

SLOAC HANDBOOK

Introductory Materials

Outcomes Assessment Cycle

COURSE LEVEL

1. Develop/Review Outcomes
2. Assess Outcomes
3. Analyze & Reflect
4. Report Assessment Results
5. Use Results to Improve Student Success

PROGRAM LEVEL

1. Develop/Review Outcomes
2. Assess Outcomes
3. Analyze & Reflect
4. Report Assessment Results
5. Use Results to Improve Student Success

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL

1. Develop/Review Outcomes
2. Assess Outcomes
3. Analyze & Reflect
4. Report Assessment Results
5. Use Results to Improve Student Success

Resources and Background Information

PART I: COURSE-LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

1. Develop/Review Outcomes

- A. Determine what students should accomplish by the end of the course.
- B. Write outcomes with *assessment* in mind.
- C. At Barstow Community College, majority of courses have identified three Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). The curriculum committee has established a minimum of two SLOs and a maximum of four.
- D. Use higher order thinking outcomes when possible. See Bloom's Taxonomy (*Appendix A*).
- E. During program review, examine existing Course-Level SLOs for relevance, measurability, and continued appropriateness to course goals.
- F. Ensure SLOs are Measurable, Manageable, and Meaningful to the course and overarching goals for the program. For specific Course-Level SLO Samples see *Appendix B*.

Measurable:	Manageable:	Meaningful:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Use verbs that specify definite, observable student performance, actions, or behaviors. › Directly measurable. › Describe student rather than instructor behaviors. › Describe student outcomes rather than processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Realistic and attainable. › Indicate behaviors that are direct results of your program. › Use simple language, clearly understood by people outside the program. › Validated by colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Tie directly to course content › Applicability to course material › Relevant to life experiences and/or allow for a bridge to existing student knowledge

2. Assess Outcomes

- A. How to Assess?

Some common practices ideas include the following:

 - › Use a pre-test/post-test
 - › Create one assignment that incorporates multiple SLOs
 - › Selecting a single question in an objective test like Math
- B. Create a Rubric. Why?
 - › Eliminates confusion or subjectivity
 - › Helps students understand outcome goals
 - › Aids departments and instructors to align better in determining goals
- C. Possible challenges during the process:
 - › How to measure non-traditional assessments such as product, performances, or speaking
 - › Sample Rubrics for Speaking, Hands on, or Demonstration SLO assessments in Speech, ESL, Cosmetology, and Automotive (*See Appendix C*)
- D. Timing: Assessments can be given any given time that makes sense, it doesn't have to be the final.

- E. Identifying Student Success Data
 - ▶ Use quantitative Data to determine if “Target” is met (needed for TracDat)
 - ▶ Standard BCC Target goal - 70% of assessed students receive 70% or higher on assessment
 - ▶ Helpful Math formula to identify target Met:
 - # Students Passed Assessment / # Students Assessed = % of Student Success
 - SAMPLE: 30 students completed assessment, 25 students passed the assessment with a “C” or higher (70%)
 - Math Formula: $25/30 = 83\%$ student success on SLO assessment.
- F. Remember, if there is other anecdotal information regarding student success and/or failure there is an area to include this on the Course Level SLO Report. Consider including information such as students not taking the assessment or dropping the course

3. Analyze and Reflect on Assessment Results

- A. The purpose of analysis and reflection is to be honest in order to improve with student acquisition of the knowledge or skills.
 - ▶ **Analysis:** Examine and evaluate relevant information that may account for differences.
 - ▶ **Reflection:** Consider assessment data to determine what can be improved, keep doing what is successful, and continue to build upon your teaching based on this new data. Of course, there is an element of adaptability that we need to have in as such each class as our students will be different.
- B. Based on the assessment results and your knowledge of the class anecdotally what changes would improve students’ success on the assessment in future classes?
- C. Reflect on the results. Consider items below or your classes may have other considerations:
 - ▶ Instructor approach or scaffolding
 - ▶ Outcome or assessment used
 - ▶ Assignments or preparation
 - ▶ Textbook
 - ▶ Understanding of student learning modalities

4. Report Assessment Results

- A. **Submission:** Submit Course Level SLO assessments to the SLOAC Committee (sloac@barstow.edu)
- B. **Deadline:** As per Academic Senate, SLO assessment reports are due within 14 calendar days after a class ends.
- C. **Course-Level SLO Form:** Use the most current form. Fill it out completely.
- D. **TracDat:** Course Level SLO assessments will be added in TracDat, which will aggregate the college data. The SLO form is aligned with TracDat. Eventually, the form will be eliminated and direct submission into TracDat will begin.
- E. **Program Review and Institutional Outcomes:** Course Level SLOs are also part of the Program Review, as well as program and institutional reports and outcomes analysis.
- F. **Consequences of Non-Submission of Course-Level SLO assessment reports:**
 - ▶ All faculty are required to participate in the outcomes assessment process.
 - ▶ Not participating can reflect on evaluations and, in some cases, course offerings.
 - ▶ Data in SLO reports is not part of any evaluation process, only participation in the process.

