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Meeting the Middle States Standards

**Deborah L. Moeckel, SUNY Assistant Provost
SUNY Cobleskill Faculty
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deborah.moeckel@suny.edu**



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**First, are you
sufficiently
caffeinated?**



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**Then, understand
what's needed.**



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**Next, define
assessment.**



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Assessment General Principles

MSCHE requires:

- Organized and systematic assessments
- **Meaningful curricular goals with defensible standards**
- Communication of the assessment results to stakeholders
- Consideration and use of assessment results for the improvement of educational effectiveness
- Assessment of the assessment



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Requirements of Affiliation

8. The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and **makes public** how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes.

9. The institution's student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment of student achievement throughout the educational offerings, **regardless of certificate or degree level or delivery and instructional modality.**

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SUNY Policy

- SUNY policy is for institutions to meet or exceed Middle States expectations.
- Program Review was established to formalize assessment cycles at 5-7 years. This expectation is for program outcomes rather than program learning outcomes.
- Program Learning Outcomes, General Education Learning Outcomes and Institutional Learning Outcomes should be assessed systematically and regularly. This is typically done through course level assessment or through capstone projects or internships and the like.



Academic Assessment

Academic assessment should have two types:

1. Program Review should be a comprehensive programmatic self-study which examines program outcomes such as completion rates, licensure exams, job placement, transfer, etc. Advisory committee input is valuable in considering curriculum currency. Also considered should be costs, revenue, faculty, equipment and other requirements for program quality and rigor. This should occur every 5-7 years.



2. Assessment of Student Learning should occur much more frequently, and should be comprised of determination of student achievement in all learning outcomes: CLOs, GELOs, PLOs, and ILOs. The process must document use of assessment results to improve teaching and learning, and must also determine whether any changes were successful in achieving this goal. This type of assessment may also be valuable in the development or revision of curricula.



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“Acquire and Demonstrate”

Good assessment of student learning should:

1. Identify and publish the student learning outcomes.
2. Establish the manner in which it will be determined that the student can demonstrate the indicated outcome apart from any assigned grade.
3. Determine whether or not the student can do what the outcome describes.
4. Document the findings of the assessment, analyze the results and take steps to make improvements in the teaching and learning process.
5. Assess the effectiveness of the intervention taken in step #4 (i.e. did it work?). If not, what alternative action will you take?

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The Expectations

- Course student learning outcomes form the basis of course level learning and should be indicated in all course syllabi.
- Although Middle States does not specifically require course level assessment, this usually provides a format for assessment of other outcomes at the gen ed, program, and institutional levels.

**If it's not
meaningful and
useful, it's not
assessment.**

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**The good news is that you
do not have to start all
over again!**

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So what are the issues?

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Grades \neq Assessment

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Definitions

- Program Learning Outcomes: after completing the academic program, students should be able to demonstrate these outcomes and competencies.
- Program Outcomes: Typically include completion data such as graduation rates and placement rates. The government includes such factors as loan default rates as well.



Questions

1. What's the difference between grading and assessing student learning?
2. What's the difference between a Student Learning Outcome (SLO) and a list of skills?



What do grades tell you?

1. If two thirds of the students in a course get a C, what does that tell you about what they know and what they don't know?
2. How will you then know what adjustments to make in your teaching/content so that learning improves?

For Example:

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Grading scale: 13-15=A, 10-12=B, 7-9=C, 4-6=D, <4=F

	Student #1	Total points 7	Grade C			Points
	Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate their abilities to produce coherent texts within common college level forms.	Does not meet (0) (add description)	Approaches (1) (add description)	Meets (2) (add description)	Exceeds (3) (add description)	
1.	Writer presents an identifiable thesis.					2
2.	The paper moves coherently and logically from introduction to conclusion.					2
3.	Paragraphs present examples and evidence to support the thesis.					2
4.	The language and tone are appropriate for the intended audience.					1
5.	Mechanics (grammar, punctuation, spelling and documentation, if needed) are accurate.					0

