



Educational Program Assessment Handbook

A Guide to Assessing the Academic Quality of Educational
Programs at
South Florida Community College

prepared by

Academic Quality Committee

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Chapter 1

Introduction to SFCC's Educational Program Assessment

The Educational Program Assessment model, as based on Nichols (2005), helps to fulfill a portion of South Florida Community College's (SFCC) Institutional Effectiveness Plan. Educational assessment's most important purpose is not to prove, but to improve student learning. Characteristics of SFCC's assessment include the following components:

- Focused - A small number of program learning outcomes (3-5).
- Participation - Program learning outcomes are the product of input and discussion by the entire department.
- Manageable – The assessment process does not attempt to evaluate everything and everybody, faculty, and staff use sampling techniques to identify the critical aspects of learning and improvement.
- Verifiable– Program chairs/managers use multiple measures to ensure that findings are accurate.
- Applied – Faculty use assessment results toward improving course student learning, and program instruction.
- College-wide – Administrators use assessment results toward improving programs.
- Linked – Educational program assessment is not a stand-alone process. It is linked to the college planning efforts (Unit Action Plan). It is the belief of SFCC administrators, faculty, and staff that the EPA model and the application contained in this handbook embodies a foundation of continuing quality improvement.

Figure 1.1 shows the overall assessment process model adopted by South Florida Community College which has been adopted from Nichols (2005).

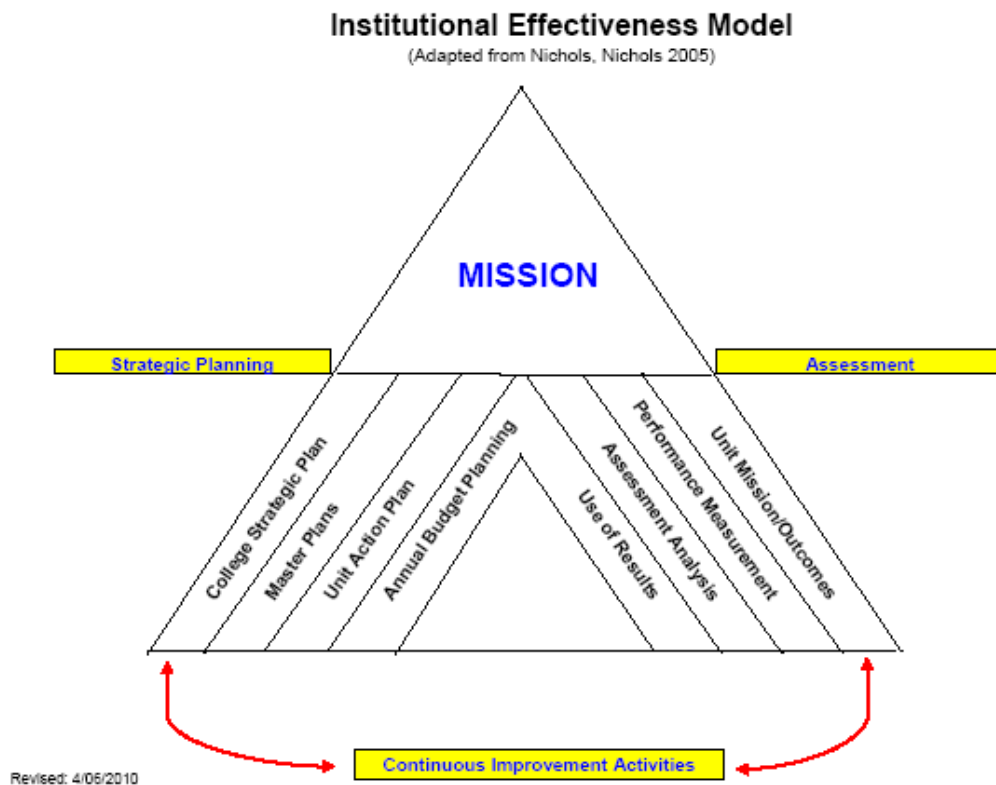


Figure 1.1 South Florida Community College Assessment Model

What is educational program assessment?

Educational Program Assessment (EPA) is the systematic process of collective inquiry which is central to the successful accomplishment of accreditation and program review. This systematic process includes the collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and program delivery at South Florida Community College.

Assessment is a cyclical process occurring as discussed in *Chapter 7: Assessment Mapping*.

Program review, as described in Procedure 3030, is a two-dimensional process which includes the *Educational Program Assessment (EPA)*. The program profile provides evaluative judgments about the productivity of a program. It also examines resources, faculty productivity, and other indicators of program health, quality, and viability.

The educational program assessment process is faculty-driven. The central focus includes the gathering of assessment data with the improvement of student learning outcomes as the central focus. The efficacy of SFCC's educational programs are demonstrated and documented in the educational assessment cycle. The over-arching question which frames the educational program-level assessment process follows: *When students leave a program of study, what should they be able to do and how do we know they can do it?*

This *Educational Program Assessment Handbook* is provided to guide the assessment activities of all programs at SFCC. Program review and accreditation include the components of assessment that require the identification of student learning outcomes, the measurement of performance, the analysis of performance data, and the documented use of the results for the improvement of the overall effectiveness of the college. The continuous improvement of the quality of all programs at the college is the ultimate goal of assessment. This singularity of

purpose serves to address the ever-changing needs of the students and the communities the college serves, and in so doing, furthers SFCC's mission.

Figure 1.2 shows the overall assessment process map used at SFCC to implement our assessment model.

Program Assessment Process Map

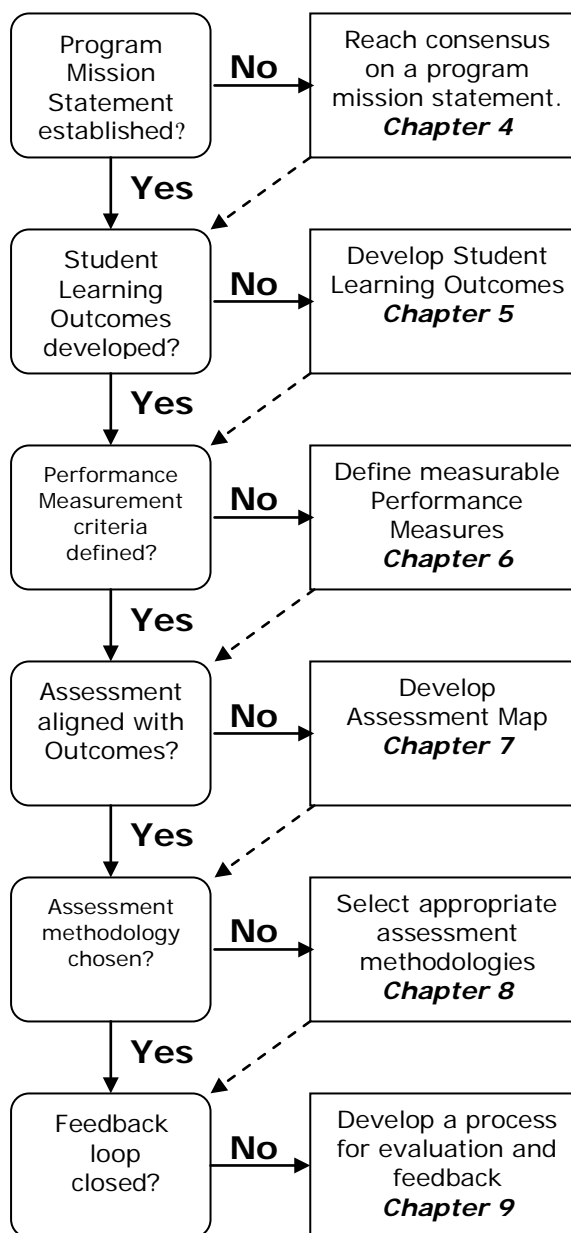


Figure 1.2 Program Assessment Process Map

Chapter 2

Assessment Database Overview

The assessment database is SFCC's online assessment reporting vehicle. It is available via the college's intranet within the Institutional Effectiveness website (Dudley). This database houses all assessment reporting for education programs and administrative units of the college. The assessment database is administered by the Institutional Effectiveness Department. The goal of the assessment database is to provide a single portal to archiving and acquiring assessment results. See Assessment Link A: "*EPA Assessment Database Application Instructions*" regarding instructions on accessing and using the assessment database.