5. Use Results to Improve Student Success

- A. Review assessment results from previous semester(s) and compare and contrast student success.
- B. Implementation steps and as appropriate, change in assessment results in following reports
- C. Continuous review of potential adjustments/ outcomes/ measurements.
 - Integrate learning into approach for new cycle
 - Adjust instructional methodology and materials as needed
 - Consider potential revisions to SLO's / curriculum as needed.
- D. There is no end goal. This is an opportunity to reflect and improve the program
- E. Remember when implementing, establish priorities – can't fix everything at once.
- F. Use the Program Review Cycle as a chance to review SLOs and SLO assessment data

Start a New Cycle



Resources

Appendix A: Bloom's Taxonomy

General examples of SLO's that assess higher order thinking (Analysis, Synthesis, and/or Evaluation)...
(Adapted from Bloom's Taxonomy).

- i. **Examine** the relationship between _____ concept and _____ concept.
- ii. **Relate** _____'s theory to your understanding of the "real life" situation provided (or experienced by student).
- iii. Using information from the text and from class, **invent** a possible model (could be physical or theoretical model, depending on course focus). **Explain** how the information you learned would support your invented model's potential success.
- iv. **Critique** _____' theory in view of the situation we experience in today's world. What elements are valid? What elements no longer apply (or never completely did), in your opinion? Use information from text/class/research to support your position.
- v. **Distinguish** between _____ and _____ as they apply to _____.
- vi. **Prioritize** the steps necessary to complete the _____ process. **Differentiate** between crucial and cosmetic/non-crucial steps.

Appendix B: SLO Examples

1. SLO's should address the 3 M's and have assessment methods in place to evaluate student success. The following are examples from various departments across the curriculum.
2. Identify, explore, and justify selections of potential career pathways that match student needs, abilities, and interests. 12
3. Decide what the important factors were that enabled the American colonies to defeat the British Empire during the Revolutionary War.
4. Describe the cultural characteristics of Mesoamerica as well as the historical processes by which the characteristics were created and transformed through time.
5. Discuss the role of gender on identity and behavioral roles.
6. Identify and analyze a particular environmental problem or situation, describe its physical, biological and/or sociological ramifications, and draw conclusions as to what can be done about the situation.
7. Examine limits of functions, asymptotic behavior of functions, and continuity.
8. Create a model for environmental law and community planning.
9. Explain the inherent meaning of the word primitive and discuss why oral religions should no longer be called *primitive* religions.
10. Identify the structure and composition of skin, and explain the function of skin.
11. Demonstrate the ability to provide skincare services in a safe environment and take measures to use Universal Precautions to prevent the spread of diseases.
12. Differentiate between public relations and community relations.
13. Identify and explain the various components of supply chain management.
14. Design pricing schedules and advertisement campaigns utilized in sales promotions.
15. Understand the relationship between voltage, current, resistance and power and be able to calculate each type in a circuit.
16. Perform basic arithmetic calculations as applied to business situations.
17. Recognize key regulatory agencies and labor relation organizations, and their responsibilities in the labor management relationship.
18. Identify Tools and their Functions.
19. Compare, contrast, and analyze major developmental milestones for children from conception through adolescence in the areas of physical, psychosocial, cognitive, and language development using standards research methodologies.

Appendix C: Speech Critique Sheet

Points	Type of Speech: _____				
Print Name: _____	Topic: _____				
	Date: _____		Meeting Day(s)/Time(s): _____		
“Like Bests” (LB):					
“Next Times” (NT):					
I. Content:	Superior	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
A. Organization					
1. Hook/Introduction: <u>Before the Topic & 1, 2, 3</u>					
2. Preview/Forecast: 1, 2, 3					
3. Body: 1, 2, 3 (Supporting Materials/Sources)					
4. Conclusion/Summary: 1, 2, 3					
B. Analysis/Reasoning					
C. Persuasive – # of Quotations and Source Citations – Properly Attributed					
D. Persuasive – Follows “Monroe’s Motivated Sequence”					
· Attention; Need (Problem); Satisfaction (Solution); Visualization; and Action					
II. Performance:	Superior	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
A. Verbal					
1. Volume					
2. Rate					
3. Fluency					
4. Non-words (um, you know...)					
5. Pitch					
6. Proper English/Double Negatives/Too Informal					
7. Vulgar Slang: “Slang Alert”					
B. Non-verbal					
1. Confidence/Poise					
2. Eye Contact					
3. Gestures (Card Control)					
4. Posture/Twisting/Magic “X”/Extraneous Movement					
III. Other:					
A. Outline					
1. Accurate with Sources					
2. Complete/Comprehensive (Full Sentences)					
3. Proper Format (Typed/Numbering/Indenting)					
B. Artistic Proofs					
1. Ethos					
2. Pathos					
3. Logos					
C. Visual Aid(s) (when required) (Sources)					
1. Size					
2. Color					
3. Neat Printing/Correct Spelling					
4. Revealed Correctly					
5. Revealed At Proper Time					
Time: Short OK Overtime				2015 © D. Conrad	

