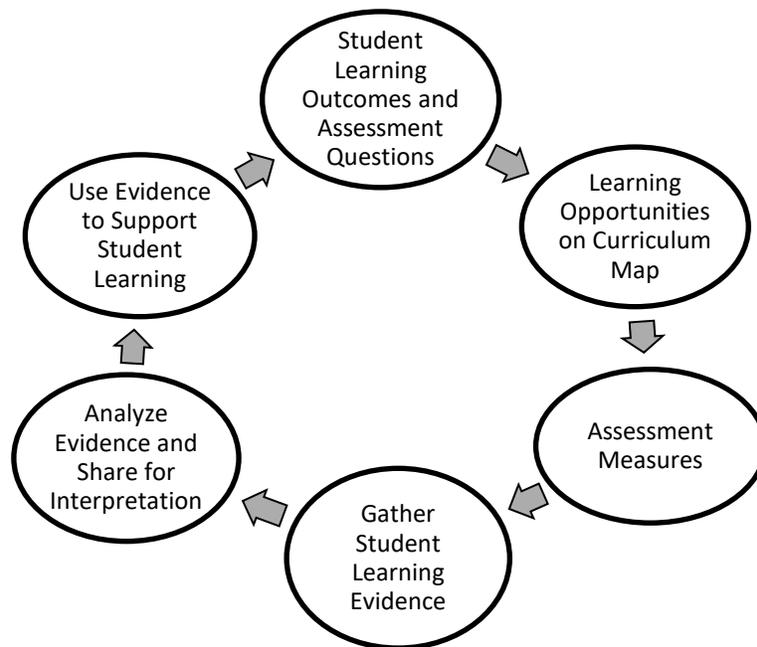


“No Frills” Approach to Planning Assessment of Student Learning In Your Undergraduate Degree Program

Office of Assessment of Teaching and Learning, WSU | January 2018

Assessment Cycle. Good assessment follows an intentional and reflective process of design, implementation, evaluation, and use/revision.

The Assessment Cycle (see graphic below) begins with student learning outcomes (SLOs) and questions about student learning in the curriculum. After reviewing the program’s SLOs and a curriculum map showing where particular SLOs are highlighted, faculty select assessment measures to gather evidence of student learning. The results are analyzed and discussed by the faculty, and then used to inform program decisions, including decisions about instruction, the curriculum, and assessment.



Assessment of Student Learning at WSU. Degree programs are responsible for identifying their own assessment measures and processes within frameworks of good practice. ATL supports the development of effective assessment systems in which faculty collaboratively develop, maintain and improve a curriculum that promotes student learning. Note that it typically takes more than one academic year to complete an assessment cycle. In an effective system, faculty regularly complete the cycle by using assessment results to inform and influence program decisions; they weave assessment throughout their programs so that it complements and enhances the work faculty are already doing and supports collective efforts to improve teaching and learning.

Targets for Meaningful Assessment. WSU expects substantially all programs ($\geq 90\%$) to continuously have their assessment elements in place and updated (SLOs, curriculum map, direct and indirect measures, and uses of assessment). The university’s overarching goal is for assessment to be meaningful and useful to faculty and students. In any given year, a few programs may experience a change in their program context, prompting faculty to revisit basic processes or tools. Faculty might decide to adjust a particular measure or process to increase the quality of their data or a program might pilot a new measure which needs several iterations to produce meaningful data. WSU’s approach encourages faculty involvement in assessment and deepening quality over time, as programs work out changes and improvements to meet evolving needs.

Some overarching purposes for degree program-level assessment of student learning

- *Collect evidence of student learning that contributes information useful to the decisions that must be regularly made regarding curriculum and instruction, to support student achievement. This commonly includes determining the extent to which seniors are achieving the learning outcomes of the degree, through one or more measures.*
- *Provide meaningful information to the chair/director and faculty instructing that program.*
- *Design and develop assessment that's useful, manageable (taking into account available time & resources) and gains traction and utility over time. Developing effective assessment is a process that normally takes several years.*
- *Optional: Meet requirements for the program's professional accreditation or standards of professional association.*
- *Contribute to standards to maintain WSU's accreditation, including faculty engagement in assessment; assessment in degrees offered online; and documenting the extent to which students meet degree learning outcomes.*

A. Purpose and Framework for Assessment in this Degree [What are your assessment questions for this degree?

What do your faculty want to know about student learning? What's the department's framework or general approach to assessment?]

B. Student Learning Outcomes & Curriculum Map

- Review SLOs (may use self-assessment rubric from ATL)
- Discuss and approve by faculty; program's SLOs may be revised over time to meet evolving needs
- Review and update curriculum map as needed; faculty review and approve periodically

C. Assessment Measures and Timeline for 201__ - 201__ (see table on next page, and other WSU samples collected by ATL)

D. Assessment Coordinator, Cmte, Faculty roles:

Faculty Assessment Coordinator:

Committee responsible for assessment:

How teaching faculty participate in assessment:

Faculty contact for other campuses offering the degree:

E. Communication within Departmental or School

- Example: The UG Studies Cmte discusses assessment regularly and communicates with the chair or school director once per semester, and with the faculty once per semester at a regular faculty meeting. A final update and discussion of results is done in August. (If instruction is commonly done by TAs, indicate how they are routinely included.)

