

**Rubric Design:  
Yes, We Can Grade and Assess  
Multiple SLOs**

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Association for the Assessment  
of Learning in Higher Education

**AALHE**  
PROMOTING ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING



The slide features three logos at the bottom. On the left is the CUTLA logo, which consists of a circular graphic with blue and green lines and the text 'CUTLA CENTER FOR UNIVERSITY TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT'. In the center is the AALHE logo, featuring the acronym 'AALHE' in large green letters with the tagline 'PROMOTING ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING' below it. On the right is the University of West Florida logo, which includes a blue circular icon with a white spiral and the text 'UNIVERSITY of WEST FLORIDA'.

Title Slide

Promote Change by Assessing the Maturity of your Assessment Culture

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## **Introductions**

### **Angela Bryan**

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The Handouts PDF file contains the presentation slides and notes (that serve as a presentation transcript) and a full-size copies of other handouts and worksheets:

Interpreting a Curriculum Map graphic  
Curriculum Map for Paris Desserts  
Worksheet template for rubric (to be posted in Padlet)

## **Learning outcomes**

### **Parts 1 & 2: Today and Padlet Gallery Walk**

- Describe the challenge of talking to faculty about why we assess and the relation between assessment and grading.
- Identify strategies to help faculty develop a grading rubric that will generate high-quality assessment evidence.
- Design a grading rubric that will gather high-quality evidence

### **Part 3: Synchronous Discussion – June 16, 10 AM CDT**

- Identify strategies for facilitating faculty buy-in of assessment.
- Identify talking points for faculty conversations related to the value of curriculum maps.

Learning outcomes

## **Building skills online: Plan for this AALHE skill-building session**

### **• Part 1: Introduction and Overview (recorded session)**

Overview of the relation between grading processes and assessment evidence. Discuss a curriculum map and assignment to be used for the skill-building activity implemented in Part 2.

### **• Part 2: Asynchronous Collaboration (Padlet activity)**

Work on your own or with colleagues on your campus to develop a rubric that aligns with program-level SLOs and expectations for the assignment. Post your rubric for a Gallery Walk activity in Padlet (first week of the conference).

### **• Part 3: Synchronous Discussion (live WebEx session – June 16, 10 AM Central Time)**

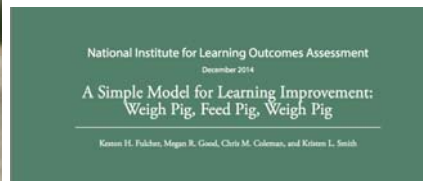
Join a WebEx live session (date on AALHE program). Identify strengths and weaknesses in rubrics posted on Padlet Gallery Walk. Discuss refinement of rubric descriptions.

## Talking to faculty about why we assess

**If you don't measure what you value,  
it won't improve.**

*Alan Merten, President, George Mason University*

**A pig won't get heavier just because you weighed it**



Assessment is first and foremost about improvement: measuring what we value and seeking opportunities and strategies to improve. Compliance with mandates is important, but secondary to the goal of continuous improvement.

