

Teaching Today's Law Students

Plenary Session

Tuesday, June 4, 2019 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Using Learning Assessment Techniques for Today's Law Students

Sophie M. Sparrow, University of New Hampshire
sophie.sparrow@law.unh.edu

What is a Learning Assessment Technique (LAT)?

A LAT is a 3-part structure that helps teachers:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How are LATs organized?

LATs are organized using L. Dee Fink's Significant Learning Taxonomy categories: <http://www.significantlearning.org>

1. Foundational Knowledge
2. Application
3. Integration
4. Human Dimension
5. Caring
6. Learning How to Learn

Learning Assessment Technique Cycle: Six Steps

Step 1: Clarify what you want students to learn:

Step 2: Determine why you are assessing learning

Step 3: Select a LAT

Step 4: Implement the LAT

Step 5: Analyze and report results

Step 6: Evaluate and make changes to improve learning

[Repeat]

Identify a course you want to focus on: _____

Step 1: Complete the Learning Goals Inventory <https://bit.ly/CTTLGI>

Which Significant Learning Dimension are you focusing on?

Example: *Learning to Learn*

Write a single course goal as a student learning outcome by completing this prompt: “Because of participating in this course, a successful learner will be able to:

Example (Learning to Learn): *Remedies students will identify effective study strategies and show how they have used these strategies with course materials to prepare for a quiz or writing assignment.*

Step 2: Determine why you are assessing learning

In 1-2 sentences, write the main reason(s) you are assessing student learning:

Example (Learning to Learn): *I want to learn more about students’ understanding and use of effective study strategies so that I can provide guidance or change aspects of the course to help them learn more effectively and deeply.*

What is the assessment question you are asking?

Example (Learning to Learn): *What do my students know and think about evidence-based effective studying techniques that produce long-lasting learning?*

Step 3: Select a LAT

Look at the different techniques in the book chapter for the learning dimension category you are focusing on, and select a LAT that sounds interesting to you.

Example: *LAT 47 Learning Goals Listing*

Name of selected LAT:

Step 4: Implement the LAT

Using the information in the LAT Quick Reference and your own knowledge of the course, design a basic assignment description for your selected LAT.

Example: *LAT 24 Contemporary Issues Journal: Students will look for recent news events or developments related to their course readings and assignments, and then analyze these current affairs to identify their connections to course material. (2 pages or 500 word max).*

Determine how you plan to evaluate individual student work.

Example: *LAT 24 Contemporary Issues Journal: I will create a rubric that identifies*
1) the thoughtfulness and responsiveness of students' answers to questions;
2) clarity of connection between course and contemporary events;
3) writing organization and mechanics; and
4) following all directions, including submitting on time.

Each criteria will be evaluated on a scale of outstanding/excellent/creative; very good, competent, and developing, to calculate a total score.

Step 5: Analyze and report results

How might you analyze and report on data generated by the LAT assignment you designed?

Example: *LAT 24 Contemporary Issues Journal: I will administer this LAT this semester and the next time I teach the course. I'll compile and compare student responses and rubric scores for rubric criteria 1) and 2).*

Step 6: Evaluate and make changes to improve learning

After reviewing and analyzing the data gathered from the LAT, what changes might you make to improve student learning?

Example: *LAT 24 Contemporary Issues Journal: I may find that students' responses are superficial rather than thoughtful, and lacking detailed connections between course topics and contemporary events. I may try explaining more about the LAT in class, providing effective and ineffective examples, revising the rubric, or a combination of approaches, to see if future performance improves.*

Adapted from Elizabeth. F. Barkley & Claire Howell Major, ***Learning Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty*** (Jossey-Bass, 2016).