Ask, Collect, Engage: How to “A.C.E.” your Program Assessment Report

CTL Partner Workshop | September 6, 2022

Dr. Katie Burr, Director of Assessment
Office of Instruction
Assessment of students’ learning
Assessment of students’ learning

The purpose of academic program assessment is for program faculty to

• identify what students should learn (*ask*),

• gather information about what and how students are learning (*collect*),

• discuss that information and use it to inform continuous improvement efforts within the program (*engage*).
Assessment of for students’ learning

The purpose of academic program assessment is for program faculty to

- identify what students should learn (ask),

- gather information about what and how students are learning (collect),

- discuss that information and use it to inform continuous improvement efforts within the program (engage).
Assessment is more about *Conversation* than spreadsheets
Assessment is more about *Conversation* than spreadsheets

*Seeking improvement* than demonstrating performance
Assessment is more about 

*Conversation* than spreadsheets

*Seeking improvement* than demonstrating performance

*Ongoing, reflective practice* than a one-time report.
SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation

SECTION 8: Student Achievement

8.2. The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves those outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results in the areas below:

- Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs
- Student learning outcomes for collegiate-level general education competencies of its undergraduate degree programs
- Academic and student services that support student success
Good Practice in SLO Assessment

General Tips!
Learning Outcomes

Describe what students will know or be able to do by the end of a course of study.
Learning Outcomes

Describe what students will know or be able to do by the end of a course of study.

- Can you capture evidence of this learning?

_Students will demonstrate social responsibility._

_Are measurable!_

_Students will identify and apply tenets of the Social Change Model to address a local civic engagement issue._
Learning Outcomes

Describe what students will know or be able to do by the end of a course of study.

- Can you capture evidence of this learning?

Students will demonstrate social responsibility.

Students will identify and apply tenets of the Social Change Model to address a local civic engagement issue.

Are measurable!
Learning Outcomes

- Describe what students will know or be able to do by the end of a course of study.
- Are measurable!
- Essential to the program and addressed throughout the curriculum
Learning Outcomes

- Describe what students will know or be able to do by the end of a course of study.
- Are measurable!
- Essential to the program and addressed throughout the curriculum
- Might change over time in response to what the world needs in [your program’s] graduates
Learning Outcomes

Describe what students will know or be able to do by the end of a course of study.

Students will demonstrate the ability to carry out original field research through creation of a research portfolio.

Students will be able to collect, analyze, and interpret relevant data to test a hypothesis in a summative lab report.

Students will demonstrate an ability to describe and explain significant trends, movements, and events in European history.

Are measurable!

Essential to the program and addressed throughout the curriculum

 Might change over time in response to what the world needs in [your program's] graduates
Measures

- Evidence that learning has occurred
Measures

• Evidence that learning has occurred
• Focus on DIRECT evidence of learning (show me what you learned)
• Supplement with INDIRECT evidence of learning (tell me what you learned)
Measures

• Evidence that learning has occurred
• Focus on DIRECT evidence of learning (show me what you learned)
• Supplement with INDIRECT evidence of learning (tell me what you learned)
• Ideally, measures are “course embedded” – assignments students are already doing (e.g., exams, essays, projects)
Measures

• Evidence that learning has occurred
• Focus on DIRECT evidence of learning (show me what you learned)
• Supplement with INDIRECT evidence of learning (tell me what you learned)
• Ideally, measures are “course embedded” – assignments students are already doing (e.g., exams, essays, projects)
• Add-on measures are valuable, too (e.g., licensure exams, program portfolio)
Measures

• Evidence that learning has occurred
• Focus on DIRECT evidence of learning (show me what you learned)
• Supplement with INDIRECT evidence of learning (tell me what you learned)
• Ideally, measures are “course embedded” – assignments students are already doing (e.g., exams, essays, projects)
• Add-on measures are valuable, too (e.g., licensure exams, program portfolio)
• Use multiple!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course (e.g., ECHD 4400)</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
<th>Outcome 3</th>
<th>Outcome 4</th>
<th>Outcome 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECHD 4420</td>
<td>3-page essay</td>
<td>Oral exam</td>
<td>Sophomore project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHD 4470</td>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>Concept inventory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHD 4490</td>
<td></td>
<td>5-page essay</td>
<td>Poster</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>Concept inventory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis

What does the evidence collected from your assessment measures tell you?