A. Assessment Responsibility

Assessment reporting is the responsibility of all department chairs and program managers. However, the assessment process is the responsibility of all faculty members. Program student learning outcomes are reviewed within program clusters that share the same faculty, students and courses, and within disciplines that are part of a larger program.

Important considerations:

1. Chairs coordinate the participation of department members in determining the program or department mission, student learning outcomes, and other related assessment activities. In addition, chairs are responsible for identifying the availability of reliable information for use as part of their assessment activities.
2. Assessment is an on-going process that includes efforts to continually improve program success. Chairs do not need to assess all student outcomes at the same time. Assessment activities should be spread throughout the academic year.
3. Department faculty and staff should work as a team when conducting assessment. Chairs should delegate assessment tasks when possible.
4. Chairs should cooperate with other chairs to identify common sources of data, joint surveys, and/or complementary evaluation processes.
5. Chairs need not create new processes. Use existing data whenever possible. Chairs should take advantage of other current campus resources, processes or vendor products to provide for program assessment.

B. Designated Programs

A list of programs and their chairs/program managers/directors may be found in *Assessment Link B: "Educational Program Assessment Units and Managers."*

C. Data Assistance

Assessment data and information may be acquired from multiple sources depending on individual program needs and the type of data required. However, the Institutional Effectiveness Department should be considered as one of the sources of institutional data used in evaluating student learning outcomes.

D. Glossary of Terms

A glossary of assessment terms has been developed to provide a clear definition of such terms as they are used in the context this handbook. (See *Assessment Link C: Glossary*)

Chapter 3

Educational Program Assessment Reporting

Assessment reporting is accomplished using the college's online database, which collects information from each program and provides standard reports to chairs and college administration. The database provides assessment reporting for both the Educational Program Assessment (EPA) units and the Administrative Programs Assessment (APA) units.

The college's assessment reporting database consists of two main data entry forms these forms include the Mission form and Outcomes/Measures form (See Figures 3.1 EPA Mission and 3.2 EPA Outcomes/Measures).



Assessment Main Menu - Windows Internet Explorer

http://dudley/ASSESSMENT/AssessmentMenu.htm

Assessment Main Menu

Unit Assessment Planning

Assessment

Exit Assessment Application

Assessment Main Menu

EPA Mission

Educational Programs (EPA) Data Entry Form

2009-2010

Outcomes and Measures Form

Assessment Reports Menu

HELP ASSISTANCE: Click on the "green" Step boxes to view context sensitive help information.

Step 1: Select Educational Program

Step 2: Unit Mission Statement

Use the following steps when completing your Program Mission Statement and related information:

Instructions:

Step 1: Select Educational Program - Using the drop down box next to Step 1, select the educational program you wish to edit.

Step 2: Educational Program Mission Statement - Click on the Step 2: green box for instructions regarding completing your Educational Program Mission Statement or refer to your Educational Program Assessment Handbook, Chapter 2, for help in describing your Educational Program Mission statement.

Format for Program Mission Statement

"The mission of (your educational program's name) is to (your educational program's primary purpose) by providing (your educational program's primary functions or activities) to (your educational program's primary stakeholders)."

Figure 3.1 EPA Mission Data Entry Form

The Mission form (above) allows department chairs to record the mission for each one of their programs.

The Outcomes/Measures form (next page) provides data entry fields for multiple student learning outcome statements, performance measure statements, performance results, evaluation of results, improvement objectives, etc.

Figure 3.2 EPA Outcomes/Measures Data Entry Form

Each department chair, in coordination with faculty and staff, creates their own mission statement(s). The mission statement is a short, concise statement describing the programs or discipline area's purpose, what is done to accomplish the purpose (function), and for whom services (students) are provided. Program and discipline mission statements describe the contribution each makes in addressing the college's mission.

Each department chair identifies three to five student learning outcome statements for each program, program cluster, or discipline they manage. These student outcome statements should reflect the most critical functions of the program or discipline.

Student learning outcome statements evolve from the mission statement. Each student learning outcome statement must have at least two performance measures.

Department chairs, along with program or discipline faculty and staff, evaluate progress toward meeting student learning outcomes on a continuous basis and implement improvement activities related to student learning outcomes that have not been achieved. To ensure continuing quality improvement (CQI) of student learning outcomes, improvement activities are also implemented for outcomes even though goals may have been met.

Chapter 4

Mission Statements

Effective planning in any organization is facilitated by a mission statement. A good mission statement focuses attention, challenges attitudes, introduces alternatives, and addresses existential issues. A mission statement can help capture the attention of stakeholders (common crisis, threat, opportunity), unfreeze attitudes and behavior patterns (creating cognitive dissonance), introduce or foster change patterns (by introducing benchmarking and other comparisons), and refreeze new attitudes, and establish behavior patterns (reinforcement theory).

Every program or discipline area at SFCC, as identified in *Assessment Link B: Educational Program Assessment Units and Managers*, must have a mission statement. A mission statement is an enduring statement that identifies the purpose of the program or discipline and explains how the purpose is accomplished and defines the program's relationship to its students and stakeholders. All programs and discipline mission statements at SFCC must be aligned with, and support accomplishment of, the SFCC Mission Statement. The SFCC Mission Statement is:

South Florida Community College Mission Statement

South Florida Community College is an open-access, higher education institution dedicated to providing a learning-centered environment through quality programs, training, and services. Working in partnership with organizations and communities, the college provides leadership and a comprehensive range of opportunities for the educational, cultural, and economic development of the service district.

The college assists the people of its service district (DeSoto, Hardee, and Highlands counties) regardless of economic, social or educational background to achieve success in:

- *Completing an associate degree in preparation for pursuing a baccalaureate or other professional degree.*
- *Completing career and technical training to enter the workforce or to improve career circumstances.*
- *Completing college preparatory programs of study including those leading to the high school diploma.*
- *Obtaining basic skill in literacy, numeracy, and citizenship to prosper as a contributing member of society.*
- *Gaining, personal, cultural, and global awareness; appreciate; and understanding needed in a complex contemporary society.*
- *Pursuing advanced academic preparation and credentials available through partnerships with colleges and universities.*
- *Participating in the social, cultural, environmental, and economic development of the communities served by the college.*

We believe in the worth of each of our students and, through all of our educational programs and services, we seek to develop human potential and to create brighter futures.

When crafting a mission statement, it is vital to use precise, exact statements of measurable activity. Avoid vague generalities and the un-measurable. Address functional benefits to students or stakeholders rather than descriptive attributes of the program itself. Think about the program from the perspective of a potential student, who has alternatives available, rather than faculty and staff already committed with a vested interest in the program or discipline. Mission statements should answer the following questions:

1. **What is the name of your program or discipline?**
 - It must be consistent with the *College Catalog*.
2. **What is the purpose of your program or discipline?**
 - Why do you do what you do?
3. **What is done to accomplish that purpose?**
 - List the primary functions or activities.
4. **For whom do you do it?**
 - List your primary stakeholders and customers.

Using the above information, each program, program cluster, or discipline at SFCC will develop a mission statement using the following template. For continuity purposes across the campus, it is imperative that the mission statements of all programs follow the same basic format. Additional clarifying information can be added as desired, but the overall length of your mission statement should not exceed 100 words.

Format for Program/Discipline Mission Statements

The mission of (your program's/discipline's name) **is to** (your program's/discipline's primary purpose) **by providing** (your program's/discipline's primary functions or activities) **to** (your primary stakeholders).

