Heritage University

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Assessment Handbook

2010-2011

A Compendium of Philosophy, Policy and Practice

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I. Introduction

A. Purpose of Assessment at Heritage University

Assessment of learning at Heritage University exists to create an environment that helps all students grow, develop, and succeed in their academic program and prepares them for success in their desired profession and/or further education.

Thus, assessment is a cycle of program planning used to

1. Determine the level of skills and knowledge each student brings to Heritage University (diagnostic assessment);

2. Measure each student's acquisition of the skills, competence, and knowledge associated with each major and with the general University Goals and Core Themes adopted by the University (equity and access, academic excellence, community engagement, and sustainability);

3. Provide information useful for improving courses, curricula, and other learning experiences so that they result in better student learning (formative assessment);

4. Ascertain before granting a degree, that each student has achieved the outcomes expected of a Heritage graduate (summative assessment);

5. Determine the effectiveness of individual teaching faculty members and inform each one's professional development plan (faculty assessment); and

6. Provide data to use in program review (program assessment), to meet accreditation requirements, and to share with our publics.

To achieve these goals, the University implements the educational assessment plan described in this Handbook, in a consistent manner, yet tailored meaningfully to fit each program. Assessment goals, objectives, and strategies reflect the University's mission and core themes.

> **Mission of Heritage University:**
> *To provide quality, accessible higher education to multicultural populations which have been educationally isolated. Within its liberal arts curriculum, Heritage offers strong professional and career-oriented programs designed to enrich the quality of life for students and their communities.*

B. Purpose & Organization of This Handbook

This handbook serves as a guide and reference for faculty, staff, and administrators who—together with the students—are responsible for the educational success for which Heritage prides itself.

The central purpose of this Assessment Handbook, therefore, is to provide expectations and guidance for Heritage faculty, staff, and administrators, to help them design and implement assessments that are useful and meaningful for our programs.

This Handbook is organized into five sections.

> Section I presents our assessment philosophy and policy, describes responsibilities, and briefly summarizes the importance of assessment to accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

> Section II provides an overview of assessment and explains the five phases of the assessment cycle, from the formulation of outcome goals, through the design of assessment methods and measures, to evidence collection, analysis, use, and feedback and improvement.

> Section III discusses the four different types of assessment in use at Heritage: diagnostic, formative, summative, and comparative.

> Section IV describes several levels of assessment, from student performance, to program assessment and faculty evaluation.

> Section V summarizes Heritage University's expectations regarding documentation and reporting of assessment results.

> Appendices and end matter include a glossary, some references and information resources, and several appendices presenting various useful Heritage assessment-related forms, worksheets, and guidelines.

C. Heritage University's Assessment Philosophy

Assessment at Heritage is performance-based rather than compliance-based. Assessment has been considered important since Heritage University opened its doors as Heritage College in 1982 with a small student body in which most students were non-traditional in background or educational experience. Its implementation has been motivated by the goal of measuring and improving performance in all important areas, rather than merely complying with externally set requirements.

The University uses the metaphor that Heritage has a wide entrance gate and a narrow exit gate. This implies that while admission is granted to a broad spectrum of individuals, earning a degree or certificate requires demonstrating that learning outcomes and competencies have actually been achieved, commensurate with the relevant outcome goals. How those competencies are demonstrated with concrete evidence has been a continuous focus of reflection and source of instructional innovation and improvement since the institution's founding.

The reliance of most colleges on standardized paper and pencil tests for admissions, and for some exit criteria, made it difficult initially for Heritage to be respected for maintaining adequate "standards" without assessing in the same manner. This dilemma created a challenge for the new institution. But from the beginning, Heritage has resisted the use of such high stakes testing,

because of concerns about social justice. The literature is replete with evidence of bias (gender, race, culture, class, etc.), which would be devastating to the talented, but academically untraditional population Heritage serves.

Instead Heritage University relies on a minimal requirements policy for entrance to its undergraduate programs. Either a high school diploma or GED gains entrance at the undergraduate level. A baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution is required for graduate admission, with appropriate additional prerequisites for entry into each graduate program.

Heritage recognizes that the true measure of the effectiveness of an institution of higher education is the <u>value added</u> for each student between entrance and exit. This is the basis for the great importance placed on higher education by its students and their families and communities. Heritage thus focuses on creating value for every individual student.

This approach is purposefully personalized, individualized, and respectful to celebrate and nurture each student's cultural and intellectual heritage. Whatever qualifications and skills a student brings to Heritage, the University expects him or her to acquire the expected knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competence before graduating.

Formal and informal assessments, integrated seamlessly into learning experiences, help faculty track student progress and adapt teaching to optimize learning. When the University awards a degree or certificate, it is intentionally signifying that the student has mastered the University's goals and acquired strong qualifications for employment or graduate education related to the major program. Faculty involvement in the design and implementation of assessment provides a level of authenticity, ownership, and rigor that assures the validity and reliability of the assessment results.

Heritage has long relied on gate-opening diagnostic assessments to guide course placement and advising for each entering student, particularly in the foundational skills of reading, writing, and mathematics, which are essential prerequisites for academic and professional success. Coursework, tutoring, interaction with faculty and peers, service-learning projects, and internships create a web of educational experiences through which students achieve the general education goals and program outcome goals. Heritage's approach to assessment has long utilized multiple measures over a period of time to demonstrate success in the programs. Students have a clear understanding of the values and outcomes addressed in their programs and are frequently shown paths for success with models from previously successful students.

In the long run, the most important outcome of an excellent, embedded assessment program across the university can be found in the lives of students. Their knowledge, skills, and growth toward full human development will reflect the educational goals of their university. What they have learned from on-going assessment will be reflected in their ability and commitment to engage in a life-long self-assessment process. They will thoughtfully choose goals. They will skillfully weigh the pathways to those goals. They will seriously undertake the chosen pathway. They will regularly evaluate progress toward goals and make mid-course corrections as needed. And finally they will reflectively celebrate and share the goals achieved.

D. Policy on Student Assessment at Heritage University

1. It is the policy of Heritage University that assessment is an integral part of its academic programs.

2. All programs and courses shall have defined, measurable learning outcomes for their students. These outcomes, which are keys to successful completion of the course or program in question, are defined in the context of the general learning outcomes established for the university as a whole.

3. The university-wide general education goals clarify expectations that each graduate from the institution shall meet. They include competencies knowledge of the physical world and of human cultures, intellectual and practical skills, personal and social responsibility, integrative and applied learning

4. For individual courses in each subject area, the program faculty, under the leadership of the chair, define the course-specific content and outcomes which support the outcomes established by the program and University goals Heritage's general education goals.

5. Heritage faculty and staff use a broad variety of assessment tools throughout each student's educational experience to collect concrete evidence of learning by the student.

6. The individual faculty member designs and implements appropriate assessments of student learning within the conduct of each course.

    Each program is expected to obtain and maintain evidence demonstrating that each recipient of a degree or certificate has acquired the necessary knowledge and skills related to the program's outcome goals.

7. Each department/program has adopted an assessment plan, which includes among its assessments a culminating 'capstone' assessment, which is performance based. This criterion-referenced capstone assessment provides some of the concrete evidence used to determine whether a student has or has not acquired the necessary knowledge and skills related to the program's defined outcomes to qualify for the degree or certificate. See Section II.

E. Assessment Responsibilities

All persons at Heritage University are responsible for incorporating assessment as an integral part of their activities and work.

Students

Each student is responsible for her or his learning, for having meaningful educational goals, and for progressing toward those goals purposefully while at Heritage. In addition, students should become increasingly skilled at objectively assessing the quality of their own work—part of the independence expected of graduates.

Individual Faculty

Each individual faculty member is responsible for preparing a syllabus for each course taught, identifying in that syllabus the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the course, along with appropriate methods for assessing student progress and understanding. Where a standard syllabus exists for a particular course, the individual faculty member adapts the required elements into his or her own syllabus prepared specifically for the term being taught.

Faculty should address not only content-knowledge goals, but also how the course contributes to student growth in skills and dispositional dimensions emphasized in the Heritage University Goals and also those relevant to the discipline or profession.

It is important for faculty members to communicate the learning goals, objectives, and assessment methods to students, early and often.

