

Hope College

Assessment Basics

January 5, 2024

Kathy S. Kremer, PhD

Sr. Director of Assessment and Accreditation

kremerk@hope.edu

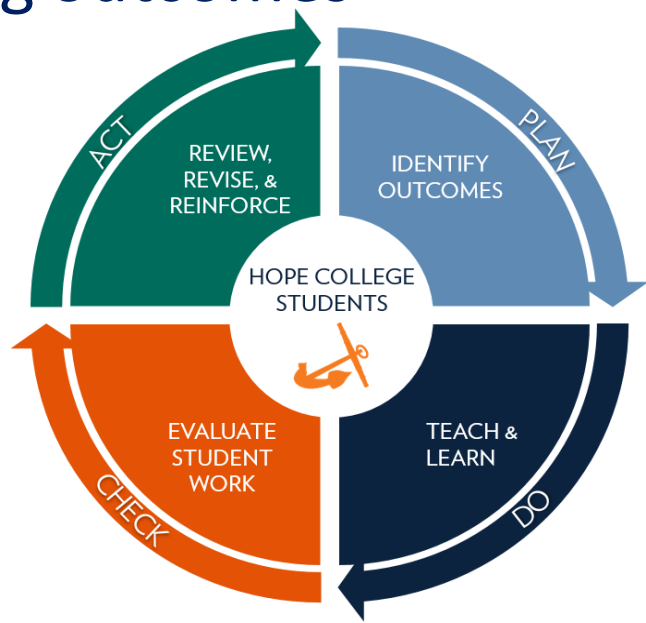
Overview:

- Assessment of student learning at Hope College
- Why we assess and the “Plan, Do, Check, Act” cycle
 - Student learning outcomes
 - Mapping student learning outcomes
 - Assessment methods and measures
 - Assessment timelines and targets
 - Using assessment results to improve student learning
- Assessment reporting (Hope College Assessment Portal & Assessment Reports folder)

**Elements of an
Assessment Plan**

Assessment of student learning at Hope

Assessment: An ongoing, systematic, process that begins with developing student learning outcomes, followed by the collection, review, and use of information about those outcomes for the purpose of improving student learning. At Hope, we assess program, general education, and common learning outcomes