Appendix D: ESL Writing Rubric

ESL 104/114 Rubric for Paragraphs

Fall 2013

	5	4	3	2	1
Conceptual Understanding	Demonstrates very clear and sophisticated understanding of assignment; ideas are clear, assertive, and insightful. Message is logical and unifying	Demonstrates clear understanding of assignment; ideas are clear and assertive; some ideas insightful; message is generally logical and unifying	Understanding of assignment is acceptable/average, though sometimes too broad. Ideas may be simplistic or predictable. No deep insights.	Understanding of assignment is basic; ideas are not really clear, assertive, or just factual; meaning may require significant inference by the reader. No real insights present.	Understanding of assignment very limited or non-existent. Ideas unclear or disjointed, perhaps only list of facts; individual's logic very hard to follow.
Organization	Very logical organization. Develops ideas fully and provides controlling main ideas, logical support and examples in very clear order. No repetition (each part of the assignment does its own job).	Logical organization. Develops ideas but may have 1-2 points not as tightly connected. Provides controlling main idea, support, and examples in generally logical order. Good use of transitions. Limited repetition.	Acceptable/average organization. Has a main idea but may occasionally go off track in supporting it. Overall, ideas in logical order, but may be missing logical examples/support. May be occasionally unclear.	Limited organization. Main idea hard to locate or too broad/factual. Support often unclear or disconnected from main idea or other support points.	Main idea not present or confused by or disconnected from organization of ideas. Reasoning difficult to follow because of order of sentences (or insertion of sentences not relevant to the point).
Communication	Great sense of voice/individuality. Ideas flow easily/naturally and message is engaging or challenging in relation to topic, purpose and audience.	Good sense of writer's voice; language (vocab) choices effective and appropriate to topic, purpose, and audience.	Writer's voice not very clear; message more mechanical. Vocab sometimes incorrect for topic. Limited awareness of purpose/audience.	Writer's voice gets lost. Message does not flow...choppy. Vocab monotonous (boring) or repetitive. Needs of audience and purpose of assignment not readily apparent.	No sense of writer's voice here. Communication very difficult to follow. Language choices misused or inappropriate to purpose and audience.
Accuracy	Grammar and mechanics of American English very strong. Few to no errors and any there do not affect meaning of text.	Above average control of grammar/mechanics. Few errors which rarely affect meaning of text.	Average control of grammar/mechanics. Some errors... occasionally affect meaning.	Little control of grammar/mechanics. Errors more common and significantly affect meaning.	Very little control of grammar/mechanics. Errors so prevalent that meaning is virtually lost.

INTERMEDIATE COSMETOLOGY 51A NAIL PROJECT RUBRIC

Possible 100 points

Gone are the days of the classic French manicure—today it's all about nail art. Nail art projects can range in fabulous looks: leopard print, plaid, stripes, stained glass, lace, glitter, and more. This super-fun project presents professional nail-art in 3D, **using only forms** and not tip overlays. This project will be your individual creativity. You will design your project on a manikin hand in 3-dimensional art. Now let your creativity flow.

Criteria	0-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-20
Proper application and understanding of nail project	The student does not reach a standard described by the project of achieving nail art.	The student shows limited knowledge and understanding of nails. The student has demonstrated limited knowledge and understanding of the elements of 3D nail art.	The student is able to demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of nail art. The student is able to demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the elements of nail art.	The student is able to demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the nail art. The student is able to demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the elements of nail art.	The student is able to demonstrate excellent knowledge and understanding of nail art. The student is able to demonstrate excellent knowledge and understanding of the elements of nail art.
Quality of work	Nail application is not correct for the chosen style: 3D Nail art	Nail application is vaguely correct for the chosen style: 3 D Nail art	Nail application is satisfactory for the chosen style: 3 D Nail art	Nail application is good for the chosen style: 3 D Nail art	Nail application is correct for the chosen style: 3 D Nail art
Creativity-	Did not stay with the theme, unable to see the connection with the photograph. Application was not clean and sharp	Vaguely stayed with the theme, but was not successful. Application was not always clean and sharp.	Attempted to stay with the theme, but was not successful. Application was not always clean and sharp	Stayed somewhat with the theme - clean, sharp and effective. Followed the photograph	Stayed with the theme - clean, sharp and effective. Followed photograph
3 Dimensional and theme	The student does not reach a standard described by the project of achieving 3D art	The student vaguely achieves 3D art application	The student attempts to 3 D Nail art application	The student somewhat achieves 3 D Nail art task	The student successfully achieves 3 D Nail art task
Overall Project Results	Poor project submission	Didn't use time effectively in the nail application process to finish project appropriately	Could have use time more effectively throughout the process to finish project	Uses time good throughout the process to finish with a good project	Uses time well throughout the process to finish with an excellent project

Appendix G: Sculptured Nails Assessments

**STATE BOARD MOCK ASSESSMENT
INTERMEDIATE COSMETOLOGY 51A
SCULPTURED NAIL ASSESMENT**

SCULPTURED NAILS 20 minutes	Y	N	COMMENTS
Preparation			
Disinfects work area or uses protective covering			
Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English			
Sanitizes hands			
Sets up implements that are visibly clean and sanitary			
Sanitizes finger			
Removes shine from nail plate safely			
Cleanses nail plate and cuticle of dust			
Application of Sculptured Nail Product			
Applies nail form to fit snugly under free edge			
Applies primer safely			
Applies sculptured product to extend free edge			
Applies sculptured product to cover nail plate			
Demonstration of Filing			
Shapes free edge safely			
Shapes free edge safely			
Buffers sculptured nail safely			
Final Appearance of Nail			
Finished sculptured nail is smooth, even, and beveled/tapered			
Contour of sculptured nail is balanced			
Nail plate is covered by sculptured nail product			
Cuticle and surrounding skin remains free of sculptured nail product			
Safety and Infection Control			
Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures			
Disposes of items to be disinfected in properly labeled receptacle			
Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service			
Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service			

