Six-Step Assessment Process: Performance Outcomes

Assessment: Basics

Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness
09.22.16 | 09.23.16
Assessment is a priority in our Strategic Plan

**Goal:** Develop and maintain a curricular and co-curricular environment that prepares students for participation in a global society and is responsive to workforce needs.

**Objective:** Implement a sustainable university-wide assessment process that includes curricular and co-curricular components.

**Strategies:** Execute an assessment process that builds upon existing efforts, incorporates recently approved University Learning Outcomes, provides resources and training, supports program accreditation and emphasizes the use of assessment to improve student learning.
Why do assessment...really

- To confirm, diagnose, and IMPROVE
- To inform decision-making
- To demonstrate effectiveness
- To support accountability/compliance requirements
Get ready for WSCUC

2012
Reaccredited
(7 yrs)

2015
Interim
Report

2016
Mid-Cycle
Report

Areas of Concern:
- Integrated strategic plan
- Assessment
- Student success
- Funding

Fall 2018
Self-Study
Due

Spring 2018
Off-Site
Review

Fall 2019
On-Site
Visit
The Purpose of...

assessment is to INCREASE quality.

evaluation is to JUDGE quality.

Too short and not enough leaves. Ĉ-
## Assessment ≠ Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Assessment</strong></th>
<th><strong>Evaluation</strong></th>
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</thead>
</table>
| • Formative/Ongoing  
(Outcome does not change annually) | • Summative/Periodical  
(Goals or criteria change annually) |
| • Output-focused  
(What impact have we made) | • Input-oriented  
(What we have done) |
| • Absolute  
(Aim for ideal outcomes) | • Comparative  
(Good vs. Bad) |
| • Improvement-oriented  
(What can we do to improve) | • Judgment-oriented  
(Reward or Punish) |
| • Reflective  
(Every step is internally defined) | • Prescriptive  
(Criteria are externally imposed) |
| • Flexible  
(Every step can be adjusted) | • Fixed  
(Process cannot be changed easily) |
| • Collaborative  
(Team effort) | • Competitive  
(Focused on individual) |
Where do we carry out assessment

- University Learning Goals
- Strategic Plan Goals

- Division POs/SLOs

- Unit POs/SLOs

Determined by the Division
**Focus of today**

**PO vs. SLO**

- **Measurable end results or consequences of activities, services, or program**
- **Variety of results**

- **Significant and essential learning that students achieve at the end of a course or program**
- **Knowledge; Skill; Attitude**

*SLO or PO?*

*Depends on the nature of the outcome, not the function of the unit*
Six-step assessment process*

What do we want our students to learn and/or our units to accomplish?

- Develop
  - Student Learning/Program Performance Outcomes

- Identify
  - Methods & Measures

- Determine
  - Criteria for Success

- Collect & Analyze
  - Data

- Plan & Execute
  - Improvement Actions

- Document
  - Assessment Activities

How are we documenting the assessment AND improvement activities/results?

How are we doing?
How do we know?

What changes are we making?
Are the changes working?

What evidence do we need to know to determine whether we are successful?

How do we use data to confirm/improve our practices?

*AECC Spring 2014
“Assessment shall be intentional, ongoing, timely, student-centered, program-controlled, collegial, respectful of diversity and academic freedom, integrated, and institutionally supported.”

(UPS 300.022)

Same principle applies to non-instructional units
Step 1: Develop Performance Outcomes

Performance Outcomes (POs):

• Measurable end results or consequences of activities, services, or program

• Variety of results
Where do outcomes come from

- University
- Division
- Unit
- Stakeholders

Alignment

- University Mission/Strategic Goals
- Division Mission/Strategic Goals
- Unit POs
- Opinions & Feedback
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission</th>
<th>Vision; Values; Philosophy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>Broad statement of general aims or purpose; Division/Unit centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Specific and precise operational definition of goals; Customer/Beneficiary centered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sound outcomes are...

