**Examples of Direct and Indirect Measures of Student Learning (Course, Program, and Institutional Levels)**

From *Student Learning Assessment, Options and Resources*

Middle State Commission on Higher Education

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|  | **Direct Measures** | **Indirect Measures** |
| **Course** | * Course and homework assignments * Examinations and quizzes * Standardized tests * Term papers and reports * Observations of field work, internship performance, service learning, or clinical experiences * Research projects * Class discussion participation * Case study analysis * Rubric (a criterion-based rating scale) scores for writing, oral presentations, and performances * Artistic performances and products * Grades that are based on explicit criteria related to clear learning goals | * Course evaluations * Test blueprints (outlines of the concepts and skills covered on tests) * Percent of class time spent in active learning * Number of student hours spent on service learning * Number of student hours spent on homework * Number of student hours spent at intellectual or cultural activities related to the course * Grades that are not based on explicit criteria related to clear learning goals |
| **Program** | * Capstone projects, senior theses, exhibits, or performances * Pass rates or scores on licensure, certification, or subject area tests * Student publications or conference presentations * Employer and internship supervisor ratings of students’ performance | * Focus group interviews with students, faculty members, or employers * Registration or course enrollment information * Department or program review data * Job placement * Employer or alumni surveys * Student perception surveys * Proportion of upper-level courses compared to the same program at other institutions * Graduate school placement rates |
| **Institutional** | * Performance on tests of writing, critical thinking, or general knowledge * Rubric (criterion-based rating scale) scores for class assignments in General Education, interdisciplinary core courses, or other courses required of all students * Performance on achievement tests * Explicit self-reflections on what students have learned related to institutional programs such as service learning (e.g., asking students to name the three most important things they have learned in a program). | * Locally-developed, commercial, or national surveys of student perceptions or self-report of activities (e.g., National Survey of Student Engagement) * Transcript studies that examine patterns and trends of course selection and grading * Annual reports including institutional benchmarks, such as graduation and retention rates, grade point averages of graduates, etc. |

**Further examples of direct and indirect evidence of Student learning**

From Suskie, L. (2009). *Assessing Student Learning: A*

*Common Sense guide*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

**Examples of Direct Evidence of student Learning**

* Ratings of student skills by their field experience supervisors or employers
* Scores and pass rates on appropriate licensure or certification exams such as Praxis or National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) or other published tests such as Major Field Tests that assess key learning outcomes
* Capstone experiences such as research projects, presentations, theses, dissertations, oral defenses,
* exhibitions, and performances, scored using a rubric
* Other written work, performances, and presentations, scored using a rubric
* Portfolios of student work
* Scores on locally designed multiple-choice or essay tests such as final examinations in key courses, qualifying examinations, and comprehensive examinations, accompanied by test blueprints describing what the tests assess
* Score gains (referred to as "value added") between entry and exit on published or local tests or writing sample
* Observations of student behavior (such as presentations and group discussions), undertaken systematically and with notes recorded systematically
* Summaries and assessments of electronic class discussion threads
* Think-alouds, which ask students to think aloud as they work on a problem or assignment
* Classroom response systems (clickers) that allow students in their classroom seats to answer questions posed by the teacher instantly and provide an immediate picture of student understanding
* Feedback from computer-simulated tasks such as information on patterns of action, decisions, and branches
* Student reflections on their values, attitudes, and beliefs, if developing those are intended outcomes of the program

**Examples of Indirect Evidence of student Learning**

* Course grades and grade distributions
* Assignment grades, if not accompanied by a rubric or scoring criteria
* Retention and graduation rates
* For four-year programs, admission rates into graduate programs and graduation rates from those programs
* For two-year programs, admission rates into four-year colleges and graduation rates from those programs
* Scores on tests required for further study (such as Graduate Record Examinations) that evaluate skills learned over a lifetime
* Quality and reputation of graduate and four-year programs into which alumni are accepted
* Placement rates of graduates into appropriate career positions and starting salaries
* Alumni perceptions of their career responsibilities and satisfaction
* Student ratings of their knowledge and skills and reflections on what they have learned over the
* course of the program
* Questions on end-of-course student evaluation forms that ask about the course rather than the instructor
* Student, alumni, and employer satisfaction with learning, collected through surveys, exit interviews, or focus groups
* Voluntary gifts from alumni and employers
* Student participation rates in faculty research, publications, and conference presentations
* Honors, awards, and scholarships earned by students and alumni