Fallacy #1

• Course Grades
  • In this day of social promotion, grade inflation and different teaching/learning philosophies, grades tell you virtually nothing.
  • They are not a measure of outcome achievement.
  • Two teachers will grade a student differently for the exact same work.
  • They cannot be used!

• While course grades cannot be used, you can grade work that demonstrates the accomplishment of learning outcomes.
• Course Grades are a measure of the percentage of all the requirements for a course that a student completes.

• Course requirements often include things like attendance, class participation, turning work in on time, following the rules on an assignment, etc.

• It is possible for a student to make an A and have learned little or nothing. It is possible for a student to earn an F and have learned more than anyone in the class.

• Grades are - "An inadequate report of an inaccurate judgment by a biased and variable judge of the extent to which a student has attained an undefined level of mastery of an unknown proportion of an indefinite material." Ohmer Milton, Howard Pollio and James Eison, Making Sense of College Grades, (Jossey-Bass, 1986).
Fallacy #2

• By evaluating teaching, we are evaluating learning.
  • Only tells you who is happy...”happiness coefficient”
  • Measures more about the business and science of teaching - not learning
  • Learning outcomes are not measures of teacher effectiveness or students satisfaction with the teaching/learning process
  • Learning outcomes are skills based
Fallacy #3

• I have 65 learning objectives on my syllabus

• The faculty has established that when students complete COMM 2301, they will have met these 65 objectives - so we are establishing and measuring outcomes

• What is the problem with this?
Fallacy #4

• Students are able to “self evaluate” how well they have learned, so to measure outcomes, - we will ask them.

• We ask questions like:
  • Since attending Schreiner, my communication skills, both written and oral, have improved.
  • Since attending Schreiner, my mathematical and logical reasoning skills have improved.
  • Since attending Schreiner, I have gained an understanding of how cultural and ethical issues influence the development of society.