SLO/AOL Assessment Workshop

Best Practices in the Formulation of Assessment Expectations

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Rajneesh Sharma

Alexander Skolnick
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

- 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
  – (Minimum + 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