

## Review: Making Assessment Meaningful: What New Student Affairs Professionals and Those New to Assessment Need to Know

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For some professionals in higher education, assessment seems an onerous task or an “add on” to an already overloaded schedule. For others, assessment is a “mandate from on high”—coming with extreme expectations but not the resources to support them. Still others suspect assessment is a disguise for personnel evaluation or a subtle strategy to impose different values. While such trepidations at the prospect

of assessment are common, implementing *meaningful* assessment can go far to allay them.

This brief from the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) describes what assessment is intended to be, why the involvement of student affairs professionals in the assessment of student learning and development is critical, and how student affairs professionals can authentically engage in designing and assess-

ing student learning on their campuses. When it is implemented by leveraging student affairs professionals’ inherent passionate concern for students’ holistic learning and development, assessment is experienced as truly integral to the nature of the work of student affairs professionals—fitting easily into their innate inquiry processes and day-to-day practices.

Author: Marilee J. Bresciani

Find this article at:

<http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/documents/ABStudentAffairs.pdf>

## Assessment of the Month ~ New Student Perceptions

This fall the Student Affairs Assessment Project distributed a survey to 1134 first-year students to ascertain why they chose to attend EIU and what they think of the campus and community thus far. Of those students, 166 (14.6%) completed the survey. About half (49.7%) of the students that took the survey reported that they were first generation students, 40.6% reported that they were not first generation, students and

9.7% of students were unsure about their first generation status.

Most students (23.5%) found out about EIU through a friend, 19.3% stated that a family member attended EIU and 13.3% of students found out about EIU by its location.

Of the reasons student’s gave for attending EIU, 54.8% said that “high standards in their major program” was their number one reason. “Location” came in second

with 51.8% of student responses followed by “Size” (43.4%) and “Cost” (41.0%).

When asked what they thought of EIU so far most (38.0%) stated that they “love it”. 12.0% said that they “liked the professors”. Approximately 10% of students said that EIU had a “good campus” and 7.8% of students “liked the classes”.

Written By: Levi Kosta-Mikel