

**STRENGTHENING CAPACITY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE  
CHANGE LAWS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC  
TRAIN-THE-TRAINERS PROGRAM**

*Colombo, Sri Lanka, 28 May-1 June, 2018*

**SESSION 17: THE ROLE OF ASSESSMENT**

Presented by Professor Carmen Gonzalez



# The Role of Assessment

- To determine whether students understand the materials, are able to think critically about the issues, and apply what they have learned.
- To provide feedback
- To evaluate progress
- To improve course content and teaching
  - Linking learning to assessment
- To rank students
- To meet accreditation requirements

# Definition of Assessment

- “The process of defining, selecting, designing, collecting, analyzing interpreting and using information to increase students’ learning and development of skills.”
- Many methods of assessment
  - Essays, assignments
  - Class performance
  - Examinations (length, type of questions, open book /closed book)
- Each method is aimed at achieving a certain objective :
  - Q – What is it that you wish students to learn?
  - Q – How best should this be taught?
  - Q - How best can you assess that the student has learned what you have tried to teach?

# Linking learning to assessment

- Assessment is most effective when the form of assessment is linked to the style of teaching and learning
- This depends on:
  - The knowledge you want students to absorb:
    - Legal knowledge
    - Contextual knowledge
  - The skills you want students to develop:
    - writing skills, oral skills, critical thinking skills
    - Other skills – presentation skills, using Power Point ...

## Linking learning to assessment (cont.)

- We need to go beyond the traditional assessment forms of examinations and essays.
- Other forms of assessment include :
  - Preparation of legal briefs
  - Assessment of participation in class:
    - role plays, brainstorming, student presentations
  - Group work & reports (testing ability to work as a team)
  - Site visits & reports
  - Moot courts and mediation exercises
  - Research papers



# Assessment criteria

- Teachers should inform students at the start, how they will be assessed.
- Class performance should be given some weight – ensures student attendance and participation
- Written examinations – length, format, what can be brought into examination (closed vs. open book, e.g. statutes, cases, all materials?)
- Oral presentations
- Group work
- Use of rubrics

# Constructive feedback

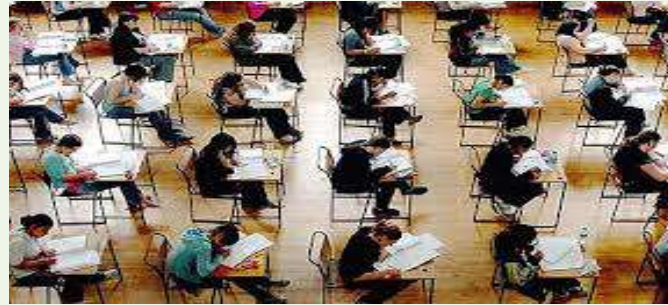
- Constructive feedback means *positive* responses to student efforts on standards they have achieved and those they have not achieved, in writing or orally.
- Through constructive feedback, basic mistakes and misinterpretations are corrected, in order to encourage students to study the subject more intensively and enthusiastically



# Summative vs. formative feedback

- **Summative** feedback tells students how they have performed upon reaching an end point, such as the end of a class or course, e.g.

- Exams
- Class presentations
- Research papers
- Final projects





# Summative vs. formative feedback

- **Formative** feedback tells students what they are doing right and what they need to improve before the end point is reached.
- Formative feedback can appear to be more informal than summative feedback. However, formative feedback should be very structured, because it must be based on the assignment goals.

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SOME INNOVATIONS IN ASSESSMENT  
IN LEGAL EDUCATION



Produced by Suzanne Owen and Gary Davis

## Some further reading

- <https://cald.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Some-Innovations-in-Assessment-in-Legal-Education-atlc-Davis-Owen-report-comb1.pdf>
- See page 11
- <https://ctl.yale.edu/FacultyResources/LawSchool>
- Download; see pages 8-10