Approaches to Qualitative Assessment

Focused Discussion
1. Your approach
   • Be systematic
   • Think about students in the aggregate
   • Document your discussion, conclusions, recommendations
2. Questions to ask
   • What should students know at each level? What is “mastery”?  
     o New advances in field?
   • Re: students’ knowledge, where are they strongest? Weakest?  
     o What concerns do you have about student learning?
     o For what areas/skills do you feel confident about student learning?
   • In which courses do (or should) students learn x, y, z?  
     o Do faculty teaching these courses use rubrics to grade?
     o Do you think a rubric might be a useful tool?

Student Opinion
1. Solicit student opinion
   • Interviews with individuals--current or graduating students
   • Focus groups
   • Surveys/questionnaires (http://www.surveymonkey.com)
     o Alumni or current students
2. Considerations
   • Be systematic
   • Specific vs. open-ended questions
   • Representative group
   • Confidentiality or anonymity
3. Topic
   • Satisfaction
   • How prepared do they feel?
   • Specific issues
   • Suggestions
4. Document process and findings
Portfolio Assessment

1. Student work over time
   - Patterns of growth and development
   - Especially helpful re: assessment of majors

2. Student input
   - Selection of work
   - Self-reflection, learn to judge own performance

3. Types of portfolios
   - Document/showcase types of skills, knowledge mastered
   - Document growth
   - Document phases (from draft to finished product)
   - Reveal student self-reflection (journals, etc.)

4. Software available
   - Course management system--Sakai e-portfoli