

## **Student Self-Reflections**

Student self-reflections help students learn by metacognition (thinking about one's thinking processes) and synthesis. Reflection balances quantitative information with qualitative information. Qualitative assessments provide fresh insight to the learning process. Faculty members get a first-hand account of how students learn; this information may help faculty to re-think and re-design classroom instruction and activities.

Chapter 8 of Angelo and Cross' *Classroom Assessment Techniques* (available in each campus library) provides numerous examples of student self-reflections, including Self Assessment of Ways of Learning (#36), Productive Study Time Logs (#37), Process Analysis (#39) Diagnostic Learning Logs (#40), and many types of journals.

In addition, the following three types of Student Self-Self Reflections may be used at the class, course and/or program levels of assessment.

### **Before-and-After Reflection**

Ask students to reflect at both the **beginning and end of a course or unit** and compare their responses in order to assess their growth and development. Example:

Initial Definition of Leadership  
Initial Definition of Poetry

Later Definition of Leadership  
Later Definition of Poetry

This type of assessment requires **THEMATIC ANALYSIS**: organizing results into categories and looking for common themes, patterns and relationships.

### **Self-Ratings**

At the end of a unit, course or program, ask students to rate themselves on their knowledge, skills or attitudes. Create a questionnaire with a list of relevant Course Learning Outcomes or Program Objectives. Ask students to rate their skills for each outcome/objective from (Low) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 (High). It may be helpful to ask an open ended question to elicit information about what they did well to earn such a high rating or what they would do differently to avoid a low rating in the future.

Option 1:

Compare student self-assessments to their actual performance on tests, assignments or projects. A significant mismatch provides an opportunity to begin a dialog with students about learning styles or studying techniques.

Option 2:

Using this technique before and after a unit or chapter is a good way to start a discussion about the learning process with students.

### **Examples of Prompts for Self-Reflection on an Assignment, Course, or Program**

1. What was the one most useful thing you learned in this assignment, course or program?
2. What suggestions would you give other students on ways to get the most out of this assignment, course or program?
3. In what area did you improve the most?
4. List three ways you think you have developed or grown as a result of this assignment, course or program?
5. What did you learn about writing, research, (or any other skill) from this assignment, course or program?
6. What problems did you encounter in this assignment, course or program?
7. What assignment of this course or program was your best work and why?

Faculty can choose one or more of these prompts for student self-reflection. Faculty should create rules for categorizing student responses to ensure a consistent and fair analysis.

(Most of the information comes from Linda Suskie's *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide*)