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General Education Assessment Forum

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UNIVERSITY of NEBRASKA at KEARNEY

UNK GENERAL EDUCATION

Current Assessment Process

- **Every GE course section subject to assessment data collection every semester**
- **Instructor reports scores on a 1-5 scale for every learning objective in that course's LOPER category**
- **Instructors choose their own assignments as assessment tools**
- **Reflective questions**
- **Minimum satisfactory learning achievement = two standard deviations below mean**

2024-25 Results

- **241 of 648 (37.2%) GE sections reported data**
  - **LOPER 3 (Oral Comm.) → 34 of 35 sections reported!!**
- **Mean scores indicated above-average mastery**
  - **High: LOPER 11 (Wellness), 4.58-4.81**
  - **Low: LOPER 8 (Natural Sci.), 3.75-4.05**
- **Reflections indicated care about student success and active course updating**

2024-25 Results

- Several reliability and sustainability issues according to Higher Learning Commission best practices
- Lack of absolute benchmarks for learning achievement
- Oversampling
- Not factoring in time for other assessment phases – design, revision, intervention, training
- Too many learning objectives (46 compared to the recommended 4-6)

HLC Assessing Gen Ed Workshop

Participants:

- **Julie Shaffer, SVCAA**
- **Christopher Exstrom, Director of General Education**
- **Scott Unruh, Director of Assessment**
- **Nita Unruh, Assoc VC, Academic & Student Affairs**
- **Frank Tenkorang, GEC Assessment Subcommittee Chair**

Four half-day sessions:

- **November 12-20, 2024**

Recommendations

- Decrease number of learning objectives
- Develop a common assessment tool for each performance indicator
- Design assessment data input to be made using Canvas
- Design assessment cycles with staggered starts among the LOPER categories

Learning Objectives Review

- **Anticipating this issue last year, the GEC Assessment Subcommittee reviewed our 46 learning objectives and determined that many of them are actually performance indicators**
- **As a starting point, they drafted a reformat with one or two learning objectives per LOPER plus specified indicators**
- **This approach was adopted for LOPER 1**

LOPER 1 Learning Objective

Students should be able to employ academic and career strategies.

Performance indicators are:

a. Apply at least two academic strategies tailored to course assignments or projects
b. Identify and use two strategies to manage time and identify academic resources
c. Identify relevant academic policies, processes, and procedures related to advising, course planning, and major exploration
d. Engage in at least two collaborative activities with peers, staff, or faculty, or utilize campus resources and/or participate in campus activities
e. Identify one area of growth in communicating across diverse perspectives
f. Apply two well-being practices and document their impact on academic and personal success

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LOPER 2 (Writing Skills)

Learning Outcome: Students should be able to demonstrate foundational writing skills

New

Performance Indicators:

a. Discern a writer's argument or purpose

b. Create an argument or purpose

c. Evaluate sources appropriately

d. Cite sources appropriately

e. Use context-appropriate conventions in writing

f. Communicate in a manner appropriate to (discipline) audience and context

Old

FOUNDATIONAL REQUIREMENTS – Skills that every university-educated person needs:

Writing skills (ENG 101 minimum; minimum 3 hours). Courses must meet all learning outcomes.

Assessed as:

1. Can discern a writer's argument or purpose
2. Can evaluate and use sources appropriately and responsibly
3. Can use context-appropriate conventions in writing
4. Can communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and context

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Draft reformats for the other LOPER categories are at the end of this presentation

Learning Objectives Review

- **NEEDED – preliminary feedback from faculty and departments who teach GE courses**
  - **Survey form link on Gen Ed assessment webpage**
  - **Comment on reformatting and/or specific objectives and indicators**
  - **Volunteer for a working group that will finalize objectives and indicators**
- **Respond by Tuesday, September 30**
- **NOTE: GE program restructuring is not on the table at this time**

Process Timeline

- **September –** Preliminary feedback
- **October-November –** GEC Assessment Subcommittee and faculty working groups review/revise learning objectives and indicators
- **December or February GEC meeting –** Approval of learning objectives and performance indicators
- **Spring semester –** develop rest of assessment plan: common assessment tools, data recording, implementation cycle, GEC approval by May meeting
- **Fall 2026 –** Commence new assessment plan

LOPER 3 (Oral Communication Skills)

Learning Outcome: Students should be able to demonstrate oral communication skills

New

Performance Indicators:

a. Discern a speaker's argument or purpos
b. Deliver an argument or purpose
c. Use appropriate sources
d. Evaluate sources appropriately
e. Use context-appropriate conventions an non-verbal expressions
f. Communicate in a manner appropriate to (discipline) audience and context

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Old

Oral communication skills (minimum 3 hours). Courses must meet all learning outcomes.

