

Selecting Assessment Measures (Rubric V-VI)

Assessment is fundamentally about continuously improving the curriculum. Direct measures, indirect measures, and program review outputs differ in how useful they are for identifying meaningful, specific, and feasible areas for curriculum improvement. In addition, the way data is collected can shift a measure from direct to indirect to merely an output—at which point the report focuses on student activity, not student learning.

- At UA, each program learning outcome must have **at least one direct measure**.

	Direct Measure	Indirect Measure	Program Review Output
Description	Evidence that clearly shows what <u>individual</u> students know and can do, and pinpoints where curriculum improvements are needed.	Evidence that <u>suggests</u> student learning.	Evidence related to the <u>overall health, capacity, and functioning</u> of a program.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubric evaluations* of Capstone Project, Performances, Clinical Evaluations, etc. Embedded exam questions aligned with PLOs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys Team/Group Projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrollment Graduation and Retention Passing Rates Course Grades Student Publications

Case: The measure mentions that students complete a Research Proposal Project in the course XYZ 123.

Continuum of Actionability

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Variations of the Same Measure	A rubric with multiple criteria for each PLO, all scored and reported separately.	A rubric is used, but only the <i>final total score is reported for each PLO</i> .	A rubric is used, but one score is reported for the whole team.	A/B/C distribution within XYZ 123.
Explanation	Shows <i>where</i> students struggle → drives curriculum improvement	Hides learning gaps; limited actionability.	Reflects group performance, not individual learning. Misleading representation of learning.	Not a measure of learning; captures unrelated factors** (e.g., extra credit, late deductions, attendance, etc.)

- Notes**
- *A single row labeled with an outcome is *not* a rubric.
 - **Individual student scores that include unrelated factors also lower actionability and turns a direct measure into an output.

Need Help?

There are no one-solution-fits-all in assessment. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) can support you at every step—ensuring your approach fits your program’s goals, resources, and capacity.

In-depth [Assessment Guides](#)
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