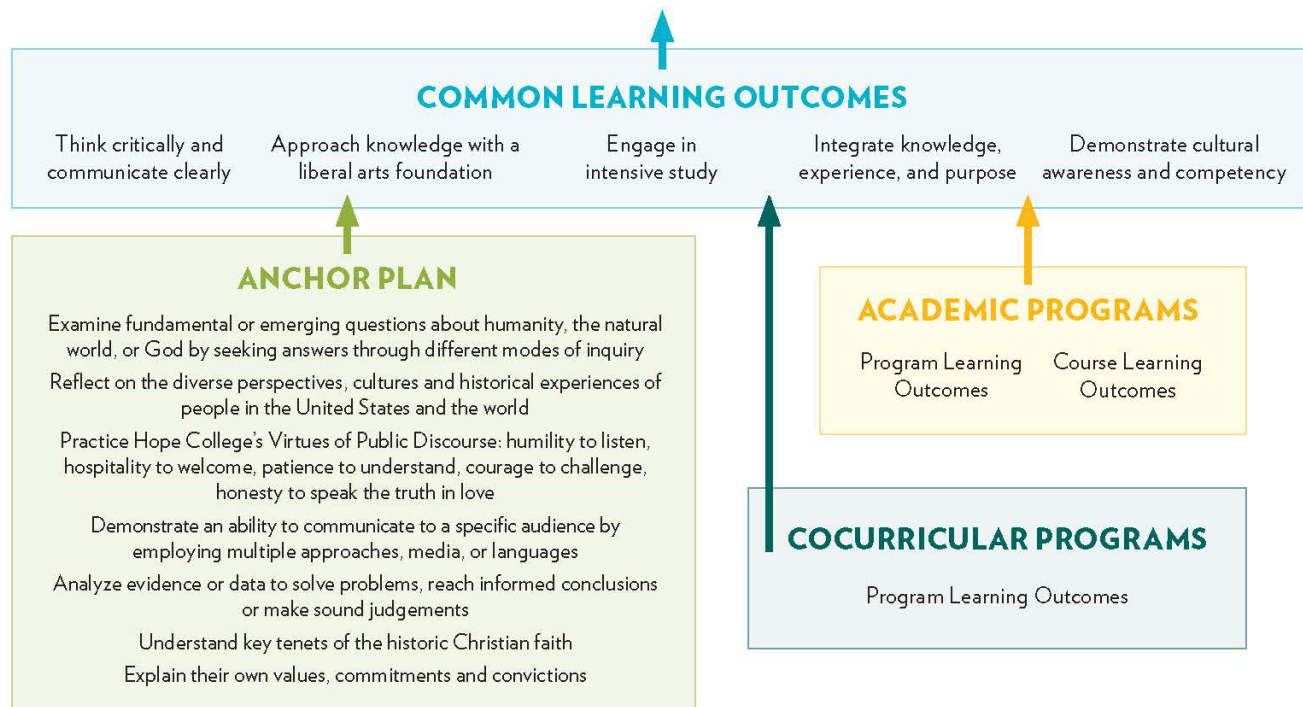


hope.edu/assessment



STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The mission of Hope College is to educate students for lives of leadership and service in a global society through academic and cocurricular programs of recognized excellence in the liberal arts and in the context of the historic Christian faith.



Program learning (curricular and cocurricular) along with the general education (Anchor Plan) help Hope College students achieve the common learning outcomes and the goals stated in our mission



Why we assess

(hint: it's all about the students)

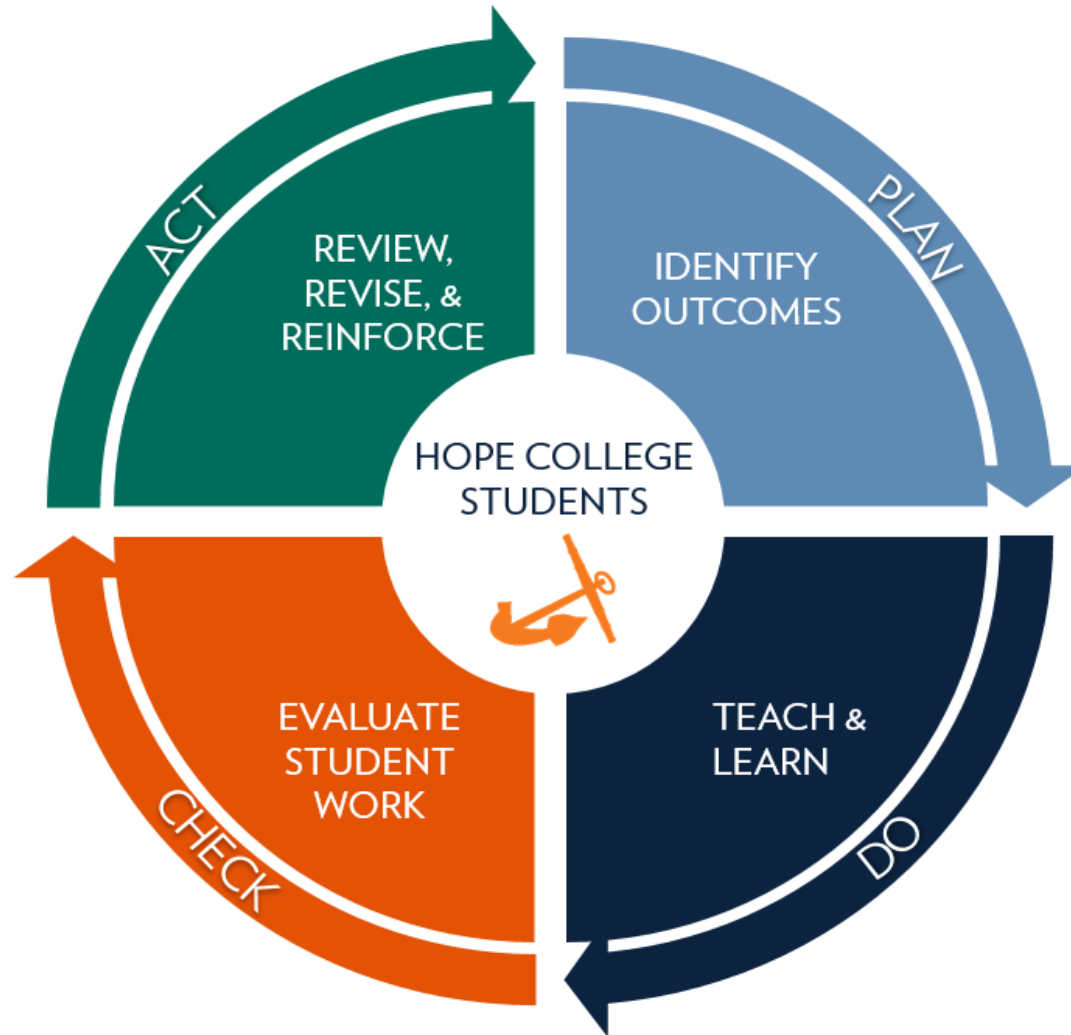
To demonstrate that we provide the education we say we are providing: *are Hope students meeting the outcomes we say they will reach?*

