



# 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

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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\*

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

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

*What changes are we making?  
Are the changes working?*



*How are we doing?  
How do we know?*

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

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



# Step I: Develop Performance Outcomes

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- 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

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University

Division

Unit

## Alignment

- “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...

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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

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- 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)

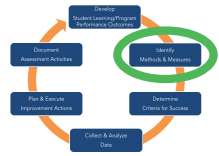
*\*Adapted from Mary Allen workshop (2006) & ALA (2016)*

# PO examples

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

*\*Suggested, not actual, POs of the division/unit*

# Case Study: Step 1



## Step 2: Identify methods and measures

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- 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

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Direct

vs.

Indirect

Value-added

vs.

Absolute

Embedded

vs.

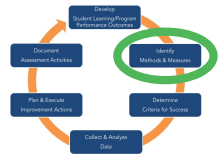
“Add-on”/  
External



# Choosing the right measure

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- **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

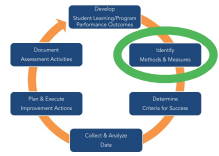


# Direct assessment examples

Division/ Unit	PO	Direct measure
OAEE	The university utilizes a centralized and standardized assessment management system	Calculate Compliance Assist Utilization Rate
Educational Partnership	McNair Scholars will be supported in successfully graduating and progressing onto graduate school.	Track graduate school enrollment rate through a national clearing house
Information Technology	IT staff will have professional development opportunities to enhance engagement and promote career advancement.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document the number of professional development opportunities provides</li> <li>• Calculate the participation rate of staff in professional development opportunities</li> </ul>

*\*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

Use as supplemental evidence

*\*\*Surveys are not always indirect assessment*



# Indirect assessment examples

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

*\*Suggested, not actual, POs of the division/unit*

## Case Study: Step 2



# Step 3: Determine criteria for success

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- **A performance standard:**

- What level of performance is good enough?
- Pre-determined!
- Supported by historical data, reasonable expectations, theoretical frameworks...



# Criteria for success examples

Division/ Unit	PO	Measures	Criteria of success
OAE	The university utilizes a centralized and standardized assessment management system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Calculate Compliance Assist Utilization Rate</li> <li>- Conduct Focus group to capture Compliance Assist user satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 80% Compliance Assist utilization rate</li> <li>- Focus group participants describe Compliance Assist as an effective tool</li> </ul>
Associated Students, Inc.	Student employees receive adequate support and feedback on their academic success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Utilize on-line platform to distribute the Iowa GROW survey to student employees, including specific question for this outcome</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 75% of student employees indicate that they have had at least 2 conversations per semester with their supervisor about their academic progress.</li> </ul>
Information Technology	IT staff will be provided with professional development opportunities to enhance engagement and promote career advancement.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Document the number of professional development opportunities provided</li> <li>- Calculate the participation rate of staff in professional development opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 90% of IT staff participate in at least 1 professional development opportunity per year</li> <li>- 80% of survey respondents report to be “satisfied” with the IT climate</li> </ul>

\*Suggested, not actual, POs of the division/unit

## Case Study: Step 3



## Step 4: Collect and analyze data

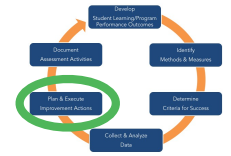
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### • Sampling!

- 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

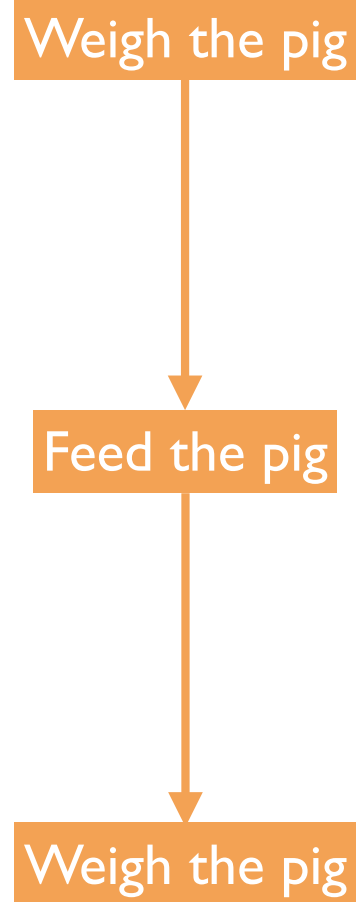




# Step 5: Plan and execute improvement actions

- 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



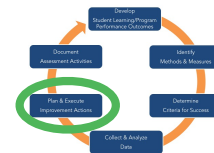
NILOA (2014)



# Improvement actions example I

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- **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

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- **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

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- **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



Organize planning and accreditation

campuslabs **Planning**

Home My Dashboard Institution Courses Reports Administration

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## Institution - Planning Items

Assessments Strategic Plans Master Items

Table Filtered By: Fiscal Year: FY 2015 Outcomes [Edit Filter](#)

- University
  - Academic Affairs
    - Academic Operations and Finance
    - Academic Programs
      - Academic Advisement Center
      - Assessment and Educational Effectiveness
      - Freshman Programs
      - Graduate Programs
      - Health Professions Advising
      - Online Programs
      - Undergraduate Programs and General Education
      - University Honors Program
    - College of Communications
    - College of Education
    - College of Engineering and Computer Sciences
    - College of Health and Human Development

+ New Item

	Number	Name	Start	End	Progress
	102-002-PO-01	<a href="#">Implement 6-step process assessment framework</a>	7/1/2014	6/30/2018	➔
	102-002-PO-02	<a href="#">Implement Compliance Assist</a>	7/1/2014	6/30/2018	➔
	102-002-PO-03	<a href="#">Enhance assessment expertise</a>	7/1/2014	6/30/2018	➔
	102-002-PO-04	<a href="#">Implement Annual Report process</a>	7/1/2014	6/30/2018	➔
	102-002-PO-05	<a href="#">Implement Program Performance Review (PPR) process</a>	7/1/2014	6/30/2018	➔
	102-002-PO-06	<a href="#">Ensure compliance-related assessment of accreditation</a>	7/1/2014	6/30/2018	➔

Fiscal Year: FY 2015

Tell a coherent story

Weigh the pig AGAIN

## Case Study: Step 6

# A multi-year assessment plan

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- **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.)

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- **Guidelines:**

Outcome is not  
for only 1 year

- 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

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