

Assessment Council Donnelly College

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Really...What is Assessment?

# Steps for Successful Assessment

1. Identify SLO as focus in your department
2. Identify Performance Indicators
3. Determine methods of assessment
4. Gather evidence
5. Close the loop
  1. Review and interpret results
  2. Recommend actions
  3. Make changes
  4. Measure effectiveness of changes

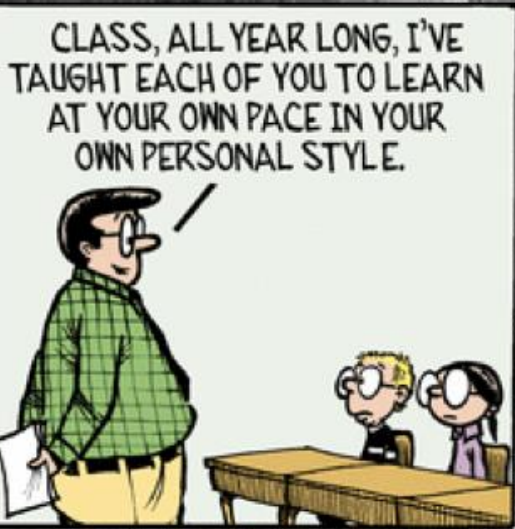
# Learning Outcomes for today:

## Assessing Performance Indicators

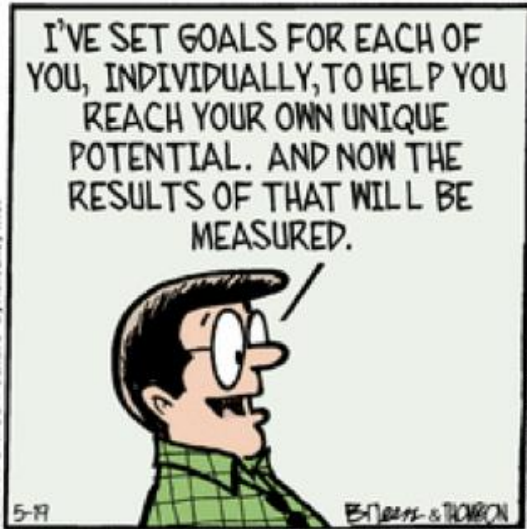
Identify direct and indirect methods of assessments

Define what rubrics are and how they can be used

Explain how course-embedded assignments can be used for assessing PI.



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# Why Assess? Assessing answers questions:

1. What should our students be learning?
2. What are our students actually learning?
3. What can we do to help our students learn?
4. What types of changes can we make to assignments, activities, materials, pedagogy to increase actual student learning?

Can we talk?

Talk  
Talk  
Talk

Talk  
Talk  
Talk

Talk  
Talk  
Talk

# Decisions, decisions, decisions

## Question 1

How many of you made a decision about a program/course in the past year?

