



**NYU Task Force
Best Practices in Student Performance
Assessment
Fall 2009**

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Introduction: The Task Force study was requested of the Faculty Senators' Council by the Provost, David McLaughlin, in late June, 2009. The group was assembled by Prof. Carol Shoshkes Reiss, the Vice-Chair of the FSC, during the summer, and two meetings of the full Task Force took place in the Fall, 2009, with 4 subcommittees gathering as needed to perform their studies and compose their reports. The membership of the Task Force and its subcommittees are listed in Appendix 1. The final report to the Provost was prepared in November, 2009.

The charge to the Task Force is as follows:

Excellence in teaching is central to NYU's mission. Yet, the landscape within which university learning is taking place has changed dramatically over the last decade. The globally networked marketplace for new ideas and information has introduced many new resources that teachers and students can employ both in and outside of the classroom.

These resources have the potential to dramatically improve the quality of our educational processes. However, they also present challenges, with few more important or meaningful than ensuring the integrity of student coursework, and – correspondingly -- how we, as educators, assess that performance. In this context, it is important that we, as faculty of NYU, take seriously the task of staying current with best practices in student performance assessment.

Accordingly, the Provost is asking the Faculty Senators Council to convene a task force to meet over the next 12 months. Its charge is to study best practices in assuring the integrity of student performance assessment at NYU including identifying the different assessment vehicles that are now available to educators, how those vehicles are most successfully administered to students, and how they can be most effectively and fairly used to evaluate student performance in courses. Consideration should be given to differences in practice across disciplines and class size, as well as across different methods of assessment -- including, for example, best practices in the administration of written versus on-line tests, written assignments submitted electronically versus by paper, and the use of group projects for both student learning and evaluation.

The FSC should submit its report of findings and recommendations to the Provost and to School Deans and Directors.

Executive summary: The current guidelines established by NYU Schools on Academic Integrity were analyzed not only among the various NYU units, but also with Peer Universities and found to be comparable. We have in place mechanisms to inform students and faculty, prevent violations, report violations, and standard disciplinary procedures.

Teaching and Student Learning are highly valued at NYU. NYU is making significant progress in developing effective pedagogical and administrative techniques for preventing plagiarism and cheating. Specific strategies are summarized in the report. This Task Force recommends that all faculty be made aware of these strategies and techniques.

A very thorough and comprehensive analysis of assessment of Student Learning was prepared by another subcommittee. This is designed to facilitate departments and programs in their development of integrated curricula.

Finally, a survey of the Tools and Resources available to faculty for support of assessing Student Performance and Academic Integrity which are accessible as of November, 2009, was completed. This report focused on Early Warning alerts for students whose assignments fall short of the expected, On-Line testing, non-traditional work (for instance the products of students in Arts courses), Virtual and Global classroom modalities, and anti-Plagiarism tools.

The Task Force has made specific recommendations for the Center for Teaching Excellence and for Information Technology commitments to implement aspects of the findings of the Task Force. These recommendations are found within each of the subcommittee reports. We anticipate that substantial new resources will be needed to support CTE to fulfill its charges. The CTE is central to developing faculty skills and maintaining the pedagogic standards which we believe are essential for NYU in the 21st century.

These Best Practices are designed to guide the Schools and Programs. We recognize that there are many different cultures within NYU, which are appropriate for distinct academic units ranging from Arts and Performance, to Natural Sciences, to Business.

Additional comments: The Task Force identified several other issues which were outside of either our expertise and beyond the scope of our charge, or premature due to the timing of our work. These may be considered in the future by other groups at the request of the Provost.

1. Classroom infrastructure: how does our aging space, shortage of large classrooms, and lack of embedded technology in every room impact on both class size and Student Learning? Are some students excluded from registering for some required courses because of a shortage of classroom seats? Does this impact on enrollment in course sequences or on time graduation?
2. Does student motivation color student learning? Are attitudes about MAP courses or introductory level survey courses in majors dissimilar to those for the elective upper level courses available to students?
3. Impact of contract vs. tenure-track full time faculty (TTFTF): Many courses are taught by contract faculty. This group is far from homogeneous as there are experts with full-time professional positions who teach individual courses, faculty who are full time members of

departments or programs (“clinical professors”, “language lecturers”, “master teachers”, etc.) as well as adjuncts who teach one or more courses at NYU and cobble together other teaching commitments at other universities every semester. How well do students learn with these distinct contract instructors and TTFTF? Student satisfaction data might be consulted in regard to programs which depend largely or entirely on contract faculty.

4. How will FAR4 impact on Student Learning and on acquisition of Teaching Skills by graduate students?



**NYU Task Force
Best Practices in Student Learning Assessment
Fall, 2009**

College Practices on Academic Integrity

Prepared by: Sub-Committee for College Practices

Richard Kalb, George Smith and Barrett Hamberger

University Policies on Academic Integrity

CHARGE: Review policies of NYU schools and peer institutions; means of publicizing policies to students, faculty, and external community; and implementation of policies.

FINDINGS: After surveying the existing publications and policies of NYU schools, we found that there is a broadly consistent pattern of how they view academic integrity; how they try to educate students about academic integrity; and how they strive to maintain rigorous academic standards. At the same time, variations exist in the particular policies and procedures for handling and adjudicating infractions and disseminating relevant information to students and faculty. Many of these variations seem appropriate given the different academic programs of each school. We note that the Gallatin School of Individualized Study, the Stern School of Business, and the Tisch School of Arts are currently in the process of rewriting their policies on Academic Integrity.

The committee also reviewed the publicized statements related to academic integrity of the following peer institutions, regarding their processes for educating students to uphold high academic standards and the policies and procedures of their disciplinary processes. The schools reviewed were: Columbia, Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania., Stanford, Brown, Emory, Boston University, Indiana University, Rutgers University and the City University of New York. Like NYU, each of these universities and their schools has a statement on academic integrity and procedures for handling infractions that are consistent with their particular academic programs.

Statement on Academic Integrity: All NYU schools publish philosophical statements that emphasize the importance of upholding the highest possible level of academic integrity in the intellectual community. The statements stress the need for open academic inquiry, intellectual honesty, a tolerance for diverse opinions, and overall integrity in the production of academic work.

All of the peer institutions reviewed publish statements promoting high personal and academic standards and exhorting everyone in their communities to be responsible and accountable for maintaining them. Further, albeit to varying degrees, they hold that an academic environment should encourage inquiry and respect for diverse viewpoints and opinions.

Process for Educating Students: All NYU schools have some process for helping students understand academic integrity and what constitutes a violation (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, forgery, etc.). This is done in a variety of ways, from orientation presentations and/or workshops, computer tutorials, handbooks, web

sites, and email reminders at final exam time to information that faculty disseminate in syllabi and in classroom discussions.

In some NYU schools students are asked to sign an academic oath, or “Community Compact,” in which they agree to uphold the highest standards of personal and academic integrity. An “Honor System” is also emphasized in some NYU schools, where every student acknowledges the obligation to report any suspected violation of the honor code that he/she might witness. In addition, other programs in the University require students to turn in a statement affirming that they have done original work on their term papers. Instructors are also encouraged to include information related to academic integrity in their courses and to design assignments and papers in ways that lessen the likelihood that students could submit work that was not their own.

The peer institutions surveyed have a variety of ways for educating students to help them understand, uphold, and maintain academic and professional honesty and integrity. They have orientation programs, workshops, computer tutorials, writing and tutorial centers, web sites, and numerous publications to help educate students. Some schools present suggested guidelines for assignments and papers that make it difficult for students to plagiarize or cheat. Like NYU, they make resources available to assist students when they have questions related to integrity issues, such as writing centers and library services. In addition, many faculty at NYU and in our peer institutions are adopting teaching styles, assignments, and research projects that discourage students from submitting work incorporating material that is not their own.

Preventing Violations: Different methods are used to prevent actual cheating on examinations or plagiarism. These include proctoring of exams, prohibiting the possession of cell phones or other electronic devices in exam rooms, distributing different versions of the same exam, using Turnitin© or other similar anti plagiarism technologies. Faculty in all of the academic disciplines are also using various creative pedagogical approaches that discourage plagiarism (e.g. short writing assignment, textural analysis, assignments, and writing intensive course, etc.).

Process for Educating Faculty: At NYU and at our peer institutions, efforts are made to very clearly communicate the policies and procedures related to academic integrity. This is done through new faculty orientations, publications and information that is disseminated to all faculty throughout the academic year, and the availability of ongoing staff resources for consultations. In one NYU school, faculty receive information on this issue twice a year. Often it is assumed that faculty understand the rules governing academic integrity, but many of the schools reported that this may not always be the case, especially where part-time faculty are involved.

The Disciplinary Process: Procedures for dealing with academic infractions are clearly delineated within all of the NYU schools, in bulletins, handbooks, and on websites. These procedures involve a process for consulting with the Dean's Office regarding academic integrity issues and grading options. Instructors are also encouraged to meet with students and discuss the nature of an offense and help them understand the severity of it and how to avoid repeating the same mistake again. There are clear procedures for reporting infractions, a faculty and student disciplinary committee exists, students have the opportunity for a disciplinary hearing, suggested and prescribed sanctions are outlined, and an appeal process is available for students. There are slight variations in these procedures between the schools that seem appropriate given the diverse academic programs in the University.

Penalties also vary, depending on the severity of the situation and whether the student has a prior record. These range from a warning or probation to suspension or dismissal. The first preference seems to be for the faculty member to resolve the issue with the student without recourse to a formal disciplinary hearing, and to impose a penalty on either a grade for a particular assignment or for the entire course.

The peer institutions have similar disciplinary policies and procedures. The particular details of policies and the procedural steps for handling violations vary slightly from one institution to another. All of the schools have committees normally consisting of some mix of students, administrators and faculty, for handling the academic infractions and violations of their academic codes of conduct. Sanctions are also similar with slight variations that are consistent with the particular process in each of the schools.

Reporting Infractions: The number of known cases of violations of academic integrity ranges from a few to double digit numbers per semester in each NYU school. However, it was difficult to know how many cases went unreported to the appropriate Dean's office. Some schools fear that the number of unreported cases is significantly large. Another widespread concern among Dean's offices is their lack of knowledge of repeat offenders.

Schools maintain that their faculty are often reluctant to report cases. The reasons for faculty reluctance include: faculty want to keep the matter between them and the student if possible; faculty don't want to devote the time necessary to document cases or to participate in investigations; faculty may fear student filings of grievances or potential legal action.