Appendix H: Automotive Hands-On Presentation

Automotive Grading Rubric

Criteria	F(0)	D(1)	C(2)	B(3)	A(4)
Automotive NATEF Task Presentation Exam	Student is unable to identify components, does not show knowledge of assembly and reassembly procedures, and does not understand safety procedures and tool use. Student was unable to complete the task.	Student is able to identify the majority of the major components, must consult references during assembly and reassembly procedures, and only demonstrates essential safety procedures and basic tool use. Student requires check point inspections during completion of task.	Student is able to identify major components, shows a basic knowledge of assembly and reassembly procedures, and shows a basic understanding of safety procedures and tool use.	Student is able to identify most components, shows knowledge of assembly and reassembly procedures, and understands safety procedures and tool use. Student has some questions but is usually able to complete task in the standard allotted time.	Student is able to identify all components, shows knowledge of assembly and reassembly procedures, and understands safety procedures and tool use. Student has mastery of subject matter and could complete the task independently in a work environment in the allotted time.

Instructor Feedback:

PART II: PROGRAM-LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENTS

1. Develop/Review Program Outcomes

- A. Review College Mission (see Website)
- B. Review current Program Mission Statement from most recent Program Review or create a Program Mission Statement.
- C. Dialogue with department on what you do and how you know you are successful at it.
- D. Identify four to six possible outcomes you want students to achieve by the end of the program.
- E. Apply the three essential criteria: measurable – manageable – meaningful.

Measurable:	Manageable:	Meaningful:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Use verbs that specify definite, observable student performance, actions, or behaviors. › Directly measurable. › Describe student rather than instructor behaviors. › Describe student outcomes rather than processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Realistic and attainable. › Indicate behaviors that are direct results of your program. › Use simple language, clearly understood by people outside the program. › Validated by colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Tie directly to course content › Applicability to course material › Relevant to life experiences and/or allow for a bridge to existing student knowledge

- F. As a department, narrow the number of outcomes to three preferably, but a maximum of four. Remember every outcome MUST be assessed so be realistic.
- G. Write the three PLO's in active, higher level taxonomy language. (See Appendix)
- H. Submit to and receive approval through the Curriculum Committee process. See Curriculum Chair or Curriculum manual for assistance.

2. Develop Assessments for Program Outcomes

- A. As a department, make a determination of how to measure achievement of outcomes in a manageable way.
- B. Create a plan to measure/assess outcomes collaboratively
- C. Some assessments may require collaboration with other departments on campus and/or transfer institutions.
- D. Create a rubric or explicit written expectations. Why?
 - › Eliminates confusion or subjectivity
 - › Aids departments and instructors to align better in determining goals
- E. Identifying Student Success Data (Program data will be entered into TracDat in the future)
 - › Use quantitative Data to determine if "Target" is met (needed for TracDat)
 - › Standard BCC Target goal - 70% of assessed students receive 70% or higher on assessment
 - › Helpful Math formula to identify target Met:
 - # Students Passed Assessment / # Students Assessed = % of Student Success
 - SAMPLE: 300 students completed assessment, 250 students passed the assessment with a "C" or higher (70%)
 - Math Formula: $250/300 = 83\%$ student success on SLO assessment.
- F. Remember, if there is other anecdotal information regarding student success and/or failure there is an area to include this on the Course Level SLO Assessment Report. Consider including information such as students not taking the assessment or dropping the course

3. Analyze & Reflect

- A. Assess and gather /Submit outcomes according to the established plan.
- B. As a department, analyze outcome results to determine whether data is meaningful or whether assessment/measure needs to be rewritten.
- C. As a department, analyze meaningful results and determine whether results support your program as a whole.
 - ▶ **Analysis:** Examine and evaluate relevant information that may account for differences.
 - ▶ **Reflection:** Consider assessment data to determine what can be improved, keep doing what is successful, and continue to build upon.
- D. CHANGE: If the outcome assessment indicates the need for course, program or other adjustments to fully meet program mission, and then determine with the department appropriate steps.

4. Report Assessment Results

- A. Report assessment results in the Program Review and/or TracDat.
- B. PLO information (assessment and results) may be posted to department's webpage
- C. Outcomes reporting at the Program Level:
 - ▶ Every program develops its own outcomes assessment and plan.
 - ▶ Faculty members in that program are expected to participate in the Outcomes and Assessment process as according to the plan.
 - ▶ Not participating can reflect on evaluations and in some cases course offerings
 - ▶ Data in SLO reports is not part of any evaluation process, only participation in the process.
 - ▶ Participation in the process as dictated by the program plan is mandatory and can be evaluated as professional responsibility.

