Pre and Post Assessments

A quick and easy way to assess your Student Learning Outcomes
Presentation Overview

- What are Pre and Post Assessments
- The Advantages of Pre and Post Assessments
- The Disadvantages of Pre and Post Assessments
- How to Construct Pre and Post Assessments
- Strategies for Administering Pre and Post Assessments
What are Pre-Post Assessments?

- Assessments administered upon an agreed upon “entry point” and “exit point.”
- These assessments can be standardized or locally-developed and test for broad general education learning or within a specific discipline or course.
- These might also be performance-based.
Pre-Post Assessment Model

- Pre-Assessment
  - Formative evaluation
- Instruction
  - Lectures, exercises, assignments, activities
- Post-Assessment
  - Summative evaluation
Advantages of Pre-Post Assessments

- Useful method for measuring the "value-added" by a program of study
- Pre-tests serve several purposes: knowledge of the current status of a group may provide guidance for future activities as well as the basis of comparison for a post-test results; administering a test of entry behavior can determine whether assumed prerequisites have been achieved.
Disadvantages of Pre-Post Assessments

- Hard to discern if the positive change charted in a pre-post test is due to learning in the classroom or simply natural maturation.
- Due to students dropping out, the post-test results may be higher because those who remain are more successful or persistent.
- Problems with statistics: if the control group scored so low that they can only go up, or the control group that scored so high little improvement will be indicated in the post-test scores.
- If using the same test for both the pre- and post-test, some argue that students will absorb knowledge just from taking the test and will attend more readily to the content.
- Tendency to teach to the post-test.
Constructing Pre-Post Assessments

- Determine what key ideas/concepts are being taught in your course.
- Establish your course learning outcomes and objectives.
  - Review the Course Outline of Record (COR) to help with this step
- Brainstorm 10-15 possible questions that would effectively test the student’s knowledge prior to the course and after the concepts have been presented.
  - This knowledge should be based on the learning outcomes and objectives you have established for the course
- Select a variety of five questions (multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, etc.) that will peak the students interest in excelling on the pre/post test and learning the material being taught.
  - A simple strategy to use is to reword your course level learning outcomes or objectives into questions.
Administering Pre and Post Assessments

- Pre-post assessments are relatively easy to administer.

- Remember these key steps:
  - Decide what you want to measure.
  - Select or develop the assessment tool you want to use to collect data.
  - Establish the pre-post assessment period.
  - Analyze and interpret the data
  - Report findings to your department
  - Use the data to improve and develop your program
Pre-Post Assessment Checklist

- Make sure the assessment is designed to be and is used as a pre-post assessment.
- Verify that the assessment is appropriate for your students, skill levels, backgrounds, etc.
- Check that the assessment measures what you want it to measure.
- Consider using the same assessment as your peers.
- Try to ensure that the conditions under which the student takes the pre-post assessments are as similar as possible.