Example:

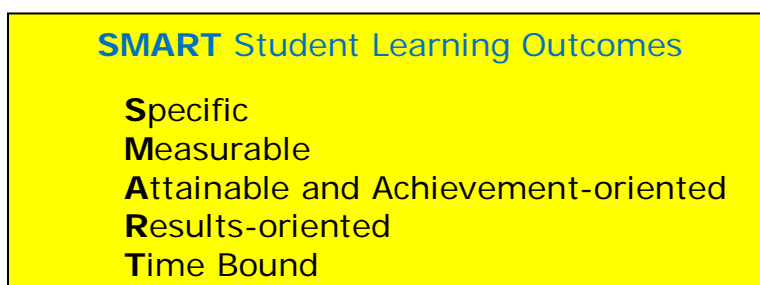
The mission of the natural science discipline is to offer courses in the life sciences, physical sciences, and Earth sciences by providing a student centered environment focused on teaching core scientific principles that promote scientific understanding and develop a solid educational foundation to students seeking degrees and careers integral to science.

Chapter 5

Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are statements of what students should know (cognitive), think (affective) and do (psychomotor), upon completion of a program of study. Intended student learning outcomes should be:

- Stated in terms of expected student behaviors
- Measurable
- Aggregate, focusing on the program, and not on individual students or courses
- Clearly specify skills, competencies, understandings, and values that students should have acquired as a result of having completed the program of study.



The definition of a student learning outcome (SLO), then, is a statement regarding what the FACULTY intend for students to be able to think, know or do when they have completed their educational program. Refer to *Appendix A: "Bloom's Taxonomy," Attachment C: Learning Outcome Links, and Assessment Link D: "Worksheet for Developing Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)"* to aid in the development of the SLO.

For the purposes of assessment, student learning outcomes help the institution focus its assessment efforts by measuring the outcomes under consideration one at a time. The only absolute requirement regarding educational student learning outcomes is that they should be stated in terms of what the student should be able to think, know or do upon completion of the program. Faculty must choose the most important or key educational outcomes for assessment that are consistent with the stated purpose (mission) of the program or discipline. Once selected, assessment activities for no more than three to five intended student learning outcomes will be conducted at any one time for an individual program.

The requirement, according to SACS Criteria 3.3.1, is that the institution has a systematic program of outcome assessment activities in place. The use of the assessment data derived from the assessment activities for the three to five outcomes are to be used to improve the educational programs for which they are evaluated. This is the component of assessment which is described as "closing the loop."

How does a department select the three to five intended SLOs for each program or discipline? The remainder of this chapter of the EPA Handbook will provide examples and resources to assist in the development of Student Learning Outcomes at SFCC.

Short List/Long List Approach

1. The department chair/program manager/faculty member/designee (assessment coordinator) should ask each member of the faculty (including part-time and adjunct) to anonymously submit up to five intended educational (student learning) outcomes which graduates of the program should achieve.
2. The assessment coordinator should then identify several outcomes for which a consensus among the faculty exists.

3. The outcomes identified in Step 2 constitute the beginning of the short list.
4. The selection of the outcomes for assessment from the longer list of program outcomes can be among one of the most difficult issues. The department will need to limit the number of outcomes for assessment, for any one cycle, to three to five.
5. The original long list, resulting from faculty submissions, should not be discarded. The long list should be documented and referred to as the faculty develop a systematic process, individualized to the department or program.
6. Assuming that assessment has taken place, for example, regarding outcome number three on the short list, and that there is clearly demonstrable evidence that those completing the program are able to achieve this particular outcome, then the original third outcome on the short list should be returned to the long list and the assessment activities related to it discontinued. At that time another outcome, not originally assessed, should be moved from the long list to the short list and assessment activities begun.
7. It is in the alternations from the long to the short list that the dynamic and systematic nature of the assessment process is documented.
8. Educational (student learning) outcomes should be clear in their meaning to all faculty in the department. Jargon specific to a discipline or field should be explained in supplemental notes attached to the assessment activity documents.
9. Statements of intended educational SLOs should be related to a single expectation on the part of faculty for student achievement and should be measured by a single assessment data point.
10. All faculty should understand that statements of educational student learning outcomes are subject to frequent change as the results of their assessment indicate that the outcome is being accomplished.

Summary of Guidelines for Developing Student Learning Outcomes,
the Foundation to Building a "Culture of Assessment" at SFCC
(*"See Attachment D: American Association for Higher Education Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning"*)

- Focus on *intended* outcomes that are specific to your program.
- Include in clear and definite terms the *knowledge, abilities, values, and attitudes* a student who graduates from your program is expected to have.
- Confirm that it is possible to *collect* accurate and reliable *data* for the outcome.
- Include more than one measure that can be used to demonstrate that the students in a particular program have *achieved the expected outcomes* of the program, the next step in assessment.
- Address how the students' experience in the *program contributed* to their knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes.
- State the outcome so that assessments of the outcome can be used to identify areas to *improve*.
- Once student learning outcomes are identified, the next step in the assessment process is to establish *performance targets or measures* and *assessment activities* designed to test whether student have achieved the outcomes.
- Consider outcome assessment methods for your program's SLO statements. *Chapter 6* of this EPA Handbook (next page) addresses performance measures.

It is no longer good enough that we offer programs; we must show that we are continually seeking to ensure our students are learning. We must also continually improve the content and methodology of our programs to better meet the changing needs of our students and the community.

Chapter 6

Performance Measures

A Performance Measure (PM) is a statement that provides objective feedback on discrete, pre-defined indicators to help evaluate progress toward achievement of student learning outcomes (SLOs). Every SLO should have a minimum of two performance measures.

Components of a Performance Measure

Performance Description: Identifies the actual student performance that is being measured.

- Performance measures can be either direct or indirect.
- Each SLO should have at least two performance measures with at least one indirect measure.

Direct Performance Measures	Indirect Performance Measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students represent or demonstrate their learning • Students' achievement is compared to other student groups • Students certify competence in a profession or field • Students' level of achievement is mapped out over the course of their studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captures students' perceptions of their learning and the educational environment that supports it • Complements the results of direct methods • Cannot substitute for direct evidence of learning • Deepens interpretations of student learning
<p><i>Examples include:</i> Standardized or locally developed tests, practicum, performances, oral examinations, behavioral observations, simulations, embedded questions</p>	<p><i>Examples include:</i> Student satisfaction, alumni, and employer surveys, focus groups, student records</p>

Performance Standard: Identifies a standard or numeric percentage which will be used to evaluate how well the outcome is being met.

- Must be realistic, address a high level of quality of achievement, and be challenging
- Must be attainable, but not impossible

Data Source: Describes exactly where the data used in the performance measure exists and will be stored.

- Data sources must be timely, relevant, and accurate
- Examples include state reports, online quizzes or surveys, results of examinations

Data Collection Frequency: Describes how often the achieved performance is going to be compared to the performance standard.

- Annually, per academic term, or monthly.

Developing Performance Measures

What will be evaluated?

- Need to be specific.

How will it be measured?

- Identify the instrument.
- Should not be too cumbersome.

When will it be evaluated?

- Need to be specific and state periodicity.

What is the desired outcome (goal)?

- Should be attainable but aggressive.
- Want to be able to establish a trend.

As an example of how to define your performance measures, let's start with the following hypothetical student learning outcome:

Student Learning Outcome: *Graduates of Imaginary Science IS 1000 will demonstrate proficiency in oral communication to the level expected when presenting a technical paper.*

Now, we need to address each of the four main components of the performance measure.

<i>What will be evaluated?</i>	<i>Oral communication skill</i>
<i>How will it be measured?</i>	<i>Scoring Rubric</i>
<i>When will it be evaluated?</i>	<i>During the final class presentation</i>
<i>What is the desired outcome (goal)?</i>	<i>90 percent on oral presentation skills</i>

Using the above components, we now develop the following direct performance measure:

Measure: *During the final class oral presentation of IS 1000, each student will earn at least 90 percent on the presentation section of their course project as measured by a scoring rubric.*

The following examples are provided from the Natural Sciences and Dental Education departments. Note the importance of faculty collaboration in the development of individual assessment documents.

Examples of Physics Discipline Measurable Outcomes

Example #1 Identify the validity of collected data.

Measurable Outcome #1 (Direct): During the laboratory experiment on kinematics, 90 percent of the students will be able to correctly determine which of the data they collect is valid and identify it correctly on their Laboratory Report.