• Customer/Beneficiary centered, not division/unit centered

• Aligned with division/university goals and missions

• Focus on high-priority operations/functions

• Real (not aspirational)

• Simple language

• Specific, clear and concise

• Demonstrable and Measurable

• Discrete (no “double-barrel” statements)

• Manageable (5-7 outcomes)
# Outcomes: Use active verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVISED VERSION (Anderson &amp; Krathwohl, 2001)</th>
<th>EXAMPLE ACTIVE VERBS</th>
<th>ORIGINAL VERSION (Bloom, 1956)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creating</td>
<td>Designing, constructing, planning, producing, inventing</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating</td>
<td>Experimenting, checking, hypothesizing, critiquing, justifying</td>
<td>Synthesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing</td>
<td>Comparing, organizing, deconstructing, interrogating, finding</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying</td>
<td>Implementing, carrying out, using, executing, transferring</td>
<td>Application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Interpreting, summarizing, paraphrasing, classifying, explaining</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remembering</td>
<td>Recognizing, listing, describing, retrieving, naming, finding</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**For SLOs:**
Concrete student performance or behavior that you can observe and measure

**For POs:**
Concrete unit impact that you can observe and measure
# PO examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Goal</th>
<th>PO</th>
<th>Division/Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curricular and co-curricular environment (SPG 1)</td>
<td>Student employees receive adequate support and feedback on their academic success.</td>
<td>Associated Students, Inc. (Student Affairs unit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence, graduation rates, and narrowing achievement gap (SPG 2)</td>
<td>McNair Scholars will receive services that support Scholars in successfully graduating and progressing onto graduate school.</td>
<td>Educational Partnerships (Student Affairs unit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-quality faculty and staff (SPG 3)</td>
<td>IT staff will be provided with professional development opportunities to enhance engagement and promote career advancement.*</td>
<td>Information Technology (IT division)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource development (SPG 4)</td>
<td>University stakeholders receive timely and effective communications about the university and graduates’ impact on and value to our region, state, and global community.*</td>
<td>University Advancement (UA division)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Suggested, not actual, POs of the division/unit*
EXERCISE: PO*

Unit POs:

1. Faculty, staff and students enjoy a safe campus that embraces diversity, provides easy access, and has sound physical facilities.

2. The unit will provide sufficient opportunities to help students explore career paths and gain job-seeking abilities.

3. The university community will experience satisfactory operations provided by the unit.

4. Students receive sufficient support on maintaining a healthy lifestyle, as demonstrated by their lifestyle choices and satisfaction survey ratings.

*POs not taken from real unit/division
# Align POs with annual goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Goal</th>
<th>Six-Step Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Short-term goals that may vary from year to year</td>
<td>• Long-term outcomes that largely stay the same for the entire assessment cycle (e.g. 5 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focused on “things we do”</td>
<td>• Focused on “impact we want to see”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reporting primarily on “things we did”</td>
<td>• Reporting primarily on “impact (or lack of it) that we observed”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Do not have to be two separate efforts!_
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office of Academic Programs</th>
<th>Division 2015-2016 Goal</th>
<th>Unit 2015-2016 Goal</th>
<th>PO in the Six-Step Assessment Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 3:</strong> Develop and implement strategic and operational plans to continue to advance university-wide commitment and efforts toward ongoing improvement in institutional quality and educational effectiveness</td>
<td><strong>Goal 2:</strong> Continue to support the university to utilize a centralized and standardized assessment management system</td>
<td><strong>OAEE PO</strong></td>
<td>The university utilizes a centralized and standardized assessment management system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Suggested, not actual, POs of the division/unit*
Step 2: Identify methods and measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>vs.</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value-added</td>
<td></td>
<td>Absolute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedded</td>
<td>vs.</td>
<td>“Add-on”/External</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formative</td>
<td></td>
<td>Summative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Choosing the right methods

