

Annual Program Assessment

A Practical Guide for
Faculty and Administrators

2008-2009

CCAC

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Assessment is a Process



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Our Model: The No-frills Assessment Plan*

Step 1: Select one objective

Step 2: Pick two measures

Step 3: Have a meeting to discuss results

* Barbara Walvoord, University of Notre Dame

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Annual Program Assessment Process

Step 1: Start with program objectives, pick one

- **Program Objectives** are detailed aspects of the program that are accomplished by the successful completion of the course outcomes.
- Each program should have 5 objectives
- Faculty from each program/discipline select one objective to be assessed during the first discipline meeting of the year

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Writing Objectives

1. In order to write an assessable objective, first answer one of the following:

Content: What do you want them to know?

Values: What do you want them to have?

Skills: What do you want them to do?

2. Complete the following statement: *Students will [be able to]...* (follow with an appropriate, measurable verb)

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Annual Program Assessment Process

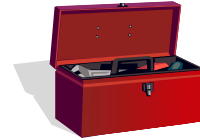
Step 2: Pick two measures

- One direct measure - Tangible evidence of what students have and have not learned
- One indirect* measure - Reveals students are learning but evidence of what students have learned is less clear

(*It is permissible to select a second direct measure in lieu of an indirect measure as long as the two are related)

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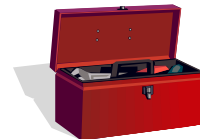
Direct Measures



- Direct evidence is observable
- With direct evidence you should be able to answer the following questions:
 - Are students achieving the objective? Y or N
 - How well are they doing?
- Examples:
 - Student work compared to a rubric
 - Student performance on embedded test questions
 - Student performance on a CAT
 - Note: Tap into existing products (tests, assignments, projects) “embedded assessment”

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Indirect Measures



- Indirect evidence can be opinion based or have other influencing factors
- Examples:
- Student self-reflection
 - Focus group interviews
 - Matching course outcomes to general education student behaviors
 - Qualitative analysis of comments/feedback
 - Graduation or job placement rates

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Qualitative Analysis

- Quick read-throughs – read through results quickly to get a general impression
- Tallies – responses fall into reasonably discrete categories
- Thematic analysis - categorized by themes, patterns, links and relationships
- It's important to ensure consistent and fair analysis – consider creating written rules or examples for categorizing ambiguous examples

(Suskie p 179)

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Choose an indirect measure related to the direct measure

- Indirect evidence supports direct evidence
 - It provides insight into the results from the direct measure
- Example: Students will exhibit fluency in a foreign language

Direct: Scores on a faculty designed rubric for an oral presentation at the end of an intermediate-level course

Indirect: Analysis of Productive Study-Time Logs (CAT 37)

Relationship – The amount of time spent practicing the language results in fluency

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The Basics of a Plan (Appendix E due September 15)

Program Assessment Plan for [Program Name]

List objective to be assessed this year:

List the two measures for assessing the objective:

Direct:

Indirect:

Establish Performance Standards for the measures

Who?

Statement about method

What?

How will you assess achievement of this objective?

When?

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Example of a Plan - Education

List objective to be assessed this year: Identify current PA teacher certification requirements, including the development of a professional portfolio, and demonstrate behaviors appropriate to the profession

List the two measures for assessing the objective:

Direct: EDU 201 students will begin a professional portfolio, which will be based on the INTASC standards. Faculty will assess portfolios using a checklist of artifacts

Indirect: EDU 201 students will write a minimum 3-5 sentence paragraph describing how each artifact demonstrates their understanding of a specific INTASC standard. Faculty will assess using a rubric.

Performance Standard: Success will be determined by the number of students who satisfy minimum requirements on the portfolio checklist and number of students whose descriptive paragraphs meet criteria of Adequate or above on the rubric.

Statement about method: EDU 201 faculty will analyze checklists and rubric scores upon completion [of the portfolios].

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Annual Program Assessment Process



Step 3: Have an annual meeting to discuss data and identify action items

Analysis of data:

- Rely on faculty expertise
- Identify student strengths and weaknesses during discussion of results
- Use the results of indirect measures to support direct evidence
- Example: The single most frequently mentioned weakness is...

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The Basics of a Report (Appendix I due March 31)

Assessment Results for [Program]

List specific objective that was measured

For the Direct and Indirect Measures:

- Summarize the results
- Is the objective being achieved?
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Identify actions to be taken to improve student learning

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Example of a Report - Education

Summarize the direct results – 79 of 85 students satisfied the minimum requirements on the checklist

Is the objective being achieved? Yes.

Identify strengths and weaknesses

Strengths: Students express understanding that portfolio development is important

Weaknesses: Student understanding of the INTASC standards is often superficial

Identify actions to be taken to improve student learning:

Principles will be introduced early in the semester and students will be asked to create a rationale statement for each assignment they complete for the class. Therefore, they will have received feedback and constructive suggestions on the process prior to applying to their Portfolio Project.

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Suggested schedule for 2008-09

- Fall discipline meeting – identify program objective, measures, and method
- By September 15 – submit an assessment plan to Discipline Dean and VP for L & SD
- Fall semester – conduct assessment and analyze data
- Spring discipline meeting – discuss results
- Before the end of the academic year - submit a report for Discipline Dean and VP for L & SD

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Valuable Resources

Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Student Learning Assessment: Options and Resources. 2003

Chapter 3 – Evaluating Student Learning

Suskie, Linda. Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide. Anker Publishing Co. 2004.

Part III – The Assessment Toolbox

Angelo and Cross. Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers. Jossey-Bass. 1993.

Chapters 7 – 9

www.ccac.edu/assessment

- Program Assessment
- Assessment Tool Kit

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Thank You

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