



Alternative & Authentic Assessments: Student Perspectives

YOUR FACILITATORS



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TODAY'S SPECIAL GUESTS

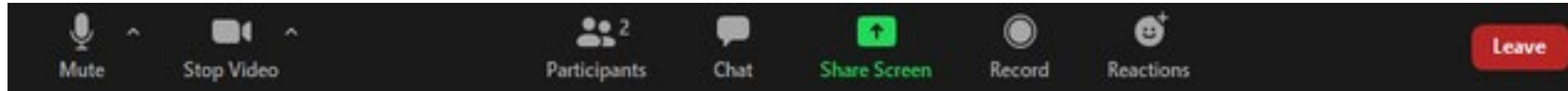


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ATTENDEE KEY TOOLS



Mute/ Unmute - Mute and unmute your microphone (The red line across the Mute icon means that your audio is OFF).

Video – Start/Stop video (The red line across the video icon means that the video is OFF).

Chat – Access the chat window to chat with the participants/host(s).

Leave meeting - Leave the meeting while it continues for the other participants. Only the host can end the meeting.

Nonverbal feedback - Places an icon beside your name to quickly notify the host.



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Continuing Development Programming and Credentialing

Welcome to our Spring 2021 **pilot** of our new Continuing Development Programs for Level One Credentials!

Our Continuing Development Program workshops are designed for new and continuing faculty and instructional TAs at Mason, across all disciplines and ranks. Our workshops and series are designed to encourage and support faculty who are

- seeking new insights and practical strategies about their teaching
- participating in ongoing professional development regarding their teaching
- documenting their growth and achievements in teaching at Mason



Additional Resources

- Workshop and Registration Details: [See our Consultations, Trainings, and Webinars page](#)

[Stearns Center - Continuing Professional Development](#)

PURPOSE OF TODAY'S WEBINAR

Through this webinar, you will:

- gain an appreciation of student perspectives on assessment;
- identify potential benefits and challenges of alternative and authentic assessments for students;
- consider examples and models for developing alternative/authentic assessment in your own courses.

OUR FOCUS TODAY



STUDENT

TODAY'S AGENDA

- **Definitions**
 - What are Alternative and Authentic Assessments?
- **Student Perspectives**
 - What does Research tell us?
 - Benefits & Challenges
- **Authentic Learning and Assessment at Mason**
 - Contemporary Students (Shyama Kuver)
 - Examples of Authentic Learning at Mason
 - Assignment Example (Dr. Sanja Avramovic, HAP)
- **Your Turn!**
 - Your Plans and Ideas for Alternative and Authentic Assessment

LET'S DO A POLL!

REMEMBER & REFLECT



DEFINITIONS



TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

Traditional Assessment	Authentic Assessment
Choosing the Correct Answer	Performing a task
Testing Academic Knowledge	Simulating Real-World Scenarios
Remember, Understand	Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, Create
Answers are right or wrong (Objective to grade)	Rubrics are used to score criteria/level of performance (Subjective to grade)

Alternative Assessment subcategories are Authentic and Performance Based

WHAT ARE AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENTS?

Key Criteria:

- Are realistic.
- Require students to make decisions, judgments and innovations.
- Ask the student to “do” the subject.
- Replicate or simulate workplace context.
- Assess the student’s ability to apply knowledge and skills to complete a complex task.
- Provide opportunities to get feedback during the learning process.

(Wiggins, 1998)

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES



RESEARCH FINDINGS

What do students think about assessments (in general)?

Students viewed assessments as having 4 different purposes:

- Provide a way to document student achievement;
- Make students accountable for their own learning;
- Sometimes irrelevant, bad, and unfair;
- Enjoyable, relevant, and more motivated, when/if assessments include more authentic or realistic activities or tasks.

