



WILLIAM WOODS
UNIVERSITY

WWU Faculty Assessment Guide

Associate Dean of Academic Assessment

WWU FACULTY ASSESSMENT GUIDE **1**

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WWU Faculty Assessment Guide

Mission:

William Woods University promotes a student-centered learning environment valuing inclusion, creativity, and intellectual inquiry. Focused on professions-oriented education, we prepare learners for success.

Historical Perspective

William Woods University draws much strength from a rich heritage of challenge and renewal. Responding in 1870 to the plight of female children orphaned by the American Civil War, members of the Christian Church founded a "Female Orphan School" at the site of a former "Female Academy" established in 1848 by frontier Platte County residents. Irreparably damaged by fire in 1889, the school relocated to Fulton, Callaway County, Missouri, and provided elementary and secondary programs for females in residence and for some males as day students. Known briefly as "Daughter's College," the institution, in 1900, assumed the name of "William Woods College," discontinuing its elementary program and adding a two-year college curriculum. The new name honored a Missouri physician and banker who, out of commitment to providing educational opportunities for young women, endowed the small college with resources sufficient to usher it into the higher education phase of its development.

During the first six decades of the twentieth century the two-year college curriculum gradually shifted its focus from preparing "young ladies" for domestic and community responsibilities to preparing increasing numbers of its students for senior college work at other institutions. The secondary program continued until 1929. A major fire in 1956 once again threatened the continued existence of the institution. This adversity firmed the resolve of a broad constituency and stimulated substantial expansion of the physical facilities. More welcome challenges were found in preparing women for rapidly changing professional and civic roles and in enabling working women and men to meet recurrent educational demands. A four-year degree program was first offered in 1962. In 1993 the institution provided its first master's level program and renamed itself "William Woods University." The institution began its migration to co-education in 1992 and became fully coeducational in 1996. The institution has continued to expand its offerings with an initial Doctorate in Education in early 2000's. The university continued to expand graduate offerings with the addition of a PhD in Organizational Leadership in 2023, and

in 2024 the addition of the EDD Curriculum and Instruction, Doctorate in Business Administration, Pd.D. in Business Administration to name a few.

While the institution's mission and name evolved along with changing circumstances, certain institutional values and traditions proved more persistent. An independent institution, chartered by the State of Missouri, governed by a self-perpetuating board of trustees, and in ongoing covenant relationship with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the University remains committed to serving the public good. In support of a democratic society and free-market economy, the University continues to assure the intellectual freedoms of teaching and learning while helping individual students link intellectual development with the responsibilities of citizenship and professional life. True to its tradition of excellence in the education of women, the University maintains and promotes a learning environment in which the worth and potential of both women and men are given due recognition. Emulating past contributions and accomplishments, William Woods University faces the present and future in the spirit of vigilant renewal.

The Importance of Assessment

Assessment is an important element in the teaching and learning process. By assessing learning outcomes, we understand what and how much students are learning. Through assessment, learning is overtly stated allowing programs to recognize any curriculum changes that may need to be made. Without assessment faculty, would only be guessing at students' knowledge and program's effectiveness.

Of course, assessing student learning is required by accrediting agencies and demonstrates accountability to the University and other stakeholders. But the most important reason for assessing student learning is that it is the right thing to do for students' education. While the focus is on program assessment, much of the basic information about assessment can help develop good course assessment, too. If courses are developed with care and attention to assessment this will benefit the academic program.

Good assessment can evaluate more than one skill when designed effectively and isolating individual skills within the activity. Design assignments that target specific skills. When assessment is thought out and planned, it can reveal how students are thinking and how they arrived at the response provided. Another quality of good assessment is when the assignment is designed in a way that it can be repeated within a course or a program. This allows for more consistency in assessment, but also a way to measure growth of student learning.

William Woods offers a tremendous amount of support to the Assessment process through faculty Assessment Workshops, Student Performance Review, and the Showcase for Scholarly and Creative Projects. The university set aside funds to assist programs in paying for external evaluators, standardized testing, and other judges or participant from outside the university to provide a neutral evaluation of students skill.

Academic Assessment Philosophy

The university recognizes the “Endorsed Principles for Effective Assessment of Student Achievement” developed through collaboration between Higher Education Associations (AACCC, AASCU, ACE, AAU, APLU, NAICU) and Regional Accrediting Commissions (MSCHE, NEASCI-CIHE, NCA-HLC, NWCCU, SACS, WASC-ACCJC, WASC-ACSCU) adopted July 2013.

Federal Law requires that a higher education institution undergoing accreditation provide evidence of “success with respect to student achievement in relation to the institution’s mission.” Both aspects of this requirement—the insistence upon achievement, and the tailoring to institutional mission—are critically important. The demonstration of quality is a fundamental responsibility of all colleges and universities, but both the kinds of quality and the methods used to measure it will differ depending on the mission of the institution.

