Program assessment is a framework for focusing faculty attention on student learning and for providing meaningful discussions of program objectives, curricular organization, pedagogy, and student development.

- Provides information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged.

Purpose

Continuous Quality Improvement Cycle.

These must be integrated...

- Planning
  - What do students need to learn
  - What actions will best support students to learn
- Performance measurement
  - How are we doing?
- Evaluation
  - Why are we doing well or poorly?

Assessment Levels

- Institutional outcomes should be reflected in the programs.
- Program outcomes should be reflected in the courses.

Formative and Summative Assessment

Formative assessment
- Determines a student's knowledge and skills, including learning gaps as they progress through a unit of study.
- Is used to inform instruction and guide learning.
- Occurs during the course of a unit of study.
- Makes up the subsequent phase of assessment for learning.

Summative assessment
- Is done at the end of a unit of study to determine the level of understanding the student has achieved.
- Grades against an expected standard.

Outcome Assessment

The systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development.

Assessment essentials: planning, implementing, and improving assessment in higher education, Palomba and Banta, 1999.
Process

1. Define student learning goals and objectives.
2. Align curricula with the adopted goals.
3. Identify instruments and measures to assess learning.
5. Use assessment information for continuous improvement.

Mission

The Focus is the Program
- Department, university, and course-level assessments are not the focus
- Statement identifies program goals and/or activities that impact specific elements of the institutional mission.
- Statement is aligned with the standards of an external professional organization, if applicable.

Developing SLOs

A. Look at course SLOs in your program
B. Describe the ideal graduate
C. Search the Web for outcomes to “borrow”
D. Check draft SLOs for measurability

Process: Another Form

1. What will our students learn in our program? What are our expectations?
2. How will they learn it?
3. How will we know they have learned it or not?
4. What will we do if they have not learned it?

Program Focus

“Learning goals should express expectations that reflect the expected depth and breadth of student knowledge and skills that are the sustainable foundations for life-long learning in support of their professional and personal development.”

SLOs

- Keep the number down to around 4-5
- Concentrate on the most important skills or knowledge the students will come away from the program with and what they will produce to show you that they have mastered those skills.
Teaching Strategies

- Courses/experiences connect to and/or build upon each other to help students achieve content knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions specific to the discipline, as described in the SLOs.
- A continuum of learning demonstrated on the curriculum map.
  - SLOs are well balanced throughout the courses/experiences in the program, with appropriate depth of coverage for each SLO.

Curricular Map

- Ensures that student have been introduced and practice the outcome in the program.

Measurements

- Direct measures may be supplemented with indirect measures.
- Includes both formative and summative measures.
- A description of the development process for the measurement tool(s) and assignment(s) is included to illustrate their appropriateness to the SLO.

Measurements

- Direct methods prompt students to represent or produce their learning or produce work so that observers can assess how well students’ texts or responses fit expectations.
  - Includes:
    - Standardized tests
    - Locally developed tests and assignments
    - Projects
    - Presentations
    - Portfolios

Assessment Measures Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Knowing</td>
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<td>• Understanding</td>
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<td>• Applying</td>
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<td>• Analyzing</td>
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<td>• Evaluating</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Assessment Measure:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Questions on an exam</td>
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<td>• Rubric elements from a project/assignment</td>
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Indirect Measures

- Examples: alumni surveys, graduating student surveys, and/or employer surveys.

  Information from indirect measures can complement the direct assessment processes, but they are not acceptable substitutes for direct assessment of learning.
Course Grades Don’t Cut It

- Course grades are aggregate measures on examinations, research papers, other projects, homework, presentations, class participation, etc. and, therefore, cannot measure students’ performance or achievement of a specific skill or knowledge set.
- Professors set the criteria and standards for their courses and these may not be completely aligned with program-level learning goals because of the focus on learning related to the specific business discipline for which the faculty member is responsible.

Data Collection

- Involves multiple faculty members.
- Clear and understandable procedures of collection and dissemination

Results (Data)

By SLO

- Results are easily understood, as well as their implications.
- Broken down so strengths and weaknesses in student learning are easily identified.
- Give Context

Types of Data

- Raw data
- Standard scores
- Percentages
- Tables, graphic, and/or narrative

Discussion (Meaning of data)

- Interpretation directly addresses the program’s mission, SLOs, and action plans.
  - Interpretation addresses past trends in student performance, as appropriate.
  - Interpretation identifies possible areas of improvement, thus initiating future actions.
  - Interpretation includes how courses, teaching experiences, and/or the assessment process might have affected results.

Action Plans

- Past years Action Plan
  - Impact of past improvements and changes
  - All proposed actions from the prior year’s action plan were specifically addressed, including who implemented them, when they were implemented, and the outcome of the implementation.
- Upcoming years Action Plan
  - Connect to findings (data/discussion)
  - Use of assessment results for program improvement

Questions/Discussion?