What	Critical evaluation of validity of data
How	Analyze data obtained during an experiment
When	Laboratory experiment on kinematics
Goal	90 percent of students will recognize which data they collect is valid

Measurable Outcome #2 (Direct): During Exam I, 80 percent of the students will be able to correctly associate acceleration curve with a described scenario.

What	Critical evaluation of validity of data
How	Be able to correctly associate supplied data with a presented problem dealing with acceleration
When	Exam I
Goal	80 percent of the students will recognize which of the data correctly corresponds to the scenario provided

Example #2 Speak clearly, project voice sufficiently, and use appropriate vocabulary.

Measurable Outcome #1 (Direct): During the classroom problem solving sessions, 85 percent of the students will be able to explain their solution to the entire class by speaking clearly with sufficient voice projection and using appropriate vocabulary.

What	Analyze student's ability to speak clearly and use appropriate vocabulary
How	Students will present their solution to a problem using a whiteboard and discuss the problem
When	During classroom whiteboard discussion sessions
Goal	85 percent of students clearly explain their problem solving solution to others.

Measurable Outcome #2 (Indirect): During end of course critique, 90 percent of the students will indicate that they either "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" that the course helped them to develop their speaking abilities and to use appropriate technical vocabulary.

What	Evaluation of student's ability to speak clearly and use appropriate vocabulary
How	Student self-assessment
When	During end of course critique
Goal	90 percent of the students will indicate that they believe the course helped them to develop their speaking ability and to use appropriate technical vocabulary.

PSAV Example: Dental Hygiene Program

Mission Statement Draft

The mission of the SFCC Dental Education Program is to educate and train dental health care professionals (DHCP) by providing the following:

- demonstrate *excellence in teaching*
- empower students to *think critically*
- guide students in the *development of professional and ethical behavior*
- teach methods for achieving *excellent technical skills*
- imbue the desire for continued *professional excellence*
- give back to the *community* that which they give to us

and to prepare graduates to accept their roles in the professional and general communities.

Collaboration Notes

The Dental Hygiene Program Mission Statement was developed by the director and faculty. This example incorporates the six core values of the department. The mission statement format is followed and includes individualization and faculty ownership.

Outcome 1: *Identify individual and population risk factors and develop strategies that promote health-related quality of life. Supports the core value of critical thinking.*

Performance Measures

1. Direct measure: Student case study simulation in the clinic lab. Simulation responses will be recorded on a faculty-developed rubric. Students must achieve a competency level of 80 percent or greater at program completion. This quantitative data will then be represented as aggregate data in the program review document.
2. Indirect measure: Survey advisory members as to their level of satisfaction with the critical thinking ability of DHCP graduates. Seventy-five percent of responses received must indicate a satisfactory response. Surveys sent out annually.

Outcome 2: *Systematically collect, analyze and record data on the general, oral and psychosocial health status of a variety of patients/clients using methods consistent with medical/legal principles. Supports the core value of development of excellent technical skills.*

Performance Measures

1. Direct measure: Performance as measured by the clinic skills manual. Learning is focused, calibrated, and measured by skill set achievement. Skill achievement must be demonstrated at 100 percent at program completion.
2. Indirect measure: Student interviews/clinic evaluations with instructor. Focus is on perceptions of student learning. Perceptions will be recorded on a scaled response form with 80 percent of the students' performance indicators scored above 6 (exceeds acceptable performance). Evaluations will take place each major term.

Outcome 3: *Continuously perform self-assessment for life-long learning and professional growth. Supports the core value of development of professional and ethical behavior.*

Performance Measures

1. Direct measure: Students will demonstrate professional conduct in all patient/client interactions as evidenced by a 9 or greater score as noted per the clinic skills manual by program completion.
2. Indirect measure: Employer satisfaction survey responses will address continuing education behaviors of graduate employees. Seventy-five percent of responses received must indicate a satisfactory response. Employer surveys will be sent out annually.

Performance Measure Resources

Bloom's taxonomy provides appropriate terminology for use in writing performance measures and to address the level of learning performance assessment desired. *Appendix A: "Blooms's Taxonomy"* provides an overview of Bloom's taxonomy with correlating terminology while *Appendix B: "Rubrics"* provides helpful information on the development of scoring rubrics.

Once your Performance Measures have been developed, they should be entered on the SFCC Institutional Effectiveness Database, accessible via <http://dudley> from a locally networked computer. See *Assessment Link A: EPA Assessment Database Application Instructions*.

"It is reasonable to expect a college student to be able to apply in a new context a law of physics, or a proof in geometry, or a concept in history of which she just demonstrated mastery in her class. If when the circumstances of testing are slightly altered, the sought-after competence can no longer be documented, then understanding-in any reasonable sense of the term-has simply not been achieved."
John Gardner, 1991

Chapter 7

Assessment Mapping

Having identified Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and performance measures, the next step is to plan your assessment strategy.

Clearly, we do not have the resources, or the time, to assess everything, so we must be very selective in what areas we conduct assessment activities. An assessment map provides a visual representation of your overall assessment plan and can be used as an analysis, communication, and planning tool. As such, an assessment map:

- allows us to review the curriculum to check for unnecessary redundancies, inconsistencies, misalignments, weaknesses, and gaps;
- documents the relationships between the required components of the curriculum and the intended student learning outcomes;
- helps identify opportunities for integration among disciplines;
- provides a review of assessment methods; and
- identifies what students have learned, allowing us to focus on building on previous knowledge.

By identifying specific courses that will address each SLO, an assessment map will provide a holistic view of the journey that students take in completing our program requirements. Just as a road map provides perspective and orientation to assist a wayward motorist to find his or her ultimate destination, an assessment map facilitates the process of understanding standards and assessment data. This will help immensely in being able to see the big picture and not be overcome by the large amounts of data being collected for assessment purposes. Thus the assessment map becomes a tool for identifying what data is being collected and helps in explaining academic performance and provides a starting point of deciding how to improve student learning.

Developing an assessment map involves developing a matrix as shown in the assessment mapping below that links all program SLOs with each course offered in the program.

	Course I	Course II	Course III	Course IV	Capstone Course
SLO A1					
SLO A2					
SLO B1					
SLO B2					
SLO C1					
SLO C2					
SLO C1					
SLO C2					

Table 7.1 Assessment Mapping Outline

Individual blocks in the assessment map are filled in by answering two questions for each SLO:

1. How is the SLO being addressed?

For example:

I = Introduced

E = Emphasized

R = Reinforced

The first time students are exposed to the concept

Expansion on a previously introduced idea

Continued refinement of a previously emphasized idea

2. Where is the SLO being addressed?

For example:

L = Laboratory Experiment

C = Class Discussion

LR = Lab Report

P = Project

T = Quiz or Test

W = Homework

It is important to note that not every block in the assessment map need or should be filled in. By selectively deciding which courses each SLO will be assessed, you maintain control over the amount of data being collected and can ensure sufficient sampling is being done across your entire program. The following is an example of a portion of an assessment map for how the general education (GENED) SLOs are being assessed in physics courses offered at SFCC:

GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES
Natural Science Department
PHYSICS ASSESSMENT MAP

GENED SLO	Performance Measures	PHY 1000	PHY 2053	PHY 2054	PHY 2048	PHY 2049	PSC 1121	AST 1002
1. Be able to think critically	a. Identify the validity of collected data.		I L,T	E L	I L	E L		
	b. Use graphical and numerical methods to organize, analyze, and interpret natural phenomena from collected data.		I L	E L	I L	E L		
	c. Use graphs, tables and charts to summarize, analyze, and interpret information to solve problems.		I W	E T	I W	E T		I T
2. Demonstrate facility in written and oral communications	a. Speak clearly, project voice sufficiently, and use appropriate vocabulary.	E P	E C	R C	E C	R C	I C	
	b. Write effective lab reports and project Reports	I P	E LR		E LR			I P
	c. Present information clearly in tables, charts, and graphs.	I P	E LR		E LR			

Assessment Cycle

All academic programs or disciplines will engage in assessment activities annually. These efforts will be documented in departmental unit action plans and any course requirements will be folded into departmental and divisional budget requests.

