

Assessing student learning

Available resources

by Amy E. Mark

The national attention on assessment in education is here to stay. Teaching librarians are focusing on assessing student learning both to justify library instruction to stakeholders and to improve student learning by working toward graduating entire classes of information literate students from colleges and universities. Librarians have become increasingly involved in assessment culture while searching for methods to assess information literacy. This column of Internet resources on student learning assessment differs from a list of information literacy assessment Web sites by embracing the paradigm shift away from evaluation and moving toward the assessment of student learning. Librarians are transitioning from skill-based measurements of evaluations to outcomes-based assessment. By reviewing the resources below librarians also open themselves up to research outside of librarianship, cognizant that other disciplines have expertise with measurement and instruments from which we can borrow.

Meta sites

- **The Educator's Reference Desk.** The new ERIC Web site. Click on the "Evaluation" link for many assessment and student learning resources. *Access:* <http://www.eduref.org>.
- **The Evaluation Center.** Out of Western Michigan University, the center's mission is to

advance the theory, practice, and use of evaluation; the site includes a searchable database of instruments. *Access:* <http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/>.

- **Internet Resources for Higher Education Outcomes Assessment.** One of the best meta-sites examined, this page has informative annotations and is organized by listing an overall site link followed by links to helpful pages within sites. Highlights include links to conference sites, assessment handbooks, accrediting bodies, and a large section of individual institutions' assessment-related pages. *Access:* <http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm>.

- **Outcomes Assessment Resources on the Web.** This site focuses primarily on links related to assessment in higher education, including university assessment pages, links to agencies, institutes and organizations involved in assessment, instruments, commercial resources, and statistical software. *Access:* <http://www.tamu.edu/marshome/assess/oabooks.html>.

- **Policy Center for the First Year of College.** The place to go to find the right survey. "Instruments and tools" provides a list of assessment instruments plus a comprehensive collection of resources and guidelines to assist institutions in local data source compilation, data assembly, and data

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analysis procedures. Access: <http://www.brevard.edu/fyc>.



Organizations/Associations with Assessment Resources

- **AAHE Assessment Forum.** Home base for higher education practitioners working in assessment, the authors can honestly state that the site is the “primary national network connecting and supporting higher education stakeholders involved in assessment.” All links to original content. Access: <http://www.aahe.org/initiatives/assessment.htm>.



- **American Evaluation Association (AEA).** Devoted to the application and exploration of evaluation in all its forms, AEA believes that evaluation involves assessing the strengths and weaknesses of programs, policies, personnel, products, and organizations to improve their effectiveness. Access: <http://www.eval.org>.

- **Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement.** A site focusing on the ethics of measurement; prepared by the National Council on Measurement in Education. Access: http://www.natd.org/Code_of_Professional_Responsibilities.html.

- **Savvy Assessment and Evaluation Skills.** This page from Diversity Web, an interactive resource hub for higher education, is maintained by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Access: http://www.diversityweb.org/research_and_trends/research_evaluation_impact/campus_climate_evaluation_tools/savvy_assessment.cfm.

Student learning outcomes and assessment

- **Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning and Developing an Assessment Plan to Learn About Student Learning.** Two initiatives from AAHE. Access: <http://www.aahe.org/assessment/principles.htm> and <http://www.aahe.org/assessment/assessmentplan.htm>.

- **FairTest: The National Center for Fair and Open Testing.** Principles and indicators for student assessment systems from

the National Forum on Assessment. Access: <http://fairtest.org/principles.htm>.

- **Guidelines for Rubric Development.** An important skill set in assessing student learning, this site gives examples of rubric design. Access: http://edweb.sdsu.edu/triton/july/rubrics/Rubric_Guidelines.html.

- **Implementing the Seven Principles: Technology as Lever.** An article discussing the *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* in the context of communication and information technologies, by Steve Ehrmann and Arthur Chickering. Access: <http://www.tltgroup.org/programs/seven.html>.

- **Learning Skills Program Bloom's Taxonomy.** One of the many interpretations of Bloom's taxonomy used to categorize the level of abstraction of questions that commonly occur in educational settings. Access: <http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learn/program/hndouts/bloom.html>.