More specifically, though the exact content of these criteria and the methods for measuring them will differ, all institutions should be expected to provide evidence of success in three domains:

1. Evidence of the student learning experience. Institutions should be able to define and evaluate how their students are learning: more specifically, institutions should be able to describe the kinds of experiences that they expect students to have inside and outside the classroom. Relevant evidence may pertain to targets for the kinds of reading and writing assignments that students should complete; levels of personal interaction with faculty members; residential and/or co-curricular components of the learning experience, and other learning experiences that the institution deems relevant to its mission.
2. Evaluation of student academic performance. Institutions should be able to define meaningful curricular goals, and they must have defensible standards for evaluating whether students are achieving those goals. Appropriate methods for the assessment of student work may include, among other

approaches, meaningful and rigorous faculty evaluation and grading or external benchmarking.

3. Post-graduation outcomes. Institutions should be able to articulate how they prepare students consistently with their mission for successful careers, meaningful lives, and, where appropriate, further education. They should collect and provide data about whether they are meeting these goals. Relevant kinds of data may include completion rates, job placement rates, levels of post-graduation civic participation, kinds of jobs and vocations chosen, surveys pertaining to alumni satisfaction and success, and data on other post-graduation goals relevant to the institution's mission.

The accreditation process needs to allow institutions flexibility with regard to the methods for measuring progress toward these goals. It is a mistake to conflate particular means for measuring goals with the achievement of those goals. Measures of all kinds will work best if they are integrated into the teaching and administration of colleges and universities, analyzed on a regular basis, and summarized in the accreditation process.

Assessment at William Woods

Assessment at William Woods is housed within Institutional Effectiveness and is overseen by the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment. The Director of Institutional Research is also housed in this area of the institution and the two work together to provide usable data for university administration and faculty and staff. Due to the limited resources of the institution, the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment has access to an Assessment Committee to assist with the functions of assessment on campus. The committee structure is described below.

William Woods University Assessment Committee

The Assessment Committee is responsible for guiding the process of academic assessment across the campus in an effort to enhance student learning and facilitate the continuous improvement of academic programs. The committee reviews program level assessment plans for all academic programs and provide recommendations for plan improvements to deans', program directors, and department faculty. In recognizing the diversity of disciplines at WWU, the committee is committed to an assessment process that is faculty driven, student centered and meets the needs of our unique program structure. The committee is comprised of faculty volunteers with an interest in the assessment process.

Charge to the members

The committee is charged with encouraging, supporting, and guiding the growth of effective student learning outcomes assessment practices at William Woods University. The committee is also responsible for guiding the development and integration of student learning outcomes assessment as part of the university-wide assessment and evaluation system that is linked with planning and budgeting processes. The committee will review program level assessment plans for programs and provide recommendations for improvements.

Responsibilities include

- Develop or adopt research-based and or best practice guidelines that promote effective integration of learning outcomes assessment practices at course, program and campus levels.
- Review program assessments as a feedback support
- Facilitate sharing effective assessment practices within and between programs and departments

- Assist with questions on the assessment management system for WWU that archives and tracks program-level learning outcomes assessment activities and the use of results for program improvement purposes.

Academic Assessment Calendar

The following calendar lists the major assessments administered to students on campus, online, and in adult cohort modules of instruction. Additional assessments might be used within programs or departments, but they are either not identified as an institutional assessment tool or not administered on a regular basis.

William Woods University Academic Assessment Calendar					
Assessment Event	Date of Administration	Type of Students	Responsibility Administration	Analysis	Administration Completion Date
CLA+	Fall odd years	Incoming Freshman	Assessment	Assessment, Academic Council, Faculty	Within 4 weeks of the start of the fall semester
CLA+	Spring even years	Graduating Seniors	Assessment	Assessment, Academic Council, Faculty	The last 4 weeks of the spring semester
NSSE	Spring Odd years	Traditional Campus Student	Assessment	Assessment, Academic Council, Student Life, Faculty	Spring Semester
Noel Levitz Priorities Survey for Online Learners	Spring Odd years	Online and Graduate students	Assessment	Assessment, Academic Council, Faculty	Spring Semesters
Annual Assessment Reports (Undergraduate and Graduate)	Spring	NA	Assessment	Academic Council, Assessment	Late Summer
Program Reviews (Undergrad and Graduate)	On a 5 year rotation	NA	Assessment, Academic Council, Graduate Academic Council	Academic Council, Graduate Academic Council, Assessment	March
End of Course Evaluations	End of every term	All Students	Faculty/UIT/Deans/Program Directors	Faculty, Department Chairs, Deans, Program Directors,	20 days from the end of course.

Academic Advisor Survey	End of Fall and Spring Semesters	Traditional Undergraduate Students	Faculty/ UIT/ Academic Dean/ Directors	Faculty, Directors, Academic Dean	Fall and Spring Semester
Dissertation Advisor Survey	End of Fall, Spring, and Summer Semesters	Doctoral Students	Faculty/UIT/Deans/ Program Directors	Dissertation Advisors, Deans, School of Education Leaders	Fall, Spring, Summer Semesters
General Education Assessment	Spring	All Undergraduate Students	Curriculum Committee, Assessment, Faculty	Curriculum Committee, Assessment, Faculty	June
Graduating Student Survey	Annual ongoing - when fill out graduation request	All students	Assessment, IR	Advancement, Academic council, Cabinet	
Graduate: End of Program Review	Final course of program	Graduate	Deans	Deans	Fall/Spring/Summer
Online: Course Design Assessment	Ongoing		Undergraduate Dean, Graduate Dean	Undergraduate Dean, Graduate Dean	Ongoing
Online: Course Delivery Assessment	End of term	Undergraduate, Graduate	Deans, Assessment	Deans, Faculty, Assessment	Ongoing

Program Assessment

Annual Assessment

All academic programs (undergraduate and graduate) complete an Annual Assessment as part of their Annual Assessment Report. The initial phase of the assessment report consists of the core program information (mission/objectives) and the Curriculum and Assessment map.

