

Key Ideas in the Development of Program, Instruction and Assessment Arising from Board Mandate and Research

Key moves in assessment:

- Articulate the guiding goals
- Assess for a gap between the goals and reality
- Plan actions . . . to close the gap
- Analyze results and act on feedback

Our first task is to make sure the program goals are:

1. Student centered
2. Stated with enough specificity to allow for assessment – measuring for the degree to which the program meets the goal.

To increase the likelihood of addressing both demands use the sentence stem:

The student will understand that

(Understanding is:

1. a core concept in the relevant domain

“Expert knowledge is organized... Their knowledge is not simply a list of facts and formulas that are relevant to the domain; instead, their knowledge is organized around core concepts or ‘big ideas’ that guide their thinking about the domain.”

-- Bransford, et. al. *How People Learn*, p. 24

2. the capacity to transfer/ apply what has been learned to solve new problems

“Learning with understanding is more likely to promote transfer than simply memorizing information from a text or a lecture.”

-- Bransford, et. al. *How People Learn*, p. 224

“Students develop flexible understanding of when, where, why, and how to use their knowledge to solve new problems if they learn how to extract underlying principles and themes from their learning exercises.”

-- Bransford, et. al. *How People Learn*, p. 224)

Simply put, a working definition of understanding has two parts:

- Insight into key ideas, as reflected in wise inferences about the knowledge and skill to be learned**
- Effective use of knowledge and skill in varied, important, realistic, and novel situations.**

Our work is to suggest possibilities. The staff's work is to finalize appropriate goals for each program.