

Waypoint Outcomes™

Authentic Assessment

What is outcomes data?

Faculty, deans, provosts, IT professionals - it seems almost everyone is talking about **outcomes assessment** these days.

But what kinds of data can help faculty and administrators improve curricula and satisfy the increasingly stringent requirements of accrediting agencies like WASC, ABET, AACSB, NCATE, and SACS?

Multiple choice tests and end-of-course surveys provide data, but they do not effectively assess the more complex skills that are so crucial to success both in the classroom and in the workforce. To develop **authentic data** on student learning, schools must assess students on complex tasks.

Waypoint Results

- Saves hundreds of hours generating outcomes data
- Leverages existing investment in Learning Management Systems
- Creates better feedback for students
- Facilitates a culture of assessment

“Waypoint is non-intrusive; professors do not have to devote additional hours to assessment. Grading and assessment become one process instead of two or even three.”

- Salvatore Lenzo, Professor and Director of Information Systems, Sellinger School of Business at Loyola College in Maryland

What is authentic assessment?

- ✓ Standardize and align **assessment** across multiple courses or sections.
- ✓ Preserve **creative freedom** for faculty.
- ✓ Improve the timeliness and **quality of feedback** to students.
- ✓ Develop rich data **while** creating student response, not in addition to it.
- ✓ Assess all types of student work, **not** just electronic documents or portfolios.

Educators know that authentic tasks, such as essays, reports, presentations, discussion posts, portfolios, and team projects, are the best measures of student learning. The research shows that prompt, detailed feedback on these kinds of tasks is vital if students are to learn and grow.

Waypoint features customizable, **interactive rubrics** to help faculty create exceptional feedback for students in just a few mouse clicks. Feedback can be easily edited to customize a response to an individual student, then printed, emailed, or exported to an LMS gradebook.

Waypoint helps faculty collaborate to build consensus on assessment practices and define course-level and program-level goals. Along with better feedback for students and rich data on authentic tasks, schools benefit from the development of the systematic assessment practices that accrediting bodies increasingly require.

“Other software purporting to generate assessment data served only our administrative needs. Waypoint helps model the kinds of response and criteria-based assessment we want our undergrad and grad students using in their own teaching.”

- Dr. Patricia Rogers, Dean of the School of Education and Graduate Studies
Valley City State University

A Unique Approach:

Faculty access **Waypoint** through a **Learning Management System**, such as the Blackboard Learning Management System™ or Moodle Course Management System. Unlike some assessment software, Waypoint is not tied to the student work that will be assessed.

Student work might be in hardcopy, an electronic file, or even a live presentation. Faculty use the Waypoint web interface to quickly and easily create feedback for students using interactive rubrics tied to **customized learning outcomes**. These rubrics can be easily shared among teams of teachers, leveraging the work of faculty who are early Waypoint adopters.

Waypoint is used to assess and respond to work in a **vast array of disciplines**, from discussion posts in a nursing program, to lesson plans in an undergraduate education program, to in-class essays in an English class, to complex content-specific assignments like engineering reports, legal briefs, and business school case study analyses.

Faculty can also use Waypoint to structure and manage **peer review and self-assessment**, or to supervise Teaching Assistants and encourage standardized responses across multiple sections.

Our partnership with the University of Kansas' **RubiStar** website means faculty have the power of 140,000 rubrics behind them – all of which can be made interactive with a few clicks.

The screenshot shows the Waypoint interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Table of Contents' and 'Content' tabs, and a status indicator 'Incomplete' with a weight of '.00 (.0%)'. Below this is a rubric for 'Table of Contents' with five items. Item 3, 'ToC is missing so...', is checked. A feedback comment is visible for item 3, addressed to 'Chris'. The comment starts with 'This is an extremely polished essay that argues (with a small 'a') a consistent point.' and continues with advice on making a thesis statement more compelling. Below the comment, there's a section titled '1. Project 2 Overall Response: Argument, Evidence, and Writing' with two bullet points. The first bullet point states: 'You have written a **well-reasoned** and substantiated essay that focuses on a **central argument**. This is solid work, and improvement can only come through even more original or finely argued writing. Most likely, this advance will come through increasing the sophistication in your writing (increased sentence complexity, original phrasings, a more developed organizational structure) and seeing more connections between various evidence that you use.' The second bullet point states: 'You use **evidence particularly well** in advancing and analyzing your case.'

