



# Assessment of Student Learning (“Assessment”)

MARY JANE K, DIMATTIO, PHD, RN  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON

# Learning Outcomes

- ▶ At the completion of today's discussion, the student will:
  - ▶ Define assessment within the context of AACSB Standards.
  - ▶ Describe three forces that converged to bring about the assessment movement in U.S. Higher Education.
  - ▶ Relate assessment in higher education to the quality movement in manufacturing, business, and healthcare.
  - ▶ Differentiate between course and program assessment.
  - ▶ Compare and contrast direct and indirect assessment.
  - ▶ Critique assessment in higher education.

# AACSB:

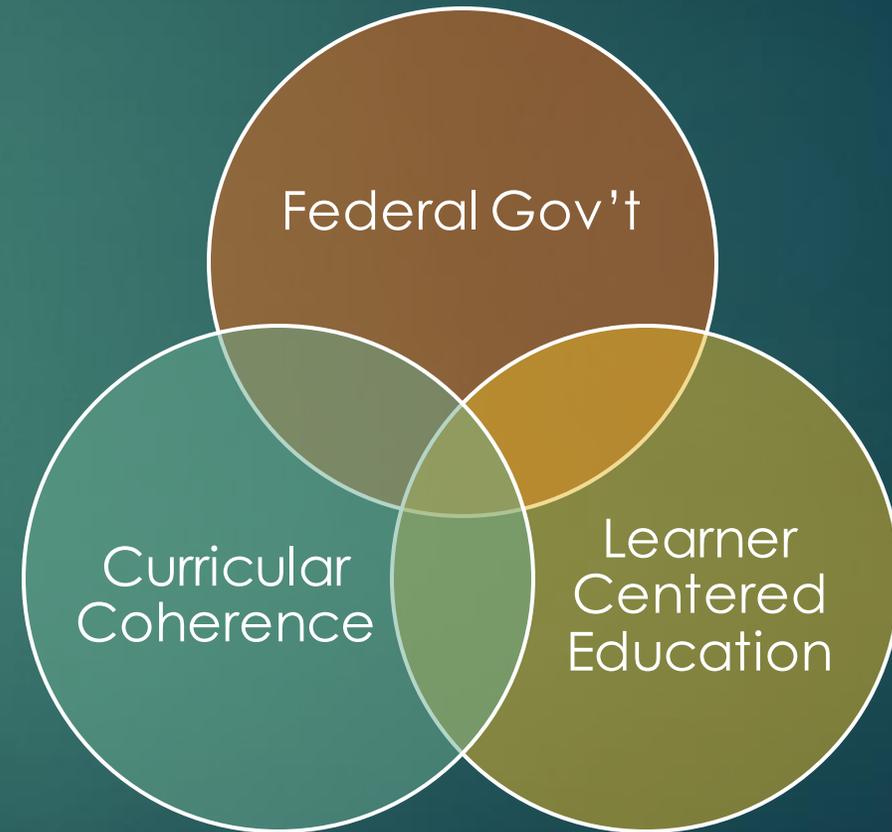
- ▶ Standard 8: The school uses well-documented, systematic processes for determining and revising degree program learning goals; designing, delivering, and improving degree program curricula to achieve learning goals; and demonstrating that degree program learning goals have been met.  
[CURRICULA MANAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE OF LEARNING]
  - ▶ (AACSB, 2018).

# Assurance of Learning

- ▶ “Refers to processes for demonstrating that students achieve learning expectations for the programs in which they participate” (p. 32).
  - ▶ Demonstrate accountability to stakeholders
  - ▶ Improve programs
  - ▶ Evaluate student success
    - ▶ <https://www.aacsb.edu/-/media/aacsb/docs/accreditation/business/standards-and-tables/2018-business-standards.ashx?la=en&hash=B9AF18F3FA0DF19B352B605CBCE17959E32445D9>

# Assessment Movement in Higher Education

- ▶ Federal Government Higher Education Acts requiring accreditors to ensure that institutions of higher education are achieving their missions.
- ▶ Movement toward learner-centered education in the 90's.
- ▶ Body of research on "learner persistence" that identified the desirability of coherent curricula.
  - ▶ Suskie (May, 2017). A new paradigm for assessment. Blog. Retrieved from <https://www.lindasuskie.com/apps/blog/show/44545247-a-new-paradigm-for-assessment>



# Societal Context

- ▶ Total Quality Management (TQM) increased in popularity in U.S manufacturing and business in the 1980s into the 90s.
  - ▶ “Business Excellence”
- ▶ Quality movement in healthcare “took off” between 1995-2000.
- ▶ In both settings, the movement is characterized by customer/patient focus and continuous improvement through analyzing processes and outcomes, using specified techniques and metrics.