Assessed as:

1. Can discern a speaker's argument or purpose
2. Can evaluate and use sources appropriately and responsibly
3. Can use context-appropriate conventions in speech and non-verbal expressions
4. Can form and support a coherent position
5. Can communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and context

LOPER 4 (Mathematics, Statistics, and Quantitative Reasoning)

Learning Outcome #1: Students should be able to solve quantitative problems

New

Performance Indicators:

a. Describe problems using mathematical, statistical, or programming language

b. Apply/utilize mathematical, statistical, or programming language to develop solutions to problems

Old

Mathematics, Statistics, and Quantitative Reasoning (minimum 3 hours). Courses must meet all learning outcomes.

Assessed as:

1. Can describe problems using mathematical, statistical, or programming language
2. Can solve problems using mathematical, statistical, or programming techniques
3. Can construct logical arguments using mathematical, statistical, or programming concepts

Learning Outcome #2: Students should be able to interpret numerical data or graphical information using mathematical, statistical, or programming concepts and methods

Performance Indicators:

a. Construct logical arguments using mathematical, statistical, or programming concepts

b. Derive insights from graphical or numerical data

4. Can interpret and express numerical data or graphical information using mathematical, statistical, or programming concepts and methods

LOPER 5 (Visual or Performing Arts)

Learning Outcome #1: Students should be able to interpret and/or create cultural products in a discipline of the visual or performing arts

New

Performance Indicators:

a. Interpret a work of art within its cultural or historical context

b. Characterize and/or interpret a work of art using concepts appropriate to its medium

c. Distinguish between works of art from various schools, time periods, and/or cultures

Old

BROAD KNOWLEDGE REQUIREMENTS – Every university-educated person should be able to:

Evaluate and/or create cultural products in a discipline of the ***visual or performing arts*** (minimum 3 hours). Courses must meet all learning outcomes.

Assessed as:

1. Can interpret a work of art within its cultural or historical context
2. Can characterize and evaluate a work of art using concepts appropriate to its medium

Learning Outcome #2: Students should be able to articulate the significance of the arts for themselves or society

Performance Indicators:

a. Describe how the arts shape society or personal values

3. Can distinguish between works of art from various schools, time periods, and/or cultures
4. Can articulate the significance of the arts for themselves or for society

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LOPER 6 (Humanities)

Learning Outcome #1: Students should be able to analyze social and cultural conditions using the concepts and methods in a humanities discipline

New

Performance Indicators:

a. Interpret primary sources appropriate to the humanities discipline

b. Compare and contrast theories, narratives, or social/cultural conditions

c. Develop and support an argument about the human experience

Old

BROAD KNOWLEDGE REQUIREMENTS – Every university-educated person should be able to:

Explain and evaluate ideas and/or social and cultural conditions using the concepts and methods in a ***humanities*** discipline (minimum 3 hours). Courses must meet all learning outcomes.

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Learning Outcome #2: Students should be able to articulate the significance of the humanities for themselves or society

Performance Indicators:

a. Describe how the humanities shape society or personal values.

Assessed as:

1. Can analyze primary sources appropriate to the humanities discipline
2. Can compare and contrast theories, narratives, or social/cultural conditions
3. Can make and support an argument about the human experience
4. Can articulate the significance of the humanities for themselves or for society

LOPER 7 (Social Science)

Learning Outcomes #1: Students should be able to explain human behavior and social systems using the concepts and methods in a social science discipline

New

Performance Indicators:

a. Use the discipline's concepts and methods to explain human behavior and/or social systems

b. Identify evidence using the discipline's concepts and methods

c. Develop and support an argument about human behavior or social systems using social-scientific evidence

Old

BROAD KNOWLEDGE REQUIREMENTS – Every university-educated person should be able to:

Explain and evaluate human behavior and/or social systems using the concepts and methods in a ***social science*** discipline (minimum 3 hours). Courses must meet all learning outcomes.

Learning Outcome #2: Students should be able to articulate the significance of social scientific knowledge for themselves or society

Performance Indicators:

a. Describe how social scientific knowledge impacts society or personal values.

Assessed as:

1. Can use the discipline's concepts and methods to explain human behavior and/or social systems
2. Can investigate problems and analyze evidence using the discipline's concepts and methods
3. Can make and support an argument about human behavior or social systems using social-scientific evidence
4. Can articulate the significance of social scientific knowledge for themselves or for society

LOPER 8 (Natural Science)

Learning Outcome #1: Students should be able to demonstrate the use of appropriate scientific methodologies.

New

Performance Indicators:

a. Identify concepts and methods to explain natural or physical phenomena

b. Analyze problems and conclusions using the concepts and methods in a natural science discipline

c. Develop and support an argument based on sound scientific principles

Old

BROAD KNOWLEDGE REQUIREMENTS – Every university-educated person should be able to:

Solve problems and evaluate conclusions using the concepts and methods in a ***natural science*** discipline (minimum 3 hours). Courses must meet all learning outcomes.

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Learning Outcome #2: Students should be able to articulate the significance of scientific knowledge for themselves or society

Performance Indicators:

a. Describe how scientific knowledge impacts society or personal values.

