



Office of Institutional Effectiveness and
Assessment

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Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment

*Workshop Title: Answering the big questions about assessment expectations
and purpose*

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

Suggested Citation:





Answering the big questions about assessment expectations and purpose

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment



Introductions

Name

Degree Program

What is one thing you hope to learn today?

GOALS

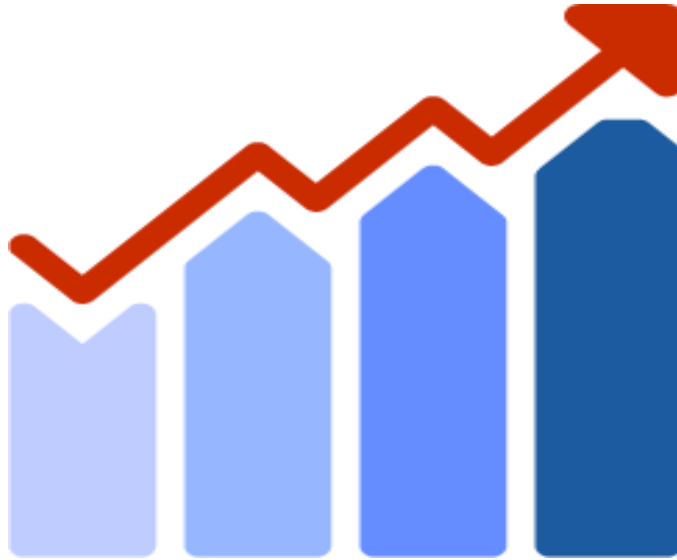
Describe the purpose of assessment

Be able to apply the process and guidelines of assessment to your programs

ASSESSMENT

WHY DO WE DO

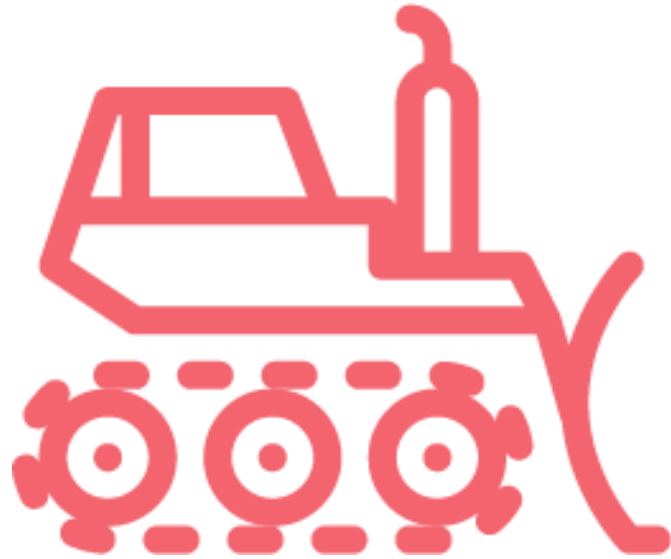
IT?



Improvement of
student learning



**Culture of
Betterment**



Support Your
Claims With Data



Accountability

ASSESSMENT

WHO DO WE DO

IT FOR?



FOR YOU



Assessment for you



Assessment for you



Assessment for you

The capstone instructor last year reported her impression of low graphing skills in seniors. Rubric scores on the capstone report supported this.

We arranged with the mathematics department for greater emphasis on graphing in the required math course and for assessment of graphing skills during that course, working closely with the capstone instructor(s). We also arranged for graphing to be a required component in the program's 300 level required course.

The capstone instructor(s) will report next year whether graphing skills are stronger. Prof. Brody is currently developing a rubric to assess graphing skills more accurately within the program.

Assessment for you

Two years ago, an advisory council of regional employers notes that our majors had a good level of biological knowledge but needed stronger skills in conducting biological research. Data from the alumni survey also supported this need.

We instituted the required capstone course, which requires students to conduct original scientific research, and we asked the instructor annually to report to the department on student research and communication skills demonstrated by their capstone projects.