5. Use Results to Improve Student Success

- A. Implement steps identified in Step 14.
- B. Include implementation steps and as appropriate, change in assessment results in following reports
- C. Continuous review of potential adjustments/ outcomes/ measurements.
 - Integrate learning into approach for new cycle
 - Adjust instructional methodology and materials as needed
 - Consider potential revisions to SLOs / curriculum as needed
- D. There is no end goal. This is an opportunity to reflect and improve the program
- E. Remember when implementing, establish priorities – can't fix everything at once.
- F. Use the Program Review Cycle as a chance to review Course Outlines including SLOs and Course SLO data

Start a New Cycle

PART III: NON-INSTRUCTIONAL OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Introduction

PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

DEVELOPING THE UNIT ASSESSMENT PLAN



1. Develop/Review Outcomes

DEFINITION OF OUTCOMES

WRITING OUTCOMES

TIPS FOR WRITING OUTCOMES

STRUCTURE OF AN OUTCOME STATEMENT

GENERAL FORMAT FOR WRITING OUTCOME STATEMENTS

RESOURCES: ACTION VERBS FOR OUTCOMES

2. Assess Outcomes

DEFINING HOW YOU WILL ASSESS PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTCOMES (METHODS AND MEASURES)

DIRECT MEASUREMENT APPROACHES

INDIRECT MEASUREMENT APPROACHES

ASSESSMENT METHODS BASED ON TYPE OF EXPECTED OUTCOME

ASSESSMENT TRAPS TO AVOID

3. Analyze & Reflect

4. Report Assessment Results

TRACDAT!

5. Use Results to Improve Student Success

Introduction

Service Area:

A department providing student support services outside the classroom that are not linked to courses in the catalog or schedule.

Administrative Unit:

A department providing operational services and organizational support.

Information to support Outcomes Assessment for both types of areas is included in this section of the handbook. The material can be applied to all College non-instructional units, although the terminology may be abbreviated, according to the flow of the narrative.

PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT

The four main purposes of assessment should be:

- ▶ **To improve:** The assessment process should provide feedback to determine how the administrative unit can be improved.
- ▶ **To inform:** The assessment process should inform department heads and other decision-makers of the contributions and impact of the administrative unit to the development and growth of students.
- ▶ **To prove:** The assessment process should encapsulate and demonstrate what the administrative unit is accomplishing to students, faculty, staff and outsiders.
- ▶ **To support:** The assessment process should provide support for campus decision-making activities such as unit review and strategic planning, as well as external accountability activities such as accreditation.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

Effective administrative unit assessment should answer these questions:

- ▶ What are you trying to do?
- ▶ How well are you doing it?
- ▶ Using the answers to the first two questions, how can you improve what you are doing?
- ▶ What and how does the unit contribute to the development and growth of students?
- ▶ How can the student learning experience be improved?

DEVELOPING THE UNIT ASSESSMENT PLAN

It is important to note that staff participation and ownership is essential for the success of Service Area and Administrative Unit assessment.

Organize for assessment

Before assessment begins, the key players, committees and structures should be identified. One or more persons may lead the unit assessment process, but it is important for all staff to assume the responsibility for designing, implementing, and carrying out the assessment process.

Define the Outcomes of the administrative unit

Outcomes are specific statements that reflect the broader goals of the unit. The Outcomes of an Administrative Unit or Service Area usually focus more on process and student development and will primarily describe what the department is going to do and what its impact will be on students and other key stakeholders.

Identify performance criteria for each outcome

Determine what standards are expected from services provided by your unit. For some outcomes, you may want to achieve a satisfaction level of “excellent” from the students who utilize the services. However, for other outcomes, this expectation may be unrealistic because other factors may affect student perception (e.g., students’ satisfaction rating of the financial assistance office).

Inventory existing and needed assessment methods

Identify, list and describe all available approaches that can be used to conduct assessment. Referring back to the needs of the unit, identify what additional methods need to be used to provide you with the necessary information needed for assessing what is going on within your unit.

Determine how assessment results will be used for improvement

No matter how well assessment activities are planned and conducted, they are not worthwhile to the unit unless the plan incorporates a timely feedback mechanism. The results and information gained should be distributed to the appropriate parties to achieve continuous improvement.

1. Develop/Review Outcomes

DEFINITION OF OUTCOMES

An Administrative Unit or Service Area Outcome (AUO/SAO) is a statement about what a client will experience, receive, or understand as a result of a given service.

Outcomes can also be defined as statements that describe the desired quality (timeliness, accuracy, responsiveness, etc.) of key functions and services within the administrative unit.

Operational outcomes define exactly what the services should promote (understanding, knowledge, awareness, appreciation, etc.).

Outcomes state expected accomplishments or improvements that the unit has identified, after careful consideration of the critical processes and functions. They can relate to the operations and processes of the unit, and may include a consideration of demand, quality, and efficiency and effectiveness.

Outcomes may also relate to intended behaviors that a student having used services provided by the unit should demonstrate. Outcome statements can also focus on the intended abilities, knowledge, values and attitudes a student should demonstrate after having used certain services or having participated in an activity. It is helpful to think about expected outcomes in three categories:

- ▶ **Unit Processes and Functions** – expected outcomes about quality, efficiency and effectiveness by evaluating organizational processes, functions, and services
- ▶ **Satisfaction** – expected outcomes about constituents’ or stakeholders’ satisfaction with a unit’s processes, functions, and services
- ▶ **Learning** – expected outcomes about whether or not students/faculty/staff are learning the desired knowledge, skills, or attitudes intended by the unit

WRITING OUTCOMES

Use the acronym **SMART** when developing the outcome statements for your unit:

Specific

The outcome is associated with key processes and services provided to students and other stakeholders. The outcome should be distinctive to the unit that is conducting assessment.

