**Assessment in the Classroom**

As an institution of higher education, everyone at Andrews University is interested in student learning. The basic question to be answered in every course and program is *What do we want students to learn?*, which is defined by the learning outcomes as knowledge, beliefs and necessary skills. A second question is *How will they learn what we want them to learn?* Learning activities must be selected to help students understand and use their knowledge and skills. The last question is *How will we know that students have learned?* The last question is answered through assessment. Assessment results help teachers to see successes and gaps in learning.

At the university, assessment occurs at three levels: 1. Classroom/Course Level; 2. Program Level; and 3. Institutional Level. Course learning outcomes should be aligned with program outcomes, and program outcomes should align with institutional goals. At the same time, course learning outcomes will be more specific and detailed than program outcomes, and program outcomes may be more specific than institutional goals. Institutional assessment is conducted by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Course and program assessment is the responsibility of the faculty. Program assessment results must be entered into Weave annually.

A curriculum map shows the link of each course in a program’s curriculum to that program’s outcomes. The goal in mapping a program’s curriculum is not primarily to alter what faculty are doing in the classroom. It is more to “promote understanding of the curriculum” (Hatfield, 2012), to determine to what degree program outcomes align with the university’s mission; to identify learning activities in courses that already align with the program outcomes, and to identify gaps that may warrant attention. Furthermore, when faculty discover lower than desired assessment results from course imbedded and external measures, the curriculum map helps identify where changes can be made in the curriculum to improve learning.

Much of what is needed for program assessment is already taking place in the classroom and many of the assignments already align with program outcomes and the institutional goals. Some of the activities taking place in the classroom may not reflect the goals of program level assessment. However, they do not have to be discarded as they may be important to course/classroom assessment and grading.

**Program Level Assessment**

Susan Hatfield, in her presentation to faculty in 2012*, said “Assessment is NOT assessing every student on every outcome in every class by every faculty member every semester.”* Program level assessment is about reviewing indicators of learning for a particular cohort of students. When thinking of program level assessment, think more in terms of sampling: sampling of key/major assignments in certain courses (especially gateway or capstone courses, practicums, etc.), sampling of student work across courses (e.g. writing, research, art), or focusing on specific outcomes in alternating years.

Program-level assessment assignments are typically "embedded in [core] courses," are "meaningful and integrative," and "aligned with program SLOs" (Assessment Office, University of Hawaii, Manoa; p.3 at the following link: <https://manoa.hawaii.edu/assessment/workshops/pdf/signature_assignments_2012-03.pdf>). In addition, they include specific point values as part of the course grade. Exams generally contain too many elements to be included under any one outcome and as a rule are not used as program level assessment measures. However, certain portions or questions from the exam may be used as evidence of learning. If used, exam questions should align with specific learning outcome(s). Also, they should carry specific point values that can be reported.

Courses may differ in terms of the numbers of program level outcomes they include so that every course does not need to cover every outcome. In addition, departments are free to divide the program level outcomes load among faculty so that some professors focus primarily on a particular outcome or two.

**Course Preparation Questions Related to Assessment:**

1. **What do I want students to learn?**

Moodle will aggregate your rubrics for you. You may also obtain a template from Institutional Effectiveness that will automatically aggregate rubric scores. It can help faculty to see student/class areas of strength and weakness at a glance.

* Create outcomes

(Backward design--begin with the end in mind—Wiggins & McTighe <https://www.fitnyc.edu/files/pdfs/Backward_design.pdf>

1. **How will they learn it?**
* Plan learning activities
* Learning activities should match the outcomes.
1. **How will I know they have learned?**
* Prepare measurement tools
* Rubrics can be used to advantage in grading weightier assignments and can also reduce grading time.
* Scoring should be specific enough to diagnose gaps in learning
* Measure learning

**Measure Learning**

 **Grading**  **Assessment**

**Course and Program Level Assessment**

Based on weightier, integrative assignments, as listed in course syllabi, that are indicators of students’ achievement of learning outcomes. Each is worth a significant percentage of the course grade.

**Evaluation of Student Performance**

Based on a variety of assignments and activities, as listed in course syllabi, including assignments that measure program level outcomes, which summarize student’s overall performance.

**Examples of Assignments:**

* Oral presentations
* Projects
* Reports
* Reaction papers
* Reflection papers (for affective learning)
* Journal Article Reviews
* Research Papers
* Performance (art, music, labs, simulations, practicum, internship, etc.)

**Examples of Assignments:**

* In-class activities (may include attendance and participation)
* Homework
* Assignments (including program-level assignments)
* Quizzes
* Chapter tests
* Exams
* Student performance (art, music, etc.)

**GRADING:**

* Teacher provides feedback on student’s work
* Teacher assigns grade
* Student works to improve learning and performance.

**ASSESSMENT: The teacher . . .**

* Aggregates scores related to outcomes
* Analyzes results for gaps in students’ learning (as a group).
* Takes steps to improve student learning.
* Reteaches in designated areas where improvement is needed.