Finally, faculty members are responsible for keeping records related to their assessment of student performance in their courses.

Department and Program Chairs

Each department and program chair is responsible to see that the outcomes expected of its graduates have been defined and communicated to both faculty and students. These outcomes are established in consultation with the faculty teaching in the program and fit within the context of Heritage University's mission, the University's General Education Goals for student learning, and the national or global professional expectations of the discipline(s).

Each department and program also determines how it will assess student achievement of the outcomes and program effectiveness through development of an Assessment Plan. Program and/or department faculty are expected to participate in the definition and occasional revision of program outcomes and design and selection of assessment methods contained in the plan, to ensure these methods have the necessary authenticity, ownership, and rigor. In addition, each chair or program director has the responsibility to complete an Annual Assessment Report responding to the following questions:

1. Which features of your program should be continued and why?

2. What might be modified or discontinued, on the basis of the evidence you gathered about student learning?

3. What other actions, if any, might your department take in response to your outcome assessment findings?

4. What program changes have you made as a result of your assessment data?

5. As a result of your assessment findings, what practical support would be helpful to improve our student services planning and practices?

In the case of programs offering degrees or certificates accredited by an external organization, the program's outcomes and assessment methods must align with the expectations and requirements of the accrediting or approval agency.

Deans

The Dean of each College is responsible for assuring that the programs in the College implement rigorous outcome goals, appropriate assessment, consistent record keeping, and use assessment results in a meaningful way to improve program offerings and student learning.

Vice President for Academic Affairs

The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) is responsible for overseeing academic assessment, for preparing annual performance reports summarizing academic assessment results, and for maintaining and updating this Assessment Handbook.

Record-Keeping Responsibilities – All Levels

Record-keeping and reporting responsibilities parallel the assessment responsibilities. Thus, faculty members are responsible for assessment record-keeping for their courses, and programs are responsible for record-keeping regarding graduation qualifications for their majors. Department Chairs and Deans are responsible for providing assessment data and reports needed for the annual summary assessment report.

F. Assessment and Accreditation:

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) is the regional accreditation authority for Heritage. It is one of the seven regional commissions which together cover all fifty states and U.S. territories. The NWCCU has formulated standards and related policies against which the quality and effectiveness of an institution are measured.

Standard Four of the NWCCU Accreditation Standards (2010) addresses educational program ~~and~~ effectiveness and improvement.

Standard Four – Effectiveness and Improvement

The institution collects data related to clearly-defined indicators of achievement, analyzes those data, and forms evidence-based judgments of achievements of core theme objectives. It regularly and systematically applies clearly-defined evaluation procedures to appraise the relationship of institutional planning, resources, capacity, and practices to the objectives of its core themes; and assesses the extent to which it accomplishes those objectives and achieves the goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services. It uses assessment results to effect improvement and disseminates its findings to its constituencies.

4.A Assessment

4.A.1   The institution engages in ongoing systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data—quantitative and/or qualitative, as appropriate to its indicators of achievement—as the basis for evaluating the accomplishment of its core theme objectives.

4.A.2   The institution engages in an effective system of evaluation of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered, to evaluate achievement of clearly-identified program goals or intended outcomes. Faculty have a primary role in the evaluation of educational programs and services.

4.A.3   The institution documents, through an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement, that students who complete its educational courses, programs, and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, achieve identified course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Faculty with teaching responsibilities are responsible for evaluating student achievement of clearly-identified learning outcomes.

4.A.4   The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives.

4.A.5   The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of planning, resources, capacity, practices, and assessment with respect to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of its programs or services, wherever offered and however delivered.

4.A.6   The institution regularly reviews its assessment processes to ensure they appraise authentic achievements and yield meaningful results that lead to improvement.

4.B Improvement

4.B.1   Results of core theme assessments and results of assessments of programs and services are: a) based on meaningful institutionally-identified indicators of achievement; b) used for improvement by informing planning, decision-making, and allocation of resources and capacity; and c) made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.

4.B.2   The institution uses the results of its assessment of student learning to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices that lead to enhancement of student learning achievements. Results of student learning assessments are made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.

Standard Five – Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability

Based on its definition of mission fulfillment and informed by the results of its analysis of accomplishments of its core theme objectives, the institution develops and publishes evidence-based judgments regarding fulfillment of its mission. The institution regularly monitors its internal and external environments to determine how and to what degree changing circumstances may impact its mission and its ability to fulfill that mission. It demonstrates a capability to adapt as necessary its mission, core themes, programs, and services to accommodate changing and

emerging needs, trends, and influences to ensure enduring institutional relevancy, productivity, viability, and sustainability.

5.A Mission Fulfillment

5.A.1   The institution engages in regular, systematic, participatory, self-reflective, and evidence-based assessment of its accomplishments.

5.A.2   Based on its definition of mission fulfillment, the institution uses assessment results to make determinations of quality, effectiveness, and mission fulfillment and communicates its conclusions to appropriate constituencies and the public.

II. Overview of Assessment

A. The Assessment Cycle

Assessment is part of a cyclical process used at Heritage University to optimize and improve the educational experience for all students. Assessment is used in the design and conduct of courses and programs and to verify that students are learning as a direct result of their Heritage experiences. The assessment cycle (Figure 1) has the following five stages:

1. **Define outcomes and criteria.** Define desired educational outcomes and associated performance criteria
2. **Select measures.** Evaluate and select measures that relate to the outcomes and performance criteria, decide what data are needed as evidence, and identify appropriate assessment methods
3. **Collect evidence.** Conduct the course/program and collect the evidence/data.
4. **Analyze data.** Compile, analyze, and summarize the data for use and dissemination.
5. **Feedback and improvement.** Reflect on the results, and take action as appropriate to improve the program and achievement of outcomes.
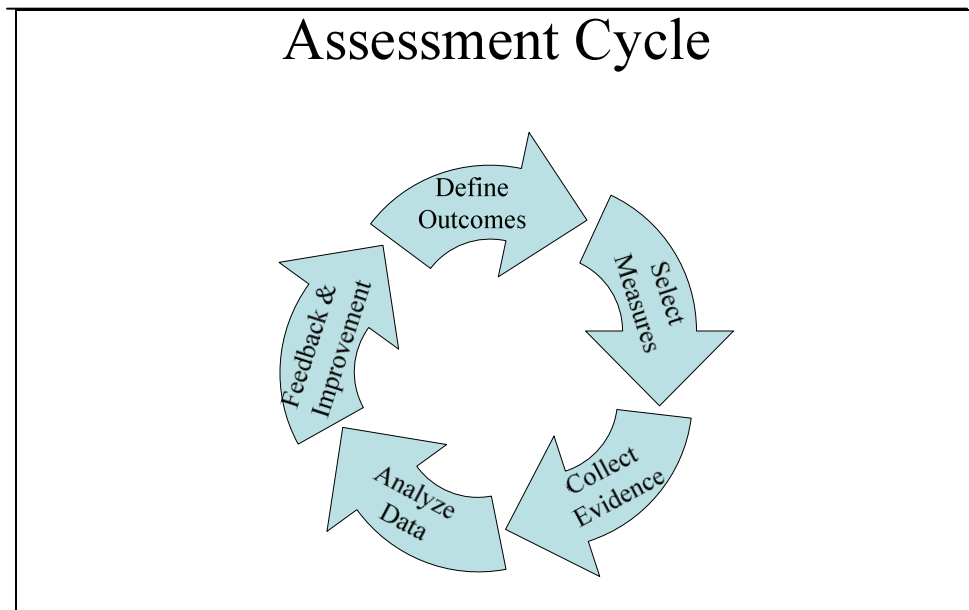

Figure 1: The Assessment Cycle

The form in Appendix B provides Heritage's worksheet for matching program outcome goals with an assessment process, and documenting how the results are obtained and used to guide improvements and inform student learning.

- **Define desired outcomes and criteria.**

What is the purpose of a Heritage education? What are the criteria graduates should satisfy? Outcome goals are goals that describe the beneficial results to students (and their communities) of pursuing higher education at Heritage and earning a degree from a particular major program. The simply stated baccalaureate degree requirement of earning 126 credits, satisfying general education requirements, taking at least 48 upper-division credits, maintaining a grade point average above 2.0, and completing coursework required for the major represents a process not an outcome.