There also seems to be limited reporting regarding the number of infractions related to academic integrity and the outcomes of any actions taken (in summary form) back to faculty or to the wider school academic community.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1.) Develop an all-University web page with a clear statement that emphasizes academic standards and affirms academic integrity. This page should have a link to each NYU school's website and page on Academic Integrity. The page should reaffirm that as a University community we uphold the highest academic and personal standards and that the concept of academic integrity encompasses both cheating and plagiarism, and violations of academic integrity are inexcusable, even if purportedly done in ignorance.
- 2.) Continue to publicize and disseminate information regarding academic integrity to promote the University Community's commitment to upholding high academic standards. The NYU Center for Teaching Excellence could be a resource for faculty by collecting material and web links on issues related to academic integrity.
- 3.) Establish a program of continuing education for both students and faculty concerning academic integrity, including the responsibility to report academic infractions to the appropriate Dean's office. Faculty who decide to handle infractions themselves should nonetheless report all such infractions. This will help ensure some measure of equity in the treatment of infractions and will also establish a record to identify repeat offenders.
- 4.) Develop presentations on the rules and procedures relating to academic integrity at new faculty orientations – both at the University and school levels.
- 5.) Recommend to faculty that syllabi should include a statement about academic integrity, and clearly outline the expectations that all relevant rules will be followed in all aspects of the coursework. Faculty should also spend some time at the first session of each course, and/or at other appropriate times calling attention to the rules governing academic integrity.
- 6.) Recommend that faculty adopt pedagogical approaches and develop written assignments for students that discourage them from plagiarizing material.
- 7.) Encourage faculty to ask students to submit a signed statement with each term paper or take-home exam submission attesting to its academic integrity.
- 8.) Recommend that each school produce and disseminate an annual report (in summary format) to faculty, administrative staff, and students regarding the number of cases related to academic infractions and their resolutions.



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**Academic Integrity Issues for Assignments and
Examinations**

Prepared by: Sub-Committee for Academic Integrity

Darlene Forest, Patricia Carey, and David Moore

Academic Integrity for Assignments and Examinations: Guiding Principles

As a subset of the issue of academic integrity, university faculty face an important challenge: designing assignments and examinations that serve an educational function but also discourage cheating or plagiarism. What follows are several principles that can guide this process, along with some suggestions for strategies and tactics that can realize those principles.

1. *What matters is learning*

The issue of integrity in students' performance on course assignments and examinations cannot be divorced from the issue of learning. We need to discourage plagiarism and other violations, to be sure, but we also need to maintain our commitment to the educational efficacy of the work we ask of students. Assignments and exams should reinforce and enhance the learning process. A basic premise of this principle is that students who recognize the learning potential of class assignments and examinations will be less likely to plagiarize or otherwise cheat; they will be more prone to cheating when they regard the work as unfair, not connected to the educational goals of the course, or excessively demanding.

a) In constructing assignments and examinations, faculty should make them consistent with the learning goals of the course, which should be clear and manifest in the teacher's practices. The work should reflect and build on the knowledge and skills students are expected to develop.

b) Writing, problem sets, quizzes and exams and other assessment tools should be a regular part of the learning process, giving students frequent and varied opportunities to display their learning, to identify their areas of strength and weakness, and to move toward the learning goals for the course. Grades should not be based on single examinations or papers without adequate preparation or feedback.

c) The assignments and exams should be fair, drawing on concepts and practices addressed in the class lectures, discussions and readings, and feasible, capable of being competently produced in a reasonable amount of time.

d) Even when instances of cheating or plagiarism do occur, the first response should be to ensure that students learn from them: about what they did not understand or could not do that led to their behavior; about how serious those violations are; about how to avoid committing similar acts in the future; about the rationale for our insistence on academic integrity. That means faculty who suspect violations should have open conversations with students about their work, their sources, and the reasons for their behavior. (This process does not

negate the importance of appropriate punishment, especially for repeated violations.)

2. Policies should be clear and consistent within and across academic units

There should be a substantial degree of consensus among faculty both within and across units of NYU about what the principles of academic integrity are and how they will be applied. That does not mean that there should be a single policy across the entire university – different departments and schools will want to express and implement the concept in their own ways – but the substance should be reasonably consistent. That agreement will ensure that (a) students who enroll in courses in different units will know what to expect in terms of the general principles of integrity, and (b) fairness reigns across the institution, so offenses are not defined or treated differently across contexts. Violations of academic integrity policies should be treated seriously, fairly and consistently. In general, we aim at a practice of ‘integrity across the curriculum.’

a) The faculty of each unit (school, department, program) should discuss their particular concerns and principles, and construct a set of procedures for recognizing, reporting and handling violations. Those procedures should be compared to and, as much as possible, aligned with those of other units. The faculty should decide on a scale of punishments for violations that take into account the severity of the offense: unintended technical errors in citations should not be treated as harshly as blatant cheating, the purchase of papers, or disregard for community principles; repeat offenses should be treated more severely than first ones. The precise sequence of disciplinary actions should be determined by each faculty, but there should be a system of escalating authorities (say, from the instructor to the dean) and punishments (from a failing grade on a paper or exam, through disciplinary probation to suspension or expulsion from the university).

b) Course instructors across the university should make clear to students that honesty, respect and integrity are crucial elements of their work, and should announce the relevant policies and procedures in the syllabus, on the course website, and in class discussions. They should tell students how the assignments and exams are designed to discourage cheating and plagiarism, as well as how the courses are designed to help them learn.

3. Reasonable practices should be implemented to discourage cheating and plagiarism

With the priorities of learning, fairness and clarity in mind, faculty members across the university should design their assignments and examinations in such a way as to discourage and reveal violations of academic integrity. There are many such practices, and many websites that describe them. Here are a few examples of what teachers can do:

a) Show students examples of plagiarized work, and discuss the procedures and criteria by which they can avoid plagiarism.

b) Announce that you are aware of online paper mills, internet search engines, Wikipedia, and other sources where students might be tempted to lift material; tell them you are using appropriate plagiarism-finding sites (turnitin.com, etc.), and will check their papers that way; point students toward websites that describe acceptable forms of citation.

c) Rather than assign single large-scale writing assignments, ask for shorter papers (drafts, progressions) that reveal the student's evolving work.

d) Particularize assignments. Specify the kinds and number of sources students may use. Change the requirements from semester to semester to minimize the chances of students using papers from others who have taken the class. Require students to incorporate some sources which are current and local, thereby minimizing the chances of them finding an essay on the internet.

e) On the day the paper is due, have the students write about the work they are handing in. This writing, which would take no more than ten minutes in class, would focus on what they had learned as a result of writing the paper and what struggles they had encountered and overcome as they were writing the paper.

d) Use examination formats appropriate to the content and goals of the course. True-false, multiple-choice and matching questions lend themselves most easily to cheating; faculty who use them should produce several different versions, with questions in different orders, and distribute them in such a way that students sitting near each other do not have the same versions.

e) Take appropriate precautions in monitoring the examinations: have students check their backpacks and electronic devices at the front of the room; circulate among the test-takers watching for violations; arrange seating to minimize opportunities for cheating.

Recommendations

To put these Principles and Practices effectively in place, and anticipate appropriate reinforcement and support, we would recommend that we call upon the *Center for Teaching Excellence* to offer seminars/workshops that directly address these principles and practices, e.g., *Best Practices in Designing Examinations and Assignments*; *Managing Academic Integrity*. Other resources we might engage would be the directors of the Expository Writing Program. Faculty in each department of the University could share their best practices in designing examinations and assignments

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**NYU Task Force
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Assessment
Fall 2009**

Best Practices in Student Learning Assessment

Prepared by: Sub-Committee for Student Learning Assessment

Michaela Rome, Matthew Mayhew, Liz Bradley, and Robert Squillace

Executive Summary

In this report, you will find:

- Answers to frequently asked questions about student learning assessment
- Descriptions of the 4 step process to developing a student learning assessment plan including:
 - Step 1: Develop Student Learning Goals
 - Step 2: Develop Course Objectives and Outline Educational Opportunities
 - Step 3: Choose Measures and Methods to Assess Student Learning
 - Step 4: Use Results and Review Assessment Activities
- Sample materials including:
 - Syllabus
 - Sequenced Assignment
 - Scoring Rubrics
 - Assessment Report Summary
- Examples of direct versus indirect measures (evidence) of student learning

The goals of the report are for readers to:

- Understand the links among teaching, learning and assessment
- Understand the difference between direct and indirect measures of student learning
- Understand why course or assignment grades are not sufficient measures of student learning
- Have a basic understanding of the parts of an assessment plan
- Understand the development and use of assessment rubrics
- Gain knowledge regarding the options available for measuring student learning
- Understand assessment reporting and how to use assessment results to improve educational opportunities

It is expected that these materials, in conjunction with one-on-one consultations regarding assessment practices, will provide faculty and administrators with the tools to accomplish the following:

- Communicate the knowledge they have gained regarding assessment practices to their colleagues.
- Disseminate best practices information to their school, department or program
- Effectively promote the implementation of assessment practices in their school, department or program
- Develop and implement an assessment plan (including a feedback mechanism) for their school, department or program

- Develop a reporting format and implement a reporting cycle for assessment in their school, department or program

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This report presents an overview of some best practices in student learning assessment and should be considered representative rather than exhaustive. This review is meant to acquaint faculty and administrators with the basics of assessment and can serve as an introduction to developing an assessment plan for their program, department or school. The Assistant Vice Provost for Assessment and Evaluation, Michaela Rome, is available for consultation with faculty and administrators who are undertaking development, revision or implementation of assessment plans. She can be reached at 212-998-4426 or at michaela.rome@nyu.edu.

I. Assessment FAQs

What is assessment?

Broadly speaking, assessment is a process that involves:

- Studying activities (courses, co-curricular events like lecture series, fieldwork, advising, etc) that are designed to meet specific goals (in this case, learning goals)
- Determining if goals are being met
- Adapting activities (and possibly goals) as appropriate if goals are not being met

But my school/program/department already assesses student learning. How is this process different?

In the vast majority of cases, assessment is occurring in departments; however, what is often lacking is formal, systematic documentation of assessment activities, assessment results and use of assessment results. Furthermore, assessment plans do not always include *direct measures* of student learning (see section II.D.1 below).

Middle States now requires that there be *systematic, formal, and explicit* “evidence of assessment” for accreditation. While Middle States does not prescribe what or how to assess, there are guidelines regarding the types of evidence that are acceptable, (e.g., Middle States does not consider that grades provide sufficient evidence of student learning, see Appendix A).

Why assess? What are the benefits?

In addition to fulfilling external accountability requirements, assessment can be an internally valuable process. The list below presents a range of benefits to students, faculty and administrators.

Students benefit because:

- The clear expectations that good assessment requires help them understand where they should focus their time and energies.

- Assessment, especially the grading/scoring process, motivates them to do their best.
- Assessment feedback helps them understand their strengths and weaknesses.
- Assessment information documents what they've learned; this documentation is beneficial in applying for jobs, awards and programs of advanced study.
- Graduate students who have assessment experience will have an advantage when applying for jobs.