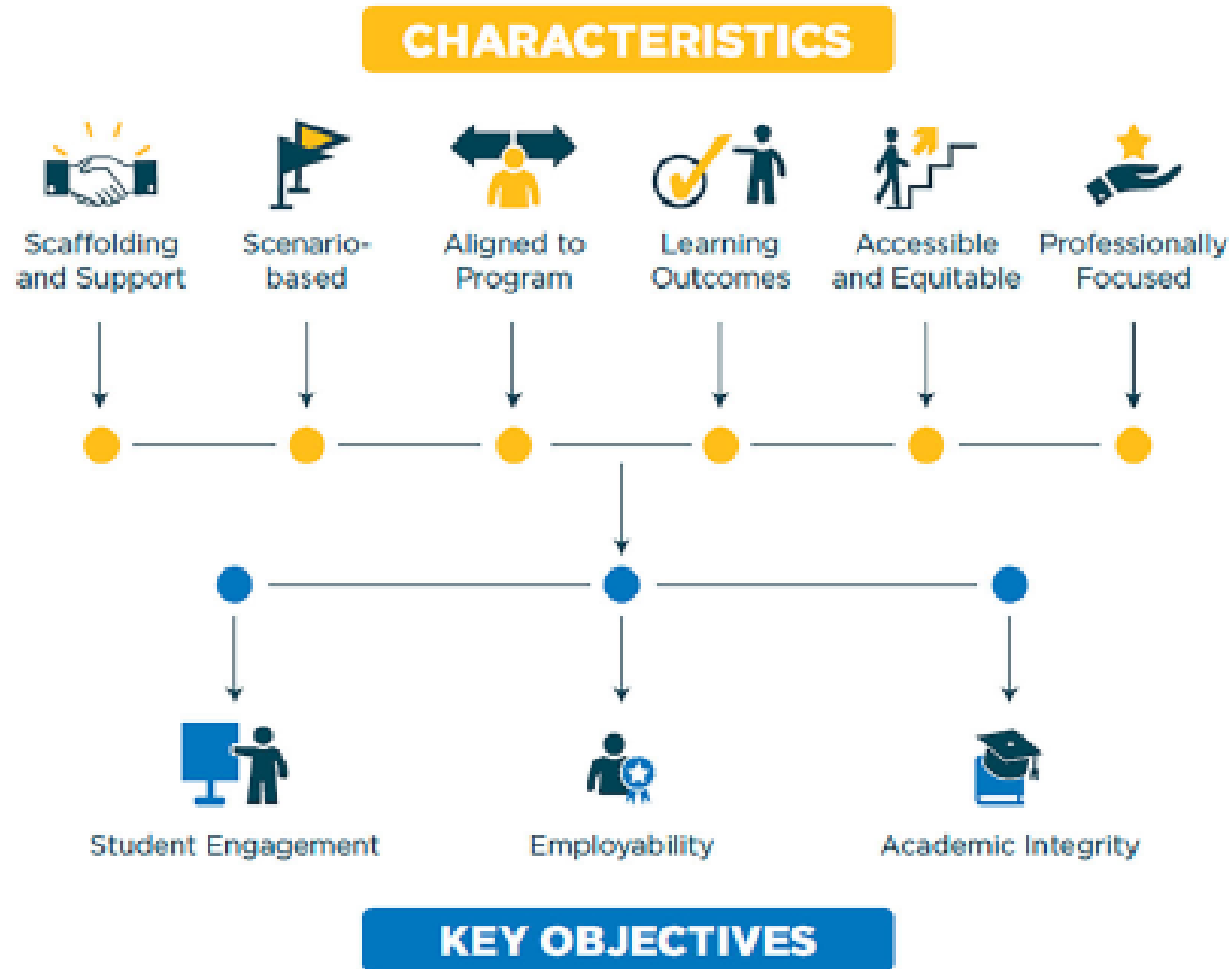
(Brown & Hirschfield, 2008)

RESEARCH FINDINGS

What do students think about alternative & authentic assessments?

- Students report that they prefer alternative assessment tasks (Miller, 2015). Authentic or realistic demonstrations of knowledge **are more positively evaluated** by students (see review of studies in Brown & Hirschfield, 2008).
- The more relevant the assessment to real-world scenarios, the **less likely students are to engage in academic misconduct** (Sotiriadou *et al.* 2020).
- Nearly three-quarters (74%) of online college students are motivated by career reasons to enroll in a program (Magda & Aslanian, 2018) and in their studies **they seek opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge in realistic situations.**

Key Objectives and Characteristics for the effective design of Interactive Oral Assessments



From Sotiriadou, P. *et al.* , 2020. p. 2144

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Alternative Assessments help students develop skills in:

- Critical Thinking
- Collaboration
- Creativity
- Synthesizing information



BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Alternative and Authentic Assessments replicate real-world scenarios.



This: Students create a case study based on a personality disorder.

Not That: Students take a multiple-choice test on personality disorders.

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Alternative and Authentic Assessments create opportunities for teamwork.



This: Students in teams create presentations on pitching a business idea.

Not That: Each student writes a research paper on different strategies for marketing.