Measurable

The intended outcome should be one for which it is feasible to collect accurate and reliable data. Refer to section 2 for more discussion on direct and indirect assessment measures.

Aggressive but Attainable

The following is a collection of questions that might help you to formulate and define aggressive but attainable outcomes for your unit:

- ▶ What types of things are you striving for?
- ▶ What types of directions do you want to move in?
- ▶ What would you like to accomplish over the next year(s) and why?
- ▶ In terms of outcomes, what would the “perfect” Administrative Unit or Service Area look like?

Results-oriented

The outcome should aid in identifying where the unit improvements are needed.

Describe where you would like to be within a specified time period. For example: 10% increase in funding within one year; 90% satisfaction rating for next year; 10% student performance within two years. If you have previously measured an outcome, it is helpful to use this as the baseline for setting your target for next year.

Time Bound

The outcome should indicate the timeframe for assessment; for example: every spring term.

Possible outcomes to measure:

- ▶ *efficiency*
- ▶ *accuracy*
- ▶ *effectiveness*
- ▶ *client satisfaction (improve, increase)*
- ▶ *quality*
- ▶ *comprehensiveness (understand)*
- ▶ *compliance with standards*

TIPS FOR WRITING OUTCOMES

First develop a master list of “what do we do” and then identify key services or functions.

Begin the outcome statement with the beneficiary as the subject:

- ▶ *Customers have . . .*
- ▶ *Administrators are able to . . .*
- ▶ *Clients understand . . .*
- ▶ *The College enjoys . . .*
- ▶ *Customers employ . . .*
- ▶ *Students are aware of . . .*
- ▶ *The institution gains . . .*

STRUCTURE OF AN OUTCOME STATEMENT

Outcome statements will have two mandatory elements:

- ▶ the intended **beneficiary** (customers, students, institution, community) and
- ▶ the **gain or benefit** they receive from what you do (impact/end result).

GENERAL FORMAT FOR WRITING OUTCOME STATEMENTS

[Intended audience] **who** [action verb 1] [program/service] **will be able to** [action verb 2] [intended outcome].

Intended audience: students, faculty, staff, users, employees within division, employees within department, alumni, customers, administrators, clients, the university, etc...

Action verb 1: complete, engage in, participate in

Program/service: respond to maintenance requests, process payments in the drop box, prepare revenue forecast report, etc...

Action verb 2: demonstrate, describe, discuss, explain, identify, list, summarize, prepare, rate, utilize, use, select, plan

Or

[Intended audience or the department] **will be able to** [action verb to describe what it will do, achieve or accomplish]

Examples

Facilities staff in the plumbing shop **will be able to** respond to maintenance requests within 24 hours of notification.

Students **who** use the online payment process **will be able to** make timely payments and not lose their scheduled courses.

College administrators **have the financial information they need to** make decisions effectively.

Administrators **who** request information from the facilities inventory **will receive** accurate, timely, useful information.

RESOURCES: Action Verbs for Outcomes

Avoid Weasel Words:

be aware of	have a (firm) grasp of
have an awareness of	have a (an in-depth) knowledge of
be conversant with	be prepared for a variety of
be familiar with	have a (good) sense of
display a broad and full grasp of	understand
develop awareness (understanding)	have an (a broad) understanding of

Use Action Verbs:

Add	Design	List	Restate
Advance	Determine	Locate	Reveal
Alter	Differentiate	Make	Revise
Analyze	Discriminate	Manipulate	Section
Annotate	Dissect	Match	Select
Apply	Distinguish	Mobilize	Separate
Appraise	Divide	Modify	Show
Arrange	Draw	Multiply	Sift
Assign	Earn	Name	Sketch
Assay	Employ	Negotiate	Solve
Assess	Estimate	Offer	Sort
Calculate	Evaluate	Omit	Speak
Canvass	Exercise	Operate	Specify
Change	Exert	Perform	Spell
Check	Expand	Pick	State
Choose	Extrapolate	Plan	Strike
Classify	Find	Point	Subtract
Collect	Form	Predict	Summarize
Combine	Generate	Produce	Support
Compare	Give	Project	Synthesize
Compose	Hold	Propose	Take care, teach
Contrast	Identify	Quality	Tell
Convert	Illustrate	Quantity	Test
Create	Include	Quote	Touch
Criticize	Integrate	Rate	Transfer
Dance	Interpolate	Read	Transform
Deduce	Interpret	Recite	Translate
Define	Judge	Referee	Use
Demonstrate	Justify	Repeat	Weigh
Derive	Label	Reproduce	Write

2. Assess Outcomes

DEFINING HOW YOU WILL ASSESS PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTCOMES (Methods and Measures)

Start by taking an inventory of the kinds of tools your department/unit is already using.

- What information are you already collecting?
- What kinds of assessments are you already using or are already familiar with?

Other departments on campus may be collecting data that you can incorporate into your methods/measures. The data collected should be representative of the whole year. You may want to collect data continuously or you may want to take “snapshots” at regular intervals. You may want to sample systematically, rather than collect data on every event/person/day.

For each expected outcome, describe methods (e.g., survey) you are using or plan to use and the measurement (e.g., satisfaction) to measure how well your department/unit is actually performing in relation to the outcome.

