

Direct vs. Indirect Measures



HAMPDEN-SYDNEY
COLLEGE

Direct vs. Indirect Measures

- **Academic Programs:** "Measures" refers to the tools or methods used to evaluate or assess student learning outcomes.
- **Unit Plans:** "Measures" show how effective a strategy is toward achieving the goal by showing an improvement in quality or effectiveness.
- **There are two types of Measures: Direct and Indirect**
 - **Direct Measures:** Capture the actual performance in a way that demonstrates learning has occurred or the goal has been achieved.
 - **Indirect Measures:** Capture the feelings, attitudes, or perceptions about learning or the progress toward a goal.

Appropriate Measures for Student Learning Outcomes

Direct

- **National standardized tests (MFAT, ACT-CAAP, CLA, etc.)**
- **Locally developed tests**
- **Course-embedded assessment - methods of assessment that occur in the context of a course**
 - **Tests; reports/essays; projects; portfolios**
- **Capstone project - a culminating project that provides evidence of how well a student integrates and applies principles, concepts, and abilities**
- **Performances or Presentations (public or taped)**
- **Exhibitions**
- **Internship evaluations**
- **Clinical evaluations**

Indirect

- **Surveys of students, alums, or employers**
- **Focus groups of students, alums, or employers**
- **Exit interviews**
- **An external review of the program**
- **Involvement records**
- **Success of students after graduation (graduate school, job placement, etc.)**

Appropriate Measure for Unit Plan Goals

Direct

- **Staff time**
- **Cost**
- **Materials**
- **Equipment**
- **Cost per unit output**
- **Accuracy**
- **Reliability**
- **Reduction in errors, issues, usage**
- **Audit or external evaluator**

Indirect

- **Surveys and Questionnaires**
 - **Stakeholder perception**
 - **Students**
 - **Administration and staff**
 - **Faculty**
- **Interviews**
- **Focus groups**