

SLO/AOL Assessment Workshop

Best Practices in the Formulation of Assessment Expectations

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Assessment Expectations

- Ability related to specific knowledge and/or skills
- At SJU we use Quantitative Analysis
 - Many programs use a five point scale

Expectations-Internal Inputs

- From the curriculum
 - Program goals (linked to SJU Student Learning Outcomes) should be the driving force
- Collaborative effort within the Department /Program
 - Integration with core courses (undergraduate: signature and variable core, business core for business students)

Expectations-External Inputs

- Preparing students with
 - Skills for other courses, job, life
 - Skills for course next in the course ladder (pre-req courses)
- Other programs, departments, universities, certifications

Characteristics

- **SMART** : Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time Related (“Time Related” is fixed for SJU, either semester or graduation)
- Will the expectations provide meaningful data on student learning
- Will the expectations provide meaningful implications (changes needed)

Setting Expectations

- Demanding yet reasonable
 - Most SJU assessments
 - Want students to reach a certain level even if they may get more exposure later

Alternatives

- Easily attainable
 - Near 100% of students should achieve.
 - Examples:
 - students will be able to download data from financial website
 - Able to use excel to create a line graph
- Challenging: need additional efforts
- Varying Expectations
 - Expectations in a post-test may be higher than those of the Pre-test
 - Critical Thinking expectations higher for Faith and Reason than First Year Seminar

Types of Expectations

- Level
- Value Added (also called growth)

Level

- **Level**

- Not concerned with where the students started, but concerned with where they end
- Course or program pre-specified level
- Common pre-existing knowledge/skills are assumed
- Appropriate for most SJU courses/programs

Value Added

- **Value Added**

- Less frequently used at SJU
- Change in performance
- Assessments at various levels
 - Pre and post assessments
- Example: Critical Thinking in GEP (assessed in FYS and Faith & Reason, expect students to do better when assessed on the same rubric)
- Is tracking on individual basis or on a group basis?

Multiple Assessments

- Different types of measures
 - Example: Written and Oral communications for Graduate goal of “Communicate Effectively”)
- Same Measure (used in certain programs at SJU)
 - Same pre/post exam

Initial Expectations

- Easy Method
 - $(\text{Minimum} + \text{Maximum})/2$, example $(60+100)/2 = 80$
- Historical data
 - Use performance from previous semesters
 - Pre-test data
- Revision of expectations
 - Revisions are needed, however the data may lose value of time series analysis
 - Balance between Accuracy versus Consistency

Summary

Take-Home message:

- 1) Think about expectations – to make them meaningful/helpful
- 2) Please explain strategy for selecting expectations
- 3) Reasonable expectations vs. met expectations

Thank You