College of Arts & Sciences

Assessment Workshop

April 20, 2004
In other words, NCA and other constituents are looking for:

• Evidence of broad participation by faculty and students in the development of Assessment Student Learning (ASL) programs.

• Evidence that we are clear about expectations for learning outcomes and that we are communicating that to students.

• Evidence that students (as a group) are learning from those learning opportunities.

• Evidence that we are using the results of our ASL activities to improve student learning.
Common Reactions to Assessment Initiatives

- Ignoring it
- Bribing someone else to do it
- Complaining about it
- Losing sleep over it
- Sitting down and writing it

Hatfield, 2004
Big Mistakes in Assessment

• Assuming that it will go away

• Trying to do too much, too soon

• Expecting to get it right the first time

• Not considering implementation issues when creating plans

Hatfield, 2004
Big Mistakes in Assessment

• Borrowing plans and methods without acculturation

• Demanding statistical research standards

• Doing it for accreditation instead of improvement

Hatfield, 2004
Big Mistakes in Assessment

• Confusing institutional effectiveness with student learning

• Making assessment the responsibility of one individual

• Assuming collecting data is Doing Assessment

Hatfield, 2004
Student Learning Outcomes
Student Learning Outcomes

• Student Learning Outcomes
  – The knowledge, skills/abilities, and attributes we want our students to be able to demonstrate.
    • From their learning experiences both curricular and co-curricular activities.
Characteristics of Student Learning Outcomes

They are:

• Learner Centered
• Specific
• Action oriented
• Cognitively Appropriate

Hatfield, 2004
Student Learning Outcomes

Basic Format:

• Students will be able to
  <<action_verb>>  <<something>>

Example:
• Students will be able to apply research methodologies to examine issues within the discipline.

Hatfield, 2004
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPREHENSION</th>
<th>APPLICATION</th>
<th>ANALYSIS</th>
<th>SYNTHESIS</th>
<th>EVALUATION</th>
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<td>Transcribe</td>
<td>Transcribe</td>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Hatfield, 2004 (adapted from Bloom’s Taxonomy)
Example #1

Gather factual information and apply it to a given problem in a manner that is relevant, clear, comprehensive, and conscious of possible bias in the information selected

BETTER: Students will be able to apply factual information to a problem.

COMPONENTS:
- Relevance
- Clarity
- Comprehensiveness
- Aware of Bias

Hatfield, 2004
Hands-on Exercise #2

*Students will be able to:*

Imagine and seek out a variety of possible goals, assumptions, interpretations, or perspectives which can give alternative meanings or solutions to given situations or problems.

Hatfield, 2004
Worksheet for Exercise #2

- Better (rephrasing):

Key Components:
Possible Answer

**BETTER:** Students will be able to provide alternative solutions to situations or problems.

**COMPONENTS:**
- Assumptions
- Perspectives
- Interpretations
- Analysis of comparative advantage

Hatfield, 2004
Lessons Learned/ Learning Outcome Rules

– Use one cognitive level
– Focus on outcomes, not processes (focus on what, not on how)
– List single accomplishments
– Do not indicate level of quality (effective)

Hatfield, 2004
Accreditation reviewers praise institutions’ assessment programs that “have clearly linked their assessment activities to their own statements of purpose and goals, and to their objectives for student learning, and in which all of these are reflective of relevant portions of the Institution’s Mission and Goals statement and its published educational purposes.” (Lopez, 1996.)
- Identify the Assessment Points in the Curriculum

- Where do you want to target your assessment efforts?
## Example 1

### Student Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course 1</th>
<th>Course 2</th>
<th>Course 3</th>
<th>Course 4</th>
<th>Course 5</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:** x = outcome addressed in the course

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We can identify where in the curriculum the student learning outcomes are developed.

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
We can identify where in the curriculum the student learning outcomes are introduced, emphasized or reinforced.

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
Questions?
Materials for Module #2
Stages

1. Developing Assessment Plans
2. Developing Implementation Strategies
3. Collecting Data
4. Implementing Change as the result of assessment

Hatfield, 2004
Understanding Assessment

- Effective assessments use multiple measures and data sources

Hatfield, 2004
Understanding Assessment

➤ Measure what you value
then value what you measure

Hatfield, 2004
Language of Assessment

• A. Specific accomplishments to be achieved OUTCOMES

• B. The key elements related to the accomplishment COMPONENTS

• C. Data indicating degree of achievement EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

• D. The objects of analysis: OBJECTS (e.g., assignment, performances, speeches, etc.)

Hatfield, 2004
Example

Students will be able to apply factual information to a problem.

Components

- Relevance
- Clarity
- Comprehensiveness
- Aware of Bias

Evaluative Criteria

Hatfield, 2004
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
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<th>Component</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write (Written Communication)</td>
<td>Relate (Interpersonal Communication)</td>
<td>Speak (Verbal Communication)</td>
<td>Listen (Listening Skills)</td>
<td>Participate (Engaged &amp; active Participation)</td>
<td>Component</td>
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</table>

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
Examples of Components

- Organization, Structure
- Level of understanding
- Complexity of ideas
- Support for ideas
- Coherence of presentation
- Knowledge of material
- Awareness of audience
- Mechanics: Writing, Language, Style
- Problem Identification

Please refer to handout for more examples

Hatfield, 2004
Hands-on Exercise #1

• Select one of your degree program student learning outcomes and identify its key components.
  – Utilize the list of example “components” (in your handout).

