

Assessment of Learning Basics I and II

From Outcomes to Feedback Loops
and Spirals
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What is assessment?

"Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development"

- Marchese, in Palomba and Banta,
Assessment Essentials, 1999.

Assessment is...

- v Discovering what students are learning
- v Determining if actual learning meets expectations
- v Improving future learning by
 - v Changing curriculum
 - v Changing delivery
 - v Changing access to resources

Assessment should...

- v Provide a framework within which programs (instructors, administrators, perhaps other campus stakeholders) can participate in discussions about student learning
- v Provide data that instructors and programs can use to advocate for students, programs, and possibly themselves
- v Be ongoing and situated in both local and national contexts

Assessment on a Budget

A Context for These Sessions

Budget Limitations

- √ Resources
 - √ Fiscal
 - √ Human
 - √ Physical
- √ Time
 - √ Of Students, Faculty and Staff
- √ Motivation
 - √ Of Students, Faculty and Staff

Some Ideas???

- √ Sampling
- √ Using volunteers
- √ Double-dipping
- √ Learning from others
- √ _____
- √ _____
- √ _____

Some common terminology

- √ Assessment/evaluation
- √ Goals/objectives/outcomes
- √ Qualitative/quantitative
- √ Validity/reliability
- √ Formative/summative

Six Fundamental Questions of Assessment of Student Learning

- √ How are your stated student learning outcomes appropriate to your mission, programs, and degrees?
- √ What evidence do you have that students achieve your stated learning outcomes?
- √ In what ways do you analyze and use evidence of student learning?

Questions, con't

- √ How do you ensure shared responsibility for student learning?
- √ How do you evaluate and improve the effectiveness of your efforts to assess and improve student learning?
- √ In what ways do you inform the public about what students learn—and how well they learn it?

**Criterion Three:
Student Learning and Effective Teaching**

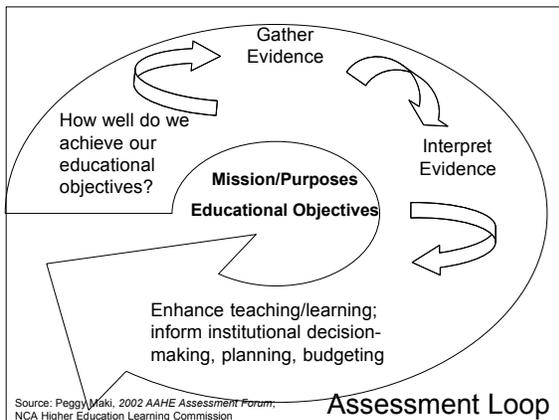
The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its education mission.

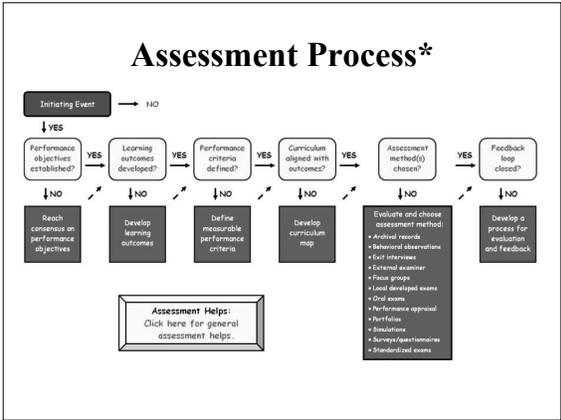
Core Components

- √ 3a. The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.
- √ 3b. The organization values and supports effective teaching.

Core Components

- √ 3c. The organization creates effective learning environments.
- √ 3d. The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.





OUTCOMES

- ✓ State expectation of student performance
- ✓ Describe what a student can *do* with what s/he *knows*
- ✓ Focus on lasting results of courses, programs, missions

CONNECTING OUTCOMES

Institutional Mission
relates to
Program Purpose
relates to
Course Purpose
relates to
Course segments

