APC Report: Assessment Tools

Assessment Tool Matrix Explanation:

The attached assessment tool matrix indicates the tools utilized to assess the individual defined student learning outcomes. The following are explanations for the specific tool designations.

A= Assignments- This would include problems, article readings with related study questions and concept application questions, assigned for work outside of class.
C= Case Studies- A case study may be thought of as a document, text, story, or event, utilized as a vehicle for discussion. The key is the discussion where students develop critical thinking skills through applying concepts and theories as a means to confront issues which the instructor wants to emphasize (Boehrer & Linsky, 1990).
D= Discussion- This would include formal and informal discussions on course related topic and readings.
E= Program Evaluation- At this point we have not defined a specific type of program evaluation. We are exploring, through grant funded research, the possibility of a content area standardized exam. We will also be discussing other possibilities such as student research presentations or a capstone course.
L= Lab Experiments or Exercises- This would include formal lab reports, lab related questions, hypothesis testing labs and others.
O= Observation- This would be instructor observation of desired outcome in lecture (including small group activities) and lab settings.
P= Presentation- Presentations would include oral or poster presentations on a research project or course related topic.
R= Written Assignments, Papers- This would include research papers and writings where a student reflects on course related concepts, questions and/or readings.
S= Active Learning- This includes concept application questions or problems that students do in class as a group or individually, and then the answers are discussed in small groups or the class as a whole providing immediate assessment of student learning.
T= Traditional Exams and Quizzes- This would include traditional exams, quizzes, group quizzes and take home exams.
I= Student Exit Interviews- These are surveys that graduating seniors fill out giving us feedback on our program and their experiences here in the Biology Department.
V= Student Evaluations- These are student evaluations of individual courses and the respective instructors.

The Biology Department also has a Biology Advisory Council already in place. This council is made up of professionals in different areas of biology who give us advice and feedback on our program.

Other modes of program evaluation include professional, graduate and job placement rates. We also may consider exploring increasing graduate, professional and employer feedback.