



Basic Assessment Workshop

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I. Workshop Outcomes

After attending the Bi-Annual Assessment Workshop, participants will be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate a basic knowledge of assessment through the development of assessment goals (Operational and Learning);
- 2) Define key terms associated with research and assessment;
- 3) Identify the seven components of the Georgia Tech Division of Student Life Cycle of Assessment;
- 4) Articulate the influences on the use of learning outcomes and assessment in higher education; and
- 5) Identify the components of a learning outcome (ABCD).

II. History of GT Student Life Assessment

- Departed from Online Assessment Tracking System (O.A.T.S) spring '06
- Developed first Assessment Plan Summer '06
- 2013 Uploaded Final Assessment Reports into Online Assessment Tracking System (O.A.T.S)
- Final Assessment Reports uploaded into Anthology Planning software
- Completed 15 years in Assessment Cycle (2006-2021)

III. Basic Definitions

Assessment – (Verb) To gather, analyze, analyze and interpret evidence that describes effectiveness.

Assessment – (Noun) Conducting an assessment project using various methods including Qualitative Assessment; Conducting Focus Groups; and Designing and Selecting Quantitative Instruments. Basic approaches of an assessment such as a: Needs Assessment; Satisfaction Assessment; Assessing Learning Outcomes; an Environmental Assessment; Assessing Cost Effectiveness; a Drop Out Assessment; and Post-Graduate Assessment

Research – To gather evidence that guides theory by testing hypotheses.

Evaluation – To ascertain value or worth.

IV. Why Assess?

- Improve* – What we do for students.
- Educate* – Impact student learning.
- Identify* – What we do and don't do well.
- Demonstrate* – Value of our programs/services.
- Justify* – Requests for resources.
- Prove* – Effectiveness in measurable terms.

**“If we don't have the data,
someone else controls the
narrative.”**

**Keynote Speaker, APLU
2017**

Notes:

V. Further Reasons to Engage in Meaningful Assessment

1. Measure the degree to which a program or service is **effective** or not.
2. **Increase** retention.
3. Increase **Accountability & Responsibility**.
4. Enhance alignment with mission of the **Institute** and the **Division of Student Life**.
5. Continuously improve **programs** and **services**.
6. **Validate** funding requests.

7. Incorporate results into **decision making**, basis for **policy/procedure change, research/grant proposals**, etc.
8. Document decisions based on **assessment** results.
9. **Validate** resources and expectations.
10. Interpret data so that it **informs** your programming, budgeting, planning, decision making, etc.

"More and more, campus leaders, the state, accreditors, and the public are asking us to justify the resources we are using and to show what value we are adding to the student experience (Ewell, 2009; Provezis, 2010).

If we do not document what we discover about our programs in ways that are consistent and that others can interpret, we cannot demonstrate how we have used the resources entrusted to us. "

