

2013 – 2014 State of Assessment Report

School of Law

Overview

The culture of continuous assessment at the Law School is strong in terms of the nationally recognized traditional measures of student learning used by law schools (i.e., bar exam pass rate; LSSSE survey data; and employment outcomes). The School's faculty and administration take this assessment data seriously and explore opportunities to enhance performance on these measures and to address problems revealed by these measures. However, these measures are too blunt, failing to reveal opportunities and problems with any specificity. This explains why the School's assessment report is somewhat vague on the results under our measures and on the faculty's reaction to the results.

The School of Law, a single degree program with a single unified faculty, relies on its committee structure and broad faculty discussions to monitor, support, and maintain a culture of continuous assessment. For example, the School's Curriculum Committee is currently engaged in curricular mapping that utilizes the School's SLOs. And the School's Assessment and Teaching Committee (our CARC) is exploring the development of new assessment measures that will provide more specific results (e.g., standard student portfolios; course level pre- and post-testing). Finally, the School's Colloquium Committee brings in speakers who engage the faculty in discussions of teaching methodology and assessment.

Academic Program Maturity Rubric Scoring and Evaluation

The maturity scores for the School of Law's program of legal education indicate that the School has made a solid start in this area by using traditional measures (bar exam results; LSSSE results; employment outcomes). The School needs to develop measures that provide more specific, direct assessment data for each SLO. The School also needs to develop a more defined process for considering the results of assessment measures and for revising and improving the program of legal education based on the results. This process will involve both committee and full law faculty discussions and deliberation. (See the School's completed Maturity Rubric Scoring Excel Template that has been submitted along with this document.)

As for efforts to improve the maturity of the School of Law's assessment practices in 2014 – 2015, the School's Assessment and Teaching Committee has been asked to take the lead in developing direct, specific measures of student learning and in formulating a process for faculty discussion, deliberation, and implementation of revisions. The Committee is beginning its work by discussing and considering the development of student portfolios that allow for assessments at critical points in the course of students' legal education. The Committee is also working with the administration to encourage faculty to engage in rigorous assessment of student learning at the course level.