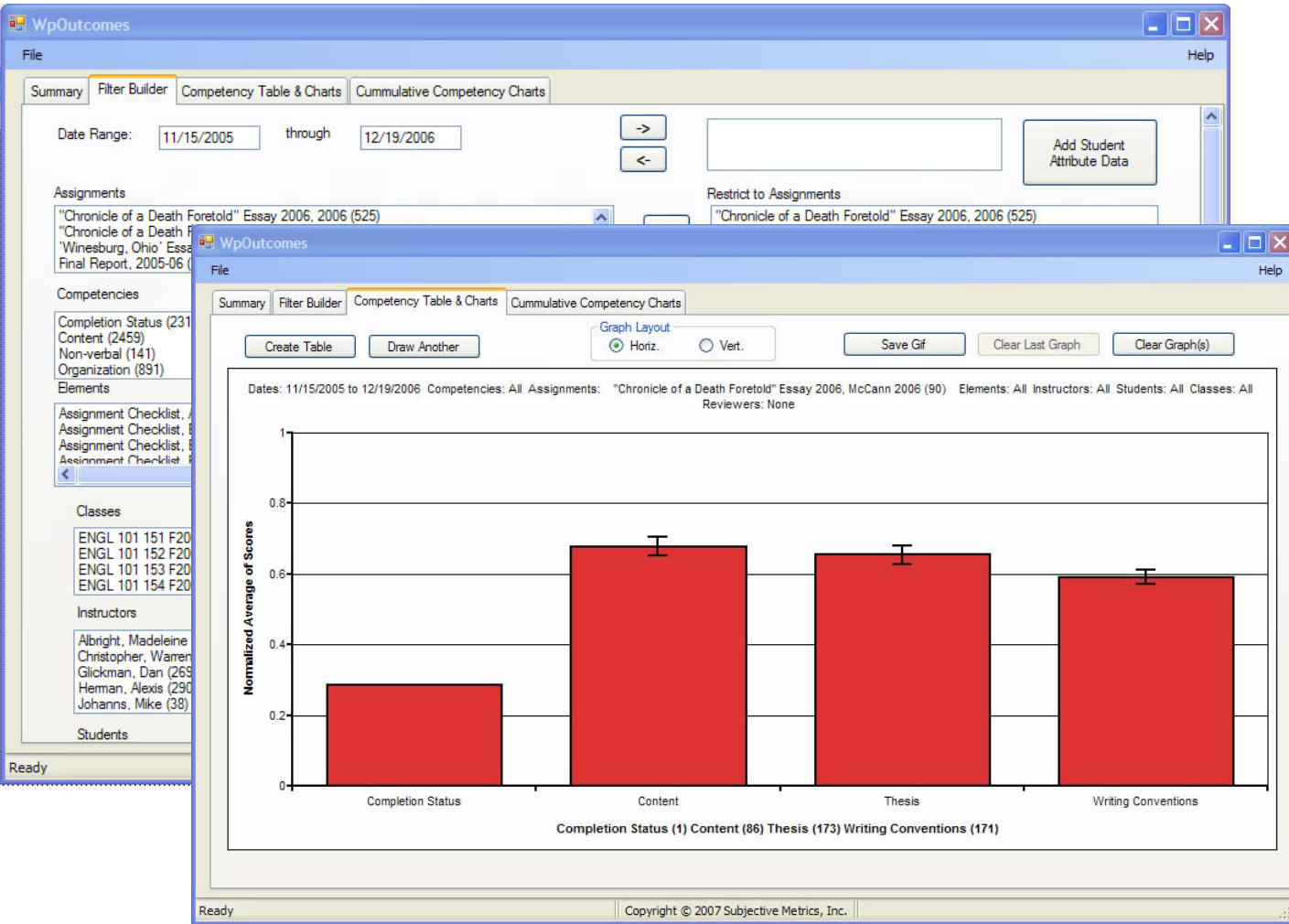
A sample interactive rubric and the kind of feedback faculty create with Waypoint

"I never had students comment on my comments before. But my students love the feedback I create with Waypoint. I receive numerous comments from them telling me how helpful they find it."

- Mitch Nathanson, Professor of Law
Villanova Law School

The Waypoint System:

While faculty and students use Waypoint via a web interface tied to a school e-learning platform of choice, assessment coordinators and administrators can utilize **WpOutcomes**, a powerful PC-based analysis program that makes analyzing and reporting authentic assessment data a simple process. WpOutcomes makes it it easy to download data tables, build queries, create charts, and **cross assessment data with demographics** – all without any specialized knowledge of databases or spreadsheet programs. With a few clicks administrators can create detailed graphs comparing cohort performance, tracking progress of skills across an entire undergraduate program, or producing data required by accrediting agencies.



Learn More:

Contact us to learn more about our customized learning outcomes, case studies of successful implementations, and the diverse ways that educators are using Waypoint to improve feedback and generate rich data on student achievement.

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