Grading scale: 13-15=A, 10-12=B, 7-9=C, 4-6=D, <4=F

	Student #2	Total points 7	Grade C			Points
	Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate their abilities to produce coherent texts within common college level forms.	Does not meet (0) (add description)	Approaches (1) (add description)	Meets (2) (add description)	Exceeds (3) (add description)	
1.	Writer presents an identifiable thesis.					3
2.	The paper moves coherently and logically from introduction to conclusion.					2
3.	Paragraphs present examples and evidence to support the thesis.					1
4.	The language and tone are appropriate for the intended audience.					1
5.	Mechanics (grammar, punctuation, spelling and documentation, if needed) are accurate.					0

Grading scale: 13-15=A, 10-12=B, 7-9=C, 4-6=D, <4=F

	Student #3	Total points 7	Grade C			Points
	Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate their abilities to produce coherent texts within common college level forms.	Does not meet (0) (add description)	Approaches (1) (add description)	Meets (2) (add description)	Exceeds (3) (add description)	
1.	Writer presents an identifiable thesis.					1
2.	The paper moves coherently and logically from introduction to conclusion.					1
3.	Paragraphs present examples and evidence to support the thesis.					2
4.	The language and tone are appropriate for the intended audience.					1
5.	Mechanics (grammar, punctuation, spelling and documentation, if needed) are accurate.					2



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Learning Outcomes vs Skills

1. Note that in the above rubrics, the learning outcome is more general and written in terms of what students will be able to do.
2. The list of skills or criteria comprises how the learning outcome is demonstrated.

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Relationship between assessment and grades

- Assessment should inform grading.
- Grades should not substitute for assessment.
- Assessment should tell you what students know and are able to do.
- Grades only tell you how much of the content was learned.

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**“Service course”
assessment and links to
program learning
outcomes**

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For courses not in the major which address crucial PLOs

Consider:

- Finding a way to identify the majors of all the students in these courses and report results by major. (Ask them their major the first day of class and put it in your grade book?)
- Using Portfolio creation during the First Year Experience course to track student progress with these PLOs.
- Collaborating with discipline faculty to establish broad rubrics/criteria for assessing these courses.

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Assessing Gen Ed and ILOs as a program across the Institution

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Some Strategies

- Aggregate the data for ILOs and GELOs across the institution to determine trends
- Disaggregate again to see where improvements might be made.
- Consider using any capstone or applied learning courses as useful places to conduct cumulative assessments of all learning outcomes.

Possible next steps

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Assess Your Assessment

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Assessment of the Assessment

- Don't overdo it. Assessment isn't busy work.
- Assessment should give you meaningful, relevant and useful evidence to help you improve teaching.
- Entering information in WEAVE is important for documentation, but...
- **Acting on the evidence and documenting the impact and next steps is essential.**

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Resources

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SUNY Council on Assessment

- Certificate programs
- Rubrics for Institutional Effectiveness and Program Assessment
- Zoom-in Workshops

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Program: _____

Sponsoring Department/School: _____

Directions: For each row in the rubric, select the level (0, 1, 2, or 3) that most accurately describes the current state of your academic program.