During any particular academic year (August - July), each department is required to not only act on the results of the prior year's assessment, but to also collect performance measure results from the current year, and to plan for performance measurement in the following year. *Table 7.2* shows a typical three-year sequence for a program and *Table 7.3* provides the "Timeline for Educational Program Assessment Planning."

Three Year Assessment Planning Cycle

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Act	Act on the results of 2008-2009 assessment	Act on the results of 2009-2010 assessment	Act on the results of 2010-2011 assessment
Measure	Measure the results during 2009-2010	Measure the results during 2010-2011	Measure the results during 2011-2012
Plan	Plan measurements for 2010-2011	Plan measurements for 2011-2012	Plan measurements for 2012-2013

Table 7.2 Typical Three-Year Assessment Planning Cycle

Timeline for Educational Program Assessment Planning

MONTH	CHAIRS/MANAGER	ACADEMIC QUALITY COMMITTEE
August	Review the results of the previous year's EPA and UAP reported during the summer: During first week back, hold meeting(s) with department or discipline faculty members to review findings from prior year and validate EPA and UAP (reported in June) findings. Identify any changes or improvement activities that need to be made immediately to this year's EPA or UAP (began in July). Document these changes or recommendations in current EPA or UAP forms.	
September	Gather any additional data that will be needed for October Assessment Day discussions.	AQC EPA subcommittee begins audit of findings from June EPA reports. Share findings with individual programs for further discussion during Assessment Day.
October	Assessment Day: Review program profile, any EPA audit findings, focus upon student learning outcome achievements, quality indicators, and methods to improve student performance and success. Correlate any changes that may be needed in program EPA, UAP, or capital outlay requests. Document findings or recommendations on EPA or UAP forms, or submit to AQC for further action.	AQC reviews any program recommendations received and identifies those requiring further action.
November	Begin planning for next fiscal/academic year. Discuss possible program modifications, new initiatives, staffing changes, or equipment needs with division dean. Forward staffing requests to division dean for action.	AQC makes recommendations to division deans, VPES, which will be taken to LASS and PC as needed.
December		
January	Review fall data collection. Review fall SEI, course, or discipline data available. Mid-year review of UAP. Make adjustments as necessary.	
February	Submit projected Budget, capital outlay requests and next fiscal year UAP. Annual evaluation process for faculty/staff.	
March		
April		
May	Gather data, surveys, materials for end of year assessments (EPA, UAP). Review spring SEI's, course, and available discipline data.	
June	End of year assessment due June 30. Measure outcome achievements, analyze findings, and identify any needed revisions, changes in standards, new projects or quality improvement activities. Document findings using Institutional Effectiveness formats (EPA/UAP).	
July	Revise EPA or UAP activities if changes in budget allocation, or based upon end of year assessment findings.	

Table 7.3 Timeline for Educational Program Assessment Planning

Chapter 8

Assessment Methods

Assessment methods are the tools used for data collection, also referred to as data collection instruments. Assessment methods can be based on quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods of data acquisition and documentation. In outcomes assessment at the program level, the primary question that needs to be answered is, “Can students demonstrate the ability to perform at an acceptable level in each of the program outcomes?” Program or discipline assessment focuses on providing evidence that students can demonstrate knowledge or skill directly linked to specific outcomes. Assessing student learning outcomes (SLOs) for the program differs from assessing classroom learning outcomes in several ways, most notably the following:

- Faculty collaborate in the development of program curriculum
- SLOs are collectively developed
- Faculty decide as a group what students should know or be able to do by the time of graduation
- Once SLOs are documented, the curriculum is developed/modified to align with them
- The assessment of outcomes should reflect student-achievement-specific outcomes as a culmination of several classes and activities throughout the program curriculum.

For assessment, a numeric score that is directly linked to student’s performance for specific performance criteria can be used as evidence of the attainment of program or discipline student learning outcomes. For example, for the outcome, “students have an understanding of ethical responsibility,” one of the performance criteria could be, “students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate the ethical dimensions of a problem in the business communications.” Faculty could develop a rubric to score student performance. The choice of assessment methods should align with the overall aims of the program, and may include the development of disciplinary skills and support the development of vocational competencies.

Program assessment’s purpose is to provide information about student learning at the program level. The measures used to assess program-level outcomes should be used consistently, should reflect specific student knowledge or skills, and should be directly linked to specific performance criteria as described in *Chapter 5 “Student Learning Outcomes”* of this *EPA Handbook*. The remainder of this chapter will include examples of qualitative and quantitative assessment methods appropriate for the assessment of student learning outcomes.

Qualitative Assessment Methods

Qualitative Assessment Methods are the methods used to assess broader dimensions of intended outcomes. Non-numeric statements are used to summarize data.

Examples of Qualitative Assessment Methods

- Written surveys and questionnaires: Ask individuals to share their perceptions about the study target, for example their own or others skills/attitudes/behaviors, or program qualities and attributes. Students, alumni, the community, or other stakeholders may be asked to share perceptions over a broad range of attributes. Valuable input can be gained by triangulating information with other assessment methods. Caution must be taken on the wording of items and the salience of survey or questionnaire content. Forced-response choices may not provide opportunities for respondents to express their true opinions. Open-ended items should be included to control for this potential bias.
- Exit and other interviews: Ask individuals to share their perceptions of their own attitudes and/or behaviors or those of others. Evaluating student reports of their attitudes and/or behavior in a face-to-face dialogue. This type of survey allows for more

individualized question and follow-up; however, it can take a great deal of time. Results are dependent upon the wording of the items and the manner in which interviews are conducted.

- **Focus Groups:** This method is a specialized type of interview typically conducted with 7-12 individuals who share certain characteristics that are related to a particular topic. Group discussions are conducted by a moderator with participants to identify trends/patterns in perceptions. This method of gathering data is useful in the capturing ideas, details, new insights and program improvement. Focus groups can be held to provide in-depth information about topics of interest generated from a survey to gain input from alumni or business partners on the strengths and weaknesses in the knowledge and/or skills of graduates. This tool is particularly helpful if used to triangulate or validate the results from other assessment methods.
- **Simulations:** A competency-based measure where a student's abilities are measured in a situation that approximates a real world setting. Simulation is primarily used when it is impractical to observe a person perform a task in a real work situation. Simulations provide an in-depth evaluation of student skill development. Simulation can be matched for maximum validity for each situation and thus can provide an excellent means of increasing the external and internal validity of skills assessment.
- **Performance Appraisal:** This method is a competency-based process whereby abilities are measured in a direct, real-world approach. Appraisals provide a direct measure of what has been learned in a program and are typically more subjective than standardized tests. An observation of a student in an internship setting is an example of such an appraisal.
- **Behavioral Observations:** This method measures the frequency, duration, and topology of student actions, usually in a natural setting with non-interactive methods. For example, formal or informal observations of a classroom. This method is the best way to know what students actually do, how they manifest their motives, attitudes and values. Special care and planning are required when studying sensitive issues.

Quantitative Assessment

Quantitative assessment places interpretative value on numerical data. Statistics are used to summarize the data.

Examples of Quantitative Assessment Methods

- **Commercial, norm-referenced, standardized examinations:** This tool is often group administered, mostly or entirely multiple-choice and objective testing in one or more curricular areas. Scores are based on comparison with a reference or norm group. Typically this type of test is purchased from a private vendor, and used primarily for students in individual programs. They provide for external validity and are beneficial in instances where state or national standards exist for the discipline or profession. This tool is valuable for benchmarking and cross-institutional comparison studies. This method is relatively quick and easy to use, but useful mostly where group-level performance and external comparisons of results are required.
- **Locally-developed examinations:** Objective and/or subjective tests can be designed by faculty of the program or course sequence being evaluated. Content and style can be geared to specific goals, objectives, and student characteristics of the program. This tool is most useful for individual course work or program evaluation, with careful adherence to measurement principles.

Mixed Methods

Mixed methods involve the use of quantitative and qualitative data to assess the complexity of student learning.

Examples of Mixed Methods Assessments

- **Portfolios:** Students collect multiple work samples usually compiled over time and rated using rubrics. The design of a portfolio is dependent upon how the scoring results are going to be used. Portfolios are a potentially valuable option adding important longitudinal and qualitative data, in a more natural way.
- **Archival Records:** Biographical, academic, or other file data available from the college or other agencies and institutions. This data is valuable for longitudinal comparison and can be a standard component of all assessment programs.