Intended outcomes provide the reasons and design criteria for programs, courses, and degree requirements. Heritage University has established General University Goals, a set of student outcomes which are the intended result of the baccalaureate degree program for every student. These outcomes have been developed and refined throughout the institution's history with significant and essential faculty involvement. The general education outcome goals are listed in the *Heritage University Catalog* in the form of declarative statements describing specific skills and competencies graduates will have. Collectively, the courses and other educational experiences Heritage offers work purposefully to help students learn and strengthen these skills.

Within the context of these goals and Heritage's mission, each program defines specific outcome goals and performance criteria appropriate to the discipline(s) or profession(s).

Heritage expects program goals to be:

- Developed and agreed to by the program's faculty;
- Aligned with national norms and expectations in the discipline, and sufficiently rigorous to ensure that each graduate is well prepared to enter the chosen profession or continue into graduate study in the field;
- Supported by specific performance criteria that can be verified using observable evidence;
- Published and publicized for the benefit of students, employers or graduates, and others; and
- Purposefully reflected in the program's requirements for graduation, such that a student fulfilling the requirements has ample opportunity to acquire and demonstrate the desired knowledge, skills, and competencies.

Each course or other learning experience, in turn, should have specific, stated outcome goals and performance criteria that are purposefully aligned with one or more of the general education and/or program goals. These goals should be stated in the syllabus.

- **Select measures and assessment methods.**

How does Heritage know whether courses serve their purposes, programs enable the desired learning, students achieve the intended outcomes, or students gain unanticipated value or suffer unintended problems? To answer these and similar questions requires gathering and analyzing appropriate evidence or data.

After defining the outcomes, the most critical step in assessment is to figure out how you will know whether the outcomes are achieved. It can also be the most creative step. The menu of possible assessment measures, methods, and forms of evidence is virtually unlimited. Some are quantitative, others are qualitative. Appendix C lists some sample assessment methods and measures.

It is important to think carefully about assessment methods and their implementation, and to make sure the ones selected are relevant to the outcomes of interest. Every method and measure has limitations, can be misleading, or may have aspects that unintentionally disadvantage some people. Some methods are easy for the person administering the assessment; some are hard to extract data that can be collated. Some rely on information that is routinely collected and readily available. Some can be so complex that they require a trained specialist to implement or interpret. Assessments can drive behavior, so it is important to make sure that they are aligned—or at least not mis-aligned—with desired behavior and performance.

Multiple methods of assessment tend to "keep each other honest," and minimize the likelihood of a false positive or false negative. Once you have selected the set of methods and measures, it can be helpful to do an early trial with preliminary or even invented results, and then try analyzing them. As you think through the analysis, you might experience some problems with interpretation, or identify the need for additional data or different evidence.

Heritage University has decided that each program shall employ a capstone assessment, providing at least one of the methods used to ascertain that students have achieved the outcomes required for earning a baccalaureate degree in that major. (See Section IV. E., below, on Capstone experiences as part of End-of –Program Assessment.)

As part of the process of selecting measures and assessment methods, it is important to decide when and how the selected methods will be employed and how the data will be handled. With such decisions made, assessment can be built integrally into the conduct of the course, program, or other effort.

- **Conduct the program and collect the evidence.**

After all the careful design and planning, this phase should be straightforward. Planned assessments are done in the course of teaching, advising, and supervising students, conducting scholarly work, and engaging in service work to the University, the community, and the profession. This effort should not be merely a matter of turning a prescribed assessment "crank," but involve reflection and, if necessary, modification to obtain meaningful and useful evidence that demonstrate the degree to which the goals and outcomes are being achieved.

- **Compile, analyze, and use the data.**

Some assessment data and information are compiled and used in "real time," such as performance assessment of a nursing student carrying out a patient procedure.   Others are collected over time to analyze and summarize at the end of the term (or at another appropriate time). Timeliness in analyzing assessment data improves its usefulness immensely. When assessment results from one term are summarized and digested prior to the next term, the individuals involved have maximum

motivation to pay close attention to them and factor any "lessons learned" into their planning for the new term.

Some assessment data/information will be requested by the VPAA for use in annual reports summarizing Heritage's performance and outcomes. They will also be required in reports to various accrediting and approving agencies.

It can also be useful to share and disseminate some assessment summaries within and across programs.

- **Feedback and improvement.**

What went well? What went badly? Are students achieving the outcomes? Are faculty members practicing the characteristics of effective teaching? Are students returning in subsequent terms, completing degrees, and getting good jobs? Reflect on the assessment results. Consider also the changes in the external world: Are our outcomes still appropriate? Are our graduates' skills and knowledge still the ones desired by prospective employers?

Take appropriate action, which can include assigning a course grade, recommending a student for a degree, or deciding to pursue an interesting lead in scholarly work. Are informal changes or modifications warranted to improve outcomes? Does it make sense to modify outcomes or consider formal improvement efforts at the course, program, College, or University level? Note that it is humanly impossible to fulfill Heritage's important day-to-day educational responsibilities and simultaneously proceed with all the possible improvement avenues that might be suggested from assessments. The key is to prioritize, paying attention to improvement actions with large potential positive impact on outcomes and the overall achievement of Heritage's mission.

III. Types of Assessment

Four types of assessment are in active use at Heritage University: diagnostic assessment; formative assessment; summative assessment; and comparative assessment or benchmarking.

A. Diagnostic assessment

Diagnostic assessment is used to determine what proficiencies a student has upon entering the institution, a program or course. For example, Heritage tests entering undergraduate students to determine the level of their reading, writing, language, and mathematics skills. This type of information helps the University place students in initial courses appropriate to their preparation. Such diagnostic assessments are conducted at Heritage by the Director of Testing in the Academic Skills Center. Diagnostic assessment helps Heritage and its faculty optimize student placement, instructional delivery, and academic advising to benefit student learning.

Faculty members are encouraged to use formal or informal types of diagnostic assessment at the beginning of a term or at the beginning of units within a course to determine what knowledge, skills, and misconceptions the students bring to the course.

B. Formative assessment

The purpose of formative assessment, also called formative evaluation, is to improve or guide the development of a program or course or the academic growth of a student. Formative assessment seeks to answer questions related to what is working well, what is not working well, and how could the learning experience be made better for its participants.

The results of formative assessment can be used to make decisions about program or course content or delivery to improve learning. Formative assessment may be done, analyzed, and used either in "real time" or at the end of one course to make improvements the next time it is offered. Formative assessment occurs routinely in teaching whenever the faculty member probes for student understanding, and re-presents the material in a different way, if the students demonstrate misconceptions.

At Heritage, the use of a mid-term survey is another form of formative assessment. Appendix D presents a survey provided by the Heritage University Center for Multicultural Learning and Teaching. It guides faculty and students to reflect on what is working well and not so well, and make mid-course corrections to maximize learning.

Peer observation of faculty teaching for the purpose of learning effective approaches from each other is another example of formative assessment (Appendix E).

C. Summative assessment

The purpose of summative assessment is to determine whether or not desired outcomes were achieved. Is a program, course, or faculty member effective at achieving its goals? Should a program or course be continued, terminated, expanded, replicated, or modified? Have the students acquired the intended skills and knowledge? Are students getting jobs in their major field? Are they admitted into and successful in graduate school? Are employers satisfied or delighted with the skills, knowledge, and dispositional factors, such as attitudes and behaviors, of Heritage graduates? These are the questions that summative assessment seeks to answer.

From time to time, summative feedback can be obtained from alumni and their employers. Summaries of summative assessments are of interest to prospective students, community stakeholders, sponsors, prospective donors, and accreditors, because they provide information about how effective Heritage University is overall.

D. Comparative Assessment or Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a technique for comparing different organizations' approaches, processes, performance, and/or outcomes in a particular area. It allows the organizations involved seeing what the range of performance is, and for them to learn the "secrets of success" from those who are doing particularly well.

Benchmarking can be done within one University, by comparing across faculty, courses, programs, or colleges. Peer faculty observation of teaching is an informal yet powerful form of benchmarking used frequently at Heritage.

