

Comments from the Editor

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This issue of *Research & Practice in Assessment* incorporates three articles that cover very different, but important topics. The first article by Pastor, Kaliski, and Weiss reveals how value-added assessment can be conducted at the institutional level. Using a locally-developed instrument, sound methodological procedures, and cutting-edge analyses they demonstrate that a repeated-measures design can be used to answer important questions about student learning.

In the second article Steinke and Fitch argue that institutions should incorporate service learning into assessment plans and reports. In part, this type of assessment could address critics of academia who claim that knowledge and skills obtained in higher education are not generalizable to the real world. To the contrary, service learning focuses on just this type of transfer. The authors also provide descriptions of several instruments commonly used to assess service learning.

The final piece by Ackermann details the historical shift of library assessment from a primary emphasis on resource utilization to a more complex and comprehensive model. In addition to resource utilization, libraries now assess learning outcomes such as information literacy. Through better assessment libraries are on a pathway to discern how their resources, instruction, and services impact student learning. Ackermann also provides details about instruments used to assess various components of libraries' effectiveness.

I hope you find these articles intellectually stimulating and that they provide you with ideas for assessment at your institution.

I would like to thank the Editorial Board for their contributions to this issue: Dr. John Willse, Dr. Robin Anderson, and Dr. Dorothy Doolittle. I would also like to introduce the new co-editor, Dr. Allen DuPont. Allen serves as the Director of Assessment, Division of Undergraduate Affairs at North Carolina State University. Not only will the journal benefit from his expertise, but his acceptance of this position also signifies a partnership between groups of assessment experts in Virginia and North Carolina and a willingness to tackle issues collaboratively.