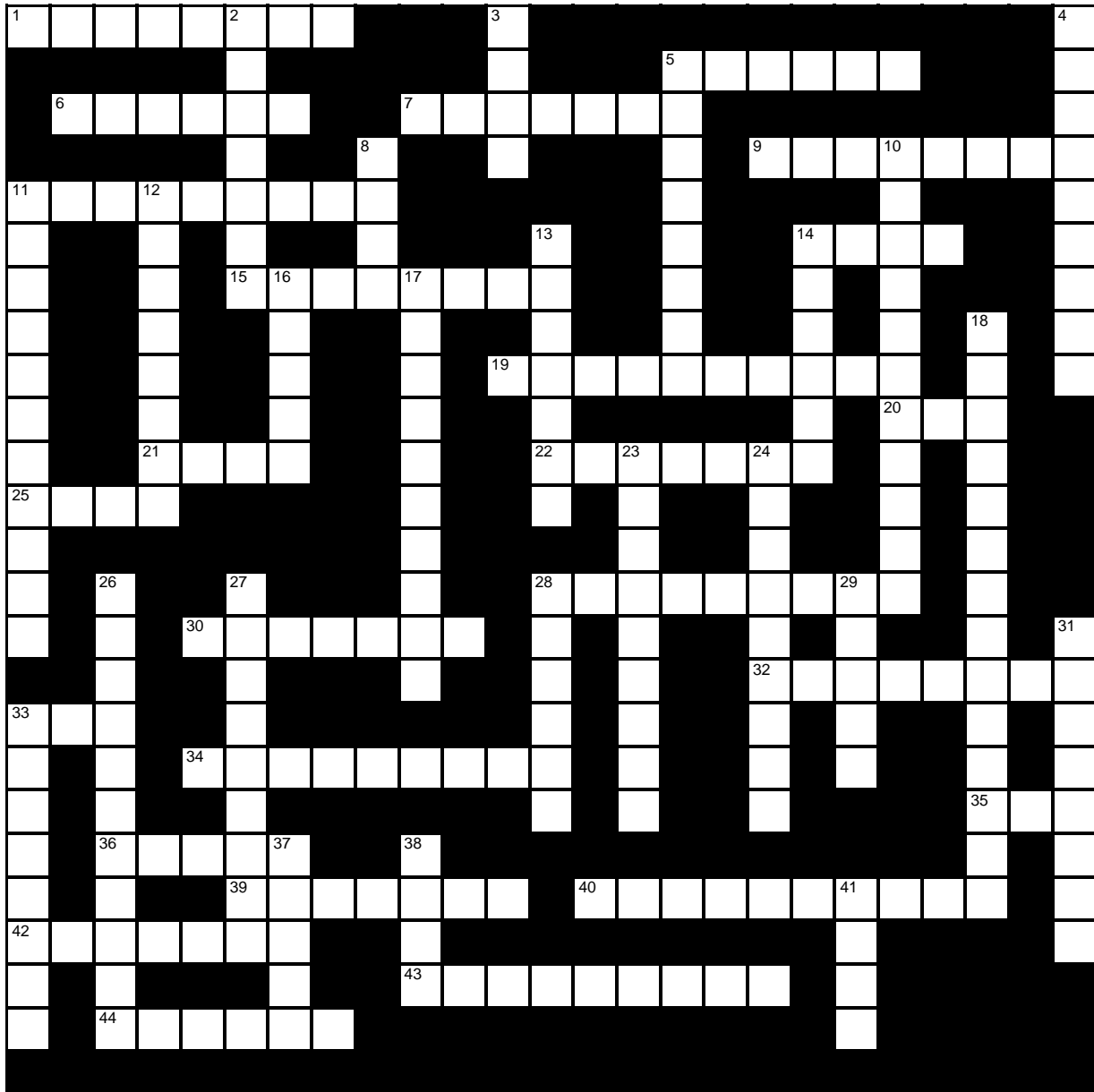


# THE PUZZLE OF ASSESSMENT

## AALS Midyear Meeting – Workshop On Measuring Learning Gains

Barbara Glesner Fines<sup>1</sup>  
Summer 2015



<sup>1</sup> Executive Associate Dean and Rubey M. Hulen Professor of Law, University of Missouri Kansas City School of Law.