In three years, when several cohorts have passed through the capstone, we will again survey alumni and employers to see whether student skills have increased, and we will review data from all the years of the capstone project.

Assessment for you



Assessment for you

**Assessment for
everyone else**





**What do you and your
faculty want to
improve?**

**What are the key skills
that you want to pursue
with excellence?**

ASSESSMENT

WHAT IS THE

PURPOSE?

THE PURPOSE

To collect meaningful actionable data that leads to program and student learning improvements.

THE PURPOSE

To collect **meaningful**
actionable data that leads to
program and student learning
improvements.

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ASSESSMENT

WHAT IS IT?

Assessment is the ongoing process of:

1. Establishing clear, measurable expected outcomes of student learning.
2. Ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to achieve those outcomes.
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Student Learning Outcomes

Curriculum Map

Measures, Targets, Interpretation of Results

Use of Results, Action Plans, Student Learning Improvement

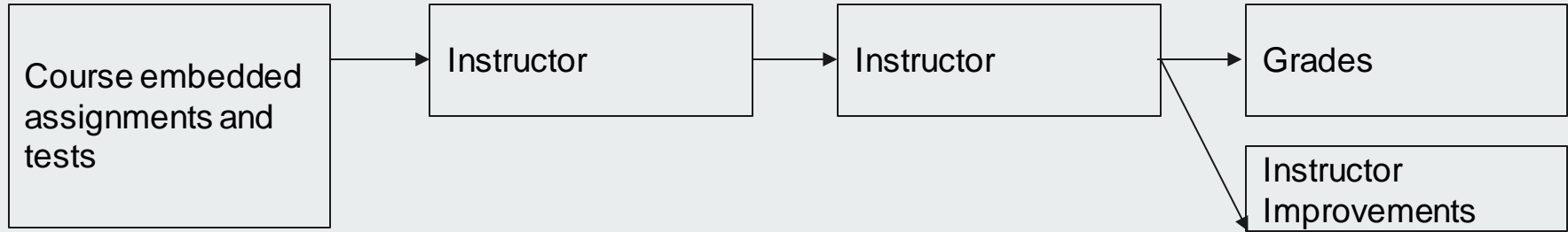
Student Performance

