

## Center for Instructional Development and Research

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## Classroom Assessment of Teaching and Learning

### WHAT IS A CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT?

Classroom assessment is the process of collecting information from your students about their experience as learners in your class. There are many different ways of collecting information, depending on what you are teaching and what kind of information you need. However, all are based on the principle that the more clearly and specifically you understand how students are learning, the more effectively you can teach them.

### BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

The purpose is to improve the quality of teaching and learning that takes place in your classroom.

- It is collected in a systematic way so that all students contribute.
- It is ungraded, so that students can provide useful information that won't be used to evaluate them.
- It calls for a response from the instructor. (If you're not prepared to change, it may be better not to ask.)
- Feedback collected once is helpful, but regular feedback on an ongoing basis tells you far more.

There are countless ways to assess learning and teaching. Here are two examples frequently used at UW:

#### EXAMPLE 1: MINUTE PAPER

Ask students to answer two questions:

- What was the most important thing you learned \_\_\_\_\_? (You fill in the blank: during today's class, while doing the homework, from this week's reading, etc.)
- What important question remains unanswered?

Students hand in brief written answers before they leave class. Use this input to help you plan future classes.

Information for People who Teach  
at the University of Washington

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## EXAMPLE 2: SGID (MIDTERM CLASS INTERVIEW)

A Small Group Instructional Diagnosis is a process in which a CIDR consultant visits your class to interview your students with two questions:

- What is helping you learn in this class?
- What changes would assist you in your learning?

Soon after the class, the consultant analyzes students' responses and meets with the instructor to summarize the responses and help set goals for change. For a more complete description of the process, see: <http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/consulting/sgid.html>

## HOW CAN CIDR HELP?

- Identify resources and ideas on teaching, learning, and assessment in the CIDR library.
- Provide consultation on design and implementation of classroom assessment procedures.
- Conduct a midterm class interview (SGID), or assist with other types of data collection and analysis.

## REFERENCES AND TOOLS

Angelo, T., & Cross, P. (1993). *Classroom Assessment Techniques* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Do you know where your students are? Classroom assessment and student learning. (1993, Winter). *Speaking of Teaching*, 4(2), available on-line at: [http://ctl.stanford.edu/Newsletter/do\\_you\\_know.pdf](http://ctl.stanford.edu/Newsletter/do_you_know.pdf)

On-line Classroom Assessment Tools:  
<http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/resources/catools.html>

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Learning can and often does take place without the benefit of teaching – and sometimes even in spite of it – but there is no such thing as effective teaching in the absence of learning. Teaching without learning is just talking. (Angelo and Cross, 1993, p. 3)



## Center for Instructional Development and Research

CIDR promotes excellence in teaching and learning at the University of Washington through its work with individual faculty and TAs, departments, campus-wide initiatives, and University leaders. CIDR staff are available year-round to collaborate on the design, implementation, and assessment of ways to advance teaching and learning for all students in the diverse UW community. Consultations are confidential and offered at no charge to UW faculty, TAs, and departments.

If you have questions about teaching and learning, or you would like to find out more about working with CIDR, you can call us at 543-6588, send a message to [cidr@u.washington.edu](mailto:cidr@u.washington.edu), or visit our web site:

<http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/>



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