# Assessment Reports and Plans Pre-Submission Workshop

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# Workshop Outcomes

At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to:

1. List the steps in an assessment cycle
2. Develop measurable Student Learning Outcomes
3. Choose the 'best' assessment strategy for their SLOs
4. Set standards for students' academic performance – Benchmark
5. Discuss why and how rubrics are valuable assessment tools
6. Data to Make Improvements - **Closing the Loop**
7. Correctly complete their department's Assessment Report and Plan

# The Assessment Cycle

# Accreditation 101

- Every 10 years, higher education institutions go through a process to reaffirm their accreditation.

- Accreditation is a "voluntary" process required by the DOE and other federal funders.

- Shows the degree has value.

- Eligible for Title IV Financial Aid and other federal funds.

- Institutional Accreditation – Focuses the university as a whole.

- Specialized and Programmatic Accreditation – You must have an institutional accreditation to keep a specialized accreditation.

- The Southern Association of Colleges and Universities – Commission on Colleges is our regional accrediting body and requires MVSU to be current on a number of standards.

# Applicable Standard

**Standard 8.2:** The institution identifies **expected outcomes**, assesses the extent to which it **achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on** analysis of the results for:

a. Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs.

# Best Practice in Assessment

➡ **All members of a unit** are involved in collecting and evaluating artifacts/data.

➡ Focus on improving learning. The focus should always be on how to make things better.

➡ Academic units should focus on **programmatic change**, not course change. Ex. Academic dishonesty may need to be addressed across all classes.

➡ Use existing data, outcomes, or metrics. **Where possible, blend Accreditation reporting requirements. For example, graduate programs have comp exams, internships, and thesis projects.**

➡ **Disaggregate** data. Ex. pass rates and summative grades are not good enough.

# What are Outcomes? What do you want to achieve?

**Student Learning Outcomes** – What attitudes, skills, or content does your academic program help students to master?

**Program Outcomes** – Destination outcomes. Do graduates secure employment? How satisfied are they with service?

**Course Objectives** – What attitudes, skills, or content does your specific course help students master?

**S**pecific

**M**easurable

**A**ttainable

**R**elevant

**T**ime-based

the balance

# Start with Your Program's Mission Statement (MS)

**Your Unit's MS must align with the University's Mission Statement**

**Your MS guides your unit's efforts for continuous improvement**

**Outcomes flow from your unit's MS**

**Academic Units Have:**

Core Objectives (**COs**) if they teach in the University's Core Curriculum

Student Learning Outcomes (**SLOs**)

Program Outcomes (**POs**)

# Program-and Course-Level SLOs

- Program Level – decide on which SLOs are important for the program as a whole.

- Course Level –decide on which SLOs represent the broad outcomes for the course. Usually, a course will have one to five SLOs.

- **Focus on what the student should know and be able to do** at the end of the program or course. Consider how students will demonstrate the knowledge, skills, abilities, or values you expect students to develop.

- **Modify as you learn** from experience. As you begin the actual assessment, sometimes flaws will be identified in the SLO itself. Upon completion of your assessment, you may discover that revision of the SLO is necessary.

## Student Learning Outcomes Defined

- Express what the <u>student</u> will be able <u>to do</u> with the *essential* knowledge, skill, and depositions gained by the <u>end</u> of a program.

- Focus on the *product (*performance) rather than the *process.*

- Are *measurable (*that is, identifiable or observable).

- Are *detailed* and *specific* – explicitly stated.

- Include appropriate *action verbs* such as define, compare, design, etc. (Bloom's Taxonomy)

- NOTE: If an SLO is *essential,* it should be assessed.