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Alternative and Authentic Assessments encourage creativity.



This: Students create a short video speaking as a character from a novel.

Not That: Students write a book review.

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Alternative and Authentic Assessments facilitate the synthesis of information.



This: Students create a storyboard for a mobile app using javascript code.

Not That: Students take a short-answer test on javascript.

CHALLENGES?

Now take a student perspective.

What are some challenges you might face with authentic assessments?



STUDENT

SOLUTIONS

Rubrics

Rubrics clearly communicate instructor expectations to students.

- See [Using Rubrics as Grading Tool](#) on Stearns Center website

Peer Evaluation Forms

Peer Evaluation Forms give students the chance to give feedback to the instructor on contributions from teammates.

- See [Self and Peer Assessments](#) in Blackboard

AUTHENTIC LEARNING & ASSESSMENT @ MASON



AUTHENTIC LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT AT MASON

- **Who are our learners?**
-Shyama Kuver, Contemporary
Student Services
- **What are examples at
Mason?**
- **How can we prepare our
students for career
skills?**
-Dr. Sanja Avramovic, HAP, CHHS



LET'S DO A POLL!
WHO ARE YOUR STUDENTS?



WHO ARE OUR LEARNERS?



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CONTEMPORARY STUDENT SERVICES AT MASON

- **ADVOCATES** for contemporary students, their sense of belonging, and their Mason experience.
- **ADVISORS** to help connect contemporary students with the resources they need to be successful.
- **AMPLIFIERS** of contemporary student voices, visions, and needs at Mason.

contemporary.gmu.edu | skuver@gmu.edu

WHO ARE CONTEMPORARY STUDENTS AT MASON?

At Mason contemporary students are:

- Transfer students
- Adult learners
- Student-parents
- Off-campus students
- Foster care alumni
- Military – present and former
- Fully-online students
- 73% of all undergraduate students fit into one or more non-traditional categories. (National Center for Education Statistics)
- "Contemporary" shifts our thinking, assumptions, and behaviors and it allows us to make space for emerging student populations.

ONLINE LEARNING AND THE CONTEMPORARY STUDENT

- Contemporary students have many competing priorities.
- Flexibility is essential to their success.
- Online learning can provide them with a curriculum that is organized in such a way that they can be proactive and create a schedule that allows them to work, commute, be caregivers, etc. in a more manageable way.

**WHAT'S HAPPENING ALREADY
@ MASON?**



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**STUDENTS
AS SCHOLARS**[http://studentsasscholars
gmu.blogspot.com/](http://studentsasscholars.gmu.blogspot.com/)

Thursday, January 21, 2021

URSP Student Sidney Boakye Conducts a Study on the Surface Degradation of Additively Manufactured (3D-Printed) ABS Polymer for Naval Applications

Additive manufacturing (AM) has recently gained attention due to its ability to transform manufacturing and logistics processes. Additionally, additively manufactured alternatives would provide extra savings and a level of flexibility, especially when it comes to replacement parts, which can not be matched by traditional methods. However, questions remain about the durability of 3D printed components and if trade-offs in durability are worth the cost benefits. My research attempts to tackle these questions by comparing additively manufactured ABS plastic with its traditionally manufactured counterpart. Samples of each would be exposed to an accelerated corrosion environment

The Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research (OSCAR) supports undergraduate research and creative activity, both within and beyond the classroom, at George Mason University.

This blog was the website before we opened oscar.gmu.edu. Now, we use it to feature work by our undergraduate scholars, update you on scholarly events at Mason and share opportunities beyond Mason.

 [Follow @Mason_OSCAR](#)

UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES

Career Readiness Faculty Toolkit

- Tools to help you guide students through high-impact, low-effort activities to identify and articulate their career-readiness skills.
- Available for immediate download by completing form found at:
 - <https://careers.gmu.edu/form/career-readiness-toolkit-request>



HOW TO PREPARE CAREER-READY STUDENT?



Sanja Avramovic, Ph.D.
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Health Administration
& Policy, CHHS
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QUESTIONS

- What motivated instructor to create this alternative/authentic assessment, instead of more traditional assessment?
- What do students need to do for this assignment?
- How does this alternative/authentic assessment meet the course learning outcomes or objectives?



STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

**What has been the student response to this assessment?
What do they like about it? What are some challenges?**

Positives:

- Future career = significant motivating factor for many students.
- Job interview and career readiness advice from former students, as well as feedback about common errors.
- Direct industry contact which the students receive through our assignment is significant to our students.