- **TLT.** The Teaching, Learning, and Technology Group's (TLT) goal is to “improve teaching and learning by making more appropriate and cost-effective use of information technology without sacrificing what matters most.” TLT features assessment tools from the award-winning Flashlight Program. Access: <http://www.tltgroup.org/>.



- **Virtual Resource Site for Teaching with Technology.** A resource for faculty seeking direction in appropriate ways to use Web-based technologies to accomplish key learning strategies of the teaching/learning issues in technology-enabled instruction. The site consists of two modules; Module 1 provides information about the selection and use of various Web-based media; Module 2 focuses on delivery. Access: <http://www.umuc.edu/virtualteaching/>.

Library-oriented sources

- **ACRL's Information Literacy Competency Standards Toolkit.** A set of tools, Web pages, and other resources to help you use the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. Includes performance indicators for each standard and outcomes. Access: www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/acrlinfolit/infolitstandards/standardstoolkit.html.

- **Assessing Community College: Information Literacy Competencies and Other Library Services and Resources.** Includes a variety of links related to assessment and original content by Gratch Lindauer. *Access:* <http://fog.ccsf.cc.ca.us/~bgratch/assess.html>.

- **Assessment of Information and Technology Literacy.** A statewide attempt to assess the information/technological literacy of baccalaureate degree recipients of the public four-year institutions of Washington State. *Access:* <http://depts.washington.edu/infolitr/>.

- **Characteristics of Programs of Information Literacy that Illustrate Best Practices: A Guideline.** An initiative by the Institute for Information Literacy and approved by the ACRL Board in June 2003, these guidelines attempt to “articulate elements of exemplary information literacy programs for undergraduate students at four-year and two-year institutions.” *Access:* <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/characteristics.htm>.

- **Hutchins Library Bibliographic Instruction Program Evaluation.** Detailed pretest and posttest analysis of student learning and perceptions of library instruction by Susan Henthorn. *Access:* <http://www.berea.edu/library/BIEVAL/Pre-test-Post-test.html>.

- **Internet Education Project.** A site from the ACRL Instruction Section for sharing peer reviewed instructional materials created by librarians to teach people about discovering, accessing, and evaluating information in networked environments. *Access:* <http://cooley.colgate.edu/etech/iep/default.html>.

- **LOEX Clearinghouse for Library Instruction.** LOEX provides resources “on all aspects of instruction to libraries and librarians who are institutional members,” including one-page point-of-use handouts, bibliographies and subject guides, pathfinders; instructional video; and Internet sites. *Access:* <http://www.emich.edu/public/loex/loex.html>.

- **Project SAILS: Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills.** A project to “develop



an instrument for programmatic level assessment of information literacy skills that is valid and thus credible to university administrators and other academic personnel.” *Access:* <http://sails.lms.kent.edu/index.php>.

Electronic lists on assessment

- **ASSESS.** An electronic list from the University of Kentucky-Lexington (listserv@lsv.uky.edu) that is devoted to assessment in higher education and has a searchable archive and instructions for using the list. *Access:* <http://lsv.uky.edu/archives/assess.html>.

Journals on assessment

- **Education Policy Analysis Archives.** Articles dealing with education policy. *Access:* <http://epaa.asu.edu>.

- **Educational Researcher.** Publishes scholarly articles of “general significance to the educational research community from a wide range of disciplines.” *Access:* <http://www.aera.net/pubs/er>.

- **JEM: The Journal of Educational Measurement.** Publishes original measurement research, reports on new measurement instruments, and serves as a vehicle for improving educational measurement applications in a variety of settings. *Access:* <http://ncme.org/pubs/jem.ace>.

- **NCA-CIHE Assessment Resources.** Provides links to original full text articles from



the Higher Learning Commission on assessment. *Access:* <http://www.ncacih.org/resources/assessment/index.html>.

- **Review of Higher Education.** Peer reviewed articles about critical higher education issues, including assessment. *Access:* http://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/review_of_higher_education/.