Aspect	Goal	Level 0: Not Evident	Level 1: Emerging	Level 2: Proficient	Level 3: Mature
Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)	There are written, measureable PLOs that are consistent with the department's/school's mission and the program's goals.	Student learning outcomes have not been written for this program.	Student learning outcomes have been written for this program. However, they are not written in terms of what students will know or be able to do as a result of successfully completing the program or they are not clearly measureable.	Measureable PLOs have been written in terms of what students will know or be able to do as a result of completing the program. The statement of PLOs is publicly available.	The PLOs are measureable and also transparently consistent with the sponsoring department's/school's mission and goals. The statement of PLOs is publicly available and incorporated into program-specific publications, including web-based and hard copy, for students.
Program Curriculum Mapping	A comprehensive depiction (curriculum map) of how PLOs are covered by the program curriculum requirements has been created.	No curriculum map exists.	A curriculum map has been created, but it is incomplete. Some PLOs are not mapped to program requirements, and/or the mapping of PLOs to specific course requirements is incomplete, and/or all courses that contribute to a PLO are not shown.	A comprehensive curriculum map has been created showing how all program learning outcomes are addressed by program requirements. The map demonstrates how multiple courses/requirements contribute to achieving some or all of the PLOs.	A comprehensive curriculum map has been created showing clear linkages between all PLOs and programmatic requirements. The curriculum map also shows progressions, as appropriate to the program, from introduction to mastery of PLOs and ties these progressions to successive course requirements.
Alignment of PLOs with Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)	There is clear documentation identifying the alignments between specific ILOs and PLOs.	No documentation showing alignment of PLOs to ILOs exists.	The program has a general statement of how its PLOs relate to the college's statement of ILOs.	A clear and specific depiction of how the PLOs contribute to fulfillment of ILOs exists.	The program's mapping of its PLOs with ILOs also depicts how the PLOs articulate with General Education outcomes.
Program Assessment Plan	The program has a schedule for assessing each PLO.	No assessment plan exists.	There is an established cycle for assessing PLOs.	A plan has been determined that ensures that the assessment of each PLO occurs on an established schedule.	There is an assessment plan that is integrated with the program's curriculum map and that provides for multiple assessments of PLOs on an established schedule.

Aspect	Goal	Level 0: Not Evident	Level 1: Emerging	Level 2: Proficient	Level 3: Mature
Assessment of PLOs	Data from direct measures of student performance, supplemented by indirect measures, are collected regularly to assess all PLOs.	Systematic and sustained efforts to assess PLOs have not commenced.	Some of the PLOs are assessed but there is no established schedule to ensure systematic assessment of all the outcomes.	Assessment of student learning outcomes takes place on an established schedule, and all PLOs are assessed. Most of the outcomes incorporate the use of direct measures of learning and some may include indirect measures.	Direct measures of learning are used to assess each PLO and these are consistently supplemented by indirect measures, as appropriate. All PLOs are assessed on an established schedule.
Dissemination and Consideration of results	Assessment data are recorded, shared, and examined.	Assessment data are collected, but not shared with and/or discussed by program faculty or administration.	Assessment results are collected and recorded in a place accessible by program faculty and administrators, but there is no evidence that faculty are considering the results for the purpose of program modification and improvement.	Assessment results are accessible and there is evidence that the implications of program assessment results are consistently considered by the faculty.	Assessment results are accessible and consistently considered by program faculty. In addition, conclusions and recommendations based on consideration of assessment results are regularly shared with administrators and/or in public forums.
Program Improvement	Assessment results are regularly used as the basis for program modification and continuous improvement.	Assessment data are not examined when considering how to improve the program.	Assessment data are examined when considering program improvements. But, program modification is not guided by the goal to improve learning assessment results.	Assessment results are regularly examined and there is evidence the results have served as the basis of program modifications designed to improve learning assessment results.	Assessment results, along with other program outcome data, are regularly used as the basis for improving the program. Follow-up assessments are performed to ensure that program modifications are effective in improving learning assessment results.
Program Review	Program review is conducted on an established schedule and when conducted a comprehensive self-study is prepared, including an examination of the extent to which the program is achieving its stated learning and other program outcomes.	The program does not conduct a systematic review on an established schedule, or one that includes a comprehensive self-study.	The program conducts a review that includes a comprehensive self-study on an established schedule. PLO assessment results and other program outcome data are reported, but are not the primary consideration in the examination of how well the program is performing.	Program conducts a review that includes a comprehensive self-study on an established schedule. PLO assessment results and other program outcome data are reported and are consistently used as the primary basis of a determination of how well the program is performing.	Program conducts a reviews on an established schedule, and the review is based in a thorough examination of PLO assessment results and other program outcome data. These findings are the basis of program improvement recommendations generated by the review process, ensuring recommendations are based on assessment results.

Questions?

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