F. Archive: Annual reports, assessment materials and results should be stored in a departmental archive.

- Archive location(s):
- Who maintains the archive?

Resources: [Contact ATL](#) for assistance with assessment planning, activities, and data analysis/display. ATL can provide examples and workshops. See suggested [Roles and Responsibilities](#).

Element or Activity	Steps and Notes	Point Person / Participants	Dates / Completion or next steps
Assessment Plan	Design/update assessment plan. ATL has samples available.		
Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for majors – curriculum or program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and revise SLOs (Are they measurable? Do they represent what the program faculty value?) • Invite faculty discussion/approval 		
Curriculum Map Samples and good practice criteria available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For a particular track, create a grid (map) of the SLOs and the courses those students take, indicating which learning outcomes each course introduces, reinforces, or expects mastery. • Invite faculty discussion/approval. • Update as courses & key assignments evolve; invite faculty discussion/approval (every 3 years) 		
Direct Measures See criteria for useful, sustainable measures	<p>Example: in a capstone and/or other core course for seniors, see what existing student work or performance can be used for program assessment (aligned with specific program SLOs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan/coordinate. If new, consider a pilot, test drive rubrics if needed ○ Evaluate a sample of student work (rubric or other method) or collect existing evaluations ○ Consider how student work from all campuses offering the degree will be assessed (including online) ○ What's your senior-level measure(s)? 		
Indirect Measures See criteria for useful, sustainable measures	<p>Example: senior exit survey, focus group, internship survey, alumni survey, interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan/coordinate ○ Design measure (e.g. survey questions or focus group questions) ○ Deliver or collect 		
	<p>Other: Institutional data, such as NSSE results (bi-annual), course grades, participation rates, retention rates, or professional stakeholder input (advisory boards, etc.)</p>		
Analyze results and share with faculty and chair/director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize and analyze assessment results. Prepare results for presentation; disaggregate if needed. Consult w/ATL if needed • Schedule meeting with faculty/chair/committee (should be a regular step in assessment) • Share and discuss results from various measures 		
Using assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use results – contribute information to decision-making in dept/sch; or influence faculty teaching practices, or faculty development • Use results – refine assessment process, procedures, purpose, as needed 		

Glossary of Key Assessment Terms

Aggregate Data: Aggregate data is data that has been combined from separate sources or locations, such as data collected from multiple campuses. Disaggregate data is a whole set of data separated into parts and sorted by meaningful categories, such as campus or student demographic information.

Assessment Cycle: The process of planning, collecting, and analyzing assessment measures and data for the purpose of sustaining and improving teaching and learning. Typically the assessment cycle refers to the timing of the processes within an academic year, but timing may vary from program to program.

Assessment Plan: A process and timeline for designing, collecting, analyzing, and discussing assessment data.

Assessment Results: Analyzed or summarized assessment data (data may be quantitative or qualitative) or other impacts of assessment activities; shared formally or informally.

Course-embedded assessments: assignments or activities students do as part of a class, which also provide assessment data about a particular program learning outcome. The course instructor can evaluate the student work, often using a rubric, or the student work can be provided to a committee to evaluate.

Complementary Measures: multiple direct and/or indirect measures, whose results are analyzed, aligned, and shared on a timely basis for use by faculty and chairs/directors. Complementary measures are especially important for comprehensive or high stakes decisions intended to support student learning.

Curriculum Map: A matrix aligning student learning outcomes with the courses in a program of study. Curriculum maps provide a visual representation of the sequencing of courses and indicate where particular learning outcomes are addressed /emphasized. The curriculum map is used to identify potential courses in which to assess a given learning outcome.

Disaggregate Data: A whole set of data separated into parts and sorted by meaningful categories, such as campus or student demographic information. Aggregate data is data that has been combined from separate sources or locations, such as data collected from multiple campuses.

Direct Measure: A measure of students' performances or work products that demonstrate skills and knowledge. In program-level assessment, direct measures often take the form of a course-embedded assessment which occurs toward the end of a students' course of study, e.g., a final research paper, a capstone project, a final presentation, an internship evaluation.

Indirect Measure: Information associated with learning, motivation, perceived success, or satisfaction; gathered, for example, through a survey or focus group. This data is often, but not always, self-reported by students. Examples of indirect measures include student surveys, e.g., NSSE, focus groups; graduating senior and alumni surveys. Used in conjunction with a direct measure, these perceptions can provide insight about student performance on the direct measures, and provide a fuller picture of student learning.

Key Assessment Elements: These include the student learning outcomes (SLOs) for the degree or major, assessment plan, curriculum map, direct measures, indirect measures, and use of assessment. All six of these are required by all WSU undergraduate programs.

Program-level Assessment: Measures and assessment tools that faculty use to collaboratively develop, maintain and improve an effective curriculum that promotes student learning through a program of study.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): Core skills and knowledge students should develop through a program of study.

SLO-aligned Assessment: Assessment measures aligned with achievement of specific learning outcomes. SLO-aligned assessment may be direct measures (such as assessment of skills demonstrated in a senior project) or indirect measures (such as input from a senior focus group on their experience related to a specific SLO).

Using Assessment Results: Assessment results a) inform continual reflection and discussion of teaching and learning and b) contribute to decision-making to ensure effective teaching and learning. Decisions can include the choice to continue current effective practices or build on strengths.