Criteria by

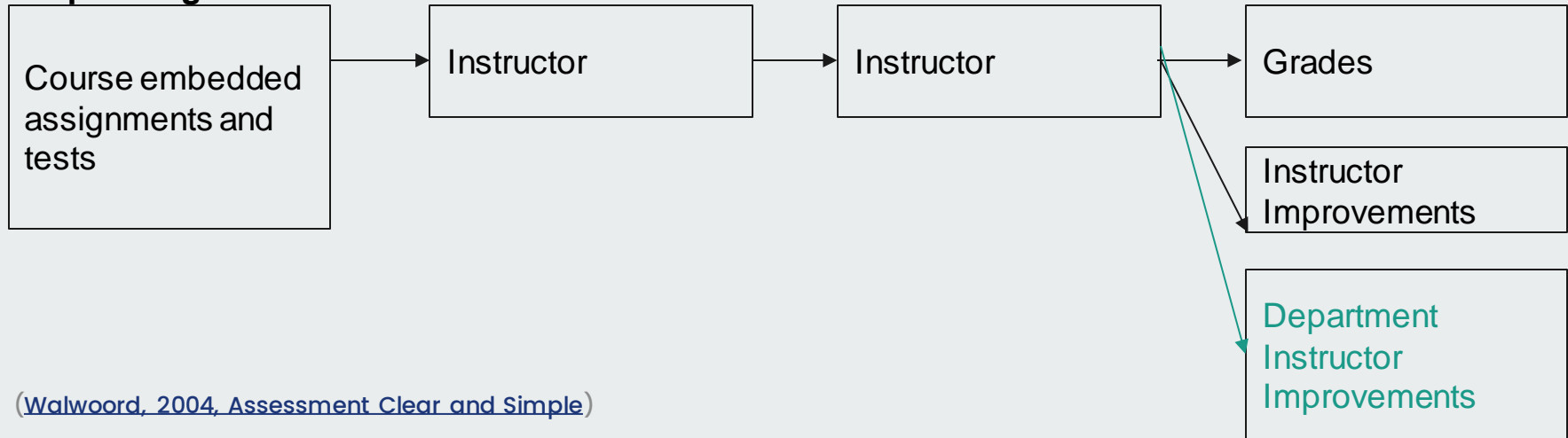
Evaluated by

Feedback by

The Grading Process



Simple Program Assessment



[\(Walwood, 2004, Assessment Clear and Simple\)](#)

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Step 1: Student Learning Outcomes

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✓ Observable

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The specific knowledge, skills, or abilities that students should be able to demonstrate or perform at the end of the program.

- ✓ Observable
- ✓ Reasonable level of learning
- ✓ Uses concrete action verbs



Linda Suskie

A Common Sense Approach to Assessment in Higher Education

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What are the characteristics of well-stated learning goals?

Posted on May 27, 2018 at 7:40 AM

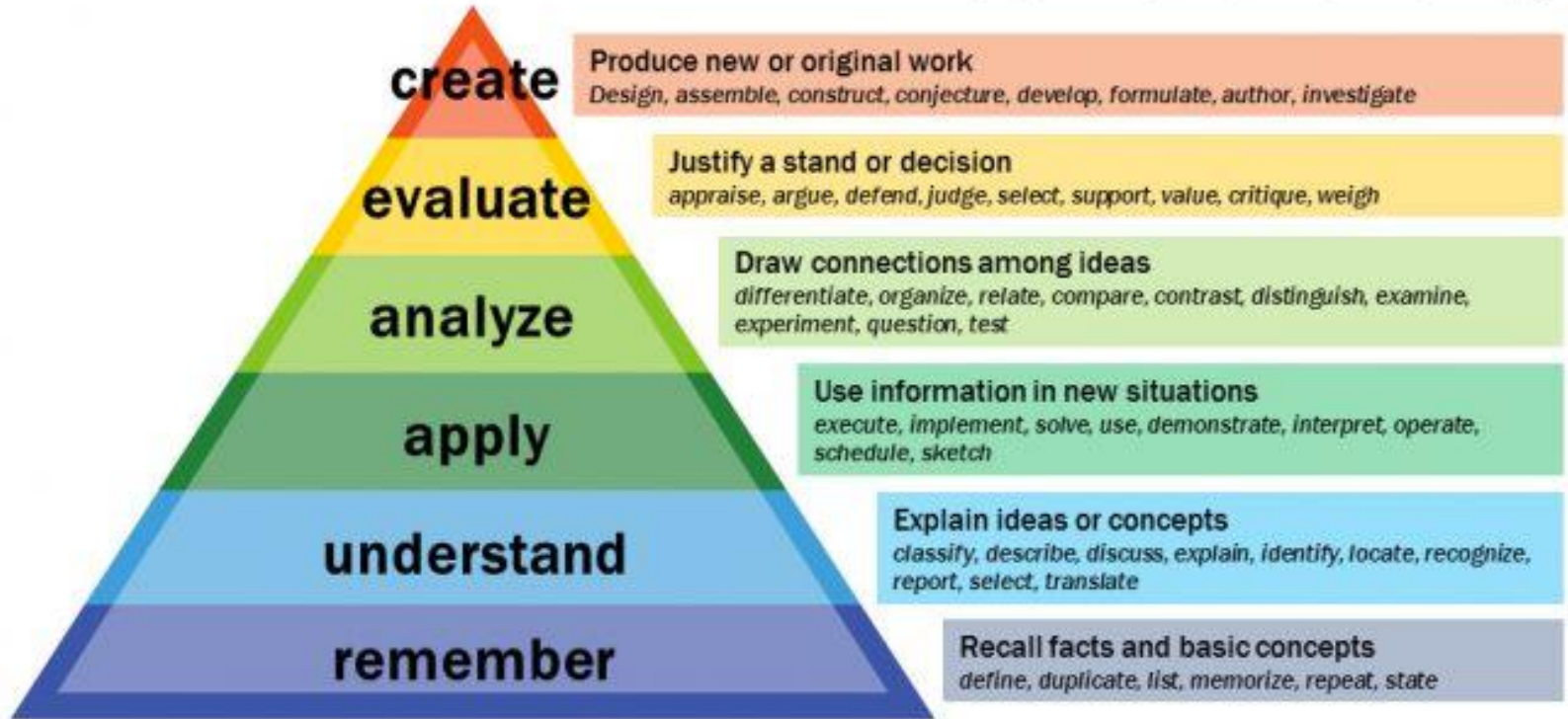
When I help faculty and co-curricular staff move ahead with their assessment efforts, I probably spend half our time on helping them articulate their learning goals. As the years have gone by, I've become ever more convinced that learning goals are the foundation of an assessment structure...and without a solid foundation, a structure can't be well-constructed.