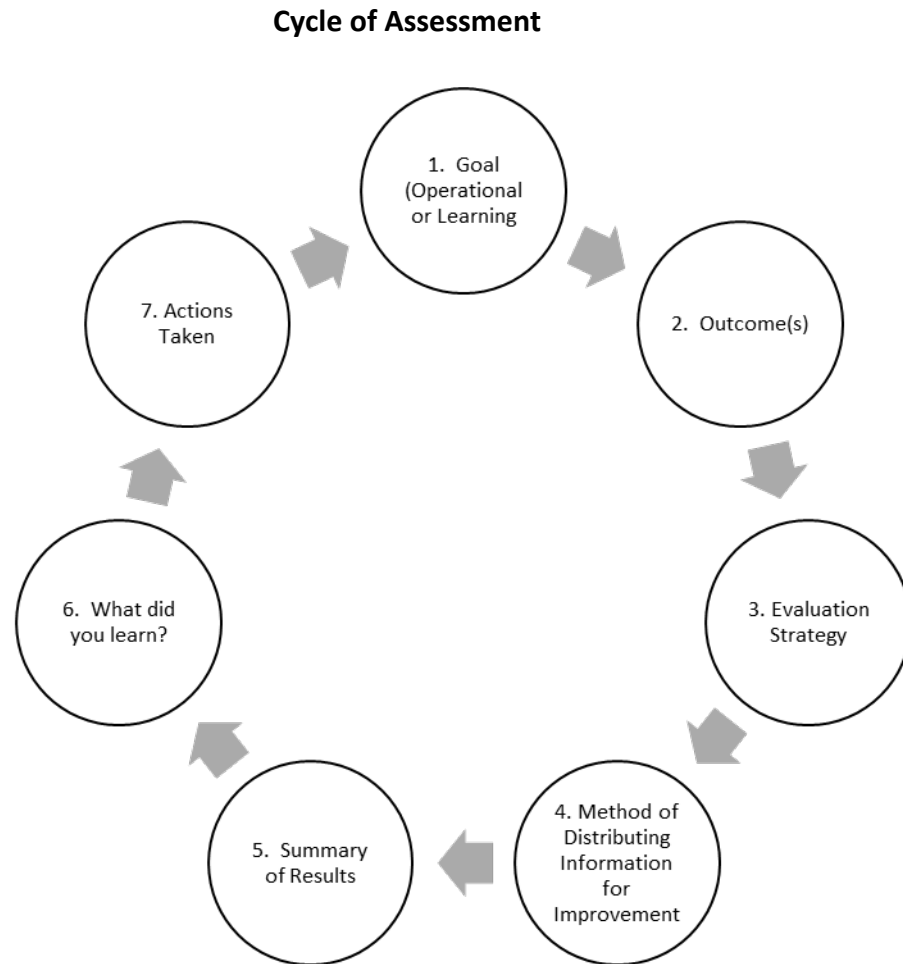
-Marilee J. Bresciani, 2011

VI. Influences on Assessment in Higher Education

- Accreditation entities
- Competency Movement in Business & Industry
- International Trade Agreement
- The Higher Education Re-Authorization Act
- Commission on the Future of Higher Education
- Public Information about Performance
- Transparency of outcomes and results
- NASPA/ACPA Learning Reconsidered
- CAS Standards
- Professional Organizations
- Spellings Report
- U.S. Government

Others? _____

VII. GT Cycle of Assessment – 7 Components



Components in Detail

1. Goal (s)

Identify Operational and/or Learning goals that require an assessment component. A goal is an end result written in broad terms.

Operational

Improve customer service, intended impact on student development, results of program, quality of service, etc.

Learning

What knowledge or skill will be acquired, attitudes/perceptions affected, criteria met?

Learning Outcomes are statements of what is expected students, faculty, staff, or others will be able to do as a result of participating in a learning activity which could be a class, project, educational program, etc.

2. Measurable Outcome(s).

Identify measurable outcomes for each goal.

Outcomes should be specific, identifiable and clearly and succinctly stated.

What specific observable effects or changes do you anticipate will be seen as a result of the program activities described in the goal? Begin with the end in mind. What would you like your findings to show?

S.M.A.R.T. Outcomes

S	Specific
M	Measurable
A	Attainable
R	Results Oriented
T	Time-Bound

3. Evaluation Strategy

Describe specific assessment/data collection methods used and timetable for implementation to evaluate the degree to which outcomes are being achieved such as a survey, focus group, interviews, observation, document review, etc.

Direct methods (work samples, journal, portfolios, observations of behavior, internal review, evaluations of performance, etc.) require program participants to display their knowledge or skills. Indirect methods (surveys, focus groups, exit interviews, tracking, etc.) ask program participants to reflect on their learning rather than to demonstrate.

4. Method of Disseminating and Using Information for Improvement

Identify methods of disseminating and using information for improvement. How do you plan to report out? Describe the manner in which data is to be utilized—e.g. monthly/quarterly meetings, annual retreat, etc.

5. Summary of Results

Write a summary of the results. What did you learn? Include date of assessment, description of important results, interpretation and decisions made based on the data. If no changes justify continuation of current practice.

6. What Did You Learn?

Describe the results based on what you learned from the assessment.

7. Actions Taken

Describe changes in operational focus, resource allocation, rules/procedures, etc. that were made because of the data/results obtained. If no actions taken justify continued practice.

Document decisions made as a result of assessment. How, if at all, did you use the information to modify a program, discontinue a service, change a process/policy, etc.

VIII. Timeline for Assessment Plans and Reports

Direct reports to the Vice President for Student Life are responsible for submitting their unit Assessment Plans and Assessment Reports on July 1 of each year.

Assessment Plans consist of components **1-4**:

1. Identified goals: Operational and/or Learning
2. Established measurable outcomes
3. Developed evaluation strategies
4. Identified methods of disseminating and using information for improvement

Assessment Reports consist of **all 7** components of the Assessment Cycle:

1. Identified goals: Operational and/or Learning
2. Established measurable outcomes
3. Developed evaluation strategies
4. Identified methods of disseminating and using information for improvement
5. Summary of Results
6. What Did You Learn?
7. Actions Taken

Final Assessment Reports for the Division of Student Life are submitted to the Vice President for Student Life and the Director of Assessment for the Georgia Institute of Technology on August 1 of each year. Final Assessment Reports are posted on the Research and Assessment for Student Life website <http://www.studentlife.gatech.edu/assessment/>

