Workshop 2
Developing an Outline for Assessing Student Learning Outcomes

Patricia Marsh and Ma. Concepcion Manzo
(pmarsh@k-state.edu and mcdmanzo@k-state.edu)
Assessment & Program Review
Kansas State University
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Main Source: Susan Hatfield, Departmental Assessment Plans, Academic Chairs Conference, February 2004, Orlando, Florida; Shatfield@winona.edu
The Workshop Series

- Understanding Assessment
- Departmental Assessment Plans, Nuts and Bolts:
  - Common Language & Approaches to Student Learning Outcomes
  - Developing an Outline for Assessing Student Learning Outcomes
  - Identifying the Tools for Assessing Student Learning Outcomes
  - Developing a Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning in a Degree Program
Workshop 2

• A brief review
  • Background/ Understanding Assessment
  • Common Language & Approaches to Student Learning Outcomes

• Developing an Outline for Assessing Student Learning Outcomes
  • Defining the Components/ Evaluative Criteria of Student Learning Outcomes
  • Defining the Performance Characteristics of the Components
  • Defining Learning Objects and Activities
A Brief Review
Assessment

**Assessment is:**

- an ongoing process,
- aimed at understanding and improving student learning.

**It involves:**

- making our expectations explicit and public,
- setting appropriate criteria and high standards for learning quality,
- systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards,
- using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance.
Assessment

When it is **embedded** effectively within larger institutional systems, assessment can help us focus our collective attention, examine our assumptions, and create a shared academic culture dedicated to assuring and improving the quality of higher education.

NCA’s Expectations for the 2005 Focused Visit

“The Team recommends a focused visit to evaluate whether the institutions is making progress in implementing a program to assess student learning outcomes. By the time of the focused visit in 2005, there should be evidence that K-State is moving toward maturing levels of continuous improvement and that faculty, students, and administrators across the University are involved in the assessment process.” [Bold was added to the original quote.]

Maturing Assessment

BEGINNING (level one)

PROGRESS (level two)

MATURING (level three)

Levels of Implementation

I. Institutional Culture
   a) Collective/ Shared Values
   b) Mission

II. Shared Responsibility
   a) Faculty
   b) Administration and Board
   c) Students

III. Institutional Support
   a) Resources
   b) Structures

IV. Efficacy of Assessment

Source: Assessment of Student Academic Achievement: Levels of Implementation, Addendum to the Handbook of Accreditation, Second Edition; http://www.ncacihe.org/resources/assessment/
Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

- Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.
- Assessment requires attention to outcomes, but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.
- Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic.

Understanding Assessment

➢ Assessment initiatives evolve

Hatfield, 2004
Maturing Assessment

BEGINNING

PROGRESS

MATURING

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITY

Hatfield, 2004
Maturing Assessment

BEGINNING

PROGRESS

MATURING

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

STUDENT LEARNING

Hatfield, 2004
Maturing Assessment

BEGINNING

PROGRESS

MATURING

INDIRECT MEASURES

DIRECT MEASURES

Hatfield, 2004
Understanding Assessment

➢ Assessment is about measuring student learning, not about teaching

Hatfield, 2004
Levels of Assessment

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
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
Measure what you value then value what you measure

Hatfield, 2004
Developing an Outline for Assessing Learning Outcomes
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
Identify the components of successful achievement of the outcome

-What are we looking for to be able to tell whether or not student performance is acceptable?

Hatfield, 2004
Example

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
Language of Assessment
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
Components

Degree Program

Outcome Outcome Outcome Outcome Outcome

Components

Relevance
Clarity
Comprehensiveness
Aware of Bias

Evaluative Criteria

Hatfield, 2004
Students will be able to apply factual information to a problem.

Components

- Relevance
- Clarity
- Comprehensiveness
- Aware of Bias

Evaluative Criteria

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
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.

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
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
- 3
- 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.

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
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

Hatfield (2004)
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.
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.

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
Degree Program

Outcome
Component
Component
Component

Outcome
Component
Component
Component

Outcome
Component
Component
Component

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
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

Write (Written Communication)
Relate (Interpersonal Communication)
Speak (Verbal Communication)
Listen (Listening Skills)
Participate (Engaged & active Participation)

Object
Lab report

mechanics
style
organization

Hatfield, 2004
Example

Psychology
(at another institution)

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
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
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.

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
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)**
- Speech
- Group Presentation

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

**Listen (Listening Skills)**

**Participate (Engaged & active Participation)**
- Debate
- Practicum

Adapted from Hatfield, 2004
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.

Hatfield, 2004
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Course 1</th>
<th>Course 2</th>
<th>Course 3</th>
<th>Course 4</th>
<th>Course 5</th>
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</table>

Legend:  
- I - Introduce  
- E - Emphasis  
- R - Reinforced  

Hatfield, 2004

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

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

How well do we achieve our educational objectives?

Mission/Purposes

Educational Objectives

Gather Evidence

Interpret Evidence

Indicators

Baseline

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