Assessed as:

1. Can use the discipline's concepts and methods to explain natural or physical phenomena
2. Can investigate problems and analyze evidence using appropriate scientific methodology
3. Can make and support an argument based on sound scientific principles
4. Can articulate the significance of scientific knowledge for themselves or for society

**Natural science requirement may include a lab component (total hours 3 – 4)

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LOPER 9 (Civic Competency & Engagement)

Learning Outcome #1: Students should be able to demonstrate Civic Engagement

New

Performance Indicators:

a. Identify problems or challenges posed by the lack of civic competency and engagement.

b. Gather reliable information about issues of public concern.

c. Extrapolate civic consequences from practices and decisions.

Old

DISPOSITIONAL REQUIREMENTS – Every university-educated person should have:

Civic competency and engagement (Civic competency encompasses civic knowledge; analytical skills; and participatory and involvement skills. Civic engagement encompasses motivations, attitudes, and efficacy; democratic norms and values; and participation and activities.) Courses must meet all learning outcomes.

Learning Outcome #2: Students should be able to articulate the importance of community service and civic engagement

Performance Indicators:

a. Describe how community service and civic engagement impact society or personal growth.

Assessed as:

1. Can identify issues of public or community concern and problems or challenges posed by lack of civic competency and engagement.
2. Can gather and evaluate sufficient and reliable information about issues of public concern and have the knowledge and skills to make reasonable judgements and decisions about them
3. Can evaluate practices and decisions for their civic consequences
4. Can articulate the importance of community service and civic engagement to address issues of public or community concern

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LOPER 10 (Respect for Human Diversity)

Learning Outcome: Students should be able to demonstrate respect for human diversity

New

Performance Indicators:

a. Identify concepts of human diversity

b. Gather reliable information for relating to diverse populations

c. Discuss information important for relating to diverse populations

d. Examine practices and decisions for their impact on inequality or inclusivity

~~e. Articulate the significance of human diversity for themselves or society~~

Old

DISPOSITIONAL REQUIREMENTS – Every university-educated person should have:

Respect for human diversity (in our own communities and/or globally). Courses must meet all learning outcomes.

Assessed as:

1. Can describe the nature and consequences of human diversity
2. Can gather and evaluate information important for relating to diverse populations
3. Can evaluate practices and decisions for their impacts on inequality or inclusivity
4. Can articulate the significance of human diversity for themselves or for society

Learning Outcome #2: Students should be able to articulate the significance of human diversity for themselves or society

Performance Indicator:

a. Describe how human diversity impacts society or personal values

LOPER 11 (Wellness)

Learning Outcome: Students will gather and evaluate information about wellness and apply to personal behavior and decisions.

New

Performance Indicators:

a. Describe the importance of the eight domains of wellness (emotional, spiritual, intellectual, physical, environmental, financial, occupational, and social wellness).

b. Gather information about wellness

c. Evaluate information about wellness

d. Describe the impact of social factors on personal decisions and behaviors.

c. Articulate educated decisions regarding the application of wellness concepts.

Old

Wellness (2 – 3 hours; optional (GE Elective); may be required by programs). Courses must meet all learning outcomes.

Assessed as:

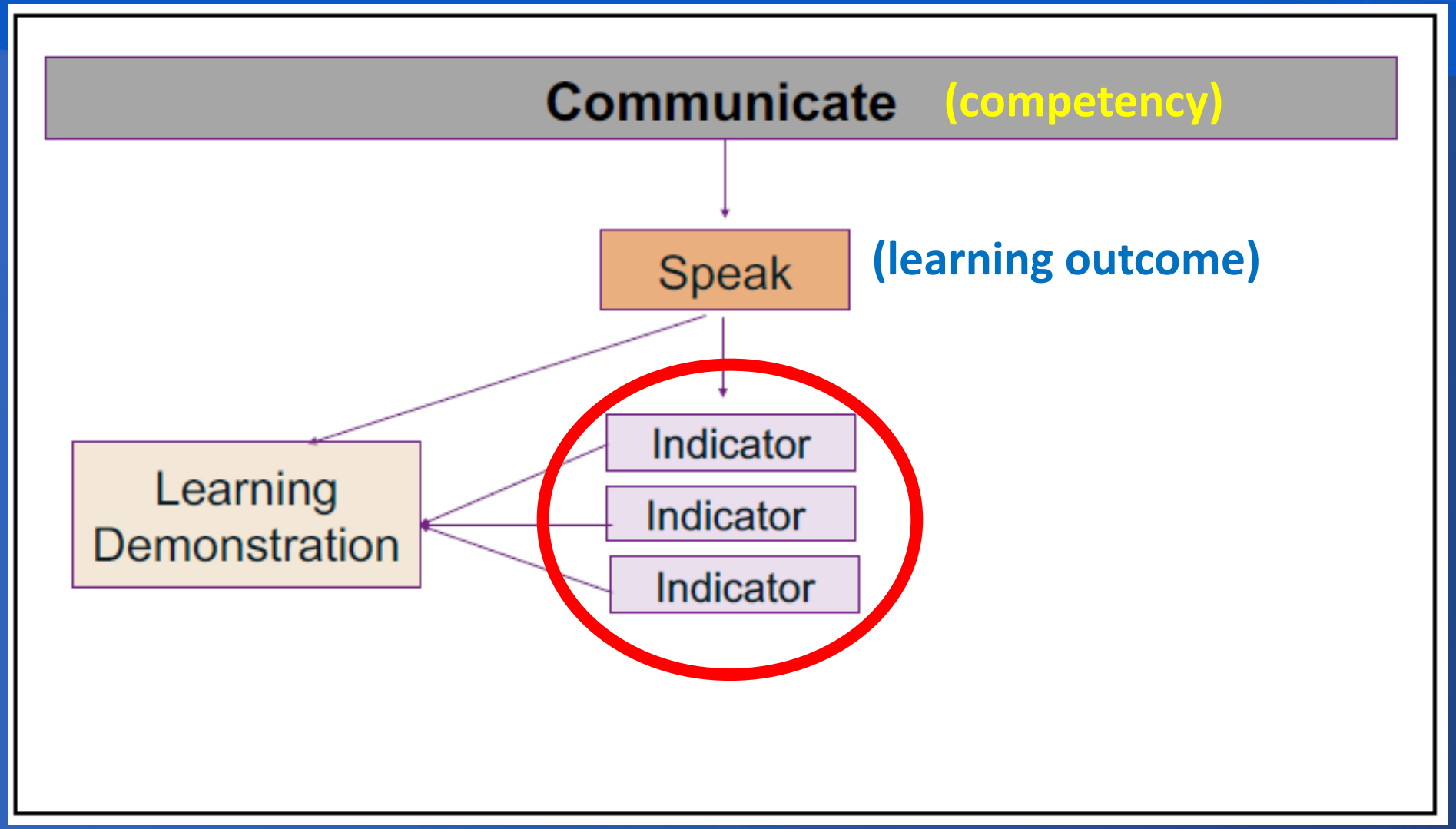
1. Can articulate the importance of the eight domains of wellness (emotional, spiritual, intellectual, physical, environmental, financial, occupational, and social wellness).
2. Can describe the impact of social factors, and personal decisions and behaviors, on wellness.
3. Can gather and evaluate information about wellness and apply to personal behavior choices or decisions.
4. Can integrate information from multiple sources and contrasting viewpoints to make an informed and educated decision regarding wellness.

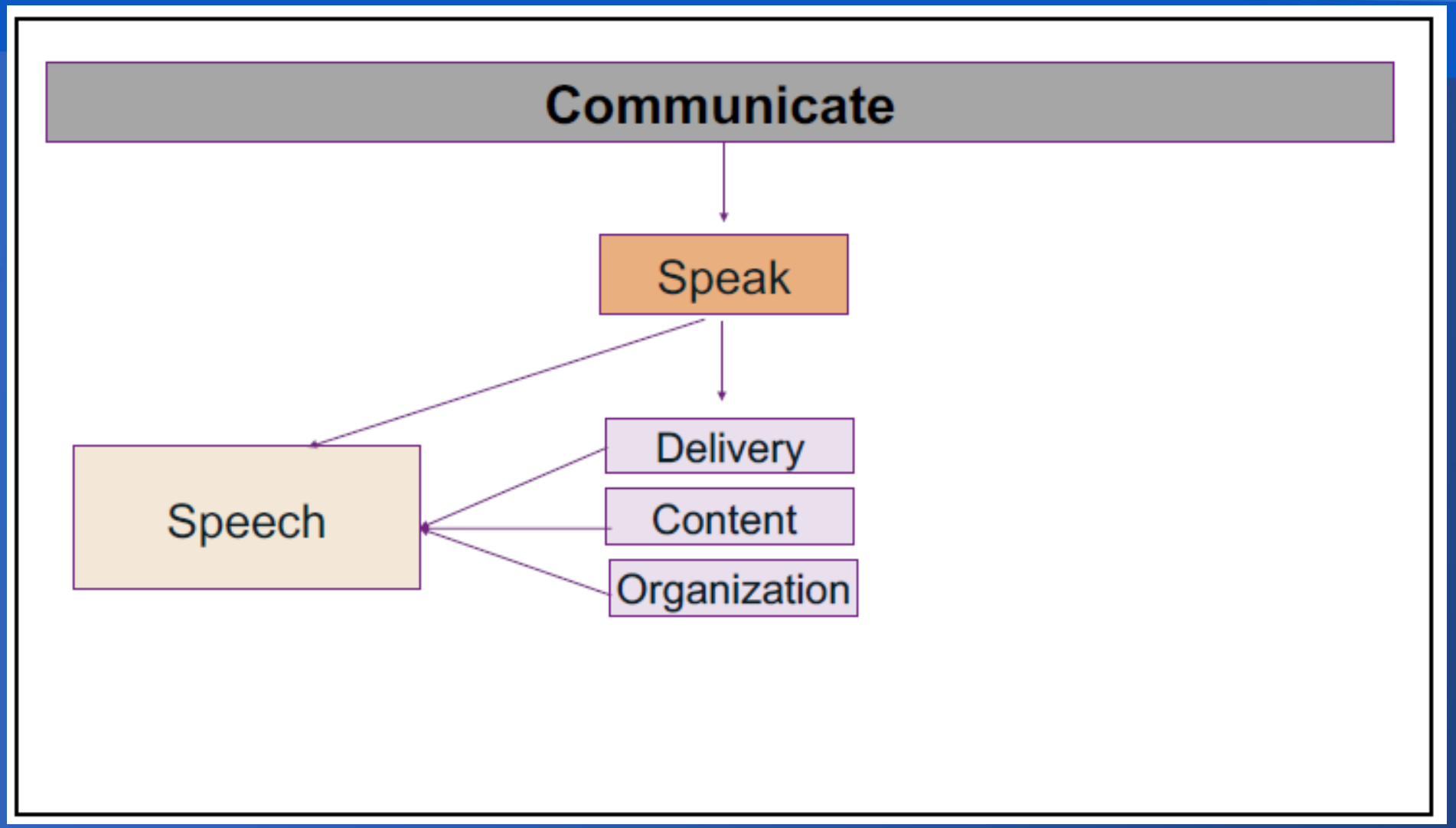
Selected Material from HLC Workshop on Gen Ed Assessment

