Introduction to Academic Assessment

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Georgia State University
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Overview

• What is Assessment?
• Why Assess?
• Types of Assessment
• Assessment Plans
  – Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes
  – Ensuring Learning Opportunities: Curriculum Maps
  – Measuring Student Learning: Rubrics
  – Collecting, Analyzing, and Using Results: Action Plans
• Useful Sources
What Is Academic Assessment?

- A systematic and ongoing process of
- collecting of evidence about
- student learning in order to
- inform planning and decisions about
- improving teaching and educational programs
Why Assess?

• Continuous Improvement of
  – Teaching and Learning
  – Academic Programs
  – Planning and Decisionmaking

• Accountability: Demonstrating Effectiveness to
  – Accrediting Agencies
  – Funding Sources (government, foundations, individuals)
Types of Assessment

• Academic
  – Institutional Level: General education
  – *Program Level
  – Course Level

• Administrative
  – Student Services
The Process: Assessment Plans

- Defining Program Purpose
- Specifying Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
- Ensuring Learning Opportunities: Curriculum Map
- Choosing Measures: Rubrics
- Setting Targets
- Collecting Evidence
- Analyzing Findings
- Using Results: Action Plans
Types of SLOs

• Content
  – Disciplinary Knowledge
  – Methods

• Skills and Abilities
  – Critical Thinking
  – Problem-solving
  – Communication

• Attitudes, Values, and Dispositions
Characteristics of Good SLOs

• Comprehensive: Cover main program goals
• Focus on the End: What students will do
• Neither Too Broad Nor Too Specific
• Measurable
Cycle and Entity Selection:
2012-2013 (Current)  Early Childhood Education BSED
Use Settings from: Georgia State University

Assessment Summary

View Sections:  All  Goals  Outcomes/Objectives  Measures & Findings

Goals

1: Content Knowledge  (Final)  
2: Pedagogical Content Knowledge & Skills  (Final)  
3: Student Learning  (Final)  
4: Diversity  (Final)  

Outcomes/Objectives

(Numbers inside parentheses show related Goals, ✓ indicates Student Learning.)

1: Demonstrates content knowledge ✓  (G:1)  (Final)  
2: Plans effectively for instruction ✓  (G:2)  (Final)  
3: Applies content and pedagogy for successful clinical practice ✓  (G:1, 2, 3, 4)  (Final)  
4: Uses assessment methods to document student learning ✓  (G:3)  (Final)  
5: Values and displays professional and ethical dispositions ✓  (G:4)  (Final)  

Copy Associations and Connected Documents from 2011-2012
Ensuring Learning Opportunities

• Levels
  – Program: Curriculum Maps
  – Course: Syllabus, Assignments, Pedagogy

• Steps
  – Introduction
  – Reinforcement/Practice
  – Demonstrate Mastery
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Introductory</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Advanced Content Course A</th>
<th>Laboratory/Practicum</th>
<th>Advanced Content Course B</th>
<th>Advanced Content Course C</th>
<th>Advanced Content Course D</th>
<th>Capstone Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLO 1: Disciplinary knowledge base (models and theories)</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
<td>Mastery/Assessed</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLO 2: Disciplinary methods</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Mastery/Assessed</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLO 3: Disciplinary applications</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Mastery/Assessed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
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<td>SLO 4: Analysis and use of evidence</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Mastery/Assessed</td>
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<td>SLO 5: Evaluation, selection, and use of sources of information</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Mastery/Assessed</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
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<td>SLO 6: Written communication skills</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Mastery/Assessed</td>
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<td>SLO 7: Oral communication skills</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Mastery/Assessed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrity / Values</td>
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<td>SLO 8: Disciplinary ethical standards</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
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<td>Mastery/Assessed</td>
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<td>SLO 9: Academic integrity</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
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<td>Mastery/Assessed</td>
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<td>Project Management</td>
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<td>SLO 10: Interpersonal and team skills</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Mastery/Assessed</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLO 11: Self-regulation and metacognitive skills</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td>Reinforced</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mastery/Assessed</td>
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</table>

Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment
http://uwf.edu/cutla/

Sample Curriculum Map (Level of Skill)
Types of Measures

• *Direct
  – Exams
  – Written Assignments
  – Oral Presentations/Performances
  – Portfolios

• Indirect
  – Student Surveys
  – Exit Interviews
Using Rubrics

• Types of Rubrics
  – Checklist
  – Rating Scale
  – *Descriptive

• Advantages of Rubrics
  – Differentiate Learning Objectives in an Assignment
  – Define Levels of Performance/Ensure Consistency
  – Clarify Faculty Expectations
# Value-added Rubric for CTW (v.2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill/ability</th>
<th>Absent/Beginning (1-2)</th>
<th>Developing/Inadequate (3-4)</th>
<th>Competent/Adequate (5-6)</th>
<th>Advanced/Sophisticated (7-8)</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification/articulation of key issue or question</td>
<td>Statement of issue is absent or incoherent</td>
<td>States issue/question, but not in a clear manner</td>
<td>Clear statement of the issue or question to be addressed</td>
<td>Sophisticated presentation of the issue/question, reflecting an understanding of nuances and context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulation of student’s position (thesis/argument) on the issue</td>
<td>Fails to formulate a position on the issue/question, or position is incoherent</td>
<td>Position is present but not clearly articulated</td>
<td>Clear statement of student’s position on the issue/question</td>
<td>Sophisticated and nuanced statement of student’s position</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective use of reasons and/or evidence in support of position</td>
<td>No reasons/evidence provided, or given reasons/evidence are not relevant</td>
<td>Some reasons/evidence provided, but do not effectively support student’s position</td>
<td>Given reasons/evidence are effective and adequate</td>
<td>Sophisticated and thorough use of reasons/evidence in support of student’s position</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of material</td>
<td>Incoherent or illogical organizational structure</td>
<td>Organization of material is simplistic</td>
<td>Presentation of reasons and evidence is logical and coherent</td>
<td>Organization of material is compelling and creative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of conclusions</td>
<td>Conclusions are absent or not clearly stated</td>
<td>Conclusions are present but consist mainly of a simplistic summary</td>
<td>Clearly stated conclusions, but not exploration of implications or consequences</td>
<td>Clearly stated conclusions with examination of implications and/or consequences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Setting Targets

• Local versus External Standards
• Differentiated versus Minimum Standards
• Value-Added Targets: Before/After Assessment
• Historical Trends: Improvements over Time
Collecting Evidence

• Every Year/Semester or Less Frequently?
• All Classes or a Sample?
• All Students or a Sample?
• Individual Faculty or a Committee?
Analyzing the Findings: What Do They Mean?

- Were the Findings Clear?
- Were Measurement Tools Appropriate?
- Was a Representative Sample Assessed?
- Were the Sources Comparable?
- Were Targets Met?
- Were Targets Meaningful?
- Were There Shortfalls in Student Learning?
Using Assessment Results

• Reports
  – To Program Leaders and Faculty
  – To Oversight Bodies for Review

• Faculty Discussions

• Action Plans
  – Individual Course Content and/or Pedagogy
  – Program: Purpose, SLOs, Curriculum, etc.
  – Assessment Process

• Recognize and Celebrate Good Results
Useful Sources on Assessment

• American Association of College and Universities VALUE Rubrics (http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/index)