***Alternatives to Common Assessment Techniques***

This learning opportunity will help instructors learn how to keep students engaged and excited about course learning content through the inclusion of active learning techniques.  At the conclusion of this session, faculty will be able to:

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| **Objectives** | 1. Describe alternatives to conventional higher education assessment methods. 2. Illustrate the expected impact on student learning that various assessment techniques have on student learning. 3. Construct a course relevant assessment method designed to enhance student learning via these alternative assessment techniques. |
| **Assessments** | Exemplary level- evidence of impact on student learning |

**Resources**

***Why might alternative assessment methods be a good choice for my class?***

If we define conventional assessment methods as term papers or midterm/final examinations we might see a mismatch between our academic vision at Wilmington University (innovative, career-oriented, student-centered instruction) and our means of measuring student learning. Professionals in most fields are not frequently assessed via these means, so it might make sense for us as faculty to develop alternative means for students to produce evidence that they are making progress in our courses.

***How do I start?***

Developing assignments that both measure student learning and provide an authentic context for that learning can be quite a challenge.

* It may help to start by identifying the relationship between the fundamental elements of student-centered assessment techniques.  We should ask ourselves, are we developing assessment methods that lead to students’ intended learning outcomes?
* From there we may want to consider browsing this list of [different authentic assessment methods](http://jfmueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/tasks.htm) we may use to pair assessment with intended student learning in creative and authentic ways.

When we do find ourselves relying on common assessment methods such as [tests/quizzes or papers](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JmfncEJwOMJoYVyG93m3UTix_EPDwvfdDQ9lKP-vtr8/edit?pli=1), we may want to examine our practices for [forming questions](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=egu1VOOopWk) to make sure we are eliciting the type of evidence of student learning we are looking for in our classes.

It may help to review our resources on authentic learning, problem-based learning, and various active learning exercises that can be employed prior to sitting down to design your alternative assessments.

***How should I approach adding these alternatives to my classes?***

For this module we encourage faculty to take a look at an assessment, and try to convert a common assessment method (term paper, final exam, etc.) into a more project or problem-based assessment that captures the professional application of course learning material.

If you would like to discuss this topic, or to forward your planned activity to the CTE for feedback please feel free to send us an email at [facultydevelopment@wilmu.edu](mailto:facultydevelopment@wilmu.edu).

***How do I earn credit for this learning unit on my Pathway to Instructional Excellence?***

The alternatives to conventional assessments learning unit is classified as a CTE Exemplary level elective. Please submit evidence of how previous application of learning content from this module has been used to improve student learning in the classroom and anticipate the needs of individual learners. Some suggested pieces of evidence include:

* Feedback received from students on student end of course surveys
* Student outcomes assessment performance in your course
* Products of student work compared over time
* Course artifacts related to your instructional preparation as faculty member over time

Evidence of professional development in the area of teaching will be scored on the following rubric:

**CTE-Pathways to Instructional Excellence-Exemplary Level Rubric**

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| **Scoring= 1**  **Unrelated or No Growth** | **2**  **Emerging Growth** | **3**  **Satisfactory Growth** | **4**  **Good Growth** | **5**  **Exemplary Growth** |
| Submission appears unrelated to learning unit. Or submission shows lack of ability to adhere to WU teaching expectations for faculty. | Submission shows ability to apply learning content to WU vision for excellence in teaching by meeting WU teaching expectations. | Submission shows understanding of how to apply learning content to WU vision for excellence in teaching by demonstrating understanding of learner-centered instruction. | Submission demonstrates correct application of teaching skill and correctly identifies potential impact this will have on student learning. Submission lacks evidence of ability to tailor teaching to individual needs of students. | Submission demonstrates correct application of teaching skill, identifies potential impact on student learning and ability to tailor teaching to individual student needs, thus displaying excellence in teaching by combining career-relevance in the classroom with individual attention to students. |

Faculty members whose submissions score a “5” will earn an *Exemplary Level* certificate for this learning unit. Submissions will be reviewed on a regular basis by the CTE and members of the academic program. Reflections rated “4” or lower may be reviewed with members of the CTE and be resubmitted. To initiate a review of an *Exemplary Level* submission please send an email to [facultydevelopment@wilmu.edu](mailto:facultydevelopment@wilmu.edu) after submitting your work via this learning module.