How is student learning going to be assessed?
Characteristics of Effective First-Year Seminar Assessment Exercises

- Direct, supplemented by indirect survey
- Course-embedded
  - Applicable for student-level assessment
- Engaging (intrinsically motivational)
- Developmental (not just evaluative)
- Based on Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy
- Time-efficient (10 to 90 minutes)
- Valid and reliable
- In class and/or outside of class
Evidence of face and content validity of the developed assessments will be established by having at least three Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) review each instrument and explicitly address two issues and rate concurrence on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree; Fink, 1995). The two statements asked of each SME will be:

› This instrument measures accomplishment of the relevant stated learning outcome.
› This instrument appears to be a reasonable way to gain insight about student accomplishment of the relevant learning outcome.

Regarding reliability:
› Rubric training
› At least two raters will evaluate each product.
› Instructors will be trained on the appropriate administration of the assessment instrument and on their latitude to offer assistance to students completing the exercises.
› Evaluator calibration sessions will be conducted regularly.
  • The initial expectation for reliability is 80% concurrence on assessments.
Exercises are 50% CLICKnSTICK (for out of class completion) and 50% RUGettingIt (designed for in class completion).
Instructors of First-Year Seminars will be asked to retain and/or remit to the First-Year Seminar Assessment Team the unmarked (but not anonymous) student products submitted by all students. These will be tracked by section number to enable identification of any course-specific contamination or problems.

Upon remittance, the Assessment Team will use a random number selector (such as http://www.random.org/) to generate a list of 5 numbers between 1 and 7 (see graphic sidebar). These numbers represent the sequence of papers pulled from a randomly distributed stack of products. The sequence will be repeated until the appropriate sample size is extracted from the class population.

The sampling strategy upon full campus implementation will be as follows: At least 40 products of each of the 17 different instruments will be evaluated as outlined in the table in the following section entitled “Metrics of Success: Evaluation Tools and Minimum Acceptable Performance Levels.”

- These products will be selected from at least three different sections/instructors.
- Each semester, instructors will be randomly assigned to deliver specific assessment instruments to students. Each and every semester, all students will complete the Service Learning Reflection Narrative as well as the Career Exploration exercises.
- Each instructor will be asked to administer at least three additional course-embedded assessments throughout the semester. The specific instruments will be assigned by the Assessment Team, and while the instructor may choose to administer more, or may choose to use them for student-level assessment, the instructors will be obligated to administer at a minimum the three specific assessments required by the Assessment Team.
Closing the Loop | Keeping the Connection

- Reexamine the assurance of learning process.
  - Are student learning objectives (SLOs) appropriate?
  - Are the requisite skills and knowledge sets being taught or delivered?
  - Are the measurements/instruments current, authentic, valid and appropriate?
  - Are rubrics sufficiently clear and easy-to-use?
  - Is the performance expectation appropriate?
  - Are evaluators committed, trained and calibrated?

- Determine if students need additional resources.
  - Tutoring or supplemental instruction?
  - Access to technology, services (e.g., library) or infrastructure?

- Evaluate whether curricular alterations are needed.
  - Is course content sequenced appropriate?
  - Is anything missing?
  - Are co-requisites needed?
  - Is the curriculum current?
  - Is the time-sequencing of the course appropriate?

- Consider pedagogical issues.
  - Are learning materials current and appropriate?
  - Is the pedagogy sufficiently engaging and active?
  - Are instructions optimally qualified?
  - Is there sufficient time to allow for comprehensive coverage of concepts?
  - Is the learning environment/facility a hindrance?
  - Is the course timing and length appropriate?
  - Are class sizes problematic and interfering with subject matter mastery?
  - Are there any communication barriers with students?
  - Was there any atypical disruption or disaster (e.g., hurricane damage or closure) during the semester?

- Determine whether students are academically qualified and prepared to learn material.
  - Do students need any ‘non-academic’ out-of-class assistance or support?
  - Are students’ expectations appropriate?
  - Do they understand the content and importance of SLOs?
  - Is there a problematic culture among students?
  - Is communication with students a challenge?