Documenting Assessment Activities for programs Offered 100% Online

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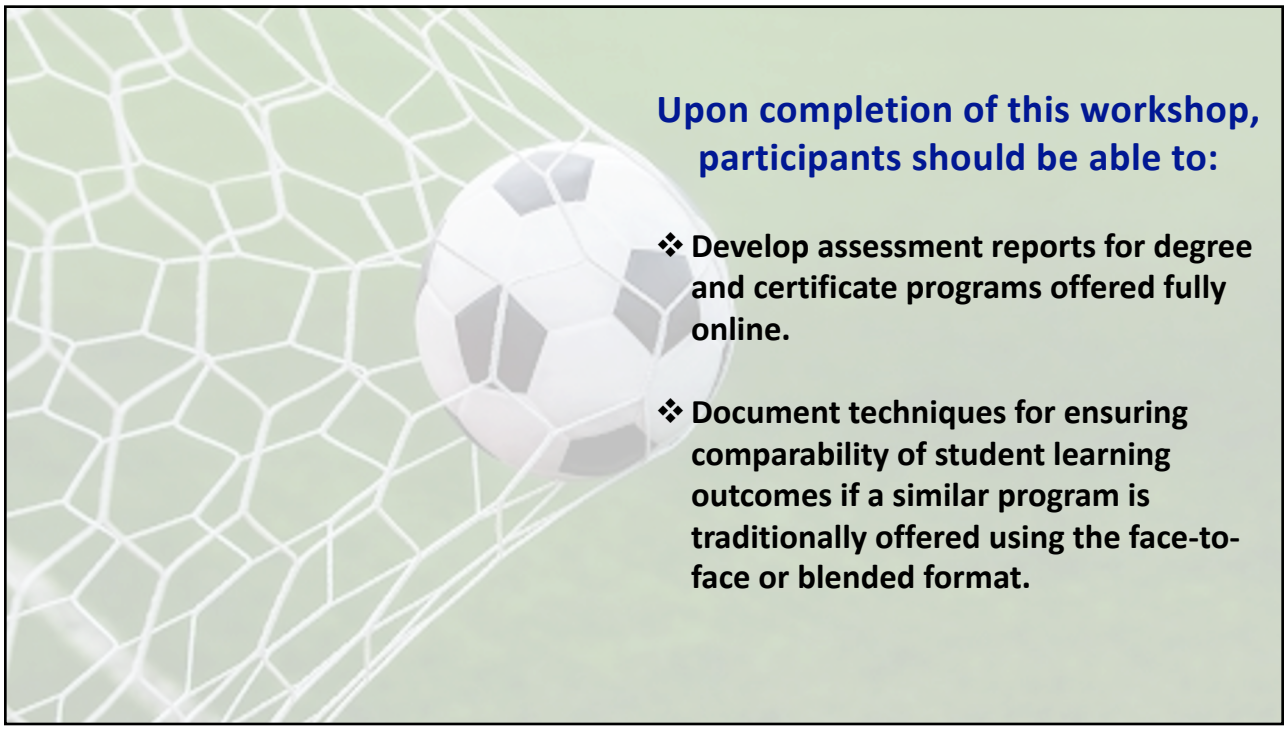

Upon completion of this workshop, participants should be able to:

- Develop assessment reports for degree and certificate programs offered fully online.
- Document techniques for ensuring comparability of student learning outcomes if a similar program is traditionally offered using the face-to-face or blended format.

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Why is this critical?

Program Effectiveness

- Student Success
- Teaching and Learning
- Retention Rates
- Completion Rates
- Career Placement/Employment
- Access

Accreditation Standards

HLC Core Component 3.A.3

The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

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Why is this critical?

Accreditation Standards

HLC Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1) The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2) The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3) The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

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Documenting assessment activities

Modes of Delivery [Certificate or Degree Program]	Assessment Report Required?	Evidence of Comparability Required?
100% Online	✓	✗
100% Online AND Face-to-Face or Blended Format	✓	✓

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Simple Steps of the Assessment Process

Programs have the greatest difficulty in the assessment cycle of "closing the loop"

Banta & Blaich, 2011

1. Articulate Student Learning Outcomes
2. Measure Student Learning Outcomes
3. Analyze Data & Document Results
4. Make Adjustments

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STEP 1: Articulate Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

What do you want students
to know and do
by the time they graduate from your certificate or degree program?

Comparability Strategy

Ensure that SLOs are similar for programs offered BOTH 100% and those traditionally offered using F2F or blended format.

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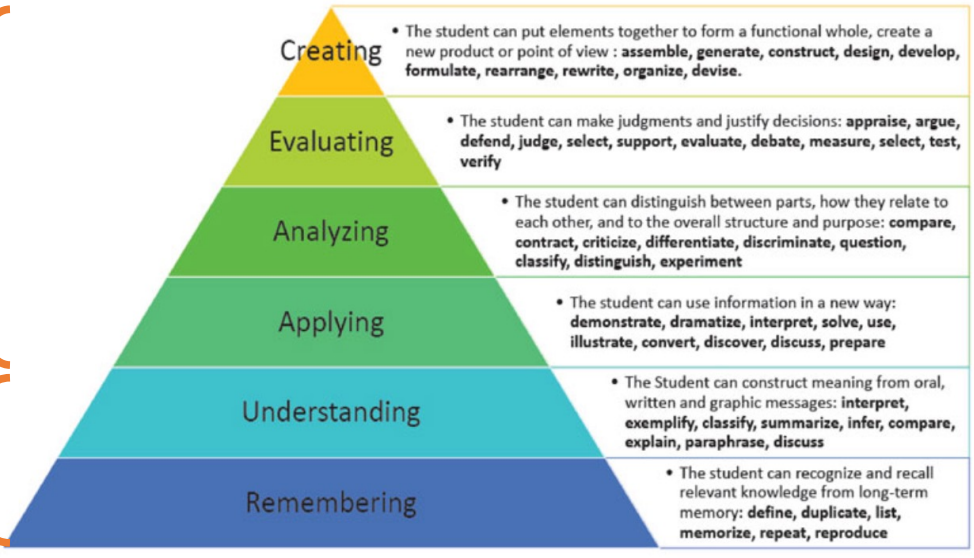
Articulating SLOs using Bloom's Taxonomy

Higher order thinking skills

Lower order thinking skills



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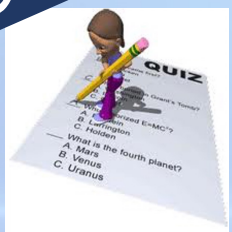
STEP 2: Measure SLOs

WHERE?