To identify areas for improvement and make changes in what **we** provide to our students: *not to place the responsibility on our students.*

To ensure equity in student progress toward our stated learning outcomes: *are some groups of students reaching our outcomes while some groups are not?*

We also provide evidence to external organizations that we are assessing student learning & using results, *but this is **not** why we assess*

Assessment for learning: Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle



What are student learning outcomes?

Student learning outcomes are statements that identify what students will know and do when they participate in or complete a course, program, or degree

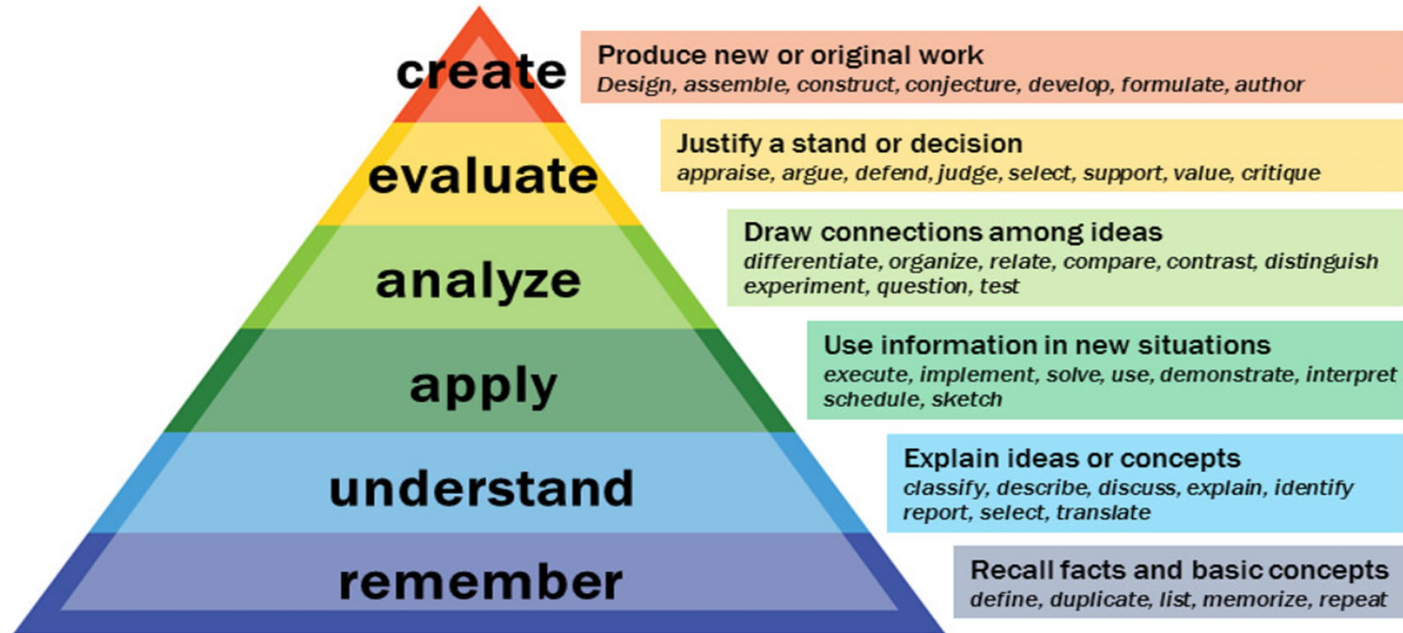
<who> will <action verb> <something> <in what context>”

Examples:

Sociology graduates will analyze social issues with sociological theory
<who> <action verb><something> <in what context>

Students completing a writing consultation will apply what they learned in future assignments
<who> <action verb> <something> <in what context>

