Embedded Assessment: An Orientation

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Why Assess?

We assess in order to improve and enhance student outcomes.
We could list dozens of more reasons for multiple stakeholders.
But they would all point back to student outcomes.

Beyond Grades

Embedded assessment (EA) moves beyond grading.

Grades are necessary but not sufficient.
Standards vary and so GPAs lose meaning.
Grades are awarded for individual classes, not programs.

What Embedded Assessment Is … and Isn't

EA uses student work produced in classes.

The assessment may even be referred to as "student products."
The assessment is often the graded work of the course.
All students are represented in the process.

EA is classroom based, managed by faculty.

Faculty create the assessment tools.
Faculty audit the process and review the results.
Faculty use the results to make changes in curriculum.
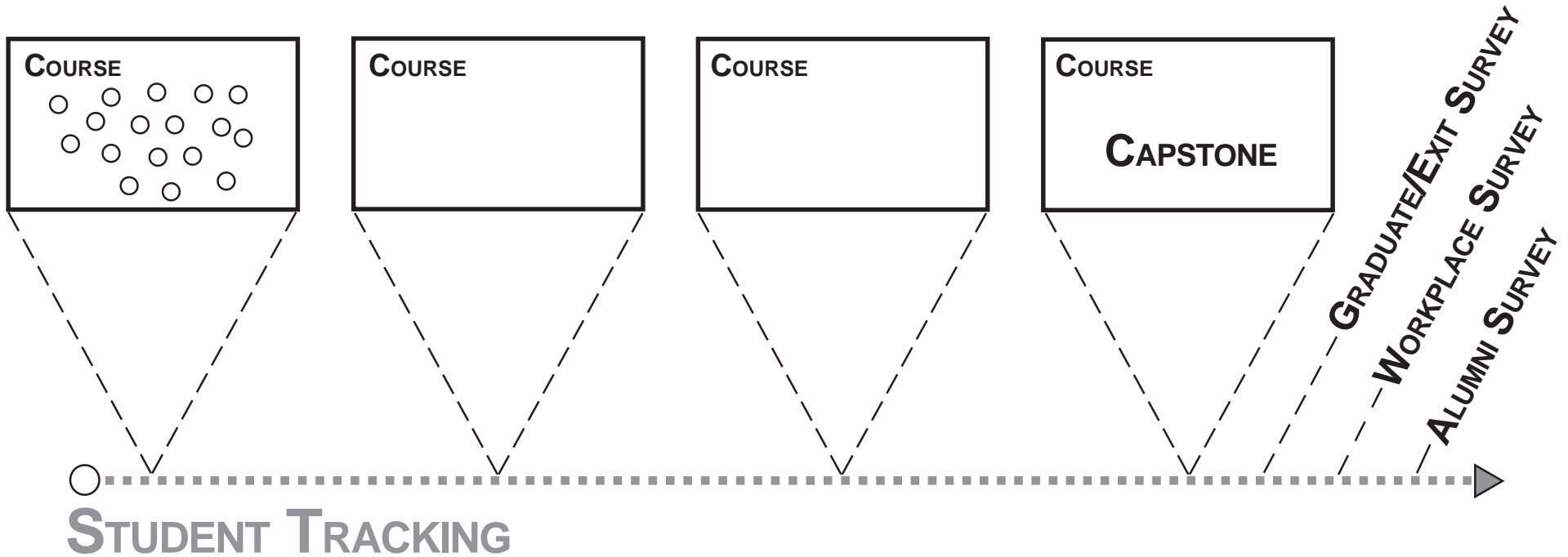
EA links assessment with content.

The assessment genuinely reflects the course of study.
The assessment is aligned with the course objectives.
The assessment is similarly aligned with program purposes.

EA is *not* faculty evaluation.

Traditional course evaluation:
evaluation of the teacher

MISS A

Pederson's research on long-term student outcomes (1978)

COURSE

COURSE

COURSE

COURSE

CAPSTONE

GRADUATE/EXIT SURVEY

WORKPLACE SURVEY

ALUMNI SURVEY

STUDENT TRACKING

PROGRAM EVALUATION
DISCIPLINE ACCREDITATION / CORE COMPETENCIES / THECB / SACS
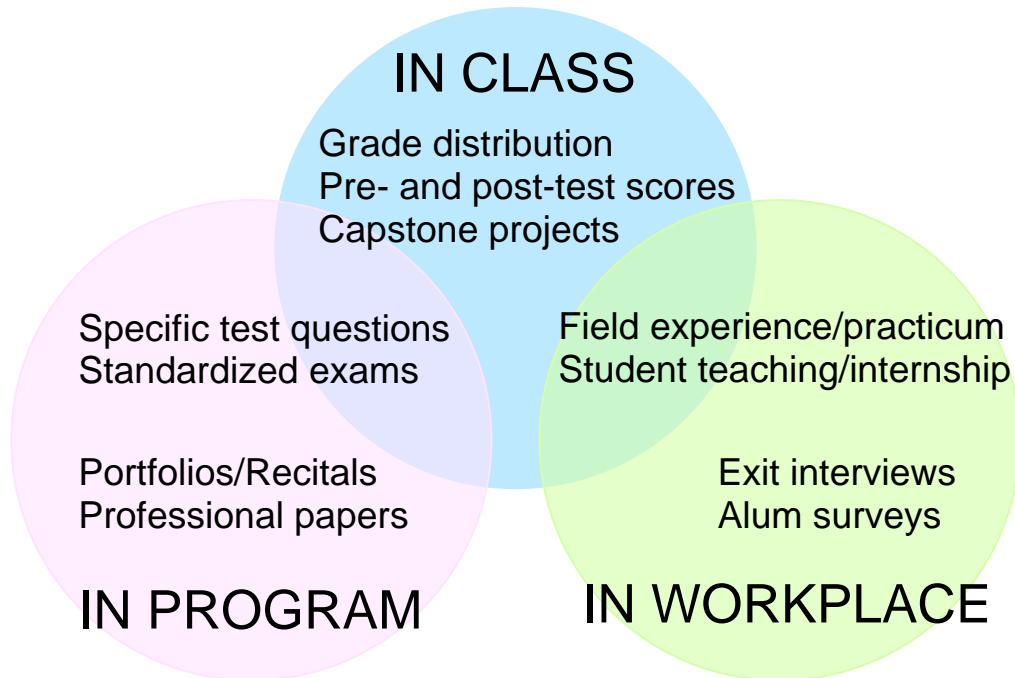
INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
THECB / SACS / QEP

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Pieces of the Process: Multi-method Approach

IN CLASS
Grade distribution
Pre- and post-test scores
Capstone projects

Specific test questions
Standardized exams

Field experience/practicum
Student teaching/internship

Portfolios/Recitals
Professional papers

Exit interviews
Alum surveys

IN PROGRAM

IN WORKPLACE

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Advantages

EA provides a framework for discussion of programs.

EA generates reliable data through

 … agreed upon processes within the program;
 … review by instructors, which is often the best way;
 … review by assessing team, when that's the best way.

EA is criterion-referenced rather than norm-referenced.

 How well did student X meet objectives?
 rather than...
 How well did student X do compared to the other students?

EA reveals patterns of strengths and weaknesses

 Is there an area that is consistently weak?
 By the same token…
 Is there an area that is consistently strong?

How to Begin the Framework

Review well-written examples both within and outside your discipline.

Look for format, language, dimensions that suit your style and standards.

Draft an initial framework and put it before your colleagues.

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Overview of Processes

Identify objectives

Inventory existing assignments (most efficient method)

Identify products that reflect mastery of objectives

Develop rubric or modify a published one

Collect products and mask identity if shared beyond the instructor

Identify assessor or team (faculty, students, professionals, alumni)

Pilot rubric (be open to revisions later, not just in pilot effort)

Calibrate: reach consensus on ratings, test for inter-rater reliability

Review products (ideal = all students' work)

Analyze results

Summarize findings and conclusions; note implications for changes in:

> curriculum
>
> pedagogy
>
> student support
>
> faculty support
>
> related staff functions

Make changes as needed

Re-assess as needed

Assessment produces feedback that drives program improvement.

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What Does Exemplary Look Like?

Rubric = efficient means to describe exemplary and less than exemplary

Exemplary	Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Exemplary	Accomplished	Developing	Beginning
Excellent	Good	Promising	Needs Work
Distinguished	Proficient	Apprentice	Novice
Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Unacceptable
Advanced	Proficient	Novice	Unable
3 – Exemplary	2 – Proficient	1 - Unacceptable	
Outstanding|AboveAcceptable|Acceptable|BelowAcceptable|Incomplete			
A **B** **C** **D** **F**			

Would it matter if the order were reversed?
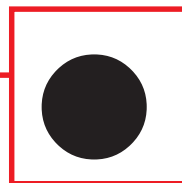What language fits your discipline? What language do you already use?

Criteria for Criteria

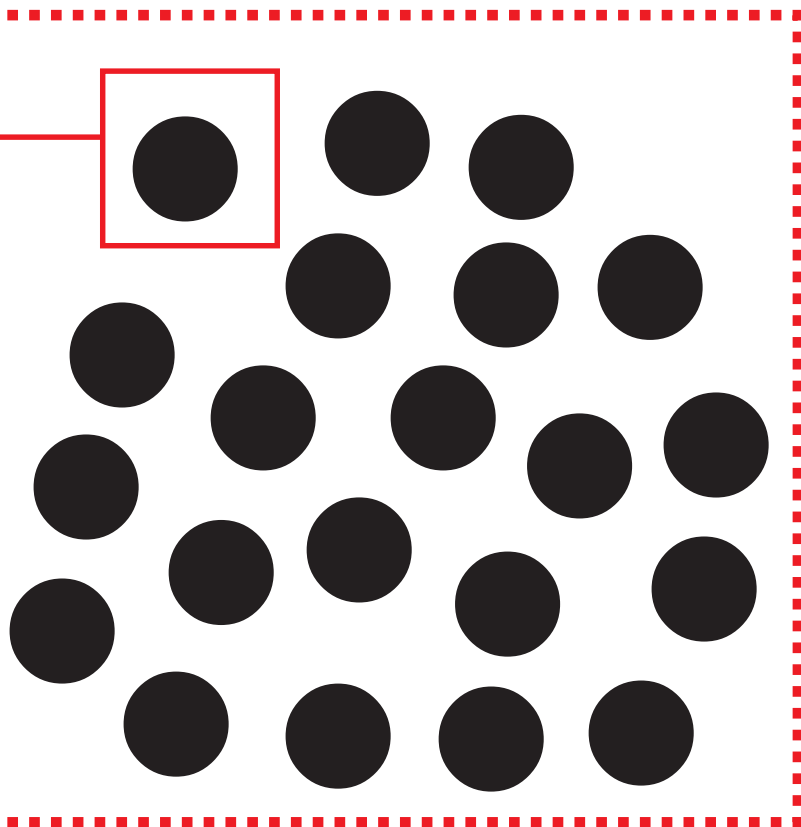   content   clear, focused, precise
     process   developmentally appropriate
     performance   calibrated

Consider rubric development a process.

Grading

Assessing

Return to Main Chart