Meeting the Expectations of the MSCHE Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation:

The use of assessment results in institutional improvement efforts.

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Assessment (generalized)

The systematic collection of information about X, in order to inform decisions about how to improve or understand Y.

Assessment of Student Learning

"The systematic collection of information about student learning, using the time, knowledge, expertise, and resources available, in order to inform decisions about how to improve learning"

(Barbara Walvoord, *Assessment Clear and Simple)*

Why it makes us crazy

- We haven't taken the **time** to understand the concept and apply it according to unique settings.
- We've made it **more complicated** than it has to be.
- **Overly complex systems prevent** us from doing our jobs when it should be providing us with information that allows us to do our jobs better.
- No utility, simplicity, do-ability, perceived relevance

Resistance Bingo

B	I	N	G	O
Academic Freedom	$$$	Give us better students and then…	What are we trying to solve for?	Waste of time
It will go away	How can we do our job, if we..	little benefit to faculty or our students	Not in my contract	Trivializing or learning is too complex
We're already doing it	Justify existence of administration	BINGO!	Will be used against us	If it's not broke
satisfy the outside people	No one reads it…	It can't be measured?	skepticism "new educational fad"	Timeline/ Timeframe
Satisfy bean counters	I care about my students	You gather all of this data and no one ever looks at it	Escalate	Next year…

Effective Assessment:

- Well-established and ongoing
- Meaningful, not methodological perfection
- Across the University
- Scheduled and regular
- Integrated with planning
- Simple

THE SIMPLICITY DIRECTIVE

- Assessment need not be complicated.
- Simple, flexible approaches.

Simplicity

"Truth is ever to be found in simplicity, and not in the multiplicity and confusion of things." – Isaac Newton

"I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth." –

JFK

Simplicity?

1. Don't assess everything at once.

2. Focus on 1 to 3 outcomes per academic year.

3. Hold two assessment meetings per year.

4. Embed/piggy-back assessments, when possible - not add it.

5. Compose short, meaningful assessment reports.

6. Let assessment evolve over time.

Minimalist Approach for all Departments and Programs

- All programs develop SLOs
- Focus on 1 -2 outcomes per year
- At least 1 direct and 1 indirect measure
- End of year forums to address student performance on selected outcomes
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Plan for addressing weakness
- Document work

What should be assessed?
Specified in Requirements of Affiliation and all Standards

#8 — The institution **systematically evaluates** its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes

#9 — The institution's student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and **appropriate assessment of student achievement** throughout the educational offerings, regardless of **certificate or degree level or delivery and instructional modality**

#10 — Institutional planning **integrates** goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning**, and the results of academic and institutional assessment**

Standard	Final Criterion
Standard I: Mission and Goals	**Criterion 4**. "Periodic assessment of mission and goals to ensure they are relevant and achievable."
Standard II: Ethics and Integrity	**Criterion 9**: "Periodic assessment of ethics and integrity as evidenced in institutional processes, practices, and the manner in which these are implemented."
Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience	**Criterion 8**: "Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs in providing student learning opportunities."
Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience	**Criterion 6**: "Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs supporting the student experience."
Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment	**Criterion 5**: "Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of assessment processes for the improvement of educational effectiveness."
Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement	**Criterion 9**: "Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, institutional renewal processes, and availability of resources."
Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration	**Criterion 5**: "Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration."

Standard VI Assessment Expectations

Criterion 1: "Institutional objectives, both **institution-wide** and for **individual units**, that are **clearly stated, assessed appropriately, linked to mission and goal achievement, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results, and are used for planning and resource allocation.**"

Criterion 2: "Clearly documented and communicated planning and improvement processes that provide for constituent participation, and **incorporate the use of assessment results.**"

Criterion 8: "**Strategies to measure and assess the adequacy and efficient utilization of institutional resources** required to support the institution's mission and goals."

What should be assessed?

- Academic Departments/Educational Programs
  - Student Learning Outcomes – Undergraduate Majors, Graduate Programs, Certificate Programs
  - General Education/Undergraduate Outcomes

- Academic and Student Support Units
- Administrative Units

- Institutional Effectiveness

Educational Programs

- Student learning outcomes
- Program-related outcomes

Administrative Units

Areas typically include:

• Alumni Office	• Financial Aid
• Academic Marketing and Communications	• Finance and Accounting
• Athletics	• Food Services
• Bursar	• Grants and Development
• Human Resources	• Mailroom
• Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment	• Health Services
• Career Services	• Information Technology
• Institutional Research	• Registrar
• Facilities	• Campus Security
• Student Housing	• Performing Arts Center
• Women's Center	• Veterans' Affairs

Academic and Student Support

Areas typically include

- Library/Learning Resources
- Teaching and Learning Center
- Financial Aid
- Residence Life
- International Programming

Student Affairs

- Academic advising/planning
- Admissions
- Career counseling
- Educational Opportunity Center
- Academic Support Center
- Orientation
- Registration
- Financial aid advising
- Student organizations

- Critical performance indicators
  - Participation
  - Satisfaction
  - Quality
  - Quantity

- Outcomes and assessments might include usage data (attendance, number of events, number of clients), satisfaction surveys, benchmarking, and other direct and indirect measures.

How it works

The Basic, No-Frills System of Assessment

1. Outcomes

2. Information (measures)

3. Analysis

3. Action

How it works

The Annual Assessment Plan:

At the beginning of the fiscal year, the unit members decide and document what outcomes and assessment methods will be used

The Annual Assessment Report:

After reviewing the assessment data, unit members meet to decide on plans for the next year based on the outcomes of the previous year and the Strategic Plan.

Faculty Role

- Write goals and measurable outcomes
- Select or develop « instruments » for assessing student learning outcomes
- Administer instruments – gather data
- Evaluate findings
- Design and implement action plans

Academic and Administrative Support Staff - Role

- Write goals and measurable outcomes
- Select or develop « instruments » for assessing student learning outcomes
- Administer instruments – gather data
- Evaluate findings
- Design and implement action plans

Administrators – Schools and Other Units

- Encourage development of assessment plans in their units
- Support assessment activities
- Collaborate in its implementation
- Institutionalize the use of assessment results for improvement of schools and units
- Relate assessment to institutional effectiveness
- Participate in ongoing evaluation and improvement of the assessment program

Using assessment results to inform planning

- Fold assessment results into planning discussions
- Establish funding priorities that are tied to instructional and unit plans
- Give funding priorities to pervasive rather than isolated problems
- Move departments making serious assessment efforts to the top of funding list

(L. Suskie, Assessing Student Learning: a Common Sense Guide)

General Education

- Establish college-wide general education outcomes relevant for all degree programs. Generally, colleges adopt four to six outcomes which are reviewed or revised every five years as part of the regular program review process.

- Agree on at least two outcomes to assess each year.

- Faculty will develop exemplary "projects" for assessing the two outcomes (Project development is often initiated by reviewing present division-level activities per outcome that foster a culture of student learning through challenging/meaningful academic tasks)

- Provide incentives and training to encourage faculty and staff to implement learning outcomes projects and activities

- Assessment rubrics piloted on these projects.

Tools and Resources

Administrative and Support Assessment Manual

Academic Assessment Exhibits

Administrative Assessment Status Monitoring Tool

Academic Program Assessment Status Monitoring Tool

Inventory of Outcomes Assessment Reports by Academic Degree Program
Example Assessment Report (UNC)

Links and resources
Assessment Committees

Assessing Assessment Rubric (MSCHE)
Program Data Summary (Access, Success, Impact)
https://www.albany.edu/ir/reports.htm

Questions / Discussion