Basic Assessment Vocabulary

Assessment – an ongoing process aimed at understanding, documenting, and improving student learning (Ruth Stiehl).

Classroom assessment – process of assessment techniques customized to the specific needs of students and curriculum, and guided by the judgment and knowledge of the teacher (Thomas Angelo and Patricia Cross).

Course assessment – includes assessment methods designed to measure achievement of learning outcomes by all students in a particular course for the purpose of measuring the effectiveness of the course.

Program assessment – a combination of student assessment, review of curriculum and instructional practices, analysis of longitudinal data, and recommendations by external panels for the purpose of evaluating program effectiveness.

Learning outcome – A clear statement of what students will be able to do after they have finished a course as a result of what they have learned (Stiehl).

Student academic achievement – Qualities of student performance as defined by the course learning outcomes and measured against criteria developed by faculty.

Program assessment:

Define
- Learning Outcomes
  Essential Question: What do we want students to know and be able to do, because of what they learn?

Review
- Assessment Methods
  Criteria for Success
  Essential Question: How will students demonstrate their knowledge and skills?

Implement
- Assessment Methods
  Essential Question: How will we know what the students know and can do?

Evaluate
- Analysis of Results
- Feedback to Students
- Recommendations for Change
- Essential Question: What have we learned from the assessment results that will help us understand strengths and weaknesses?

Integrate
- Implementation
  Assessment
  Essential Question: How are we going to use our better understanding about student achievement to improve teaching and learning?

FAQS

Q: What is assessment?
A: An ongoing process aimed at understanding, documenting, and improving student learning (Stiehl). Academic assessment takes place at the classroom level, the course level and the program level.

Q: Why should we perform assessment?
A: To improve student learning and assist faculty in understanding student achievement.

Q: How does assessment do this?
A: Assessment improves student learning, and it helps faculty measure student success.

Q: How does assessment improve student learning?
A: Assessment provides a clear indication of student knowledge of the course’s learning outcomes. This, in turn, offers valuable data so faculty can improve the curriculum and instruction.

Q: How is assessment different from grades?
A: While grades provide a numerical evaluation for an assignment or course, assessment is a more all-encompassing measurement of student knowledge of the course’s learning outcomes. Assessment doesn’t affect a student’s grade; assessment measures a student’s performance and knowledge so facilitators can improve the course or program.

Q: Will assessment be used to evaluate my teaching?
A: No, assessment and evaluation are different. Instructors assess student learning. The college administration evaluates instructor effectiveness.

Moraine Valley’s College Assessment Plan:

Cycle-Plan-Report (CPR)

Why Moraine Valley performs assessment

To make improvements to curriculum, instructional strategies, and the allocation of college resources to support teaching and learning.

College Assessment Plan: CPR

The modern era of student assessment at Moraine Valley began in 1995 during the self-assessment phase of North Central Accreditation. Today, the college has a full-time Director of Academic Assessment who provides leadership and support for the college’s academic assessment efforts. A broad-based schedule of assessment initiatives occurs throughout the year, at the classroom, course, and program levels.

Cycle – The five-year cycle guides the department’s ongoing sequence of assessment. In each year, assessment is focused on identified courses/programs.

Plan – The Annual Assessment Plan establishes clear assessment initiatives for each academic department for the upcoming academic year.

Report – The Annual Assessment Report documents the department’s assessment activities carried out according to the department’s assessment plan.

Assessment Levels

Course – Assessment of student learning related to the course’s learning outcomes, which constitute what students should be able to do based on instruction and curriculum.

Program – Assessment of student learning related to an academic or student development program’s learning outcomes or core functions.

General Education – Assessment of student learning of general education learning outcomes found across the college’s general education core curriculum.

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Assessment of Student Academic Achievement

Assessment of Student Academic Achievement improves student learning by providing faculty with information that can be used to improve curriculum, instructional strategies, and the allocation of resources to support teaching and learning.

For more information, visit morainevalley.edu/studentassessment

Best Practices in Action

Course Assessment
Department chairs and their faculty members lead course level assessment.

Best Practices in Course Assessment
• Employ shared departmental exams.
• Implement pre/post tests.
• Use grading rubrics for student essays.
• Incorporate capstone assignments into course curriculum.
• Ensure syllabi currently in use are consistent with course outlines and model course syllabi.

Program Assessment
Program assessment involves a combination of student assessment, review of curriculum and instructional practices, analysis of longitudinal data, and recommendations by external panels for the purpose of evaluating program effectiveness.

Best Practices in Program Assessment
• A comprehensive exam for program graduates.
• A pre- and post-test for incoming program students.
• In order to track student achievement in the program’s courses, build a database that houses assessment results for each academic year. This data will indicate where improvements can be made to curriculum and instruction.
• Form or seek the guidance of a panel from the program’s fields. These individuals can keep departments current on job prospects, best standards and practices, and general changes to the fields.

General Education Assessment
General education assessment includes the assessment of general education goals, the broad skills found throughout the institution’s general education curriculum. General education assessment touches more courses than course or program-level assessment and typically involves large-scale initiatives.

Best Practices in General Education Assessment
• Capstone projects across general education courses that share common learning outcomes
• Shared rubrics used to score student artifacts across general education courses
• Shared experience projects that include campus programming or student life

Contact
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For more information, visit morainevalley.edu/studentassessment

Rubrics
Resources for instructors
Best practices

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