Definitions focused on the process leading to improvement of teaching and learning seem most useful in discussing the assessment of global learning. The following definitions informed how we have developed this chapter:

Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development.15

As Figure 1 illustrates, assessment is the ongoing process of:

- Establishing clear, measurable expected outcomes of student learning.
- Ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to achieve these outcomes.
- Systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well student learning matches expectations.
- Using the resulting information to understand and improve student learning.16

In our work on student global learning, we define assessment as a cyclical process undertaken to improve learning. It consists of several components: articulating global learning outcomes, gathering evidence of students’ achievement of those outcomes, interpreting the evidence found, and using the findings to improve learning opportunities.

The assessment process and its techniques can be applied to specific courses, programs of study, or learning opportunities across the institution. When applied to programs of study, assessment adds value to existing course-embedded assessments.

![Figure 1: Assessment as a Continuous Four-Step Cycle](image)


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