# Systematic Processes for Demonstrating that Degree Program Learning Goals Have Been Met

# Course Assessment

- ▶ Within the purview of individual faculty per AACSB
- ▶ The degree to which students meet course learning outcomes
- ▶ Primarily for the purpose of improving teaching of course content



# Course Assessment

- ▶ Course learning outcomes should logically link to program learning outcomes.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

# Example

## Course LO

- ▶ Examine the ways in which the research question and theoretical framework provide direction for the design and methods of a research study (MSN PO 1, 4, 9).
- ▶ Critique research studies using a systematic process MSN PO 1, 4).

## Program LO

- ▶ 1) Integrate knowledge from nursing and other disciplines to provide evidence-based care to diverse populations at an advanced-practice level.
- ▶ 4) Incorporate research outcomes within the clinical setting to resolve practice problems.

# Types of Course Assessment

## Direct

- ▶ Faculty or preceptor ratings of student performance
- ▶ Faculty grading or rating of student outputs/work such as test questions, papers, projects, etc.
  - ▶ "Artifacts"

## Indirect

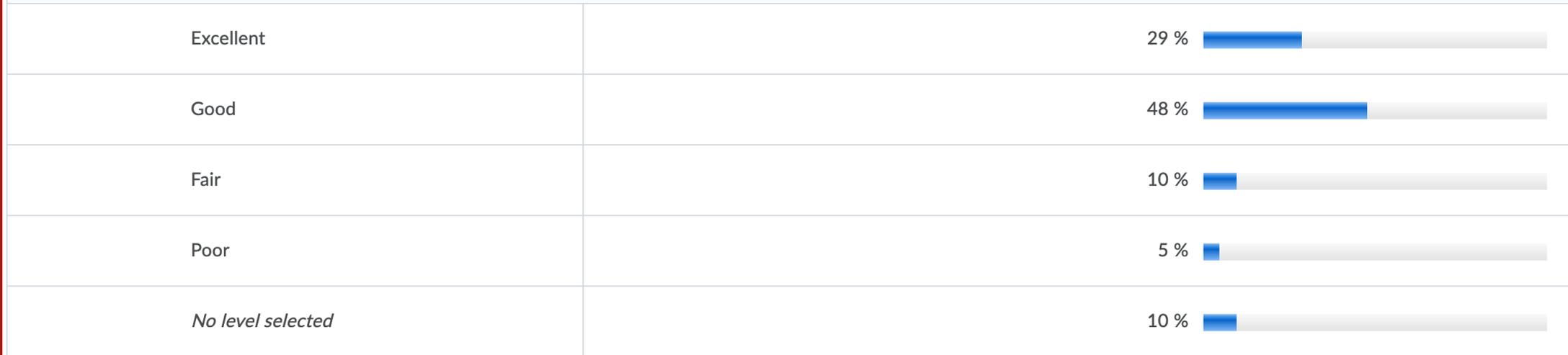
- ▶ Student self-ratings/ perceptions of their own learning
- ▶ General faculty judgments about student learning

# Example

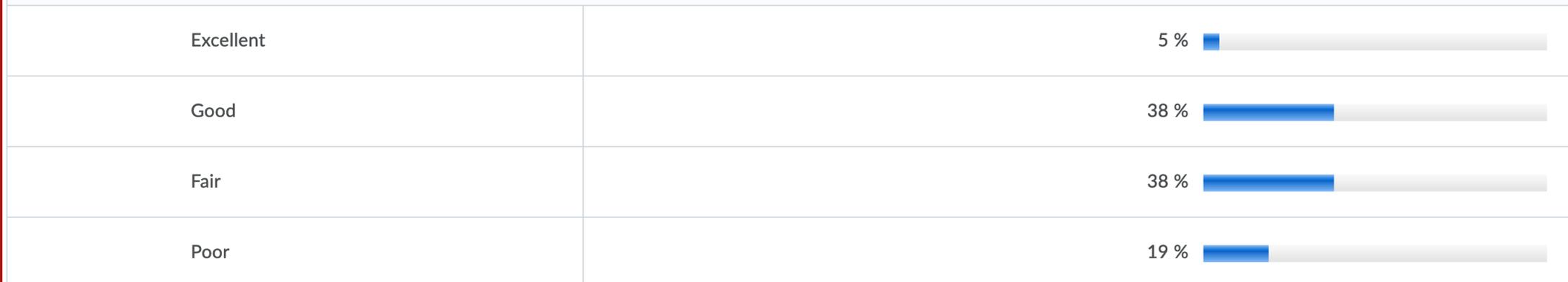
- ▶ Learning Outcome
  - ▶ Apply epidemiological principles to real world problems.
  - ▶ Artifact: Epidemiology paper

