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EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING:
PRACTICAL STRATEGIES, LESSONS LEARNED

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WHAT
IS YOUR
PRIMARY
ASSESSMENT
CHALLENGE?

- Discuss with a partner or your table.
- Be prepared to share with the larger group.

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TODAY'S AGENDA

1. The Big Picture
2. Establishing an Assessment Program
3. Strategies for Effective Reporting
4. Questions and Discussion

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WHAT IS OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT?

Systematic, ongoing collection of information about attainment of program or office outcomes, and use of that information to guide decision-making and drive improvement.

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WHAT ASSESSMENT IS NOT

The Purpose of...

assessment is to **INCREASE** quality.

evaluation is to **JUDGE** quality.

Too short and not enough leaves C.

- Not judging quality of a unit's work.
- Review focuses *solely* on:
 - quality of assessment
 - clarity, completeness of report
 - documentation of efforts to improve
- Purpose is to *identify opportunities to improve*.
- No "gotcha" if criteria not met.*
- Just tell the story.

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WHY CONDUCT OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT?

- Promote student learning and success.
- Sustain a supportive learning environment.
- Identify needs, implement steps to improve.
- Strengthen unit/institutional performance.
- Document progress/improvement over time.
- Advance the institutional mission.
- Comply with accreditation requirements.

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SECTION 8.2: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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 in the areas below:

- a. Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs.
- b. Student learning outcomes for collegiate-level general education competencies of its undergraduate degree programs.
- c. Academic and student services that support student success.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (2018). *Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation, Third Edition*. Decatur, GA: sacscoc.org.

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Plans to make improvements do not qualify as seeking improvement, but efforts to improve a program that may not have been entirely successful certainly do.

SACSCOC Resource Manual, Third Edition, 2018, p. 68.

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FOUR-COLUMN REPORT

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Learning (or Program, or Operational) - XYZ Program/Office

Mission: The mission of the XYZ Program/Office is to ...
Assessment Point of Contact:
Program History:

* Columns 1 and 2 (Outcomes and Methods) are the assessment "plan." In combination, all four columns comprise the assessment report.

| Operational Outcomes | Assessment Methods | Results and Analysis | Use of Results/Action Plan |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>LEARNING OUTCOME 1 NAME = Students will know or be able to do (do when they graduate, or at a given point of their academic pathway. Students will have access to specific academic services or support or consentient times and locations.</p> <p>Outcome Status: Active</p> <p>Start Date: 07/01/2019 End Date:</p> | <p>Direct/Indirect - (Select one.) Scores on specified items or assignments, graduation results, time to complete processes, survey results, record of publication or job placement, etc.</p> <p>Criteria for Success: None:</p> | <p>Reporting Period: 2009-00 (Select from dropdown menu)</p> <p>Result Types: Inclusive (Select from dropdown menu)</p> <p>Start Date: Inclusive results. What happened? Analyze and explain any unusual or notable data.</p> <p>Follow-up on Previous Year Action Plan Describe progress toward achieving last year's action plan. Was it completed? If so, what happened? If not, why not?</p> <p>Status of Previous Year Action Plan: (Select from dropdown menu.)</p> | <p>Use of Results/Action Plan: Based on this year's results, what are we going to do during the next cycle to improve? Even if criteria are met, there may be ways to do things better or improve students' experience. It is not acceptable to "maintain its momentum" or go more than one year without a specific, actionable plan to show improvement.</p> |

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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- With a partner/group:
 - Review following sample for 2 min.
 - Identify strengths and/or gaps.
 - Note any questions.

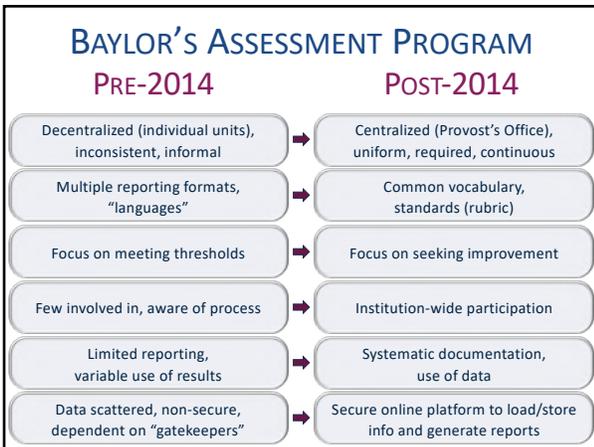
Be prepared to discuss with the larger group:

- Based on the SACSCOC guidelines, do you think the sample is compliant?