RUBRIC EXAMPLE*

	4 - Exceeds Criteria	3 - Meets Criteria	2 - Progressing to Criteria	1 - Below Expectations
Content	Provides ample supporting detail to support solution/argument.	Provides adequate supporting detail to support solution/argument.	Some details but may include extraneous or loosely related material.	Inconsistent or few details that may interfere with the meaning of the text.
Organization	Organizational pattern is logical & conveys completeness & wholeness.	Organizational pattern is logical & conveys completeness & wholeness with few lapses.	Little completeness & wholeness, though organization attempted.	Little evidence of organization or any sense of wholeness & completeness.
Style	Uses effective language; makes engaging, appropriate word choices for audience & purpose.	Uses effective language & appropriate word choices for intended audience & purpose.	Limited & predictable vocabulary, perhaps not appropriate for intended audience & purpose.	Limited or inappropriate vocabulary for the intended audience & purpose.
	Consistently follows the rules of standard English.	Generally follows the rules for standard English.	Generally does not follow the rules of standard English.	Does not follow the rules of standard English.

MEASURES

- v **DIRECT:** uses performance or product, created by students, that can be compared to expected outcomes

- v **INDIRECT:** uses information that does not directly link the learning to the outcomes

*

Method	Direct	Indirect	Method	Direct	Indirect
Exit and Other Interviews		✓	Locally Developed Exams	✓	
Simulations	✓		External Examiner	✓	
Behavioral Observations	✓		Written Surveys, Questionnaires		✓
Archival Data		✓	Portfolios	✓	
Focus Groups		✓	Oral Exams	✓	
Performance Appraisal	✓		Standardized Exams	✓	

Assessment: What good is it?

- v Students learn when we and they are clear about what they are expected to learn.
- v Students learn better when they receive frequent, specific feedback about their work
- v Faculty know more about student learning and can direct teaching efforts more efficiently

What good is it?

- v Faculty can agree on and better envision student learning outcomes for programs and can teach more effectively.
- v Rationale for curriculum design and course sequencing is clearer so advising and teaching are improved.
- v Faculty can show evidence to students, parents, colleagues, and outside stakeholders about what students actually learned.

What I wish I knew then that I know NOW

- v You can NOT do everything: build a sequential assessment process/program
- v There is not a RIGHT way to do assessment: use what fits your mission and your culture
- v Avoid the “data dump”: less is more
- v Provide opportunity for early successes
- v Faculty evaluation ≠ assessment



Martha Stewart College**

Bachelor of Arts Degree,
Party Planning Major

Martha Stewart College: BA, Party Planning Program Outcomes

All students with a major in Party Planning will be able to:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Bachelor of Arts in Party Planning

Core Courses:

- √ Introduction to Party Planning
- √ Party Budgeting and Purchasing
- √ Fundamentals of Catering
- √ Home Decoration
- √ Crisis Management
- √ Capstone Course/Internship

PPL 201: *Fundamentals of Catering*

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Create and develop food and beverage menus for a variety of parties.
2. Budget and price menus for a variety of parties.
3. Develop realistic timelines for delivering and preparing food and ancillary party accoutrements.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of food varieties and appropriateness for different occasions.
5. Make appropriate decisions regarding staffing at a variety of parties.

**Assessing Learning in
*Fundamentals of Catering***

How would you determine whether or not students achieve these objectives?

Assessing Student Learning

1. What kinds of approaches were used?
2. What other objectives (i.e., General Education) might also be assessed in this course?
3. Will the results serve as “Credible Evidence?”

Do these outcomes...

- v Focus on critical abilities, knowledge and skills developed over time?
- v Focus on integrative capacities?
- v Guide the curriculum?
- v Focus on what a graduate should be able to do after the degree?

RESOURCES

- v General link:
<http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm#gen>
- v Handbooks
<http://www.cod.edu/Dept/Outcomes/AssessmentBook.pdf>
<http://129.219.216.161/assess/assessguide.pdf>

RESOURCES

- v Assessment pages
<http://www.k-state.edu/assessment/index.htm>
<http://www.austincc.edu/oiepub/index.html>
<http://webport.cgc.maricopa.edu/published/s/lo/sloac/home/2/>

Acknowledgments

- √ Sue Darby
- √ Cia Verschelden
- √ Bob Mundhenk**
- √ Higher Learning Commission Staff
- √ Dr. Gloria Rogers*, ABET, www.abet.org

10 Steps for Evaluating the Achievement of Student Learning Outcomes in Academic Programs

Developed by Jeanne L. Wissmann
and Gary Heisserer, Graceland
University

Activity

- √ Focus on either
 - √ An academic program (major or minor)
 - √ A specific course
 - √ A general education program, or
 - √ A co-curricular program

