

Grading or Assessment? That is the Question

Grading

- Summarizes *many outcomes* for *one student*

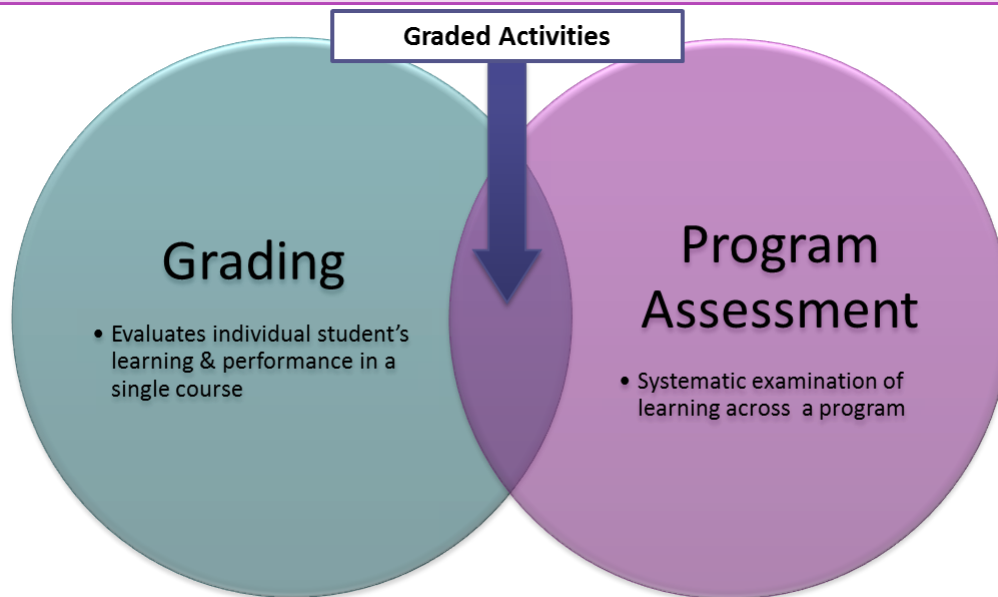
Assessment

- Summarizes *one outcome* for *many students*

Aren't Grades Assessment?

Yes. But grades by themselves have limited use for program assessment. A department might know that the average grade on student senior research projects was 3.6, but that doesn't tell them much. It's not enough to say that we know students learned X if they got a grade of C or better in such-and-such course. Instead, the department needs more specific, diagnostic information: students were strong in X and Y, but weak in Q and R. That detailed information tells the department what to work on. Such detailed information may emerge as faculty are grading student work, but then it must be aggregated and analyzed at the department or general education level, as each chapter in this book explains.

Excerpt from : Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments and General Education by Barbara E. Walvoord, 2nd. Edition, Jossey-Bass, 2010



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