Designing Assessments and Tools for your Program

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Department chairs rely upon Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) assessment to ensure student mastery of material in their program fields and to enable continuous improvement within programs to meet accreditation standards. Comprehensive assessment plans that use curriculum mapping are helpful in evaluating the degree of learning and areas for improvement. A curriculum map is a visual tool to review the alignment of SLOs with individual course content in a program. As part of the mapping process, faculty collaborate with external constituents to define SLOs, map the level of knowledge/skill that students should achieve on each SLO in a given course, develop direct assessment of student learning, and rubrics/scoring guides for each of the SLOs. It is critical to document development, use, review, and the closing of the assessment loop in a program's assessment initiative to determine student success.

This presentation reviews a methodology that involves faculty and external constituent teams to define SLOs in the context of specific programs. The SLOs will guide how faculty groups develop opportunities for the assessment of student learning achievement for each SLO using appropriate assessment activities and tools (rubrics/scoring guides). The presenter will discuss examples of curriculum mapping, and assessment tools to evaluate straightforward numerical problems, and semi-complex assignments that might require rubrics with multiple performance indicators. The presenter will explain successful implementation of the assessment process to include the development of an assessment cycle for each SLO, and the collection, analysis, and review of the assessment results. Finally, the presentation will provide information regarding the proposal of appropriate actions to enhance student learning and improve program success based on the assessment plan to "close the loop" in the program's assessment plan.