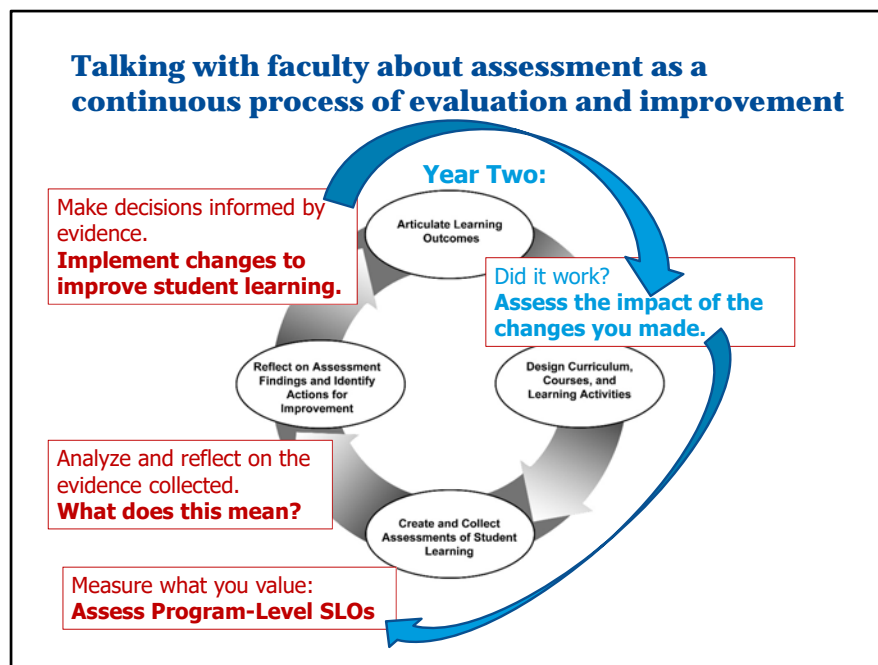


Figure describes a continuous process of assessment for improvement based on the following steps:

1. Identify learning outcomes
2. Design curriculum and activities to promote the learning outcomes
3. Gather assessment evidence to evaluate learning
4. Analyze and reflect on the findings: What do these data/observations tell us about strengths in student learning and the challenges/obstacles students encounter?
5. Make decisions informed by assessment evidence. Implement changes to curriculum, courses, teaching, or learning activities to try to improve future learning.
6. Ask the important question: Did these changes make a difference? Did it work? Or, if no changes were made, do students continue to achieve these SLOs at the same level?

**Curriculum maps as assessment tools****Does the curriculum map describe a coherent curriculum?**

- How does each course contribute to curriculum goals (program SLOs)?
- Does every required course contribute to learning for at least one program SLO?
- Do courses allow students to get enough practice with a skill before they are expected to demonstrate mastery?
- Are there gaps? An SLO that no course supports?
- Are any SLOs mapped to elective course department expect elective courses to provide key learning opportunities for SLOS? What happens if students elect not to take these courses? Can a student avoid an SLO?
- If students can select a course from a menu of options to meet a core requirement, do all courses in a category serve a common program SLO?
- Are outcomes addressed in a logical order?
- Do some SLOs get "covered" more than needed? Some not enough?

**Use curriculum maps to identify strengths and gaps in the curriculum structure: Is this curriculum coherent?**

Content	Introductory Course	Research Methods	Intermediate Course	Laboratory / Practicum Course	Advanced Content Course A	Advanced Content Course B	Advanced Content Course C	Advanced Content Course D	Capstone Course
SLO 1: Disciplinary knowledge base (models and theories)	Introduced		Introduced		Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Mastery / Assessed
SLO 2: Disciplinary methods		Introduced		Reinforced			Reinforced		Mastery / Assessed
SLO 3: Disciplinary applications	Introduced				Reinforced	Reinforced		Reinforced	Mastery / Assessed
<b>Critical Thinking</b>									
SLO 4: Analysis and use of evidence		Introduced		Reinforced		Reinforced		Reinforced	Mastery / Assessed
SLO 5: Evaluation, selection, and use of sources of information	Introduced	Reinforced		Reinforced			Reinforced		Mastery / Assessed
<b>Communication</b>									
SLO 6: Written communication skills	Introduced	Reinforced		Reinforced			Reinforced		Mastery / Assessed
SLO 7: Oral communication skills									Mastery / Assessed
SLO 8: Interpersonal and team skills				Introduced					Mastery / Assessed
<b>Personal Growth</b>									
SLO 9: Disciplinary ethical standards		Introduced		Reinforced					Mastery / Assessed
SLO 10: Academic Integrity	Introduced	Introduced		Reinforced					Mastery / Assessed

**Areas outlined in red identify weaknesses in the curriculum.**

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<http://uwf.edu/cutla/>  
 November 2016

**Flawed Curriculum Map**  
 Neglected SLOs, poor sequencing of skills in courses for skill development, no plan for assessment of some SLOs

One course contributes to only one program SLO and this contribution is redundant with that of five other courses.

One SLO is not supported – no courses provide any opportunities for learning but the SLO is assessed in the capstone course.

One SLO is supported by only one course (which introduces the learning) and is assessed for mastery in the capstone course.

One SLO is weakly supported (learning activities in only two courses) and is never assessed for mastery.



