**Defining Mastery, Progressing, Low/No Skills for Assessment**

For assessment of SLOs and ILOs, each academic department and program reports the level of mastery, progressing, and low/no skills in the assessment module each year during the Academic Program Review processes. Each program determines the level of competency that defines these levels for each assessment tool(s).

As the assessment data is reported through program review to the Office of Assessment, Evaluation, and Institutional Outcomes, the information reported is aggregated across the college for the purposes of institutional assessment and reporting to external agencies.

Per the request of departments and programs across the campus, the role of this document is to provide some guidance for setting the levels of performance in mastery, progressing, and low/no skill (MPL).

General things to keep in mind:

1. It is important to remember most students should be at the **progressing** level of performance. This is especially true in general education and transfer programs, especially at the 100 level of coursework. Most frequently, MPL will follow a normal distribution (bell-curve). If the data collected is distinctly different, the department may wish to contact the Assessment Office to discuss what the data may indicate.
2. Because assessment is a narrow piece of data on a single skill, a student can achieve **progressing** or even **low/no skills** and still pass the course. MPL levels do not equate to grades, although there can be correlation.
3. Criteria for MPL can differ from course to course in a program. An introductory course and a higher-level course can have different MPL criteria; however, MPL should be consistent within multiple sections of a single course.
4. Remember in setting the MPL level, this is NOT about faculty performance. This data is not shared at the class level or with faculty information. This is wholly about student performance.
5. Some programs have specialized accrediting or nationally normed exams students must take to practice in the field. A program may choose to set the M and P levels so that students who pass the exam will be assigned M or P, while students who fail will be assigned L.
6. MPL is used to provide standard reporting numbers institution wide. MPL may or may not be useful to a program, so programs are encouraged to use the assessment tool and the greater depth of data analysis applied to the results in any way that provides insights to inform curricular changes.

Setting the level of performance:

* The department might find it helpful to set the level of progressing first. What is the acceptable level of student performance for the ILO or SLO that is being assessed? As noted above, most students will fall in the progressing category.
* It is important to remember since the assessment question is focused on an area that needs student performance improvement, it is probable the first several collections of data will be *below* your benchmark. The planned interventions are designed to increase student’s learning and those numbers should increase over time.