Faculty benefit because:

- Assessment activities bring faculty together to discuss important issues such as what they teach, why, and their standards and expectations for student learning.
- Assessment activities help faculty see how their courses link together to form coherent programs and how the courses they teach contribute to student success in subsequent pursuits.
- Assessment creates a common language that engages faculty spanning a variety of disciplines.

Administrators benefit because:

- Assessment information documenting the success of a program or institution can be used to convince employers, donors, legislators, and other constituents of its quality and worth. (This benefits faculty and students too!)
- Assessment can help ensure that institutional resources are being spent in the most effective ways possible - where they'll have the greatest impact on student learning.

Suskie, 2004, pp. 11-12

What is the process for assessing student learning?

Develop and implement an assessment plan for your school, department or program. The Assessment Plan is the formal, explicit statement of how you will systematically assess student learning, including how you will collect, compile, share and use of assessment results with the goal of improving educational opportunities (curriculum, instruction, academic supports) and student learning.

This report will focus on developing an Assessment Plan for program/departmental majors; however, the process can be adapted for schools and other categories of students (minors, study abroad students, service learning programs, etc.).

What are the components of an assessment plan? What is the process for assessment plan development?

The steps for developing an assessment plan are listed below and are described in greater detail in section II of this report. Assessment plan development is an ordered process, as illustrated in Figure 1. The foundation of an assessment program consists of the student learning goals upon which the curriculum is built and against which assessment measures are aligned. A feedback loop connects the final step back to the beginning of the process. The assessment plan is developed within the context of the stated program mission¹ and includes (1) development of broad program goals, (2) development of specific course objectives (educational opportunities: curriculum, instruction, academic supports), (3) identification of measures and methods for assessing student learning, (4) use of assessment results to improve educational opportunities and, if needed, to revise program goals (feedback loop).

Figure 1 Steps in the Assessment Process



Rome, 2009

¹ The broader context of school-level mission and goals is not discussed here; however, it is expected that there will be alignment between a program's mission/goals and, broadly speaking, those of the school.

How do I know if my program is meeting the standards for assessment practices? Beyond meeting the minimum standards, what are the “best practices” in student learning assessment?

Table 1 presents a rubric which describes the minimum standards for student learning assessment practices. In addition to the minimum standards, best practices are also described. Schools, departments and programs are encouraged to move beyond the minimum standards to implement these best practices. Table 1 can be used to gauge the current status of assessment practices in your school, department or program in relation to minimum standards and best practices. As changes are made to assessment practices, Table 1 can be used to track your progress.

Table 1 Standards for Assessment Practices

Assessment Practices	Best Practice: In addition to meeting the described standard...	Meets Standard	Needs Attention
Learning Goals	Learning goals are clearly and actively communicated to students (on program website, handbook, etc.) and to faculty in the program	Learning goals are described in explicit, observable terms, using action words, how students will be able to use their knowledge, what thinking skills and disciplinary dispositions they will have, and/or what else they will be able to do upon completion of the program.	Learning goals do not meet the described standard
Course Objectives	Course objectives are clearly and actively communicated to students (on syllabi) and faculty in the program	Course objectives are described in explicit, observable terms, using action words, how students will be able to use their knowledge, what thinking skills and disciplinary dispositions they will have, and/or what else they will be able to do upon completion of the course.	Course objectives do not meet the described standard
Educational Opportunities <i>(Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, Academic Supports)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is clear that every student in the major has ample opportunity to master each learning goal, either through multiple courses or through intensive study in one course. Courses are completed by students in a hierarchical sequence in which skills to be mastered are presented from basic to intermediate to advanced. Earlier skills are reinforced in subsequent courses. Similarly, this ordered and iterative approach to teaching and learning occurs within individual courses. Learner-centered instructional practices are employed (e.g., sequenced assignments, detailed assignment guidelines, discussion of sample papers, multiple drafts of papers, dissemination of expectations (rubrics) to students, etc.) 	Every student has sufficient opportunity to master each learning goal through completing at least one course in which the learning goal(s) are addressed.	Educational opportunities do not meet the standard.
Assessment Methods	Evidence is provided that the assessment methods yield truthful, fair information that can be used with confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each assessment method clearly matches the learning goal being assessed and multiple assessments are used systematically (repeatedly, on a schedule) over time. Assessments are conducted for <i>all</i> students in the major (or a representative sample) Assessment practices include direct measures of student learning. 	Assessment methods do not meet the standard.
Use of Results	Standards have been established that clearly describe performance levels considered minimally adequate for students completing the program, and positive assessment results are shared with faculty, students, academic administrators, prospective students, and other audiences as appropriate.	Assessment results are shared and discussed with faculty teaching in the program and are used to modify learning goals, teaching methods, curriculum, and/or assessment strategies, as appropriate.	Use of results does not meet the standard.

Adapted from Suskie, L. (2004). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide (2nd ed.)*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (pp. 68-69).

II. Developing an Assessment Plan

Why develop an assessment plan? In general, most endeavors are more successful if they are clearly outlined and planned in advance. Assessment is no different. A department's (or school's) assessment plan and resulting assessment reports can serve a number of functions:

External representation of institutional memory. Valuable information can be lost as members of the department change roles, go on sabbatical, move to another university, retire or simply not recall the challenges, successes, explanations for decisions, solutions to problems, etc. that have occurred through the assessment process. Assessment plans and reports document these processes for future members and leaders of the department.

Shared departmental vision. An assessment plan allows all departmental members to share an understanding of the department's assessment vision. Faculty can comment on and question the plan from an informed standpoint. Faculty are aware of how their courses and educational practices fit in with the rest of the curriculum and what their roles are with regard to assessment.

Resource for new and adjunct faculty. An assessment plan is an efficient means for new and adjunct faculty to be made aware of the assessment activities and educational practices in their department. They do not need to wait for a committee meeting nor do they need to rely on piecemeal information which may leave them with an incomplete or inaccurate depiction of the department's assessment activities.

Sharing best practices. Departments can share their assessment plans with each other and, in doing so, share successful approaches to assessment, creative solutions to overcoming obstacles to assessment, innovative changes made to curriculum and instruction to improve student learning, etc.

External audiences. An assessment plan demonstrates to accrediting and funding agencies, parents, students and others that the department has thought through the assessment process and is committed to assessing student learning and to improving the teaching and learning process in the school or department. Assessment reports document evidence of student learning as well as the improvements that have been made to educational opportunities.

A. Define the Context: Program Mission Statement

The mission is a broad statement of purpose that can guide faculty decision-making in designing a focused and coherent program of study and allows students to determine if the program is aligned with their educational and post-graduation goals. The mission statement may articulate the purpose, philosophy, and values of the program, as well as

identify the approaches used to fulfill the mission. Mission statements should be succinct, accurate, clear, realistic, and should reflect input from program faculty. Mission statements should be revisited for accuracy and relevance as often as appropriate for the discipline. Below are several examples of statements that might be included as part of a mission statement:

- The program is designed to prepare students for graduate school, professional school and/or the workforce
- The program focuses on developing problem-solving and information-gathering skills that can continue to be applied even as the knowledge base of the field changes
- The program strives to produce students who are creative thinkers via an interdisciplinary approach to learning
- The program produces students who are on the cutting edge by offering courses taught by leaders in the field

B. Step 1: Develop Student Learning Goals

Faculty use their disciplinary expertise as well as the mission of their program to guide development of student learning goals. These goals form the foundation of an academic program and determine which educational opportunities should be provided to students (see Step 2). Goals encompass the knowledge, skills, attitudes, dispositions, aspirations and/or behaviors that faculty expect their majors to have developed upon completion of program requirements.

A discussion of development of learning goals is presented in Suskie's *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide* (2004, Chapter 5) and in the *Middle States Commission on Higher Education's Student Learning Assessment: Options and Resources* (2007).

http://www.msche.org/publications/SLA_Book_0808080728085320.pdf

A summary of Suskie's best practices to consider when developing student learning goals is presented below:

- Develop goals that are neither too broad nor too specific; they should define what you expect all successful graduates of your program/major to learn, rather than what some subset might learn
- Define fuzzy or vague terms (such as "critical thinking") in ways that apply specifically to your major/ program
- Articulate goals which describe what students will learn (e.g., students will demonstrate the ability to conduct lab experiments), rather than the educational opportunities you will provide (e.g., students will participate in hands-on lab experiences)
- Focus on the 4-6 goals that are most important
- Use concrete action terms to describe the type of learning you expect (e.g., students will identify, describe, apply, evaluate, analyze, etc.)
- Work with colleagues to ensure that goals develop from broad collegial discussion
- Revisit goals as often as is appropriate for your discipline. Add, modify or delete goals as warranted, based on changes in the discipline, program mission, or

external factors (e.g., changes in requirements for acceptance to graduates school, new developments in the field, etc.)

Suskie, 2004, pp. 78-79

C. Step 2: Develop Course Objectives and Outline Educational Opportunities

What experiences does your program provide in order to give students the opportunity to achieve the goals that have been set for them? In part, these experiences are a program's required courses, the content of which is designed to fulfill course-level objectives. These course objectives are *aligned with program goals* but are more specific and concrete (i.e., defined in a way that makes them measurable). Course objectives are also sometimes described in terms of competencies or performance objectives.

Examples of broad versus specific wordings for course objectives:

1. Fine Arts
 - a. Broad: Students will demonstrate knowledge of the history, literature and function of the theatre, including works from various periods and cultures.
 - b. More specific: Students will be able to explain the theoretical bases of various dramatic genres and illustrate them with examples from plays of different eras.
 - c. Even more specific, specifying the conditions: During the senior dramatic literature course, the students will be able to explain the theoretical bases of various dramatic genres and illustrate them with examples from plays of different eras.
2. Philosophy
 - a. Broad: The student will be able to discuss philosophical questions.
 - b. More specific: The student is able to develop relevant examples and to express the significance of philosophical questions using appropriate analytical frameworks.
3. General Education
 - a. Broad: Students will be able to think in an interdisciplinary manner.
 - b. More specific: Asked to solve a problem in the student's field, the student will be able to draw from theories, principles, and/or knowledge from other disciplines to help solve the problem.
4. Business
 - a. Broad: Students will understand how to use technology effectively.
 - b. More specific: Each student will be able to use word processing, spreadsheets, databases, and presentations graphics in preparing their final research project and report.
5. Psychology
 - a. Broad: Students will understand the historically important systems of psychology.

- b. More specific: Students will understand the psychoanalytic, Gestalt, behaviorist, humanistic, and cognitive approaches to psychology.
- c. Even more specific: Students will be able to recognize and articulate the foundational assumptions, central ideas, and dominant criticisms of the psychoanalytic, Gestalt, behaviorist, humanistic, and cognitive approaches to psychology.

<http://assessment.uconn.edu/docs/HowToWriteObjectivesOutcomes.pdf>

Educational opportunities also encompass the specific elements of course work, such as methods of instruction, assignments, academic supports, etc. A few examples of elements that can support and enhance student learning are:

- Syllabi that include explicitly stated course objectives (see Appendix B)
- Written, detailed guidelines for assignments (including purpose, audience, format, citation style, resources to be used, assessment criteria, etc.) (see Appendix C)
- Explicit criteria, shared with students, that define successful performance on assignments (rubrics) (see Appendix D)
- Class discussion of examples that illustrate poor, proficient, and superior performance on assignments (often called "workshopping" or "models")
- Sequencing assignments (e.g., mini-assignments that build to a larger assignment, such as a final paper) (see Appendix C)
- Students' submission and revision of multiple drafts of papers
- Conferences with students to discuss their papers
- Informal in-class writing (e.g., one-minute papers, learning logs, etc.)
- Use of an editing checklist for students to review their work (self-editing and/or peer review)

In addition to the course-related "best practices" stated above, additional educational opportunities can be implemented to support student achievement of learning objectives and mastery of departmental goals, including the following:

- Sequencing courses so that skills are introduced from basic to intermediate to advanced
- Reinforcement of skills and knowledge across courses (not "once and done")
- Tutoring/learning center
- Advising
- Faculty availability during office hours
- Guest speakers
- Student/professional clubs
- Study abroad

D. Step 3: Choose Measures and Methods to Assess Student Learning

As with the other steps, there is a great deal of flexibility in developing this section of the assessment plan. The measures used to collect data (evidence of student learning) and the methods by which data are collected will vary by department. These decisions will be based on the particular goals established by the department, the needs and preferences of faculty, the structure of the curriculum, the discipline and other considerations.

1. Measures

Departments must determine which type of assessment measure (a paper, an exam, a performance, etc.) will give them information which addresses their student learning goals (i.e., provides evidence that students are learning what is expected of them). Evidence obtained to measure student learning can be either *direct* or *indirect*. While both types of evidence have a place in an assessment program, best practices suggest (and Middle States requires) at least some collection of *direct* evidence. Direct measures of student learning assess specifically what a student has learned, as demonstrated by his or her performance on a task. Indirect measures of student learning give a general indication that students have probably learned something, but what exactly they have learned is unclear. A list of direct and indirect measures of student learning is presented in Appendix E.

When deciding on a direct measure of student learning, many programs find that an effective and convenient assessment measure for majors is a culminating project or experience (a capstone or capstone-like project) that entails demonstration of mastery of the most important program goals. An alternative approach to the capstone measure is the use of multiple smaller assessment measures (shorter papers and/or exams), each of which may address a different goal. A combination of these two approaches may also be used. Regardless of the measure chosen, it must be detailed enough to clearly demonstrate alignment with learning goals. This most often requires the use of a detailed scoring guide called a *rubric*. Most faculty already use scoring criteria, though these criteria are not always explicitly expressed. Furthermore, faculty within the same department will often find that they share (albeit implicitly) the same criteria for assessing student success on an assignment. A discussion of the use of rubrics is presented in Appendix D.

2. Methods

The method for obtaining direct measures of student learning can be *course-embedded* (i.e., the measure is a regular course assignment, such as a final exam or paper) or *add-on* (such as an exit exam or project that is external to a specific course). However, whatever method is chosen, Middle States expects evidence that *all* students are achieving the goals set by the program. That is, evidence of student learning should be collected for all majors (or a representative sample), not just for a specific subset of majors (e.g., honors students). Some options for collecting assessment data include:

- All majors participate in a senior seminar which includes a course-embedded assessment (e.g. substantial research paper assessed using a rubric)
- In their final semester, all majors enroll in one (of many) advanced departmental courses (which may also include juniors). All students complete the assignment; however only graduating seniors are assessed.
- A wide array of advanced departmental courses are designated as “W” (writing) or “C” (culminating) courses. Each major is required complete at least one of these courses in which their learning is assessed directly (via rubric or other detailed assessment technique).
- All majors enroll in several advanced core courses. Each course addresses a different learning goal (e.g., statistics, theory, and writing). A separate measure of direct student learning is used in each course in order to cover all goals.
- Majors take a licensing exam (add-on method), and the department receives specific feedback on each item or section. This specific feedback allows the department to identify student strengths and weaknesses so that they can be addressed at the level of educational opportunities (curriculum, instruction, academic supports).
- All majors are required to pass an exit exam which is comprised of items that are aligned with the program’s major learning goals (add-on method).

E. Step 4: Use Results and Review Assessment Activities

Results from student learning assessments are collected, analyzed, and reported to faculty for discussion and feedback. A sample summary assessment report is presented in Appendix F. Sharing and discussion of assessment results can occur in faculty committees, meetings, workshops, retreats, etc. Results can be used to identify what students have and have not learned, and to calibrate the program's response accordingly. For instance:

- Faculty can recognize and appreciate their students’ successes. Given high levels of student achievement, faculty can determine if it would be appropriate to challenge students further
- Suggestions can be made to address student weaknesses (e.g., employing additional or new types of coursework, assignments, courses, academic support, instructional methods)
- Decisions can be made regarding the appropriateness of program goals. Are they too challenging? Not challenging enough? Still aligned with the program’s mission? (However, please note that learning goals should drive curriculum, not vice versa.)
- Faculty can adapt the curriculum to better align with program goals
- Faculty can discuss the appropriateness and usefulness of the assessment activities that are being conducted. Are the current assessment instruments capturing information that is useful? Are the assessment instruments aligned with course objectives and program goals?

Appendix A: Assessment versus Grading

There is a great deal of overlap between the concepts of grading and assessment. Both are attempts to identify what students have learned, and the grading process can therefore be an important component of an assessment program. But grades alone are insufficient evidence of student learning for the following reasons:

Grading and assessment criteria may (appropriately) differ

Grading is a complex rhetorical system in which the faculty member is communicating to several audiences at once (the student, parents, the program and the University, potential employers, graduate and professional programs, etc.) about the student's relative achievement in a number of different areas (progress, potential, mastery of skills, mastery of content, time management, etc.) For instance, some faculty base grades (appropriately) not just on evidence of what students have learned, such as tests, papers, presentations, and projects, but also on student behaviors that may or may not be related to course goals. Some faculty, for example, count class attendance toward a final course grade, even though students with poor attendance might nonetheless conceivably master course goals. Others count class participation toward the final grade, even though oral communication skills aren't a course goal. Some downgrade assignments that are turned in late or for which formatting does not meet requirements (e.g., double-spaced, 1 inch margins, etc.). Some grade on a curve; others don't.

These can all be very appropriate classroom management strategies and grading practices, but they illustrate how grades and assessment standards differ. A student who has not achieved major learning goals might still earn an acceptable grade by playing by the rules and fulfilling other grading criteria. Conversely, a student who has achieved a course's major learning goals might nonetheless earn a poor grade if he fails to do the other things expected of him.

Grading standards may lack detail, be applied unsystematically, or vary across graders

Sometimes grades are based on standards that are vaguely defined or are inconsistently applied (i.e., for any given paper, the grader may focus on some aspects of a student's work and overlook others that are less salient or are viewed as less important). Faculty from different departments who are teaching sections of the same course may not agree on common standards and might therefore award different grades to the same student assignment. Even when graders give student work the same assessment in relative terms, they may translate that assessment into grades according to different scales; thus, one instructor who perceives a student's work as "reasonably good: appropriate use of evidence, but an undeveloped conclusion" might assign an A- while another might assign a B.

Grades alone may give insufficient information on student strengths and weaknesses

Grades alone don't always provide meaningful information on exactly what students have and haven't learned. We can conclude from a grade of B on a sociology research paper that a student has probably learned a good deal about sociology research methods, but from the grade alone we can't tell exactly what aspects of the research process she has and hasn't mastered.

Do grades have a place in an assessment program?

Yes. Grades can be useful evidence of student learning if the grades are based on evidence of student learning (test, papers, etc.) that is clearly linked to major learning goals and clearly delineated, consistent standards through test blueprints or rubrics.

Adapted from Suskie, 2004, pp 6-8

Appendix B: Syllabus Template and Sample Syllabus²

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY [Name of School]
[Name of Department]
Course Outline [Course #] [Name of Course]
[Semester] [Year]
Professor [Name]
[Day(s) of Week] [Time of Day]; [Building], [Room #]

To contact professor: [\[email address\]](#)
[\[Building\]](#), [\[Room #\]](#)
Phone: [\[xxx-xxx-xxxx\]](#)
Office hours: [\[Day\(s\) of Week\]](#) [\[Time of Day\]](#)., or by appointment

Course Pre-requisites

Course Description [The course -- what it is, the purpose, and how it fits into the program or supports other courses, needs, etc.]

Course Objectives [Four to six objectives - what you want students to accomplish in this course]

Course Structure

[For example, lectures, discussion, recitations, labs, course readings, case studies, fieldwork, etc.]

Readings

The required text for the course is: [Full citation for book(s)]

An optional and recommended text is: [Full citation for book(s)]

[Location of books and readings - for example NYU bookstore, Bobst, Bobst reserves, Bobst electronic journals, etc.]

[Optional: List of journals, databases, resources that students in the major might find interesting/ useful]

Course requirements

[Description of expected course participation - for example, reading before class, class participation, attendance, assignments, exams, other requirements]

[Name of Assignment or Exam 1] [Date due] [Percentage of final grade]

[Brief description of assignment/exam, including number of pages, purpose, content, format required]

[Name of Assignment or Exam 2] [Date due] [Percentage of final grade]

[Brief description of assignment/exam, including number of pages, purpose, content, format required]

[Name of Assignment or Exam 3] [Date due] [Percentage of final grade]

² See also Grunert O'Brian, J, Millis, B.J. & Cohen, M.W. (2008). *The course syllabus: All Learning Centered approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

[Brief description of assignment/exam, including number of pages, purpose, content, format required]

Part I: [Topic of first part of the course, if applicable]

[Date] Topic of Class 1

- [Reading 1]
- [Reading 2]

[Date] Topic of Class 2

- [Reading 1]
- [Reading 2]

[Date] Topic of Class 3

- [Reading 1]
- [Reading 2]
- [Name of assignment that is due]

Part II: [Topic of second part of the course, if applicable]

[Date] Topic of Class 4

- [Reading 1]
- [Reading 2]

[Date] Topic of Class 5

- [Reading 1]
- [Reading 2]
- [Reading 3]

[Date] Topic of Class 6

- [Reading 1]
- [Reading 2]
- [Name of assignment that is due]

[Date] [Exam]

[Date] Topic of Class 7

- [Reading 1]
- [Reading 2]

[Date] Topic of Class 8

- [Reading 1]
- [Reading 2]

[Date] [Final Assignment Due]

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE
Course Outline P11.2171 Program Analysis and Evaluation³
Fall 2006

Professor Michaela Rome

Thursdays 6:20-8:00 p.m.; Tisch Hall, Room UC57

To contact professor: michaela.rome@nyu.edu

Bobst Library, 1238

Phone: 212-998-4426

Office hours: Thursdays, 3:30-5:00 p.m., or by appointment

Course Pre-requisites

Students must have completed (or waived) P11.1011 (Statistical Methods), P11.1018 (Microeconomics), and P11.1022 (Introduction to Public Policy). This course builds on these introductory courses and lays the foundation for the following course, P11.2875 (Evaluation of Health and Social Programs).

Course Description

Program evaluation is a critical component in designing and operating effective programs. Evaluations supply information to policymakers and program managers that can assist them in making decisions about which programs to fund, modify, expand or eliminate. Evaluation can be an accountability tool for program managers and funders. This course serves as an introduction to evaluation methodology and evaluation tools commonly used to assess publicly funded programs.

Course Objectives

Students are expected to:

- Develop logic models which represent the various elements which make up a program
- Apply their understanding of the concepts, methods and applications of evaluation research to a variety of real-world scenarios
- Critique the logic, methods, and conclusions of evaluation research
- Propose an appropriate evaluation plan to assess the implementation and effectiveness of a program

Course Structure

The class will be comprised of lectures and discussion regarding course readings and case studies. There is no specific policy or sector focus of this course, as evaluation tools are used in all policy areas and by public (government) and private (foundations) funders as well as by public and private sectors program managers.

Readings

The required text for the course is:

Carol Weiss, (1998), *Evaluation: Methods for Studying Programs and Policies*. (Prentice Hall, 2nd edition)

An optional and recommended text is:

Peter Rossi, Howard Freeman, and Mark Lipsey (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*,

³ Original course and syllabus developed by Carolyn Berry, NYU Wagner School of Public Service

7th ed. Sage Publications. (abbreviated in syllabus as "RFL")

Both books are on reserve at Bobst. In addition to the required text, you will need to read one chapter from the optional textbook and 15 readings which are mostly articles. Ten of the articles are available through Bobst electronic journals. The five remaining readings and chapter of the RFL textbook that are not available for downloading are in the reserve reading room at Bobst. There are also additional optional readings, all of which can be downloaded.

There is a sizable and growing body of literature, which deals with program evaluation and policy analysis. The journal **Evaluation Review** (previously **Evaluation Quarterly**) is an especially rich source on the subject, as is the **Evaluation Studies Review Annual** (Sage, more or less annually). **Evaluation Practice, Evaluation and Program Planning, New Directions for Program Evaluation, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, and American Journal of Evaluation** are also recommended. There are also evaluation journals for specific fields, including **Evaluation and the Health Professions, Evaluation in Education, and Evaluation and Human Services**.

Course requirements

Class preparation and participation are important for this course and will be factored into your final grade. Students must read required text and articles in advance and be prepared to participate in class discussion. In addition to class participation, students will write two or three brief memos, take one in-class midterm exam, and write a final evaluation design paper. There is no final exam. **Note: The following descriptions are not enough to complete the assignments adequately. More detailed instructions for each assignment will follow.**

Program Memo, October 12 (15% of final grade)

Students will submit a short (1-2 pages) description of the selected program. This memo should offer a brief description of the program, including the problem to be addressed by the intervention, the intended beneficiaries or targets of the program, the intended benefits, and the stakeholders associated with the program. In addition, the memo should contain a causal model/program theory diagram underlying the program. This memo is a preliminary step in writing the final design paper.

Midterm Examination, November 2 (30% of final grade)

This will be a timed, essay-type examination which will cover the required reading.

Measurement Memo, November 16 (20% of final grade)

Using the program model developed in the first memo, students will specify the concepts, operational definitions and specific measures they would use in an evaluation of the program. Students should also indicate the strengths and weaknesses of these measures.

OPTIONAL Evaluation Review (for extra credit), December 7

It is important to become a good consumer of evaluations, if not a good evaluator oneself. Students are to identify an evaluation (any type) pertaining to the program they have chosen for their memos and final paper. The evaluation can be from a peer-reviewed journal or it may be a final report for a foundation or agency. In 2-3 pages,

students will summarize the type of evaluation described, its design and methods, and write a critique of the evaluation.

Final Paper: Evaluation Design, December 20 (35% of final grade)

The final paper builds on the three previous assignments. Students will design a comprehensive evaluation plan for their chosen programs.

Part I: Planning and Implementation

Sep. 7 Introduction to the course and the field of program evaluation; stakeholders

- Weiss Chapters 1 & 2
- *Optional*: RFL Chapter 1
- *Optional*: Mercier, Participation in a stakeholder-based evaluation: A case study. (CS)

Sep. 14 Pre-program evaluation activities: Needs assessment

- Review Weiss Chapter 2
- Witken, Needs Assessment Since 1981: The State of the Practice.
- *Optional*: RFL Chapter 4
- *Optional*: Ma & Thompson, Needs for youth substance abuse and violence prevention in schools and communities. (CS)
- *Optional*: Dietze, Rumbold, Cvetkovski, Hanlin, Laslett, & Jonas, Using population-based data on alcohol consumption and related harms to estimate the relative need for alcohol services in Victoria, Australia. (CS).

Sep. 21 Explicating and assessing program theory

- Weiss Chapter 3
- Chen et al, Evaluating the process and outcome of a garbage reduction program in Taiwan (CS)
- *Optional*: RFL Chapter 5
- *Optional*: Cooksy, Gill & Kelly, The program logic model as an integrative framework for a multimethod evaluation (CS)
- *Optional*: Unrau, Using client interviews to illuminate outcomes in program logic models: A case example (CS)

Sep. 28 Explicating and assessing program theory (continued)

Oct. 5 Formative evaluation, program monitoring, and implementation analysis

- Olugbemiga, Bronner, Johnson-Taylor, Dambita, & Squire, Formative evaluation of a men's health center. (CS)
- Dewa, Horgan, Russell & Keates, What? Another form? The process of measuring and comparing service utilization in a community mental health program model (CS)
- *Optional*: RFL Chapter 6
- *Optional*: Onyskiw, Harrison, Spady, & McConnan. Formative evaluation of a collaborative community-based child abuse prevention project. (CS)
- *Optional*: Sabatini, Designing multimedia learning systems for adult learners: Basic skills with a workforce emphasis (CS)

Part II: Measuring the Impacts of Programs

Oct. 12 Impact evaluation: design, and internal and external validity

- Weiss Chapter 8
- *Program memo due*

Oct. 19 Impact evaluation: Random design

- Weiss Chapter 9
- Grossman & Tierney, Does mentoring work?: An impact study of the Big Brothers and Big Sisters Program (CS)
- Killias, Aebi, & Ribeaud, Denis, Does community service rehabilitate better than a short-term imprisonment?: Results of a controlled experiment. (CS)
- *Optional: RFL Chapter 8*
- *Optional: McCurdy, Can home visitation enhance maternal social support? (CS)*
- *Optional: Bauman et al, The influence of a family program on adolescent tobacco and alcohol use (CS)*
- *Optional: Fein, Will Welfare reform influence marriage and fertility? Early evidence from the ABC demonstration (CS)*

Oct. 26 Impact evaluation: Quasi-experimental designs with comparison groups

- RFL Chapter 9, pp. 265-286
- Jason, et al, Effects of enforcement of youth access laws on smoking prevalence (CS)
- Ballart & Riba, Impact of legislation requiring moped and motorbike riders to wear helmets. (time-series CS)
- *Optional: Avery-Leaf et al, Efficacy of dating violence prevention program on attitudes justifying aggression (CS)*
- *Optional: Rotheram-Boras et al, Efficacy of a preventive intervention for youths living with HIV (CS)*
- *Optional: Babcock & Steiner, The relationship between treatment, incarceration, and recidivism of battering: A program evaluation of Seattle's coordinated community response to domestic violence.*

Nov. 2 MID-TERM EXAMINATION

Nov. 9 Formulating Research Questions and Measurement

- Weiss, Chapter 6
- Litwin, Mark. How to Assess and Interpret Survey Psychometrics, Ch 2 & 3
- Beebe, Harrison, Sharma, Hedger. The Community Readiness Survey: Development and Validation. Evaluation Review, 25(1), 55-71. (CS)
- *Optional: RFL Chapters 3 & 7*
- *Optional: Dufrene. An evaluation of a patient satisfaction survey: validity and reliability. (CS)*
- *Optional: Christo, Spurrell, & Alcorn. Validation of the Christo Inventory for Substance-misuse Services (CISS): A simple outcome evaluation tool.*

Nov. 16 Formulating Research Questions and Measurement (continued)

Full coverage and reflexive designs

- Weiss, review Chapter 8, pp. 191-199
- RFL Chapter 9 pp. 289-295
- Bickman & Hamner, An evaluation of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum (CS)
- *Optional*: Cook, The effects of skilled health attendants on reducing maternal deaths in developing countries: testing the medical model (CS)
- *Optional*: Peterson & Johnstone, The Atwood Health Promotion Program, Federal Medical Center, Lexington, KY (CS)
- *Optional*: Veney, Evaluation applications of regression analysis with time series data.
- ***Measurement memo due***

Nov. 23 Thanksgiving Recess

Nov. 30 Full coverage and reflexive designs (continued)

Sampling

- Babbie, The Practice of Social Research, Chapter 8

Dec. 7 Sampling (continued)

Evaluation Synthesis

- Weiss Chapter 10, pp 235 - 244
- Cordray, Strengthening causal interpretations of non-experimental data: the role of meta-analysis (skim statistical foundation section, pp. 64-71)
- ***Evaluation review due***

Dec. 12 Evaluations in the real world: context, politics, and ethics

- Weiss, Chapter 14
- Knott, A wiz of a way to remember the five guiding principles for evaluators
- Knickman & Jellinek, Four lessons from evaluating controversial programs
- *Optional*: RFL Chapter 12
- *Optional*: Johnson, Using video vignettes to evaluate children's personal safety knowledge: Methodological and ethical issues (CS)
- *Optional*: Allen et al, One system, many perspectives: Stakeholders and mental health system evaluation

Dec 20 *Final Paper Due*

Appendix C: Assignment Template and Sample Sequenced Assignment

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

[Name of Department]

[Course #] [Name of Course]

[Semester] [Year]

Professor [Name]

[Title of Assignment]

[Due Date]

[Submission requirements (e.g., hard copy, email)]

[Format requirements (e.g., typed, double-spaced)]

[Expected length]

[Grading/Point Value]

[Resources, (e.g., databases, journals, Writing Center, etc.)]

[Provide students with one or two models of an exemplary paper/assignment. If possible, discuss in class (or recitation) a range of assignments which scored low/medium/high]

[Purpose of assignment]

[Topic of assignment]

[How this assignment fits into the sequence of course assignments, if applicable]

[Audience for the assignment (e.g., professional anthropology community, lay audience, etc.)]

1. Details re: content of the assignment
2. Details re: the content of the assignment
3. Details re: the content of the assignment
4. Details re: the content of the assignment

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE
P11.2171 Program Analysis and Evaluation
Fall 2006 Professor Michaela Rome

Measurement Memo⁴

Due: November 16 in class AND by email that day (if you email the memo to me at least one hour before class, I will print it out and bring it to class)

Expected length: 2 pages, plus REVISED program theory chart (from memo 1)

Grading: 20 points

Hints: Use the sample memos that we discussed in class as models for the structure, format, and content of your memo. Read through and revise the first draft of your memo. Switch papers with a classmate and give each other feedback, or consult a writing tutor. Revise your memo again, using any helpful feedback you received.

The purpose of this memo is to help you develop research questions or hypotheses that are *measurable*. These research questions/ hypotheses will be the basis for your impact evaluation proposal (final paper due at the end of the semester). You should use the program you are planning to use in the final evaluation design paper. In the final paper you will need to state your research questions and discuss measures, and this memo will help you get there.

Write this memo as though you are an external evaluator who has been hired by a foundation to evaluate a program that it is funding. You should address your memo to a foundation representative who is knowledgeable about the substantive area, but not technically sophisticated about research methodology.

1. State **two** program goals from your program. Put them in the words of your program.
2. From those **two** program goals, develop **three** impact research questions or hypotheses. Make sure these questions or hypotheses are clear, concise, and specific. The outcome variable of interest in each question should be an operational definition. Remember to have an appropriate counterfactual (typically either from baseline/pre-test to post-test OR to a comparison group of some sort) and a timeframe.
3. For each of the 3 research questions and their outcome variables, describe a potential measure and identify the level of measurement of each measure (nominal, ordinal, interval, ratio). Be very specific about these measures.
 - a. For **one** of the outcome variables, describe a second potential measure.

⁴ Original course and assignment developed by Carolyn Berry, NYU Wagner School of Public Service

4. Pick **one** (of the four) of the measures you came up with in #3. Discuss how you propose to assess validity and reliability for this measure. Do not just discuss reliability and validity in general, or possible ways to address each. Be specific about your measures and how you will address validity and reliability. **DO NOT DISCUSS INTERNAL VALIDITY OF YOUR DESIGN.**

Appendix D: Rubric Basics

According to Stevens and Levi (2005), a rubric is “a scoring tool that lays out the specific expectations for an assignment. Rubrics divide an assignment into its component parts and provide a detailed description of what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable levels of performance for each of those parts” (p. 3).

According to Stevens and Levi (2005) Rubrics are useful tools for communicating expectations and standards to a variety of constituencies:

- *Students*: A rubric is an explicit statement regarding what is important for students to accomplish in the assignment. When students receive the rubric as part of the assignment description, they can ask relevant questions to clarify their understanding of the assignment *before* they complete and hand it in. (This also helps students to write better papers and decreases grading time for faculty and teaching assistants - see below.)
- *Teaching Assistants*: Faculty can use the rubric to communicate what their Teaching Assistants should be focusing on in recitation sections. This is especially helpful when there are several Teaching Assistants for the same course.
- *General education faculty who are teaching the same course*: A rubric connects faculty from disparate fields and departments to the goals of general education and helps to provide a coherence in the general education curriculum, without stifling a faculty member’s creative and personal approach to instruction nor the uniqueness of his/her field.
- *New and adjunct faculty*: A rubric is a convenient way to provide these faculty with an explicit description of departmental or program standards and expectations.
- *Writing Center staff*: Students who are struggling with an assignment may have difficulty explaining the assignment to Writing Center staff. A rubric helps to ensure that the expectations for the assignment are not “lost in translation” and that Writing Center staff can provide appropriate assistance.
- *Departmental colleagues who are involved in curriculum development*: A rubric can be used to create a shared understanding within the department regarding expectations for student learning and can provide focus for developing curriculum to meet those expectations.

Rubrics can help faculty and teaching assistants save time grading and focus instruction where it is most needed (Stevens and Levi, 2005).

- *Rubrics provide a quick and efficient means for providing feedback on student papers*: Rubrics include descriptions of common errors that students make (e.g., “The paper is missing some of the key counter-arguments to the thesis”). Rather than write these comments out longhand, the grader can simply circle this statement on the rubric.
- *Rubrics provide a framework for feedback to the class and a focus for follow-up instruction and support*: Faculty can use the rubric to keep track of common

mistakes that students make on any given assignment. Faculty and Teaching Assistants can then provide additional supports and targeted instruction which address these particular weaknesses. In addition, for cases in which there is more than one grader (e.g., several Teaching Assistants for one course), a rubric is an especially useful shared framework for communicating overall student strengths and weaknesses to the faculty member.

Using rubrics does involve an initial time investment (creating the rubric, becoming adept at quickly and efficiently applying rubric standards to papers), but, based on feedback from faculty and students, the dividends are high: improved student performance on assignments (benefiting both students and faculty) and time saved assessing student papers.

Appendix E: Sample Rubrics (Art, Pre-Professional, Social Science, Science, Humanities)

Grading Criteria for Studio Art Courses

Objectives	Course Grade				
	A Outstanding	B Good	C Average	D Deficient	F Inadequate
Creativity/ imagination/risk taking/success of solution	Takes a problem beyond the assignment to a personal solution	Works beyond the assignments but the work lacks some imagination	Follows the assignment but the work does not demonstrate a point of view	Consistently misses the point of the assignment	Inadequate in all areas
Technical skill	Surpasses expectations of acquired skills	Meets expectations for acquired skills	Slightly below expectations for acquired skills	Below expectations for acquired skills	
Productivity	Productivity exceeds expectations of faculty and/or peers	Productivity is good; enough time is being spent to complete objectives	Work is submitted on time; objectives adequately met	Work is late and/or below expectations of faculty and/or peers	
Engagement; oral communication of ideas/ class participation	High/attendance is perfect	Ability to talk about ideas	Attendance is good, but participates only when asked	Late for class and/or does not participate	

Grading Criteria for Internships: Sponsor Evaluation of Intern

Areas of Development	Description of Developmental Areas	Superior	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Inferior
Personal qualities	1. initiative 2. ingenuity 3. maturity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Subject Matter	1. ability to handle subject matter 2. ability to make independent judgments 3. skill in application of subject matter 4. growth in knowledge of subject matter	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Professional qualities	1. attitude toward you as a supervisor 2. ability to follow through on projects 3. regularity of attendance 4. willingness to cooperate 5. ability to carry out assigned tasks 6. ability to profit from criticism	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Journalism Advanced Reporting Capstone Rubric

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
News judgment (Has the student selected a newsworthy and interesting topic to write about? Has the student found a compelling angle? Has the student put the focus of the piece in the right place?)	The story is newsworthy and interesting. The story has an compelling angle. The story is properly focused; the student has emphasized the right elements.	One or two minor defects indicating a slight weakness in news judgment, such as: Establishing newsworthiness is a little bit of a struggle. The story is generally interesting, but drags on occasion. The story's focus is not quite right; there are elements that are insufficiently emphasized or given too much weight.	Multiple minor defects, as described above, indicating a moderate weakness in news judgment. Not meeting the criteria for good, but there are no show-stopper problems as described below.	Major defects that indicate a serious weakness in news judgment, such as: The story is not newsworthy. The story has little interest. The article's focus is significantly off; the student has missed the real story or is misinterpreting what the story really should be The reporting is not at a level expected of a graduating senior.
Reporting (Has the student done a thorough, balanced, and fair job of reporting and researching? Is the reporting of sufficient breadth and depth to do justice to the story? Is the article substantially complete, or are there holes that could be patched with more reporting or research?)	The story is thoroughly reported and researched The reporting is balanced and does justice to all sides of the story. The reporting is sufficiently broad and deep.	One or two minor defects that could be corrected with a little more reporting or research, such as: The story is reasonably researched and reported, but it is crying out for an extra source or two. There is some imbalance to the reporting; one perspective gets a bit too much or a bit too little attention. While generally satisfactory, the reporting is not quite as broad or as deep as it should be. The student isn't using the sources optimally; interview technique isn't dead on. The student is missing a subtle nuance to a story that more reporting or research should have revealed.	Multiple minor defects, as described above, that could have been corrected with a moderate amount of additional reporting. Not meeting the criteria for good, but there are no show-stopper problems as described below.	A major defect needing significant additional reporting to correct, such as: The story is underresearched or underreported; there are many sources that should have been contacted but weren't. The reporting is biased; voices that should be heard are ignored. The reporting is narrow, missing broad sectors of sources that should have been spoken to. The reporting is shallow, failing to answer obvious questions. The student's interview technique is poor; quotations don't have much value. The reporting is not at a level expected of a graduating senior.
Grammar and usage (Has the student mastered the fundamentals of grammar,	Grammar is perfect or nearly so; prose is free of common mistakes, such as	One or two minor defects betraying slight weakness in grammar or usage, such as:	Multiple minor defects, as described above, indicating moderate weakness in	One major defect such as: Repeated grammar errors (capitalization, punctuation,

<p>spelling, and usage, or is the student struggling with basic issues?)</p>	<p>agreement issues, missing antecedents, run-on sentences, and the like. Spelling is perfect, or nearly so. Punctuation is used correctly. Word choice and word usage are appropriate. Prose is clear and direct.</p>	<p>Infrequent subtle grammar errors (agreement, tense, etc.) Infrequent subtle spelling errors (difficult words, typos, etc.) Infrequent misuse of punctuation. Word choice isn't always appropriate or occasionally betrays a need for a stronger vocabulary. A usage problem such as a dangling modifier or lack of parallelism. Infrequent sentences that are unclear or hard to parse; unwarranted use of the passive.</p>	<p>grammar or usage. Not meeting the criteria for good, but there are no show-stopper problems as described below.</p>	<p>etc.) Frequent or embarrassing spelling errors (such as it's/its, your/you're, inconsistency in spelling names.) Frequent poor word choice or malapropisms. The grammar and usage is not at a level expected of a graduating senior.</p>
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Political Science Final Paper Rubric

Assessment Criteria	Level of Student Performance		
	3 Superior	2 Satisfactory	1 Unacceptable
	<i>Meets the standard; A or B level work</i>	<i>Falls short of the standard/ needs improvement, but student is developing towards proficiency; rough equivalent, C level work</i>	<i>Does not meet the standard, work is roughly equivalent to a D/F level</i>
Thesis, argument, and understanding of topic	The student presents a clear, coherent, original, noteworthy thesis. Evidence supporting the thesis/argument is thorough, relevant, and clearly presented. The argument demonstrates a thorough understanding of the elements/ assumptions/ concepts of the chosen topic.	The student presents a thesis statement that lacks clarity or is somewhat trivial or banal. The argument is only partially complete, lacking some key evidence. Some evidence is superficial or irrelevant. There are some breaks in logic and some lack of clarity. The argument indicates that the student did not thoroughly understand the elements/ assumptions/ concepts of the chosen topic.	The student does not clearly state a thesis; the argument is not supported. The student's argument is incoherent and illogical. The student demonstrates a lack of understanding of the key elements/ assumptions/ concepts of the chosen topic.
Counter-arguments	The student discusses all main counter-arguments. The discussion of counter-arguments is clear and demonstrates depth of understanding of the key elements of the counter-arguments in relation to the student's argument.	The student discusses at least one main counter-argument. The student discusses some extraneous concerns of the counter-argument which may not be directly related to the student's argument or misses some important elements of the counter-arguments. The discussion of the counter-argument indicates that the student may not have thoroughly understood all elements of the counter argument.	The student does not discuss counter-arguments.
Sources	Sources used are thorough and are critically evaluated regarding their credibility, underlying assumptions and possible biases.	Student may lack some important sources. Student presents a superficial evaluation of the credibility and/or possible biases of sources.	The breadth of sources used is inadequate for the topic being explored. Sources are not critically evaluated for credibility or possible biases.
Methods and Analysis	The methods used are appropriate for the thesis/topic and are thoroughly explained and justified. The student's application of research methods (analysis) is appropriate and demonstrates an understanding of the concepts, assumptions, and limitations of the chosen method.	The methods used are appropriate for the thesis/topic but are not thoroughly explained or justified. The student's application of research methods is appropriate but demonstrates a lack of understanding of some of the concepts, assumptions, and/or limitations of the chosen method.	The methods used are inappropriate for the thesis/topic, are not explained, and are incorrectly applied.
Conclusions	Conclusions are clear and reasonable (based on research findings). Conclusions are discussed with regard to how they relate to dominant arguments.	Conclusions are somewhat clear. Conclusions are overstated (based on research findings). The relationship of conclusions to other arguments is not thoroughly presented.	Conclusions are not clear or are not reasonable (based on research results). Conclusions are not discussed in relation to other arguments.

Biology Research Paper Rubric

SECTION	UNSATISFACTORY	DEVELOPING	GOOD	EXCELLENT	Pts.
Purpose: 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No purpose given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief/unclear/incorrect purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose is stated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose is clearly, concisely, and completely stated 	
Introduction: 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No research No vocabulary Does not cite sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief summary of research Vocabulary not defined or complete Some sources cited correctly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good summary of research Vocabulary defined within text Sources cited appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent summary of research Vocabulary integrated throughout text Sources cited thoroughly 	
Hypothesis: 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Prediction No Explanation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incomplete/incorrect prediction No explanation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of prediction Explanation included 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thoughtful/complete prediction Explanation supported 	
Materials/ Procedure: 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials not listed No procedure No experimental design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some materials missing Incomplete procedure Incomplete/incorrect experimental design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lists all materials Complete procedure Clear experimental design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lists all materials Complete and clearly stated procedure Innovative and thoughtful experimental design 	
Data & Observations: 5/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No organization No units/labels No charts/tables/drawings No descriptions No graphs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poorly organized Missing or incomplete units/labels Incomplete charts/tables/drawings Incomplete descriptions Graphs present but missing key pieces of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized Correct units/labels Complete tables/charts/drawings Clear descriptions Graphs are titled, labeled, properly scaled, and data appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well organized Correct units/labels Complete tables/charts/drawings Thoughtful and complete descriptions Graphs are titled, labeled, properly scaled, and data appropriate 	
Discussion/ Conclusion: 8/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion questions and answers not included No explanation of data Hypothesis not restated Missing or showing a lack of understanding Does not include sources of error 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion questions answered but lack support, depth, or are incorrect Disorganized and incomplete or incorrect explanation of data Hypothesis/purpose restated Obvious conclusions stated without support Stated sources or error but did not show relevance or connection to lab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct responses to discussion questions Organized and appropriate explanation of data Hypothesis/purpose restated Conclusions drawn with limited support from data and research Identified significant sources of error and relevance to lab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well supported, thoughtful responses to discussion questions that are backed with research Insightful, well organized, and appropriate analysis of data Hypothesis/purpose restated and explained Conclusions are drawn and well supported by data/analysis/research Appropriate and complete discussion of realistic sources of error and relevance to lab 	
Bibliography: 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent format Limited resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few mistakes in format Several diverse sources listed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perfect format Several diverse sources listed 	
Mechanics: 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Messy, rushed job, illegible Sections are not separated Grammar needs editing Nothing cited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes handwritten sections Sections not labeled Many typos, grammar mistakes Little cited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented neatly Labeled sections A few typos, grammar mistakes Mostly cited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented perfectly Sections carefully laid out No typos, grammar mistakes Well cited 	

Biology Assessment Criteria for Internship: Sponsor Evaluation of Intern

Areas of Development	Description of Developmental Areas	Superior	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Inferior
Participation in the lab	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engagement in persistent, hard work 2. Ability to carry out assigned tasks autonomously 3. Ability to work as part of a team 4. Ability to profit from constructive criticism 	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Time spent in the lab	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regularity of attendance 2. Amount of time (hours) 	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Data acquisition and analysis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creative contribution to design and analysis of experiments 2. Application of critical thinking skills in lab work and meetings 3. Understanding of technical and theoretical aspects of the research 4. Technical skill in conducting lab work 	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Clarity of lab notebook	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Up-to-date entries 2. Organization 3. Legibility 	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	(to be determined by mentor)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Humanities (General Education)Paper Rubric

Learning Objectives	Student's Performance Level			
	1 [Unsatisfactory]	2 [Developing Proficiency]	3 [Proficient]	4 [Superior]
Critical Reasoning	The student demonstrates little or no critical engagement with the text(s) and a trivial interpretation or problem for analysis.	The student demonstrates a less than satisfactory critical engagement with the text(s) and/or poses a simplistic interpretation or problem for analysis.	The student demonstrates a satisfactory critical engagement with the text(s) and/or poses an interpretation or problem for analysis that is not trivial, but which may be lacking in nuance or complexity.	The student presents a highly insightful reading of the text(s) under consideration and/or poses a complex interpretation or problem for analysis.
Argumentative Structure	The student's argument is incoherent and illogical.	The student's argument is less than satisfactory in its presentation, often incoherent and illogical. Extraneous considerations are frequent.	The student's argument is satisfactory in its presentation but may not be entirely coherent or may demonstrate some lapses in logic. Some considerations are extraneous to the argument.	The student's argument is coherent. The argument is logically structured and is presented without extraneous considerations.
Use of Evidence	The student does not present evidence in support of his or her argument or does so only poorly, does not consider counter-evidence or does so only poorly. The use of evidence demonstrates little or no engagement with the text(s).	The student is less than proficient in the appropriate use of evidence and consideration of counter-evidence. The use of evidence demonstrates only a superficial understanding of the text(s).	The student demonstrates proficiency in the use of evidence in support of his or her argument, but may not have fully considered counter-evidence. The use of evidence demonstrates a good understanding of major themes of the text(s).	The student demonstrates outstanding use of relevant evidence in support of his or her argument. Counter-evidence is appropriately considered. The use of evidence clearly shows a mastery of the text(s).
Grammar and Clarity of Expression	The paper demonstrates poor grammar and is unclear.	The paper demonstrates a less than satisfactory grammatical proficiency and clarity of expression.	The paper demonstrates a satisfactory grammatical proficiency and clarity of expression.	The paper is outstanding in its presentation.

Appendix F: Direct and Indirect Evidence of Student Learning

EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING

C = evidence suitable for course-level as well as program-level student learning

1. Direct (Clear and Compelling) Evidence of What Students Are Learning

- Ratings of student skills by field experience supervisors
- Scores and pass rates on appropriate licensure/ certification exams (e.g., Praxis, NLN) or other published tests (e.g., Major Field Tests) that assess key learning outcomes
- “Capstone” experiences such as research projects, presentations, theses, dissertations, oral defenses, exhibitions, or performances, scored using a rubric
- Other written work, performances, or presentations, scored using a rubric (C)
- Portfolios of student work (C)
- Scores on locally-designed multiple choice and/or essay tests such as final examinations in key courses, qualifying examinations, and comprehensive examinations, accompanied by test “blueprints” describing what the tests assess (C)
- Score gains between entry and exit on published or local tests or writing samples (C)
- Employer ratings of employee skills
- Observations of student behavior (e.g., presentations, group discussions), undertaken systematically and with notes recorded systematically
- Summaries/analyses of electronic discussion threads (C)
- “Think-alouds” (C)
- Classroom response systems (clickers) (C)
- Knowledge maps (C)
- Feedback from computer simulated tasks (e.g., information on patterns of actions, decisions, branches) (C)
- Student reflections on their values, attitudes and beliefs, if developing those are intended outcomes of the course or program (C)

2. Indirect Evidence of Student Learning

(Signs that Students Are Probably Learning, But Exactly What or How Much They Are Learning is Less Clear)

- Course grades (C)
- Assignment grades, if not accompanied by a rubric or scoring guide (C)
- For four-year programs, admission rates into graduate programs and graduation rates from those programs
- For two-year programs, admission rates into four-year institutions and graduation rates from those institutions
- Quality/reputation of graduate and four-year programs into which alumni are accepted

- Placement rates of graduates into appropriate career positions and starting salaries
- Alumni perceptions of their career responsibilities and satisfaction
- Student ratings of their knowledge and skills and reflections on what they have learned in the course or program (C)
- Questions on end-of-course student evaluation forms that ask about the course rather than the instructor (C)
- Student/alumni satisfaction with their learning, collected through surveys, exit interviews, or focus groups
- Voluntary gifts from alumni and employers
- Student participation rates in faculty research, publications and conference presentations
- Honors, awards, and scholarships earned by students and alumni

3. Evidence of Learning Processes that Promote Student Learning

(Insights into Why Students Are or Aren't Learning)

