

# Assessment 1-2-3

## What do we measure?

- It's in our Mission Statement
- It's tied to the University
- It's what we value

## Great Universities Measure What They Value (anonymous)

The same can be said for colleges- *great colleges measure what they value*. So what do we value in our college and what are we measuring?

Our mission says we value a stimulating learning environment, collaboration, liberally educated graduates who serve their clients, patients, profession, and community, and we value excellence and leadership in professional education, service and scholarship.

So what measures do we have for these? We have a variety which include things like our student dashboard and our faculty scholarship dashboard. We track our NAPLEX and MPJE pass rates, our college teaching goal, and other student indicators like the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

And we measure the opinions and perceptions of stakeholders through the use of our national

surveys of alumni, faculty, and graduating students.

In this issue of Assessment 1-2-3, we'll highlight several of these measures. I think you'll be impressed at our progress on many fronts and our commitment to improving.

CP

## Snapshot of 2009 Pharmacy Graduates

There are a variety of ways to summarize the class of 2009, but generally speaking, they achieved much success.

Our annual survey of graduates tells us a lot about how they perceive the college and the curriculum, but we also get some information from that survey that we often gloss over.

For example, how much debt did these students have upon graduation? Well, 92 P4s responded to the annual survey. Based on this sample:

### DEBT:

Roughly 82 % borrowed money to help pay for college expenses.

What is amazing is that the average debt for these students was around \$72,000! Some had no debt, but at least one person said they had \$180,000 in educational debt! Ouch!

### WORK:

Almost all of the students worked during college prior to their P4 year. Roughly 85% worked during their P3 year. Once in their P4 year, almost half did not work and an-

other 33% worked less than 10 hours per week.

### DU PERCEPTIONS:

When asked about their preparedness, student services, facilities, their student experiences, and their overall impressions, we improved on 53% of the questions asked compared to the previous year. In fact, we improved or stayed the same on all but 1 of the 78 questions asked of the graduates. This speaks well of the hard work by everyone over the last two years!

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*If I were starting my pharmacy program over again I would choose the same college/school of pharmacy:*

**Drake P4s: 93.5% agreed**

vs.

**Nat'l average of 82.9%**

## 2009 Board Results

**99% First time pass rates on NAPLEX**

**95% First time pass rates on MPJE**

## '09 Grads (continued from p.1)

### POST-GRAD PLANS:

Based on student reported data to the College, a full 40% of the 2009 class pursued a residency. This far exceeds previous years when the rate was 20-30%- still above the national average

### PASS RATES:

The 2009 graduates continued to do well on the national licensure exams. A full 99% passed the

NAPLEX on their first attempt. Similarly, the first time pass rate was 95% for the MPJE.

Of course, there are lots of other measures to judge the success of the PharmD program and its graduates. Service and professional commitments come to mind. But, these results help highlight 2009 as a tremendous year for graduates and the strength of the pharmacy curriculum.



## Alumni Perspectives

The 2009 alumni survey asked graduates who were 1 and 5 years out their thoughts on the college and the curriculum.

Some general impressions of the alumni are noteworthy:

If I were starting my pharmacy program over again I would choose the same col-

lege/school of pharmacy **(94.5% of alumni agreed)**

If I were starting my pharmacy program over again I would choose the same college/school of pharmacy **(91.6% agreed).**

These results support the idea of a quality Drake education.

The alumni also mentioned things that we are already working on: the need for more pharmacy electives, understanding the sequence and outcomes of the curriculum, and more emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention– all things that are we've been working on.

## Why "Assessment 1-2-3?"

So maybe you're wondering why this newsletter is called "Assessment 1-2-3". It's because there are three basic steps to program assessment:

1. Articulate your goals for student learning
2. Gather evidence on how students meet your goals. As discussed earlier, the evidence can be both direct and indirect measures.
3. Use the information for improvement

Our goals for student learning revolve around our Educational Outcomes for both the PharmD and the Health Sciences programs.

Our task is to find good, reliable measures for these outcomes (our evidence– much like the idea of evidence based medicine) and then use that evidence to improve our programs

CP

## What is a “Direct” Assessment?

Direct assessments, Indirect assessments, embedded assessments, formative and summative assessments... the jargon of program assessment is growing, as is the emphasis on good evidence in evaluating educational programs.

So what is a direct vs. an indirect measurement?

**Direct measures** directly evaluate student work. Direct measures include exams, papers, projects, presentations, portfolios, competency scores, and proficiency exams such as the NAPLEX.

**Indirect measures** are things like our national surveys and some of our dashboard measures. Asking graduates and alumni their perspectives on their Drake education

and being prepared to enter practice are indirect measures. Others are things like our graduate placement rates and number of students going on to residencies or graduate work. So if those placements and stats are high, it's an indication we're putting out a good product.

CP

## A Simple Example of 1-2-3 and Direct Measures

Let's say that our Health Sciences program has a goal that graduating seniors will be able to *conduct original scientific research and present it in writing and orally*. The senior capstone course requires students to do exactly that.

The teacher of the capstone has developed an explicit set of criteria by which she assesses the students' scientific reports (a rubric). She uses this rubric to help determine the grade and also to prepare an end of the year summary to the college in which she shares the students' strengths and weaknesses, in aggregate.

At a faculty meeting, she shares the assignment, written criteria, and the class aggregate scores compared to previous years. She might say something like, "Students' scores on 'research design' were low two years ago. I made some changes in how I teach it and the scores improved over the last two years. I'm still not satisfied, so here's what I plan to try next year. Colleagues express support and offer suggestions and help.

Perhaps she goes on to say that the students don't seem prepared to create databases for their projects and that this isn't something that should be taught in the capstone. She might then ask "Can we look at the curriculum to see where we can do a better job of teaching or re-enforcing this material?"

Perhaps Professors Washington and Maldin agree to give more time to creating and using databases in the introductory statistics courses.

And finally, someone records the meeting events and reports to the assessment committee that this is taking place and that there is ongoing monitoring for improvement. *(Example adapted from: Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education; Barbara E. Walvoord, 2004 John Wiley and Sons, Inc.)*

Thus, we have an **embedded assessment** using a **direct measure** of the educational goal. And, we've used the data from the assessment to improve the course and program.

When this type of process is tied to our educational objectives as in this example, then the whole process leads to better student outcomes and a better program. Gaps are identified and addressed by the faculty and the curriculum grows stronger.

*Watch for final details on our faculty development speaker from the IDEA Center.*

*April 7, 2010*

## Updates

- In the next few months, we will be reviewing our Self Study, looking at what we said we needed to work on, and pursuing those improvements
- Our new college Strategic Plan is posted on our assessment website. Check it out.
- Faculty Affairs is working on quantifying the service commitments of faculty.
- Thanks for providing feedback on all faculty candidates: Response rates were very good.