A wealth of assessment methods are used in higher education to assess students' achievements. The primary goal is to choose a method which most effectively assesses the objectives of the program.

When choosing assessment items, it is useful to have one eye on the immediate task of assessing student learning in a particular unit of study, and another eye on the broader aims of the program and the qualities of the graduating student. Many of the assessment tools used daily in the classroom lend themselves to such analysis. Essay, group work, case studies and presentations can add valuable data to the assessment of the accomplishment of student learning outcomes at the student, course, and program level. The use of scoring rubrics is frequently used to gather information about individual as well as overall program performance. A discussion of scoring rubrics and resources to assist department in the development of rubrics will complete this chapter.

Rubrics

A rubric is a set of categories which define and describe the important components of the work being completed, critiqued, or assessed. Each category contains a gradation of levels of completion or competence with a score assigned to each level and a clear description of what performance needs to be met to attain the score at each level.

Examples of Rubrics

Rubrics are scoring guides used in subjective assessments. A rubric makes explicit expected qualities of performance on a rating scale or the definition of a single scoring point on a scale. Rubrics answer the question, "What does mastery (and varying degrees of mastery) for a target achievement (student learning outcome) look like?" "What does the range in the quality of performances look like?" In effect, rubrics translate outcome statement into criteria. These criteria publicly identify the significant dimensions that raters apply to texts student generate in response to an assessment method. Results of applying these criteria provide evidence of learning patterns. At both the institution and program levels these patterns identify students' areas of strength as well as weaknesses. Scoring rubrics consist of both kinds of descriptors:

- **Criteria descriptors:** Describes the criteria or traits manifested in a project, performance, or text that a student produces in response to an assessment method. The criteria identify the ways of thinking, knowing, or behaving represented in what student produce, such as creativity, self-reflection, analysis, integration, synthesis.
- **Performance descriptors:** Describes how well students execute each criterion or train along an achievement continuum or score level. This continuum, then, describes representative ways students perform or execute each criterion, reflecting mastery levels; national or professional levels; levels established through the collective expertise of faculty, staff, and others who contribute to students' education. Based on their observation of students' progression over time or the developmental process that typically occurs is documented.

The development of scoring rubrics should be a collaborative work that draws on multiple levels of expertise inside and outside of an institution and its programs. The rubric is one authentic assessment tool which is designed to simulate real life activity where students are engaged in solving real-life problems. It is a formative type of assessment because it becomes an ongoing part of the whole teaching and learning process. Students themselves are involved in the assessment process through both peer and self-assessment.

As students become familiar with rubrics, they can assist in the rubric design process. This involvement empowers the students and as a result, their learning becomes more focused and self-directed. Authentic assessment, therefore, blurs the lines between teaching, learning, and assessment. The use of scoring rubrics is a valuable tool in the assessment of student learning outcomes.

The following sample rubrics are provided to help visualize a completed rubric. *Appendix B: "Rubrics"* contains numerous references to websites with guidance on developing rubrics and many sample rubrics.

EXAMPLE: AST 1002 Lunar Observation Project Scoring Rubric

	Distinguished (10 points)	Proficient (8 points)	Marginal (5 points)	Flawed (2 points)	Unsatisfactory (0 Points)	Point Multiplier
CONTENT						
Observational Data	Complete	Incomplete, missing a few days or data elements	Incomplete, missing several days or some data elements	Incomplete, many days or data elements	Missing	5
Tidal Differences Table	Complete and fully labeled	Complete but not fully labeled	Incomplete	Incomplete	Missing	2
Tidal Differences Graph	Complete and fully labeled	Complete but not fully labeled	Incomplete	Incomplete	Missing	2
Summary & Analysis	Complete, convincing, and fully discusses data collected	Incomplete, addresses most of the required topics	Incomplete, only addresses some of the required topics	Incomplete, only addresses a few of the required topics	Missing	3
MECHANICS						
Spelling & Grammar	Error-free	Present but do not interfere with meaning	Careless or distracting	Interfered with overall understanding	No evidence that a spell checker was used	1
Overall Quality	Neat, extrudes pride of ownership	Organized, pages unnumbered and/or out of place	Organized, pages unnumbered, pages messy, looks more like a draft than a final report	Sloppy, unorganized, looks like it was thrown together in a hurry	Sloppy, pages missing, looks more like scrap paper than a final report	2

Chapter 9

Analysis and Use of Results

Evaluation's most important purpose is not to prove, but to improve. Is the program doing what the stated objectives say it should do? How do we improve program and discipline instruction with the collected data?

Assess derives from Latin, "assidere," originally and literally, "to sit beside." Thus an assessor is not just one who measures, but one who coaches and mentors.

The next step in the assessment cycle involves the analysis and use of the results of assessment. Faculty teams review the data against the established performance measures. The discussion is then focused on recommendations from program/discipline faculty and leadership to make improvements. (See Assessment Link E: "Guidelines in Reporting Your Results")

An effective program assessment should answer these questions:

- What are you trying to accomplish?
- How well are you doing it?
- How, using the answers to the first two questions, can you improve what you are doing?
- What and how does a program contribute to the development and growth of its students and/or the support of its students?
- How can student learning be improved?

Evidence of Program Assessment **SUCCESS**

Sincerity means people trust the process.

Usefulness means the process helps people.

Clarity means people understand the process.

Commitment means people believe the process works to their advantage and leaders support the process.

Enthusiasm means the people want to do it.

Systematic and sustainable means everyone is continuing to use it.

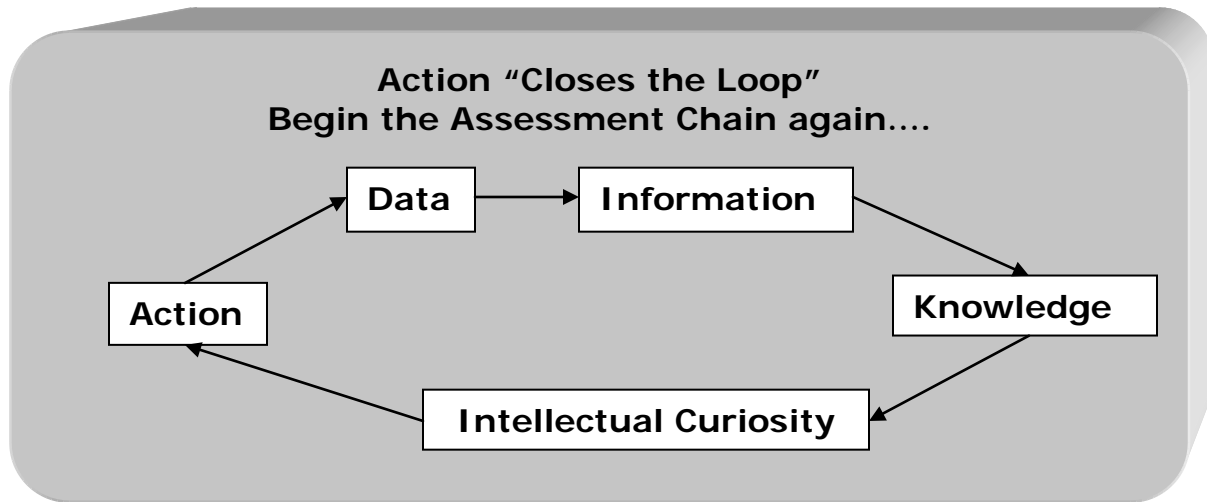
Support means people are not on their own.

The Institutional Effectiveness paradigm, in a culture of inquiry, includes the assessment plan. The analysis and use of assessment results answers the following critical questions:

- Where are we going (vision)?
- What do we do (mission)?
- How do we get to where we are going (goals)?
- What will it look like (outcomes and benchmarks)?
- How will we know (assessment and evaluation)?
- What will we do with the results (IE, continuous quality improvements, and change)?

