

Assessing for Learning: Building a Sustainable Commitment Across the Institution

By Peggy L. Maki

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While there is consensus that institutions need to represent their educational effectiveness through documentation of student learning, the higher education community is divided between those who support national standardized tests to compare institutions' educational effectiveness, and those who believe that valid assessment of student achievement is based on assessing the work that students produce along and at the end of their educational journeys.

This book espouses the latter philosophy?what Peggy Maki sees as an integrated and authentic approach to providing evidence of student learning based on the work that students produce along the chronology of their learning. She believes that assessment needs to be humanized, as opposed to standardized, to take into account the demographics of institutions, as students do not all start at the same place in their learning. Students also need the tools to assess their own progress.

In addition to updating and expanding the contents of her first edition to reflect changes in assessment practices and developments over the last seven years, such as the development of technology-enabled assessment methods and the national need for institutions to demonstrate that they are using results to improve student learning, Maki focuses on ways to deepen program and institution-level assessment within the context of collective inquiry about student learning.

Recognizing that assessment is not initially a linear start-up process or even necessarily sequential, and recognizing that institutions develop processes appropriate for their mission and culture, this book does not take a prescriptive or formulaic approach to building this commitment. What it does present is a framework, with examples of processes and strategies, to assist faculty, staff, administrators, and campus leaders to develop a sustainable and shared core institutional process that deepens inquiry into what and how students learn to identify and improve patterns of weakness that inhibit learning.

This book is designed to assist colleges and universities build a sustainable commitment to assessing student learning at both the institution and program

levels. It provides the tools for collective inquiry among faculty, staff, administrators and students to develop evidence of students' abilities to integrate, apply and transfer learning, as well as to construct their own meaning. Each chapter also concludes with (1) an Additional Resources section that includes references to meta-sites with further resources, so users can pursue particular issues in greater depth and detail and (2) worksheets, guides, and exercises designed to build collaborative ownership of assessment.

The second edition now covers:
* Strategies to connect students to an institution's or a program's assessment commitment
* Description of the components of a comprehensive institutional commitment that engages the institution, educators, and students--all as learners
* Expanded coverage of direct and indirect assessment methods, including technology-enabled methods that engage students in the process
* New case studies and campus examples covering undergraduate, graduate education, and the co-curriculum
* New chapter with case studies that presents a framework for a backward designed problem-based assessment process, anchored in answering open-ended research or study questions that lead to improving pedagogy and educational practices
* Integration of developments across professional, scholarly, and accrediting bodies, and disciplinary organizations
* Descriptions and illustrations of assessment management systems
* Additional examples, exercises, guides and worksheets that align with new content

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Editorial Review

Review
"This is a welcome second edition for Maki's well-known tome on assessment and learning. This volume stands out as a sentinel work in the area for three reasons. First, it is a comprehensive account of sustainable assessment across educational institutions. In this regard it looks at assessment not so much as something that occurs in universitites and colleges but as something that defines them. Second, it provides a range of practical strategies that have been well tested at the "coalface" of learning, that is, with students in classrooms and other educational settings. Finally, it provides a well-grounded practical focus without sacraficing conceptual depth. The book provides a wealth of theoretical material which creates and sustains a strong context for learning. This book is highly recommended." (Richard Rymarz, St. Joseph's College, University of Alberta *Teaching Theology and Religion*)

"Peggy Maki's text as a whole represents a comprehensive and realist approach to assessment and constructs a notion of assessment that is an uncommon blend of the pragmatic and sustainable, meaningful and valuable, theoretical and practical. Maki has artistically drawn together esoteric, philosophical foundations with pragmatic, real-world applications from which nearly any assessment practitioner will benefit... The second edition of *Assessing for Learning* verges on being a seminal work in higher education assessment scholarship." (*The Review of Higher Education*)

About the Author
Peggy L. Maki is a higher education consultant, specializing in assisting undergraduate and graduate colleges and universities, higher education boards, higher education organizations, and disciplinary organizations integrate assessment of student learning into educational practices, processes and structures. She has served on several assessment advisory boards, including the national advisory board for AAC&U’s VALUE Project and its Quality Assurance Group and one of Lumina Foundation’s advisory boards. In August 2016 she was appointed to the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment’s (NILOA) National Advisory Panel. For three years she was sole consultant to the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education and its public higher education institutions under a multi-year assessment project. From May, 2011-May, 2013 under a grant from the Davis Education Foundation awarded to the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, she served as sole consultant to the 28 public colleges and universities in Massachusetts to assist them build their assessment capacity to score students’ authentic work using the VALUE rubrics. Altogether, she has presented over 550 workshops and keynotes in the US and abroad. At the request of Inside Higher Education, Educause, and Project Kaleidoscope, she has presented national webinars on assessment of student learning. She is also the recipient of a national teaching award, The Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching.

Users Review

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Paul Heisler:

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