Comparative assessment can also be done between or among several institutions of higher learning. For many years, the U.S. Department of Education has collected from all U.S. institutions of higher education extensive data on enrollments, demographics, retention, degrees, faculty, financial aid, and other variables. These data are available on line (http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/), and allow anyone with computer access to compare institutions on these factors. However, few of these data points reflect learning outcomes.

Within the past few years, consortia of higher-education institutions interested in particular topics, such as student retention, graduation rates, or instructional costs, have self-organized to share and analyze quantitative data pertinent to the topic of interest. Heritage University participates in some of these benchmarking projects.

IV. Levels of Assessment and Example Assessment Methods

A. Assessment of student progress and learning at the course level

As described in its syllabus, each course is designed to help students gain specific content knowledge, skills, and/or dispositional growth collectively aimed toward achieving the University's Goals and/or the outcome goals set by the major program (see Appendix G).

Each professor asks assessment questions as students' performance and work are reviewed. Do students understand the goals, outcomes, and how their achievement will be measured? What progress is the student making? What knowledge/skills/dispositions has the student mastered? Has the student achieved the outcome goals state in the syllabus? What is the evidence that Student A has achieved the outcomes, while Student B has not?

Course-related assessments should be designed to elicit student performance that allows the professor

- to make a judgment on each student's achievement;
- to give feedback to the student on his/her progress toward or demonstration of the goals and how to do better; and
- to monitor instructional strategies and adjust them to improve student learning.

Ideally, assessment activities are integrated holistically into the curriculum, and not only provide evidence of student knowledge, skills, and dispositional factors, but also contribute to student learning.

There are many methods for assessing student performance in courses, and most courses employ several of them. Examples include quizzes, tests, mid-term and final exams, research papers, essays, homework, problem-solving, individual or group projects, tutoring sessions, practicums, presentations, laboratory work, field work, computer simulations, dramatic or musical performances, original art work, portfolios, reflective self assessment, analysis of case studies,

portfolios, contributions to class discussions, and others. Some of these assessment methods inherently provide concrete evidence, others are informal or ephemeral and do not provide data for comparison or further analysis.

Some assessment methods are quantitative or have intrinsic scales or measures. For other assessment methods that are more qualitative, professors should, as often as possible, have an explicit rubric or rating scale defining the standards for exemplary achievement, satisfactory achievement, and unsatisfactory achievement. In order to develop such a rubric or rating scale, the professor identifies what specific qualities or criteria student work must demonstrate to be judged exemplary or satisfactory. In writing the rubrics, professors try to keep in mind how these desirable qualities are related to the goals and desired outcomes of the course or program.

Assessments can be designed to measure students' memory, factual knowledge, and analytical skills. They can be designed to assess creative thinking and problem solving. Or they can emphasize practical applications and use. Depending on their learning styles and academic strengths, different students are likely to be variously successful at demonstrating their learning through various tasks that call on memory/knowledge, or creativity, or practical skills.

B. Sample Assessments for Different Learning Outcomes

Sample Ways to Develop and Assess for Different Types of Skills

Cognitive skills, such as
      Memory: Recite, recall, or test for factual knowledge.
      Analysis and synthesis: Analyze issues.
                                     Compare and contrast items.
                                     Explain a complex phenomenon

Creative learning and thinking: Create a poem or art work.
                                     Develop computer project.
                                     Invent a new approach to display the learning
                                     Explore beyond what was taught.
                                     Create an "imagine if…" scenario

Practical learning and thinking: Solve a practical problem.
                                     Create an accounting or financial report.
                                     Communicate in a foreign language.
                                     Determine whether plants will grow.
                                     Implement a plan.
                                     Demonstrate practice of a theory/ principle

C. Course-Level Assessment Concerns

In courses where student growth is the goal, it is essential to measure each student's level at the beginning of the course and at the end. This can be done, for instance, using pre- and post-tests, or pre- and post-interviews, performances, or essays.

It is important for assessments to measure the desired outcomes, and not something unrelated but easier to measure. For instance, a true-false test is not a reliable way for a student to demonstrate competence in working in multicultural teams. An essay will not showcase classroom teaching skills.

In practice, the assessment process usually should use multiple methods and multiple types of evidence. Through multiple methods, students have a chance to test their competence in a variety of techniques or settings.

Timely feedback on any assessment from the professor to the student should contribute both to student learning and to helping the students gain in their ability to judge their own progress and performance. The composite results of the instructor's assessment of a student are summarized in the student's grade for the course and should not come as a surprise to the student if appropriate assessment dialog has taken place between the student and the professor.

D. Assessment of General University Goals

University Goals are a set of learning priorities held by Heritage University for all students which *permeates all learning experiences* at both the undergraduate and graduate level. University Goals identify a broader set of academic achievements, professional and personal attitudes, dispositions and individual and community priorities embraced by the institution. All courses (both within GUCRs and within academic majors) should incorporate University Goals.

Heritage University Goals

Goal 1: **Knowledge of the Physical World and of Human Cultures**
Goal 2: **Intellectual and Practical Skills**
Goal 3: **Personal and Social Responsibility**
Goal 4: **Integrative and Applied Learning**

Source: Heritage University Catalog 2010

Heritage determines whether and to what extent each student achieves these goals and attributes in two general ways.

(1) The entire set of outcomes and attributes is assessed during the student's participation in the courses. Each course provides opportunities for students to learn and grow with respect to a significant subset of the Goals and outcomes. Collectively the entire set of outcomes is measured in these courses, though no individual course encompasses all of them.

(2) In addition, each program measures the exit performance of students prior to the awarding of a degree. These assessments focus on assessing student performance against the discipline-specific outcomes set by the major program. Thus, the role of the major department or program in measuring University goals immediately prior to graduation is not to assess each and every one of the outcomes, but to do a sample validation of the assessments included previously in courses.

E. End-of-Program Assessment and "Capstones"

What does a student, who has earned a degree from Heritage University, know in the major discipline and as a graduate of a liberal arts institution? What can the graduate actually do? What is the evidence? How does a program know a student deserves a degree?

Heritage's baccalaureate degree programs require students to do more than successfully complete the mandatory coursework. Each program has the flexibility to design its end-of-program assessment in a way that is appropriate for the discipline(s) involved and allows the students to demonstrate that they are qualified in the discipline(s) represented by the major. An end-of-program assessment is often called a "capstone."

A well designed capstone typically engages the student in demonstrating the practice of the discipline, requires the student to integrate knowledge and skills acquired throughout the educational experience, and allows the student to reflect on and assess the quality of his/her work. It is not necessary that all majors experience an identical capstone experience/assessment, merely that alternative acceptable forms be equivalently valid for demonstrating a student's successful mastery of the program's outcomes.

Heritage University expects "capstone" experiences to be:

- Integral to the program's teaching and learning process and philosophy;
- Matched to the program's learning goals and intended outcomes;
- Appropriate to the profession(s) the program prepares students for;
- Owned, designed, and administered by the program and its faculty, with each student's performance judged by at least two regular faculty members;
- Known and understood by students, and respectful of their individual cultural heritage and learning style; and
- Documented.

Capstone assessments could be accomplished in a wide variety of ways. Examples include:

- senior-level capstone course requiring presentation(s);
- independent project or thesis;
- "capstone day" in which all the students in a given program present their projects or finds for local citizens to attend;
- internship or student teaching assessed by a professional in the field;
- preparation and presentation of a scholarly report or case study;
- examination (oral, written, or by computer), either designed by the instructor or prepared by a professional or national organization;
  - profession's certification process
- portfolio reviewed according to established norms by current or visiting faculty;
- reflective "self-assessment" written or given orally by the student;
- research demonstrating competency in the research skills of the major;
- combination of any of the above.

F. Program Review

All academic programs at Heritage University benefit from regular program review. For degree programs subject to specialized accreditation by external authorities, program review is accomplished using the process and criteria defined by those authorities, with an informal, internal review done in the process of preparing for the specialized accreditation. For other programs, program review is conducted under the auspices of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA).