**Curriculum map should describe how required courses contribute to program SLOs**

A **coherent curriculum** is more than a collection of courses



A curriculum map shows how courses support one another to promote student learning on each outcome

## Sample curriculum map for the hands-on activity

Course	Program Name	Program Description	SLOs																	
			SLO 1	SLO 2	SLO 3	SLO 4	SLO 5	SLO 6	SLO 7	SLO 8	SLO 9	SLO 10								
Course 1	Program Name	Program Description	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	
Course 2	Program Name	Program Description		Identified		Identified		Identified		Identified		Identified		Identified		Identified		Identified		Identified
Course 3	Program Name	Program Description	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified	Identified
Course 4	Program Name	Program Description	Identified		Identified				Identified				Identified		Identified		Identified		Identified	

**Four Program SLOs:**

1. Identify and describe the varieties of authentic pâtisserie.
2. Accurately describe size, appearance, and quality of pâtisserie.
3. Evaluate flavor and presentation of pâtisserie.
4. Adhere to professional standards in acquisition and evaluation of pâtisserie

Refer to the full-size copy of the curriculum map in session handouts. Map depicts four SLOs and ten required courses. Cells describe the contribution of each course to the program SLOs.

### **This program links assignments in two courses as embedded assessments**

Students must produce an original pâtisserie as a component of the exam for their Baking & Pâtisserie Practical Exam (FCA 4099).

Students learn about food writing in (FCA 2035) and are assessed on writing skill with a **Pâtisserie Review Assignment** in Branding and Packaging (FCA 4057).

#### **The assignment serves two purposes:**

1. Evaluate writing skills.
2. Reviews create peer feedback for students taking the Baking & Pâtisserie Practical Exam.

Faculty resistance to assessment often takes the form of an objection: “We already grade students. Isn’t that enough?” (Nilson, 2015; Suskie, 2018). Grades (for courses, exams, and assignments) are unsuitable as direct measures mainly because they are too broad. They combine multiple aspects of student learning (reflecting multiple learning goals) and include other elements unrelated to learning (participation points, penalties for late work, and other rewards intended to motivate students) (Stanny, *in press*).

### **But what about grades?**

Grades combine multiple aspects of student work in one value:

- Multiple dimensions of student learning represented in assignment expectations
- Adjustments based on characteristics unrelated to learning goals (e.g., penalties for late work)
- Extra credit points awarded to motivate students
- Points for participation or attendance (class grades)

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### **Grading rubrics can generate direct measures of multiple SLOs**

Elements of a grading rubric identify specific characteristics that align with learning outcomes.

For example, an assignment might include:

- Discussion of content that describes and explains disciplinary knowledge
- Arguments that depend on disciplinary skills with thinking, analysis, and evaluation
- A sample of student writing
- Products that require specific disciplinary skills

A well-crafted analytic rubric can disaggregate these components and enable faculty to harvest direct measures for multiple learning outcomes from graded student work. These rubrics do require extra bookkeeping efforts to isolate the relevant information from rubric elements aligned with specific learning outcomes. This skill building series will discuss the challenge of discussing rubric construction and the need to track scores on individual rubric elements. The payoff is that faculty can then harness their grading efforts to generate meaningful and actionable assessment evidence (Suskie, 2018; Walvoord & Anderson, 1998).

Rubric Template				
Criterion (Score 0 if element is absent)	Below Expectations (1)	Meets Expectations (2)	Exceeds Expectations (3)	Score
Identify each grading element or criterion (example of a criterion element and descriptors follow below)	Describe typical problems, weaknesses, or errors that characterize student work that does not meet expectations for the assignment.	Describe characteristics of student work that meet expectations for quality on this criterion.	Describe characteristics of student work that make a submission stand out as exemplary work.	
Criterion 1				
Criterion 2				
Criterion 3				
<b>TOTAL</b>				

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Template for a simple rubric.

