Grades vs. Assessment

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LiveText @ Loma Linda University

MANY STRENGTHS. ONE MISSION.

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LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH

We've lived without it for years. Why do we need it now?

WHAT IS ASSESSMENT?

Contemporary vs. Traditional Ways of Thinking about Assessment

Contemporary Approaches

» Carefully aligned with goals: the most important things we want students to learn

» Focused on thinking and performance skills

» Developed from research and best practices on teaching and assessment methodologies

Traditional Approaches

» Planned and implemented without consideration of learning goals, if any even exist

» Often focused on memorized knowledge

» Often poor quality because faculty and staff have had few formal opportunities to learn how to design and use effective assessment strategies and tools

Suskie, L. (2009). *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide, second edition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Contemporary vs. Traditional Ways of Thinking about Assessment

Contemporary Approaches

» Used to improve teaching and learning as well as to evaluate and assign grades to individual students

» Used to tell our story: what makes our college or program distinctive and how successful we are in meeting students' and societal needs

Traditional Approaches

» Used only to evaluate and grade individual students, with decisions about changes to curricula and pedagogies often based on hunch and anecdote rather than solid evidence

» Not used to tell that story: stories are told through anecdotes about star students rather than broader evidence from representative students

Suskie, L. (2009). *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide, second edition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

What is assessment?

The ongoing process of:

» Establishing clear, measurable expected outcomes of student learning

» Ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to achieve those outcomes

» Systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well student learning matches our expectations

» Using the resulting information to understand and improve student learning

Suskie, L. (2009). *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide, second edition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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Assessment at the Program Level

»An academic program should be integrated and greater than the sum of its parts…more than a collection of its courses

»It should have goals and assessments that are broader than those of its courses: program learning outcomes (PLOs)

»Academic program level assessment can happen in many ways including:

~ Embedded course assignments

~ Capstone experiences, such as theses, dissertations

~ Field experiences

~ Portfolios

Do we have to get rid of one or the other? Or can they coexist?

GRADING VERSUS ASSESSMENT

What is the Difference Between Assessment and Grading?

»Grades focus on individual students, while assessment focuses on entire cohorts of students and how effectively everyone, not an individual faculty member, is helping them learn.

~Grades alone do not usually provide meaningful information on exactly what students have and have not learned.

~Grading and assessment criteria may (appropriately) differ.

~Grading standards may be vague or inconsistent.

~Grades do not reflect all learning experiences.

Suskie, L. (2009). *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide, second edition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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Aren't Grades Assessment?

» Grades by themselves have limited use for program assessment.

» Grades can serve as red flags.

» Grades sometimes include more than student learning:

~ Class attendance

~ Class participation

~ Loss of points for late assignments

~ Assignments that don't meet formatting requirements

» So are grades assessment?

~ They can be *IF* based on student learning evidence linked to major learning goals and clearly delineated, with consistent standards through test blueprints or rubrics.

~ LiveText integration with ExamSoft holds some exciting potential for assessment.

Benefits of Assessment

»Assessment is used to improve curricula and pedagogies to bring about even greater learning.

- ~ Assessment helps students learn more effectively.
- ~ Assessment activities bring faculty and staff together to discuss important issues.
- ~ Assessment activities help faculty and staff see how courses link together.
- ~ Assessment results provide feedback.
- ~ Assessment brings neglected issues to the forefront.
- ~ Assessment helps faculty and staff make better decisions and use limited resources more wisely.

Suskie, L. (2009). *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide, second edition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

More Issues with Grades

Grades represent the extent to which a student has successfully met the faculty member's requirements and expectations for a course.

Program assessment focuses on providing evidence that students can demonstrate knowledge or skill directly linked to specific program outcomes. Grades *per se* **do not** provide that information.

Grading policies in courses are generally dependent on the individual faculty member.

Course content for any given subject may vary among faculty members teaching the same course.

Rogers, G. (2003). Do Grades Make the Grade for Program Assessment?

Where we are now and where we hope to grow!

LLU ASSESSMENT

Program Learning Outcomes Assessment

»Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) – what students should know or be able to do by the time of graduation in order to meet them.

»Curriculum is developed or modified to represent a well articulated and aligned set of courses.

»These concepts are applied in courses throughout the rest of the curriculum, as students move from knowing and understanding a concept to developing an ability to apply that knowing and understanding in various ways, in multiple settings.

»The assessment of program outcomes should reflect student-achievement-specific outcomes as a culmination of several classes and activities throughout the curriculum.

Rogers, G. (2003). Do Grades Make the Grade for Program Assessment?

Learning Outcomes

ILOs
- Institutional Learning Outcomes

PLOs
- Program Learning Outcomes

CLOs
- Course Learning Outcomes

Program Assessment Plan

PLOs	• 5-7 • 1-2 PIs	
Curriculum Map	• Instruction • Assessments	
Assessment Matrix	• Schedules • Complete descriptions	

This is where LiveText gets really exciting!

