Too often, the topic of assessment is experienced as daunting, dreary, and distressing. When done right, assessment research and practice can and should be experienced in precisely the opposite manner – accessible, fascinating, and essential.

https://www.nafsa.org/professional-resources/learning-and-training/craig-shealy-interview
Assessing International,
Multicultural, and Transformative Learning

Guiding Principles
Principle 1

You can’t know where to go if you don’t know where you are.

- There is no way to improve “student learning outcomes” if you don’t assess such outcomes. That is, you can’t know if your students are “improving” if you don’t gather data regarding where they “start” and where they “end.”

- But, neither is it as simple as that…
Principle 2

Define your terms.

- What do we mean by phrases such as “international learning,” “intercultural development,” “global citizenship,” or “student success”?

- These are constructs, any one of which may be defined as “a concept or a mental representation of shared attributes or characteristics, and it is assumed to exist because it gives rise to observable or measurable phenomena” (Hubley & Zumbo, 2013, p. 3).
Principle 3
Assess complex constructs in an ecologically valid manner.

- Institutions and organizations may differ wildly not only in their definitions of such constructs, but may – and do – go about measuring them in radically different ways, and with methods that may or may not meet minimal standards of assessment best practice.

- So, even if measurement occurs, the data that are gathered regarding the effectiveness of a particular learning intervention (e.g., a course, a program of study, an international learning experience, institutional learning goals) may be uninterpretable, or worse yet, uninterpretable but interpreted nonetheless.
Principle 4

*Good assessment practice is good assessment research.*

- To understand whether, how, for whom, and under what circumstances “improvement” is occurring, we must assess longitudinally (i.e., over time and on more than one occasion) the complex and interacting mediators and moderators of such change (e.g., life history, affective capacity, attributional tendencies, self / other awareness, and the like).

- If we do not assess in this manner, there is no way to determine if the “student learning outcomes” we observe are due to our learning interventions, the attributes and experiences our students bring to the learning process, or more likely, interactions between these different levels of analysis.
Principle 5

Good assessment practice should be meaningful, relevant, and fascinating.

It is possible – indeed necessary – to assess complex phenomena such as “global learning” in ways that are meaningful, relevant, and fascinating.
Assessing International, Multicultural, and Transformative Learning

Best Practices
Reliability and validity are integral to assessment best practice.

By definition, reliable and valid measures are demonstrably able to account for, explain, and/or predict that which is different and similar across countries, cultures, and contexts.

The single biggest problem with assessment practice – all over the world – occurs when people without sufficient awareness of the guiding principles and best practices of assessment make up measures based upon what seems to make sense and then impose those measures upon others.

The single biggest problem with assessment measures – all over the world – is that they are inadequately conceptualized; that is, their underlying theory about “who humans are” and/or “why they do what they do” is simplistic or inadequate vis-à-vis what the measure ostensibly measures.
### Assessing International, Multicultural, and Transformative Learning: Seven Best Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice 1</th>
<th>Gain deep familiarity with literatures and interventions regarding human functioning, development, and change.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice 2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice 3</td>
<td>Convene your assessment team, review models and methods for developing an assessment plan, and commit to long-term collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice 4</td>
<td>Review learning outcomes that are relevant and measurable (e.g., external and internal to your institution or organization).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice 5</td>
<td>Operationalize constructs in an ecologically valid manner, accounting for mediators and moderators that affect processes and outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice 6</td>
<td>Select mixed methods measures that are demonstrably able to evaluate and facilitate change across cultures, countries, and contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice 7</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Practice 1

Gain deep familiarity with literatures and interventions regarding human functioning, development, and change.

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**Practice 2**

Ensure competence in the big five of assessment practice: 1) psychometric theory, 2) research design, 3) statistical analysis, 4) measurement usage, and 5) impact evaluation.

Developed jointly by:
- American Educational Research Association (AERA)
- American Psychological Association (APA)
- National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME)

The “Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing” were approved as APA policy by the APA Council of Representatives in August 2013. The 2014 edition of the “Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing” is now available. The Testing Standards are a product of the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education. Published collaboratively by the three organizations since 1966, it represents the gold standard in guidance on testing in the United States and in many other countries.

**Resources**
- [American Psychological Association](https://www.apadivisions.org/division-5/resources/journals/index)
- [American Psychological Association](https://www.apa.org/science/programs/testing/standards)
- [International Association for Educational Assessment](https://www.iaea.info)
- [International Test Commission](https://www.intestcom.org)
Practice 3 Convene your assessment team, review models and methods for developing an assessment plan, and commit to long-term collaboration.

Six Recommendations for Collaborative Success
https://oia.osu.edu/presentations/2566-international-program-evaluation-the-power-of-collaboration.html

1. **Assess Deeply** (e.g., encourage innovation; integrate mixed methods; strive for ecological validity; evaluate interactions, mediators, and levels of analysis);
2. **Address Challenges** (e.g., political, time, economic; science/humanities split; not knowing what one doesn’t know);
3. **Secure Support** (e.g., institutional/organizational; develop functional team; identify and pool resources);
4. **Ensure Expertise** (e.g., theory/data link; research design; psychometrics; statistical);
5. **Develop Plan** (e.g., specify assessment goals and outcomes; select measures; assign roles and responsibilities; monitor/correct processes); and
6. **Value Collaboration** (e.g., recognize team talents; appraise/meet local needs; facilitate buy in; solicit input/feedback).
Review learning outcomes that are relevant and measurable (e.g., external and internal to your institution or organization).
Practice 5  Operationalize constructs in an ecologically valid manner, accounting for mediators and moderators that affect processes and outcomes.

Assessing International, Multicultural, and Transformative Learning: Seven Best Practices

https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/3868/6a927ce67d2f57d19461bd7f73b70cc30b54.pdf
Practice 6

Select mixed methods measures that are demonstrably able to evaluate and facilitate change across cultures, countries, and contexts.
Analyze and report data in a transparent and accessible manner to illuminate what works, what doesn’t, and why, and to improve courses, programs, and interventions.

Changes in beliefs and values about self, others, and the world at large appear determined largely by the 7Ds:

1. **duration** (i.e., how long an international, multicultural, or transformative education experience occurs);
2. **difference** (i.e., how different the experience is from what the “self” of the experiencer is accustomed);
3. **depth** (i.e., what the capacity of the learner is to experience all that the intervention is able to convey);
4. **determine** (i.e., through formal and informal assessment, how well the intervener understands his / her audience);
5. **design** (i.e., based upon knowledge of the audience and careful deliberation and development, what the quality of the intervention is);
6. **deliver** (i.e., how well the intervener can fulfill the transformative potential of the intervention); and,
7. **debrief** (i.e., before, during, and after the intervention, how deeply the intervener assesses the nature of the learning experience, and uses such feedback to improve future interventions).
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Thank you!