Corporate and pay assessment solutions

- **The Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric (HCTSR).** Products for “multi-modal assessment” with four levels of descriptors are used to categorize the critical thinking evident in projects, portfolios, presentations, and essays. *Access:* <http://www.insightassessment.com/HCTSR.html>.

- **InterEd.** A business that offers outcome assessment products for colleges and universities. *Access:* <http://www.intered.com/college/collegehome.htm>.



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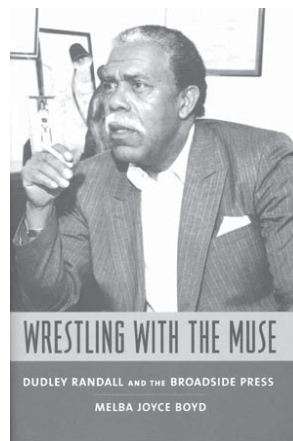
gramming formats (adult contemporary, all news), shows (Fibber McGee and Molly, All Things Considered), networks and companies (NBC, Clear Channel Communications), technology (audiotape, receivers, walkman, digital satellite radio), law (Wireless Acts of 1910 and 1912, "Seven Dirty Words" case), issues (advertising, blacklisting, women in radio, propaganda, violence), awards, film and TV depictions of radio, and emergency broadcasting. A much broader treatment than John Dunning's *On the Air: The Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio* (Oxford, 1998). \$375.00. Routledge. ISBN 1-57958-431-4.

Refuge of a Scoundrel: The Patriot Act in Libraries, by Herbert N. Foerstel (218 pages, January 2004), analyzes all aspects of the USA Patriot Act directly affecting libraries and offers advice on what to do if your library is approached by law enforcement under authority of Section 215 of the act. Other chapters summarize the FBI Library Awareness Program of the 1970s, recent government actions beyond the Patriot Act, and public and legislative responses to the act. Foerstel, formerly head of branch libraries at the University of Maryland-College Park, also includes several useful appendices: survey results of the University of Illinois Library Research Center and the California Library Association on FBI library visits; a sample U.S. attorney records preservation demand letter; and a sample district court ECPA order, subpoena, and search warrant. The FBI has refused to provide samples of either a FISA warrant or National Security Letter. \$35.00. Libraries Unlimited. ISBN 1-59158-139-7.

Russia, All 89 Regions: Trade and Investment Guide (1,029 pages plus companion CD, January 2004), an English translation of a new Russian series to be published every two years, gathers together economic information on Russia's 89 republics and regions, cooperatively provided by the administrators of each region, official publications of the State Statistics Committee of the Russian Federation, data from regional statistics offices, and the estimates of regional and independent experts. The guide's primary section offers data on the administration, economic potential, trade and investment opportunities, and investment projects for each area, introduced by the region's governor. Other

interesting features include an introductory article by Arkady Volsky, president of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (Employers), titled "Why Invest in Russia?"; information on the Russian tax system and foreign-investment legislation; a list of international credit institutions in Russia; the largest banks operating in each region; and an overview of the major economic events in the Russian Federation for the first half of 2003. \$395.00. CTEC Publishing, 10 Rockefeller Plaza, Suite 1007, New York, NY 10020. ISBN 0-9743478-1-7.

Wrestling with the Muse: Dudley Randall and the Broadside Press, by Melba Joyce Boyd (385 pages, February 2004), highlights the life and career of Dudley Randall (1914–2000), poet, publisher, editor, civil-rights activist, and professional librarian at Lincoln University, Morgan State University, the Wayne County Federated Library System, and the University of Detroit. Boyd, a former editor at the Broadside Press (founded by Randall in 1965) and his colleague for 28 years, has penned this definitive biography and celebration of his poetry. Randall's



works include "Booker T. and W.E.B." (1952), a dialogue between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois; "Ballad of Birmingham," written to commemorate the 1963 bombing of a church in which four girls were killed; and "Detroit Renaissance," for which he was named poet laureate of the city in 1981. \$29.50. Columbia University. ISBN 0-231-13026-0. ■

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• **National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)**. A nonprofit organization with the mission of assisting colleges and universities as they improve their management capability; many assessment resources for sale. Access: <http://www.nchems.org>. ■