The Ten Steps

- √ 1. Identify student learning outcomes
- √ 2. Identify courses/activities for each outcome
- √ 3. Identify actual measurements
- √ 4. Develop criteria
- √ 5. Create benchmarks

The Ten Steps

- √ 6. Develop a plan
- √ 7. Collect data
- √ 8. Summarize and evaluate results
- √ 9. Take action
- √ 10. Evaluate success of actions

Assessing Co-Curricular Learning

THREE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

- λ How are stated student learning outcomes appropriate to your mission and programs?
- λ In what ways do you analyze and use evidence of student learning?
- λ How do you ensure shared responsibility for assessment of student learning?

IMPROVING LEARNING AS INSTITUTIONAL GOAL

- λ How do non-instructional areas contribute to that goal?
- λ How do non-instructional areas facilitate that goal?
- λ How do non-instructional areas produce learning? How do they know they've done so? What do they do to improve the learning they produce?

IS THERE SUCH A THING AS
A "NON-INSTRUCTIONAL AREA"?

CHANGING THE PARADIGM

λ If interactions between students and staff can develop learning, then the model of "teaching" and the responsibility for learning shift to one that is institution-wide, more interactive, more intentional, and more focused on institutional outcomes and student development

ONCE UPON A TIME. . .

λ Co-curricular learning was limited to such things as:

- Self-actualization
- Study and self-management skills
- Leadership
- Cultural Awareness

ONCE UPON A TIME . . .

λ And its assessment tended to be based on:

- Surveys
- Self-reports and other reflective devices
- "Engagement" measures

TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION

- λ "Teaching" shifts away from an information transfer orientation to one that enables students to integrate what they learn into what they do.
- λ Students need to become "*intentional learners* who can adapt to new environments, integrate knowledge from different sources, and continue learning throughout their lives."
(*Greater Expectations*)

TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION

- λ Learning, development, and identity formation are interactive and shape each other
- λ No separation between academic instruction and student development
- *Learning Reconsidered and Learning Reconsidered*
2
(NASPA, ACPA, et al.)

CROSS-CAMPUS RESPONSIBILITY

- λ Under this model, all areas on campus are responsible for learning
- λ Student learning and development are not separate concepts or activities
- λ All aspects of student experience may have a role in producing and improving learning

TWO TYPES OF MEASURES

- λ EFFICIENCY
- λ EFFECTIVENESS

EFFICIENCY MEASURES

- λ Participation rates:
 - λ How many students engage in activities or enroll in programs
- λ Graduation and retention rates
- λ User rates
 - λ How many students use services
 - λ How many books circulate from the library
 - λ How many times distance ed students log on

EFFICIENCY MEASURES

- λ Economic indicators:
 - λ Room utilization
 - λ Cost per FTE
 - λ Enrollments in sections/ majors in programs
 - λ Event attendees
- λ Limited and somewhat mechanistic approach, with only inferential connection to learning—at best

OLD MEASURES OF FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- λ How well is an office or service performing its stated mission?
- λ How well and how directly does that mission align with the institutional mission, especially with regard to student learning and development?
- λ How does it know it is fulfilling its mission?

RETHINKING EFFECTIVENESS

- λ Student Performance:
 - λ Are student grades higher as a result of tutoring?
 - λ Do certain environments produce better student work?
 - λ Does course scheduling affect student performance?
 - λ How does an office/area know it has affected student success?

USEFUL SOURCES FOR MEASURING FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- λ James O. Nichols and Karen W. Nichols:
A Road Map for Improvement of Student Learning and Support Services through Assessment (2005)
- λ Chapter 9 specifically deals with administrative and educational support areas

USEFUL SOURCES FOR MEASURING FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- λ John Schuh and M. Lee Upcraft:
Assessment in Student Affairs: A Guide for Practitioners (1996)
- Assessment Practice in Student Affairs: An Applications Manual* (2000)

A BROADER MODEL OF EFFECTIVENESS

- λ Applies effectiveness model *beyond* functional domain
- λ Student development as a learning process:
 - λ Learning through action, contemplation, reflection, and emotional engagement as well as information acquisition
 - λ Thus all areas affecting student development are part of—and responsible for—student learning