Program faculty collect data throughout the academic year as evidence of assessment. Undergraduate faculty include data from coursework, student performance reviews, senior showcase, LEAD events, and presentations related to program objectives. Graduate faculty include data from coursework, projects and outside assessment scores related to program objectives.

Assessment is completed in the spring and all annual assessment reports are submitted through Watermark Planning and Self Study. Annual Assessments are reviewed by the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment with feedback provided within the online portal and then exported out for review on the university assessment page on the website.

Annual assessment reports for new programs (less than 3 years) are reviewed by Academic Council with additional feedback provided to assist in new program development.

Program Review

All programs of study undergo a program review on a five-year cycle. The Associate Dean of Academic Assessment facilitates the Program Review process with the School Deans and program faculty. The Academic Council members and the Provost analyze all program reviews. All Program Reviews include a detailed review of the academics as well as the resources (financial, library, human) utilized by the program. Each program review includes an external review report as a neutral party to provide feedback and critique of the program. Program faculty respond to any comments made by the external reviewer before the report is submitted to Academic Council.

The calendar for program review is maintained by the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment and updated as needed with completed reviews as well as adjustments when needed. The calendar is shared with Academic Council and discussed at each faculty assessment workshop. It is also posted on the website. The most updated calendar can be found through reaching out to the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment.

General Education Assessment

Another program that is assessed at the university through Institutional Effectiveness is the evaluation of the General Education Program. The program is maintained through the Curriculum Committee but due to the rotational nature of positions on the committee the structure and data provided for the report are supplied through the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment.

During the 2021-2022 academic year the faculty and Curriculum Committee discussed and approved a revision to the format of General Education. The Curriculum Committee settled on a Two-tier General Education system. Tier 1 focuses on providing foundational skills necessary to successfully complete their undergraduate degrees. Tier II allows students to explore three thematic categories. The Faculty voted in March 2022 to determine the course requirements for Tier I. With the first tier established, the Curriculum Committee created three broad thematic categories for Tier II. The Faculty

approved the final Two-Tier General Education framework on May 4, 2023, during the Spring Assessment Workshop.

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the Curriculum Committee focused on implementation of the new general education framework. In October 2023, the committee drafted rubrics for the four new general education categories: Cultures & Communities, Inquiry & Analysis, Expression & Invention, and Information Literacy. The committee held workshops to help faculty who teach general education courses transition their courses to the new system. During the Winter Intersession, faculty were invited to apply to have their courses included in the Two-Tier system using an expedited application process. The Curriculum Committee coordinated with the Vice Provost of the Undergraduate Affairs and the Registrar to ensure that the applications submitted and approved during the expedited process were sufficient to move forward with the transition. In the opening weeks of January 2023, the Curriculum Committee, the vice Provost of Undergraduate Affairs, the Registrar, and the Provost concluded that the university was prepared to move forward with the new General Education system beginning in Fall 2024.

Faculty review the juried assessment during the winter intersession and complete their review of the assessment. They review the data collected as well as the sample artifacts. For many faculty, this is the first time they are seeing what faculty in other classes are submitting. An assignment from each course was reviewed to ensure that content faculty had a solid understanding of what the assessments looked like and how the work was being assigned in other areas. The variety in what is submitted is also important for content faculty so that they can determine revisions to assessment activities to better meet the standard. During the meeting, faculty are prompted to complete a Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) analysis of the assessment data and rubrics.

The GE assessment follows a 4-year cycle rotating through the various areas of General Education. The artifacts are assessed over the summer by the Juried Assessors, and their data is presented to the content faculty during winter intersession. The completed report is provided to the faculty for review and discussion and a final vote to accept.

The Assessment Process

Simply put, assessment of student learning consists of three basic activities:

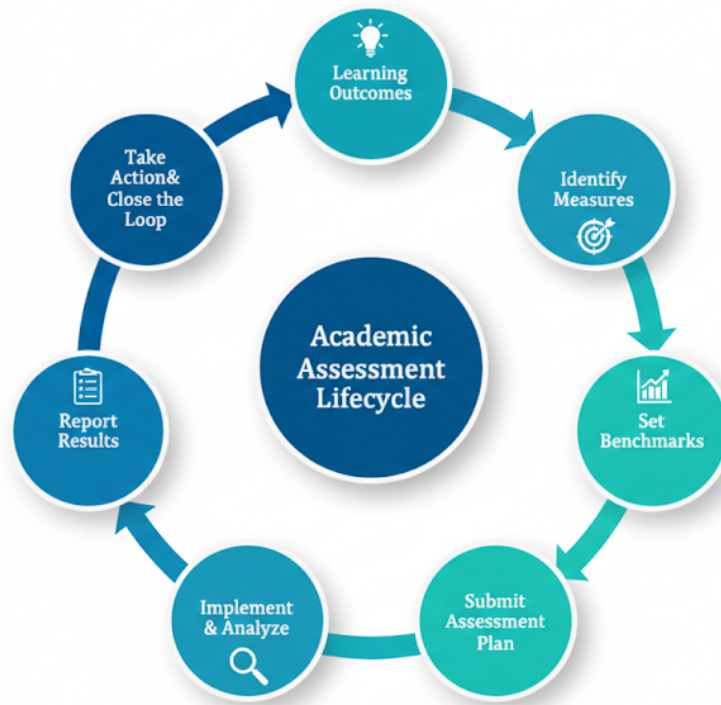
- 1) determining what we want students to learn,
- 2) measuring their performance against the criteria, and
- 3) analyzing the assessment results.

