

Assessing General Education Programs

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Texas A&M Assessment Conference

GE Learning Outcomes

- The common denominator in higher education
- The marks of a college-educated person

GE Assessment Can Be Challenging:

- GE Belongs to the Entire Faculty
- Distributed Teaching
- Faculty Allegiance
- Adjunct Faculty

Program Assessment is an on-going process designed to monitor and improve student learning. Faculty:

- Develop SLOs
- Align the curriculum
- Collect and assess evidence
- Reach a conclusion
- Close the loop

Definitions

- Direct vs. Indirect Assessment
- Authentic Assessment
- Formative vs. Summative Assessment
- Triangulation

In general, focus on
direct, authentic,
summative assessment
with triangulation.

GE Learning Outcomes

- Define what faculty want students to learn
- Describe how students can demonstrate their learning (active verbs)
- Clarify the types of assessment evidence we should collect

What kind of evidence would
you need to assess each
outcome?

Alignment: The Cohesive Curriculum

- Coherence
- Synthesizing Experiences
- Ongoing Practice of Learned Skills
- Systematically Created Opportunities to Develop Increasing Sophistication and Apply What Is Learned
- May extend GE outcomes into the majors

Curriculum Map

- I = Introduced
- D = Developed & Practiced with Feedback
- M = Demonstrated at the Mastery Level
Appropriate for Graduation

Is this a cohesive curriculum?

The Curriculum Map

- Focuses faculty on curriculum cohesion
- Guides course planning
- Allows faculty to identify potential sources of assessment data

Ensuring Curriculum Alignment

- Course Certification
- Periodic Course Recertification
- Alignment Projects

GE Assessment Plan

- Meaningful
- Manageable
- Sustainable

**We don't have to assess
every outcome in every
student every year!**

Example

Does this plan involve:

- Direct or indirect assessment?
- Authentic assessment?
- Formative or summative assessment?
- Triangulation?

Properties of Good Assessment Results

- Valid
- Reliable
- Actionable

Rubrics

- Holistic (Portland State example)
- Analytic (NE Illinois example)

Rubric Strengths

- Faculty apply the same criteria
- Criterion-referenced judgments
- Efficient assessment
- Calibration of reviewers

Some Friendly Suggestions

- Focus on what is important.
- Include relevant adjunct faculty.
- Close the loop.
- Learn from your colleagues—both on-campus and external.

**Without assistance, each of us
will not only reinvent the
wheel, we'll also reinvent the
flat tire.**