VIV. Assessment Methods

1. Existing Databases & Resources
2. Surveys & Questionnaires
 - CampusLabs
 - Lime
 - OrgSync
 - PsychData (www.psychdata.com)
 - Qualtrics
 - Survey Methods (www.surveymethods.com)
 - Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com)
 - SurveyGizmo (www.surveygizmo.com)
 - SurveyPro
 - TaskStream
 - Zoomerang (www.zoomerang.com)
3. Focus Groups & Interviews
4. Grading/Performance Rubrics
5. Naturalistic Observation
6. Archival Data

X. Workshop

Exercise 1 Operational Goal

1. Operational Goal

2. Outcome(s)

3. Evaluation Strategy

4. Method of Disseminating and Using Information for Improvement

5. Summary of Results

6. Actions Taken

Exercise 2 Learning Goal

Writing Outcomes for Learning Goals

ABCD =

Audience (e.g. student, employee, participant, etc.)

Behavior (e.g. demonstrate, identify, articulate, etc.)

Condition (e.g. training, workshop, course, presentation, etc.)

Degree (e.g. 85% post-test, supervisor observation satisfaction, etc.)

The ABCD's of Objective Writing

A = (Audience) – Who is it that you are teaching?

Example: Students...

B – (Behavior) - What is it that they will be able to do?

Example: Students will be able to articulate the Georgia Tech fight song...

C = (Condition) - What circumstances or condition does the learner have to be in in order to complete your requirement?

Example: Students will be able to articulate the Georgia Tech fight song word-for-word...

D= (Degree) - How good does it have to be done?

Example: Students will be able to articulate the Georgia Tech fight song word-for-word with 100% accuracy...

Completed Objective:

“Students will be able to articulate the Georgia Tech fight song word-for-word with 100% accuracy.

As you can see the objective is very descriptive. It tells the student exactly what they need to do in order to complete or meet the criteria. Using this method of writing objectives online will help students focus on what they need to learn.

1. Learning Goal

2. Outcome(s)

3. Evaluation Strategy

4. Method of Disseminating and Using Information for Improvement

5. Summary of Results

6. Actions Taken

XI. GT Division of Student Life Uses Assessment to:

1. Enhance alignment with Institute mission
2. Increase accountability
3. Demonstrate responsibility
4. Measure program effectiveness for improvement
5. SACSCOC accreditation report(s)
6. Guide/improve programming and training
7. Inform students, faculty, staff, Institute committees
8. Validate funding requests
9. Incorporate results into research/grant proposals, benchmarking, etc.
10. Document decisions based on assessment results

XII. Uses of our Assessment Results

- Improve programs and services
- Justify our need for additional human and fiscal resources
- Impact student development
- Disseminate knowledge

- Change policy/procedures
- Modify or discontinue programs/services
- Enhance perceived value of programs/services

**What decisions did you make about your program(s) last year?
What evidence did you use to inform that decision?**

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)

XIII. Assessment Vocabulary

Action Research – Classroom-based research involving the systematic collection of data in order to address certain questions and issue so as to improve classroom instruction and educational effectiveness.

Affective Outcomes – Outcomes of education that reflect feelings more than understanding; likes, pleasures, ideals, dislikes, annoyances, values.

Annual Report – A report from an academic or non-academic program/division/unit based on its assessment plan that is submitted annually, which outlines how evidence was used to improve student learning outcomes through curricular and/or other changes or to document that no changes were needed.

Assessment – The systematic process of determining educational objectives, gathering, using, and analyzing information about student learning outcomes to make decisions about programs, individual student progress, or accountability.

Assessment Tool – An instrument that has been designed to collect objective data about students' knowledge and skill acquisition. An appropriate outcomes assessment test measures students' ability to integrate a set of individual skills into a meaningful, collective demonstration. Some examples of assessment tools include surveys, focus groups, frequency counts, rubrics, content analysis, etc.

Benchmark – A criterion-referenced objective performance datum that is used for comparative purposes. A program can use its own data as a baseline benchmark against which to compare future performance. It can also use data from another program as a benchmark. In the latter case, the other program often is chosen because it is exemplary and its data are used as a target to strive for, rather than as a baseline.

Cohort – A group whose progress is followed by means of measurements at different points in time.

Criterion Referenced Tests – A test in which the results can be used to determine a student’s progress toward mastery of a content area. Performance is compared to an expected level of mastery in a content area rather than to other students’ scores. Such tests usually include questions based on what the student was taught and are designed to measure the student’s mastery of designated objectives of an instructional program. The “criterion” is the standard of performance established as the passing score for the test. Scores have meaning in terms of what the student knows or can do, rather than how the test-taker compares to a reference or norm group.

Curriculum Map – A matrix showing where each goal and/or learning outcome are covered in each program course.

Direct assessment – Direct measures of student learning require student to display their knowledge and skills as they respond to the instrument itself. Objective tests, essays, presentations, and classroom assignments all meet this criterion.

