

**Assessment Quick Guide  
for the  
THECB-approved Certificates, AAS degrees, and the AAT degrees**

**What is it?** As defined by the American Association for Higher Education, assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving performance. It involves:

- Making expectations explicit,
- Setting appropriate criteria and high standards for quality,
- Systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards, and
- Using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance.

**Who does it?**

- All faculty teaching courses that can be applied to an award (certificate or degree) conduct program-level assessment.
- All faculty teaching developmental and core curriculum courses assess Critical Thinking in support of the college's QEP (Quality Enhancement Plan).

**Why do it?** Assessment helps to determine

- where the learners are in their learning,
- where they need to go, and
- how to best get them there.

**How to do it?** A step-by-step approach to developing and implementing a useful and feasible plan includes:

- Review the mission and goals for your program.
- Identify student learning outcomes of the program (program-level learning outcomes).
- Identify where in the curriculum students have the opportunity to achieve and demonstrate the learning outcomes (complete or revise curriculum maps).
- Design relevant, valid, and reliable assessments of the learning outcomes.
- Align assessments in Blackboard Outcomes with appropriate rubrics.
- Participate in calibration and scoring sessions.
- Review results.
- Identify changes to be made in order to improve student learning.
- Complete assessment reports.

**When to do it?** In order for assessment to effectively lead to improvement, it must be

- continuous,
- on-going,
- whenever the course is taught.

Assessment occurs regardless of modality, session length, or instructor status.

**Where to do it?** Direct assessment methods are classified by two categories:

- Course-Embedded (via Blackboard Outcomes)
- Course-Embedded (manually collected, scored, and evaluated)
- Licensing/Certification Exams

**Program Level Assessment Process**  
for the  
THECB-approved Certificates, AAS degrees, and the AAT degrees