# Blooms and Rigor
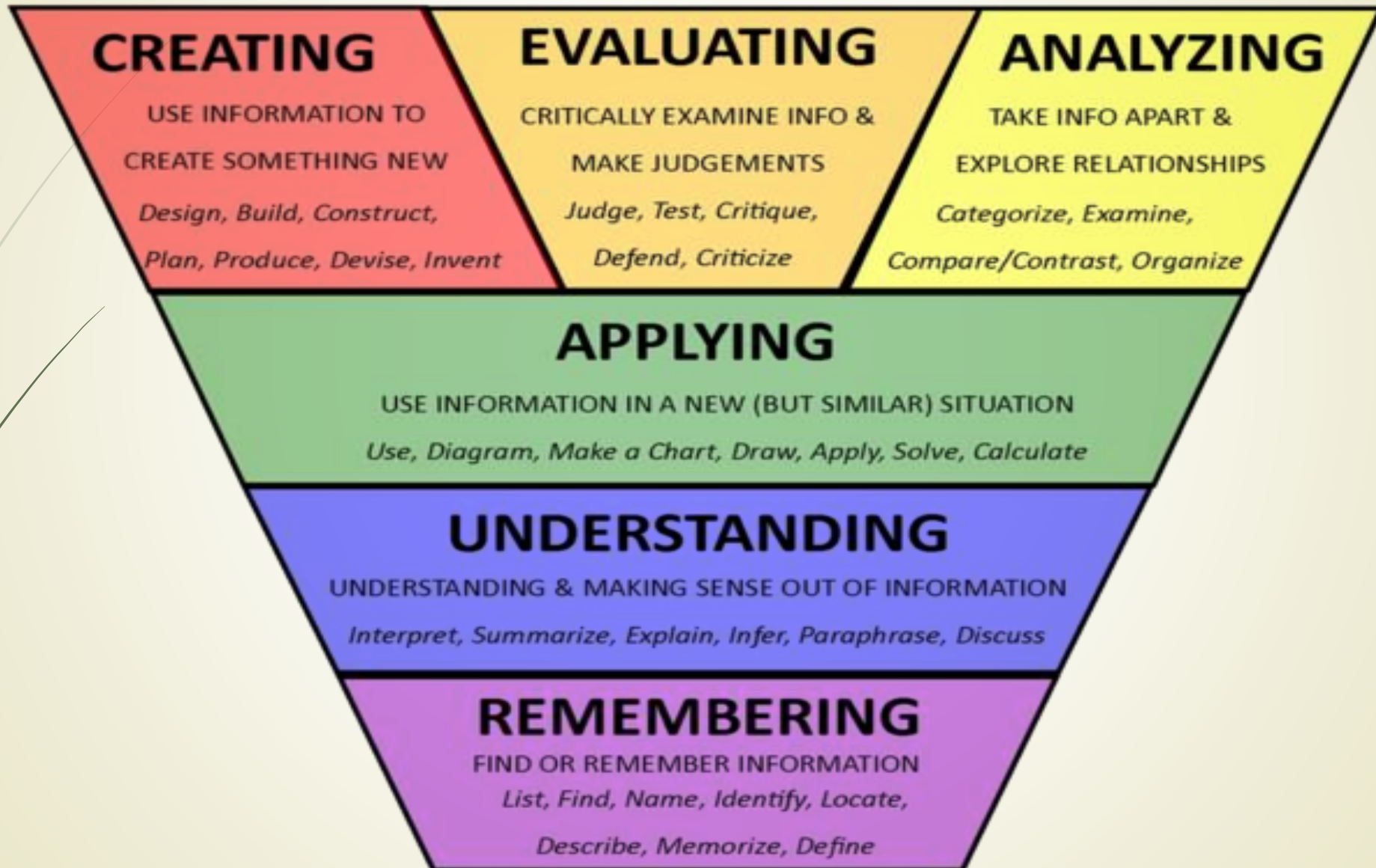
# Examples of Outcomes

- **Student Learning Goals (University Level)**
  - Critical Thinking, Communication, Service-oriented, Research, Disciplinary Mastery,
- Student Learning Outcomes:
  - Students can **synthesize** information in the bio-informatics literature.
  - Students can **analyze** quantitative data and draw relevant conclusions.
  - Students can **evaluate** the strengths/weaknesses of exercise regimes.
  - Students can **identify & define** key terms & concepts in criminal justice.
- Program Outcomes:
  - Graduates will attain professional employment in their discipline.
  - **Graduates** will express satisfaction with their program of study.