Heritage University's policy on academic program review requires continuous assessment of academic programs in light of the changing needs of the disciplines, the field, or occupations for which programs prepare students. All programs are reviewed at least once every five years, with attention paid to the following suggested guidelines:

1. Review and revise (if necessary) program objectives/outcomes.
2. Review entrance requirements and the method of administering them.
3. Review General University Requirements to assess if they facilitate students in this program area to acquire the General Education Goals.
4. Review course requirements to assess if they assist in achieving the program outcomes.
5. Review electives for the program to assess their role in achieving the program outcomes.
6. Review exit requirements, capstones, and the mechanisms for administering them.
7. Review the assessment of program outcomes and the use of assessment in improving the program.
8. Number of majors in program.
9. Placement rate of graduates or number of graduates attending graduate school.

For programs which do not have specialized accreditation, program review is primarily an internal review. Annually at the conclusion of the spring semester, each program prepares a summary of its assessments and outcomes for the VPAA. The VPAA in collaboration with the Dean of the respective College routinely and informally reviews academic program quality, enrollment, demographics, and average grade point average of graduates, budgets, personnel, and the program's relation to the University's mission.

At least once every five years each program undergoes a more formal program review. As part of this review, the program prepares a thorough self assessment of its performance. The person responsible for preparing the program self assessment, normally the program or department chair, is released from 25% of his/her teaching load to provide the time necessary to fulfill this responsibility for two semesters: the semester the program review is scheduled and the prior semester.

Heritage University allows considerable flexibility in the content and format of the program self assessment, to allow it to be tailored to the discipline(s) involved. It is expected that the program undergoing review will carry out the following:

- Inventory its program objectives, outcome goals, curricula, entrance requirements, graduation requirements, electives, and learning outcomes;
- Systematically review its use of assessment results to guide the improvement of the learning experiences it offers;
- Summarize its enrollments, degree production, and post-degree activities of its graduates;
- Survey some alumni and employers of alumni for feedback on the program;
- Assess the expertise, contributions, and professional development of its regular and adjunct faculty;
- Propose plans and goals for the future.

The completed self assessment is submitted through the Dean to the VPAA for their joint review about 6 weeks before the end of the semester scheduled for the program review. Later in the semester, the VPAA and Dean hold a review and feedback session with the program and/or department chair and regular faculty, to discuss results, plans, mission alignment, desired improvements and future directions. At the discretion of the VPAA and Dean and as appropriate for the program, external reviewers or other internal reviewers may be included.

G. Specialized Accreditation

 The University has four academic programs with specialized accreditation: Education, Social Work, Nursing , and Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS).

- NAACLS the accreditation body for Clinical Laboratory Science accepted a 5 year progress report in 2010 and found it satisfactory. However, the full accreditation visit is due in fall 2011. The Self Study report is due April 2011.

- The Washington State Department of Health Nursing Quality Assurance Commission approved our LPN program in 2007 for 8 years. The next approval is due in 2015.

- Council of Social Work Education reaffirmed accreditation for our Social Work program in June 2010 for 8 years. They next accreditation visit will be in 2018.

- Education programs are reviewed and approved every five years by the Washington Professional Educator Standards Board. The focus is to verify that state requirements and standards are being met for the teaching residency certification, principal's

credential, program administrator's credential, and school counselor's credential. By implication, the review also verifies that the related baccalaureate and master degree programs satisfy state requirements and standards. The most recent review was in 2009, and resulted in full approval of all programs until 2014

Other programs are encouraged to seek specialized external accreditation where appropriate and meaningful.

H. Assessment of Faculty Performance

Faculty contributions in teaching, scholarship and creativity, and service are assessed as objectively as reasonably possible, as described in the *Faculty Handbook,* for the purpose of maintaining high standards and promoting the excellence of the University. The rationale of evaluation is to encourage and commend the faculty, bring about improvement, and guide professional development.

The "Key Characteristics of Effective Faculty" in Appendix H provide the performance criteria for the assessment of faculty teaching. Among the information utilized in the annual and triennial assessments of faculty are the faculty effectiveness assessment summary along with the companion professional development plan. See Appendix I for copies of the forms used.

A. Self Evaluation

The best motivation to continued improvement lies in accurate self-appraisal. Faculty members are encouraged to use self-evaluation as a tool for professional growth. At least annually, faculty members reflect on their courses and other activities: What went well? What could have gone better? Are significant changes warranted? What professional development opportunities should be pursued?

Faculty members are encouraged to confer with their program and/or department chair, dean, or a colleague about this evaluation in order to develop as teachers and improve identified areas.

B. Peer Evaluation

Objective judgments of peers regarding the quality of teaching, scholarship, and service are a second important source of formative and summative evidence of faculty performance.

C. Student Feedback

Recognizing the value and limitations of student appraisals of faculty, Heritage encourages faculty members to use informal mid-term surveys to get formative feedback from students regarding how a course is facilitating their learning. In addition, Heritage requires use of objective questionnaires at the end of each course to elicit student judgments on a number of facets of instruction with regard to the individual teacher and in relation to supportive resources on the campus as a whole. A compilation of these forms, completed in the Vice President for Academic Affair's office to preserve students' anonymity, are given to the faculty member and to his/her Department Chair.

D. Other Assessment Information

The contributions of faculty members to the campus, to schools, industry, to state, local, and national agencies, and to the public at large provide evidence of their service performance. With respect to scholarship and creativity, evidence includes published or publicly presented work, creative work, the range and variety of intellectual interests, success in engaging students in scholarly activities outside of class, and participation or leadership in professional associations and in the editing of professional journals.

V. Documentation, Reporting, Feedback, and Improvement

Much but not all of the information and evidence used in assessment at Heritage is formal and documented. The person or office responsible for each assessment is responsible for maintaining appropriate documentation, for reporting assessment results, and for reporting how they are used in decision making and for guiding improvements in programs, teaching, and learning.

Table V.1 indicates the length of time different assessment records are to be maintained.

A. Table V.1 Assessment Recordkeeping Requirements

Type of Assessment	Responsible Person	Record-keeping Requirement
Student performance in course	Faculty member	2 terms
Course Final Grades	Registrar	Forever
End-of-Program Assessment	Program Chair	5 years
Program review	Vice President for Academic Affairs	10 years (2 full cycles)
Faculty Performance	Vice President for Academic Affairs	Forever

B. Faculty Academic Advising & Assessment

At least once each term, faculty advisors meet with students individually, to discuss with them their goals, performance, assessment results including grades, and accomplishments. From there, the advisor can move to discussing the student's plan for the next phase of the student's education (from the upcoming term through to degree completion).

C. Annual Assessment Reports

Annually after the end of the spring term, the VPAA requests summaries of academic assessment results from programs and compiles them into an annual performance report that is made available within the University, to the Board of Directors, and to the University's key stakeholders. This data is also used in preparing the annual report to the Board of Directors on progress toward the goals in the current five-year Strategic Long-Range Plan.

On a regular, periodic basis, surveys are conducted of the business community, alumni, employers of graduates, and others to get feedback from them on their perceptions of the quality, effectiveness, and areas for improvement of a Heritage education. Summaries of these surveys are submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affair's office and the President's Office. They are also maintained by the office that conducted them at least until they are superseded by an updated survey of a comparable audience.

Glossary of Terms

ASSESSMENT – A process for obtaining and analyzing information needed to monitor and judge the success of student learning, student skills and competencies, course delivery, faculty effectiveness, academic programs, and unit operations.

ALIGNMENT – Consistency and compatibility of mission, goals (desired outcomes), learning activities, pedagogical approaches, and assessment methods.

BENCHMARK – A description or example of student or institutional performance that serves as a standard of comparison for evaluation or judging quality.

CAPSTONE – A program's set of culminating experience(s), course(s), or examination(s) that enables each student to provide evidence that he/she has the knowledge, skills, and dispositional competencies expected of a degree recipient in the discipline(s). A well designed capstone typically engages students in demonstrating practice of the discipline, requires the student to integrate knowledge and skills acquired throughout the educational experience, and allows the student to reflect on and assess the quality of his/her work.

CORE THEME- A core theme is a manifestation of a fundamental aspect of institutional mission with overarching objectives that guide planning for contributing programs and services, development of capacity, application of resources to accomplish those objectives, and assessment of achievements of those objectives. Collectively, the core themes represent the institution's interpretation of its mission and translation of that interpretation into practice.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK- A defined philosophical premise which provides direction for planning, course design, pedagogical strategies, student performance expectations, faculty scholarship and service, and accountability.