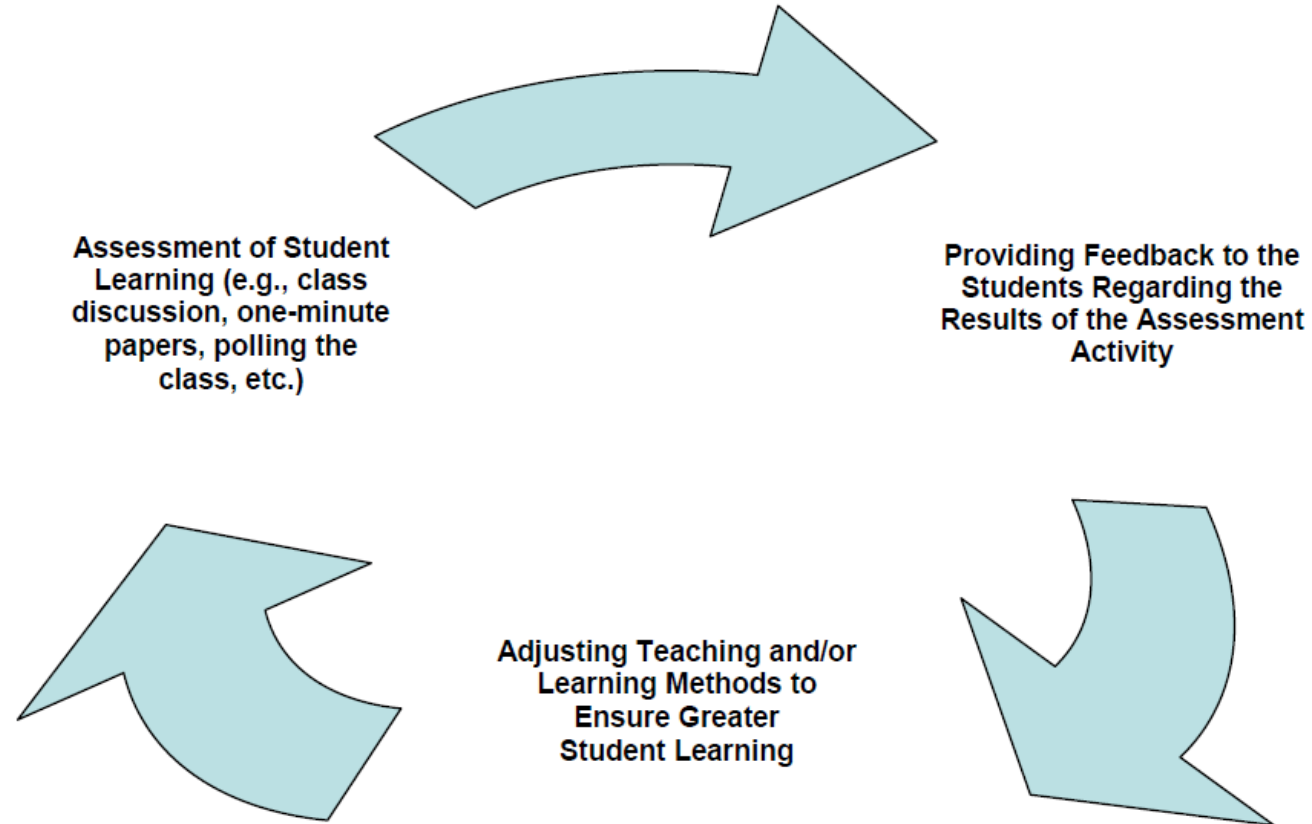
## Question 2

Did you have reasons for the decisions you made?

## Question 3

What were you trying to do or achieve with the program/course when you made this decision?

*An Assessment Plan should reflect the following cycle:*





# Performance Indicators

Indicate what concrete actions the student should be able to perform as a result of participation in a program. Once program outcomes have been identified, the knowledge and skills necessary for the mastery of these outcomes should be listed. This will allow the desired behavior of the students to be described, and will eliminate ambiguity concerning demonstration of expected competencies.

Performance indicators are made up of at least two main elements; action verb and content (referent). The expected behavior must be specified by name, using an observable action verb such as interpret, discriminate, or define.

Adapted from:

A Guide to Developing and Delivering Measurable Student Learning Outcomes  
(Canada College)

# Direct vs. Indirect



# Indirect Methods

- **Ask students to reflect on their learning rather than demonstrate it.**

(Palomba, C and Banta, T, "The Essentials of Successful Assessment" in Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing, and Improving Assessment in Higher Education, Jossey-Bass. 1999.)

- **Capture students' perceptions of their learning and the educational environment that supports learning.**

(Overview of Types of Measures, Margaret Kasimatis)

- **Provide signs that students are probably learning, but the evidence of exactly what they are learning is less clear.**

(Suskie, L. "Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide," Anker Publishing, 2004)

# Indirect Methods

- Student Surveys
- Course Evaluations
- In Class Surveys
- Department Surveys
- Student Evaluation of Instruction
- Student Interviews
- Course Grades

OK CLASS, THESE CAREER PATH SUGGESTIONS  
ARE BASED ON THE PERSONALITY ASSESSMENTS  
YOU ALL TOOK LAST WEEK...