# Overall Process of Alignment

Mission Statement

↓

Outcomes: derived from the MS

↓

Strategies: Derived from Outcomes

↓

Measures & Targets: must cohere with the outcomes

↓

Revised Strategies based on data from measures

**Measures: What are You Using to Achieve Your Outcomes**

➡ Two Types of Measures

➡ **Direct Measures:**

➡ Academic: Student work is evaluated against learning outcomes

➡ **Indirect Measures:**

➡ Academic: self-reported perceptions of student learning

➡ *Best Practice: Two measures per outcome\**

# Examples of Direct and Indirect Measures – Course Level

| Direct Measures | Indirect Measures |
|---|---|
| Course-based exams/assignments/projects | Course evaluations |
| Term papers, lab reports, case studies | Test blueprints (outlines of concepts & skills tested) |
| Course-embedded questions/assignments | Classroom Assessment techniques (e.g., thought papers, muddiest point explanation) |
| Observations of field work, internship performance | Percent of class time spent at intellectual or cultural activities related to the course |
| Oral presentations | Reflective essays |
| Portfolios | Focus group interviews with students |
| Graphic tests and poster | Job placement data |
| Group and team projects | Exit interviews |
| Transcript analysis of class conversations | |
| Capstone Course projects/assignments | |

# Examples of Direct and Indirect Measures – Program Level

| Direct Measures | Indirect Measures |
|---|---|
| Pass rates or scores on licensure or certification exams or subject area tests | Focus group interviews with graduating seniors, faculty, employers |
| Student publications or presentations | Job placement data |
| Capstone projects, senior thesis, exhibits, portfolios, or performances | Employer or alumni surveys |
| Employer & internship supervisor ratings of students' performance | Student perception surveys |
| Portfolios <br> Research projects | Acceptance into professional, graduate schools |
| Embedded questions and assignments – essay exams, objective exams | Exit interviews |
| Locally developed exams | |
| Pre/post test data | |
| Major Fields Test | |
| **Overall test grades and overall course grades are <span style="color:red">NOT</span> good measures.** | |

# Using Data to Make Improvements.

Closing the Loop

# Data Uses - Courses

For formative feedback so instructors can improve learning.

For summative feedback to inform planning for the future by an instructor or a course committee.

To support cross-sectional analysis of how consistently multi-section courses are achieving important learning outcomes or the purposes of the course in a sequence

# Data Uses - Program

To confirm the purpose of the program (e.g., its place in the entire curriculum or connection to mission).

To check the alignment of program design with program outcomes.

To discern how well the program, from its beginning to end, fosters cumulative learning of the desired outcomes.

To discover how well the program as a whole enables students to achieve end-point levels of competence for all program outcomes.

To identify superfluous and or missing curricular and co-curricular elements in the program.

# Using Rubrics to Assess SLOs

# Rubrics & Scales

- Validity – Does this measure what is intended?
-  (Inter-rater) Reliability – Are repeated scores similar?
- Created Rubrics:
    - Gain input from all stakeholders, including students
    - Review/Pilot before putting into use
- Likert-Scales:
    - 5-7 categories
    - Does reporting show accurate grouping
- *Best Practices:*
    - *Both measures assist with disaggregated data*
    - *Ensure all are on the same page*
    - *Establish target/benchmark*

**Rubric/Scoring Guide/or Grading Criteria**

Select your scoring guide:

A simple list, chart, or guide that describes the criteria that you will use to score or grade an assignment.

The list is often accompanied by guidelines for evaluating each of those things.

## Sources for Rubrics

https://www.rcampus.com/indexrubric.cfm

Comprehensive rubric development, assessment, and sharing tool –browse by subject and grade level.

AAC&U  - https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics

build rubric
my bookmarks
search
assessments

Related areas
my classes
coursework

iRubric Receives
High-Tech Innovation
Award and Special
Honors

2009
TechAmerica
ORANGE COUNTY
High-Tech Awards Winner

iRubric™
with Click2Grade Technology

# RUBRICS BY GRADE LEVEL:

Kindergarten - Grade 5 *(127521)*    Grade 6-8 *(152208)*    Grade 9-12 *(186915)*    Undergraduate *(76510)*    Graduate *(21043)*

Post Graduate *(4209)*

# RUBRICS BY SUBJECT:

(General) *(85207)*    Accounting *(11507)*    Arts and Design *(53433)*    Biology *(19616)*    Business *(26303)*    Chemistry *(13576)*

Communication *(27433)*    Computers *(31461)*    Dance *(16600)*    Education *(46205)*    Engineering *(15331)*    English *(195435)*

