

# Sabbatical Report

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# Sabbatical Work

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**Driving question:** How can we use assessment better to support equitable learning for students?

**Activities:**

- Read a lot of research literature and writing by practitioners
- Attended webinars and conference sessions
- Participated in a national research project
- Used what I learned to outline the curriculum for a faculty learning community



**I'll focus here for this presentation**

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# Grand Challenges in Assessment

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## Grand Challenges in Assessment

- Collaborative effort endorsed by ten higher education organizations
- Focuses on addressing pressing challenges facing assessment in higher education

I helped lead a team focused on better ways to use **formative assessment** to promote equitable learning



Some of our Formative Assessment team members: Kari Thierer, Ashley Charsha, Jessica Taylor, Xue Zhang, Chadia Abras

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# What is formative assessment?

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## **Summative assessment:**

- high-stakes assignments or exams
- the final chance in a course or program for students to demonstrate their achievement of the intended learning outcomes

## **Formative assessment:**

- low-stakes activities or assignments
- timely feedback on students' strengths and gaps
- support student progress toward the course's intended learning outcomes

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# Why formative assessment matters

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Provides guidance that can increase student learning **immediately**

ALSO can increase **future learning** by teaching students how to learn

This effect can be bigger for first-generation students and students from other groups that have been historically marginalized in education and elsewhere

Carney, E. A., Zhang, X., Charsha, A., Taylor, J. N., & Hoshaw, J. P. (2022). [Formative assessment helps students learn over time: Why aren't we paying more attention to it?](#). Intersection; A journal at the intersection of assessment and learning, 4(1).

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# Where we (nationally) fall short

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Grand Challenges 2024 survey results:

**Fewer than half of respondents** who teach reported that they use formative assessment in their teaching

**Almost all of those** who use formative assessment

- aligned formative assessment to intended learning outcomes
- discussed the results of formative feedback with their students

← good practices

**Significantly fewer** taught students how to use formative assessment results to make improvements

← An even better practice --  
We want more of this!

# Current work, informed by sabbatical

## Faculty Learning Community: Developing and Using Rubrics Winter-Spring 2025

### Why rubrics?

- Provide feedback that is relevant, clear, and task-focused
- Facilitate dialogue between instructor and students
- Make implicit expectation explicit and increase equitable learning
- Encourage critical thinking
- Faster and easier grading/feedback for instructors

### *Breakfast in Bed: Analytic Rubric*

|              | Beginning<br>1  | Developing<br>2  | Accomplished<br>3   | Exemplary<br>4  | Score |
|--------------|---|--|---|---|-------|
| Food         | Most food is colder or warmer than it should be, is under- or over-seasoned, or is under- or overcooked.    | Some food is colder or warmer than it should be, is under- or over-seasoned, or is under- or overcooked.                         | All food is at the correct temperature, adequately seasoned, and cooked to the eater's preference.    | All food is perfectly cooked and seasoned to the eater's preference. Additional condiments are offered.                 |       |
| Presentation | More than one item (tray, napkin, or silverware) are dirty or missing.                                      | Tray, napkin or silverware may be dirty or missing.  | Food is served on a clean tray, with napkin and silverware. Some decorative additions may be present. | Food is served on a clean tray, with napkin and silverware. Several decorative touches are added.                       |       |
| Comfort      | Wake-up is abrupt, little to no help with seating, and the recipient is rushed and crowded during the meal. | Wake-up is somewhat abrupt, recipient may struggle with seat adjustment, or there may be some rushing or crowding during eating. | Recipient is woken gently, assisted in seat adjustment, and given reasonable time and space to eat.   | Recipient is woken gently and lovingly, assisted until seating is just right, and given abundant time and space to eat. |       |