## Across

- 1** A course or project, usually undertaken in the final semester, which is intended to integrate knowledge and skills associated with the entire sequence of courses that make up the program. Assessing student performance in these classes or on these projects can provide a measure of student learning in the program or degree as a whole.
- 5** A form of indirect assessment in which individuals are asked about learning rather than demonstrating the learning itself. Indirect measures of learning are valuable supplements to direct measurement of learning.
- 6** Faculty qualification, teacher-student ratios, library book counts, for example; in contrast to *process* or *outcomes* measures.
- 7** "You can't expect what you don't \_\_\_\_\_" (Catchy phrase to remind us that assessment drives student learning).
- 9** For optimal student learning, faculty should provide \_\_\_\_\_ and meaningful feedback. (This is one of the seven principles for good practice in legal education. See Volume 49 J. Leg. Educ. (1999), at <http://lawteaching.org/resources/lawreviewarticles/1999-49journaloflegaleducation367.pdf>).
- 11** A collection of examples of student learning which can be used for student self-assessment, summative assessment of overall achievement in a program, and evidence of growth in specific learning outcomes. See <http://bestpracticeslegaled.albanylawblogs.org/2015/03/10/using-portfolios-for-assessment/>.
- 14** Part of the title of the person who in most law schools who is charged with directing assessment planning. For assessment to be effective, however, it must be the responsibility of the entire faculty.
- 15** Measure the effectiveness or efficiency of a program, process, or person.
- 19** Any systematic inquiry of student knowledge, skills, or attitudes that is designed to improve learning.
- 20** Common scale used to rate student performance at the end of a course; provides very little information about what students have learned or how well they have learned because criteria are aggregated, hidden, and scores are normed.
- 21** Matrices that describe where learning outcomes are measured throughout the curriculum.
- 22** What we want students to be able to do in order to learn from experience. This activity can also be used a direct measure of student learning, particularly as a measure of development of student attitudes.
- 25** If we view assessment as an externally imposed mandate to check off, the temptation is to select outcomes based on those things that are \_\_\_\_\_ to measure so that we have something to report rather than rather than measuring those outcomes that we really care about so that we can improve student learning.
- 28** Assessment that takes place at the end of a unit of instruction, which can inform changes in pedagogy or curriculum for future students.
- 30** Assessment should be this type of process, rather than an isolated, episodic event to be undertaken one time only.
- 32** A measure that produced similar results with similar students in similar circumstances. (See also 29 down).

- 33 To consume, as food (unrelated to assessment, this word is simply provided as a nudge to help make this puzzle have an appropriate level of challenge. Challenge, on the other hand, is a word that is central to assessment, as an appropriate level of challenge in assessment can increase learning).
- 34 Common location for formative assessment. For assessment techniques that can be used in this setting, see <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/profiles/glesnerfines/cats.htm>.
- 35 While assessment can be seen as a form of research, assessment measures or processes do not require approval from this independent ethics committee which monitors research involving human subjects.
- 36 Rubric: A checklist, matrix, or scoring \_\_\_\_\_ that describes various skill levels for discrete learning outcomes. <http://lawteaching.org/teaching/assessment/rubrics/index.php>.
- 39 Process of providing single summative rank of student performances in a course or on a particular exam or assignment. While this process is not the same as assessment, many of the activities faculty use in this process can be used to gather assessment data regarding student learning of specific outcomes. See, e.g., <http://bestpracticeslegaled.albanylawblogs.org/2012/01/17/assessment-tales-the-bluebooks-that-stayed/>.
- 40 Ethical standard of proficiency required of attorneys (ABA Model Rule 1.1) and common level of achievement expected of law students.
- 42 Informal term used to describe the device used in audience response systems. An efficient and effective technology tool that can be used in the classroom to measure student learning.
- 43 Assessment of student learning by all degree programs (including law schools) is required as a condition of accreditation by all regional accrediting bodies, who act under the authority of this federal agency.
- 44 Special designation of high achievement (e.g., *cum laude*). Assessment permits not only the identification of students learning that is deficient but also instances of outstanding student achievement.