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| Assessment Methods | Results and Analysis | Use of Results/Action Plan |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Direct - [Effective AY14-15 to Present] Evaluation of the originality of the student's proposed research as assessed by the Qualifying Exam using the QE-Written Evaluation Rubric.</p> <p>Criteria for Success: [Effective AY15-16 to Present] 85% of students will achieve a rating of 3.0 or higher on the "Imagination and Originality of Thought" section of the Qualifying Exam Rubric (scale: 1-4).</p> <p>Notes: [Effective AY14-15 to AY14-15] 50% of students will achieve 3.0 score.</p> | <p>Reporting Period: 2017 - 2018 Result Type: Criteria Met 85% students scoring >= 3.00 Average score: 3.1 Range of scores: 2.0 - 4.0</p> <p>53% average score: 3.04</p> <p>We have seen a 17% increase in the percentage of students meeting criteria for success on the Imagination and Originality of Thought section of the Rubric. We have exceeded our goal. We believe that the monthly meetings with the program director to address questions have helped us to meet our goal. (09/28/2018)</p> <p>Status of Previous Year Action Plan: Action Plan Begun/Ongoing</p> <p>Follow-up on Previous Year Action Plan: The Program Director has met with the students monthly to address their questions and concerns about the Qualifying Exam. The Program Director has used this time to explain the Imagination and Originality of Thought expectations. The program director will guide the students to use content analysis reports, citation analysis reports and meta-analysis reports in their thinking of originality. He will also discuss key concepts and state of the art papers and how they play a role in imagination and originality of thought.</p> <p>Reporting Period: 2016 - 2017 Result Type: Criteria Not Met 50% students scoring >= 3.00 Average score: 2.75 Range of scores: 2.00 - 4.00</p> <p>63% average score: 2.97 (02/22/2017)</p> <p>Status of Previous Year Action Plan: Action Plan Begun/Ongoing</p> <p>Follow-up on Previous Year Action Plan: Although the Program Director met with the students to discuss originality in thought, they are still struggling to understand the concept. Policy (instituted in 2016-17) is to have</p> | <p>Use of Results/Action Plan: The Program Director will work with members to encourage them to develop strategies of utilizing the student's abilities to use originality and imagination in the lab while working on and developing experiments. He will encourage the members to have frequent brainstorming sessions with their students, increase higher level modeling with the student, encourage more cooperative learning, and focus on developing project-based techniques. (06/29/2018)</p> <p>Use of Results/Action Plan: Based on this data, Program Director will implement meeting discussions prior to the Qualifying Exam and identify students who have problems articulating Imagination and Originality and will have individual meetings/coaching with the struggling students. The Program Director has already begun this process with the second year students. (06/29/2017)</p> |

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RUBRIC OVERVIEW

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| | Initiated (1) | Developing (3) | Exemplary (5) |
|---|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Intended Outcomes | | ✓ | |
| Assessment Methods | ✓ | | |
| Criteria for Success | | | ✓ |
| Results and Analysis | | ✓ | |
| Follow-up on Previous Year Action Plans | | ✓ | |
| Use of Results, New Action Plans | ✓ | | |

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**BUILD YOUR ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
ONE RELATIONSHIP AT A TIME**

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Build Relationships

- Listen to concerns, suggestions
- Respect people's time
- Collaborate actively, often
- Respond quickly, thoroughly
- Be patient: quality, buy-in take time



Build Knowledge & Skills

- Personalized coaching on demand
- Workshops, group training
- Online and informal resources
- Continuous follow-up and guidance
- Reinforce (deadlines, expectations)

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QUALITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE REPORT

- Results aligned clearly with methods and outcomes
- Result Type (Criteria Met/Not Met, etc.) matches results
- Notable/unusual results are analyzed
- Related docs (student info redacted) illuminate results, support analysis
- Specific, logical action plans, tied to results
- Follow-up describing impact of previous plan
- Clarity of Communication**
Any reader can follow and understand

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**EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT REPORTING
REQUIRES EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

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| | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Clear to <i>any</i> reader. | Interpretation <i>not</i> required. | Thorough, connects all dots. |
| Content flows logically across columns, years. | Limited jargon, acronyms defined. | Grammatically correct. |

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SEEKING IMPROVEMENT

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- View missed criteria/targets as opportunities.
- Identify and address areas *in need of improvement*.
- Discontinue or replace methods if criteria are continually met.
- Focus on action plans, follow-up and analysis.
- Describe impacts of plans, even if they didn't work.
- Repeat.

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AVOID *IN-ACTION* PLANS

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- Buying Time:** "... collect more data before deciding if/what changes are needed."
- Couldn't Be Better:** "Criteria met. No action required."
- Play It Again:** "Continue to monitor...", "copy plans year to year, summarize results."



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BUILD A BETTER ACTION PLAN

- **Align directly and clearly** with results, criteria and outcomes.
 - *In light of student feedback regarding wait times, the office will...*
- Focus on **specific, achievable, measurable** steps.
 - Avoid vague terms (“consider” a change, “encourage” students to “focus”).
 - Be explicit: describe *what* will be done, by *whom*, *when*, and *why*.
- **Leverage ongoing practices.** Standard planning and review, committee meetings, etc. can—and should—inform action plans.
- **Think small.** Targeted, granular adjustments can be solid action plans if they are clearly articulated, based on results and aligned with outcomes.
- **Look ahead.** Action plans should be presented in future tense (“will”).

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DOCUMENT YOUR STORY

- **Attach evidence/documentation.**
 - Course syllabus
 - Policy statements
 - Scores
 - Publication/award lists
 - Exam/survey items used as methods
- **Ensure that evidence is useful.**
 - Relevant to assessment method
 - Clarifies results
 - Supports assertions/analysis
- **Redact personal info, identifiers.**



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CLOSE THE ASSESSMENT LOOP WITH ANALYSIS AND FOLLOW-UP

- Were this year’s results unusual? Are trends appearing?
- Why did scores go up, wait times increase, survey ratings drop?
 - Answers can point to new action plan items.
- Was last year’s action plan implemented? Did it work?

 Follow-up on action plans that do not achieve desired results *is* evidence of seeking improvement.

 Action plans without follow-up are proposals for change, *not* evidence of seeking improvement.

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KEEP IN MIND

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-  Build assessment program/culture over time, through relationships.
-  *Seeking improvement: results + analysis + action plan + follow-up -> repeat.*
-  Focus more on action plans and follow-up than on always meeting criteria.
-  Clear communication and alignment for effective reporting.
-  Assessment and reporting are tools for improvement and compliance.

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THANK YOU!

Please complete an evaluation form.

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