

## Assessment- How, What and Why?

### Definition

Assessment is like a cycle. It is identifying the outcomes you want to achieve and interpreting the collected data and going back to see if the desired outcomes have been reached.

A desired outcome is the purpose of your assessment, and is based on the goals and mission of an institution.

Assessment is also looking at the bigger picture. It should be a broader process, not just about evaluation or survey.

### Types and Purposes

- Utilization
- Satisfaction and program review
- Learning outcome
- Needs assessment
- Assessment benchmarking

Assessment should have linkage from a plan, such as an individual showing linkages in their personal plan.

Majority of assessment is qualitative- it is hard to measure, since many times it depends on the student's mood. **Recommended to read a Public Relations book.**

Many delegates wish that assessment were more than surveys. A suggestion was to use rubrics, where skills are actually demonstrated. Rubrics do not require students to fill out. If there is great effort to analyze the data correctly, the data can be extremely powerful.

Not only think about what the desired outcome is, but as well as having the right data, right time and appropriate attention span (which much of our assessment doesn't have).

Turnkey operations- how do you use the tool now? Working with learning outcomes. Providing an online tool- creating surveys.

Student voice- a delegate had a really positive experience with this and believed it makes a large difference. It has online surveys and uses a lot of capacity building. Can access data from any division in the institution. Student Voice is also able to benchmark against other institutions.

### Structure with in organization

One delegate is a player of front line and believes individuals should be apart of assessment, if the career can involve the design and also how we can be creating our careers.

Another delegate believes that the holy grail of assessment is retention and graduation. Does student services reflect the improvement of student success. Assessment is always a risk.

Students may see the value of the assessment within 3 to 4 years later. Maybe survey students when they have graduate- like a follow up with a year or 2. Once they have a career, they may see the value correctly.

Assessment is total management literature.

Interpretation of measurement: 2 different possible approaches:

1. Direct: Rubrics
2. Indirect: Something underlining

### Assessment Tools

- CAS (Canadian Association Survey)?
- NSSEI (National Survey of Student Engagement)
- Student Voice
- Help us get there (Just recently translated from French to English) :Point of entry and redone in winter term
- Health Survey

### How to deal with mounds of data

Assess everything- Look at the change. If there is not a lot of change in one area pull back and focus somewhere else.

Break down individual aspects of the program.

Imperative that you get the message out as soon as possible. Present and engage them and distribute it widely and access is easy (such as putting it online). Data has to always be in a way the public can understand.

### Focusing on Persistence vs Retention

Retention was more common during 1960s -1970s. What we're seeking has change, now students may be leaving institutions for financial reasons or transferring to another institution. Must change that perception of students dropping out and never getting any credentials, it was researched that within 6 to 10 years many individuals came up with a credential of some sort.

Developing persistence becomes a value, if we can develop the system with the institution. However, if the student decides to transfer to another institution, you are still able to steer them in an appropriate path. Shift change outcomes to plan for, this is

sometimes where benchmarks are important. It's all relative, if we can get to the point to where they want to go—measure that is a major success.

Retention is an institutional measure, not educational.

Identifying upcoming students as class 2014 refers to wanting the students to graduate in the 4 year span. It is not a good; it mismatches of wanting to produce global citizens.

Approximately 25% - 35% actually graduate in 4 years—we need to change our mind set—must have positive assessment in order for them to want to come back to university.

One delegate had a success by looking at the retention of the institutions international students which was 15%, after looking and improving the wants and needs of the international students the retention increased to 85%.

Benchmarking also rooted from the past; there is a recommendation to read to step back and analyze: **“Second Shift” by Arlie Russell Hochschild and Anne Machung.**