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1997

## Assessing student learning in Universities

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### Recommended Citation

Bell, Maureen, Assessing student learning in Universities, *Overview - University of Wollongong Teaching & Learning Journal*, 4(1), 1997, 57-57.

Available at: <http://ro.uow.edu.au/overview/vol4/iss1/12>

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# Assessing student learning in Universities

## **Abstract**

Academics are continually pondering appropriate methods to effectively assess student learning. They recognise that 'assessment is not simply a matter of finding out how much students have learned. Lecturers want assessment strategies that provide feedback to students on their progress and encourage a deep approach to learning.



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### BOOK REVIEW

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# ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING IN UNIVERSITIES

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BELL

Peggy Nightingale, Ina Te Wiata, Sue Toohey, Greg Ryan, Chris Hughes, Doug Magin. (1996) *Assessing Student Learning in Universities*. Sydney: University of NSW Press.

Academics are continually pondering appropriate methods to effectively assess student learning. They recognise that assessment is not simply a matter of finding out how much students have learned. Lecturers want assessment strategies that provide feedback to students on their progress and encourage a deep approach to learning.

*Assessing Student Learning in Universities* is based on the principles that assessment should assess a broad range of learning outcomes, guide and enrich learning and support autonomy and self evaluation. The book presents 62 case studies of current practice in university assessment. The editors have classified the cases into eight clusters of abilities which represent the areas in which academics would like their students to make significant progress. These clusters are:

- Thinking critically and making judgements
- Solving problems and developing plans
- Performing procedures and demonstrating techniques
- Managing and developing oneself
- Accessing and managing information
- Demonstrating knowledge and understanding
- Designing creating and performing
- Communicating.

Most of the cases are presented in some detail, outlining context, method, procedures, effectiveness, strengths and limitations, examples and so on. One of the strengths of the book is in the discussion of cases and strategies and further information provided by the editors. An extensive annotated bibliography is an added bonus.

Academics looking for new assessment techniques will find *Assessing Student Learning in Universities* not only an inspiring collection of practical ideas but a useful reference on a variety of assessment issues and strategies.

BOOKS