So what are well-stated learning goals? They have the following characteristics:

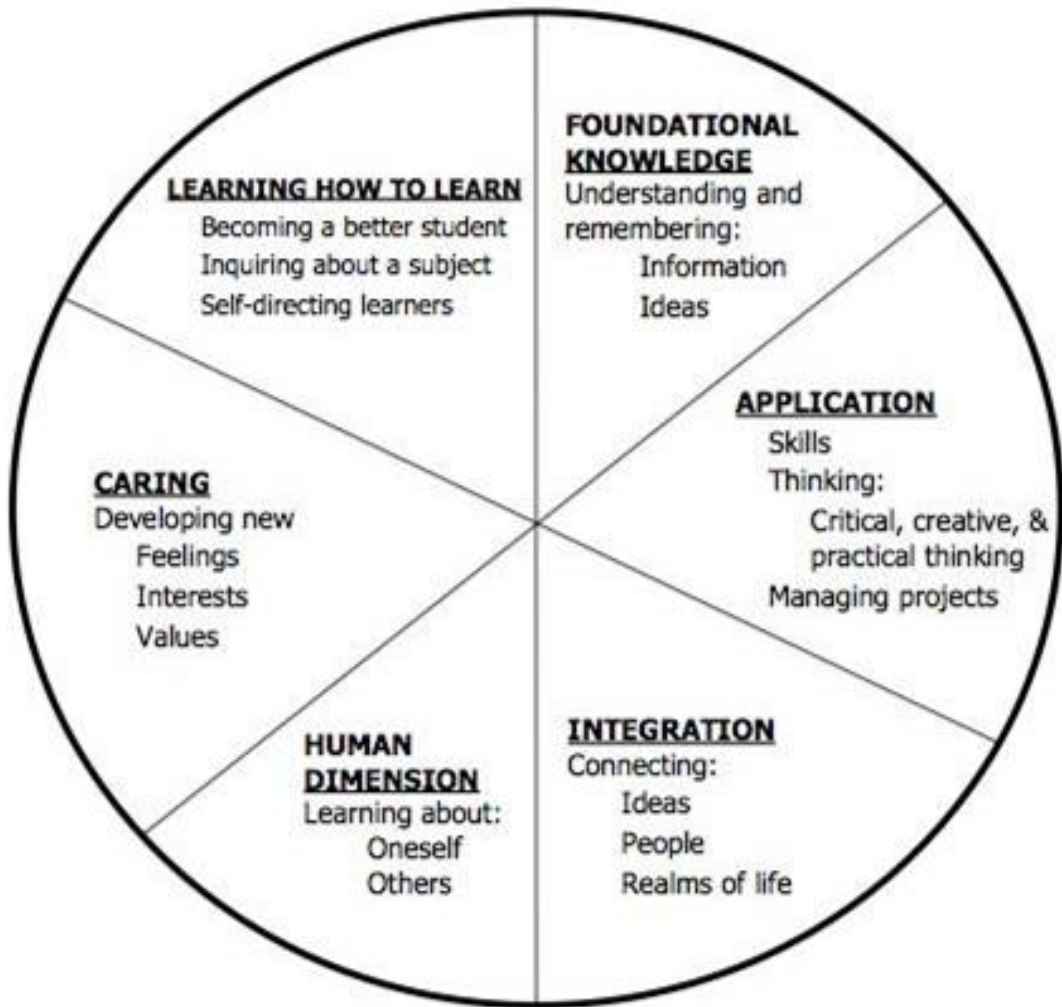
They are outcomes: what students will be able to do after they successfully complete the learning experience, not what they will do or learn during the learning experience. *Example: Prepare effective, compelling visual summaries of research.*

