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"

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

Assessment should…
- Provide a framework within which programs (instructors, administrators, perhaps other campus stakeholders) can participate in discussions about student learning
- Provide data that instructors and programs can use to advocate for students, programs, and possibly themselves
- 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.

Assessment Loop
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
RUBRICS

v EVALUATE ASSIGNMENTS WHILE STUDENTS:
  v learn expectations
  v learn specific student outcomes
  v receive meaningful feedback
**RUBRIC EXAMPLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exit and Other Interviews</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Locally Developed Exams</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simulations</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>External Examinations</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Written Surveys, Questionnaires</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>Oral Exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance Appraisal</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Standardized Exams</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MEASURES**

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

- **INDIRECT:** uses information that does not directly link the learning to the outcomes
### Assessment: What good is it?

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

### What good is it?

- Faculty can agree on and better envision student learning outcomes for programs and can teach more effectively.
- Rationale for curriculum design and course sequencing is clearer so advising and teaching are improved.
- 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

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

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

RESOURCES

- General link: http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm#gen
- Handbooks

RESOURCES

- Assessment pages
  - http://www.k-state.edu/assessment/index.htm
  - 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

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

IMPROVING LEARNING AS INSTITUTIONAL GOAL

1. How do non-instructional areas contribute to that goal?
2. How do non-instructional areas facilitate that goal?
3. 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

1. 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... 

2. Co-curricular learning was limited to such things as:
   --Self-actualization
   --Study and self-management skills
   --Leadership
   --Cultural Awareness
ONCE UPON A TIME . . .

And its assessment tended to be based on:

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

TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION

"Teaching" shifts away from an information transfer orientation to one that enables students to integrate what they learn into what they do.

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

Learning, development, and identity formation are interactive and shape each other.

No separation between academic instruction and student development.

Learning Reconsidered and Learning Reconsidered 2
(NASPA, ACPA, et al.)
CROSS-CAMPUS RESPONSIBILITY

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

TWO TYPES OF MEASURES

- EFFICIENCY
- EFFECTIVENESS

EFFICIENCY MEASURES

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

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

OLD MEASURES OF FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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

RETHINKING EFFECTIVENESS

- Student Performance:
  - Are student grades higher as a result of tutoring?
  - Do certain environments produce better student work?
  - Does course scheduling affect student performance?
  - 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


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


INTERTWINED OUTCOMES

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

INTEGRATED OUTCOMES

- Civic engagement
- Interpersonal/intrapersonal competence
- Service learning; student government, community service, judicial boards
- Classroom projects and discussions, lab teams; student employment, advising and counseling, tutoring
HOW DO WE CREATE AND ASSESS THESE OUTCOMES?

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

PLANNING THE LEARNING
1. Define the outcome and its manifestation
   - WHAT
2. Decide responsibility and process
   - WHERE
   - HOW
   - WHO
3. 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:
  » Academic context
  » Social context
  » Institutional context
STRIVING FOR THE IDEAL

1. What effect would a learning effectiveness model have on educational support and co-curricular areas?
   - Library
   - Tutoring
   - International Studies
   - Service Learning

2. What effect would a learning effectiveness model have on administrative offices?
   - Registrar
   - Buildings and Grounds
   - Placement

3. Cross-institutional discussion of institutional learning outcomes
4. Cross-institutional planning and coordination of student learning
5. Cross-institutional development and use of common rubrics
6. Cross-institutional collaboration on strategies for improvement
Assessing General Education

Janice Denton

With thanks to . . .

Ric Shrubb, 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)

The Gen Ed Assessment Steps…

Should we adjust our methods and outcomes based on the feedback we get from our tests?

Start here: What are the general Skills, Knowledge, and Behaviors we want all our students to gain? (These are called Outcomes)

How do we test our instructional methods to be sure they’re working?

Other than our own opinions, how do we know if the skills, knowledge, and behaviors we’ve identified are valuable to our students?
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
  - Program specific assessments (Nursing, NCLB)
  - Course-level assessment
  - Direct and Indirect measures
  - 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:

- Clearly connect with institutional mission:
  - Mission/Program/Course
- Be measurable
- Be clear
- Be useful to learners
- Be assessed regularly but not all the time
PROGRAM OUTCOMES

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

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE DEGREE?

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

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

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

Three Types of Outcomes

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

Examining Your Graduate Program

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

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

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

... 

SOME DESIGN QUESTIONS:

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

SOME DESIGN QUESTIONS:

1. How important is coverage?
2. What is the relative importance of professional competency?
3. How much should learning within the program approximate activity after the program?