Educational Goals – The knowledge, skills, abilities, capacities, attitudes or dispositions students are expected to acquire as a result of completing your academic program. Goals are sometimes treated as synonymous with outcomes, though outcomes are the behavioral results of the goals, and are stated in precise operational terms.

Formative assessment – The assessment of student achievement at different stages of a course or at different stages of a student’s academic career. The focus of formative assessment is on the documentation of student development over time. It can also be used to engage students in a process of reflection on their education.

Holistic Scoring – In assessment, assigning a single score based on an overall assessment of performance rather than by scoring or analyzing dimensions or traits individually. The product is considered to be more than the sum of its parts and so the quality of a final product or performance is evaluated rather than the process or dimension of performance. A holistic scoring rubric might combine a number of elements on a single scale. Focused holistic scoring may be used to evaluate a limited portion of a learner’s performance.

Indirect – Indirect methods such as surveys and interviews ask students to reflect on their learning rather than to demonstrate it.

Institutional assessment – Assessment to determine the extent to which a college or university is achieving its mission.

Learning outcomes – Operational statements describing specific student behaviors that evidence the acquisition of desired goals in knowledge, skills, abilities, capacities, attitudes or dispositions. Learning outcomes can be usefully thought of as behavioral criteria for determining whether students are achieving the educational goals of a program, and, ultimately, whether overall program goals are being successfully met. Outcomes are sometimes treated as synonymous with objectives, though objectives are usually more general statements of what students are expected to achieve in an academic program.

Longitudinal – Data collected on the same individuals over time for use in a longitudinal study. A study that investigates development, learning, or other types of change in individuals over time.

Median – the middle number in a given sequence of numbers, taken as the average of the two middle numbers when the sequence has an even number of numbers: 4 is the median of 1, 3, 4, 8, and 9.

Mean – Simple or arithmetic average of a range of values or quantities, computed by dividing the total of all values by the number of values.

Mode – that one value of a range of values that has the highest frequency as determined statistically.

Norm – A distribution of scores obtained from a norm group. The norm is the midpoint (or median) of scores or performance of the students in that group. Fifty percent will score above and fifty percent below the norm.

Objectives – Refers to the specific knowledge, skills, or attitudes that students are expected to achieve through their college experience; expected or intended student outcomes.

Outcomes – Refers to the specific knowledge, skills, or developmental attributes that students actually develop through their college experience; assessment results.

Percentile – The percentage of examinees in the norm group who scored at or below the raw score for which the percentile rank was calculated.

Performance-Based Assessment – Direct, systematic observation and rating of student performance of an educational objective, often an ongoing observation over a period of time, and typically involving the creation of products. The assessment may be a continuing interaction between teacher and student and should ideally be part of the learning process. The assessment should be a real-world performance with relevance to

the student and learning community. Assessment of the performance is done using a rubric, or analytic scoring guide to aid in objectivity. Performance-based assessment is a test of the ability to apply knowledge in a real life setting or performance of exemplary tasks in the demonstration of intellectual ability.

Portfolio Assessment – Portfolios may be assessed in a variety of ways. Each piece may be individually scored, or the portfolio might be assessed merely for the presence of required pieces, or a holistic scoring process might be used and an evaluation made on the basis of an overall impression of the student’s collected work. It is common that assessors work together to establish consensus of standards or to ensure greater reliability in evaluation of student work. Established criteria are often used by reviewers and students involved in the process of evaluating progress and achievement of objectives.

Primary Trait Method – A type of rubric scoring constructed to assess a specific trait, skill, behavior, or format, or the evaluation of the primary impact of a learning process on a designated audience.

Program assessment – Assessment to determine the extent to which students in a departmental program can demonstrate the learning outcomes for the program.

Reliability – An assessment tool’s consistency of results over time and with different samples of students.

Rubric – A set of criteria specifying the characteristics of a learning outcome and the levels of achievement in each characteristic.

Self-efficacy – Students’ judgment of their own capabilities for a specific learning outcome.

Standard deviation – a measure of dispersion in a frequency distribution, equal to the square root of the mean of the squares of the deviations from the arithmetic mean of the distribution.

Summative assessment – The assessment of student achievement at the end point of their education or at the end of a course. The focus of summative assessment is on the documentation of student achievement by the end of a course or program. It does not reveal the pathway of development to achieve that endpoint.

Triangulation – The collection of data via multiple methods in order to determine if the results show a consistent outcome.

Validity – The degree to which an assessment measures (a) what is intended, as opposed to (b) what is not intended, or (c) what is unsystematic or unstable.

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Recommended Qualitative Books

Compiled by Student Affairs Assessment Leaders (SAAL)

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information consult the OSU Student Life Website:
<http://oregonstate.edu/studentlife/assessment/index.html>

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