# Direct Assessment

## ▼ Content Development



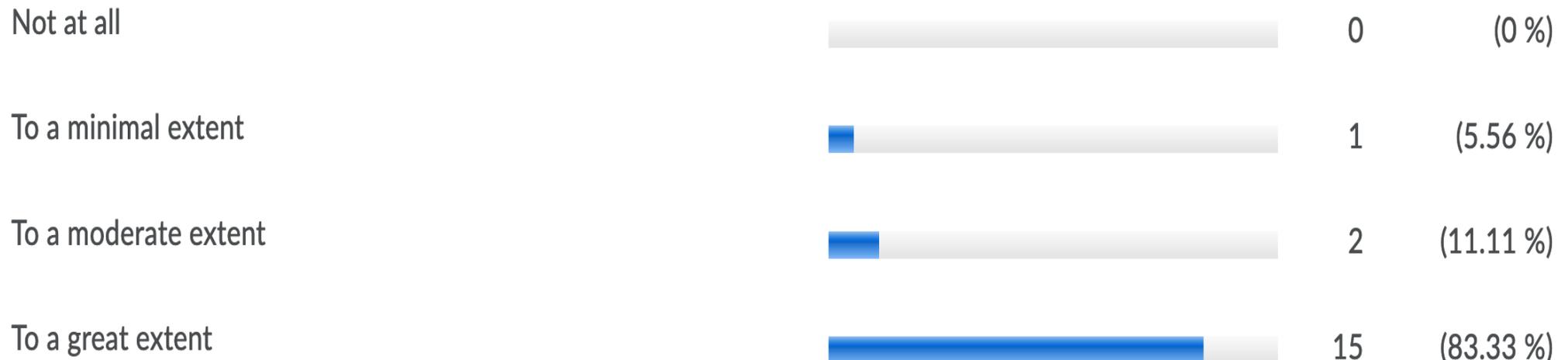
## ▼ Mechanics/Style



# Indirect Assessment

## Question 7

Rate the extent to which the course helped you to demonstrate an understanding of how to apply epidemiologic principles to real world problems.



# Program Assessment

Program Curriculum Map With Performance Targets

		Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3	Learning Outcome 4	Learning Outcome 5
Required	Course 100	1		1		
Required	Course 120		1		1	1
Required	Course 201		2	2		
Elective	Course 215				2	2
Required	Course 300	2		3		
Required	Course 330		3		2	3
Capstone	Course 410	3	3	3	3	3

Performance Goal

1	2	3
---	---	---

emerging    developing    proficient

- ▶ Program: Developed body of courses that receives transcript recognition (University of Scranton Faculty Handbook)

# Types of Program Assessment

- ▶ Direct
  - ▶ Course Embedded (e.g. student performance on a capstone assignment for a senior-level course) – Curriculum Map
  - ▶ General (e.g. Brumster Case; ETS subject exam; certification test pass rate)
- ▶ Indirect
  - ▶ General (e.g. student exit survey)



# Systematic Processes for Revising Degree Program Learning Outcomes and Improving Degree Program Curricula

# Close the Loop (i.e. do something with the information)

- ▶ Revise learning outcomes
- ▶ Improve curriculum
- ▶ "If it ain't broke... just document."



