Assessment: Program vs Course

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Session Road Map

❖ Introduction to the session
❖ What is assessment?
  ○ Program vs Course
❖ What are learning outcomes? How do they align?
❖ Assignments that promote learning
❖ Learning Assessment Techniques
❖ Closing the Loop
What is assessment?

Assessment is the systematic collection and analysis of information to improve student learning.

- It makes the learning process more effective.
- It helps instructors become better teachers.
- It provides systematic feedback to students.
Every program has a set of learning outcomes. What do you want the student to know or be able to do when they complete the program?

The General Education Program has 4 learning outcomes*. Communicate Effectively, Understand and Value Differences, Think Critically, Use Information Effectively and Ethically.

*there are specific descriptors for each outcome
Assessment of *Course* Learning Outcomes

❖ Course-based assessment refers to methods of assessing student learning within the classroom environment, using course goals, objectives, and content to gauge the extent of the learning that is taking place.

❖ Assessment vs Evaluation:
Program vs Course

❖ GE Program Outcomes (4)

❖ Outcomes for GE components:
  ➢ Exploring Perspectives (EP)
  ➢ Building Connections (BC)
  ➢ Attributes:
    ■ Diversity & Equity
    ■ Quantitative Reasoning
    ■ World Cultures and Societies
    ■ Writing

❖ Each individual course outcomes:
  ➢ EP/BC
  ➢ Attribute

❖ Course objectives/goals

These should align with the program outcomes!
Course Assignments/Assessments

❖ Can shape what and how a students learns in a course
➢ Develop assignments that encourage students to not just “complete the assignment because I have to”, but that encourage a student to think “Why would a teacher have me do an assignment like this?”

➢ Example:
  ■ Create a cover sheet for each assignment
    ● Ask the student why they think you developed this particular assignment to provide evidence of learning.
Make room for failure!

- Weird assignments (non-traditional) require more deliberate thought of students
  - Key: Make room for failure ➔ allow time for formative feedback ➔ regrade revisions
Assignments that Promote Learning

❖ Content learning
  ➢ Is it important? Interesting? Challenging?
  ➢ How does the assignment advance what students should know by the end of the course and end of the program?

❖ Promote development of skills
  ➢ What skills is the course content well-positioned to develop?
  ➢ What skills is the assignment is a good position to develop?

❖ Skills are best developed
  ➢ One at a time
  ➢ With fixed and focused attention
  ➢ Accompanied with deliberate practice
Learning Assessment Techniques

❖ Learning Assessment Techniques (LATs)
➢ balance disciplinary content and sound pedagogy as they promote engaged, active learning
■ that produces an assessable learning artifact
■ can be evaluated for student achievement

Learning Assessment Techniques handout
Tips for Learning Assessments in an Online Classroom

Learning Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty by Elizabeth F. Barkley and Clarie Howell Major, 2016 (an online version of this book is available at the University of Arizona Library)
Create Assessment Rubrics

❖ Why?
➢ Rubrics promote effective assessment because they establish clear, appropriate criteria and standards by which to measure student progress toward or achievement of learning goals.
➢ Rubrics help standardize multiple class sections and instructors.
➢ Rubrics help clarify expectations for students.
Closing the Loop: Depending on assessment results

- Do you need to adjust the goal?
- If targets are met do you want to raise them? Expand goals?
- Would it help to modify your objectives/outcomes? Are they tangible and produce a product?
- Should outcome statements be tightened or loosened?
- Would it be useful to modify/expand upon your purpose for assessing?

- Would it be worthwhile to experiment with a new LAT? Or a different instructional context?
- Have you considered making changes in various elements?
- Could changes in preparatory materials help?
- Might you introduce the activity in a way that is more engaging?
- Would it help to change any of the steps in the activity?
- Are there ways that you could make the timing of the phases more efficient?
Assessment

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