Assessment Technique Overview

This document provides an overview of many assessment data collection methods along with a brief description of each.

**Tracking**

* Simply tracking individuals served/affected
* Important to gather data in detailed way for future analysis
* Helpful to have an ID number to connect to other institutional databases
* Need a systematic electronic format

**Surveys**

* Can be paper or electronic
* Used to collect data from many people quickly and easily
* Limited resources needed
* Unfortunately, this the default

**Interviews**

* Used to obtain detailed information and allow for direct follow-up
* Can be in person or on the phone
* Can gather rich data
* Need to develop trust with interviewee
* Can be expensive and time consuming
* Takes a great deal of time to transcribe notes and analyze data

**Focus Groups**

* Can be done in person or online
* Allow for direct follow-up
* Need to develop trust between moderator and participants
* Provide depth of answers, but lack breadth
* Can be time consuming to collect and analyze data

**Testing Instruments**

* Use of pre-created instruments to measure particular traits or domains
* Examples: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Moral Development Inventory, Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), Measurement of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP)
* Participants are given score and compared to normative data
* Can be useful if measuring a specific area

**Concept Maps**

* Used to demonstrate relationships and connections
* Can demonstrate critical thinking skills
* Allows user to be creative

**Quasi-experiments**

* Seek to control variables by assessment design
* Can give confident results when implemented
* Can be resource intensive
* Pre-post test is most popular design

**Ratings of Skills**

* Teacher/advisor/supervisor rates skills of student
* Could be part of formal evaluation process
* Helpful to have criteria for ratings

**Rubrics**

* Set of criteria to judge student demonstration of learning
* Completed by rater or learner
* Can be holistic or component
* Can be an effective assessment tool, but underutilized

**Observation**

* Used to gather qualitative data in an unobtrusive way
* Need ongoing access to group you want to collect data from
* May take great deal of time to transcribe notes and analyze data

**Narrative/Journaling**

* Allows student to reflect on experience
* Can be analyzed using a rubric or content analysis
* Demonstrates writing skills, critical thinking skills, and can also provide insight into other types of learning
* Need to consider intent for student and intent for assessment

**Portfolio**

* Way of documenting progression towards goals
* Can be electronic or paper
* Used for a variety of learning outcomes
* Provides opportunity for reflection by student
* Allows for feedback from staff/faculty/other students
* Can serve as archive students can share

**Reflexive Photography**

* Captures images as the data to analyze
* Provides great detail
* May be easy to alter images
* Limited number of perspectives

**Focused Listing**

* Assesses prior knowledge, recall, and understanding.
* This CAT focuses students’ attention on a single important term, name, or concept from a particular lesson or class section and directs them to list several ideas that are closely related to that “focus point.”
* Helps educator determine the most effective starting point for an activity.

**Empty Outlines**

* Assesses prior knowledge, recall, and understanding.
* The instructor provides students with an empty or partially completed outline or an in-class presentation or assignment and gives students limited time to fill in the blank spaces.
* Helps instructor know how well students grasped main points.

**Minute Paper**

* Assesses prior knowledge, recall, and understanding.
* At the end of an activity students are asked to respond briefly to some variation of “what was the most important thing you learned in class.”
* Provides manageable amounts of timely and useful feedback for a minimal investment of time and energy

**Muddiest Point**

* Assesses prior knowledge, recall, and understanding.
* The technique consists of asking students to jot down a quick response to one question: “What is the muddiest point in\_\_\_\_\_\_?”
* Provides information on what students find least clear or most confusing about a an activity or interaction.

**One-Sentence Summary**

* Assesses synthesis and creative thinking.
* This simple technique challenges students to summarize an activity or set of information in one sentence.
* Enables educators to find out how concisely, completely, and creatively, students can summarize a large amount or information.

**Documented Problem Solutions**

* Assesses problem solving.
* This technique prompts students to keep track of the steps they take in solving a problem – to “show and tell” how they worked it out. By analyzing these detailed protocols – in which each solution step is briefly explained in writing – educators can gain valuable information on their students’ problem-solving skills.
* There are two main aims: 1) assess how students solve problems and 2) assess how well students understand and can describe their problem-solving methods.

**Application Cards**

* Assesses application and performance.
* After students have heard or read about an important principle, generalization, theory, or procedure, they receive an index card and are asked to write down at least one possible, real-world application for what they have just learned.
* You can know quickly how well students understand

**Directed Paraphrasing**

* Assesses application and performance.
* Directed paraphrasing is an assessment technique designed to assess and help develop the ability to translate highly specialized information into language that clients or customers understand. Students are directed to paraphrase part of a policy or practice for a specific audience and purpose, using their own words.
* Provides feedback on students’ ability to summarize and restate important information or concepts in their own words.