- Address the PO
- Valid
- Reliable
- Actionable
- Sustainable
- Embedded
- Multiple methods - Triangulation
- Meaningful and engaging to stakeholders

Focus on “what we want to measure,” not “what existing measure we have”
Direct assessment: Ideas

- Quantity and quality of service provided
- Completion/usage rate
- Analysis of error rates
- Analysis of processing time
- Needs analysis/Gap analysis
- Customer/Supervisor evaluation
Direct assessment examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division/Unit</th>
<th>PO</th>
<th>Direct measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OAEE</td>
<td>The university utilizes a centralized and standardized assessment management system</td>
<td>Calculate Compliance Assist Utilization Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Partnership</td>
<td>McNair Scholars will receive services that support Scholars in successfully graduating and progressing onto graduate school.</td>
<td>Track graduate school enrollment rate through a national clearing house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Information Technology | IT staff will be provided with professional development opportunities to enhance engagement and promote career advancement.* | • Document the number of professional development opportunities provides  
• Calculate the participation rate of staff in professional development opportunities |

*Suggested, not actual, POs of the division/unit
Indirect assessment: Ideas

- Customer survey**
- Interview: Individual or group
- Focus group: Structured or unstructured
- Comparisons to best practices in the profession

**Surveys are not always indirect assessment
# Indirect assessment examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division/Unit</th>
<th>PO</th>
<th>Indirect measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OAEE</td>
<td>The university utilizes a centralized and standardized assessment management system</td>
<td>Conduct focus group to capture Compliance Assist user satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Life and Leadership</td>
<td>Students will receive quality online services from the student engagement office</td>
<td>Student satisfaction survey with the services provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>IT staff will be provided with professional development opportunities to enhance engagement and promote career advancement.*</td>
<td>Conduct annual climate survey to identify strengths and weaknesses related to staff retention and engagement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Suggested, not actual, POs of the division/unit
### Where to document the “things we do” : Step 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Step 1: Outcomes</strong></th>
<th><strong>OAEE example</strong></th>
<th><strong>IT example</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The university utilizes a centralized and standardized assessment management system</td>
<td>IT staff will be provided with professional development opportunities to enhance engagement and promote career advancement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Step 2: Methods and Measures</strong></th>
<th><strong>OAEE example</strong></th>
<th><strong>IT example</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| OAEE will design and improve the Compliance Assist system | - Monitor IT climate, and trends in staff retention and engagement  
- Provide training programs and other professional development opportunities to all IT staff |
| Calculate Compliance Assist Utilization Rate  
Conduct Focus group to capture Compliance Assist user satisfaction | - Conduct annual climate survey to identify strengths and weaknesses related to staff retention and engagement  
- Document the number of professional development opportunities provided  
- Calculate the participation rate of staff in professional development opportunities |

**“Things we do”**

**“Data we collect”**

*Suggested, not actual, POs of the division/unit*
Step 3: Determine criteria for success

• A performance standard:
  • What level of performance is good enough?
  • Pre-determined!
  • Supported by historical data, reasonable expectations, theoretical frameworks...
## Criteria for success examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division/Unit</th>
<th>PO</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Criteria of success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| OAEE                          | The university utilizes a centralized and standardized assessment management system | - Calculate Compliance Assist Utilization Rate  
- Conduct Focus group to capture Compliance Assist user satisfaction | - 80% Compliance Assist utilization rate  
- Focus group participants describe Compliance Assist as an effective tool |
| Associated Students, Inc.     | Student employees receive adequate support and feedback on their academic success. | Utilize on-line platform to distribute the Iowa GROW survey to student employees, including specific question for this outcome | 75% of student employees indicate that they have had at least 2 conversations per semester with their supervisor about their academic progress. |
| Information Technology        | IT staff will be provided with professional development opportunities to enhance engagement and promote career advancement.* | - Document the number of professional development opportunities provided  
- Calculate the participation rate of staff in professional development opportunities | - 90% of IT staff participate in at least 1 professional development opportunity per year  
- 80% of survey respondents report to be “satisfied” with the IT climate |

