Covers two or more general education learning outcomes and one or more program-level or course-level outcomes (horizontal and vertical integration)

Assignment instructions/prompts are closely linked to specific learning outcomes. The assignment is intentionally designed to collect evidence of student learning on the chosen SLOs (alignment)

Is course-embedded, i.e., integral part of the regular coursework students are required to complete to pass the course (evaluative)

Accounts for a significant portion of the final grade (at least 10%, ideally 15% - 20% or more). By giving this assignment significant weight, students are encouraged to give their best thought and effort.

Is performance-based and authentic and promotes deep, lasting learning (reinforces student learning). The assignment asks students to apply knowledge and skills in new contexts or real-life situations (application)

Provides robust and meaningful data that will help your department identify where students excel and where they need extra help (informative)

Table 2.7. Advantages of Subjective Assessments

Subjective assessments evaluate many important skills that objective tests cannot, including organization, synthesis, and problem-solving skills. Subjective assessments are the tools of choice when encouraging creativity and originality, as traditional multiple-choice tests have, by definition, only one correct response and therefore encourage convergent thinking.

Subjective assessments can assess skills directly. Many faculty and staff would agree, for example, that a writing sample is more convincing evidence of a student’s writing skill than answers to multiple-choice questions on how to write. Similarly, watching a student nurse draw a blood sample provides more compelling evidence of skill than the student’s answers to multiple-choice questions on how to draw blood.

Subjective assessments promote deep, lasting learning. You probably learned and remember far more from the research papers you wrote in college than from the studying you did for multiple-choice final exams.

Scoring procedures for subjective assessments allow nuances. On a subjective math test, for example, students can receive partial credit for doing part of a problem correctly, but on a multiple-choice math test, they usually receive no credit for an incorrect answer, even if they do much of their work correctly.