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT – Evaluation of students' entrance proficiencies relating to defined skills and outcomes.

END-OF-PROGRAM ASSESSMENT – The process used by a program to assess students' achievement of the outcomes expected by its graduates. By successfully completing the end-of-program assessment, each student demonstrates that he or she is qualified for the degree and has achieved the program's outcomes. At Heritage, the end-of-program assessment includes a Capstone course or experience.

EXEMPLAR – A product of outstanding quality which serves as a model.

FIELD EXPERIENCES – Various field-based (non-classroom) educational opportunities in which students observe, tutor, instruct, work, and/or conduct research. Field experiences may occur on campus or in off-campus settings such as schools, agricultural sites, partner laboratories, businesses, community centers, nursing homes, etc.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT – Evaluation that helps guide and improves a course, program, or the educational experiences of a student.

LEARNING TARGETS OR OUTCOMES– Often referred to as learning objectives, they define academic success in terms of what we want our students to 'know' or 'be able to do'.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT – Ways to evaluate a student, course, program, or faculty member. For example, four assessment methods utilized to evaluate students in the classroom are selected response (test), essay, performance (project), and oral communication.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA – Descriptions or rubrics that specify qualities or levels of student proficiency that are used to evaluate student performance.

POSITIVE IMPACT on STUDENT LEARNING – Evidence gathered from diagnostic, formative and summative assessments which documents student growth over time.

PROGRAM REVIEW – Process used to assess each degree-granting program and assure its quality.

RUBRICS – Descriptive criteria for judging performance that indicate the qualities by which levels of performance can be differentiated and that anchor judgments about a student's degree of success. Rubrics fall into two categories, holistic and analytic.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT – Evaluation of students' proficiencies at the completion of a course or program relating to the defined course or program outcomes. Also refers to the evaluation of a course or program's effectiveness at achieving its goals or intended outcomes.

UNIVERSITY GOALS- University Goals are a set of learning priorities held by Heritage University for all students which *permeates all learning experiences* at both the undergraduate and graduate level. University Goals identify a broader set of academic achievements, professional and personal attitudes, dispositions and individual and community priorities embraced by the institution. All courses (both within GUCRs and within academic majors) should incorporate University Goals.

References and Resources

A growing body of reference and resource materials is available on assessment in higher education. This listing provides some references mentioned in the text and some useful internet resources and books on assessment. This list is not intended to be exhaustive or complete, merely helpful. These resources mention or link to many others.

American Association of Colleges and Universities, http://www.aacu-edu.org/issues/assessment/institutional_departmental.cfm

Angelo, T. & Cross, K.P. (1993) Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Astin, A. (1993). What Matters in College: Four critical years revisited. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Heritage University, College of Education and Psychology, "Constructivist Teaching Learning and Leading: Unit Assessment System" 9/23/03

Heritage University Faculty Handbook (Current edition)

Heritage University Catalog (Current edition)

Heritage University Center for Multicultural Teaching and Learning

Huba, M.E. & Freed, J.E. (2000). Learner-centered assessment on college campuses. Boston: Allyn & Bacon

Moore, Robert C., "Capstone Courses," http://users.etown.edu/m/moorerc/capstone.html

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, Accreditation Handbook, (2003 Edition). Also available on-line or to download: http://www.nwccu.org

Nicholas, J. (1995). A practitioner's handbook for institutional effectiveness and student outcomes assessment implementation. New York: Agathon Press.

Ohio Dominican University (2002), "Institutional Effectiveness Planning and Assessment Handbook"

Palomba, C. & Banta, T. (1999). Assessment essentials: Planning, implementing, and improving assessment in higher education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pascarella, E., Blaich, C., Wolniak, G., & Seifert, T. (March, 2004). "A Liberal Arts Education Changes Lives: Why Everyone Else Can and Should Have This Experience."

Pascarella, E., & Terenzini, P. (1991). How College Affects Students. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Wabash College, Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts.
http://liberalarts.wabash.edu/cila/assessment

Wiggins, G. (1994). "The Truth May Make You Free, But the Test May Keep You Imprisoned: Toward Assessment Worthy of the Liberal Arts." In J. Stark & A. Thomas (Eds.), Assessment Program Evaluation, ASHE Reader Series. Boston, MA: Pearson Custom Publishing.

Appendix A:
NWCCU Standard IV: Effectiveness and Improvement

The institution regularly and systematically collects data related to clearly defined indicators of achievement, analyzes those data, and formulates evidence-based evaluations of the achievement of core theme objectives. It demonstrates clearly defined procedures for evaluating the integration and significance of institutional planning, the allocation of resources, and the application of capacity in its activities for achieving the intended outcomes of its programs and services and for achieving its core theme objectives. The institution disseminates assessment results to its constituencies and uses those results to effect improvement.

4.A – Assessment

4.A.1   4.A.1 The institution engages in ongoing systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data—quantitative and/or qualitative, as appropriate to its indicators of achievement—as the basis for evaluating the accomplishment of its core theme objectives.

4.A.2   The institution engages in an effective system of evaluation of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered, to evaluate achievement of clearly identified program goals or intended outcomes. Faculty have a primary role in the evaluation of educational programs and services.

4.A.3   The institution documents, through an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement, that students who complete its educational courses, programs, and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, achieve identified course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Faculty with teaching responsibilities are responsible for evaluating student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.

4.A.4   The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives.

4.A.5   The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of planning, resources, capacity, practices, and assessment with respect to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of its programs or services, wherever offered and however delivered.

4.A.6   The institution regularly reviews its assessment processes to ensure they appraise authentic achievements and yield meaningful results that lead to improvement.

4.B – Improvement

4.B.1   Results of core theme assessments and results of assessments of programs and services are: a) based on meaningful institutionally identified indicators of achievement; b) used for improvement by informing planning, decision making, and allocation of resources and capacity; and c) made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.

4.B.2   The institution uses the results of its assessment of student learning to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices that lead to enhancement of student learning achievements. Results of student learning assessments are made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.

Appendix B: Program Assessment Form for Educational Programs
Heritage University

Major Degree Program: _____   **Date:**_____

Expected Outcomes in terms of Skills and Knowledge	Performance Indicator(s)	Assessment Methods and Evidence	Assessment Results	Evidence that Assessment Activities Lead to Improvement of Teaching and Learning
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

May 2005

Appendix C: Sample Assessment Methods & Factors Measured

Assessment Method	Example Assessment Factors
Course quizzes, tests, and exams	Number/points correct; problem-solving method used; sum of points for various parts of exam
Research or analytical papers	Rubric includes levels of achievement in content, logical argument, clarity, thoroughness, insightfulness
Class participation	Questions, answers, discussion, interaction with other students and with faculty, dispositional factors
Observation of assessment subject (a student, a course, a team,…)	Description of what was observed; Number or quality of incidences of certain behaviors & description of them; Listing of actions and consequences; Dispositional factors identified
Surveys or questionnaires: mid-course; end-of course; end-of-program, alumni, parent, employer	% returned Summary results of survey feedback Satisfaction level Meeting expectations
Interview	Knowledge in the interview area; integration of learning from many sources; problem-solving; critical thinking, oral expression skills
Oral presentation or examination	Knowledge; presentation skills; rapport with audience; dispositional factors; recall; thinking "on feet"; organization of material; completeness in covering subject; identifying areas for further study or research
Independent or capstone project or course	Knowledge; integration of learning from many sources; independence; creativity; dispositional factors; discipline-appropriate strategies; readiness to enter the profession or graduate school.
Licensing or certification examination	Knowledge and skills pertinent to licensing in a specific profession.
Graduate school admission and degree completion	Percent of students seeking admission who gain admission; percent of graduates continuing in graduate school; quality/prestige of the programs entered; success in graduate school
Employment in major field	Percent of graduates employed within given time; time between graduation and first such position; employers' survey results on satisfaction with employee(s)
Time to degree	Persistence; retention; attending FT each term

