

Sometimes the answer to program assessment is staring you right in the face!

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- **Problem:**
 - Accrediting agencies emphasize programmatic assessment that leads to program improvement.
 - Course assessment is no longer sufficient.
 - Our provost mandated integrated program assessment to be fully functioning by fall 2005.
 - Our department (which includes psychology, sociology, and criminology) developed a multi-method approach to assess the six learning goals of the department, however, implementing the assessment plan was sporadic, at best.
 - We needed a new assessment plan with the following qualities:
 - easily implemented,
 - good student and faculty buy-in, and
 - ability to provide data which could then be used to make changes in the department.
- **Solution:**
 - We asked students enrolled in our research methods classes to develop methods for assessing the department's learning goals.
 - This approach afforded the following benefits:
 - The faculty learned what the students were and were not willing to do as participants in the assessment activities.
 - Students participated in an authentic, applied activity that required them to use the skills that they were building in their research methods courses.
 - Students reconnected with the learning goals of the department.
- **Department Goals Developed by Department Faculty:**
 - A broad and deep knowledge base within each specific discipline
 - Methodological competence in statistics, research design and assessment
 - Understanding different theoretical perspectives
 - Effective communication skills
 - Practical research, laboratory or field experience to generalize a scientific style of thought to the realm of application
 - Sensitivity to ethical issues
 - Recognition of ethnic, cultural, social and gender diversity
- **Outcome Measures:**
 - Assessment of written/ oral presentations of empirical work
 - Addresses all goals
 - Serves as a measure of actual ability
 - Requires revision of assignment guidelines
 - Evaluation by internship supervisors
 - Addresses all goals
 - Provides input by external constituencies
 - Survey of graduating seniors
 - Addresses three goals
 - Completed during review audit with academic advisor
 - Provides input from all students
 - Serves as a measure of student attitudes