2. Outcomes, Indicators, and Methods

Performance Indicators

- Specific elements of student performance contributing to the achievement of the learning outcome
- These are measured through learning demonstrations or “assessment exercises”
- Analysis of the results determine level of student achievement for the learning outcome

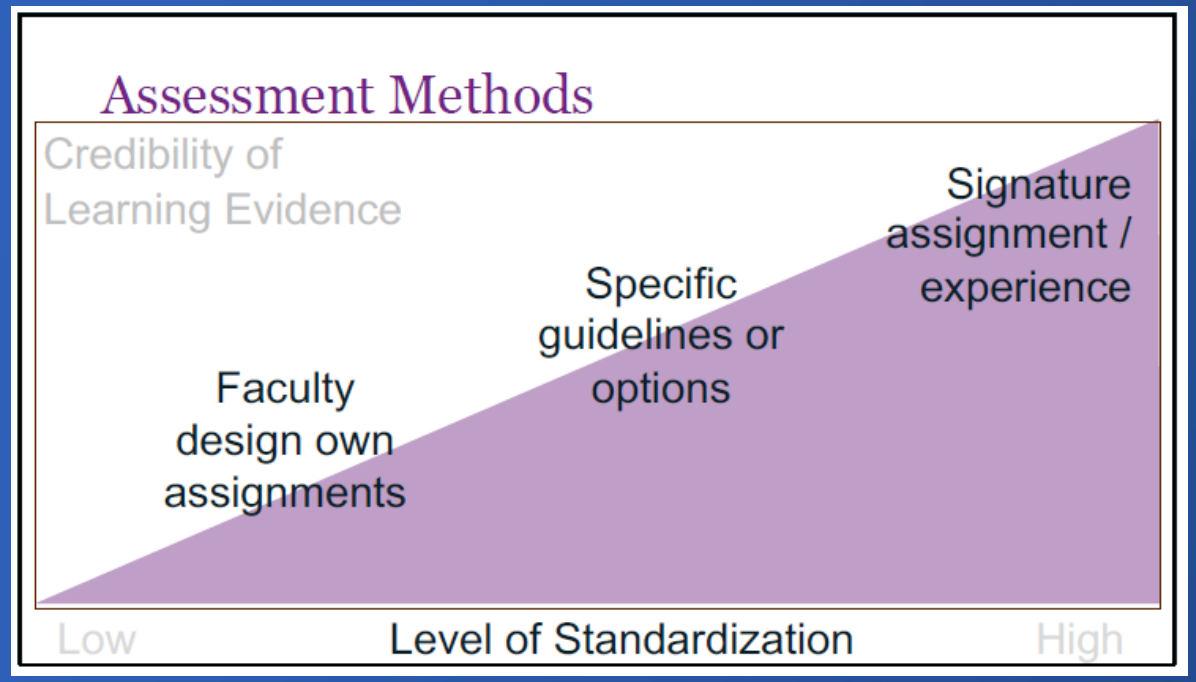

Communicate (competency)
Speak
(learning outcome)
Learning Demonstration
Indicator
Indicator
Indicator

