Workshop 1

Assessment Workshop Series for the
College of Technology & Aviation

Developing an Outline for Assessing Learning Outcomes

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Main Source: Academic Chairs Conference, February 2004, Orlando, Florida
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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
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.

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.

Please refer to handout.

In 2002, K-State was reaccredited by NCA for another 10 years, however, two main areas that need improvement were identified:

- (1) Assessment of student learning, and
- (2) Diversity education

Thus, the institution was granted reaccreditation with the condition that an Assessment Focused Visit will be conducted in spring 2005.
Evidence that requires institutional attention and Commission follow up:

- “There is not presently a coherent, widespread understanding that the purpose of assessment is the continuous improvement of student learning …. “

- “Faculty ownership of assessment in academic programs has not developed consistently across campus, and assessment in graduate education has not begun.

- “Students have not participated in the development or implementation of the University’s assessment program.”

Evidence that requires institutional attention and Commission follow up (continued):

- "The K-State assessment program is in its infancy; the supporting infrastructure has not been fully developed. … to develop the structures needed for
  a) educating the University community about assessment,
  b) providing administrative leadership that will lead to embedding the assessment process in the institutional culture, and
  c) ensuring the sustainability of the assessment program."

Source: NCA’s Final Report for K-State, 2001, Section 2, p. 11
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/
Understanding Assessment

- Assessment initiatives evolve

Hatfield (2004)
Maturing Assessment

BEGINNING

PROGRESS

MATURING

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITY

Hatfield (2004)
Maturing Assessment

BEGINNING

PROGRESS

MATURING

PROCESS MEASURES

OUTCOME MEASURES

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.

- Assumes that quality teaching has been established.

Adapted from Hatfield (2004)
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)
Student Learning Outcomes

- How to revise student learning outcomes into a simpler and easier to use format.

- The proposed format will help in the selection of applicable assessment tools, measures, assignments, performances, etc.
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)
Identify the components of successful achievement of the outcome.

Things to think about:
- What are we looking for?
- What do we want our students to achieve?

Adapted from Hatfield (2004)
Understanding Assessment

➢ Language of Assessment

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)
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)
Hands-on Exercise

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.
Examples

- 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)
Student Learning Outcomes of the Degree Program

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

Component

Component

Component

Component

Component

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Component

Adapted from Hatfield (2004)
Evaluative Criteria

• Scale or description 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)
Hands-on Exercise

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.

Adapted from Hatfield (2004)
Examples

Level or degree:
- Accurate, Correct
- Depth, Detail
- Coherence, Flow
- Complete, Thorough
- Integration
- Creative, Inventive
- Evidence based, supported
- Engaging, enhancing
- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- Presence, Absence

Please refer to handout for more examples

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)
Writing
(student learning outcome)

*Mechanics
*Style
*Voice
*Structure

Hatfield (2004)
Tasks for Follow-up Workshop

We will meet again in two weeks, Tuesday April 20\textsuperscript{th}.

Be prepared to share the:

\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] Components you have identified for the 2 – 4 student learning outcomes for your degree program.
\item[2.] Evaluative criteria you have developed for these learning outcomes.
\item[3.] Experiences your department has had with these exercises.
\end{itemize}