The results of assessment inform us about the effectiveness of the learning experience.

Focusing on goals and outcomes keeps us focused on what students are learning in our classes and programs. As a result, we must measure what we say is important to our programs of study. Measurement can help us to know if the outcomes are reasonable or stated appropriately.

Good assessment transcends simple data collection; the goal of assessment is action and the data that is collected should lead to discussions, serious thought, and improvement. Meaningful assessment data gives feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of the academic program.

Steps in the Assessment Process:



1) Develop four to eight student learning outcomes for the program.

Program Learning Objectives are determined by the program faculty. It is the expectation that each program identifies objectives that will lead students to complete a degree that will set them up for success in their specific profession. The number of objectives each program has is left to the discretion of the faculty, but it is common practice that most programs have between 4-8 program objectives. Many programs have sub-components of their objectives, which become course objectives. Also, programs that are externally accredited are obligated to implement the objectives required by their accreditation organization.

Student learning outcomes should:

- ✓ be aligned to the mission and goals of the college and the program
- ✓ describe the expected abilities, skills, knowledge, attitude of graduates
- ✓ be simply stated and understandable
- ✓ be specific to the program and applicable to state, regional, or national standards
- ✓ be measurable and collectable
- ✓ focus on learning results
- ✓ identify areas of improvement.

Each program objective needs to be assessed a minimum of **two** times during the course of the year. It is not necessary for each class to create an assignment for assessment. The goal is to make assessment manageable and useful, so creating assignments that meet no purpose, but assessment is counterproductive to the objective. Many programs use an entry level survey course and then their capstone course to provide for a baseline and then the expected level of mastery for students.

Consider using Bloom’s taxonomy when determining the verbs to use for student learning outcomes dealing with cognitive skills. Bloom’s taxonomy is a classification of the levels of learning that identifies various abilities at each level. The Bloom’s Taxonomy table below describes the cognitive objective starting with the lowest level, remembering, and moving to the highest level, creating. This is provided only as a suggestion and a way to introduce different terminology into the learning objectives. Suggested verbs for each level are listed.

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION	SUGGESTED VERBS
Remembering (Knowledge)	recall of information, facts, terminology	define, duplicate, list memorize, recall, repeat, reproduce, state
Understanding (Comprehension)	understanding information or being able to explain ideas or concepts	classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, recognize, select
Applying (Application)	using information in a new way	demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch solve, use, write
Analyzing (Analysis)	distinguish facts from inferences or assumptions	appraise, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, distinguish, examine, question
Evaluating (Synthesis)	justify a stand or position	Appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, evaluate
Creating (Evaluation)	create a new product or point of view; solve problems by creative thinking	Assemble, construct, create, design, develop, formulate

2) Identify the methods (measures) you will use to determine if students have met the learning outcomes

Assessment methods should be selected or developed that are aligned with the student learning outcomes. Here are a few things to think about when selecting measurement tools:

- ✓ Choose tools that evaluate the intended outcomes. Don’t just choose what is easy, handy, or something that other programs use.

- ✓ Choose tools that give you manageable information. You don't need to be a slave to assessment. If time is limited, choose instruments that don't take too much time to administer and are easy to score and evaluate. Keeping data collection simple will make assessment a more useful activity.
- ✓ Use or modify existing course assignments. You don't have to develop a new assignment or project for assessment. Exams can be separated into learning outcome topics that will make it easier for the instructor to measure the results by learning outcome topic.
- ✓ If possible, use tools that assess more than one outcome at a time. If you use a specialized accreditation task list, standardized test, or licensure exam you will be able to use the individual items to assess student performance in more than one area.
- ✓ Use multiple measures (direct and indirect) and quantitative and qualitative tools. You will get richer assessment data if you use a mixture of measurements.

EXAMPLES OF DIRECT ASSESSMENT METHODS	EXAMPLES OF INDIRECT ASSESSMENT METHODS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Comprehensive exams ➤ Certification or licensure exams ➤ Pre- and post-tests ➤ Performance-based tasks ➤ Capstone projects ➤ Portfolios ➤ Standardized exams ➤ Internship evaluations ➤ Presentations ➤ Case Study Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Comparison with peer institutions ➤ Job placement ➤ Employer surveys ➤ Exit interviews ➤ Focus group discussions ➤ Participation in course discussion ➤ Peer Review ➤ Conference Presentation ➤ Alumni surveys ➤ Student graduation/retention rates

3) Determine the benchmark that will indicate successful attainment of the student learning outcomes.

