Six-Step Assessment Process: Performance Outcomes

Assessment: Basics

09.19.17
Get ready for WSCUC

Areas of Concern:
- Integrated strategic plan
- Assessment
- Student success
- Funding
Where do we carry out assessment

University

Division

Unit

University Learning Goals
Strategic Plan Goals

Division POs/SLOs

Determined by the Division

Unit POs/SLOs

Alignment
**Focus of today**

**PO** vs. **SLO**

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

- **SLO**
  - 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 doing?
How do we know?

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

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
Step 1: Develop Performance Outcomes

• A statement

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

• Variety of results
  • Example: “The University has an effective and sustainable assessment process.”
Where do POs come from

• “Top-down” vs. “Bottom-up”

• Adapt from existing “best practices”

• Engage faculty/staff

• Involve important but often forgotten stakeholders (students, alumni, employers, etc.)
Mission...Goals...Outcomes...

**Mission**
Holistic vision of the values and philosophy of an institution/division/unit

**Goals**
Broad statement of general aims or purpose; Division/Unit centered

**Outcomes**
Specific and precise operational definition of goals; Customer/Beneficiary centered

*Adapted from Mary Allen workshop (2006) & ALA (2016)*
What are good POs

- Customer/Beneficiary centered, not division/unit centered
- Aligned with the mission and goals of university/division etc.
- Focus on “high-priority” operations/functions
- Real (not aspirational)
- Simple language
- Specific, clear and concise
- Demonstrable and measurable
- Discrete (no “double-barrel” statements)
- Manageable (more is not better)

*Adapted from Mary Allen workshop (2006) & ALA (2016)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Goal</th>
<th>PO</th>
<th>Division/Unit</th>
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<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 be supported 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 have professional development opportunities to enhance engagement and promote career advancement.*</td>
<td>Information Technology (IT division)</td>
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<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>
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*Suggested, not actual, POs of the division/unit
Case Study: Step 1
Step 2: Identify methods and measures

• We are *already* and *always* assessing our performance

• The evidence/measures already in place are NOT always the best place to start
  • Do the measures address the PO?
# A bit of vocabulary

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

• **Valid:** Are you measuring the outcome?
• **Reliable:** Are the results consistent?
• **Actionable:** Do the results clearly tell you what is or is not working?
• **Triangulation:** Are there multiple lines of evidence for the same PO?
• **Meaningful and engaging:** Are faculty/staff engaged? Do the relevant stakeholders care?
• **Sustainable:** Can the process be managed effectively within the unit context?
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>
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<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 be supported 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 have 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 |
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

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<th>Division/Unit</th>
<th>PO</th>
<th>Indirect measure</th>
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<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>
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*Suggested, not actual, POs of the division/unit*
Case Study: Step 2
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>
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</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
Case Study: Step 3
Step 4: Collect and analyze data

• **Sampling!**
  
  • Relevant, Representative, and Reasonably sized
  • **Determined by the outcome and unit context**
  • Moderate sample size is sufficient (e.g. “50-80” rule; 20-30%).
    • Very large sample size is rarely needed.
    • If homogenous population, small samples are sufficient.
Case Study: Step 4
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!

Small changes matter

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.*
Improvement actions example 3

• 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
Case Study: Step 5
Step 6: Document assessment activities

Tell a coherent story

Weigh the pig AGAIN
Case Study: Step 6
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:**

  - Start with 3-5 outcomes

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

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

  - Consider overlapping assessment (of new PO) and improvement (of assessed PO) activities

  - Make sure assessment involves the entire unit/division

  - **Outcome is not for only 1 year**
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www.fullerton.edu/assessment