Assessment scholarship has now existed long enough in the public domain to uncover principles that apply across many domains. Properly used, assessment saves time, energy, and money. It monitors and assures student learning, raises standards of achievement, and supports such things as program review, student retention, development of student knowledge, skills, and dispositions, and even institutional accountability. All this is achievable in ways that ease administrative burden. This interactive seminar/workshop links assessment principles to the Saluki First Year.
Directed Paraphrasing

In 1-3 clear, concise sentences, please write your definition of *writing-to-learn* (in a *discipline* or in *general education*), or at least what you think it should be. Construct a definition that would make sense to your students regardless of their years in school or academic disciplines.

*Writing-to-learn is:*

_________________________________________

_________________________________________

_________________________________________

_________________________________________

_________________________________________
Scholarship Reconsidered, Scholarship Assessed

In *Scholarship Reconsidered*, Ernest Boyer presents the idea of four scholarships: Discovery, Integration, Application, and Teaching. He argues that the first three share in common the properties of thoughtful reflection and peer review. If teaching could be structured to possess these properties, it could be scholarly, too.

In *Scholarship Assessed*, Ernest Boyer’s six principles of reflective practice are advocated as desirable habits. They characterize any scholarly activity. Application of these principles endows assessment with elegant properties that can be used to satisfy criteria for classroom assessment, formal program review, and individual promotion/merit/tenure portfolios as well. Thus, assessment merits our attention because it supports honest, reflective practice.

1. *Clear Goals*: Does the scholar state the basic principles of his or her work clearly? Does the scholar define objectives that are realistic and achievable? Does the scholar identify important questions in the field?

2. *Adequate Preparation*: Does the scholar show an understanding of existing scholarship in the field? Does the scholar bring the necessary skills to his or her work? Does the scholar bring together the resources necessary to move the project forward?

3. *Appropriate Methods*: Does the scholar use methods appropriate to the goals? Does the scholar apply effectively the methods selected? Does the scholar modify procedures in response to changing circumstances?

4. *Significant Results*: Does the scholar achieve the goals? Does the scholar’s work add consequentially to the field? Does the scholar’s work open additional areas for further exploration?

5. *Effective Presentation*: Does the scholar use a suitable style and effective organization to present his or her work? Does the scholar use appropriate forums for communicating work to its intended audiences? Does the scholar present his or her message with clarity and integrity?

6. *Reflective Critique*: Does the scholar critically evaluate his or her own work? Does the scholar bring an appropriate breadth of evidence to his or her critique? Does the scholar use evaluation to improve the quality of future work?
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct &amp; Indirect Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formative &amp; Summative Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment &amp; Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment as Grading? Questioning?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Six Principles of Scholarship</td>
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In *Scholarship Assessed*, Ernest Boyer’s principles of reflective practice are advocated as desirable habits. Application of these principles endows assessment with elegant properties that can be used to satisfy criteria for classroom assessment, formal program review, institutional reaccreditation, and individual promotion/merit/tenure portfolios as well. Thus, assessment merits our attention because it supports honest, reflective, scholarly practice.

**Principle #1:**

*Clear Goals:* Does the scholar state the basic principles of his or her work clearly? Does the scholar define objectives that are realistic and achievable? Does the scholar identify important questions in the field?

Picture a domain --- assignment, topic, course, or program --- for which you have responsibility. What Big Rocks related to student learning do you, as a professor, want to “go in first”? That is, what major goals do you wish your students to achieve under your guidance?

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**Principle #2:**

*Adequate Preparation:* Does the scholar show an understanding of existing scholarship in the field? Does the scholar bring the necessary skills to his or her work? Does the scholar bring together the resources necessary to move the project forward?

Ideally and briefly, what would you need to see (what evidence needs to be present, what specific indicators must be visible) in order for a skeptic to see that your undergraduate students are approaching the goals of Principle #1? Identify those that require a disciplinary specialist for interpretation and those that would be meaningful to a disciplinary layperson.
Some Assessment Ways and Means

- Assessment days and assessment centers
- Case studies
- Classroom assessments
- Completion and retention studies
- Content analyses
- Debates
- Direct observations
- Focus groups
- Graduate success
- Internships and service learning
- Interviews (including videotapes)
- Exams for certification and licensure
- Matrices
- Performances
- Portfolios of several kinds
- Projects (Primary Trait Analysis)
- Questionnaires and surveys
  (Face-to-face, telephone, web; employer, alumni, and student attitude and satisfaction)
- Reflective essays
- Study and activity logs
- Tests and embedded questions
  (Locally-developed and standardized)
- Transcript analyses
Annotated Word Journal

Read the designated text and write one word that captures the essence of what you’ve read and summarizes your response to it.

______________________________
One Word Summary

Explain why you chose that word and how it provides, in a capsule, your summary of the reading.