# Direct Methods

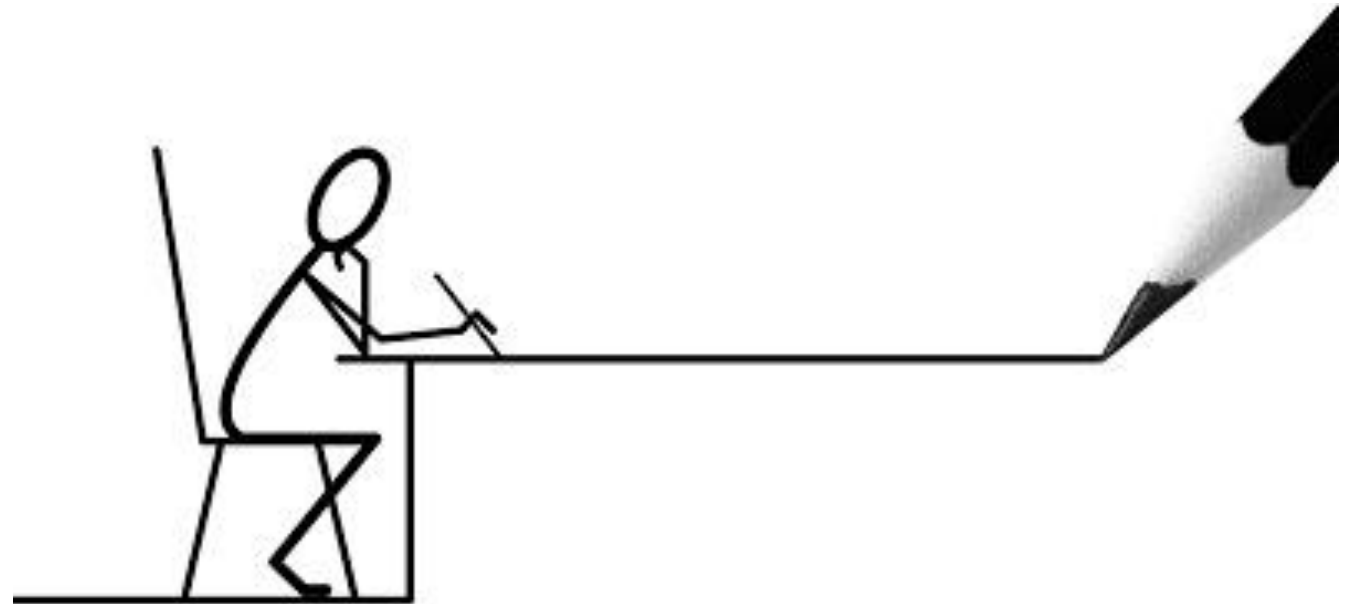
- **Require students to display their knowledge and skills as they respond to the instrument itself.** (Palomba, C and Banta, T, "The Essentials of Successful Assessment" in Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing, and Improving Assessment in Higher Education, Jossey-Bass. 1999.)
- **Look at student work products or performances that demonstrate level of learning.** (Overview of Types of Measures, Margaret Kasimatis)
- **Are tangible, visible, self-explanatory evidence of exactly what students have and haven't learned.** (Suskie, L. "Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide," Anker Publishing, 2004)

# Direct Methods

- Locally developed tests/test questions
- Rubrics for evaluating:
- Essays/Papers
- Lab work
- Exam questions
- Capstone projects
- Exhibits
- Performances/Presentations
- Portfolios of student work
- Comprehensive Exams
- Standardized Tests