Rubric Template				
Criterion (Score 0 if element is absent)	Below Expectations (1)	Meets Expectations (2)	Exceeds Expectations (3)	Score
Identify each grading element or criterion (example of a criterion element and descriptors follow below)	Describe typical problems, weaknesses, or errors that characterize student work that does not meet expectations for the assignment.	Describe characteristics of student work that meet expectations for quality on this criterion.	Describe characteristics of student work that make a submission stand out as exemplary work.	
Use of evidence to support assertions	Assertions based on personal opinion only. Assertions are based on empty citations; citation information is given as support for an assertion but no information is provided about the content of the cited work or how or why the cited work/author supports the assertion made. Factual errors: the cited work does not actually support the assertion made in the assignment and/or is described inaccurately.	Assertions are supported with appropriate evidence. Appropriate evidence includes an interpretation of empirical data, description of arguments and evidence presented in a scholarly source that supports the assertion (with appropriate citation of the source). Evidence provided in support of an argument is described and interpreted correctly.	Assertions supported with evidence (as described in <i>meets expectations</i> ). Assertions are supported with multiple sources of evidence based on primary sources. When relevant, opposing positions are considered and arguments discounting these positions are supported with relevant scholarly evidence. Synthesizes evidence to draw new, relevant, logical inferences.	
Criterion 2				
Criterion 3	Descriptions of typical problems	Descriptions of expectations for this criterion for the assignment	Descriptions of qualities that characterize exemplary work	
<b>TOTAL</b>				

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 Center for University Teaching, Learning, & Assessment <https://uwf.edu/offices/cutla/supporting-pages/rubric-development/>

The template has now been partly filled in with a learning outcome (as a rubric criterion) and language that describes different levels of quality, including descriptions of common mistakes that detract from the quality of an assignment.





## **Task for Part 2: Design a rubric**

**Alternative 1: Rubric for pâtisserie (Baking Exam Rubric)**

**Alternative 2: Rubric for the pâtisserie review assignment (Branding & Marketing Rubric)**

Review the pâtisserie review assignment and examples of a food blog post (Le Tribunal des Gâteaux), which models expectations for reviews. Develop criteria that describe expectations for the substance and quality of student work.

Design a multi-function rubric. Use the rubric template and assignment description (workshop handouts) to develop a rubric elements that align with program-level SLOs identified in the sample curriculum map.

Uploaded your rubric to Padlet for a virtual Gallery Walk.

Participants will review and comment on each other's rubric. You can participate in the Gallery Walk across the next week.

## Gallery Walk on the Padlet site

Double click on the background to open a window to host your uploaded rubric.

<https://padlet.com/cstanny/7cg1lao23torz4vq>

### Gallery Walk on the Padlet site

To upload your rubric, double click on the background to open new post. Upload the file for your rubric.

Posts have spaces for comments – provide (and receive) comments and suggestions for posted rubrics.

Like a rubric? Give it a star!

### **Part 3: Synchronous discussion and workshop debriefing on WebEx**

Join Angela and Claudia for a 30-minute synchronous (live) WebEx session during Week 2 of the AALHE conference **(date, time – check the AALHE conference schedule)**

#### **Agenda for Live Session**

- Discussion of strengths and weaknesses of posted rubrics
- Suggestions for language to refine descriptions of student work at different levels of quality
- Discuss how separate measures for several SLOs would be harvested from the grading process
- Discuss strategies for introducing rubrics to faculty at your campus

Update this slide when the AALHE schedule for live sessions is finalized.

## Relevant scholarly resources

Fulcher, K. H., Good, M. R., Coleman, C. M., & Smith, K. L. (2014, December). *A simple model for learning improvement: Weigh pig, feed pig, weigh pig*. (NILOA Occasional Paper No. 23). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois and Indiana University, NILOA.

Nilson, L. B. (2015). *Specifications grading*. Stylus.

Stanny, C. J. (*in press*). Making the most of assessment: Using assessment processes and findings to improve curriculum and teaching. In C. M. Hakala, S. A., Nolan, & R. E. Landrum (Eds.), *Assessment: Individual, institutional, and international approaches*. APA Books.

Suskie, L. (2018). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide (3<sup>rd</sup> ed)*. Jossey-Bass.

Walvoord, B.E. & Anderson, V.J. (1998). *Effective grading: A tool for learning and assessment*. Jossey-Bass.

*thank you!*

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Bryan, A., & Stanny, C. J. (2020, June). *Rubric design: Yes, we can grade and assess multiple SLOs*. Skill building session presented at the annual conference of the Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE). [Online Conference]

**Please complete the session evaluation!**

Please remember to complete the session evaluation!