For each learning outcome, there should be a benchmark that tells you if the program is producing students with the desired level of skills and knowledge.

Setting the benchmark for success is a subjective activity. If you set a goal at 70% you may find, that after several years of assessment, students are performing higher than that and you may want to raise the goal to 80%. If students are performing lower than the

identified benchmark, either your expectations are unrealistic or there is some change that must be made in the program.

4) Complete the assessment plan and submit to the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment

All academic programs assess outcomes annually or on an identified rotation with each outcome being assessed a minimum of every two years. It is preferable that critical skills are measured annually. Assessment data should be used to identify ways in which the program can be improved over time. It is important to observe the trends in the data so that you know the program is moving in the right direction. The initial assessment map helps to keep faculty on track with key assessment information. The University provides faculty three assessment workshops to assist in the planning and reporting phases of assessment.

5) Assess

Now it is time to put your assessment map into action. Complete the assessment activities planned for the year. Your assessment activities may be a series of specific assessments that you will do over time and compile to form the assessment results for your broader program outcomes. Or you may devise one or more capstone assignments/projects that will reveal how well your students have met the outcomes. Utilize course-based assessments, external exam results and data collected through scholarship presentation as well as Student Performance Review.

6) Report the results

At the end of each academic year faculty will provide a summary report of your assessment findings to the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment. Each report is read and feedback is provided for continued improvement and an outside eye for assessment recommendations. A summative report of all annual assessments is provided to the Academic Dean and posted to the Assessment page of the website.

7) Take action (Close the loop)

Remember, the purpose of assessment is to help programs improve. As you review the assessment results you will note that students do very well in some areas. You will also find out if there are areas in which students are struggling. Remember, the result of assessment should be **ACTION**. You will have to decide what needs to be done to adjust your program so student learning is improved. Assessment informs you about what changes should be

made or where the curriculum needs strengthening. You will want to act and adjust before your next assessment cycle. Then you will be able to compare the results and see if the changes you made have been successful.

Software

Student Learning & Licensure (Student Learning & Licensure (Via)) by Watermark Insights

This is a web-based assessment software that manages the course-based assessment needs of the university. Student Learning & Licensure (Via) allows for students and faculty set up in different types of groups to complete activities to be assessed by the desired criteria for the purposes of data production. Student Learning & Licensure (Via) is used for all General Education assessment and most course based Academic Program assessment.

Faculty can get support on Student Learning & Licensure (Via) by contacting Carrie McCray at carrie.mccray@williamwoods.edu, or the support email for Student Learning & Licensure (Via) at: support@watermarkinsights.com.

*Faculty can connect to all Watermark products through QuickLaunch. The system is set up through the single sign on system and using QuickLaunch verifies users and allows for ease of logging into any Watermark product.

Planning and Self Study by Watermark Insights

The Planning and Self Study portal is an Assessment Reporting system housed through Watermark as well. This system integrates with Student Learning and Licensure and the EOC system to assist with aligning data and making assessment more efficient. This program is administered by the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment. All assessment reporting is completed through this web-based portal. You can log in the system through the Single Sign On (QuickLaunch) from the WWU webpage. If assistance is needed, faculty can contact Carrie McCray at carrie.mccray@williamwoods.edu, or the support email at: support@watermarkinsights.com.

Course Evaluation and Surveys by Watermark Insights

The Course Evaluation and Surveys tool by Watermark is an integrative end of course survey tool that integrates into the LMS as well as sends out scheduled reminders for students. The tool allows for faculty project surveys as well. The survey tool is housed on the same platform with Watermark allowing for ease of use and the ability to toggle back and forth between assessment platforms. If assistance is needed, faculty can contact Carrie McCray at carrie.mccray@williamwoods.edu, or the support email at: support@watermarkinsights.com.

Program Assessment Expectations:

It is the expectation of the university that each program on campus will participate in the assessment process. This is a component of accreditation, but more importantly it is about striving to provide the best education possible to our students. The act of assessment might seem like an unnecessary step, but it is something faculty participate in after each lecture, activity, test, and semester of our courses. The need to articulate that assessment and put it to words is in most instances the missing link. The university strongly believes the faculty are the subject area experts and are the ones most qualified to determine the most appropriate assessment activity. All program faculty are expected to contribute to the assessment of students. It is critical that faculty participate in the process to allow for continuity in learning for our students.

All majors and any stand-alone minor are expected to participate in program assessment. This includes course based, and program-based assessment that contributes to the Annual Assessment Report and the 5-Year Program Review.

Assessment opportunities specific to William Woods are **Student Performance Review** and **Scholarly and Creative Projects Showcase**. Many programs use **Student Performance Review** (spring) as an opportunity to bring in external evaluators to review student projects (portfolios, business plans, presentations, monologues, art show). This is a 1-day (no classes) opportunity for programs to assess how students are doing in the program without the activity being tied to a course. Several programs schedule their students to take various Major Field Exams, or pre-Certification exams. Other programs use this time for entrance evaluations to programs as well. If programs are bringing in external evaluators, or use funds from Assessment, they are asked to submit a budget for costs to the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment in the Fall along with their schedule for their students for that 1-day event.