_________________________________________
_________________________________________
_________________________________________
_________________________________________
_________________________________________
_________________________________________
A Fuller Definition of Writing to Learn

Although how writing fosters critical thinking is not clear (Applebee), theoreticians and practitioners alike agree that writing promotes both critical thinking and learning (See Adams, Britton, Bruner, Emig, Herrington, Knoblauch and Brannon, Odell, Parker on the linked bibliography.) As Toby Fulwiler and Art Young explain in their "Introduction" to Language Connections: Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum:

Writing to communicate--or what James Britton calls "transactional writing"--means writing to accomplish something, to inform, instruct, or persuade. . . . Writing to learn is different. We write to ourselves as well as talk with others to objectify our perceptions of reality; the primary function of this "expressive" language is not to communicate, but to order and represent experience to our own understanding. In this sense language provides us with a unique way of knowing and becomes a tool for discovering, for shaping meaning, and for reaching understanding. (p. x)

In "Writing to Learn Means Learning to Think," Syrene Forsman makes the same point, but she directs her attention not to a theoretical justification but a practical rationale for writing to learn:

As teachers we can choose between (a) sentencing students to thoughtless mechanical operations and (b) facilitating their ability to think. If students' readiness for more involved thought processes is bypassed in favor of jamming more facts and figures into their heads, they will stagnate at the lower levels of thinking. But if students are encouraged to try a variety of thought processes in classes, they can, regardless of their ages, develop considerable mental power. Writing is one of the most effective ways to develop thinking. (p. 162)

The Consequences of Writing by Robert P. Parker and Vera Goodkin is an especially good resource on writing to learn. Following a detailed discussion of the theoretical links between language (especially writing) and learning, these authors outline projects that focus on writing in entomology, clinical nursing, psychology, and mathematics, all with similar results: students learned key concepts and understood material more fully while also practicing some features of discourse for the specified discourse community. Thus, writing to learn can have additional positive effects in helping students mature as effective communicators even though the initial goal is to help students become better learners.

--The WAC Clearinghouse, http://wac.colostate.edu/intro/pop4a.cfm
Principle #3:

*Appropriate Methods:* Does the scholar use methods appropriate to the goals? Does the scholar apply effectively the methods selected? Does the scholar modify procedures in response to changing circumstances?

Subdivide one item of evidence, activity, or behavior from Principle #2 into component parts and construct a rubric representing a 3- or 4-point assessment of quality.

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Principle #4:

*Significant Results:* Does the scholar achieve the goals? Does the scholar’s work add consequentially to the field? Does the scholar’s work open additional areas for further exploration?

A. What venues exist where assessment activities might take place to gather evidence of the sort described in Principle #2?

B. What resources need to be maintained in your environment in order for you to collect this evidence? Which of these are the most important?

C. What obstacles, if any, are preventing you from collecting the evidence described in Principle #2 and achieving your student-related Big Rocks?
Principle #5:  
**Effective Presentation:** Does the scholar use a suitable style and effective organization to present his or her work? Does the scholar use appropriate forums for communicating work to its intended audiences? Does the scholar present his or her message with clarity and integrity?

To what forums and audiences will assessment reports in your domain be addressed? Who will write and who will read the reports? What constructive feedback mechanisms are active? How will reports be used and what will happen as a consequence?

**Three Questions Appearing in Every External Assessment Inquiry**
- What have you learned about your students’ learning?
- How did you learn it?
- What are you going to do about it and when, where, and how are you going to do it?

Principle #6:  
**Reflective Critique:** Does the scholar critically evaluate his or her own work? Does the scholar bring an appropriate breadth of evidence to his or her critique? Does the scholar use evaluation to improve the quality of future work?

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**Beginning and Advanced Assessment: A Scholarship**

- Questions
  - Goals
  - Objectives
- Methods
  - Results
  - Reports
- Intervention
  - Faculty Development
- Interpretation
  - What Now?
  - What Else?
  - What Next?

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**Question:**

The 3 highest priority questions that I would like to look into regarding educational performance here are:

1. 

2. 

3. 

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Five Conditions That Foster Deep Learning
[Halpern & Hakel, Marchese, DeWinstanley & Bjork, Marchese, Shpancer, National Research Council]

Deep learning is enhanced when students:
1. Become actively engaged.
   (So they can learn to self-assess, reflect, and learn to learn for themselves.)

2. Practice retrieval and presentation in varied environments.
   (And activate multiple neural pathways --- sensory, motor, and association.)

3. Link new learning to prior learning.
   (In order to use existing knowledge as a foundation for new knowledge.)

4. Apply learning to new situations that they care about.
   (Because generating applications is a powerful way to make connections.)

5. Receive timely and relevant reinforcement.
   (So they can learn to self-assess, reflect, and learn to learn for themselves.)

Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education

Good Practice:
1. Encourages active learning.
   (Writing, applying, doing, thinking, and thinking about what they’re doing.)

2. Gives prompt feedback on performance.
   (So they can learn to self-assess, reflect, and learn to learn for themselves.)

3. Develops reciprocity and cooperation among students.
   (Deepens understanding, improves thinking, enhances communication.)

4. Emphasizes time on task.
   (Practice improves learning because learning = time x effective energy.)

5. Encourages contact between students and faculty.
   (Especially contact focused on the academic agenda---in and out of class.)

6. Communicates high expectations.
   (Reward the positive and encourage students to learn high self-expectations.)

7. Respects diverse talents and ways of learning.
   (And engenders respect for the many forms of genius.)
Some References on Assessment, Feedback, and Writing-to-Learn


