How the assessment process may/can impact personal teaching style and focus
Using “best practices” as a guide

• In CJ derived from (ACJS) the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Guidelines

• ACJS provides the reader a seven section outline of assessment:
ACJS Assessment

- What is Assessment? What isn’t Assessment?
- Why do Assessment? What are the benefits?
- What to Assess
- Developing Program Assessment Plans
- Course-Embedded Assessment
- ACJS Certification Standards and Assessment
- Assessment Resources
Course-embedded assessment

• The academy advocates course embedded assessment for various reasons
• Engaging in course-embedded assessment has several advantages:
Advantages

• It is an “authentic” assessment activity.
• It is integrated into the regular activities of the classroom.
• Students are more likely to be motivated.
Advantages continued

- It has greater relevance to individual faculty members.
- It has very low costs/takes minimal time.
- It can be implemented “on the fly.”
• In addition to the central focus of examining student learning in specific courses, course-embedded assessment can be used to:
  • Help individual faculty members improve their pedagogy
  • Examine achievement of program outcomes
  • Inform institutional assessment initiatives
Practice at the Individual Level of the Instructor

Assessment mandated/provides a guide for the task

• The guidelines help to order your own world (the typical standard four class teaching load)

• Reform at this level forms the solid foundation for the overall assessment.
An example:

• From my own experience.
• Begin with syllabi
  – adjusting assignments and content to adhere to a rubric.
Evolution of course objectives for CJ 3130 Research Methodology

Before
• Expose the student to a broad range of research methods terminology.
• Become familiar with the different social science paradigms.
• Define the difference between qualitative and quantitative research.

After
• Expose the student to a broad range of research methods terminology.
• Become familiar with the different social science paradigms.
Comparison continued

Before

• Explain the logic of sampling and the difference between probability and non-probability sampling.
• Discuss the three purposes of research.
• Develop an understanding of the importance of reliability and validity in social science research.

After

• Provide the student opportunities to exhibit the ability to develop and utilize critical thinking skills as related to how knowledge is perceived.
• Define the difference between qualitative and quantitative research.
Comparison continued

**Before**
- Examine the various survey methods and the importance of survey construction.
- Explain how to design a research project.

**After**
- Provide the student a venue wherein they can develop communication skills as they are related to their chosen discipline of study.
- Provide the opportunity for the student to determine how diversity of every type can impact the research process and outcome.
After Objectives continued

• Provide the student the opportunity to understand the concept of ethics as it is related to social science research.
• Provide the student the opportunity to learn/develop technological computing skills as related to social science research.
• Explain the logic of sampling and the difference between probability and non-probability sampling.
After Objectives continued

• Discuss the three purposes of research.
• Develop an understanding of the importance of reliability and validity in social science research.
• Examine the various survey methods and the importance of survey construction.
Conclusion

• So, course embedded assessment is not only for a select group of “major courses” that can be used to generate raw materials (papers and projects) for the process such as:

• CJ 3130 Research Methodology
• CJ 3140 Data Analysis
• CJ 3750 Capstone
• To the contrary, this process should begin early as it progresses to those advanced courses.
• One must begin to incorporate assessment friendly assignments at the earlier level
• Important aspects, such as quantitative and critical thinking skills must be addressed from beginning to end.
CJ 2050 PyP of LE as an example

• This is typically a sophomore level course
• I have provided a section of time wherein we discuss many aspects related to being able to understand a typical research article (a research methodology concern)
• We discuss” the article” by breaking it into its many sections so that when the student arrives to 3130 they will have already been exposed
• And, with this exposure they will be much more likely to productively digest this information during research methodology

• An incremental approach to the article confusion/problem
• From this perspective it would appear that all of these important concepts and concerns:
  • A concern for diversity
  • Ethical thinking
  • Critical thinking
  • Quantitative skill advancement

Must be addressed early.
• One can not possibly do this in each class
• But with proper/careful coordination and planning, these areas can be addressed all during the four year process
• And, hopefully when the capstone day arrives the student is prepared to do their best