

Developing an Assessment Tool

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The Assessment Process

- Define SLOs
- Create assessment tools/rubrics
- Assess SLOs
- Compile results
- Reflect on results
- **Plan and implement changes and improvements**
- Repeat!

Assessment Tools

- Are used for collecting assessment information
- Consist of grading/scoring guidelines
- Could be a complete or partial rubric of the assignment
- Could be simple or complicated

Assessment Tools

- It's best to create your own.
- That way, it will be tailored to what's important to you.

Creating an Assessment Tool

Step 1: Start by choosing which SLO to assess.

- Often, the SLO itself will suggest the most appropriate assessment method or assignment.

Example SLO

English 1A, Laney College:

- Develop individual perspectives in essays that demonstrate critical thinking skills, command of standard grammar, and logical organization.
- This SLO should be assessed by analyzing student essays.

Example SLO

English 1A, Laney College:

- Develop individual perspectives in essays that demonstrate critical thinking skills, command of standard grammar, and logical organization.
- The assessment tool should include:
 - critical thinking
 - standard grammar
 - logical organization
 - development of individual perspective

Creating an Assessment Tool

- Step 2: Decide which aspects of the assignment to examine.
- Example:
 - critical thinking
 - standard grammar
 - logical organization
 - development of individual perspective

Creating an Assessment Tool

- Step 3: Decide how many different performance levels you'd like.
- 3 levels? (good, adequate, needs work)
- 4 levels? (exemplary, good, satisfactory, poor)
- 5 levels? (excellent, good, OK, needs work, needs a lot of work)

Creating the Assessment Tool

- How many different levels of student performance would be useful to record?
- 3 levels:
 - Good - students “got it”
 - Sort of - students showed partial mastery
 - Students didn’t get it.
- Is the “sort of” level acceptable performance? Decide!

Performance Levels

- 4 levels of student performance:
 - Good - students “got it”
 - Minor errors
 - Significant errors but showed some mastery
 - Didn't get it
- Is the “sort of” level acceptable performance? Decide! What is the minimum acceptable level of performance?

Assessment Tool

- The assessment tool should include:
 - Aspects of the assignment you are checking
 - A description of performance levels for each aspect
 - A way to record or capture the types of mistakes students make (like a checklist).
 - This could be built in to the rubric.

General Rubric Format

	Excellent	Good	OK	Needs work	Not done
organization	(description appears in each box)				
content					
analysis					
Grammar/ mechanics					

Example checklist of problem areas

- For a chemistry assignment:
 - Didn't balance the equation
 - Correct setup but calculation error
 - Error in the number of significant figures reported
 - Molar mass incorrect
 - Didn't use the mole ratio
 - Etc.

Collecting Assessment Information

- Use the assessment tool to tally student performance.
- Make copies of the tool.
- Use one copy to evaluate each student's work.
- Tally the number of students in each category for each aspect of the assignment.

Using Test Questions

- Choose one or more test questions that demonstrate the SLO.
- Make a scoring guideline for those questions, such as:
 - Excellent – no errors
 - Good – one minor error
 - OK – some errors but right idea overall
 - Major errors (doesn't meet requirements)
 - Left blank or super wrong

Using Test Questions

- Beforehand, decide what types of errors count as “minor” errors and what types are “major” errors.
- As you are grading the test, tally how many students are in each category.
 - Excellent – no errors
 - Good – one minor error
 - OK – some errors but right idea overall
 - Major errors (doesn't meet requirements)
 - Left blank or super wrong

Diagnosing problem areas

- In addition to the performance levels, it's very useful to be able to capture what mistakes were commonly made.
- This is important to know, as you will need to develop an improvement plan as part of the assessment report.
- Develop a checklist of common mistakes as part of your assessment tool.

Collaborate with Colleagues

- If the course is taught by more than one instructor, you will need to collaborate on the assessment project.

Keep in mind

- Remember to design the tool so that it is easy to use.
- Design the tool so that you get information that is useful and not too cumbersome. (Too many categories can be cumbersome.)

Overall Assessment Results

- If several sections participate in the assessment, combine the information.
- You will be able to see strong and weak points for entire classes and for the whole department.
- This will tell you how to focus improvement efforts.

After collecting assessment information

- Have a meeting, and discuss the results with your colleagues.
- Discuss improvement plans.
- Report on your assessment findings and plans for improvement using TaskStream.

Rubric Wizard

- Use the “Rubric Wizard” in TaskStream. It’s easy!
- www.taskstream.com
 - Log in, then click on “Resource Tools”
 - TaskStream contains examples that you can modify
 - Once you create a rubric on TaskStream, “publish” it so that other Laney instructors can see it, use it, and modify it for themselves.

Useful Resources

- Laney rubrics website
 - <http://www.laney.edu/wp/assessment/how-to-create-rubrics-and-examples/>
- Learning Assessment Committee website
 - <http://www.laney.edu/wp/assessment/>
- How to write SLOs website
 - <http://www.laney.edu/wp/assessment/how-to-write-slos/>