Finance *(11289)*    Foreign Languages *(52988)*    Geography *(20560)*    Geology *(18482)*    Health *(35058)*    History *(54687)*

Humanities *(21129)*    Journalism *(16179)*    Law *(12491)*    Math *(52690)*    Medical *(20333)*    Music *(34568)*    Nursing *(6599)*

Pharmacy *(501)*    Philosophy *(11582)*    Physical Ed., Fitness *(32614)*    Physics *(12493)*    Political Science *(12775)*    Psychology *(16786)*

Public Administration *(105)*    Science *(75151)*    Social Sciences *(56398)*    Test Preparation *(2997)*    Vocational *(42535)*

# RUBRICS BY TYPE:

(Other) *(68762)*    Assessment *(95953)*    Assignment *(118038)*    Attendance *(5037)*    Class note *(8846)*    ePortfolio *(10241)*

Exam *(31917)*    Handout *(8006)*    Homework *(24731)*    Presentation *(123176)*    Project *(207399)*    Quiz *(9494)*    Reading *(26453)*

Reflection *(1426)*    Writing *(120399)*

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# Tips for Choosing a Rubric

➤ Rubric must be aligned with your curriculum

➤ Similar in level:

❖ Course

❖ Program

❖ Institution

From the same or similar discipline/curriculum

From peer institutions or nationally recognized groups.

Developed through a collaborative process.

# Completing the Assessment Report

# Components of the Annual Report

Artifacts/Measures

Strategies Used –Data Collection Plan

Benchmarks/Target

Was Data collected?

Results

Action Plan – New strategies - Use of Data to close the loop

Improvements made during the year

# Program Mission Statement:

➤ A mission for the program should explain the basic purpose(s) of the degree program. It should make clear what it aims to accomplish, how it contributes to the well-being of its students and its significance for the entire university. It may include a vision statement that suggests where the program is headed.

# Core Student Learning Outcomes:

➡ Academic programs should have 3-6 ongoing SLOs that regularly use exit measures and course-embedded measures.

➡ Ideally, each program should develop trend-line data to show its areas of strengths and weaknesses in student learning. That would allow the program to generate "special" objectives to build on strengths and address weaknesses.

➡ This would also give reviewers the opportunity to view the program over time.

# Core Student Learning Outcomes: cont.

The list of Core Objectives should not be understood as an exhaustive list of all the program's objectives. These are the most basic things that the program expects all its students to achieve if they are to graduate. Examples would be:

- "Students will write professionally in Business Administration."

- "Students will explain the basics in all three subfields of Criminal Justice."

- "Biology students will practice lab safety."

- "Social Workers will be sensitive to diversity."

## Link to Institutional Mission:

Indicate which portion of the University mission statement justifies the student learning outcomes selected for this program. Do not paraphrase. Quote directly from the current mission statement at https://www.mvsu.edu/university/mission

**Faculty Involvement:** Leave this item blank in the **Assessment Plan.** In the **Assessment Report**, include a list of all assessment meetings for the major.

## Student Learning Outcome:

Only report on 3 of your SLOs in a cycle (3 to five years)

Indicate what students are expected to know, think, or do (knowledge, skills, and dispositions) as a result of your program.

Do not include means of assessment in the student learning outcomes.

# Student Learning Goal Supported:

Indicate which of the following Student Learning Goals each SLO is most likely to support. If the SLO could fall under more than one category, choose the best. Do not choose more than one. The choices are:

I. **Students will be critical thinkers.**

  **1A: General Critical Thinking.**

  **1B. Critical Reading.**

  **1C: Mathematics or Statistics.**

II. **Students will be exceptional communicators.**

  **2A. Writing Proficiency.**

  **2B. Oral Proficiency.**

  **2C. Computer Literacy.**

III. **Students will be service-oriented, engaged, and productive citizens.**

IV. **Students will Participate in Research.**

V. **Students will Master the Discipline.**

# Means of Assessment:

- Means of assessment are the instruments (artifacts) used to determine whether the Student Learning Outcome (SLO) has been achieved.

Examples:

- a) A locally developed rubric will be used to measure performance proficiency in Theater 406, the capstone course for the degree in Theater.

