

Examples of Direct and Indirect Measures Used in Degree Program Assessment

“Assessing student learning over time—known as formative assessment—provides valuable information about how well students are progressing towards an institution’s or program’s expectations.” (Maki, Peggy, L. Developing an Assessment Plan to Learn about Student Learning, January 2002. Retrieved from the website <http://www.aabe.org/Assessment/assessmentplan.htm>)

Focused Visit Team of Evaluators:

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Degree program assessment plans submitted by faculty in the different academic departments by the end of 2004 have significantly improved relative to assessment plans submitted in 2001. Aside from clearer statements of student learning outcomes, there are more direct measures of student learning being proposed.

Direct measures give evidence based on student performance, which demonstrate student learning itself. Indirect measures provide evidence that is a reflection or satisfaction about learning, or a secondary evidence of learning itself.

In the past, departments at K-State have primarily used indirect measures of student learning such as self-report measures, student satisfaction or alumni surveys. However, a few exceptions existed for programs with outside accreditation.

The current assessment plans are still using past methods but are infusing new measures that directly assess student knowledge, abilities and attributes. Although exceptions exist, these represent the typical classification of the measures proposed in the assessment of student learning in the degree programs.

Direct Measures:

- * Capstone experience (e.g., design projects, field projects and experience, practicum, thesis, strategic plans, oral presentations, written products, student teaching portfolio, course exams, and course assignments)
- * Portfolio (e.g., major projects, examples of student work in various courses)
- * Locally developed tests or selected key questions on exams or quizzes

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Focused Visit on Assessment on Feb. 21-22, 2005

As announced in previous issues of the newsletter and meetings with deans, faculty and various college and university assessment committees, a team of evaluators from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), will conduct a focused visit on assessment of student learning at Kansas State University, on February 21-22, 2005. HLC raised concerns on assessment

of student learning during K-State’s accreditation visit in 2001 and a focused visit was scheduled in 2005 to review the university’s progress on the recommendations.

The 2005 K-State Focused Visit Report was submitted to HLC and the team on Dec. 21, 2004. The initial drafts of the report were prepared by the professional staff of the APR Office, under the able guidance of a Self-Study Report Committee appointed by the

Provost. The K-State community provided inputs to the report before it was submitted to HLC. To view the report, please see <http://www.k-state.edu/apr/accreditation/selfstudyreport.pdf> at the APR website.

A summary of the progress made on assessment at K-State are being disseminated to the Deans, Faculty Senate and various K-State constituents.

Measures Used *(from page 1)*



- * Case analyses, studies or reports
- * Laboratory exercises, practicals, or reports
- * Standardized Test, Grable and Cantrell test assessing four domains of student achievement)
- * National licensure, certification or professional exams (e.g., Education of Young Children state licensure exam, National ServSafe Certification Exam)
- * Internally and externally reviewed exhibition or product of student work (e.g., architectural design project)
- * Employer evaluation of performance during internships, based on program objectives and student learning outcomes

Indirect Measures:

- Senior exit surveys and focus groups
- Alumni surveys
 - Employer, company, or industry advisory group surveys
 - Student perceptions of their learning, experience or satisfaction in the degree program
- Level of student engagement on practices related to high levels of learning and development (NSSE)

February's newsletter will be sent electronically. The newsletters will also be available online, and can be accessed at the following link on the APR webpage:

<http://www.ksu.edu/apr/resources/newsletter.htm>

<http://www.ksu.edu/apr/resources/newsletter.htm>

ASSISTING EACH OTHER IN ASSESSMENT

Departments sharing their success stories, issues confronted, and solicit informational assistance through our newsletter can help others across campus. Departments should use our newsletter as a platform for these purposes.

Feel free to email your articles (which should be between 200-400 words) to pmarsh@k-state.edu.

Integration of Assessment Beyond Academic Programs

(Excerpt from the "2005 Focused Visit Report" on Assessment. Kansas State University. Dec. 21, 2004, pp. 19, 35-44.)

Although the assessment process at K-State was originally focused on the academic degree programs, the goal is for eventual integration of other service and support units into the process. As of 2004, the following major units/initiatives have started developing student learning outcomes and are working on assessment plans that parallel and integrate with the process being followed by the academic programs. These units are working with the APR Office during the review, revision, and approval process.

- The Hale Library has developed an initial focus on defining expectations and assessing information literacy.
- The Institutional Advancement office has revised their student learning outcomes and has devise assessment strategies within the Student Affairs and Student Life areas.
- The Division of Continuing Education assists programs in the distribution and collection of student learning information, student and departmental evaluations; and assessment of student services related to distance education.
- The Community Service Program (CSP), the university's service learning program, supports faculty and administration in the design, organization and conduct of service learning activities.
- Diversity Assessment Facilitators are convening. Diversity is an important priority of the university, as reflected in its inclusion among the five undergraduate university student learning outcomes, and the assessment of diversity is being approached through multi-dimensional but coordinated efforts including partnerships with the Tilford Group, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, the Assessment & Program Review office, and academic colleges.

♠ Would like to share with your colleagues information, tools or articles on assessment?

♠ Need more resources on assessment?

♠ Need to contact us?

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