1 student.
1 outcome.
1 score.

The triptych above can help us avoid common mistakes found in faculty assessment reports. Below are explanations of the most often found errors and how/why to avoid them.

Most often occurring errors:

Scores derived from team projects/assignments:
Team projects most often receive a single grade that may differentiate from student to student based on peer evaluations. This does not allow a faculty member to know to what extent each student achieved learning on a single SLOs.

Assignment/Exam grades used as assessment scores:
Unless an assignment or exam is designed to challenge students on exactly one SLO, the grade will likely include many variables like grammar, citations, logic, argument, etc. And exams often cover broad areas of knowledge.

There are easy ways to use a grading rubric wherein one facet of the assignment addresses an SLO. Then we are able to use the score for that element as an assessment score. Likewise, using one or more short answer questions on an exam can work for a single SLO. Or using a set of objective questions can measure learning on the assessment scale of 1-5.

All students receiving the same score:
We know that all students have varying levels of learning and performance. When an entire class of students receive the same assessment score, it could be an indicator that the instrument or measure may not be rigorous.

Multiple SLOs receiving the same score:
Every SLO must be assessed separately. Let's look at the Discernment and Discourse (writing) for example. There are 5 SLOs that cover: thesis; paragraph; tone; grammar, citations. D&D Faculty use one long written assignment and score students separately on each SLO. The same must be true for all UC components carrying multiple SLOs.

*Need help? Advice on constructing assignments or exams? Please ask. **assessment@smu.edu***