- b) An exit exam for Criminal Justice Students will be administered to all graduating seniors, measuring the three main areas of competence.

- c) All graduating students will pass a licensing exam in Social Work.

- d) Students will complete the Major Field Test in Biology.

In the Assessment Plan, **the 1st means of assessment is required.**

**The 2nd means of assessment is strongly recommended**.

## Choosing an Assessment Strategy

➡ The best assessment plans use multiple, diverse approaches (Suskie, 2004 & Walvoord, 2004).

Approaches:

❖ Formative and summative assessment.

❖ Direct and indirect evidence of student learning.

❖ Assessment yielding evidence of learning processes, inputs, and context, as well as learning outcomes.

❖ Objective and subjective assessments.

❖ Performance assessments and traditional assessments.

❖ Embedded and add-on assessments.

❖ Local and published assessments.

❖ Quantitative and qualitative assessments.

# Strategies for Achieving Outcomes

- What will you do "to make it happen"?
- Do your strategies align with your outcomes and measures?
- Examples:
  - If data shows that students must improve their research documentation skills, then a strategy for that could be more in-class source citation drills.
- What strategies inside and outside class will you adopt to achieve your outcomes?
  - Instructional Activities: updating texts and lectures, interactive class exercises
  - Course Assignments: project-based assignments, student presentations, etc.
  - Program activities: grad school recruiter visits, cover letter writing workshops.

# Artifacts/ Measures

- How did you measure this outcome?
- Describe the student artifact and how you measured it for the outcome
- Two measures are required for SLOs, at least one of which must be a direct measure
- Sources of Data:
  o Rubric assessed student artifacts
  o Qualtrics (or other) survey data
  o Focus group data
  o Major Field Tests (or other standardized exams)
- Disaggregating data helps identify areas for improvement.
- A rubric with multiple elements (for grammar, organization, argument, sources, etc.) will reveal precise areas of deficiency.
- A test with embedded questions aligned with the outcome.

## Data Collection Plan:

▸ This should explain all the steps necessary to administer the instrument properly. The plan should include the following elements:

▸ a) Who is responsible for administering the instrument?

▸ b) When will it be administered?

▸ c) Where – if done in a specific course(s)

## Benchmarks/ Targets

- This section should describe the level(s) of proficiency students should attain once the instrument is applied. Make sure that the benchmarks are expressed numerically. For example, students are expected to score an average of 3.5 on the six items in the reading rubric.

- The most useful instruments allow for multiple benchmarks, which allow the program to identify areas of strength and weakness.

# Benchmarks/ Targets

- For example, a standard such as "students will score at the 40th percentile in all areas of the Major Field Test." could yield the following results: Students are up to standard in 3 of the 4 areas. That means that the program can focus on improving the fourth area. Similarly, a standard may say that students will score at least a '4' on every item in an Oral Presentation Rubric. If they score at standard in 4 of six levels, the program will know to focus on the other two.

- In the drop-down portion of the menu, select the exact number of benchmarks that the program expects to achieve. Please use the space provided to describe benchmarks. Extended explanations, charts, and graphs should be included as appendices.

## Benchmarks /Targets

➡ What target did you set for each measure of each outcome being assessed?

➡ Did you meet your targets? Yes, no, partially.

➡ Your 5-Year Plan should have your targets for all measures for each Core Objective, Student Learning Outcome, or Program Outcome you assess.

# Data Collected:

If the data was collected as planned, that can be noted without further comment.

If there were issues, missing data, or modifications, these should be noted and explained.

# Results

**What do the data say about the performance of this outcome?**

This should be a narrative explaining what your assessment data reveal.

- Include actual figures, sample size, and whether your strategies worked.

**How does this year's data compare to previous cycles' data for this outcome?**

No change? Minor change? Significant? Elaborate.

# Benchmarks Achieved:

For instance, "Students met the standard on 4 of 6 items on the writing rubric. Items met were Thesis, Introduction, Organization and Content. Items not met were Mechanics and Grammar." Or "students passed two of the five sections of the test." Identify these.

It should be clear to the reader how many benchmarks were met, how many were not met, and at what level.

In the section calling for a description, the report should express the ratio of benchmarks achieved to benchmarks expected. For instance, "the program met 4 of 6 benchmarks. The rubric items below standard were 'Thesis' and 'Organization.' These will be our focus for next year."