EXCELLENT SOURCES ON LEARNING EFFECTIVENESS

- λ Bresciani, Zelna, and Anderson:
 - λ *Assessing Student Learning and Development* (2004)
- λ NASPA, ACPA:
 - λ *Learning Reconsidered* (2004)
 - λ *Learning Reconsidered 2* (2006)

INTERTWINED OUTCOMES

- λ Cognitive complexity
- λ Knowledge acquisition, integration, and application
- λ Classroom work, problem-based learning; campus media, diversity programs
- λ Majors, group projects; living-learning communities, information literacy

INTEGRATED OUTCOMES

- λ Civic engagement
- λ Interpersonal/intrapersonal competence
- λ Service learning; student government, community service, judicial boards
- λ Classroom projects and discussions, lab teams; student employment, advising and counseling, tutoring

HOW DO WE CREATE AND ASSESS THESE OUTCOMES?

CO-CURRICULAR LEARNING

- λ Planning the outcomes of co-curricular activities in the context of institutional learning outcomes is critical
- λ Assessing them should focus on the transformation that occurs in the student(s) as a result of the experience
- λ Mapping development is a necessary concomitant of planning and assessing

PLANNING THE LEARNING

- λ Define the outcome and its manifestation
 - λ WHAT
- λ Decide responsibility and process
 - λ WHERE
 - λ HOW
 - λ WHO
- λ Determine a strategy for assessment

A VISIT TO BRINYMEAD

The Student Affairs Division

AN IDEAL WORLD

- λ Areas strive to be efficient in the context of institutional effectiveness in producing learning
- λ Actions and planning are in the context of institutional learning mission
- λ Actions are assessed in terms of institutional learning mission, not merely in terms of efficiency

STRIVING FOR THE IDEAL

- λ Seeing students as becoming makers of meaning for themselves and for society
- λ Thus cognitive, affective, ethical, and social development become part of learning
- λ Defining a role in transformative learning:
 - λ Academic context
 - λ Social context
 - λ Institutional context

STRIVING FOR THE IDEAL

λ What effect would a learning effectiveness model have on educational support and co-curricular areas?

- Library
- Tutoring
- International Studies
- Service Learning

STRIVING FOR THE IDEAL

λ What effect would a learning effectiveness model have on administrative offices?

- Registrar
- Buildings and Grounds
- Placement

STRIVING FOR THE IDEAL

- λ Cross-institutional discussion of institutional learning outcomes
- λ Cross-institutional planning and coordination of student learning
- λ Cross-institutional development and use of common rubrics
- λ Cross-institutional collaboration on strategies for improvement

○ ○ ○ | **Assessing General Education**

Janice Denton

○ ○ ○ | **With thanks to . . .**

Ric Shrubbs, Rebecca Timmons, Marie Baehr, Tanya Breidenbach, and Steve Mohr

○ ○ ○ | **General Education Outcomes**

Should focus on

- General, transferable learning outcomes, not classroom procedures or course-specific content
- Abilities developed and sustained over time

○○○ | **General Education Outcomes**

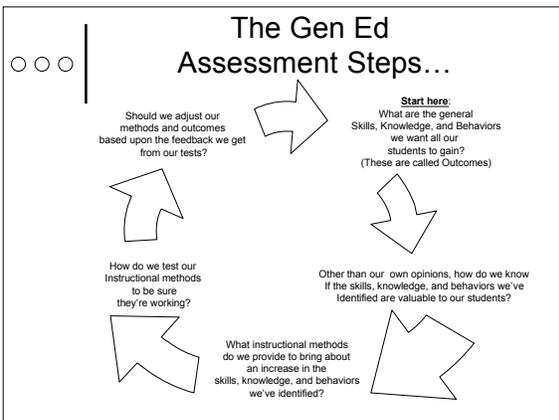
Should be

- Measurable according to what students know, how they behave, or what they can do
- Developed in more than one course or experience
- Linked to the institution's broad mission

○○○ | **Assessing General Education...**

Where to start?

