

## Using Signature Assignments and Rubrics in Assessing Institutional Learning Outcomes and Student Learning

**Authors :** Leigh Ann Wilson, Melanie Borrego

**Abstract :** The purpose of institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) is to assess what students across the university know and what they do not. The issue is gathering this information in a systematic and usable way. This presentation will explain how one institution has engineered this process for both student success and maximum faculty curriculum and course design input. At Brandman University, there are three levels of learning outcomes: course, program, and institutional. Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are mapped to specific courses. Faculty course developers write the signature assignments (SAs) in alignment with the Institutional Learning Outcomes for each course. These SAs use a specific rubric that is applied consistently by every section and every instructor. Each year, the 12-member General Education Team (GET), as a part of their work, conducts the calibration and assessment of the university-wide SAs and the related rubrics for one or two of the five ILOs. GET members, who are senior faculty and administrators who represent each of the university's schools, lead the calibration meetings. Specifically, calibration is a process designed to ensure the accuracy and reliability of evaluating signature assignments by working with peer faculty to interpret rubrics and compare scoring. These calibration meetings include the full time and adjunct faculty members who teach the course to ensure consensus on the application of the rubric. Each calibration session is chaired by a GET representative as well as the course custodian/contact where the ILO signature assignment resides. The overall calibration process GET follows includes multiple steps, such as: contacting and inviting relevant faculty members to participate; organizing and hosting calibration sessions; and reviewing and discussing at least 10 samples of student work from class sections during the previous academic year, for each applicable signature assignment. Conversely, the commitment for calibration teams consist of attending two virtual meetings lasting up to three hours in duration. The first meeting focuses on interpreting the rubric, and the second meeting involves comparing scores for sample work and sharing feedback about the rubric and assignment. Next, participants are expected to follow all directions provided and participate actively, and respond to scheduling requests and other emails within 72 hours. The virtual meetings are recorded for future institutional use. Adjunct faculty are paid a small stipend after participating in both calibration meetings. Full time faculty can use this work on their annual faculty report for "internal service" credit.

**Keywords :** assessment, assurance of learning, course design, institutional learning outcomes, rubrics, signature assignments

**Conference Title :** ICHE 2017 : International Conference on Higher Education

**Conference Location :** London, United Kingdom

**Conference Dates :** May 25-26, 2017