Challenges:

- Some students do not use their account or distrust social media. It is ultimately up to the student how much or how little they get from this assignment.

EXAMPLES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Undergraduate Course Version 1



Introductory Information

Use the link above to submit your introduction information.

The first question will ask for your advisor's name and email. If you do not have an advisor, you need to get a tentative one, even if you do not plan to declare a major. If you have declared a major and do not know who your advisor is, please contact your department and ask for their name and email.

The second question will ask for your Linked In or any web page that provides an introduction to you. Here are 4 criteria used to evaluate this assignment:

1. The web page should introduce you, mention that you are a student at this University and include an image.
2. Please find the instructor's web page request to be connected to the instructor.
3. The web URL you enter should begin with <http://> and have a complete and correct URL.
4. Post the URL of your web page in the discussion area, so other students can see it.

Please note that this is a public document about you and will affect your ability to get jobs and employment, so spend time to make sure that it is a reasonable document.

Undergraduate Course Version 2

Step 4: Complete 1.2 Student Introductions

Instructions:

Please introduce yourself to your fellow students and to your instructor by answering the following questions:

1. Where do you call home?
2. Do you have any experience with health informatics? If so, what kind of experience (programming, data analytics, etc)?
3. Do you have any exposure in health care?
4. Do you have any programming experience?
5. Add a link to your LinkedIn account.
6. Add an picture of yourself or an avatar.

Graduate Course

Linked In Assignment

For this assignment you will create a LinkedIn page for yourself.

Your tasks:

- Create a [LinkedIn page](#) if you don't already have one.
- Once created, Post your page URL to the discussion area.
- Within the LinkedIn website, request to be a contact for the [instructor's LinkedIn page](#) as well as your classmates.
- Some students do not wish to maintain a public page. If you wish not to do this assignment on LinkedIn page, please provide an alternative.
- An acceptable alternative could be to create the same content in a Word document and email it to the instructor and other students.
- Then, consider where you ideally want to work, once you graduate from the health informatics program.
- Once you have selected 3 organizations, find 1 individual within each of the 3 organizations who can help you understand the organization better or who might be hiring in future.
- Send the name of these individuals and their LinkedIn URL to the instructor via email. You can find your instructor's email in the getting started page on the left hand navigation of this course.
- Review the instructor's LinkedIn contacts to see who he could write to and introduce you.
- Remind the instructor for the need to do so by end of the class. These introductions are for you to network with key people who can help you change jobs or be employed using SQL and health informatics.
- Note: The instructor can only do this if you are one of his contacts. This portion of the assignment is done by the instructor at end of the course.
- This assignment is related to learning module objectives of "Know your instructor and course requirements."

Instructions

In order to complete this assignment you must create your linked in profile, connect with your instructor via Linked in, post your personal URL to the discussion forum, email your instructor with the name of your 3 selected individuals and their linked in URL. Each student will make their post and email their instructor **by Sunday 11:55 PM EST**

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

How has student learning been demonstrated in this alternative/authentic assessment?

- The students' completion of the assignment is an indication of the fact that they are able to use a tool such as LinkedIn and also to create their own resume.
- Anyone who completes the assignment gets full credit.

How is this assessment particularly suited for an online course?

- We have used this assignment in both online and F2F settings, and it has been easy to implement in both cases.

WHITEBOARD SHARING

WHAT AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENTS
HAVE YOU TRIED?



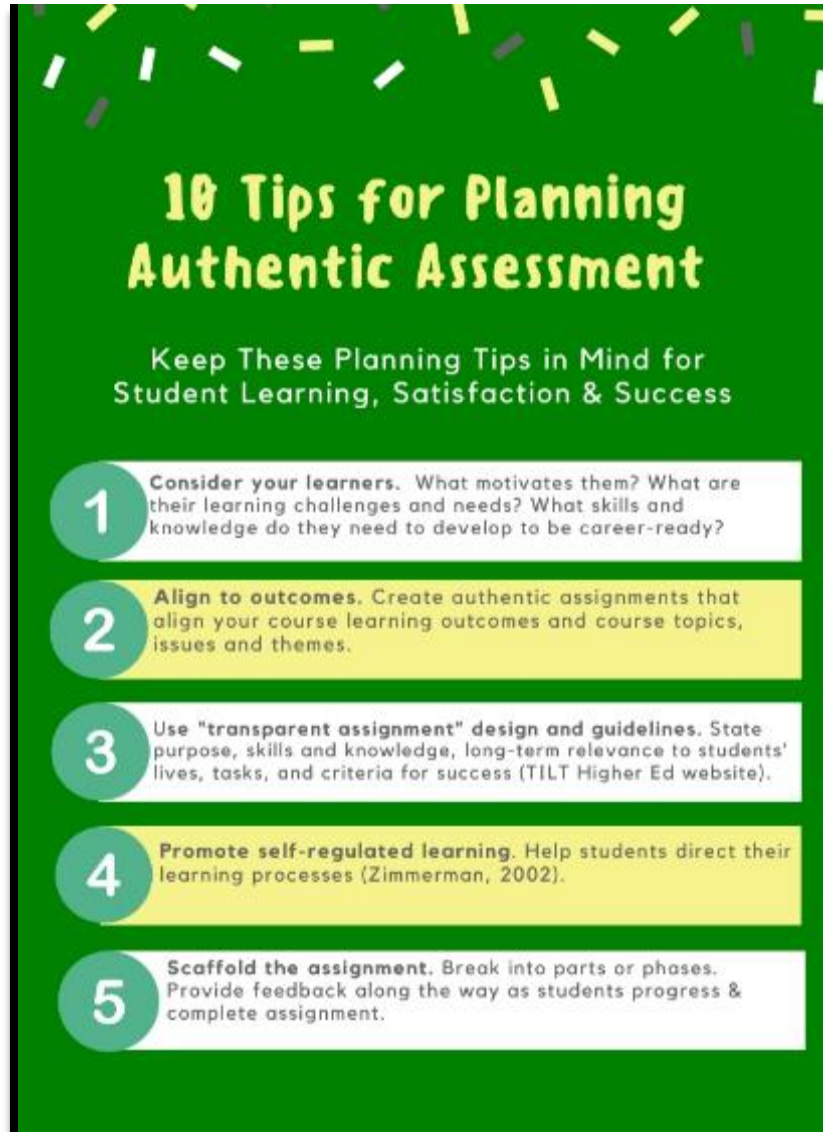
QUESTIONS ?



**NOW IT'S
YOUR TURN!**



TIPS FOR AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT



Keep These Planning Tips in Mind for Student Learning, Satisfaction & Success

See link to downloadable Tip Sheet shared in Chat

TIPS FOR AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

1. Consider your learners.
2. Align to outcomes.
3. Use “transparent assignment” design and guidelines.
4. Promote self-regulated learning.
5. Scaffold the assignment.
6. Include student reflection.
7. Incorporate sharing and peer feedback.
8. Invite experts.
9. Plan for additional time to complete assessments and for grading.
10. Gather data!

OUR FOCUS TODAY



STUDENT

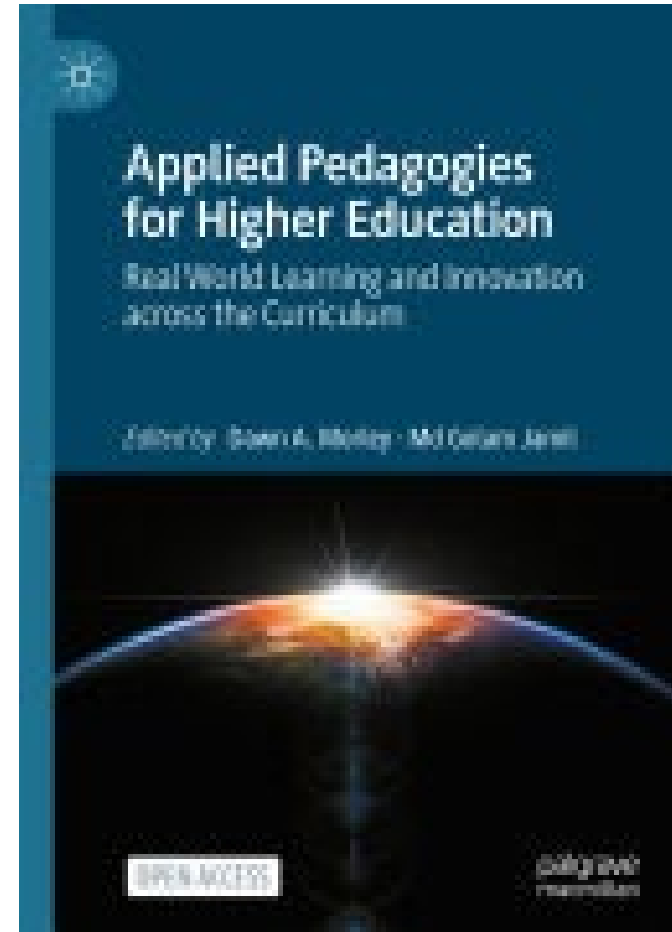
CPD ACTIVITY

- Draft an alternative or authentic assessment to use in your course, considering student perspectives. Keep in mind our planning tips!
- Your attendance and participation in today's webinar, and your alternative/authentic assessment plans count toward earning Level 1 Essentials Credential. Please see Stearns Center website for more information.