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

# Critique of Assessment

- ▶ Why can't we just use grades?
- ▶ Assessment threatens my academic freedom.
- ▶ It is difficult to measure student performance and to gather sound evidence for assessment.
- ▶ Everything isn't measurable.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)



# Assessment of Student Learning (“Assessment”)

MARY JANE K, DIMATTIO, PHD, RN  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON

# Learning Outcomes

- ▶ At the completion of today's discussion, the student will:
  - ▶ Define assessment within the context of AACSB Standards.
  - ▶ Describe three forces that converged to bring about the assessment movement in U.S. Higher Education.
  - ▶ Relate assessment in higher education to the quality movement in manufacturing, business, and healthcare.
  - ▶ Differentiate between course and program assessment.
  - ▶ Compare and contrast direct and indirect assessment.
  - ▶ Critique assessment in higher education.

# AACSB:

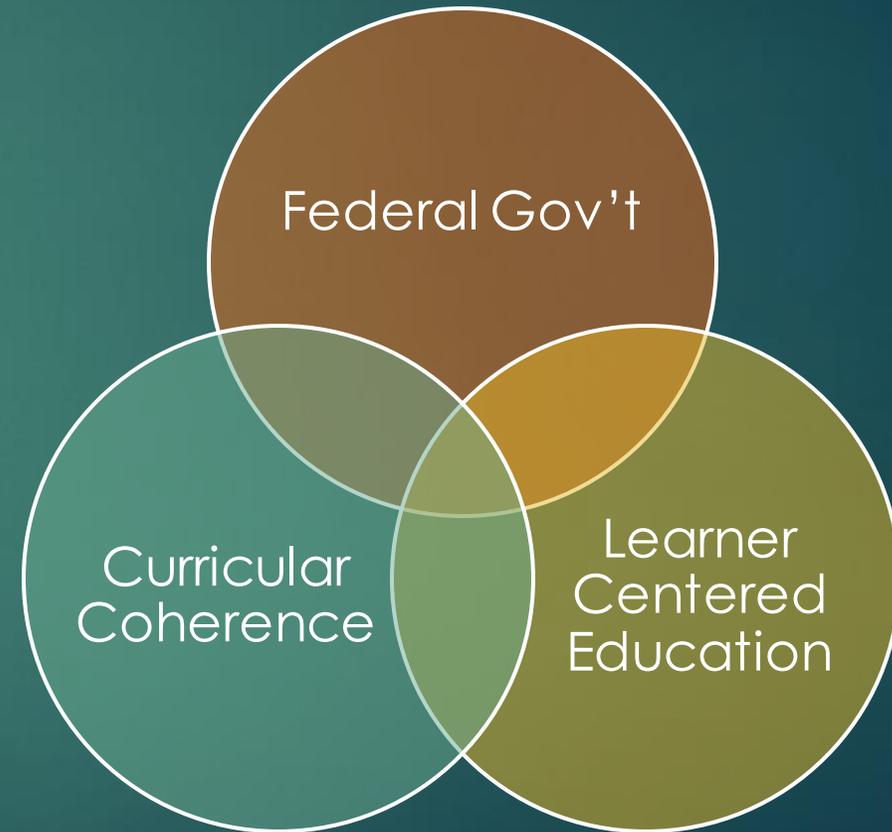
- ▶ Standard 8: The school uses well-documented, systematic processes for determining and revising degree program learning goals; designing, delivering, and improving degree program curricula to achieve learning goals; and demonstrating that degree program learning goals have been met.  
[CURRICULA MANAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE OF LEARNING]
  - ▶ (AACSB, 2018).

# Assurance of Learning

- ▶ “Refers to processes for demonstrating that students achieve learning expectations for the programs in which they participate” (p. 32).
  - ▶ Demonstrate accountability to stakeholders
  - ▶ Improve programs
  - ▶ Evaluate student success
    - ▶ <https://www.aacsb.edu/-/media/aacsb/docs/accreditation/business/standards-and-tables/2018-business-standards.ashx?la=en&hash=B9AF18F3FA0DF19B352B605CBCE17959E32445D9>

# Assessment Movement in Higher Education

- ▶ Federal Government Higher Education Acts requiring accreditors to ensure that institutions of higher education are achieving their missions.
- ▶ Movement toward learner-centered education in the 90's.
- ▶ Body of research on "learner persistence" that identified the desirability of coherent curricula.
  - ▶ Suskie (May, 2017). A new paradigm for assessment. Blog. Retrieved from <https://www.lindasuskie.com/apps/blog/show/44545247-a-new-paradigm-for-assessment>



# Societal Context



- ▶ Total Quality Management (TQM) increased in popularity in U.S manufacturing and business in the 1980s into the 90s.
  - ▶ “Business Excellence”
- ▶ Quality movement in healthcare “took off” between 1995-2000.
- ▶ In both settings, the movement is characterized by customer/patient focus and continuous improvement through analyzing processes and outcomes, using specified techniques and metrics.