Bloom's Taxonomy



Active verbs developed based on Bloom's Taxonomy

Knowledge	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
define	explain	solve	analyze	reframe	design
identify	describe	apply	compare	criticize	compose
describe	interpret	illustrate	classify	evaluate	create
label	paraphrase	modify	contrast	order	plan
list	summarize	use	distinguish	appraise	combine
name	classify	calculate	infer	judge	formulate
state	compare	change	separate	support	invent
match	differentiate	choose	explain	compare	hypothesize
recognize	discuss	demonstrate	select	decide	substitute
select	distinguish	discover	categorize	discriminate	write
examine	extend	experiment	connect	recommend	compile
locate	predict	relate	differentiate	summarize	construct
memorize	associate	show	discriminate	assess	develop
quote	contrast	sketch	divide	choose	generalize
recall	convert	complete	order	convince	integrate
reproduce	demonstrate	construct	point out	defend	modify
tabulate	estimate	dramatize	prioritize	estimate	organize
tell	express	interpret	subdivide	find errors	prepare
copy	Identify	Manipulate	survey	grade	produce
discover	indicate	Paint	advertise	measure	rearrange
duplicate	Infer	Prepare	appraise	predict	rewrite
enumerate	relate	produce	Break down	rank	role-play



Common problems with outcomes

Problem #1: too many variables (the “and” problem)

Geography students will demonstrate an ability to design and conduct experiments, as well as to analyze and interpret data and prepare research reports

Problem #2: not directly measurable

Health Dynamics students will appreciate exercise as a stress reduction tool

Problem #3: not focused on student learning

Hope students will participate in off-campus study before they graduate

Problem #3: the level of learning is unclear (remember Bloom’s Taxonomy?)

Aviation Science students will understand and apply the principles of the scientific method

Mapping courses and activities to outcomes

Students attain learning outcomes by participating in or completing curricular and cocurricular activities where knowledge, skills, or behaviors are learned (Bloom's, anyone?)

Introductory Student has introductory understanding of the knowledge, skills, or behaviors needed to meet the outcome

Reinforced Student understanding and application of the knowledge, skills, or behaviors are reinforced as the student grows toward meeting the outcome

Mastery Students knowledge, skills, or behaviors enable them to meet the outcome,

Mapping curricular program outcomes

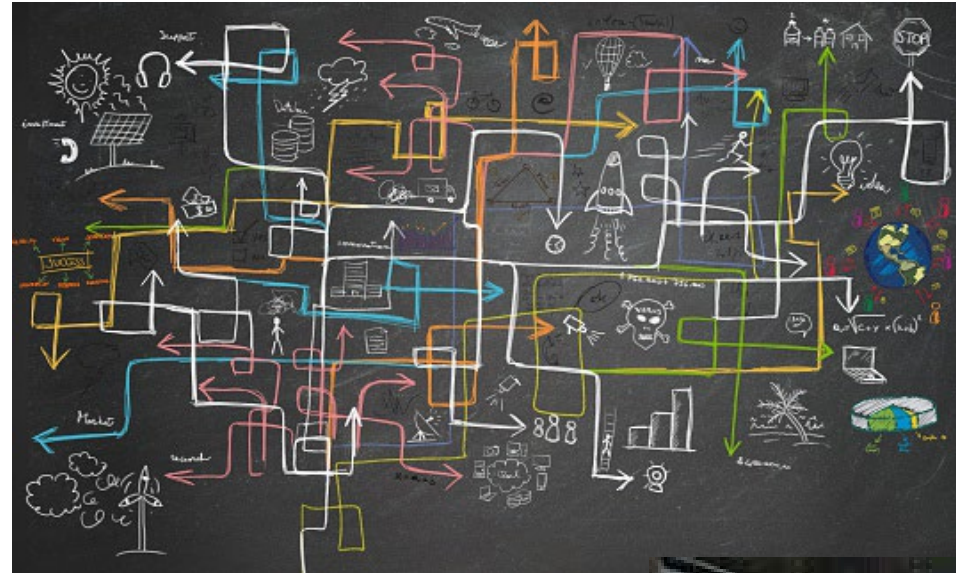
Program Learning Outcomes Knowledge, skill, or behavior students can demonstrate upon program completion		Courses Mapped to Outcomes									
		Comm 101	Comm 151	Comm 140	Comm 280	Comm 260	Comm 295	Comm 399	Comm 460	Comm 463	Comm 470
1	Students will apply major theories used within the communication discipline.	I	I	I	R	R	R		M	M	M
2	Students will use communication research methods to engage in communication inquiry.	I			R	R	R		R		M
3	Students will communicate effectively in professional contexts.		I	I	R		R	M	R	R	R