Writing samples	Writing skills in grammar, punctuation, usage, vocabulary; ability to express ideas
Portfolio of artistic or scholarly work	Creative/artistic competence; presentation of work; ability to articulate meaning and experience of producing the work
Internship	Workplace experience, dispositional factors, application of classroom learning; teamwork skills; handling conflict; identifying specific career goals; satisfaction of workplace supervisor with student performance
Case study	Analytical skills, integration and application of learning; problem-solving; good judgment and suggested actions appropriate to the context.
Teaching/tutoring other students	Dispositional factors; knowledge of subject; communication skills; and intercultural communication competence
Retention	University's success in keeping students enrolled until graduation
MCAT, LSAT, GRE, DCAT, NCLEX scores	Nationally normed comparison of knowledge in discipline area
Graduates' contributions to community	Dispositional factors; service learning experience; Heritage values expressed in volunteer activities of graduates
Reflective self assessment	Independence, objectivity, calibration of performance against professional norms,

Appendix D:
Form for Mid-term Feedback from Students
on Courses and Instructors

The Center for Multicultural Learning and Teaching

Suggestions for Using Our Favorite Midterm Feedback Strategy

At midterm we faculty all develop assignments to assess our students' academic progress during the first eight weeks of the semester. In addition, asking students to reflect on their own learning at this time can give us further valuable information and help us to link our course goals and student outcomes more effectively.

The strategy that we recommend and one with which many of us have had enormous success is the Mid-Course Feedback Form (enclosed).

In using this form, we usually suggest the following process:

1.   Administer the form in class. Explain that the purpose is to get feedback in order to help further your students' learning, a way of showing you care about their learning and progress in the course, and that you are flexible. (Knowing we care is important for student motivation. Making a change or two based on feedback shows our flexibility and students appreciate that.)

2.   Once you have the feedback forms, share the feedback with someone else, someone you trust and feel comfortable with, for our human tendency is to only see and dwell on the ONE out of 20 responses that is critical, and we miss all of the good and positive things students are saying about us. Identify from the feedback both <u>strengths</u> and <u>issues</u>.

3.   Finally, be sure to collate the results and give the students a report on what they said asap, preferably the next class. Summarize the themes for questions 1 and 2 (what was most helpful, and what least), tell the students one or two things you will change if possible, and read out loud virtually everything they say for 3b, which are usually wonderfully honest student statements of how they need to change to take more responsibility for their own learning.

We hope you find this feedback form helpful!
If you have questions before using it, or if you want one of us to read the feedback you get (in confidence) and tell you what we see, please call or stop by!

Mid-Course Feedback Form

1. What 3-4 things in this course (teaching methods and approaches, assignments, readings, experiences, etc.) are going well, are <u>working best for your learning</u>?

2. What 3-4 things in this course (teaching methods and approaches, assignments, readings, experiences, etc.) are going no so well, are <u>working least well for your learning</u>?

3. In terms of #2, what can I as the teacher do differently to help your learning?

4. In terms of #2, what can you, the student, do differently to help your learning?

5. Reflecting on the questions above, what are you learning about yourself this semester?

Appendix E: Peer Observations of Teaching – Informal Guidance
From the Heritage Center of Multicultural Learning and Teaching

One major purpose of peer observation of teachers is to do "classroom research" on the culture and climate of teaching and learning at Heritage, to study the wide variety of different ways in which teachers are effective. A second purpose is purely developmental - to help good teachers become even better—both those who are observing and those being observed. Results are not reported to supervisors, Deans or to the VPAA. The guiding model for these visits is an ethnographic one of providing descriptive, non-evaluative feedback—holding up a mirror of what happened in the class. This guidance is deliberately couched as suggestions and guidance, not as a check list.

Two Fundamental Principles provide context for teaching in general and the peer observations in particular:
- There are many different ways of being an effective teacher; and
- All of us can stretch our style and methods to enhance our effectiveness

The Six Principles of Effective Teaching/Learning (which include sensitivity to diversity) are a helpful set of principles to keep in mind.

In addition, the observer can look for aspects of class dynamics and interactions, such as pacing, balance and relation between theory and practice/examples, acknowledgement and honoring of student prior (and current) experience, energy flows back and forth from teacher to students and among student, who is doing most of the talking (i.e., learning), whose stories are told, who is making connections, who is going to the board to solve the problem, who is reading the passage in the text, doing the interpreting, the extent to which --and how-- cultural diversity comes up and is dealt with, etc.

Three basic research questions can help guide the observations. They will be the subjects of a report summarizing and distilling patterns, themes, examples of good practice, and wisdom from the observations:
1. What is the range of different effective ways in which Heritage faculty help students learn, and especially help multicultural students learn? What are the evidences?
2. What teaching/learning issues emerge that we all share and need to address to more effectively help our students learn?
3. What concerns do faculty have, especially adjunct faculty? That is, what do they need to enable them to do their work more effectively?

It is vitally important for the observer to have pre- and especially post-visit conversations with the faculty colleague being observed.
- Pre-visit conversation: To get a sense of the context: where are we in the course, what are the goals for that class, what would the teacher like us to look for in particular, if anything? what's the essential learning challenge that day? And anything else that comes up in an informal chat.
Post-visit conversation: Make copy of notes from the class and give a copy to the person. That's the basis of post-class conversation, which should occur as soon as possible, preferably right after if we can. Go over notes. Re-visit significant moments in the class. Hold up the notes as a descriptive mirror, not as evaluative.

Appendix F: Internal Program Reviews- Suggested Schedule[1]

(See Section IV. F. in the Assessment Handbook for description of Program Reviews)

Fall 2008:   Education (all programs)

Fall 2009:   Science
                        Nursing
                        Mathematics

Spring 2010:   Social Work
                        Clinical Lab Science

Fall 2010:   All Academic Programs

Fall 2011:   Five Year Cycle for Program Review Schedule

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[1] Each review covers all degree-granting programs or levels in the discipline area(s).

Appendix G: Generic Syllabus Template for Heritage University [2]

Course No. and Title: _____Credits _____Semester and Year _____
Instructor's Name:_____Campus:_____
Telephone: _____Office hours _____
E-mail _____

"Knowledge Brings Us Together"

1. Program Outcomes and Conceptual Framework:

2. Course description and prerequisites: (Use information from the Heritage University Catalog)

3. Learner Outcomes, Performance Indicators, and Assessment Methods:

LEARNER OUTCOMES (KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS)	ALIGNMENT TO UNIVERSITY GOALS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (EVIDENCE) (Products and Performance)	*ASSESSMENT METHOD/CODES

*Assessment Methods or Codes:
- Selected Response (constructed tests)   Code = SR
- Essay—written   Code = E
- Performance (skills, products, and presentations)   Code = P
- Oral communication (interviews, conferences, oral examinations, questioning) Code = OC
- Self reflection   Code = SRef
- List others

---

[2] Other formats providing comparable, subject-matter-appropriate information are acceptable. Programs may add program-specific outcomes or rubrics, if desired.

4. Course guidelines and expectations:
   A. Attendance and absence policies
   B. Assignments
   C. Tutoring and/or study groups
   D. Audio visual materials
   E. Use of technology

5. Texts and study aids:
   A. Required text: Title: _____
                        Author(s): _____
                        Edition: and/or Publication Date: _____
                        ISBN number: _____
                        Publisher: _____

   B. Supplements: _____ .

   C. Required readings: _____ .
      Recommended readings: _____ .
      Bibliography: _____ .

   D. Other aids required or recommended: _____ .

6. Assessment and Grading Procedures:
   A. Percentage/weighting of each type of assessment: exams, quizzes, and assignments
   B. Grading scale

7. Course schedule:
A course schedule should accompany the Course Plan. This should be a specific outline of the topic to be covered at each class meeting. It should go beyond the mere chapter titles in the text. The schedule should include:
   A.   Dates of class and holidays
   B.   Content to be covered and mode, (lecture, class discussion, reports, or other)
   C.   Assignment due dates
   D.   Assessment Procedures

Other Important Information: Emergency information; method for requesting accommodations, etc.

Appendix H: Key Characteristics of Highly Effective Faculty at H.U.

