Draft

IIT Student Learning Assessment Template

April 3, 2013

The IIT Student Learning Assessment Template was created by the Assessment Subcommittee of the IIT Accreditation Advisory Committee. The purpose of this template is to facilitate the use of current "best practices" in the field of student learning assessment across all academic programs of study at IIT.

This document contains sections on drafting program learning goals, creating a curriculum map and developing an assessment plan for an academic program of study. Each section contains definitions, guidelines and examples.

Your feedback is welcome. Please send comments and suggestions on this template to assessment@iit.edu.

Program Learning Goals

What are Program Learning Goals?

Program learning goals are the benefits that result from the completion of an entire program or series of courses.

Guidelines for Writing Program Learning Goals

1. Limit the number to 3 to 5 learning goals per program of study.
2. Focus on the end, not the means. Effective learning goals refer to a destination rather than the path taken to get there.
3. Identify goals that are measurable.
4. Rather than starting with a blank slate, collect information on potential learning goals from internal sources (e.g., faculty colleagues, syllabi of current courses, your college's mission statement) and external sources (e.g., professional standards espoused by relevant disciplinary associations, goals articulated by specialized accrediting organizations, employers of program graduates, your department's industry board, admission criteria for graduate programs pursued by program graduates).
5. Use clear and observable terms (e.g., instead of "*think critically*," say "*analyze and evaluate arguments"*).
6. Use concrete action verbs (e.g., conduct, demonstrate, summarize, identify, select).
7. Aim for goals that are neither too broad nor too specific.

Examples of Program Learning Goals

1. Acquisition or mastery of knowledge, conceptual understanding, skills, values or habits of mind that make one successful in the field, for example:
    a. Conduct original, publishable research in the field.
    b. Demonstrate a broad knowledge of theory and research across several sub-disciplines in the field.
    c. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of one area of expertise by completing an independent research project and documenting the findings.
    d. Appropriately select, and safely use the laboratory equipment basic to research in the field.
    e. Write and speak effectively to professional and lay audiences about issues in the field.
    f. Work effectively as a team member by demonstrating an ability to get along with and work collaboratively with other team members, take direction from the team leader, and subordinate personal prominence to the efficiency of the whole.
2. Preparation for employment or graduate school.
3. Preparation to pass a licensure exam.
4. Professional participation and service to the disciplinary field.

Program Learning Goals Template

Program Name (*e.g. Bachelor of Science in Biology)*	
Department	
College	

After successfully completing this program a student will be able to....

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Curriculum Map

What is a Curriculum Map?

A *Curriculum Map* is a chart that shows how the program curriculum relates to the program learning goals by indicating the courses in which students have the opportunity to either achieve or demonstrate their achievement of each program learning goal.

How is a Curriculum Map Useful?

A Curriculum Map is useful by showing how well the current curriculum aligns with the stated learning goals. The curriculum does this by showing whether the current curriculum provides every student with at least one opportunity to achieve each program learning goal. It can also help to identify courses that do not contribute to students achieving or demonstrating their achievement of any of the program learning goals. Curriculum maps for undergraduate programs should include general education courses.

Example of a Curriculum Map

	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5
BIOL100	x	x			
BIOL107		x	x		
BIOL109			x	x	
BIOL115	x		x		
BIOL117		x		x	
BIOL210					x
BIOL225				x	x
BIOL401					
BIOL430	x	x	x	x	x
MATH151			x		
MATH152			x		
MATH425			x	x	
CHEM124	x	x			
CHEM125		x			
CHEM237					
PHYS123	x				x
PHYS221		x		x	
PHYS224			x		x
CS105			x		x

Guidelines for Creating a Curriculum Map

1. When creating a curriculum map, refer to actual course syllabi; do not rely on memory or assumptions about whether the course provides an opportunity to achieve a particular learning goal.
2. Don't rely solely on course goals to determine whether the course provides an opportunity to achieve a particular learning goal. Rather, look for particular content and assignments that directly address the learning goal.
3. Kill two birds with one stone, but jotting down the specific content, assignments or evaluation opportunities and add these to the curriculum map as you are building it.
4. Share the curriculum map with course instructors so they know the program expectations for their course.

Learning Assessment Plan

Components of a Learning Assessment Plan

A basic, no-frills learning assessment plan includes the following:

1. A set of *program learning goals*.
2. A *curriculum map* showing where in the program curriculum students have opportunities to achieve and demonstrate their achievement of program learning goals.
3. One or more measures that assess whether the student has achieved the learning goal. See below for examples of measures
4. *A process for collecting data for each measure*, including who is responsible for collected the data for each metric, and when and where (e.g., in which classes or other venues) will data for each metric be collected.
5. A process for evaluating the data (i.e., grading the student work), and comparing the results to pre-defined standards for success.
6. A process for using the results of the data analysis to improve the program.

The following page contains a Learning Assessment Plan template.

Examples of Measures

- Exams, papers, homework assignments, class presentations when evaluated[1] using a rubric (see below).
- Student achievement of outcomes as demonstrated in a capstone course or experience.
- Student feedback
- Faculty assessment of their own courses
- Faculty and student peer evaluations based on a rubric
- Alumni feedback
- Employer feedback
- Licensure, certification or practice exams

The Importance of Rubrics

A rubric is a set of criteria used to evaluate a piece of work. Simply stated, a rubric provides a list of the things you are looking for when you evaluate an assignment. You must use a rubric to evaluate student work that is used for assessment. You may also want to use rubrics to grade student work. Below is a list advantage to using a rubric.

- A rubric clarifies expectations for performance and delineates the difference between different levels of performance.
- A rubric makes scoring more accurate, unbiased and consistent.
- A rubric makes scoring easier and faster.
- A rubric improves feedback to students.
- A rubric reduces arguments with students.

[1] It is important not to confuse grading with evaluation. Grading is used to provide feedback to the individual student whereas evaluating an assignment for assessment purposes is used to provide feedback to the faculty and administration about how well a program is achieving its goals for student learning. Both faculty and students can evaluate student work using a rubric.

Learning Assessment Plan Template

Learning Goals W*hat should students be able to do after success-fully completing the program?*	Measures *What class work and assignments will be used to assess whether the student has achieved the goal?*	Schedule W*hen, how often and by whom will data be collected?*	Evaluation *How will you determine how well your students have learned this?*	Standards *What benchmarks will be used to interpret your results?*	Improvement *How will you use your assessment results to improve the program?*
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

References

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