ROBERT H. SMITH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS | OFFICE OF DIGITAL LEARNING

Assurance of Learning (AoL) FAQ

What is the Assurance of Learning Initiative?

The Assurance of Learning Initiative, known as AoL, is the primary tool used to make sure that we at the Maryland Smith School are equipping our students with the skills, knowledge, and behaviors they need to be successful in their future careers. For each degree program, faculty have identified a set of student learning objectives and meaningful, measurable, and curriculum-relevant assessments to capture data around student mastery. Data collection and reporting is a requirement for faculty teaching AoL-designated courses. Each year, student-learning data from all AoL courses is pooled and sent to designated faculty oversight committees, who then identify necessary curricular and/or programmatic improvements or changes.

Where Can I Find the Program Level Learning Objectives?

- Undergraduate Program Level Learning Objectives
- Specialty Masters Program Level Learning Objectives
- MBA Program Level Learning Objectives
- EMBA Program Level Learning Objectives

Where Should Program Level Learning Objectives be Assessed?

The intent of AOL is to evaluate students right before graduation. Therefore, learning objectives do not need to be measured in a course that is specifically focused on the learning objective content. As long as students are expected to demonstrate the behavior outlined in the learning objective, and there is a clear assessment mechanism, the learning objective can be placed in an advanced course.

How Many Students in the Program Should be Assessed?

Maryland Smith leadership have made it clear that they would like as many students as possible to be assessed. However, according to our accreditor, a minimum of 30% of the student body must be assessed.

Can I Assess Group Work?

No. All AOL data must come from individual assessment data. Group work does not provide a baseline for each student in the program, so it cannot be utilized for AOL purposes.

I am now teaching a course with an AOL learning objective. What do I need to do?

1. Speak with the course coordinator or prior faculty member to identify how they measured the learning objective. Ensure that the assignment and accompanying rubric are consistent with what was done previously (or contact aol (SHARED) to make an adjustment).
2. Administer the assessment within your course, ensuring that individual students are being assessed (no group work is allowed!).
3. Provide the results of the assessment to the AOL team. You will receive an email at the end of the semester requesting your AOL data via a form. Please complete that form in a timely manner.

Can I use grades for Exceeds Expectations (i.e., A), Meets Expectations (i.e., B), etc.?

No. If this was the case, we could simply look at GPAs, which really wouldn't tell us how students are performing on specific areas of content mastery. Please see our Rubric Resources to develop a rubric that will provide useful AOL data.

Questions?

Please reach out to your department chair with any questions regarding the Assurance of Learning initiative. Experts are available to meet with you to discuss assessment requirements in your course.