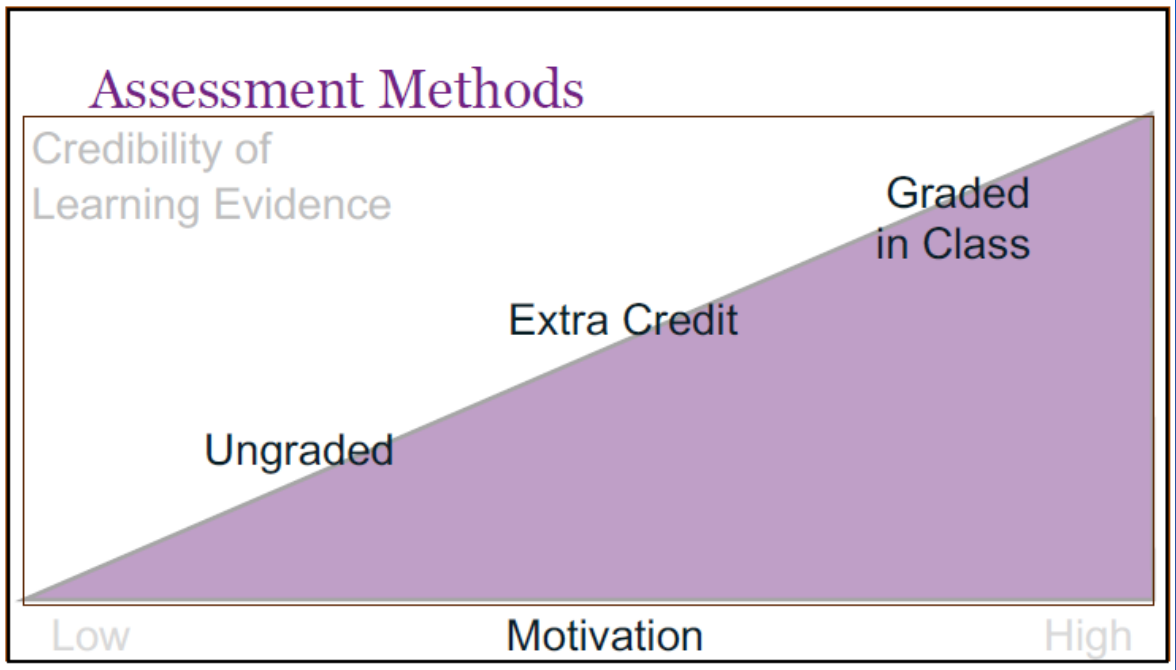

Communicate
Speak
Speech
Delivery
Content
Organization

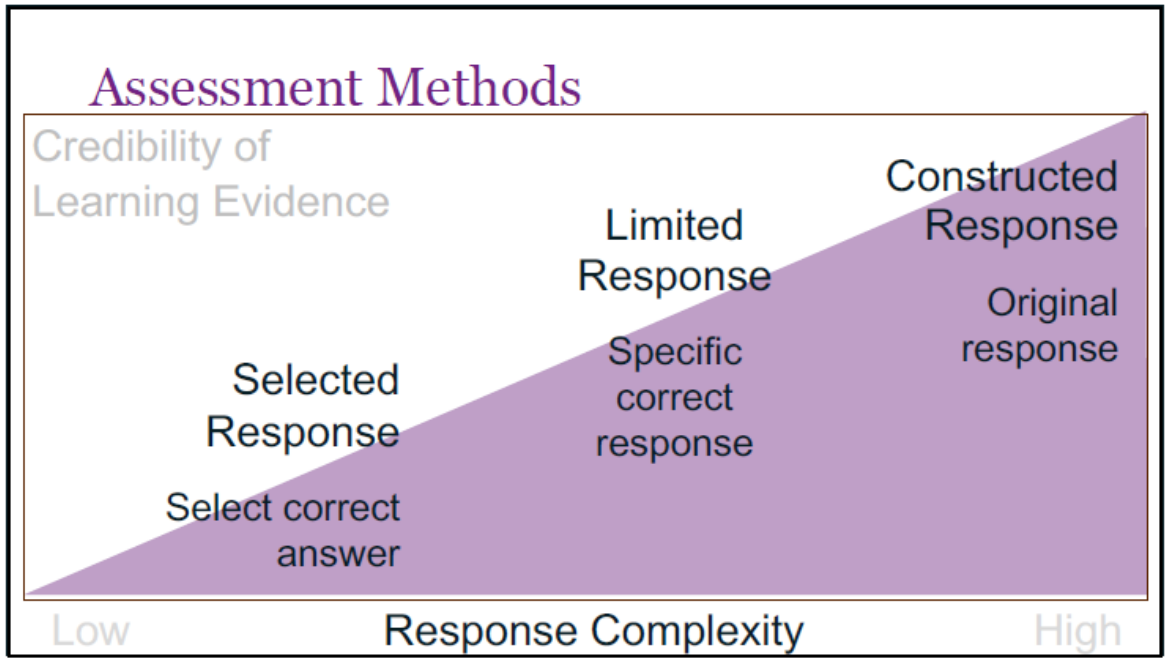
2. Outcomes, Indicators, and Methods

Assessment Methods: Credibility vs. Sustainability

- Credibility = Motivation, Engagement, Consistency, Impact
- Sustainability = Time, Effort, Cost




