Using “Signature” or “Key” Assignments for Program-level Assessment

Assessment Office
March 23, 2012

Workshop Outcomes

As a result of this workshop, you will know how to

• Create a signature or key assignment that is aligned with program learning outcomes
• Collect student work from multiple course sections and/or instructors
• Use results to help students improve their skills and content knowledge
Assessment Office

Program Assessment

Program Assessment → Program Evolution

Program Assessment ≠ Individual Evaluation

Photo: Star Bulletin

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Program Assessment Cycle

What is a signature or key assignment?

- Embedded in a course
- Used for course grade and program assessment
- Aligned with program SLOs
- Collaboratively designed by faculty
- Meaningful and integrative
Why signature or key assignments?

- Allows a program to assess SLOs across course sections or instructors
- Creates consistency
- Useful for assessing course sections with different modalities/pedagogies

Collect evidence across time and across sections with consistency
Why signature or key assignments?

You get what you ask for

How to Use Signature Assignments for Program Assessment

1. Identify the SLOs and appropriate course using the curriculum map
2. Design an assignment
3. Draft a rubric
4. Gather & evaluate student work
5. Aggregate & analyze results
6. Use results to evolve the program
1. Identify SLOs & Course

Curriculum map excerpt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>SLO 1 Economic Literacy</th>
<th>SLO 2 Quantitative Reasoning</th>
<th>SLO 3 Written Report</th>
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<td>CRS 301</td>
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<td>I</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>R</td>
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<td><strong>M &amp; A</strong></td>
<td><strong>M &amp; A</strong></td>
<td><strong>M &amp; A</strong></td>
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</table>

I=Introduced; R=Reinforced/Practiced; M=Mastered (at exit level); A=Assessed (for program assessment)

2. Design an assignment

Assignment asks students to
- Demonstrate mastery
- Integrate knowledge
- Apply knowledge
2. Design an assignment

The assignment is structured.
- Aligned to SLOs
- Tailored and specific
- Explicit guidelines
  - Instructions on how to complete
  - Evaluation criteria

Design an assignment brainstorm

- Students analyze and evaluate an issue from multiple perspectives to form a position of agreement/support or action.
3. Draft a rubric

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Does Not Meet</th>
<th>Partially Meets</th>
<th>Meets</th>
<th>Exceeds</th>
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<tr>
<td>Economic Literacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written Report</td>
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</table>

4. Gather & Evaluate

- Students’ assignments
- Course Instructor(s)
- Faculty Team evaluates
- Course Instructor(s) evaluates
- Grade (to students)
- Assessment Coordinator/ Curriculum Committee
5. Aggregate & Analyze

Sample Capstone Results (percent of students)
2010-2011
N=25

- Economic Literacy
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Written Report

6. Use results to evolve the program

- Share the good news!
- Programs have reported changing:
  - Curriculum
  - Assessment procedures
  - Policies
Tip Sheet

1. Identify Course: utilize your curriculum map
2. Assignment: ask for the right thing
3. Rubric: find & adapt, expect to revise
4. Gather & Evaluate: sample student work
5. Aggregate & Analyze Results: keep it simple
6. Use Results: make (small) meaningful changes

Your Turn

• What might a signature assignment in your program look like?
• What challenges do you foresee?
Thank You!

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USING “SIGNATURE” OR “KEY” ASSIGNMENTS FOR PROGRAM-LEVEL ASSESSMENT

Step 1: Identify the SLOs and appropriate course using the curriculum map
Step 2: Design an assignment
Step 3: Draft a rubric
Step 4: Gather & evaluate student work
Step 5: Aggregate and analyze results
Step 6: Use results to evolve the program

EVALUATION FORM

Student Identifier:___________________   Semester__________  Year _______

Program SLOs (sample excerpts)

Upon completion of the program, students can:
1. Clearly explain core economic terms, concepts, and theories.
2. Apply appropriate quantitative and statistical techniques to economic analysis.
3. Effectively communicate results of economic research and analysis through written reports.

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<th>Meets</th>
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<td>SLO2: Quantitative Reasoning</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLO3: Written Report</td>
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Comments:
USING “SIGNATURE” OR “KEY” ASSIGNMENTS FOR PROGRAM-LEVEL ASSESSMENT

AGGREGATE & ANALYZE RESULTS

Example Results from Capstone Project 2010-2011 (percent of students)
N=25

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Written Report</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>90</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: There were no “Does Not Meet” ratings