Assessing Students’ Online Learning: Resources, Instruments and Strategies

Introduction and Background

Assessment is an integral part of instructional design. Successful online teaching and learning involves computer-mediated communication processes in which students and teachers are actively and reciprocally engaged in the process of knowledge construction, creating and sharing meaning, theory-based applications and situational problem solving. Since assessment events drive learning outcomes, they are integral to the design and structure of not only a particular subject but also the learning environment. This kind of assessment encourages purposeful dialogue, multiple discourses, collaboration, peer and self-evaluation, and contributes to a sense of community and shared purpose among a community of learners.

Purpose of Showcase:

The purpose of my showcase will be to present numerous assessment tools, which have been developed specifically for evaluating students’ online learning. A few examples of such tools include:

- Self-assessment tools for students to evaluate their progress toward their final products.
- Instruments in which teams can evaluate their progress and contributions.
- Specific tools and strategies for assessing student’s critical thinking and writing skills in electronic discussion boards
- Rubrics that assess the quality of student contributions in online discussion boards.

In addition, I will have copies of my recent edited book for purchase. This collection was written for faculty in higher education and offers an assortment of tools and strategies for evaluating learning as well as instructional design in online classrooms. The contributing authors, from a variety of disciplines, are nationally and internationally prominent educators who advocate and practice a constructivist approach to learning. They are experienced instructors in both face-to-face and online classrooms and they view assessment and learning as central components in their instructional design. Because of the multi-disciplinary and comprehensive approach to this book, it will be of interest to faculty, administrators, scholars and researchers in higher education.