• Feel free to work on a second learning outcome, if time permits.
Select the learning outcomes you plan to address, *then* identify the key components for those outcomes. You do not need to identify all components at the same time.

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
Evaluative Criteria

• Once the components of the student learning outcomes have been identified, the next step is to identify the evaluative criteria.
Evaluative Criteria

• Are the scale items or descriptions for assessing each of the components.

• Two to Five-point scales for each component are typical. Each department will determine the appropriate performance range for their programs.

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
Example Layout

Speak in public situations

- Verbal Delivery
- Nonverbal Delivery
- Structure
- Evidence

Hatfield, 2004
Speak in public situations

Verbal Delivery
1. Several
2. Some
3. Few fluency problems

Nonverbal Delivery
1. Distracting
2. Connected
3. Integrated
4. 
5. Enhancing

Structure
1.Disconnected
2. Connected
3. Integrated

Evidence
Doesn’t support
Sometimes
Always supports

Evaluative criteria may be numerical, descriptive, or both.
Example Scales for Evaluative Criteria

- Missing - Included
- Inappropriate - Appropriate
- Incomplete - Complete
- Incorrect - Partially Correct - Correct
- Vague - Emergent - Clear
- Marginal - Acceptable - Exemplary
- Distracting - Neutral - Enhancing
- Usual - Unexpected - Imaginative
- Ordinary - Interesting - Challenging

Hatfield, 2004
Example Scales for Evaluative Criteria

- Simple - More fully developed - Complex
- Reports - Interprets - Analyzes
- Basic - Expected - Advanced
- Few - Some - Several - Many
- Isolated - Related - Connected - Integrated
- Less than satisfactory - satisfactory - more than satisfactory - outstanding
- Never - Infrequently - Usually - Always
Hands-on Exercise #2

Evaluative Criteria

• Once the components of the student learning outcome(s) have been identified, then identify at least two evaluative criteria.

• Characteristics or criteria of the effective, accurate, successful, or levels that demonstrated what was learned.
Learning Objects

- After identifying key components and evaluative criteria, the next step is to identify the learning objects.
  - Learning objects are the assignments, activities, and performances that promote achievement of each learning outcome.

Hatfield, 2004
List of possible sources of evidence (objects)

- Assignments
- Practicum
- Word Problem
- Work of Art
- Recital
- Presentation
- Speech
- Lab report
- Essay

Hatfield, 2004
Learning Objects

• There are multiple objects (e.g., assignments, competitions, licensing exams) that can demonstrate student learning.

• Utilize the forms of evidence that already exist in your programs (curriculum) or modify what you are currently doing in your curriculum.

Please refer to handout for examples.

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
Learning Objects


Hatfield, 2004
Writing
(student learning outcome)

*Mechanics
*Style
*Voice
*Structure

Hatfield, 2004
Learning Objects

Degree Program

Objects

Writing Assignment
Mathematical Problem
Presentation
Practicum

Outcome

Component
Component
Component

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
Example

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the different areas in psychology.

Components:
- Historical roots
- Research methods
- The nervous system
- Learning perspective

Evaluative Criteria

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
Example

Degree Program

Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the different areas in psychology.

Components
- Historical roots
- Research methods
- The nervous system
- Learning perspective

Evaluative Criteria
- Novice
- Intermediate
- Knowledgeable

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
Example

Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the different areas in psychology.

**Goal:** Using multiple assignments to assess students’ knowledge of historical roots of psychology. This approach can be used for multiple assignments and/or across multiple instructors.
Take-home Exercise #1

Learning Objects

• Once the evaluative criteria of the components have been identified, then identify at least two learning objects.
Examples of Learning Objects

- **Write** (Written Communication)
  - Lab report
  - Essay

- **Relate** (Interpersonal Communication)

- **Speak** (Verbal Communication)
  - Speech
  - Group Presentation
  - Debate

- **Listen** (Listening Skills)
  - Group Presentation
  - Debate

- **Participate** (Engaged & active Participation)
  - Practicum
Learning Objects

• It is possible to use course or instructor-specific Objects to assess an outcome, but the components of the Object being assessed must remain constant.

• NOTE: Data from multiple courses and instructors will need to be aggregated, interpreted, reported, and utilized in decision making. Thus, it is recommended that a set of components be assessed across multiple courses, assignments, and/ or instructors.
Identify the Assessment Points in the Curriculum

Where do you want to target your assessment efforts?

Hatfield, 2004
We can identify where in the curriculum the student learning outcomes are developed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Major Courses</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Legend: x = outcome addressed in the course

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
We can identify where in the curriculum the student learning outcomes are introduced, emphasized or reinforced.

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
Take-home Exercise #2

Identifying Assessment Points

• Refer to at least two student learning outcomes in your degree program.
• Identify where in the curriculum these outcomes are developed.
• Recommend where in the curriculum these outcomes can be assessed.
Developing an Assessment Plan

- Identify Assessment Measures
  (part of Workshop 3)
Assessment Measures

Hatfield, 2004
Assessment Loop

How well do we achieve our educational objectives?

Mission/Purposes

Educational Objectives

Enhance teaching/learning; inform institutional decision-making, planning, budgeting

Gather Evidence

Interpret Evidence

Indicators

Baseline

Source: Peggy Maki, 2002 AAHE Assessment Forum; NCA Higher Education Learning Commission
Questions?