They are clear, written in simple, jargon-free terms that everyone understands, including students, employers, and colleagues in other disciplines. *Example: Work collaboratively with others.*

Bloom's Taxonomy



Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching



Dee Fink (2013)

Taxonomy of Significant Learning

“Creating Significant Learning Experiences”

<https://serc.carleton.edu/sp/library/interdisciplinary/index.htm>

Step 1: Student Learning Outcomes

Students graduating with a degree in Music, will be able to compose a short piece of music with creativity, craftsmanship, and aesthetic appeal.

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Step 1: Student Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate an understanding of musical concepts and composers.

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- × Observable
- × Reasonable level of learning
- × Uses concrete action verbs

Step 1: Student Learning Outcomes

MS Economic students will be able to apply the theoretical foundations of economics to policy issues in the private and-or public sector.

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MS Economic students will be able to apply the theoretical foundations of economics to policy issues in the private and-or public sector.

- ✓ Observable
- ✓ Reasonable level of learning
- ✓ Uses concrete action verbs

HGTV Activity (2 minutes)

Pick an outcome to “remodel”
or improve

Now share your before and after student learning outcome with your group.

As a group, identify one that example that you would like to share.

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Step 2: Opportunities to Achieve

Curriculum Maps

The map:

- Documents what is taught and when
- Reveals gaps in the curriculum
- Helps design an assessment plan

**Step 2:
Opportunities to
Achieve**

Outcome 1: Students will be able describe three major theories related to music development.

Outcome 2: Students will be able to compose a short piece of music.

Outcome 3: Students will be able to critique pieces of music and describe opportunities for improvement.