*Suggested, not actual, POs of the division/unit
A student service unit asked students to rate their satisfaction with the services received at the end of their visit, using a 4-point scale. Results from 100 students’ ratings are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Level</th>
<th>1 (Unacceptable)</th>
<th>2 (Need improvement)</th>
<th>3 (Acceptable)</th>
<th>4 (Exemplary)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Ratings</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two models of criteria for success: Which one would you choose?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for success</th>
<th>“Average” Model</th>
<th>“Percentage” Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average rating of 2.9 or higher</td>
<td>At least 80% of students rate 3 or higher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average = 2.79</td>
<td>81% of students rated 3 or higher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Outcome not met</td>
<td>Outcome met</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Criteria for success example not taken from real unit/division*
Step 4: Collect and analyze data

• Sampling, sampling, sampling!
  • Relevant
  • Representative
  • Reasonably sized

Determined by outcome, unit circumstances
EXERCISE: Data collection and analysis*

Data collection and analysis:

A student service unit that promotes healthy lifestyles asked students to rate their satisfaction with the services received at the end of their visits, using a 4-point scale. At the end of the year, 100 students’ ratings were aggregated — 95% of the students rated the services as “Acceptable” or “Exemplary”.

The unit also did a diary study of 12 students on their lifestyle choices (e.g. food, exercise), and found that only 4 of these students consistently followed the guidelines recommended by this unit.

*Data example not taken from real unit/division
Step 5: Plan and execute improvement actions

• Review the assessment findings

• Types of changes:
  • Infrastructure
  • Program design
  • Service delivery
  • Tools used
  • Resources
  • Assessment plan

• Don’t forget to re-assess the improvement actions!

NILOA (2014)
Improvement actions example 1

• Associated Students, Inc.:

  • Student employees reported significant growth in oral communication skills, but not in written communication. Supervisor evaluation of student skills do not support students’ positive self-report.

  • Unit will 1) develop plans to investigate possible areas of improvement for student oral communication development; 2) review the nature of student employee positions; 3) adjust the outcome to truly reflect the skills applicable to student employee positions.
Improvement actions example 2

• **Disability Support Services:**

  • In the new student orientation survey, over 80% of students expressed satisfaction of the overall quality of the orientation; over 80% of students indicated that they knew how to access DSS services.
  • Data exceeded the criteria of success - outcome met

  • *Unit will 1) review open-ended questions on the survey to identify specific ways to further improve the orientation program; 2) develop a direct assessment measure; 3) attend a disability related assessment conference to improve assessment plan.*
• Business Communication (SLO)
  
  • Student writings of a case analysis were graded using the CLASS rubric, and found that students had the greatest deficiencies in “Strategy”.

  • Program 1) collected additional demographic data to narrow down weakness population; 2) offered faculty development workshop on case analysis; 3) emphasized use of topic sentences and supporting evidence; 4) provided sample professional documents for use in classroom and homework exercises.

  • Writing communication scores improved 17% between 2009 and 2012
Step 6: Document assessment activities

Tell a coherent story

Weigh the pig AGAIN
A multi-year assessment plan

- What to plan for:
  - Timeline
  - Process
  - Participants
  - Steps to turn assessment results into improvement actions
  - Self-evaluation/Reflection of the assessment process
A multi-year assessment plan (cont.)

• Guidelines:

• Limit to 5-7 outcomes

• Determine a realistic assessment plan cycle, i.e. how long (e.g. 7 years) to complete meaningful assessment of all POs/SLOs

• Create a multi-year assessment plan that assesses 1-2 POs/SLOs a year

• Consider overlapping assessment (of new PO/SLO) and improvement (of assessed PO/SLO) activities

• Make sure assessment involves the entire program/department

Outcome is not for only 1 year
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Assessment vocabulary*

*Modified from ALA 2016*
assessment@fullerton.edu

www.fullerton.edu/assessment