SIMPLE CURRICULUM MAPPING

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	CORE COURSES			
	A	D	E	F
1	✓	✓	✓	✓
2		✓	✓	✓
3	✓			✓

HOW?



DIRECT ASSESSMENT

INDIRECT ASSESSMENT

Hint:

- *Undergraduate: Focus on core courses and other educational experiences required of all students.*
- *Graduate: Center on processes that prepare students for culminating experiences AND assessment of the culminating experiences.*

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Curriculum Map Template

PROGRAM LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	CORE COURSES							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Knowledge of Theories								
Critical Thinking								
Communication Skills								
Quantitative Reasoning								
Application of Theories								
Problem Solving								

Build a Curriculum

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Curriculum Map Template *(basic)*

PROGRAM LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	CORE COURSES							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Knowledge of Theories			✓				✓	✓
Critical Thinking	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓
Communication Skills				✓	✓	✓		
Quantitative Reasoning								
Application of Theories		✓			✓	✓		✓
Problem Solving								✓

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Curriculum Map Template *(with levels)*

PROGRAM LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	CORE COURSES							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Knowledge of Theories							A	M
Critical Thinking	I		A	A			A	M
Communication Skills	I			A	A	A		
Quantitative Reasoning								
Application of Theories					A	A		
Problem Solving								M

MAPPING KEY:

I=Introduced A=Advanced M=Mastery

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Curriculum Map Template *(with levels)*

PROGRAM LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	CORE COURSES							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Knowledge of Theories		I			A		A	M
Critical Thinking	I	I	A	A			A	M
Communication Skills	I	I		A	A	A	M	M
Quantitative Reasoning			I		A		M	M
Application of Theories	I				A	A		M
Problem Solving		I		A	A		M	M

MAPPING KEY:

I=Introduced A=Advanced M=Mastery

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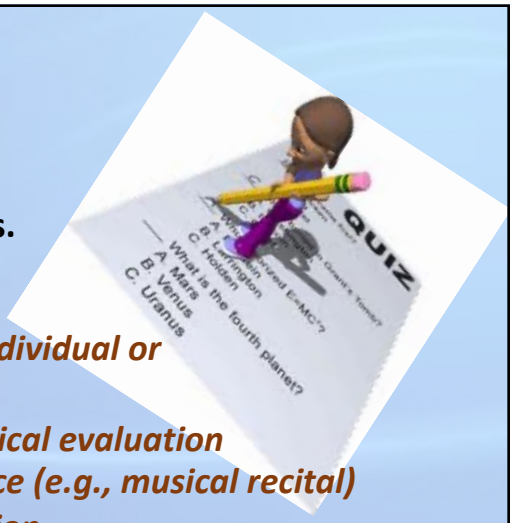
Direct Assessments

…are "measurement" strategies that require students to demonstrate achievement levels related to program-specific learning outcomes.



- *Pre and posttests*
- *Multiple-choice tests*
- *Essays*
- *Portfolio evaluation*
- *Case studies*
- *Reflective journals*
- *Capstone projects*
- *Project Designs*
- *Class projects (individual or group)*
- *Internship or clinical evaluation*
- *Performance piece (e.g., musical recital)*
- *Poster presentation*

**All the above methods, except for multiple-choice tests, require the use of rubrics to assess the quality of student performance.*

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Indirect Assessments

…are reports of student "perceptions/opinions" regarding their learning.

- *Course Evaluations*
- *Transcripts*
- *End of Course Grades*
- *Interviews*
- *Focus Groups*
- *Student Surveys*

**SLOs should primarily be assessed using direct assessments. Indirect assessments are simply used to augment results of the direct assessments but should not be used without direct methods.*

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STEP 2: Measure SLOs

- *Are there common major assessments, exams or experiences between the programs?*
- *Are the assignments aligned directly with the program SLOs?*
- *Are there common, generic rubrics used to evaluate the quality of student work for various SLOs?*
- *Do the rubrics reflect a set of common criteria and scales to allow for comparability of student performance data?*
- *Do syllabi for all required courses reflect similar course level student learning outcomes?*

Comparability Strategy

Focus on common elements regarding WHERE and HOW program SLOs are measured.

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STEP 3: Analyze & Interpret Student Performance

Key Questions

- *What do the data show about your students' level of mastery of intended learning outcomes?*
- *Are there areas where students are outstanding? Are they consistently weak on certain skills?*
- *Are there areas where performance is good, but not outstanding, and you'd like to see better/higher performance?*

Comparability Strategy

Find out if there are major differences regarding student performance in each SLO between programs.

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STEP 4: Use Results for Continuous Improvement

Key Questions

- What will you do to improve student learning?
- Which program elements should be
  - Reinforced?
  - Maintained?
  - Strengthened?
  - Modified?

Comparability Strategy

If there are major differences in student performance between similar programs offered in distinct environments, then discussions should be held to determine actions for continuous improvement.

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