MUSC 200

X

X

MUSC 250

X

MUSC 300

X

MUSC 350

X

MUSC 400

X

MUSC 450

X

X

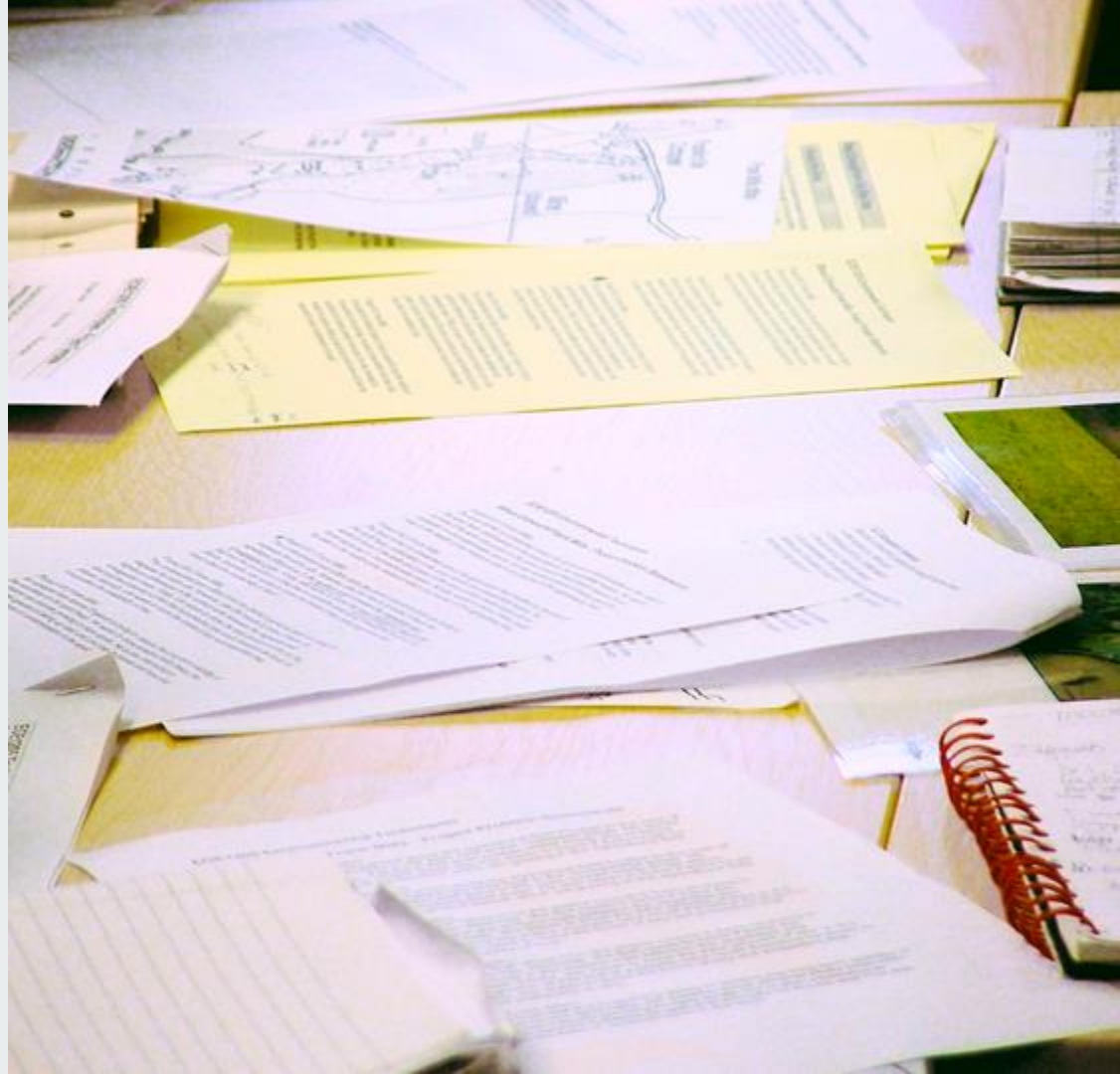
X

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Step 3: Gather, Analyze, and Interpret

Measures



Step 3: Gather,
Analyze, and
Interpret

Measures are opportunities for programs to collect information about how well students are demonstrating or performing the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

Step 3: Gather,
Analyze, and
Interpret

- ✓ Yields meaningful information for improvement

Step 3: Gather, Analyze, and Interpret

- ✓ Yields meaningful information for improvement
- ✓ One direct measure
- ✓ Multiple types of measures

Direct Measures

- Course assignments
- Scores and pass rates on standardized tests
- Research projects or writing samples
- Course quizzes, tests, or inventories
- Portfolio artifacts
- Capstone projects
- Case studies
- Comprehensive or oral examination
- Ratings or evaluation

Indirect Measures

- Surveys, questionnaires, open-ended self-reports, dealing with current students' perception of their own learning
- Course grades
- Employment or placement rates of graduating students into appropriate career positions
- Number or rate of students involved in research, publications and/or

