

Multi-dimensional Assessment for eLearning; Traditional and Social Assessment Models

New modalities of learning require new models of assessment for learners. No longer do we look for mastery of an instructional objective, we also look for communication, team building and critical thinking skills. Multiple models of assessment can converge into a new portfolio of assessment for online learning. This session will focus on a multi-dimensional approach to assessment of eLearning success based on the learning environment and how it prepares students for the virtual / collaborative professional environment.

The independence of time and space have created new challenges in assessment of learning effectiveness in elearning. This paper will address the issues of how assessment of learners must more closely match the environment they will be expected to compete in for their professional careers. eLearners must interact in disassociated environments where the community is virtual, temporary, time schedules are tight and teamwork skills are critical. In this environment everyone must contribute and collaborate.

Group work has been a difficult activity to measure in the past and forms the basis for many eLearning activities. We will explore some of the current methods of assessment that measure effectiveness of learning and teamwork through application of quantitative and qualitative instruments. End of course assessments and longitudinal tools such as ePortfolios can give us a much more complete assessment of the learner and result in a very valuable representation of what skills and knowledge they have acquired in their degree program.

The effectiveness of group work / teamwork assessment using tools such as a 360 Degree evaluation gives students feedback on their social interaction and effectiveness as a virtual team member. Giving students the feedback to improve their collaborative skills is a vital outcome of the eLearning environment.