- Transcripts, catalog descriptions, and course syllabi, analyzed for evidence of course or program coherence, opportunities for active and collaborative learning, etc. (C)
- Logs maintained by students documenting time spent on course work, interactions with faculty and other students, nature and frequency of library use, etc. (C)
- Interviews and focus groups with students, asking why they achieve some learning goals well and others less well (C)
- Many of Angelo and Cross's Classroom Assessment Techniques (C)
- Counts of out-of-class interactions between faculty and students (C)
- Counts of programs that disseminate the program's major learning goals to all students in the program
- Counts of courses whose syllabi list the course's major learning goals
- Documentation of the match between course/program objectives and assessments (C)
- Counts of courses whose final grades are based at least in part on assessments of thinking skills as well as basic understanding
- Ratio of performance assessments to paper-and-pencil tests (C)
- Proportions of class time spent in active learning (C)
- Counts of courses with collaborative learning opportunities
- Counts of courses taught using culturally responsive teaching techniques
- Counts of courses with service learning opportunities, or counts of student hours spent in service learning activities
- Library activity in the program's discipline(s) (e.g., number of books checked out; number of online database searches conducted; number of online journal articles accessed)
- Counts of student majors participating in relevant cocurricular activities (e.g., the percent of Biology majors participating in the Biology Club)
- Voluntary student attendance at disciplinary seminars and conferences and other intellectual/cultural events relevant to a course or program (C)

<http://www.msche.org/publications/examples-of-evidence-of-student-learning.pdf>

Appendix G: Sample Annual Assessment Report Summary

I. Goals	II. Objectives	III. Educational Opportunities			IV. Assessment Measures
What will students learn?	What, specifically, will students know or be able to do?	Courses with this outcome as primary objective	Courses that reinforce this outcome	How will you accomplish each goal?	How will you measure each of the goals and objectives in columns I and II?
<i>Goal 1: Students will develop proficiency in oral and written communication</i>	<p>Produce academic writing that demonstrates ability to develop a thesis, use specific examples or evidence, and draw well-founded conclusions</p> <p>Respond analytically and critically to ideas and texts, synthesize relevant materials, and formulate an original argument</p> <p>Analyze and draw evidence from both primary and secondary texts</p> <p>Effectively use library resources</p>	<p>V00.0001</p> <p>V00.0004</p>	<p>V00.0012</p> <p>V00.0016</p> <p>V00.0025</p>	<p>Treat writing as a process of draft and revision; work extensively with individual students, both via written feedback and in person</p> <p>Facilitate collaborative work settings, including peer-editing</p> <p>Offer tutoring for students who need or desire extra help</p> <p>Provide library workshops</p>	<p>Assessment of student writing via rubric</p> <p>Student Course Evaluations</p> <p>Student focus groups</p> <p>Senior Survey</p> <p>Senior exit interviews</p> <p>Syllabi and curriculum review</p> <p>(see attached departmental assessment plan for copies of assessment instruments)</p>
<i>Goal 2</i>					
<i>Goal 3</i>					
<i>Etc.</i>					

Sample Assessment Report Summary (continued)

I. Goals	V. Results	VI. Possible Explanations	VII. Action Taken
What will students learn?	What are the findings from Column IV?	Why might these results have occurred?	How have you used the findings from the assessments? What improvements or changes have been made based on assessment findings?
<p><i>Goal 1:</i> Students will develop proficiency in oral and written communication</p>	<p>20% of students scored “unacceptable” and 30% scored “developing proficiency” on rubric criterion “coherence of argument”</p> <p>Student evaluations of writing classes generally poor</p> <p>Review of syllabi revealed broad variation in amount, type, and standards of writing</p> <p>Senior Survey reveals that students in our department feel that their writing skills have not been enhanced to as great a degree as in other departments (50% vs. 70%, respectively)</p> <p>(see appendices for complete reports of findings)</p>	<p>Students not being asked to produce sufficient writing to practice their skills</p> <p>Students not receiving enough “actionable” feedback on assignments</p> <p>Students not aware of standards</p>	<p>Revised common guidelines for writing standards</p> <p>Implemented faculty workshops to discuss writing assignments and agree common goals and strategies</p> <p>Identified and discussed examples of poor, proficient, and superior writing in class</p> <p>Created repository of writing assignments online</p> <p>Collaborated with NYU Libraries to provide additional on-site instruction on library resources</p> <p>Expanded writing tutorial support</p>
<i>Goal 2</i>			
<i>Goal 3</i>			
<i>Etc.</i>			

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**NYU Task Force
Best Practices in Student Learning Assessment
Fall, 2009**

Tools and Resources

Prepared by: Sub-Committee for Tools and Resources

Heather Stewart, Nicola Monat-Jacobs, and Marybeth Curtin

Tools and Resources

Overview

This section addresses the topic of technical tools and resources used to support academic integrity and assessment of student performance. In doing so, it provides an overview of the current technical environment at NYU on topics of integrity and assessment including examples of tools and resources used in the schools and those supported centrally. It also provides an overview of methodologies, tools and resources available in the field at large that are employed in other educational settings. Finally, it proposes recommendations for new tools.

Information Technology Resources and Governance

Characterized by diversity among its schools and within its programs, approaches to teaching and learning at New York University reflect the curricular complexity and variety. As such the ways in which technology is used to support and facilitate academic activities varies considerably by school. This is, at once, a challenge and an asset to NYU in providing technological resources of any nature to the community, including tools and resources for student performance assessment. For this reason, in April 2008, NYU appointed a Task Force of senior leaders with the goal of validating and developing a strategic plan for information technology that to ensure NYU's success in its endeavors in the decades ahead.

In its final report, the Task Force identified the following principles to guide IT decision-making.

- Promoting innovation – on the edges and in the center - in uses and sources of IT services;
- Supporting the schools' unique competitive, discipline-specific and reputational needs;
- Encouraging continuous improvement in the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of central IT services;
- Facilitating engagement by members of the NYU community across units and in interdisciplinary work, through integrated IT services wherever appropriate;
- Presenting external audiences with easy, appealing access to current information about NYU; and,
- Leveraging economies of scale wherever practicable, as technologies and services evolve.

Assessment Types

Technologies commonly used for performance assessments can be categorized into six main areas; Early Warning and Alert, Online Testing, Performance Assessment, Classroom Assessment Techniques and Practices, and Anti-Plagiarism. At New York University, all categories are currently used.

1) Early Warning and Alert

In 2002 NYU ran approximately 300 courses per semester using its learning management system known as BlackBoard. In 2009 approximately 6,800 courses per semester and 47,000 students use BlackBoard. The advent of the enterprise learning management system (LMS) affords the opportunity to use it as one type of pervasive tool for assessment. For example, one feature of the LMS is the grade book which provides a rapid feedback option for student assessment. Another is the discussion board, which enables faculty to construct opportunities for students to display and review their ideas and to comment on the ideas of their peers.

Another mechanism heavily used at NYU allows instructors to create and deploy tests (where the answers are graded and respondents are identified to the instructor) and surveys (where there are no right answers and respondents are anonymous) in their course sites within the LMS. Test types include but are not limited to multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, matching, ordering, true/false and essay.

It is noteworthy that while most faculty and students use BlackBoard as the LMS, several schools and individual faculty use Epsilen and Sakai. As NYU continues to evolve its offerings in hybrid and online learning it will and should continue to look toward those technologies that foster the creation of assessment opportunities in the learning process.

Looking beyond current capabilities, NYU has followed work under development at Indiana University which actively sends an early warning message to students based on an automated algorithmic process and also displays a dashboard of student course health. Deploying this technology could be of particular use to students in danger of failing to make academic progress.

2) Online Testing

The LMS platform is one means for deploying online tests at NYU. Some programs employ test banks provided by publishers and disciplinary societies to assess progress. Still others use third-party vendors to integrate more sophisticated testing functions. These include Respondus, Question Mark and Scantron, as well “home grown” systems, or those developed within the schools themselves.

3) Performance Assessment

Many of NYU’s academic disciplines lend themselves particularly well to performance based assessment and have capitalized on rich media to make these formative and summative tasks more effective. Some schools are using audio and video captures of their students processes and products to evaluate them. Podcasts and Echo 360 capture technology are commonly used. Several have established portfolios for text and media compositions and performances. Portfolios that are based on commercial technologies, community source technologies, such as Sakai, and those that are developed internally are in use at NYU. Departments use them for student reflection, resource display and career planning and placement.

Another example that NYU is piloting is the translation of the student journal from paper for to online form. Using Open Journal System Technology, a small group is testing the possibilities of publishing online journals as part of the curriculum. The arena of web publishing, collective intelligence and social networking has extended the classroom, and therefore faculty are experimenting with the sense of audience via the web in performance assessment.

Another place where NYU has been innovative in its use technology for assessment is through technical product creation. For instance, students develop applications and technical code which is released to the world for adoption. Some applications available in the Apple App Store are the result of student performance tasks and a longitudinal measure of success extending beyond the classroom is adoption and use which is akin to the more traditional research publication and adoption process.

4) Simulated Environment Testing/Skills Demonstration

Faculty also have used virtual spaces such as Second Life for assessment which enables the replication of environmental conditions at a scale and availability that had been unattainable in the classroom heretofore. Beyond hosting performances, students can demonstrate calculations, simulate conditions, and can serve data to create visualized representations, such as in Geographical Information Systems. All of these are new modalities for students to present their work, for faculty to evaluate the work and to assess student performance with far greater context and complexity than only several years ago.

5) Classroom Assessment Techniques and Practices

As much of learning assessment occurs in the classroom, some faculty use practices that occur during the individual session time. These techniques include the use of clickers in some courses. Others are beginning to pilot the use of mobile polling devices, where laptops, tablet computers, phones and other portable and hand-held devices use many types of applications for voting, submitting questions, and submitting short assignments. The concept of the digital drop and return box which was formerly limited to the LMS now is more portable through web-based file storage applications, such as Xythos.

6) Anti-Plagiarism

One school has used anti-plagiarism tool Turn-it-In, which reviews papers for plagiarism and there is currently interest in wider availability of this software. A different sort of anti-plagiarism technology with which NYU has experience is with eye cameras and key stroke monitoring for remote learners.

Recommendations

The recommendations of the IT Taskforce bolster the possibilities of overcoming some challenges previously posed by considerable IT federation.

- 1) A set of technologies that are in use and are in pilot form at NYU and should be selected and developed to be widely available and supported at the enterprise level. Selection should be informed by the Faculty Working Group on Information Technology Services and Direction.
- 2) An educational and informational series should be created to inform faculty about the technologies that are available for student learning assessment. This should be jointly sponsored by ITS, NYU Libraries and the Office of the Provost. Efforts to demonstrate and gather feedback on the tools in use in the schools should be a part of this ongoing effort.
- 3) Adopt an enterprise, integrated anti-plagiarism tool, such as Turn-it-In. ITS should make this available on an opt-out basis to the schools.

Finally, it is important to NYU's progress to recognize that fears about decline in academic integrity that been associated with increased communication, editing and collaboration activities which have been made possible through technology, especially web and media have generally not been realized in the academy.

Appendix 1: Members of Task Force

**FSC Task Force on
Best Practices in Student Performance Assessment
Fall, 2009**

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