Assessment Team Tasks:

- Establish a timeline for the process
- Collect assessment artifacts
- Establish a method of evaluating artifacts, develop rubrics and/or assessment tools as necessary
- Assess learning outcomes and analyze quality of learning
- Prepare assessment report with findings and recommendations
- Incorporate actionable assessment results into your upcoming year's Unit Action Plan (UAP) as a way to document your actions
- Post assessment report on "dudley" (See Figure 3.2. EPA Outcomes/Measures)



The ultimate definition and intent of Institutional Effectiveness is to promote the systematic and ongoing process of improving quality by assessing the achievement of outcomes and adjusting programs and services to achieve improved future outcomes. The documentation of the use of assessment results is at the core of institutional effectiveness (See Attachment E: EPA Assessment Mission, Outcomes, and Measures Report).

Continued quality improvement also includes evaluating the tools being used to evaluate your program or discipline. As part of the process of evaluating it is also necessary for you to determine whether or not your:

1. outcomes continue to be appropriate in determining program success.
2. performance measures and related standards are appropriate and sufficient to identify outcome results.
3. data sources provide you with accurate and appropriate information related to the measures you are attempting to evaluate.
4. data sources include direct measures.

"The new world economy is highly knowledge-intensive, so you must be good at constantly learning. If you stand still, you fall back."

-J.F. Rischard, High Noon (p.30)

Chapter 10

Educational Program Assessment Reporting

Assessment reporting is accomplished using the college's online database which collects information from each program area and provides standard reports to department chairs and college administration. The database provides assessment reporting for both the Educational Program Assessment (EPA) units and the Administrative Programs Assessment (APA) units.

The college's assessment reporting database consists of two main data entry forms (pages): Mission Form and Outcomes/Measures Form (see Figures: "10.1 EPA Mission" and 10.2 "EPA Outcomes/Measures" below).

Assessment Main Menu - Windows Internet Explorer
 http://dudley/ASSESSMENT/AssessmentMenu.htm

Unit Assessment Planning

Assessment

Exit Assessment Application

Assessment Main Menu

EPA Mission

2009-2010

Educational Programs (EPA) Data Entry Form

Outcomes and Measures Form

Assessment Reports Menu

HELP ASSISTANCE: Click on the "green" Step boxes to view context sensitive help information.

Step 1: Select Educational Program

Step 2: Unit Mission Statement

Use the following steps when completing your Program Mission Statement and related information:

Instructions:

- Step 1: Select Educational Program - Using the drop down box next to Step 1, select the educational program you wish to edit.
- Step 2: Educational Program Mission Statement - Click on the Step 2: green box for instructions regarding completing your Educational Program Mission Statement or refer to your Educational Program Assessment Handbook, Chapter 2, for help in describing your Educational Program Mission statement.

Format for Program Mission Statement

"The mission of (your educational program's name) is to (your educational program's primary purpose) by providing (your educational program's primary functions or activities) to (your educational program's primary stakeholders)."

start Assessment EPA_UnitAssessment... Assessment Main Me... Unit Assessment Plan... Search Desktop 8:45 AM

Figure: 10.1 EPA Mission

Figure 10. 2 EPA Outcomes/Measures

The Mission Form allows department chairs to record their program/discipline mission.

The Outcomes/Measures Form provides data entry fields for multiple student learning outcome statements, performance measure statements, performance results, evaluation of results, improvement objectives, etc.

Each department chair, in coordination with program faculty and staff, creates their own mission statement(s), which is a short, concise statement describing the program's or discipline's purpose, what is done to accomplish the purpose (function), and for whom the program is intended to provide services for (stakeholders). Mission statements describe the contribution each program or discipline makes in addressing the college's mission.

Each department chair identifies three to five student learning outcome statements for each program or discipline. These student outcome statements should reflect the most critical functions of the program/discipline. Student learning outcome statements evolve from the mission statement. Each student learning outcome statement must have at least two performance measures. Department chairs along with program faculty and staff evaluate progress toward meeting student learning outcomes on a continuous basis and implement improvement activities toward improving student learning outcomes. See *Assessment Link G: "South Florida Community College EPA Audit Criteria"* to ensure that you have met the guideline in collecting and reporting your student program learning outcomes.

Attachment A:

Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's taxonomy is a great way to state your performance measures so that they address the level of learning performance you are seeking. Table F.1 provides an overview of Bloom's taxonomy with correlating key words.

Bloom's Taxonomy Category	Key Words
Knowledge: Recall data or information.	define, describe, identify, know, label, list, match, name, outline, recall, recognize, reproduce, select, state
Comprehension: Understand the meaning, translation, interpolation, and interpretation of instructions and problems. State a problem in one's own words.	comprehend, convert, defend, distinguish, estimate, explain, extend, generalize, gives examples, infer, interpret, paraphrase, predict, rewrite, summarize, translate
Application: Use a concept in a new situation or unprompted use of an abstraction. Applies what was learned in the classroom into novel situations in the work place.	apply, change, compute, construct, demonstrate, discover, manipulate, modify, operate, predict, prepare, produce, relate, show, solve, use
Analysis: Separates material or concepts into component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood. Distinguishes between facts and inferences.	analyze, breaks down, compare, contrast, diagram, deconstruct, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, identify, illustrate, infer, outline, relate, select, separate
Synthesis: Builds a structure or pattern from diverse elements. Put parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure.	categorize, combine, compile, compose, create, devise, design, explain, generate, modify, organize, plan, rearrange, reconstruct, relate, reorganize, revise, rewrite, summarize, tell, write
Evaluation: Make judgments about the value of ideas or materials.	appraise, compare, conclude, contrast, criticize, critique, defend, describe, discriminate, evaluate, explain, interpret, justify, relate, summarize, support

Table A.1 Key Words Related to Bloom's Taxonomy

Attachment B:

Rubrics

Examples of Critical Thinking Scoring Rubrics:

- Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric, Academic Press.
http://66.132.144.88/pdf_files/rubric.pdf
- General Education Critical Thinking Rubric, Northeastern Illinois University.
<http://www.neiu.edu/~neassess/pdf/CriThinkRoger-long.pdf>
- The Critical Thinking Rubric, Washington State University.
<http://wsuctproject.wsu.edu/ctr.htm>

Instructions on how to create scoring rubrics:

- Scoring Rubrics: What, When and How? *Barbara M. Moskal*, Associate Director of the Center for Engineering Education, Assistant Professor of Mathematical and Computer Sciences, Colorado School of Mines.
<http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&n=3>
- Designing Scoring Rubrics for Your Classroom, *Craig A. Mertle*, Bowling Green State University.
<http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&n=25>
- Scoring Rubrics, California State University-Sacramento.
<http://webapps@CSUS.edu/assessment/>
- Developing scoring rubrics:
http://intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Assessments/Ideas_and_Rubrics/ideas_and_rubrics.html

Attachment C:

Learning Outcome Links

The following hyperlinks to student learning outcome at other colleges and universities are provided as points of reference that may provide helpful when developing your own SLOs.

- Fresno City College FAQ on Learning Outcomes
<http://online.fresnocitycollege.edu/senate/curriculum/slo.html>
- League for Innovation Learning Outcomes
http://www.league.org/league/projects/lcp/lcp3/Learning_Outcomes.htm
- Learning Outcomes project at Las Positas College - very comprehensive
<http://www.laspositascollege.edu/SLO/index.php>
- Examples of Learning Outcome competencies
http://www.laspositascollege.edu/SLO/documents/cc_examples.pdf
- Show us the Learning - Handbook from College of DuPage
<http://www.cod.edu/Dept/Outcomes/AssessmentBook.pdf>
- Review of how colleges implement Learning Outcomes from Cerritos College
http://www.cerritos.edu/staffdev/activities/learning_outcomes.htm
- Lane Community College - Vanguard Learning College Learning Outcomes Project
<http://www.lanecc.edu/vanguard/outcomes.htm>
- Santa Fe Community College's Learning Outcomes
<http://inst.santafe.cc.fl.us/~21century/LOC.htm>
- Learning Outcomes Resources from Cabrillo College
<http://www.cabrillo.edu/~tsmalley/learneroutcomes.html>
- Learning Outcomes Notes from Dr. Magdala Ray
http://www.pbcc.edu/documents/Academic_Services/ray_notes_sacs.pdf
- Baltimore County Community College Learning Outcomes Booklet
http://www.cbccmd.edu/media/cisl/loa_booklet.pdf

Attachment D:

American Association for Higher Education Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

<http://ultibase.rmit.edu.au/Articles/june97/ameri1.htm#9>

The American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) is a national organization of 8,500+ individual members dedicated to the common cause of improving the quality of American higher education. AAHE is higher education's "citizen's organization," where faculty, administrators, and students from all sectors, plus policymakers and leaders from foundations, government, accrediting agencies, and business can address collectively the challenges higher education faces.