Systematic Processes for  
Demonstrating that Degree Program  
Learning Goals Have Been Met

# Course Assessment

- ▶ Within the purview of individual faculty per AACSB
- ▶ The degree to which students meet course learning outcomes
- ▶ Primarily for the purpose of improving teaching of course content



# Course Assessment

- ▶ Course learning outcomes should logically link to program learning outcomes.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

# Example

## Course LO

- ▶ Examine the ways in which the research question and theoretical framework provide direction for the design and methods of a research study (MSN PO 1, 4, 9).
- ▶ Critique research studies using a systematic process MSN PO 1, 4).

## Program LO

- ▶ 1) Integrate knowledge from nursing and other disciplines to provide evidence-based care to diverse populations at an advanced-practice level.
- ▶ 4) Incorporate research outcomes within the clinical setting to resolve practice problems.

# Types of Course Assessment

## Direct

- ▶ Faculty or preceptor ratings of student performance
- ▶ Faculty grading or rating of student outputs/work such as test questions, papers, projects, etc.
  - ▶ "Artifacts"

## Indirect

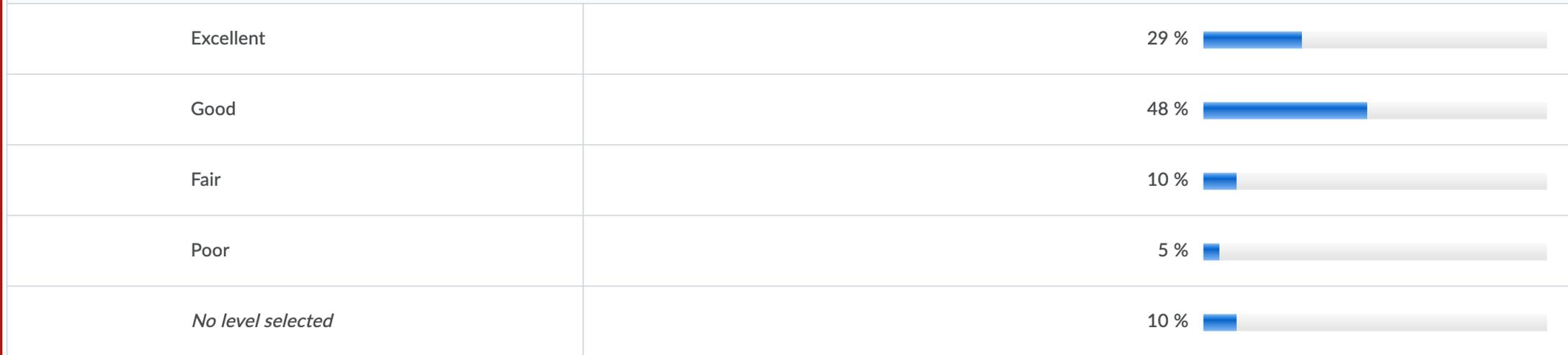
- ▶ Student self-ratings/ perceptions of their own learning
- ▶ General faculty judgments about student learning