Does the evidence gathered accurately answer the questions implied by the SLOs?

What are students learning? What aren’t they learning? Do you notice patterns over time?

What changes to course or curriculum design might be considered given the assessment evidence?

Does assessment evidence highlight a need to revise the assessment plan, outcomes or measures for future assessment practice?

Remember! The purpose of assessment is to use the information for continued improvement of student learning.
Analysis

What does the evidence collected from your assessment measures tell you?

Does the evidence gathered accurately answer the questions implied by the SLOs?

What are students learning? What aren’t they learning? Do you notice patterns over time?

What changes to course or curriculum design might be considered given the assessment evidence?

Does assessment evidence highlight a need to revise the assessment plan, outcomes or measures for future assessment practice?

Remember! The purpose of assessment is to use the information for continued improvement of student learning.
Analysis

What does the evidence collected from your assessment measures tell you?

Does the evidence gathered accurately answer the questions implied by the SLOs?

What are students learning? What aren’t they learning? Do you notice patterns over time?

What changes to course or curriculum design might be considered given the assessment evidence?

Does assessment evidence highlight a need to revise the assessment plan, outcomes or measures for future assessment practice?

Remember! The purpose of assessment is to use the information for continued improvement of student learning.
Analysis

What does the evidence collected from your assessment measures tell you?

Does the evidence gathered accurately answer the questions implied by the SLOs?

What are students learning? What aren’t they learning? Do you notice patterns over time?

What changes to course or curriculum design might be considered given the assessment evidence?

Does assessment evidence highlight a need to revise the assessment plan, outcomes or measures for future assessment practice?

Remember! The purpose of assessment is to use the information for continued improvement of student learning.
Analysis

What does the evidence collected from your assessment measures tell you?

Does the evidence gathered accurately answer the questions implied by the SLOs?

What are students learning? What aren’t they learning? Do you notice patterns over time?

What changes to course or curriculum design might be considered given the assessment evidence?

Does assessment evidence highlight a need to revise the assessment plan, outcomes or measures for future assessment practice?

Remember! The purpose of assessment is to use the information for continued improvement of student learning.
Analysis, Con’t

• If the data collected are never used, this becomes a pointless exercise!

• If a program is continuously measuring something that it has already optimized, this becomes a pointless exercise!

• And there is nothing worse than a pointless exercise!
Examples
Undergraduate, Graduate, and Certificate Programs
Graduate Certificate in Gerontology

**Outcome:**

Students will be able to differentiate between normal aging and psychological disorders.

**Measure:**

Experiential assignment from GRNT 6750 where students are asked to test out a mental status assessment tool and critique the tool in a discussion forum. The tool is used to distinguish between normal cognition and cognitive impairment. Students are asked to take the assessment, then reflect on the experience. And then to critically examine the tool as a screening tool for older adults. This portion is completed in a discussion board forum (online).

**Data Collected:**

Students participate in discussion board prompts to complete the assignment. Discussion assignment details as provided to students are attached. Class assignment grades (11 students): Minimum 75% Maximum 100% Average: 97.7%
Graduate Certificate in Gerontology

Analysis & Improvement:

All students far exceeded our expected performance threshold.

There was only one measure used to determine student attainment. Additionally, faculty felt that this was not adequately measuring the learning outcome on its own. Therefore, the faculty will consider how to best add at least one additional measurement for the next course iteration. This could be in the form of additional reflection, especially on the meaning of "normal aging", or perhaps in finding additional assessments for cognition in the literature that address some of the criticisms raised in the discussion. Faculty will explore this for the fall 2019 course.
BLA Landscape Architecture

Small curriculum tweaks

Faculty in the Landscape Architecture program consider multiple direct indicators (e.g., exam items, capstone projects) and indirect measures (job placement data) in evaluating students’ skill development.

Supplemental computer graphics classes were added in 2019 as elective coursework to advance digital graphic skills. In 2020-21, instructors teaching LAND 3330 updated the course’s supplemental workbook.
PhD Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Students’ acquisition of desired competencies in the BCMB program are based upon evidence-based strong predictors of success for early career scientists.

The assessment approach was recently redesigned to capture evidence of these competencies by leveraging the ongoing relationship between student and advisory committee.

Committee members evaluate a student/candidate’s growth over time using a rubric.
Questions

Thank you!