AAHE members share two convictions: that higher education should play a more central role in national life, and that each of our institutions can be more effective. AAHE helps members translate these convictions into action. Through AAHE's conferences, publications, and special programs, members acquire both the "big picture" and the practical tools they need to increase effectiveness in their own settings and to improve the enterprise as a whole.

NINE PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING

1. The assessment of student learning begins with educational values. Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement. Its effective practice, then, begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only *what* we choose to assess but also *how* we do so. Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about.
2. Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time. Learning is a complex process. It entails not only what students know but what they can do with what they know; it involves not only knowledge and abilities but values, attitudes, and habits of mind that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom. Assessment should reflect these understandings by employing a diverse array of methods, including those that call for actual performance, using them over time so as to reveal change, growth, and increasing degrees of integration. Such an approach aims for a more complete and accurate picture of learning, and therefore firmer bases for improving our students' educational experience.
3. Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes. Assessment is a goal-oriented process. It entails comparing educational performance with educational purposes and expectations -- those derived from the institution's mission, from faculty intentions in program and course design, and from knowledge of students' own goals. Where program purposes lack specificity or agreement, assessment as a process pushes a campus toward clarity about where to aim and what standards to apply; assessment also prompts attention to where and how program goals will be taught and learned. Clear, shared, implementable goals are the cornerstone for assessment that is focused and useful.
4. Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes. Information about outcomes is of high importance; where students "end up" matters greatly. But to improve outcomes, we need to know about student experience along the way -- about the curricula, teaching, and kind of student effort that lead to particular outcomes. Assessment can help us understand which students learn best under what conditions; with such knowledge comes the capacity to improve the whole of their learning.
5. Assessment works best when it is ongoing not episodic. Assessment is a process whose power is cumulative. Though isolated, "one-shot" assessment can be better than none, improvement is

best fostered when assessment entails a linked series of activities undertaken over time. This may mean tracking the process of individual students, or of cohorts of students; it may mean collecting the same examples of student performance or using the same instrument term after term. The point is to monitor progress toward intended goals in a spirit of continuous improvement. Along the way, the assessment process itself should be evaluated and refined in light of emerging insights.

6. Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved. Student learning is a campus-wide responsibility, and assessment is a way of enacting that responsibility. Thus, while assessment efforts may start small, the aim over time is to involve people from across the educational community. Faculties play an especially important role, but assessment's questions can't be fully addressed without participation by student-affairs educators, librarians, administrators, and students. Assessment may also involve individuals from beyond the campus (alumni, trustees, employers) whose experience can enrich the sense of appropriate aims and standards for learning. Thus understood, assessment is not a task for small groups of experts but a collaborative activity; its aim is wider, better-informed attention to student learning by all parties with a stake in its improvement.
7. Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about. Assessment recognizes the value of information in the process of improvement. But to be useful, information must be connected to issues or questions that people really care about. This implies assessment approaches that produce evidence that relevant parties will find credible, suggestive, and applicable to decisions that need to be made. It means thinking in advance about how the information will be used, and by whom. The point of assessment is not to gather data and return "results"; it is a process that starts with the questions of decision-makers, that involves them in the gathering and interpreting of data, and that informs and helps guide continuous improvement.
8. Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change. Assessment alone changes little. Its greatest contribution comes on campuses where the quality of teaching and learning is visibly valued and worked at. On such campuses, the push to improve educational performance is a visible and primary goal of leadership; improving the quality of undergraduate education is central to the institution's planning, budgeting, and personnel decisions. On such campuses, information about learning outcomes is seen as an integral part of decision making, and avidly sought.
9. Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public. There is a compelling public stake in education. As educators, we have a responsibility to the public that support or depend on us to provide information about the ways in which our students meet goals and expectations. But that responsibility goes beyond the reporting of such information; our deeper obligation -- to ourselves, our students, and society -- is to improve. Those to whom educators are accountable have a corresponding obligation to support such attempts at improvement.

Attachment E: EPA Assessment Mission, Outcomes, and Measures Report

Unit Assessment Planning

Assessment frm_AssessmentReportMenu rpt_MissionReport

2009-2010 **South Florida Community College** **Educational Program Assessment**
Rafatti, Colleen **Assessment Mission, Outcomes, and Measures Report** **Educator Preparation Institute (EPI)**

Unit Mission Statement The mission of the Educator Preparation Institute (EPI) is to prepare individuals for professional certification as primary and secondary school teachers in Florida schools and related settings through their participation in an alternative teacher certification program.

Outcome Number 1

1	Students will demonstrate their understanding and mastery of the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAPs).	Performance Description:	1. Demonstrate achievement of competency in each of the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices at the preprofessional level in the EPI classroom setting. 2. Demonstrate achievement of competency in each of the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices at the preprofessional level in the field (K-12 school) setting.
		Performance Standards:	1. 100% of students who successfully complete the EPI Program will demonstrate competency in each FEAP through submission of a series of mandatory artifacts created in their EPI courses. 2. 100% of students who successfully complete the EPI Program will demonstrate competency in each FEAP by passing the mandatory Teaching Proficiency Demonstration in their EPI 0945 field experience course.
		Data Sources:	1. Artifacts from EPI courses submitted to the required FACTS.ORG student portfolio. 2. Teaching Proficiency Demonstration scored rubric and associated supportive documents (lesson plan, assessment tools, etc.)
		Data Collection Period:	Reporting Year (Summer, Fall, Spring)

Strategy Goal: Enable all students to succeed. **Performance Met:** No **Participants:** Colleen Rafatti, Dean Brown

Performance Results:
Analysis Of Results:
Performance Improvement Activities:

Educator Preparation Institute (EPI) Page 1 of 3 Monday, April 05, 2010

Page: 1 of 1 No Filter

start EPA Handbook - 5Apr... Unit Assessment Plan... Search Desktop 3:14 PM

Assessment Links

Assessment links provide informational support toward the development, documentation, and evaluation of program assessment activities. The assessment links below provide a brief description regarding the purpose of the link and in some cases a direct link to the support document. All of the links can be located in the assessment database located at:

<http://dudley/ASSESSMENT/AssessmentMenu.htm>

Assessment Link A: EPA Assessment Database Application Instructions

Provides step by step instruction on using the EPA Assessment Database Application. The application is located at: <http://dudley/ASSESSMENT/AssessmentMenu.htm>

Answer to questions regarding the application can be obtained from South Florida Community College's Institutional Effectiveness department at 863-784-7318.

Assessment Link B: Educational Program Assessment Template

The Educational Program Assessment Templates assists program chairs and faculty with developing outcomes and standards prior to being entered into the EPA Assessment Database Application.

Assessment Link C: Glossary of Terms

In-depth glossary of assessment terms as defined for South Florida Community College are located at http://dudley/_COLLEGEDATA/Assessment/rptEPAGlossary.pdf through the college's intranet. These terms are continually being updated and expanded upon as our overall College assessment process matures.

Assessment Link D: Worksheet for Developing Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

This worksheet serves as a guide to the development of S.M.A.R.T. SLO statements that describes desired learning outcomes for our students.

Assessment Link E: EPA Audit Criteria

http://dudley/_COLLEGEDATA/Assessment/EPA%20Audit%20Criteria%20-%20Assessment%20Link%20E-May2010.pdf

Assessment Link F: Program Assessment at South Florida Community College -Guidelines in Reporting Your Results

http://dudley/_COLLEGEDATA/Assessment/EPA%20Guidelines%20in%20Reporting%20Your%20Results%20-%20Assessment%20Link%20F%20-%20May2010.pdf