Think of competencies that all graduates of your institution could reasonably be expected to demonstrate in general living and working situations--regardless of major)





Use a combination of Direct and Indirect Measures

- Direct Assessment measurements are the kinds that provide stand-alone data. For example, a nationally-normed examination showing that your graduates score lower on math than graduates at similar institutions
- Indirect Assessment measurements are the kinds that provide supplemental, affective data. For instance, an opinion measurement, like an employer satisfaction survey or a student focus group.



Choosing Tools

- **Make use of what you already have**
 - λ Program specific assessments (Nursing, NCLB)
 - λ Course-level assessment
 - λ Direct and Indirect measures
 - λ Compare Gen Ed Objectives with current data on student learning; identify significant gaps
- **Determine what will work for you**
 - Know what you need to know before choosing
 - Will faculty find results meaningful and useful for improving learning?



Taking Stock:

- What data are you currently gathering?
- How do these data answer whether you are achieving / addressing your stated general education outcomes?
- How can the data be used to answer the Gen Ed Assessment Steps questions? (see slide 6)

ASSESSING OUTCOMES FOR GRADUATE PROGRAMS AND COURSES

Elaine Klein

TWO FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

1. How are your stated student outcomes appropriate to your mission, programs, and degrees?
2. What evidence do you have that students achieve your stated learning outcomes?

OUTCOMES SHOULD:

- λ **Clearly connect with institutional mission:**
 - λ Mission ◊ Program ◊ Course
- λ **Be measurable**
- λ **Be clear**
- λ **Be useful to learners**
- λ **Be assessed regularly but not all the time**

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- λ Focus on critical but broad outcomes
- λ Focus on outcomes developed over time
- λ Focus on integration of skills and knowledge
- λ Focus on what a graduate will be able to do after the degree

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE DEGREE?

- λ Professional Activity outside Academe:
 - λ Clinical practice
 - λ Working with Colleagues
 - λ Possibly Management Functions
 - λ Research
 - λ Grant Development
 - λ Possibly Teaching/Mentoring/Training

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE DEGREE?

- λ Professional Activity within Academe:
 - λ Teaching
 - λ Research
 - λ Grant Development
 - λ Working with Colleagues
 - λ Professional Service

COURSE OUTCOMES

- λ **Must build to program outcomes**
- λ **Should be realistic**
- λ **Should build in ambition and complexity over time**
- λ **Should be identifiable in program design and outcomes**

Three Types of Outcomes

- λ **Knowing – content and relevant theoretical contexts**
- λ **Doing – applying content and theory to original work**
- λ **Valuing – developing new knowledge within professional ethical contexts**

Examining Your Graduate Program

1. **Does the program require a thesis or summative project?**
 - λ **If so, is the documentation read and evaluated by a committee of experts?**
 - λ **What criteria are used by the evaluating committee to decide if the student's work is satisfactory?**
 - λ **What are the broad student learning outcomes that might be measured by the thesis/project?**
 - λ **How can you capture and aggregate the expert evaluations for purposes of program evaluation?**

Examining Your Graduate Program

2. Does your program have a qualifying or comprehensive examination requirement?
 - λ If so, what learning objectives do students have to demonstrate in order to pass?
 - λ What are the broad student learning outcomes that might be measured by the thesis/project?
 - λ How can you capture and aggregate the expert evaluations for purposes of program evaluation?

Examining Your Graduate Program

3. Does your program have a practical external component?
 - λ If so, what is its purpose?
 - λ Is the student's performance evaluated by one or more experts? What criteria are used to decide if the student's work is satisfactory?
 - λ What are the broad student learning outcomes associated with this program component?
 - λ How can you capture and aggregate those evaluations for program evaluation?

Examining Your Graduate Program

4. Does your program require a licensure exam?
 - λ Although content of such exams are often beyond program control, how does this exam measure the student learning outcomes of your program?
 - λ Are results shared with the institution?
 - λ How can you capture and aggregate those evaluations for program evaluation?

**What other components exist
in graduate programs?**

λ ...

SOME DESIGN QUESTIONS:

- λ **How does the program reflect and integrate these three types of outcomes?**
- λ **How do individual courses lead students to be able to do what professionals in their fields do?**
- λ **How do critical assessments (theses, dissertations, etc.) approximate professional activities?**

SOME DESIGN QUESTIONS

- λ **How important is coverage?**
- λ **What is the relative importance of professional competency?**
- λ **How much should learning within the program approximate activity after the program?**
