Using Course-Embedded Assessment for General Education Student Learning Outcomes

LINDA LISOWSKI, PH.D.
JACKIE BOURQUIE, PH.D.
J SARGEANT REYNOLDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Outcomes

Participants in this workshop will:
- Recognize how course-embedded assessment is used to address general education and program-specific student learning outcomes;
- Recognize the advantages and barriers to implementation of a course-embedded assessment approach to general education learning outcomes;
- Share ideas, strategies, successes, challenges, and questions related to the valid and reliable assessment of general education outcomes using course-embedded assessment.

Rationale for General Education Outcomes

- Continuous improvement
- Accountability to stakeholders
- Growing understanding of best practices
- Work done by LEAP (AAC&U):
  - https://www.aacu.org/leap
Overview

1. General education learning outcomes
2. Developing an assessment protocol
3. Developing assignments and rubrics
4. Scoring student work
5. Disseminating results
6. Using results for improvement

General Education Learning Outcomes

- VCCS Core Competency Outcomes
- LEAP
  - [https://www.aacu.org/leap/essential-learning-outcomes](https://www.aacu.org/leap/essential-learning-outcomes)
- And VALUE
  - [https://www.aacu.org/value-rubrics](https://www.aacu.org/value-rubrics)
- Yours?

Developing an Assessment Protocol

- Process
- Outcomes
- Barriers and challenges
- Successes
**Our Story**

- General Education Committee and Office of Institutional Effectiveness
- Starting point: standardized testing
- Needs: Data that can be used by faculty
- Influences: VALUE Rubrics and other institutions
- Solution: Course-embedded assessment

**Decisions**

- Where to assess?
- What to assess?
- Who to assess?
- Faculty input? Faculty ownership?
- Carrots and sticks?
- Approvals?
  - VP of Academic Affairs
  - Executive Vice President
  - Faculty Senate

**Starting Points: Where?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Education and Content Specific Outcomes</th>
<th>Courses that address outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication</td>
<td>ENG 111, ENG 112, ENG 101, 111, HIS 101, 111, HIS 102, 112, SOC 200, PSY 200, ECO 202, CST 110</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
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<td>Cultural and Social Understanding</td>
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<td>Information Literacy</td>
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<td>Personal Development</td>
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<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scientific Reasoning</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* indicates that the course addresses the outcome.
Starting Points: When?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
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<td>Critical Thinking</td>
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<td>Information Literacy</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Development: Wellness</td>
<td>✗</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Development: Decision-Making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Who scores? And what's their motivation?

- Faculty assessors
- Professional development workshops
- Program heads/deans approval
- Incentives

Your turn: Developing an Assessment Protocol

- Your stories
  - Successes
  - Barriers overcome
  - Remaining challenges
Developing assignments and rubrics

- Outcomes ➔ Assignment ➔ Rubric
- Where to start?
  - Communication!
  - Best practices and workable models
- Multiple drafts?
  - Is it good enough?
- Faculty input? Faculty ownership?

Examples: Cultural and Social Understanding

- Zimbardo’s Stanford Prison experiment and Milgram Obedience Experiment
- Did it conform to ethical standards?
- Using your own ethical standards, should the experiment have been allowed?
- Impact of social status and institutional setting on behavior

Examples: Personal Wellness

- Action plan for personal wellness
- Set a personal goal related to the course outcomes
- Identify barriers you may face in achieving goal
- Identify strategies to help you overcome barriers
- Collect ongoing data regarding your achievement of goal(s)
- Reflect on the outcome of your action plan
Examples: Math

For a home improvement project, you have chosen to put hardwood flooring in the living room, dining room, and hallway; ceramic tiles in the kitchen; and carpet tiles in the bedrooms. You have selected your materials from lowes.com and recorded the following product information. (Cost of all materials is provided in table form.)

Use this product information and the floor plan below to calculate the total cost to purchase the flooring materials needed for these rooms in the house assuming that you can only purchase whole cartons, (Note: You will not be flooring the bathrooms or closets in this project.)

(Floor plan with measurements is provided.)

Your turn: Assignment and Rubrics

- Your stories
  - Successes
  - Barriers overcome
  - Remaining challenges

Collecting, Distributing, Scoring

Big Question: Electronic or Paper?

- Sampling
- Collecting Student Work
- Identifying information?
- Tracking?
- Nagging?
- Distributing
- Scoring
Scoring
- What’s best for your institution?
  - Proprietary platforms?
  - Homemade system?
  - Paper system?
- Analyzing the results
  - Someone’s got to do it!

Disseminating and Using Results
- Who will you share results with?
- When will you share results?
- Who is responsible for general education outcomes?

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General Education Assessment: Strengths and Weaknesses
2015-16
Strengths:
- Grammar, syntax, mechanics (course-embedded written communication, course-embedded oral communication, and VCCS writing assessment)
- Use of language (course-embedded oral communication, course-embedded written communication, and VCCS writing assessment)

Weaknesses:
- Organization (course-embedded oral communication, VCCS writing assessment)
- Uses of sources and evidence to support an argument (course-embedded written communication)

* Issues related to use of evidence shows up as both a strength and as a weakness, depending on the assessment used. This suggests that the effective use of evidence may be context-specific.
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General Education Assessment Worksheet  

- How do general education strengths and weaknesses reveal themselves in your discipline/program/courses? 

- What are some ways that your program can address these general education outcomes and findings so that student learning and student performance is improved? How can these findings be incorporated into your teaching? (Program-specific ways only.) 

Your turn: Collecting, Scoring, Disseminating, and Using Results  

- Your stories  
  - Successes  
  - Barriers overcome  
  - Remaining challenges 

Sharing, Questions, Comments?  

- Jackie Bourque, PhD  
  Director of Institutional Effectiveness  
  J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College  
  jbourque@reynolds.edu  

- Linda Lisowski, PhD  
  Assessment Coordinator  
  J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College  
  llisowski@reynolds.edu