

St. Philip's College
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DISTRICT

St. Philip's College

Assessment Quarterly

THIRD EDITION

The Assessment Quarterly is a quarterly look at how assessment integrates into the St. Philip's College culture to create a holistic approach to supporting student learning at all levels. The Assessment Quarterly focuses on the language of assessment, key concepts in assessing student and programmatic outcomes, and ideas for sharing with faculty and staff to improve the overall student experience. Future Assessment Quarterlies will focus on signpost/signature assignments, how to establish Assessment Work Groups, and using indirect assessment measures.

JUNE 2022 QUARTERLY FOCUS

In the June 2022 edition, the focus is on direct and indirect measures that the SPC community can use to tailor assessment to meet the needs of each Division.



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Focus on measures
- Examples and comparisons



KEY TERMS IN ASSESSMENT

New to assessment? Each month we will feature key terms in assessment to help you learn the common vocabulary used in assessment.

Assessment Methods or Measures describe the tools or techniques used to determine the extent to which an outcome is achieved and explain how the outcome is tested, proven, and/or monitored.

Direct Measures provide evi-

dence obtained through actual student demonstration of skills, abilities, or knowledge that shows learning was accomplished.

Indirect Measures provide evidence and data that suggest learning or development has occurred without an actual demonstration of skills, abilities, or knowledge.

Derived from Association of Institutional Research, Introduction to Learning Outcomes

“What gets measured gets improved .”
attributed to Peter Drucker

LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Not all assessable learning occurs within the classroom. Co-curricular activities and student life events, among others, may be considered in student learning.

These supplemental learning and engagement opportunities contribute to student success and retention, while offering students a chance to develop and reinforce leadership, creativity, communication, organizational and social skills. This learning may be assessed through direct or indirect methods.

DIRECT MEASURES

Examples of direct measures include:

- Comprehensive exam
- Course-embedded exam
- Pre-test and post-test evaluation
- Standardized test
- Licensure or certification exam
- Essay test
- Classroom assignment
- Project
- Capstone paper, project, or presentation
- Student portfolio
- Performance
- Externally reviewed internship and/or practicum
- Grading with scoring rubrics



INDIRECT MEASURES

Examples of indirect measures include:

- Student self-assessment
- Survey and/or questionnaire
- Transfer student performance
- Student focus groups
- Exit interviews
- Alumni survey ratings
- Job placement
- Employer surveys
- Syllabi and curriculum analysis
- Transcript analysis

5 STEPS FOR DEFINING A MEASURE

1. ADDRESS WHO WILL BE ASSESSED.
2. STATE HOW THE ASSESSMENT WILL BE CONDUCTED.
3. IDENTIFY WHEN THE ASSESSMENT WILL OCCUR.
4. DETERMINE WHERE THE ASSESSMENT WILL OCCUR.
5. DEFINE WHAT SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, VALUES, AND/OR ATTRIBUTES WILL BE ASSESSED.



THINGS TO KNOW:

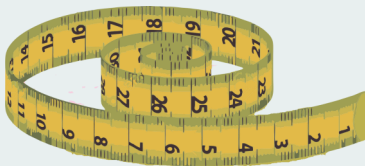
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THE INSTITUTION IDENTIFIES EXPECTED OUTCOMES, **ASSESS-ES THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT ACHIEVES THESE OUTCOMES,** AND PROVIDES EVIDENCE OF SEEKING IMPROVEMENT BASED ON ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS IN THE AREAS BELOW:

a. Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs.
(Student outcomes: educational programs)

b. Student learning outcomes for collegiate-level general education competencies of its undergraduate degree programs.
(Student outcomes: general education)

c. Academic and student services that support student success. (Student outcomes: academic and student services)



CHARACTERISTICS AND USES OF MEASURES/METHODS

Measures/Methods

- Indicate performance targets
- Are feasibly implemented within the academic year
- May be implemented in a reasonably efficient manner
- Address areas where the program has control
- Predominately focus on direct (rather than indirect) measures of acquiring data

SPOTLIGHT ON MEASURES/METHODS

Best Practices

- Generally, best practices call for multiple measures or methods to assess each outcome
- In lieu of multiple measures, a single measure may be used in 2 or more classes (curriculum mapping may help identify which classes address the same outcomes)
- At least one direct measure should be used to assess each student learning outcome
- Indirect measures may supplement direct assessment methods but should not replace them

ESTABLISHING MEASURES/METHODS

- Selecting an appropriate measure for each outcome creates more meaningful assessment
- Consider the scope of the outcome to determine the measure(s) or method(s) that best proves skill or knowledge attainment; if an outcome addresses effective communication, an essay or presentation may provide valuable evidence, whereas an externally reviewed internship or practicum may evaluate more accurately student understanding of workplace safety

THE ROLE OF GRADES IN ASSESSMENT

The tendency exists to use course completion or success rates as methods, measures, or evidence of student learning. Because metrics such as grades provide a broad overview or summary of student performance, rather than addressing specific student learning, strengths, and /or weaknesses, such metrics cannot give an accurate appraisal of student learning outcomes achievement.

This lack of specificity becomes apparent when considering all of the components involved in a final course grade, which may include extra credit, attendance, participation, and other elements that do not impact or prove student learning. While grades may demonstrate satisfactory student progress, grading standards are often inconsistent or subjective, rendering grades unreliable across course sections, faculty, and time.



“Don't eat me. I am an inchworm. I am useful. I measure things.”
Leo Lionni

A NOTE ON CURRICULUM MAPPING

Specific courses and activities may be “mapped” to corresponding program student learning outcomes. The benefits of this alignment include:

- Clarify expectations and wording of outcome statements to ensure emphasis remains on the outcome
- The mapping process may reveal existing gaps in the curriculum and promote multiple opportunities for competency development that leads to successful completion
- This process also provides faculty and staff a chance to determine where and how assessment data may be collected and analyzed for program and learning efficacy and improvement

LOOKING AHEAD

Our next Assessment Quarterly will discuss seeking improvement, including documentation and evidence of the process, strategies employed, and results gathered.