Scholarly and Creative Projects Showcase is an activity for both fall and spring semesters. This is when graduating seniors are provided a stage to present their capstone experience. This is generally scheduled during the last full week of classes before finals week. Many programs set up their seniors in "science fair" style and open it up to all students by making it a LEAD event so that their students have the opportunity to discuss their success to their peers.

Both events can be included in the program assessment plan matrix through the Student Learning and Licensure assessment reporting system. Then assessment activities administered during that time can be recorded easily and included in the report.

Appendix A: Glossary of Assessment Terms

Assessment: The systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning.

Assessment Plan: A summary of assessments, including outcomes, measures, and criteria for success that will be implemented.

Benchmark: A description or example of performance that serves as a standard of comparison for evaluation or judging quality.

Capstone: A course, project, or experience that gives students the opportunity to organize and synthesize the knowledge and skills developed through the academic program. Students can demonstrate their ability to apply their learning in meaningful ways. Capstones occur toward the end of a program.

Classroom Assessment: The systematic and on-going study of what and how students are learning in a particular classroom; often designed for individual faculty who wish to improve their teaching of a specific course. Classroom assessment differs from tests and other forms of student assessment in that it is aimed at course improvement, rather than at assigning grades. (National Teaching & Learning Forum)

Closing the Loop: This is the process by which assessment results are used in program and campus decisions to impact student learning.

Criteria: Guidelines, rules, characteristics, or dimensions that are used to judge the quality of student performance.

Curriculum Mapping: An examination of a course sequence to determine where student learning outcomes are taught in the curriculum.

Direct Measure of Learning: A direct measure is based on a sample of actual student work, including reports, exams, demonstrations, performances, and completed works.

Formative Assessment: Assessment that provides feedback to the teacher for the purpose of improving instruction.

Indirect Measure of Learning: An indirect measure is based upon a report of perceived student learning, such as a student interview, exit survey, alumni survey.

Juried Assessment: Multiple reviewers evaluate student performance based on observation, coursework, portfolios, or other assignment submitted. This process is generally used for the General Education assessment to provide neutrality in the evaluation of students meeting the benchmarks identified by the general education faculty. The assessor is not a faculty member who actively teaches in the criteria area being assessed but has been approved by the content area faculty as an appropriate assessor.

Learning Outcomes: Observable behaviors or actions on the part of students that describe the learning mastered. A demonstration of what the student can do. Outcomes are achieved results or consequences of what was learned.

Measurement: Design of strategies, techniques, and instruments for collecting data that shows the extent to which students demonstrate the desired behaviors.

Objectives for Learning: Objectives express intended results or consequences of instruction, curricula, or activities.

Performance Assessment: The process of using student activities or products, as opposed to tests or surveys, to evaluate students' knowledge, skills, and development.

Portfolio Assessment: A portfolio is a collection of students' classroom work. The portfolio can be assessed when the assessment purpose is defined, criteria are clear for what is included in the portfolio, and criteria for assessing the portfolio or individual pieces of work are identified and used to make judgments.

Quantitative Assessment Methods: Methods that rely on numerical scores or ratings, such as surveys, inventories, exams.

Qualitative Assessment Methods: Methods that rely on descriptions rather than numbers, such as field studies, logs, journals, observation, interviews.

Reliability: Refers to how accurately a score will be re-produced if an individual is measured again. Reliable measures produce consistent results over time.

Rubric: A specific set of criteria that clearly define for both the student and teacher the range of acceptable and unacceptable performance.

Summative Assessment: A culminating assessment that gives information on students' mastery of content, knowledge, and skills.

Validity: The extent to which an assessment measures what it is supposed to measure.

Appendix B: Difference between Grading and Assessment

Assessment is any effort to gather, analyze and interpret evidence which describes institutional, departmental, divisional, or agency effectiveness. Assessment includes graded and ungraded activities used within a course/program.

Grading speaks to how well a student performed on a particular assignment, or course. Many times, grades include components like, timeliness, spelling, group cohesiveness, & attendance. While these are part of the submission process, they do not speak to how effectively students are mastering program objectives.

Assessment Rubrics are based on the academic program stated objectives. They generally include the program objectives as the designated criteria and then the level of student success is determined in the degree of skill displayed. Many programs have a baseline skill on program objectives in an introductory course, with the same skill approaching mastery in a capstone course. This rubric is not used to determine a score for a grade on an assignment, but to determine the level of competence the student displayed according to the overarching program objectives. Assessment rubrics can be placed in Student Learning & Licensure (Via) at the program level, so that other program faculty can use the same program rubric for assessment. This allows for continuity of assessment, and the ease of pulling data within the system.