<https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/programs/stearns-center-opportunities/continuing-professional-development/>

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE

- Morley, D.A. & Golam, J. (2021). *Applied Pedagogies for Higher Education: Real World Learning and Innovation Across the Curriculum* . 1st ed. Springer International Publishing.
- Available as open-access book through Mason Libraries.
- Chapter 14 covers Authentic Assessment.



QUESTIONS ?



ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS



Alternative assessments represent more creative and experimental approaches to evaluating student learning compared to traditional assessments, like multiple-choice tests.

BENEFITS

- Promotes the application of skills to real-world situations
- Promotes higher-order thinking that involves application, analysis, evaluation and creation
- Helps students focus on learning



STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

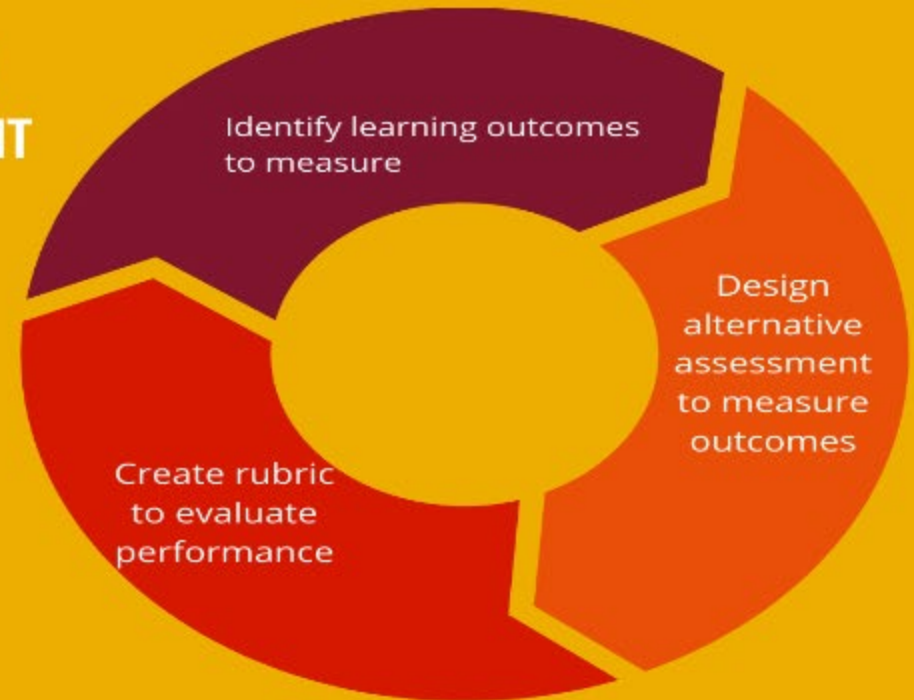
- Pro: Student prefer alternative assessments and opportunities for creative expression
- Con: Students may become frustrated over the lack of clear "right" answers



AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENTS

Authentic assessments are a form of alternative assessment that involve real-world application. All authentic assessments are alternative assessments, but not all alternative assessments are authentic assessments.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT



TYPES OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS



- Case studies
- Collaborative projects
- Collaborative testing
- Debates
- Infographics
- Open-book exams
- Portfolios
- Posters
- Presentation
- Process plan
- Role playing
- Storytelling

SOURCES

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THANK YOU!

- If you have any questions about today's webinar or would like resources for how to design a learner-centered alternative or authentic assessment, please **contact Stearns Center** (stearns@gmu.edu).
- See the **Stearns Center website** for the schedule of webinars and consultation/office hours: workshops and office hours available to faculty: [Stearns Center Trainings and Workshops](#)
- Thanks to our guest presenters, Shyama Kuver and Dr. Sanja Avramovic.
- Also thanks to Dr. Crystal Anderson (Assistant Director Stearns Center) for helping us create the alternative assessment infographic.