Assessment measures can be:

- **direct** (any process employed to gather data which requires subjects to *display* their knowledge, behavior, or thought processes) *or*
- **indirect** (any process employed to gather data which asks subjects to *reflect upon* their knowledge, behaviors, or thought processes),

Multiple measures should be used for each outcome. An assessment method and measure can be used to assess progress towards more than one outcome.

Assessment methods and measures must align with the outcome:

Outcome:

Hypothetical Administrative Unit will demonstrate increased timeliness in terms of processing student requests.

Assessment:

Number of students served by *Hypothetical Administrative Unit* will be tracked for three semesters.

*This is an example of assessment that **will not** provide useful, useable information.*

Assessment:

A computerized log will track the date and time of each student request and the date and time that it is resolved. The time between request and resolution will be compared for two semesters.

*This is an example of assessment that **will** provide useful, useable information.*

Note: The first example assessment shows that data are being collected, but not **useful** data. The second example assessment provides information that can be used to determine if the administrative unit is increasing its timeliness.

Methods of Assessing Administrative Unit and Service Area Outcomes

The following are examples of the methods that can be used to assess the expected outcomes of administrative programs.

1. Tracking the use of a service (e.g. hits on a website, use of computer technology)
2. Satisfaction surveys
3. Graduation rates
4. Retention rates
5. Establishing timelines and budgets
6. Recruiting results
7. Tracking program participation
8. Tracking complaints and how they are resolved

Develop targets or benchmarks for each measure

Targets are specific values that you are expecting to reach (e.g., %). For example,

- ▶ *80% of users reported satisfaction with the service in the Customer Satisfaction Survey*
- ▶ *100% of monthly reports (note – it would be better to identify the reports by name) are submitted by the third business day of the month*
- ▶ *100% of ad hoc reports (note – it would be better to identify the reports by name) are submitted by the promised deadline*
- ▶ *90% of the faculty and staff responding to the annual spring Customer Satisfaction Survey will report they feel safe on campus*

Tips for developing methods and measures and for collecting data:

- ▶ Methods and measures must be set before you begin to collect data.
- ▶ If you easily meet your success target, you will want to raise the bar or modify the method, measure and/or the target in order to further improve your outcome.
- ▶ Using the completion of a project as an assessment method is not recommended because simply completing the project does not provide any information on how to improve.

Data collection needs to become a regular activity for the department. The more you can automate or make routine, the easier it will be to incorporate into your activities. Remember, if the responsibility for data collection is purposefully assigned to a person or position, it increases the likelihood that it will occur.

Examples of assessment measures for administrative units and service areas include:

- ▶ satisfaction surveys
- ▶ number of complaints
- ▶ count of participants,
- ▶ growth in participation
- ▶ average wait time
- ▶ statistical reports
- ▶ average service time
- ▶ staff training hours
- ▶ number of applications
- ▶ processing time
- ▶ number of users
- ▶ focus groups
- ▶ opinion surveys
- ▶ external review
- ▶ number of staff trained
- ▶ attendance at events
- ▶ website hits
- ▶ year-to-year comparisons
- ▶ etc...

DIRECT MEASUREMENT APPROACHES

Locally Developed tests

Example: **Pre/Post Test.** Administered before and after a specified learning experience to measure participants' level of knowledge, skills, behaviors and attitudes. (The learning experience can be a program that meets several times or one event.) Post-test scores are compared to pretest scores to determine if the students have learned specific information or concepts.

Embedded questions

Specific questions designed to see if students or clients learned something you expected them to learn.

Rubrics designed to address specific skills or behaviors

A product or performance of some kind is completed by participants and the criteria for evaluating the product have been determined ahead of time and listed with guidelines for evaluating the quality of each aspect listed.

Behavioral observations

- ▶ An expert observer (often a supervisor) observes a practical application of a student learning outcome and rates student performance.
- ▶ An observer counts specific occurrences of a behavior that is one of the targets for a group involved in a particular experience.

INDIRECT MEASUREMENT APPROACHES

Case Study

Cases studies are focused, systematic examination of one instance of a phenomenon such as an event, program, process or person. Typically, they involve collection of qualitative and quantitative data such as observations, surveys, and interviews for an in depth study of the phenomenon. A report on the case study can help integrate the evidence into one response.

Focus Group

Individuals who are users of the support service or whom benefit from the academic preparation made possible as a result of completing the program (e.g., employers, alumni, faculty, parents, etc.) can provide important qualitative data that can be used to identify strengths and weaknesses within the program.

Interview

One-on-one structured interviews with students, faculty, employers and alumni conducted by a trained interviewer can provide useful information, which can be used to identify strengths and weaknesses within the program.

Assessment Methods Based on Type of Expected Outcome	
What is Being Measured?	Assessment Method
Unit Processes or Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ Error rate ‣ Cost effectiveness analysis ‣ Activity logs ‣ Wait or processing time ‣ Benchmark ‣ External or internal audit ‣ Checklist/Inventory ‣ Track services provided to constituents
Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ Constituent surveys ‣ Employer questionnaire ‣ Focus groups ‣ Interviews
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ Pre and post survey/tests ‣ Checklists ‣ Documented observations ‣ Case Studies ‣ Tracking behaviors or performance ‣ Skills inventory ‣ Rubric

It is important to note that satisfaction surveys are commonly used assessment methods. However, they do not provide direct evidence of achieving expected outcomes, ***unless it is a satisfaction outcome***. For processes/functions outcomes and learning outcomes, it is acceptable to use satisfaction surveys as supporting evidence to supplement results of direct assessment methods, but they cannot be the only method used.