Mapping cocurricular program outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes Knowledge, skill, or behavior students can demonstrate upon program participation or completion		Activities Mapped to Outcomes			
		Organization leader September training	Monthly meetings of organization leaders		
1	The primary student leader of a student group will express confidence in their ability to lead a group during their time in office	I	R		
2	The primary student leader of a student group will use new leadership skills gained during their time in office	I	R		

Assessment methods & measures

Keeping assessment
manageable
makes it
sustainable



Methods: formative and summative assessment

Formative Assessment Approach

Using assessment throughout a course, activity, or program to improve student attainment of learning outcomes.

Summative Assessment Approach

Using assessment as a final measure of students' attainment of learning outcomes, usually at the end of a course, activity, academic program or degree.

Methods: direct and indirect assessment

Direct Assessment

Using measures that require students to actually display or demonstrate the extent of their learning

- Embedded assessments
- Major field tests
- Applying rubrics to artifacts

Indirect Assessment

Collecting student reflections or self-assessment about student learning without actual demonstrating their knowledge, skills, or behaviors

- Graduate surveys
- Senior surveys
- NSSE

Measures: stand-alone and embedded measures

Stand-alone Assessment

Determining student learning by administering a new assignment or survey that is not already completed in their program courses or activities

- Senior surveys
- Focus groups and interviews
- A common assignment

Embedded Assessment

Determining student learning using artifacts already completed in their program courses or activities

- Papers/powerpoints/presentations
- Research Projects
- Reflections
- Essays
- Institutional surveys

What's a rubric and do I need to use one?

- A rubric is a tool used for scoring or evaluating work that specifies the criteria used to differentiate levels of performance.
 - The number of levels of performance ranges from 3-6, although 4 is most typical
 - A rubric can be specific to a course or program, or applied to different types of student work from multiple disciplines
- Rubrics can be simple or complex
 - Analytic rubrics measure each component of an SLO separately
 - Holistic rubrics assign one score to the SLO
 - Examples of rubrics:
 - AAC&U Value Rubrics
 - Professional organization and program accrediting bodies' rubrics
 - Rubrics used at other institutions
 - Developing your own rubric based in your program outcomes

Example: Holistic, Summative Assessment Rubric	1=Very early or no indication of development	2=200-level understanding	3=Solid work	4=Exceeds expectations
<p>Outcome 1: Paper shows the use of fundamental skills needed for reading philosophical texts and for thinking and interacting with others philosophically. In brief: fundamental philosophical skills</p>				
<p>Outcome 3: Paper shows that the student has gained an understanding of the techniques and pursuits characteristic of representative types of philosophical undertaking and applies and integrates student’s accumulated philosophical expertise at the advanced undergraduate level. In brief: development of philosophical acumen</p>				
<p>Outcome 5: Paper demonstrates how the study of philosophy connects with the real-world concerns of the student’s life. In brief: communication and application of philosophical understanding</p>				

Example: Analytic Rubric (from AAC&U Value Rubric for Critical Thinking)	Capstone 4	3	2	Benchmark 1
Explanation of issues	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description.
Evidence Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/ evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/ evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/ evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/ evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.
Influence of context and assumptions	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. Maybe more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.

Assessment timelines

Timelines: How often do I need to assess each outcome?

- You do not need to assess every outcome every year
- However, small programs may need to collect assessment data every year to have a large enough sample to evaluate every 2-3 years
- Large programs can select a sample rather than all students' measures each year
- If students are not meeting your outcome, you may need to assess it more frequently
- Assessment is a cycle – like trips to Paris, once is not enough!



Assessment targets

Targets: What % of students attain the outcome

- How do we determine our target?
 - Past student performance: you may need one round of assessment to identify a target if using a new measure
 - National or organizational benchmarks
- Targets can change over time
- Assessment data informs whether or not our students attained the outcome – targets and outcomes need to be aligned



Program Learning Outcomes Knowledge, skill, or behavior students can demonstrate upon program completion	Measurement Tool	Timeline/Frequency of Assessment	Target	Review
¹ Students will proficiently present their qualifications to a prospective employer.	Post-career expo survey of participating employers	At each career fair with results combined by the Director and reviewed annually	Participating employers report that 90% of students who completed a resume can proficiently present their qualifications to a prospective employer	Career Advisors review assessment results annually in June and report findings and recommendations to the full center staff who determine responsibility for implementing
² Students will design research in Geography	Analytic rubric applied by department faculty to all Senior Geography research projects presented at the Celebration of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity	Faculty assessments are collected each Spring in a Google spreadsheet and analyzed together by the chair in even years	90% of students are proficient (score of 3) for each component of the rubric	In even years, the faculty reviews aggregate results and at the final department meeting of the year, discusses and makes recommendations for improvement and assigns responsibility for implementing

To improve student learning, move from

**Data
Collection**



**Data
Use**

Reviewing assessment results

~~“The department will review assessment results and decide if additional action is needed”~~

1. Be specific regarding when results will be reviewed

“The department will review assessment results from the previous year at the first department meeting in September”

2. Identify who is responsible

“The department chair will compile assessment results and provide to all department faculty”

3. Identify the steps to improving student learning

“Faculty members will identify action suggested by the assessment results, a timeline, and assign individuals responsible for implementation”

4. Set a date for reviewing implementation

“The department will review progress on implementing the identified actions at their first department meeting in January”

Program Learning Outcomes Knowledge, skill, or behavior students can demonstrate upon program completion	Measurement Tool	Timeline/Frequency of Assessment	Target	Review
1 Students will proficiently present their qualifications to a prospective employer.	Post-career expo survey of participating employers	At each career fair with results combined by the Director and reviewed annually	Participating employers report that 90% of students who completed a resume can proficiently present their qualifications to a prospective employer	Career Advisors review assessment results annually in June and report findings and recommendations to the full center staff who determine responsibility for implementing
2 Students will design research in Geography	Analytic rubric applied by department faculty to all Senior Geography research projects presented at the Celebration of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity	Faculty assessments are collected each Spring in a Google spreadsheet and analyzed together by the chair in even years	90% of students are proficient (score of 3) for each component of the rubric	In even years, the faculty reviews aggregate results and at the final department meeting of the year, discusses and makes recommendations for improvement and assigns responsibility for implementing

Reporting assessment at Hope

- Annual reports due October 1 for the previous academic year for all curricular and cocurricular program assesment
- Only report on the assessments for which you've completed all steps in the cycle
- Reports are submitted in the assessment portal
- Submitted reports can be accessed in the Hope College Assessment Reports google folder

ASSESSMENT PORTAL

PROGRAM
ASSESSMENT
PORTAL

CO-CURRICULAR
ASSESSMENT
PORTAL

COMMON
OUTCOMES
ASSESSMENT
PORTAL

GENERAL
EDUCATION
ASSESSMENT
PORTAL

COMPLETED ASSESSMENT REPORTS

[HOPE COLLEGE ASSESSMENT REPORTS →](#)

**Some additional
information . . .**

Assessment of program learning or program evaluation?

Important but different practices in higher education

Assessment of Learning identifies:

- knowledge, skills, & behaviors that students demonstrate after participating in or completing the program or activity
- the standards for performance that we want Hope students to attain

Program Evaluation identifies:

- usage and participant numbers
- quality of activities provided
- satisfaction
- credentialing and staff training
- resources allocated to the program

Activities or outcomes?

Student Activity



Students will learn about servant leadership
Students will learn research methods of their discipline

Staff/Faculty Activity



Students will receive servant leadership training
Students will complete upper division lab courses

Learning Outcome



Students will illustrate servant leadership
Students will design research in the discipline

SLOs identify what students can do after completing the program or activity, not what they will do during the activity or what will be provided to them

Cocurricular and extracurricular

Cocurricular Learning

Learning activities, programs, and experiences that reinforce the institution's mission and values and complement the formal curriculum – *Source: Higher Learning Commission* (library, writing center, student government, career services, health & personal wellness, study abroad, research, student newspaper)

The cocurriculum works in partnership with the curriculum to support student attainment of institutional outcomes, is designed to promote student learning or development, and provides students with opportunities to apply their learning in different ways

Extracurricular Activities

Activities that grow efficacy but are not specifically designed to support student learning and success in the curriculum (athletics, student social clubs, intramural activities)