ASSESSING WITH RUBRICS

What is a rubric and why should I care?

»A rubric is a scoring guide: a list or chart that describes the criteria that you and perhaps your colleagues will use to evaluate or grade completed student assignments.

»Rubrics are important tools for student learning as well as for assessment.

»Use a rubric as a tool to plan your assignment: write the rubric before you write the assignment that it will evaluate.

»There are many kinds of rubrics including:
  ~ Checklist
  ~ Rating scale
  ~ Descriptive
  ~ Holistic scoring guides
  ~ Structured observation guides

LLU INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOME: INFORMATION LITERACY RUBRIC

Based on the AAC&U Written Communication VALUE Rubric, value@aacu.org, assessment@llu.edu, or see sites below[2]

Definition

The ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand. - The National Forum on Information Literacy

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	4	3	2	1
Determine the Extent of Information Needed	Effectively defines the scope of the research question or thesis. Effectively determines key concepts. Types of information (sources) selected directly relate to concepts or answer research question.	Defines the scope of the research question or thesis completely. Can determine key concepts. Types of information (sources) selected relate to concepts or answer research question.	Defines the scope of the research question or thesis incompletely (parts are missing, remains too broad or too narrow, etc.). Can determine key concepts. Types of information (sources) selected partially relate to concepts or answer research question.	Has difficulty defining the scope of the research question or thesis. Has difficulty determining key concepts. Types of information (sources) selected do not relate to concepts or answer research question.
Access the Needed Information	Accesses information using effective, well-designed search strategies and most appropriate information sources.	Accesses information using variety of search strategies and some relevant information sources. Demonstrates ability to refine search.	Accesses information using simple search strategies, retrieves information from limited and similar sources.	Accesses information randomly, retrieves information that lacks relevance and quality.
Evaluate Information and Its Sources Critically	Chooses a variety of information sources appropriate to the scope and discipline of the research question. Selects sources after considering the importance (to the researched topic) of the multiple criteria used (such as relevance to the research question, currency, authority, audience, and bias or point of view.)	Chooses a variety of information sources appropriate to the scope and discipline of the research question. Selects sources using multiple criteria (such as relevance to the research question, currency, and authority.)	Chooses a variety of information sources. Selects sources using basic criteria (such as relevance to the research question and currency.)	Chooses a few information sources. Selects sources using limited criteria (such as relevance to the research question.)
Use Information Effectively to Accomplish a Specific Purpose	Communicates, organizes and synthesizes information from sources to fully achieve a specific purpose, with clarity and depth.	Communicates, organizes and synthesizes information from sources. Intended purpose is achieved with some clarity and depth.	Communicates and organizes information from sources. The information is not yet synthesized, so the intended purpose is not fully achieved.	Communicates information from sources. The information is fragmented and/or used inappropriately (misquoted, taken out of context, or incorrectly paraphrased, etc.), so the intended purpose is not achieved.
Access and Use Information Ethically and Legally	Students use correctly all of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrate a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.	Students use correctly three of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.	Students use correctly two of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.	Students use correctly one of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.

[2] AAC&U - http://www.aacu.org/value/metarubrics.cfm; LLU Office of Educational Effectiveness - http://www.llu.edu/central/assessment/index.page

The State of LLU ILO Assessment

»Started in 2010 just before the WASC EER site visit

»Outcome of the WASC site visit: an amazing 10 years!

»Poor participation ranging from 13-24% of all academic programs

»Programs that have participated had high rates of success (90%+)

»Programs that found gaps either proposed how they would address the gap or they had already done it

»No shame in having a gap…only in not doing assessment and never finding the gap

Reasons Given for Low Participation

»I don't have time.

»I won't do it until I see my name on a black list.

»WASC will never read my program's ILO report.

»I did the assessment with the LLU/AAC&U rubrics. But, I never had time to enter the scores into Excel or SPSS, analyze the results, and enter the report into the AMS.

LiveText to the Rescue!

» Do the ILO assessment with rubrics already in LiveText, and you will have data instantly to analyze!

~ No more stacks of completed paper rubrics staring at you from the shelf making you feel guilty!

~ No more laborious data entry into Excel, SPSS, etc.

~ No more headaches!

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"LLU Comes to You" by School of Allied Health Professions

0:00 / 5:19   YouTube

SAHP Educational Effectiveness Video

More videos >

Announcements

New 2014-2015 Guides

- **Distance Education Instructor Guide**
- **LLU Assessment Guide**
- **Program Review Guide**

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Wrap Up

»Every aspect of assessment, program review, accreditation, etc., can be made more efficient and effective by using LiveText
.

»LLU is hoping for a magnificent turn around on ILO assessment participation due to LiveText.

»Be part of the assessment success movement!

»Office of Educational Effectiveness:
  ~Email: assessment@llu.edu
  ~Phone: extension 15042
  ~Web: http://www.llu.edu/assessment