

## HLC Statement Regarding Measuring Student Learning

Institutions should measure student learning using a variety of direct and indirect measures and methods. Institutions should also consider incorporating into their program measures of cognitive learning (knowledge acquisition), behavioral learning (skill acquisition), and affective learning (attitudinal development). Serious assessment programs strive to understand the strengths and weaknesses of various sources of information and methods of gathering assessment data:

- **Direct indicators of learning** include pre- and post-testing; capstone courses; oral examinations; internships; portfolio assessments; evaluation of capstone projects, theses, or dissertations; standardized national exams; locally developed tests, performance on licensure, certification, or professional exams; and juried reviews and performances.
- **Indirect indicators of learning** might include information gathered from alumni, employers, and students; graduation rates; retention and transfer studies; graduate follow-up studies; success of students in subsequent institutional settings; and job placement data.
- **Data collection methods** include paper and pencil testing, essays and writing samples, portfolio collections of student work, exit interviews, surveys, focused group interviews, the use of external evaluators, logs and journals, behavioral observations, and many other research tools. Research methods should be tailored to the type of data to be gathered and the degree of reliability required.