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Rubric for Assessing the Quality of Program-level Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment Plans

[Taken and adapted from the August 10, 2007 draft *Rubric for Assessing the Quality of Academic Program Learning Outcomes*" by WASC]

CRITERION	1-INITIAL	2-EMERGING	3-DEVELOPED	4-HIGHLY DEVELOPED
COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	The list of outcomes is problematic: e.g., very incomplete, overly detailed, inappropriate, disorganized. It may include only discipline-specific learning, ignoring relevant institution-wide learning. The list may confuse learning processes (e.g., doing an internship) with learning outcomes (e.g., application of theory to real-world problems).	The list includes reasonable outcomes but does not specify expectations for the program as a whole. Relevant institution-wide learning outcomes and/or national disciplinary standards may be ignored. Distinctions between expectations for undergraduate and graduate programs may be unclear.	The list is a well-organized set of reasonable outcomes that focus on the key knowledge, skills, and values students learn in the program. It includes relevant institution-wide outcomes (e.g., communication or critical thinking skills). Outcomes are appropriate for the level (undergraduate vs. graduate); national disciplinary standards have been considered.	The list is reasonable, appropriate, and comprehensive, with clear distinctions between undergraduate and graduate expectations, if applicable. Relevant institution-wide learning outcomes are included. National disciplinary standards have been considered. Faculty have agreed on explicit criteria for assessing (e.g., rubric, exam answers) students' level of mastery for each outcome.
ASSESSABLE OUTCOMES	Outcome statements do not identify what students can do to demonstrate learning. Statements such as "Students understand scientific method" do not specify how understanding can be demonstrated and assessed.	Most of the outcomes indicate how students can demonstrate their learning	Each outcome describes how students can demonstrate learning. E.g., "Graduates can write reports in APA style" or "Graduates can make original contributions to biological knowledge."	Outcomes describe how students can demonstrate their learning. Faculty have agreed on explicit criteria statements, such as rubrics, and have identified examples of student performance at varying levels for each outcome.
ALIGNMENT	There is no clear relationship between the outcomes and the curriculum that students experience.	Students appear to be given reasonable opportunities to develop the expected knowledge/skills/attitudes of the outcomes in the required curriculum.	The curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for students to learn and to develop increasing sophistication with respect to each outcome. This design may be summarized in a curriculum map.	Pedagogy, grading, the curriculum, relevant student support services, and co-curriculum are explicitly and intentionally aligned with each outcome. Curriculum map indicates increasing levels of proficiency.
ASSESSMENT	There is no formal plan for assessing each outcome.	The program relies on short-term planning, such as selecting which outcome(s) to assess in the current year.	The program has a reasonable, multi-year assessment plan that identifies when each outcome will be assessed. The plan	The program has a fully-articulated, sustainable, multi-year assessment plan that describes when and how each outcome will

PLANNING				may explicitly include analysis and implementation of improvements.	be assessed and how improvements based on findings will be implemented. The plan is routinely examined and revised, as needed.
THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE		Students knows little to nothing about the overall outcomes of the program. Communication of outcomes to students, e.g., in syllabi or catalog, is spotty or nonexistent.	Students have some knowledge of program outcomes. Communication is occasional and informal, left to individual faculty or advisors.	Students have a good grasp of program outcomes. They may use them to guide their own learning. Outcomes are included in most syllabi and are readily available in the catalog, on the program web page, and elsewhere.	Students are well acquainted with program outcomes and may participate in creation and use of rubrics. They are skilled at self-assessing in relation to the outcomes and levels of performance. Program policy calls for inclusion of outcomes in all course syllabi, and they are readily available in other program documents.

Checklist to Critique Your Assessment Project Plan

(based on the *Program Evaluation Standards* by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/jc/)

If the plan is a good one, "yes" should be the answer to these questions:

YES	NO	QUESTION
		UTILITY: Useful to the intended users? Meets the needs of the intended users?
		FEASIBILITY: Realistic, practical, diplomatic, and economical?
		PROPRIETY: Designed to be conducted ethically, legally, and with regard for the welfare of those involved and those affected by the results?
		ACCURACY: Designed to reveal and convey technically adequate information about the program? Designed to reliably answer the assessment question(s) being asked?