# Action Plan for Change

- Agree on the needed change.
- Document the action plan.
- Consider how the changes will be assessed in the next assessment cycle.
- Share the action plan with your department.
- Put the action plan in motion.

# Action Plan – Pertinent Questions

1. What is the source(s) of the data you collected for your SLO?

2. What do the data say about your SLO's achievement level?

Must have a target/benchmark for each measure.

Disaggregating data is key to pinpointing areas of strengths/weaknesses.

# Action Plan

- Based on the data you collected, what new strategies will you implement to strengthen the results of the assessed outcome?

- **This is the all-critical "closing the loop" question.**

- Should be a narrative of specific strategies you plan to implement.

- These strategies must be data-driven, i.e., based on the answer to the question - How are you using the data?

# Improvements During the Year

- What specific strategies or actions did your program take this cycle to strengthen this outcome?
  - Focus here on what you did.
- Were these strategies implemented based on the previous assessment cycle for this outcome?
  - If no, explain the basis for the strategies implemented.
- How did your program use the data to improve on this outcome?
  - This is a key question as it "closes the loop."
  - List and describe the actions you took, the strategies you adopted, etc., in response to the data pertaining to the outcome.
  - Use past-tense verbs. Shows what you did based on the data collected.
  - List new strategies.

**IMPROVEMENTS OBSERVED DURING ACADEMIC YEAR**

- Describe how assessment results were used to improve the program. These improvements could have been derived from data analysis from previous years. First, include the student learning outcome and the academic year in which it was initiated.

- Most reports will track SLOs initiated in previous years. If more than four improvements are observed, include those in the appendix section.

- Report improvements in one or more of the following categories:

# IMPROVEMENTS OBSERVED DURING ACADEMIC YEAR

- TYPE 1: Improvements in means of assessment (e.g., validated a rubric or adopted a nationally normed test).

- TYPE 2: Interventions suggested by the data (e.g., created a new course, adopted a new pedagogy, or changed the emphasis in an existing course).

- TYPE 3: Documented gains in student learning attributable to an intervention. Specify the intervention. All gains in category 3 must be expressed numerically unless the analysis is qualitative (e.g., students' scores increased by 2 percentile on the Major Field Test).

- Attach the report for the qualitative analysis in the appendix section.

# APPENDIX:

- Please use the space provided for all reporting items. Often, extended explanation, methodological preface, charts, graphs and other items requiring extended space are often necessary to adequately convey a program's achievements.

- These are properly confined to the Appendix section.

# Efficient and Effective Assessment

| Integrate | Make | Consider |
|-----------|------|----------|
| Integrate the assessment into the assignments you are currently using. (Hint: Don't reinvent the wheel) | If you must create a new assignment, make the assignment appropriate to everyone's time and effort.<br><br>(Remain relevant) | Consider assessing at the practice level rather than only at the mastery level. |

## Efficient and Effective Assessment

**The department is invested in the assessment of the program**

**They have a reasonable cycle for assessing all program SLOs**

**Appropriate FACULTY ….**

- Are involved in the assessment
- Gather their assessment data
- Meet to discuss the assessment findings with their colleagues in the department to identify ways to make improvements.
- Report how they plan to use the assessment findings to improve student learning.

# Inefficient and/or Ineffective Assessment

- The program doesn't assess, or the assessment cycle is unreasonable.

- Assessment is "farmed out" to the new faculty member.

- Faculty are not involved in assessment.

- Faculty are not engaged in reviewing their assessment findings.

- The program continually reports a description of their "process but not a "Use of Results to Improve Student Learning."

- Faculty only look at improving assessment and do not devise strategies to improve student learning.

- The program doesn't report their assessment.

# Sources

- Miller, R., & Leskes, A. (2005). *Levels of Assessment: From the Student to the Institution*. Association of American Colleges and Universities. Washington. DC

- Suskie, L. (2004). *Assessing student learning: A commonsense guide*. San Francisco, CA: Anker Publishing Company.

- Walvoord, B. E. (2010). *Assessment clear and simple: A practical guide for institutions, departments, and general education* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Wiley & Sons, Inc.

# THANK YOU!

- QUESTIONS

- COMMENTS
  - ?
  - ?