Authentic Assessment and Online Learning
What’s in it for your students?

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Not a New Idea, a “New” Label

- Apprentice → Journeyman → Master Craftsman from at least 1000 CE
- Internships – from at least 1911 in USA
- Performance-based curricula in technical degree programs – impetus post WW II in USA
- “Authentic assessment”--first used in print in USA in 1988
Authentic Assessment

- Performing real-world tasks (or solving problems analogous to real-world tasks) that demonstrate meaningful applications of specific knowledge, skills and competencies used by adult citizens, consumers and/or professionals.

Composite definition from Jon Mueller, *Authentic Assessment Toolbox*
Some Examples

- Analyzing data from a core sample
- Applying the scientific method to the analysis of a mock crime scene scenario
- Making friends in Spanish
- Comparing the costs of 15 & 30 year mortgages for your first house
- Analyzing the use of the terms “liberal” and “conservative” on Fox News
Some Formats for Authentic Assessment

- Recorded Interviews
- Projects/Exhibitions
- Experiments/ Demonstrations
- Making Predictions
- Peer Editing
- Journaling
- Blogs
- Self Assessment
- Problem-Solving
- Programming
- Creative Performance
- Websites
- Wikis
- 3-D Printing
Think and Respond:

- Do you remember an authentic assessment in your degree program(s)?
- What made this assessment memorable?
Think and Respond:

- Based on these responses, what is one value of authentic assessment to students?
What’s in it for students?

- Before the assessment
  - Understanding of the value of the assessment
    - Integration of world inside classroom with world outside classroom—the meta-curriculum
  - Knowledge of professional expectations
    - With rubric that links grading standards to professional performance
What’s in it for students?

- During the assessment
  - Integration of knowledge and skills within and among disciplines
    - Example: A science report that includes “…the assessment of language skills, information selection and use skills, and reasoning skills, as well as knowledge of scientific content.”
      
      Daniel Callison, “Authentic Assessment”
What’s in it for students?

- During the assessment
  - Integration of learning and assessment
    - Learning while doing in creating new solutions or applications—at least ones that may be new for learner
    - Holistically engaged—facts, information, understanding, skills, emotions….
What’s in it for students?

- During the assessment
  - Cognitive development—"constructed" rather than "received" knowledge
    - Understanding, rather than regurgitating
    - Working with multiple dimensions/multiple right answers
    - Working with higher order thinking skills—analysis, synthesis, creativity
What’s in it for students?

- After the assessment
  - Tangible Products
    - Demonstrate achievement
  - Self confidence
    - Problem solving within discipline
    - Application of skills/knowledge across disciplines
  - More Permanent Learning
Retention percentage source: NTL Institute from Retention Rates From Different Ways of Learning.

Graphic Model: Elaine Montambeau ©2000
Support Information: Jannette Finch
Think and Respond:

- Based on what you’ve heard, what is one value of authentic assessment to faculty?
What’s in it for faculty?

- More work (than packaged, objective tests)
  - Careful construction of integrated, open-ended assessment
  - Creation of rubrics to express professional expectations and evaluate products
  - More careful sequencing of learning to practice necessary skills
What’s in it for faculty?

- More engaged students
  - Who are more actively involved in course work
- Artifacts that directly measure student knowledge, understanding and skills and engage them in higher order thinking skills
- Ability to see/measure student growth
Think and Respond:

- Based on what you have heard, what is one value of authentic assessment to administration?
What’s in it for administrators?

- Direct evidence of learning and levels of mastery to measure core competencies
- Satisfied consumers—students and employers
- Graduates who are confident professionals
My Viewpoint

Authentic assessments should be central to every online course because they:

- Make assessment relevant
- Integrate learning and assessment
- Integrate knowledge and skills within and across disciplines
- Promote cognitive development of higher order thinking skills
- Create confident professionals
Easily adapted to LMS

- Discussion Boards
- Blogs
- Journals
- Wikis
- Peer Reviews
- Assignments
- External Links
- Rubrics
Think and Respond

- What are your questions and concerns about authentic assessment?
Authentic Assessment

“You build stuff; you create works; you get your hands dirty; you perform….we regularly see students create and use learning as a demonstration of (practical as well as theoretical) understanding….A real-world task requires students to deal with the messiness of real or simulated settings, purposes, and audience…."

--Grant Wiggins, “27 Characteristics of Authentic Assessment”
If there’s time or interest, we’ll briefly cover the following
Four of the Principles of Authentic Assessment:

1. Create **engaging, meaningful, worthy problems** or tasks that apply outside the classroom.

2. Choose problems/tasks that **require the application of skills** important to the discipline.

3. Include **problems/tasks that are cognitively complex**—requiring higher order thinking skills and/or displaying creative problem-solving.

4. **Score** these problems or tasks **with rubrics** that make clear the standards that are applied in the discipline.
## A Sample Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards of Quality or Criteria</th>
<th>Levels of Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Follows Directions</td>
<td>Well Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs Improvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Well Done**: Follows all directions in the assignment and submits work on time
- **Competent**: Follows 4 of 5 directions in the assignment and submits work on time
- **Needs Improvement**: Misses 2 or more directions in the assignment and/or submits work late
Rubrics

- Outline clear, precise expectations for performance
  - Competence in task
  - Competence in discipline
  - Competence in professions

- Delineate levels of mastery
  - Appropriate to student’s level of learning

- Allow for scoring and/or self-assessment
# A Sample Rubric

## Standards of Quality or Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synthesis</th>
<th>Levels of Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Well Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integrates facts, information and opinion using a sophisticated pattern of organization and explaining connections along the way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Samples of Student Products

- **Children’s Book: “Osiris, Set and Isis”** by Hsin Huan Tien
- **Roman Public Radio Website** by Kristopher Schave
References


