Laying the Assessment Foundation

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Assessment isn’t an activity.
It’s a state of mind.

Session Outcomes

- Articulate the definitions of important assessment terms
- Articulate how to align assessment
- Articulate the different types of assessment
- Articulate the importance of anchoring assessment

Definitions

- What are the differences between assessment, evaluation, and research?
Assessment Ins and Outs

- Purposes of Assessment
- Forms of assessment
- Types of assessment
- Methods/techniques of assessment

Forms of Assessment

- Summative
- Formative
- Political

Purposes for Assessment

- Accountability
- Improvement

Summative: Did you get where you wanted to do? Did you accomplish your goal?

This is used to determine if a particular organizational activity or function should be continued, enhanced, curtailed, or eliminated. They are used for accountability and strategic planning.

Accountability

Forms of Assessment

- **Formative**: Was the process to get to your outcomes successful
  - Is used to improve organizational or institutional effectiveness and typically focuses on improving the processes which potentially lead to increased effectiveness.

**Improvement**


Forms of Assessment

- **Political** assessment is used to communicate and defend a program to potential stakeholders, including professional staff, office staff, faculty, administrators, parents, tax payers, and funders.


Types of Assessment

- Tracking Usage
- Needs Assessment
- Satisfaction Study
- Culture/climate Assessment
- Outcomes Assessment
- Resource Effectiveness Study
- Benchmarking
- Program Review
- Strategic Planning

Assessment Techniques (Sample)

- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Counting heads
- 1-minute papers
- Capstone project
- Portfolio
Assessment and Planning

- Assessment and planning are linked, intertwined, and interrelated
- Systems thinking
- “Backward design”
- “Starting with the end”

Assessment Cycle

- Mission Purposes
- Identify outcomes
- Improve learning
- Create learning opportunities
- Gather, interpret evidence

Language of Outcomes

- Mission: A mission clarifies an organization’s purpose or why it should be doing what it does (Bryson, 2004, p. 102).
- Example: The Division of Student Development facilitates programs, services and experiences that help students develop as leaders who are holistically formed, critically reflective, and socially and personally responsible.

Mission

- Mission: A mission clarifies an organization’s purpose or why it should be doing what it does (Bryson, 2004, p. 102).
- Example: The Division of Student Development facilitates programs, services and experiences that help students develop as leaders who are holistically formed, critically reflective, and socially and personally responsible.
Mission Alignment

- Institutional, divisional, and departmental missions should be aligned and should support the one above.

The Division of Student Development facilitates programs, services and experiences that help students develop as leaders who are holistically formed, critically reflective, and socially and personally responsible.

As the Student Involvement Center, we are committed to creating educational experiences that engage students through their campus involvement, leadership development, and college transitions.

Goal

- **Goal**: A goal is an end result written in broad terms.
- **Example**: As a result of participating in the Emerging Leaders Program, students will increase their leadership skills.

Mission-Goal Alignment

- **Mission**: As the Student Involvement Center, we are committed to creating educational experiences that engage students through their campus involvement, leadership development, and college transitions.

- **Goal**: As a result of participating in the Emerging Leaders Program, students will increase their leadership skills.
Input

- **Input**: A raw material that is used to develop a program or intervention which can include faculty, staff, budget, facilities, technology, etc.
- **Example**: $1500, two staff members, and electronic portfolio software is available for the Emerging Leaders Program.

Outcomes

- Operational outcomes
- Learning outcomes
- Program outcomes

Operational Outcome

- **Operational Outcome**: Metrics that document how well the operational aspects of a program or activity are functioning, but do not document learning or overall impact of the program or activity.
- **Example**: 200 students will participate in the Emerging Leaders Program by the end of the 2014-2015 academic year.

Learning Outcome

- **Learning Outcome**: A learning outcome is the desired learning effect of a program, service, or intervention but is more specific than a goal. It is results-focused and participant centered.
- **Example**: As a result of participating in the Emerging Leaders Program, students will develop meeting facilitation skills.
Program Outcome

- **Program Outcome**: A program outcome is the desired aggregate effect of a program, service, or intervention but is more specific than a goal.
- 80% of all students will lead a student organization during their college career.

Strategy

- **Strategy**: A strategy is a means to achieving an outcome or goal.
  - Example: In order for students to increase their meeting facilitation skills, they will identify and describe three best practices in meeting facilitation.

Action Step

- **Action step**: An action step is a way to implement a strategy to achieve an outcome or goal.
  - Example: If the strategy is to have students identify and describe three best practices in meeting facilitation, action steps might include identifying meetings to attend, developing an opportunity for reflection, developing a framework for that reflection, evaluating the experience, etc.
Anchoring Assessment

- Theory
- Institutional guideposts
- Established practice
- Professional standards
  - Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS)
    - www.cas.edu

Anchoring Assessment

- White papers/National reports
  - Learning Reconsidered
    - www.myacpa.org/pub/documents/LearningReconsidered.pdf
  - College Learning for a New Global Century
  - AAHE Principles of Good Assessment
    - www.iuk.edu/~koctla/assessment/9principles.shtml

Politics of Assessment

- Control/ownership of the issue
- Stakeholder involvement
- Position on agenda
- Resources
- Communication
  - What
  - How
  - When
  - Spin
Ethical Assessment

- Informed consent
- Voluntary participation
  - may be reason to mandate
- No repercussions for non-participation
- Confidentiality
- Minimization of risk

Conclusion

"That's all Folks!"