# DCLO #1

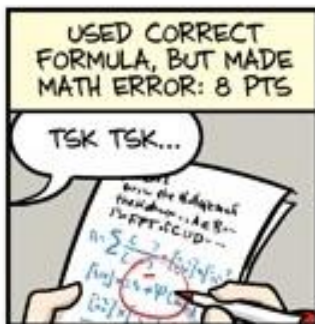
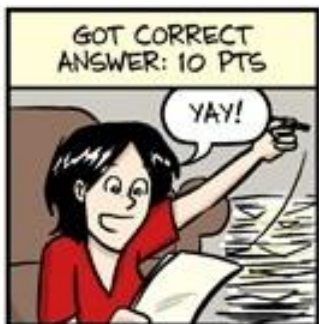
- What is your PLO/SLO for DCLO#1?
- What are your Performance Indicators for this?
- How will you assess communication in your area of emphasis?
- What tools are you currently using to assess this objective?
- When you have the results what data driven changes will you make in your area of emphasis?
- How will you "close the loop?"





# GRADING RUBRIC

PROBLEM 1 (TOTAL POINTS: 10)



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# Using Rubrics to Assess Performance Indicators What is a rubric?

A scoring guide composed of

- the things you are looking for
- guidelines for evaluating each of those things

A kind of scorecard that breaks down a written or demonstrated assignment into manageable, observable pieces.

Types of rubric :

**Holistic** – A single score for overall performance

**Analytic** – Grading is broken down into specific criteria with levels of performance provided

**Checklist** – Indicates if a scoring criterion is present, as opposed to providing a description of performance

## Why use a rubric?

If the assignment requires an answer more complicated than one that could be corrected with an answer key.

- When “complex products or behaviors” are being evaluated, which require more than a right or wrong answer.

Rubrics are often used to assess how well students perform a task (speaking, writing, performing, etc.) as opposed to whether an answer is *right* or *wrong* “quality continuum” from exceptional to not meeting expectations

# Using Tests to Assess Performance Indicators

After you decide that using a test is the most effective way to assess a Performance Indicators ...

- Align test items with Performance Indicators to match specific SLOs
- Each instructor grades the test for his/her course
- Each instructor provides the SLO-related results for his/her section to program
- Data is aggregated across sections for program assessment
- Criteria for success is determined Ex. The average grade on each PI should be at least 75%.
- Data is reviewed and discussed
- Efforts to improve student learning are put in place

# Benefits of Using Course-Embedded Assessments

- Takes advantage that students are motivated to do well as assignment contributes to course grade
- Does not usually require anything extra of the students
- Is not costly (Instrumentation, Analysis and Reporting)
- Is faculty-driven and therefore more likely to be used to improve student learning
- Feedback to faculty is often quick
- Will likely be used again in future semesters, thus more easily allowing for follow-up assessments
- More easily directly linked to specific SLOs
- Convenience
- Provides students with clear expectations and criteria for assessing achievement of SLO

# Choosing a Method for Assessment

## MATURE

- **Matches:** Is aligned with the outcome to be measured
- **Appropriate:** Choose appropriate method
- **Targets:** Indicates desired level of performance
- **Useful:** Will provide you with useful and useable information; methods help identify what is already effective and what can be improved
- **Reliable:** Based on tested, known methods and yields consistent results over time.
- **Effective and Efficient:** Each approach accurately and concisely measures the outcome

*Adapted from [http://oeas.ucf.edu/doc/adm\\_assess\\_handbook.pdf](http://oeas.ucf.edu/doc/adm_assess_handbook.pdf)*

# Evaluative Rubric for Program Assessment Plans

(handout)

# Assessment: An On-going Process

- Assessment is an on-going process
- Each assessment is a “pilot test” for the next one
- Keep a record of what worked...and what didn't
- There's always error
- Each iteration brings you: The benefit of experience
- A more accepting environment
- Baselines for future measurements
  
- Goal: A valid and reliable assessment Student work: does it reflect the learning outcome?
- Assessment method: does it measure the learning outcome? Does it measure what you intend it to measure?
- For assessment: is scoring consistent? From “The “Nuts and Bolts” of Implementing An Assessment Plan” at <http://www.web.virginia.edu/iaas/assessment>



# Q&A