Grading Rubrics are designed to assist in determining the score earned on an assignment. The assignment criteria make up the components of the rubric. Each component is aligned to a point value. As faculty complete the rubric the score is determined based on the points earned on the criteria. Samples of criteria are but not limited to punctuation, organization of ideas, citation of information, not to mention content specific skills. This is fine for determining a score on an assignment, but this is not program

Appendix C: Assessment Methods

Selecting Assessment Methods

- Good assessment, according to Mary Allen (2002) is **meaningful, manageable and sustainable**. In other words, planning for assessment requires setting priorities; it is neither prudent nor productive to measure everything that moves.
- **Summative assessments** are tests, quizzes, and other graded course activities that are used to measure student performance. They are cumulative and often reveal what students have learned at the end of a course. Within a course, summative assessment includes the system for calculating individual student grades.
- **Formative assessment** is any means by which students receive input and guiding feedback on their relative performance to help them improve, absent their grade. Formative assessment can be provided face-to-face in office hours, in written comments on papers, projects and problem sets, and through e-mails.
- Select carefully those outcomes that your department is most interested in having students achieve.
- You may not be able to assess all of your important learning outcomes in a single year but remember that outcomes assessment is an ongoing process.
- Select methods or instruments for gathering evidence to show whether students have achieved the expected learning outcomes related to educational objectives and goals.

Methods will vary depending on the learning outcome(s) to be measured.

- **Capstone Courses:** could be a senior seminar or designated assessment course. Program learning outcomes can be integrated into assignments.
- **Case Studies:** involve a systematic inquiry into a specific phenomenon, e.g., individual, event, program, or process. Data are collected Student Learning & Licensure (Via) multiple methods often utilizing both qualitative and quantitative approaches.
- **Classroom Assessment:** is often designed for individual faculty who wish to improve their teaching of a specific course. Data collected can be analyzed to assess student learning outcomes for a program.
- **Collective Portfolios:** Faculty assemble samples of student work from various classes and use the "collective" to assess specific program learning outcomes. Portfolios can be assessed by using scoring rubrics; expectations should be clarified before portfolios are examined.
- **Embedded Questions to Assignments:** Questions related to program learning outcomes are embedded within course exams. For example, all sections of

"research methods" could include a question or set of questions relating to your program learning outcomes. Faculty score and grade the exams as usual and then copy exam questions that are linked to the program learning outcomes for analysis. The findings are reported in the aggregate.

- **Exit Interviews:** Students leaving the university, generally graduating students are interviewed or surveyed to obtain feedback. Data obtained can address strengths and weaknesses of an institution or program and or to assess relevant concepts, theories or skills.
- **Focus Groups:** are a series of carefully planned discussions among homogeneous groups of 6-10 respondents who are asked a carefully constructed series of open-ended questions about their beliefs, attitudes, and experiences. The session is typically recorded and later the recording is transcribed for analysis. The data is studied for major issues and reoccurring themes along with representative comments.
- **Interviews:** are conversations or direct questioning with an individual or group of people. The interviews can be conducted in person or on the telephone. The length of an interview can vary from 20 minutes to over an hour. Interviewers should be trained to follow agreed-upon procedures (protocols).
- **Locally developed essay questions:** Faculty develop essay questions that align with program learning outcomes. Performance expectations should be made explicit prior to obtaining results.
- **Locally developed exams with objective questions:** Faculty create an objective exam that is aligned with program learning outcomes. Performance expectations should be made explicit prior to obtaining results.
- **Observations:** can be of any social phenomenon, such as student presentations, students working in the library, or interactions at student help desks. Observations can be recorded as a narrative or in a highly structured format, such as a checklist, and they should be focused on specific program objectives.
- **Reflective Essays:** generally, are brief (five to ten minute) essays on topics related to identified learning outcomes, although they may be longer when assigned as homework. Students are asked to reflect on a selected issue. Content analysis is used to analyze results.
- **Standardized Achievement and Self-Report Tests:** Select standardized tests that are aligned to your specific program learning outcomes. Score, compile, and analyze data. Develop local norms to track achievement across time and use national norms to see how your students compare to those on other campuses.
- **Surveys:** are commonly used with open-ended and closed-ended questions. Closed ended questions require respondents to answer the question from a provided list of responses. Typically, the list is a progressive scale ranging from low to high, or strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Resources:

Allen, Mary; Noel, Richard, C.; Rienzi, Beth, M.; and McMillin, Daniel, J. (2002). Outcomes Assessment Handbook. California State University, Institute for Teaching and Learning, Long Beach, CA

Appendix D: General Education Rubrics by Content:

Written Communication

Students transmit information effectively in written form.

Examples of Evidence:

- 1) Artifact evidences substantive content
- 2) Artifact evidences effectual organization;
- 3) Artifact evidences compelling style elements.

Oral Communication

Students will transmit information effectively in spoken form.

Examples of Evidence

- 1) Student crafts a compelling, insightful and logical message with effective outside support;
- 2) Student presents a message with effectively delivery and visual support

Information Literacy

Students will successfully evaluate, use and create information in an ever-evolving digital world.

Examples of Evidence

- 1) Defines the need for information;
- 2) Accesses information with an effective search strategy;
- 3) Critically evaluates information and its sources;
- 4) Uses information correctly and ethically.

Historical Perspective

Students will think historically, meaning that they will understand both how the present is shaped by the past and how our interpretation of the past is shaped by the present.

Examples of Evidence

- 1) Student will understand the basic methodology and sources used by historians;
- 2) Student is able to provide an analysis that addresses the key historical questions of causation, context change/continuity, and /or contingency.

Natural Science

Students will understand that scientific knowledge is developed through a continual process based on the interpretation and communication of quantifiable information.

