Is there a gap between what you’re teaching and what your students are learning?

How can you close that gap?

Even the most dedicated college faculty often discover that their students haven’t learned what they are trying to teach—and that much of what students do learn is quickly forgotten after the final exam.

Our assessment tools tell students what we think is important to learn. The tests commonly used in college science and math courses usually emphasize fact-based knowledge and algorithmic problem solving. Innovative assessment methods emphasize deeper levels of learning and give instructors valuable feedback during a course.

Assessment drives learning

“While I was a graduate teaching assistant in astronomy, students told me that there were two ways of taking college science classes. One was to learn and understand the material, and the other was to get an ‘A.’… I realized that what I loved about doing science was DOING science…”

Over the years, I have used portfolios and performance assessments to emphasize to students that procedural knowledge and creative problem solving is at least as important as knowing the facts.”

— Timothy F. Slater
Research Assistant Professor
Department of Physics
Montana State University

http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/nise/cl1