EXEMPLARY EXAMPLE

An Example from Classroom Research

The simple Concept Map in Figure 7.1 represents “Classroom Research” in relation to other types of assessment in higher education.

From Introduction to Feminist Thought (Women’s Studies)

Ten minutes before the end of the first class meeting of this lower-division course, the instructor asked students to draw a Concept Map focused on the concept of “feminism.” She directed students to write “feminism” in the center of a blank sheet of paper and, around that center, to add related words or concepts that came to mind. She told students not to write their names on the maps and to be honest. She asked a student to collect the Concept Maps as class ended.

As the women’s studies professor had expected, many of the maps contained what she saw as negative associations. But many others contained a mixture of positive and negative concepts—often very stereotypical ones in either case. Some students included the names of public figures; others included personal references. To give students feedback, she made up three composite Concept Maps—based on their drawings—to discuss with the class. She also kept their maps and, throughout her subsequent lectures, referred to ideas and individuals they had mentioned. At midterm, she repeated the assessment exercise and got back much more detailed and coherent Concept...
Figure 7.1. A Concept Map Relating Classroom Research to Other Types of Higher Education Assessment.

- **Systemwide Assessment**
  - **Level**: Community college, four-year, or university systems
  - **Goal**: To provide public accountability

- **Institutional Assessment**
  - **Level**: Individual college or university
  - **Goals**: To provide public accountability; to gain and maintain accreditation

- **Program Review and Assessment**
  - **Level**: School, program, or department
  - **Goals**: To gain and maintain accreditation; to improve program quality and success

- **Classroom Research**
  - **Level**: Individual course
  - **Goals**: To understand and improve teaching and learning in that individual course

- **Classroom Assessment**
  - **Level**: Individual class meeting or assignment within the course
  - **Goals**: To understand and improve teaching and learning of a single lesson or unit

Maps, which demonstrated much change in knowledge but little appreciable change in attitudes.

**From Charles Darwin: His World and Work (History of Science)**

About halfway through this graduate seminar, the professor asked students to draw a Concept Map centered on Darwin's theory of natural selection. The map was to connect Darwin's theory with its predecessors, contemporaries, competitors, and descendants. He urged the graduate students to use their imaginations in representing the relationships but to stick to the facts in characterizing them. In response, seminar participants created everything from flowcharts to family trees to mock maps full of topographical features.

**From International Trade (Economics)**

During the first week of class, the instructor in this course asked students to draw a Concept Map to illustrate their understanding of "free trade." To illustrate what he meant by a Concept Map, he used the overhead projector to show the class an example he had drawn—a Concept Map of his understanding of the gross national product (GNP). To assess students' responses, he drew his own Concept Map on "free trade" and extracted a list of critical related concepts to look for in their maps.