Examples of Evidence

- 1) Understand the process and nature of science as a progressive body of knowledge through the interpretation and application of credible scientific principles, statements, and experimental results.
- 2) Ability to understand quantitative information; this includes the skills to interpret figures, tables, mathematical models, and any other form of communication of quantifiable data.

Mathematics

Students will solve problems through an analysis of quantitative relationships.

Examples of Evidence

- 1) Select and apply commonly used mathematical terminology and theorems appropriately;
- 2) Evaluate the accuracy of statements concerning math concepts;
- 3) Use mathematical models to analyze problems from the world at large;
- 4) Manipulate and interpret quantitative data;
- 5) Exhibit proficiency in using technology in solving mathematical problems.

Expression & Invention

Students will combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways to demonstrate innovation, creativity, divergent thinking, and risk taking.

Examples of Evidence

- 1) Utilizes recognized elements for this domain;
- 2) Demonstrates innovation, creativity, divergent thinking, and risk taking.

Inquiry & Analysis

Students explore issues, objects, or works through the collection and analysis of evidence to make informed conclusions or judgements.

Examples of Evidence

- 1) Identifies an appropriate topic for the domain;
- 2) Integrates relevant evidence to make informed conclusions or judgements.

Cultures & Communities

Students will engage complex, diverse interdependent systems and legacies to foster effective and appropriate interactions in a variety of cultural and ethical contexts.

Examples of Evidence

- 1) Identifies issues pertaining to the interactions of cultures and legacies;
- 2) Analyzes the cultural and ethical impact of these interactions.

Appendix E: General Education Assessment Procedure

During the Fall 2012 semester, the William Woods University Curriculum Committee examined the historical contexts and results of the institutional General Education assessment practices with the aim of establishing a more effective and expedient approach to this annual challenge. As a result of the investigation the Curriculum Committee offers the following procedural vision, designed as a continuous, collaborative effort among all involved parties. This format continues to guide the faculty assessment of the general education components.

Juried Assessor Identification

During the Spring semester each year, a Curriculum Committee representative will solicit faculty volunteers to serve as juried assessors.

This may be done during a Faculty Assembly meeting, or via e-mail. In either case, the CC rep will distribute a brief form which clearly identifies both the Common Studies assessment focus areas for that academic year and the compensation to be provided for juried assessors. Interested faculty members will be asked to indicate areas they are willing to assess, along with any pertinent background information in terms of teaching, areas of expertise, etc.

Assessor Subcommittee Formation

During the Spring semester each year, the Curriculum Committee will identify and contact a group of juried assessors from a pool of volunteers to serve as juried assessors for that year's General Education assessment activities.

The group size will vary depending on the number of areas and courses slated for assessment. Ideally, the assessment group will include a significant number of faculty members with teaching and / or research backgrounds in the GE fields to be reviewed but overall should include faculty members from across the curriculum.

Assessor Artifact and Assignment Orientation

Assignments are submitted through Watermark Student Learning and Licensure. All courses identified as a general education course are required to have an assignment noted for general education assessment and connected to the corresponding general education rubric.

Online general education assignments are set up through the master template and the

staff that coordinate online learning management will set up and ensure that the link between the LMS and the Assessment portal are working.

On campus faculty are responsible for setting up their own assessment activities in the online portal and linking it to their class in the LMS.

Set up of the Juried Assessment

At the conclusion of the spring term the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment is responsible for auditing the artifacts uploaded in the assessment portal. The Associate Dean then creates a list of all courses that have completed the required assessment and those who did not. A listing of all possible assessment activities is created and a sample of 50 online and 50 on campus artifacts are selected using a random number generator. The two-assessment faculty for each content area are responsible for assessing the sample of artifacts in the Juried assessment section of the online assessment portal.

Closing the Loop and Feedback

The Associate Dean of Academic Assessment will oversee the General Education assessment process for both on-campus and online courses annually in May and then return data to the CC for feedback the following Fall semester.

The results of each year's assessment data will be provided to the Gen Ed representative from each area by the CC before Sept 1. Subsequently, the GE representative will submit to the CC a written response to the May assessment data. If an area's results fall short of established benchmarks, faculty from that area will be charged with the task of developing action steps to improve performance for the next assessment. The action steps will be sent back to the CC prior to October 1 to be included in the end of the year report, which CC will send to the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment by Jan 1.

During the ensuing Fall semester, a representative for Curriculum Committee will reinstate this process for the next round of General Education areas slated for review.

Moving Forward

All Curriculum Committee documents relating to General Education Assessment will be housed in SharePoint to help facilitate future recommendations, reports, and improvements.

Resources

Assessment Commons: <http://assessmentcommons.org/#area>

Carnegie Mellon University: Eberly Center, Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovation: <https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/index.html>

Harte Research Associates. (2016). *Trends in learning outcomes assessment: Key findings from a survey among administrators at AAC&U member institutions*. (Pdf download)

Upcraft, M.L. & Schuh, J.H. (1996). *Assessment in student affairs: A guide for practitioners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. P. 18.

Yorke, M. (2003). *Formative assessment in higher education; Moves toward theory and the enhancement of pedagogic practice*. Higher Education, 45:4, pp.477-501.

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