## Down

- 2 What a student can be expected to know, think, or do as a result of a particular course of study.
- 3 Good, Better, \_\_\_\_\_. Student learning outcomes need not be only those that are subject to quantitative measurement. Any knowledge, skill, or value that can be judged against criteria and distinguished among levels of proficiency can be assessed.
- 4 For grading to be an effective tool for measurement of student learning, grades must be referenced to \_\_\_\_\_ rather than norm referenced.
- 5 Individuals who are the focus of learning outcomes.
- 8 A broad statement of a desired endpoint for student learning; should be linked to the law school's mission and reflect long-range plans; Often used interchangeably with "outcome" or "objective".
- 10 Assessment results expressed in words. In many cases, this type of assessment can be converted into quantitative measures through the use of *rubrics* (See 36 across).
- 11 A degree of competence or skill demonstrated in an assessment.
- 12 Classification of educational goals and objectives first developed by Bloom and others in 1956. See *Paul D. Callister, Time to Blossom*, 102 Law Lib. J. 191 (2012). [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1488918](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1488918). See also <http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching-resources/effective-practice/revised-blooms-taxonomy/>.

- 13** The method used to gauge student learning.
- 14** Assessment activities that require students to display their knowledge and skills in response to a measurement such as exams, portfolios, practice.
- 16** Most important part of speech in stating learning outcomes.  
<http://bestpracticeslegaled.albanylawblogs.org/2015/02/09/crafting-learning-outcomes-what-verbs-do-you-use/>.
- 17** While this is one of the most common verbs used in stating learning objectives, it is difficult to measure because it is not an active verb - readily observable -- and its meaning is so ill-defined, used interchangeably with "know" and "know how". See this chapter in class assessment text by Grant Wiggins & Jay McTighe <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/103055/chapters/Understanding-Understanding.aspx>.
- 18** Assessment is, in part, a result of demands for this from constituencies of legal education.
- 23** Assessment that takes place during the course of instruction, enabling assessors to modify instructions practices in time to improve learning for the particular students being assessed.
- 24** A standard for measuring the quality of learning on a particular outcome.
- 26** To recognize as distinct or different; recognize the salient or individual features or characteristics of.  
 -- Good rubrics permit different graders to do this among various performances so that assessment is both reliable and efficient.
- 27** A dimension of learning, assessed at its most basic level by a student's ability to recognize or recall information (see also 17 down).
- 28** "Organized conceptual structures ... that guide how problems are represented and understood." John D. Bransford, Ann L. Brown, and Rodney R. Cocking, *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School* 65-66 (2000).[http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record\\_id=9853&page=R1](http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=9853&page=R1). Moving from novice to expert involves building schema upon which one can scaffold new information and skills. What students learn depends in part on how much and what they already know. Diagnostic and formative assessment permits teachers to measure that learning and help students build more sophisticated schema in their journey from novice to expert.
- 29** An assessment that accurately measures the learning it claims to measure. See Stuckey, et. al, *Best Practices in Legal Education* 241-42 (2007), [http://www.cleaweb.org/Resources/Documents/best\\_practices-07.pdf](http://www.cleaweb.org/Resources/Documents/best_practices-07.pdf).
- 31** Without assessment, it is difficult to provide students this important component for learning.
- 33** "To judge students as they demonstrate their knowledge and abilities, we must make \_\_\_\_\_ the criteria for competent performance. If students know the criteria ahead of time, they can strive to meet them in their performance." Gregory S. Munro, *Outcomes Assessment for Law Schools* 99 (2000).
- 37** Assessment helps to reinforce and guide learning because of the powerful learning effect of trial and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 38** A challenge in conducting effective assessment.
- 41** Bar \_\_\_\_\_. A significant summative assessment measure for determining whether a law school has met ABA Standard 301 in preparing its graduates for admission.

SOLUTION