And Measures of Faculty Success
[Approved by Faculty Senate March 2005; Academic Affairs April 2005]

Core Convictions/Preamble

Highly effective educators at Heritage University are persons whose commitment and dedication embody the three "key values" underlying the Heritage University Vision Statement: "1) honoring each person's human dignity and potential; 2) seeking intellectual growth and challenges; and 3) celebrating the shared spiritual roots of all humankind." Highly effective Heritage educators value the intellectual life in all its dimensions: cognitive, affective, and cultural; listen to and incorporate student knowledge and experience by respecting their diverse cultures and learning styles; challenge students to explore and aspire to their full academic potential; and foster collaboration among students and faculty to form a community of engaged, reflective, mutually-supportive learners.

Together the faculty members of Heritage University have identified the following categories of key characteristics of faculty who are highly successful at Heritage.

1. Knowledge
    A. Is professionally well-prepared; is well-informed on a broad range of topics
    B. Provides strong, academic disciplinary content; continues to advance in the discipline; knows
    C. Integrates related academic disciplines
    D. Is aware of key aspects of human, intellectual, and moral development
    E. Understands and respects individual learners, intellectually, emotionally, and culturally

2. Learner-Centered Teaching
    A. Uses a variety of active teaching and learning strategies to interest, engage, and motivate students
    2B. Connects discipline content to authentic, real life applications and current issues
    2C. Identifies learning outcomes and multiple means of achieving them
    2D. Uses frequent and multiple techniques of assessment
    E Adapts teaching strategies to diverse learning styles,
    2F. Identifies the point at which students can grow, and supports students in meeting rigorous academic challenges
    G. Designs a hospitable classroom culture and builds a collaborative community from the diversity
        in the classroom
    H. Integrates technology and multi-media into classroom learning.
    2I. Encourages hands-on learning with projects, practica, or research that is relevant to students'
        professional development and to the needs of the community.

3. Cultural Pluralism

3A. Celebrates human diversity and practices inclusiveness as core institutional values

3B. Enlarges students' world view, respecting the many traditions underlying ethical thought and conduct by bringing cross-cultural/global perspectives into the curriculum

3C. Functions comfortably and effectively in the cultural communities served by Heritage University

3D. Recognizes and respects each student's multiple socio-cultural identities and teaches holistically

(mind, heart, spirit, and body)

4. Communication

4A. Demonstrates reading, writing, quantitative, and research skills appropriate to the discipline, and

provides students with opportunities to develop and practice these skills

4B. Models active listening, effective speaking, and oral questioning skills

4C. Understands and uses cross-cultural communication skills

5. Reflective Teaching

5A. Is an analytical, life-long learner in the profession

5B. Learns from students

5C. Welcomes new ideas; seeks to learn and improve

5D. Does self-evaluation; has a professional self-improvement plan

5E. Has a humble, patient attitude with self and others

5F. Models appropriate risk taking, innovation

6. Professional Standards and Ethics

6A. Demonstrates responsibility to the learning community and profession

6B. Embraces cross-disciplinary collaboration

6C. Disseminates results of research or creative endeavors

6D. Observes the code of ethics of the profession/discipline and understands conflict of interest

6E. Embraces contractual responsibility

6F. Participates in college governance

6G. Is accessible to students

6H. Demonstrates ethically appropriate relationships inside and outside of the classroom

Appendix I: Faculty Assessment Summary & Professional Growth Plan

Faculty Member_____

Program (Department, Courses, Areas of Responsibility) _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Program Chair (Supervisor)_____

Other Mentors _____

Dates for Reviewing Progress _____

Date of Conversation on this assessment and growth plan _____

Signed:
Faculty member _____

Program Chair _____

Copies to:
1. *Faculty Member*
2. *Faculty Member File in Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs*
3. *Faculty Member File in Office of the College Dean*
4. *Program Chair*

Summary of Self-Assessment & Developmental Conversation

(The reflective process that connects the key characteristics to the professional development plan)

Areas of Strength: (How I best help students learn)

Key characteristics and areas (teaching, community service, scholarship), which represent my greatest strengths, according to my self-assessment, are:

Greatest strengths according to the program chair (and other mentors) are:

Summary of conversation reconciling and integrating these strengths:

Some evidences and examples (especially for positive student learning outcomes) are:

I would be willing to serve as a professional resource to colleagues on these strengths
Yes _____ No _____ Comment _____

Areas for Growth and Development: (How I can better help students learn)

Key characteristics and areas, based on self-assessment and university needs, I would like to develop are:

Areas for growth and development according to program chair and others are:

Summary of conversation reconciling and targeting areas for professional growth in next year or so:

Professional Growth Plan

1) **<u>Targeted Areas for Development</u>** (learning outcomes)

2) **<u>Planned Developmental Activities</u>**

3) **<u>Useful Resources and Opportunities:</u>** (Books, articles, reports, people at Heritage, people elsewhere, workshops, conferences, seminars, grants, courses, degree programs, etc.)

4) **<u>Resources Needed from the University:</u>**

5) **<u>Timeline/Checkpoints:</u>**

6) **<u>Formative Assessment:</u>** (linking key characteristics, where applicable, to positive impact on student learning, past and projected)

Appendix J: Tips on Outcomes-Based Teaching & Learning

From Dr. Peter Frederick

How do we know what are students are learning?
- Know what learning outcomes/goals you want to achieve
- Tell students what these goals/outcomes are early and often

Know your students
- Who they are
- How they learn best
- What their goals (learning and careers) are
- What they already know and have done (life experiences)

Use teaching/learning methods and strategies that CONNECT, that form and make connections between the desired learning outcomes and who the students are.
- Inside out as well as outside in
- Stories—theirs!
- Community experiences
- Practice skills
- Visual, pedagogical representations
- Using the seven principles of effective teaching and learning

Give and get feedback early and often on how well these connections are working and on how well your and their goals are matched

Reflect and purposefully make meaning

Appendix K: Academic Program Review

Academic Program Review

Department: Chair or Director:

*Please integrate the draft THEMES (see attached) in your responses below.

Program Description

Program Goals and Objectives

Program Entrance Requirements

Course Requirements

Program Electives

Exit Requirements

Assessment System

Number of Candidates in Program

Graduates Last Five Years

Placement Rate of Graduates or Number of Graduates Attending Graduate School

Appendix L: Ten Steps to Analyzing Assessment Results

Ten Steps to Analyzing Your Results

1. State the question	What do you want to learn from the data? Refer to your assessment plan, learning outcomes	Prevents wild goose chases
2. Gather and aggregate data	Tabulate and aggregate data across students	Aggregation permits analysis at program level
3. Do basic, descriptive analyses	Keep it simple. Compute frequencies (# and % of students falling into each category), mean, median, range	Permits initial "does this make sense?" review
4. Describe patterns	What do you see? Does it make sense, given what you know of your students? If not— what are alternative explanations for results?	Permits double-check on validity, reliability
5. Compare to your standard	Compare your results to your target, baseline or benchmark	The bottom line
6. Highlight program strengths and weaknesses	In what areas do students perform very well? In what areas not so well?	May help guide curricular decision-making; may add useful information
7. State confidence in results	Describe your confidence in your results and limitations of the assessment	Guides decision-making regarding assessment and curricula; if not fully confident, how to increase certainty? Is more information needed?
8. Interpret results	What do the results mean for your program?	Change needed? What kind? Or is more information needed?
9. Document process and results	Write it down: your process, procedures, decisions, analyses, results, and actions	When it's time for your Program Review self-study, you'll be glad you did. Prevents reinventing the wheel during next iteration of assessment.
10. Pose new questions for next time	Did this analysis raise new questions about student learning? Refine existing questions?	Getting the question right underpins the whole assessment

Annual Assessment Report[3]

Mission-Driven, Meaningful, and Manageable Inquiry for Program Improvement

2009-2010

Department/Program: Chair:

1. Which features of your program should be continued to support academic excellence and
    why? What might be modified or discontinued to support our core themes, on the basis of
    the evidence you gathered about student learning?

2. What other actions, if any, might your department take in response to your outcome
    assessment findings?

3. What program changes have you made as a result of your assessment data?

4. As a result of your assessment findings, what practical support would be helpful to improve
    our student services planning and practices aligned to our core themes?

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[3] *Engaging Departments: Assessing Student Learning* (AACU Peer Review, 2010).