Assessment Methods
Credibility of Learning Evidence
Graded in Class
Extra Credit
Ungraded
Low
Motivation
High


Assessment Methods
Credibility of Learning Evidence
Constructed Response
Original response
Limited Response
Specific correct response
Selected Response
Select correct answer
Low
Response Complexity
High

3. Assessment Measures & Implementation Plans

Implementation Stages

1. Design strategy
2. Pilot strategy
3. Revise strategy
4. Train those involved
5. **ASSESS student learning**
6. Analyze results
7. Intervene (if needed) to improve learning
8. Re-assess student learning

3. Assessment Measures & Implementation Plans

Many institutions (like UNK) do this:

		Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
1	Fall	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess
	Spring	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess
2	Fall	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess
	Spring	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess
3	Fall	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess
	Spring	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess
4	Fall	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess
	Spring	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess

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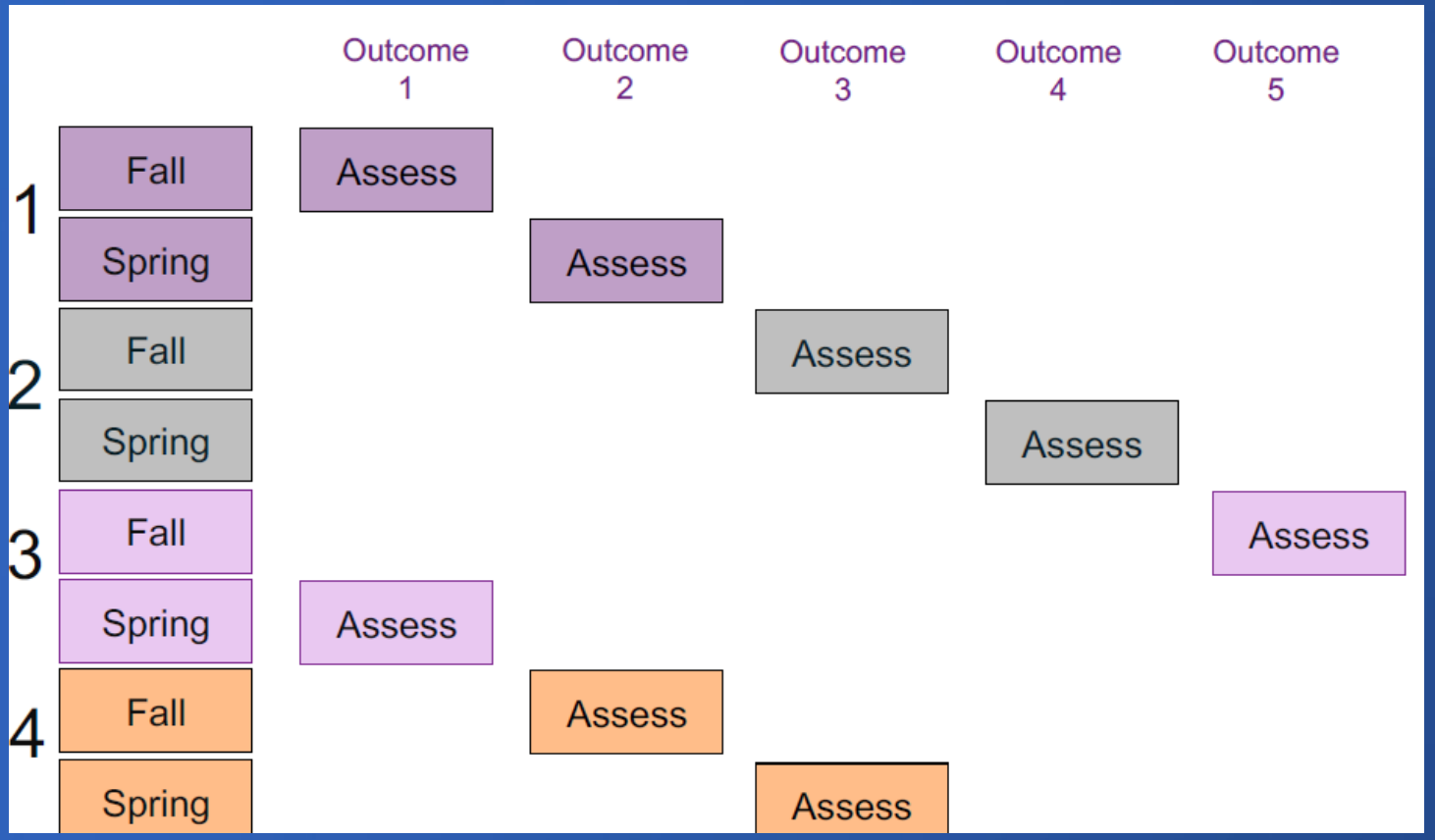
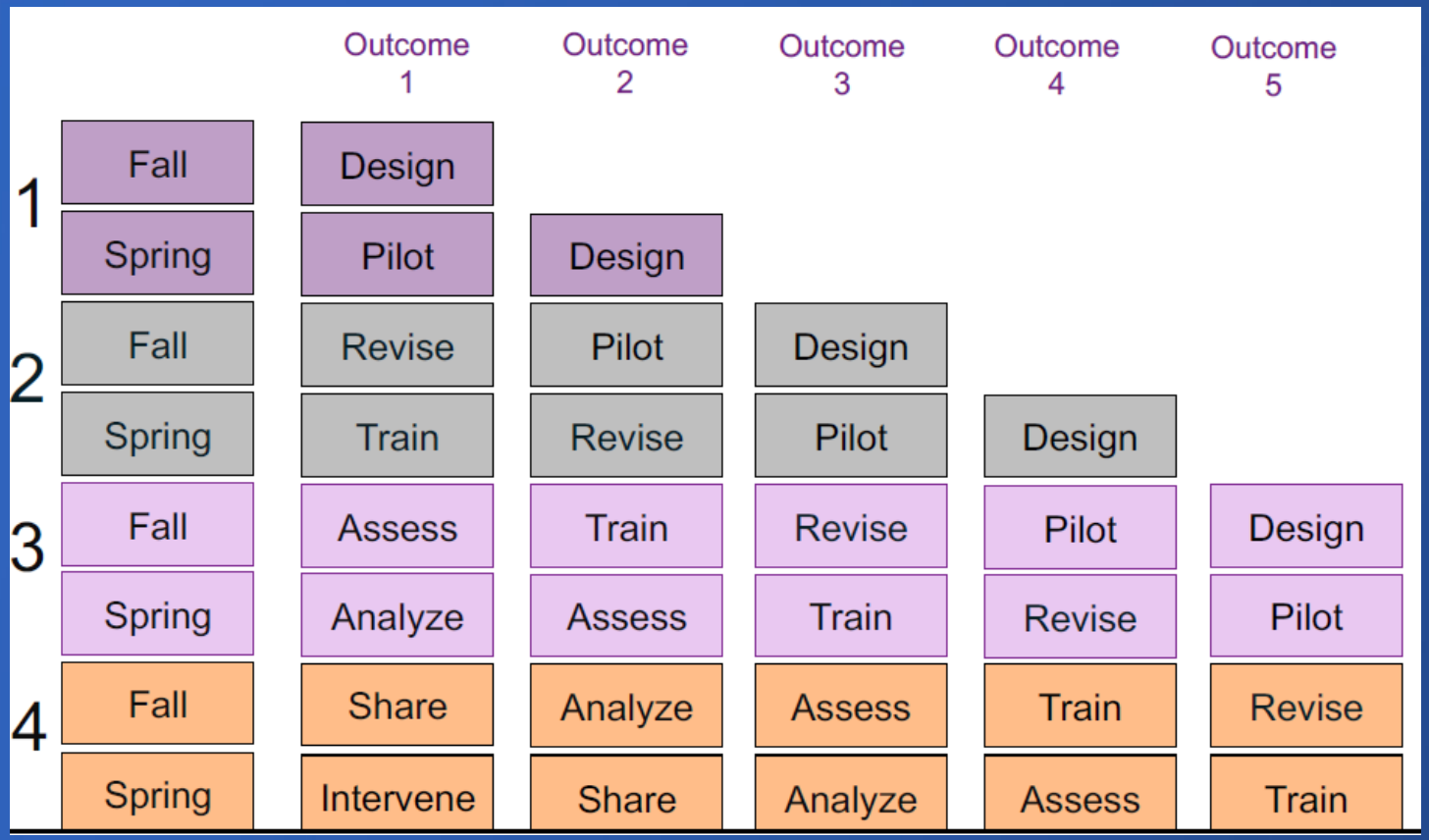
3. Assessment Measures & Implementation Plans

Many institutions (like UNK used to) do this:



3. Assessment Measures & Implementation Plans

Example incorporation of all steps:



		Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
1	Fall	Design				
	Spring	Pilot	Design			
2	Fall	Revise	Pilot	Design		
	Spring	Train	Revise	Pilot	Design	
3	Fall	Assess	Train	Revise	Pilot	Design
	Spring	Analyze	Assess	Train	Revise	Pilot
4	Fall	Share	Analyze	Assess	Train	Revise
	Spring	Intervene	Share	Analyze	Assess	Train

3. Assessment Measures & Implementation Plans

Example incorporation of all steps: