To: Academic Faculty

From: Student Learning Assessment Learning Community (Faculty: Jenifer Blacklock, Kristine Callan, Debra Carney, Vibhuti Dave, Renee Falconer, Todd Ruskell, Chet Van Tyne, and Kay Schneider - Assessment Director)

Date: 4/28/16

Subject: Academic Faculty Attitudes Regarding the Measurement of Student Learning Outcomes

The Student Learning Assessment Learning Community (SLALC) members are devoting time and effort to:

1. Enhancing the use of assessment information (i.e. the measurement and evaluation of student learning outcomes) for improving student learning.
2. Promoting measurement and evaluation of student learning as a value added activity rather than a compliance activity.

We recently conducted a survey to obtain faculty feedback so that we could determine how to best support faculty members’ efforts to enhance student learning at Mines. We appreciate the time that 94 faculty spent responding to the survey. Your responses indicate interest in the following topics and inform our future work, which will include the following initiatives, beginning in Fall 2016:

1. Clarify differences between assessment (measurement and evaluation of student learning outcomes) and end of course evaluation of faculty.
2. Share expertise regarding how we can use student learning data to improve and inform a variety of class sizes and delivery modes.
3. Share expertise regarding strategies for obtaining useful feedback from students.
4. Describe best practices for obtaining insights about student learning in individual courses.
5. Discuss strategies for supporting learning of specific subpopulations of students (by gender, first generation status, under-represented minority status, etc.)
6. Provide more information to faculty about students’ learning strategies, success, obstacles, etc.
7. Discuss “quick and easy” strategies for measuring student learning.

We look forward to working with you to support the measurement of students’ learning, with the ultimate goal of using student learning data to inform curricular improvements and student success.

P.S. We realize that assessment may be a four-letter word to some of you. We prefer to focus on the importance of enhancing students’ learning and success, so share the following definition:

"Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development.”