Direct and Indirect Assessment

I. Two Basic Ways to Assess Student Learning:

- **Direct** – The assessment is based on an analysis of student behaviors or products in which they demonstrate how well they have mastered learning outcomes.

- **Indirect** – The assessment is based on an analysis of reported perceptions about student mastery of learning outcomes. The perceptions may be self-reports by students, or they may be reports made by others, such as alumni, fieldwork supervisors, employers, or faculty.

II. Both direct and indirect assessments begin with a clear statement of learning goals.

III. Strategies for Direct Assessment of Student Learning

- Exams
  - Comprehensive tests
  - Pre and post tests
  - Published/standardized tests
  - Professional exams
  - Locally developed tests
- Embedded course assignments and activities
  - Projects
  - Papers
  - Presentations
  - Performances
  - Portfolios
  - Homework assignments
  - Fieldwork
- Developmental or collective portfolios - reviewed by faculty members, professionals, visiting scholars
- Performance evaluations
  - Internships
  - Productions
  - Exhibits
- External evaluation of student work (e.g. Honors examiners)

IV. Strategies for Indirect Assessment of Student Learning

- Surveys (of students, alumni, employers)
- Interviews (of students, alumni, employers)
- Focus groups
- Student records