ASSESSMENT TRAPS TO AVOID

Some common assessment traps are described here. These are common challenges faced by units starting to incorporate assessment into their organization. As units infuse assessment as part of their daily activities these assessment traps become easier to avoid.

Great method, wrong expected outcome

In order for assessment results to be informative, it is critical that the assessment methodology matches what the unit is trying to measure. For example, conducting focus groups with faculty to determine if students are satisfied with walk-in hours at the Advising Center is a mismatch of assessment method to outcome.

No target, no idea

It's very important that, along with selecting matching assessment methods, units define the target or criteria for determining success. Without a defined target, a unit does not have a guide to what they are striving for in their performance.

Beware of the labor intensive and time draining

If a unit has all the resources at its disposal and no pending deadline, then this common trap does not apply. However, for the majority of units, time and resources are always limited. Without the proper resources, selecting a labor-intensive and time-consuming assessment method have significant disadvantages. It increases the probability that data will not be collected reliably and consistently. Also, faculty or staff involved will not have a positive experience and may decline to participate in future assessments.

Data, data everywhere

A caution about collecting an overabundance of data: sometimes more data are just more data. For example, it is not necessary to survey every customer that uses the cafeteria for feedback about quality service. However, it is important to make sure that customers who are surveyed represent the diversity of the customer population. Some strategies include surveying customers at different points in the day; and, selecting a representative sample of customers.

The one assessment method to assess them all

It is a fallacy that one assessment method can completely capture it all. All assessment methods have their benefits and shortcomings. While expected outcomes should be assessed by at least one direct assessment method, using more than one assessment method offers multiple perspectives and addresses gaps in each methodology. As a best practice, units should strive to create a comprehensive body of evidence by selecting more than one direct assessment method and utilizing indirect assessment methods to supplement the results of direct assessment methods.

Statistically significant syndrome

Assessment is not research. All too often assessment results are dismissed because research standards are imposed on methodology. While it is important that an assessment tool is reliable, to apply the same standards as research conducted for peer review does not necessarily enhance the information collected. An appropriate assessment method should be a helpful resource for making informed decisions and improving organizational practice, it does not have to be precise, but it does need to be useful to the unit.

3. Analyze & Reflect

- A. **Gather:** As a service area or administrative unit assess and gather outcomes according to the established plan.
- B. **Analyze:** As a service area or administrative unit, analyze outcome results to determine whether data is meaningful or whether assessment/measure needs to be rewritten.
 - a. As a service area or administrative unit, analyze meaningful results and determine whether results support your service area or administrative unit as a whole.
 - b. Examine and evaluate relevant information that may account for differences.
- C. **Reflection:** Consider assessment data to determine what can be improved, keep doing what is successful, and continue to build upon.
- D. **Adjust:** If the outcome assessment indicates the need for adjustments to fully meet administrative unit outcome or service area outcome (AUO/SAO) determine with the department the appropriate steps.

4. Report Assessment Results

- A. Report the Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) or Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUOs) for your unit assessment results in the Program Review and TracDat.
 - a. Summarize the progress your unit has made on SAO/AUO measures since the last program review.
- B. Service Area Outcomes information (assessment and results) may be posted to department's webpage.
- C. Describe any improvements made by the service area or administrative unit as a result of the outcomes assessment process.

- Every service area and administrative unit reports its own outcomes assessment and plan.
- Service area and administrative units are expected to participate in the outcomes and assessment process in the program review.

5. Use Results to Improve Student Success/Client Engagement

- A. Review Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) or Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUOs) assessment results for successful student and/or client engagement.
- B. After analysis of SAO's or AUO's implement changes as appropriate.
- C. Continuous review and/or potential adjustments to outcomes or measurements as required.
 - Integrate changes as necessary for a new cycle.
 - Adjust measurements as needed.
 - Consider potential revisions to Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) or Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUOs) as needed.
- D. There is no end goal. This is an opportunity to reflect and improve.
- E. Remember when establishing and implementing priorities, reaffirm what's working and make changes as needed.

- F. Use the Program Review Cycle as a chance to review Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) or Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUOs) data.

Start a New Cycle



Acknowledgements

This portion of the handbook has been adapted in large part from other Colleges and Universities. It contains material from several documents on administrative unit assessment and borrows liberally from other texts.

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Various sources have been noted below:

<http://www.lanecollege.edu/text/StepsinDevelopingAssessmentPlan.pdf>

<http://www.nvcc.edu/about-Nova/directories--offices/administrative-offices/college-planning/planning/hbannplanningevalcampusesadminunits.pdf>

https://oeas.ucf.edu/doc/adm_assess_handbook.pdf

http://www.uta.edu/ier/Resources/ABCD_Outcome_Writing_Model.pdf

<https://wccc.edu/media/15342/adminunithandbook.pdf>

<http://www.marymount.edu/marymount.edu/media/Home/Faculty-and-staff/AdminAssessHandbook.pdf>