# Example

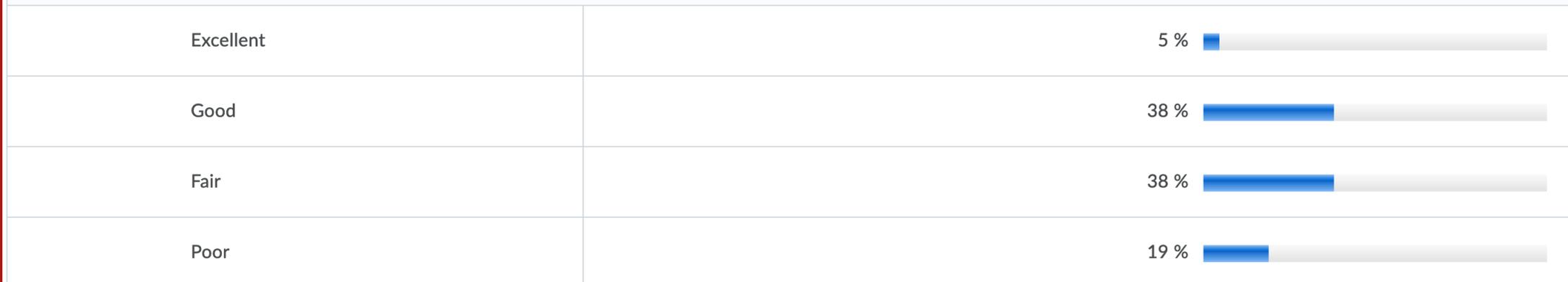
- ▶ Learning Outcome
  - ▶ Apply epidemiological principles to real world problems.
  - ▶ Artifact: Epidemiology paper

# Direct Assessment

## ▼ Content Development



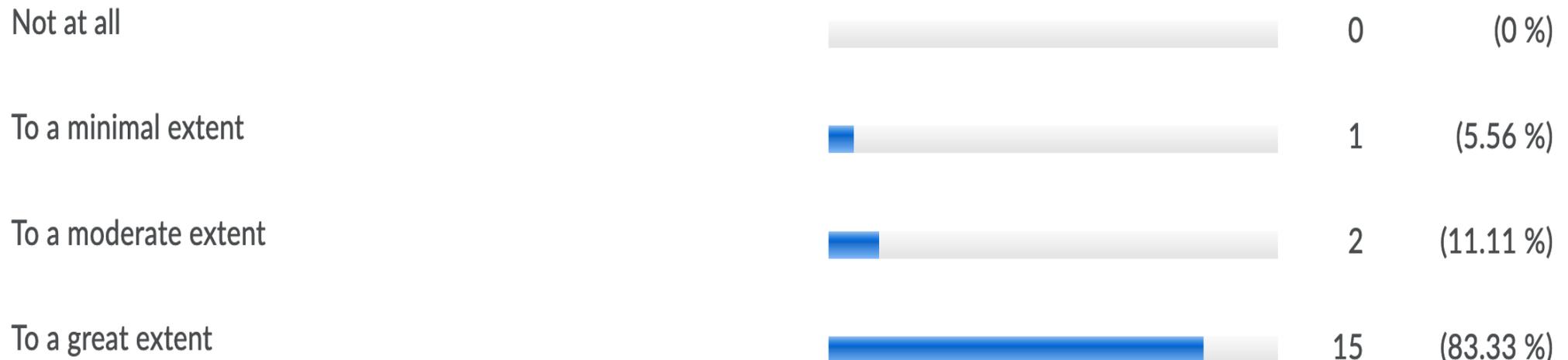
## ▼ Mechanics/Style



# Indirect Assessment

## Question 7

Rate the extent to which the course helped you to demonstrate an understanding of how to apply epidemiologic principles to real world problems.



# Program Assessment

Program Curriculum Map With Performance Targets

		Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3	Learning Outcome 4	Learning Outcome 5
Required	Course 100	1		1		
Required	Course 120		1		1	1
Required	Course 201		2	2		
Elective	Course 215				2	2
Required	Course 300	2		3		
Required	Course 330		3		2	3
Capstone	Course 410	3	3	3	3	3

Performance Goal

1	2	3
---	---	---

emerging    developing    proficient

- ▶ Program: Developed body of courses that receives transcript recognition (University of Scranton Faculty Handbook)

# Types of Program Assessment

- ▶ Direct
  - ▶ Course Embedded (e.g. student performance on a capstone assignment for a senior-level course) – Curriculum Map
  - ▶ General (e.g. Brumster Case; ETS subject exam; certification test pass rate)
- ▶ Indirect
  - ▶ General (e.g. student exit survey)



# Systematic Processes for Revising Degree Program Learning Outcomes and Improving Degree Program Curricula

# Close the Loop (i.e. do something with the information)

- ▶ Revise learning outcomes
- ▶ Improve curriculum
- ▶ "If it ain't broke... just document."



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

# Critique of Assessment

- ▶ Why can't we just use grades?
- ▶ Assessment threatens my academic freedom.
- ▶ It is difficult to measure student performance and to gather sound evidence for assessment.
- ▶ Everything isn't measurable.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)