

## TOOLBOX

In the last Issue of *Mentoring Mastery* I introduced a new resource that is being developed, the *Competency Assessment Worksheet*. For this issue of the *Tool Box*, I want to highlight and clarify the relationship between MLO emphasis (or competencies) and assignments (ODAs).

To demonstrate the components and usefulness of the resource, I am using NV 501 - "Embracing Fellowship with God" as an example. Please note, I am outlining only the first competency/MLO emphasis of the five emphases.

NV 501: Embracing Fellowship with God											
<b>A. Life Impacted</b>	<b>Demonstrates a life impacted by fellowship and intimacy with God that effectively results in making His mission their mission</b>										
	Students will demonstrate a life that has been authentically and ongoingly impacted by cherishing the fellowship and love-driven intimacy with the Triune God, making His mission their mission.										
	<i>Grading Rubric</i>				A+	A	A-	B+	INCOMPLETE		
					Absolute Mastery	Competent Mastery	Growing Mastery	Reasonable Mastery	Developing Proficiency	Emerging Confidence	Initial Engagement
	<i>Mentor Assessment</i>										
<i>ODAs</i>	Micro-Course - Embracing Fellowship with God Reading - Desires and Disciples in Fellowship with God - A/D Reflection - Student's Journey: History and Assessment - A/C/D/E										
<i>Supplemental ODAs</i>											

The addition that you should note is that this resource now ties the ODAs associated with the development or display of the specific competency/MLO emphases.

The Northview Immerse curriculum is designed in such a way that each MLO has associated with it between 4-6 MLO emphases or competencies. In theory, when students submit an ODA and mentors affirm completion of the ODA to their satisfaction, they are also indicating (passively and tacitly) that the associated MLO emphasis has also been completed and affirmed. Or are they?

One of the distinctive features of a competency-based curriculum like Immerse is that the goal is the mastery of competencies and outcomes, not the completion of assignments. This requires a bit of a paradigm shift. Since the predominant educational paradigm still associates the completion of assignments with completing course requirements, often both mentors and students inadvertently (because of the conventional assignment paradigm) gravitate towards the submission and completion of assignments as equal with the mastery of the associated competency. In fact, this

perspective needs to be flip-flopped. This can be a significant obstacle to overcome to properly administer the competency-based paradigm. The question we need to ask in the competency-based model is, “has the completed assignment accomplished its purpose in developing and/or demonstrating mastery of the competency?” This is where the focus of our student/mentor engagement should take place - not around completion of the assignment, but upon the development and demonstration of the associated competency.

The usefulness of this spreadsheet is that it more readily aligns the MLO emphases/competencies with the ODAs designed to develop and/or display the competency. The result hopefully will be a greater emphasis on whether the **outcome emphasis** has “been mastered” over whether the **assignment** has “been completed.”

Note however, a completed assignment (ODA) does give us as mentors, both individually and as a team, the opportunity to assess whether the competency associated with the assignment has been mastered. Once again, this spreadsheet outlines a rubric for the individual mentors to assess mastery of the outcome emphasis. If an appropriate level of mastery has been demonstrated, then theoretically, that competency/emphasis can be considered complete (for that mentor) and graded.

Another practical use for the spreadsheet is that it gives space to make notes and observations that both affirm and challenge mastery. Identifying indicators of what has been observed, and what you would like to see observed, is helpful as mentors discern where growth is needed and to document affirmed mastery. This can be very helpful in student conversations and mentor team discussions pertaining to mastery.

Another useful application is for specifying the use of supplemental ODAs to target specific competencies or combinations of competencies.

One final and important point in using the format in this spreadsheet is that it makes more evident the relationship of assignments with specific facets of the MLO being developed. I have observed times where a number of ODAs were submitted, but all towards the same MLO emphasis. Again, the emphasis of assignments submitted over MLO emphasis being pursued is evident as an imbalance in the completion of individual MLOs. Understanding this design component should help both students and mentors plan and pursue ODAs that target specific competency development and completion. Work smarter - not harder!

As you can hopefully see, a resource like this has the potential to simplify the complexity of development and assessment by organizing the more complex descriptions into component parts that are easier to define, assess and align.

The ultimate goal of this resource is to have each of the Northview Immerse Ministry Leadership Outcomes (MLOs) outlined individually. The current pursuit is to complete the work of reverse engineering the MLOs over the course of the summer months. However, if there is a particular MLO that you would like fast-tracked in its development to assist your student and team in a more immediate way - let me know. I am more than happy to adjust my plans to benefit yours.