Step 3: Gather, Analyze, and Interpret

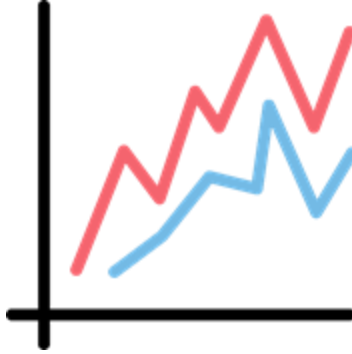
- ✓ Yields meaningful information for improvement
- ✓ One direct measure
- ✓ Multiple types of measures
- ✓ Relevant and directly assesses intended SLO

Step 3: Gather, Analyze, and Interpret

- ✓ Yields meaningful information for improvement
- ✓ One direct measure
- ✓ Multiple types of measures
- ✓ Relevant and directly assesses intended SLO
- ✓ Yields useful information
- ✓ Yields consistent information across administrations



COMPETENCY



**CHANGE
OVER
TIME**



**GROUP
COMPARISONS**

**Step 3: Gather,
Analyze, and
Interpret**

Outcome: Students graduating with a degree in Music, will be able to compose a short piece of music with creativity, craftsmanship, and aesthetic appeal.

**M1: Music Composition Course, Final Project –
Compose an original piece of music graded on a
program level rubric.**

**M2: Senior Survey (music composition skills
section)**

Step 3: Gather,
Analyze, and
Interpret

M1: Music Composition Course, Final Project –
Compose an original piece of music graded on a
program level rubric.

M2: Senior Survey (music composition skills
section)

- ✓ At least 1 direct measure for each SLO;
- ✓ Multiple types of measures are present

Step 3: Gather,
Analyze, and
Interpret

M1: Music Composition Course, Final Project – Compose an original piece of music graded on a program level rubric.

M2: Senior Survey (music composition skills section)

✓ Directly assess intended SLO (validity)

Step 3: Gather,
Analyze, and
Interpret

M1: Music Composition Course, Final Project –
Compose an original piece of music graded on a
program level rubric.

M2: Senior Survey (music composition skills
section)

✓ Yields trustworthy and consistent information

Step 3: Gather,
Analyze, and
Interpret

M1: Music Composition Course, Final Project –
Compose an original piece of music graded on a
program level rubric.

M2: Senior Survey (music composition skills
section)

✓ Yields meaningful information for improvement

Think, Pair, Share

We want to improve writing.

What information would we collect to help us learn more? Select 3 sources.

—

Evaluate Your Choice of Measure

1. Provides specific answers to the assessment question being investigated.
2. Is feasible to carry out given program resources and amount of time faculty members are willing to invest in assessment activities.
3. Has a maximum of positive effects and minimum of negative ones. The method should give faculty members, intended users, and students the right messages about what is important to learn and teach.
4. Provides useful, meaningful information that can be used as a basis for decision-making.
5. Provides results that faculty members and intended users will believe are credible.
6. Provides results that are actionable. Faculty members will be willing to discuss and make changes to the program (as needed) based on the results.
7. Takes advantage of existing products (e.g., exams or surveys the

Reflection

How did these questions help you reconsider the assessment measures/methods?

Step 3: Gather,
Analyze, and
Interpret

Measures Description:

Step 3: Gather,
Analyze, and
Interpret

Measures Description:

1. General Information about the assignment/rubric and Relationship to Outcome
2. Quality of Evidence
3. Data Collection

Step 3: Gather, Analyze, and Interpret

Are students meeting our expectations?

Step 3: Gather, Analyze, and Interpret

So What?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of student learning in this area?

How well are students learning and why?

For programs with both online and on-campus degree earners: how does the performance of these unique cohorts compare?

How do the results compare to previous years?

Step 3: Gather, Analyze, and Interpret

Overall students did well on the final music composition project. This is an end of semester assignment that involves some scaffolding. They were able to include some interesting musical ideas (aesthetic appeal). They were also able to compose a piece of music that varies a few musical elements (creativity). Many exceed expectations by composing very original, unusual or imaginative musical ideas.

Students struggled with craftsmanship. Many students presented one complete musical idea. However, composition lacked overall completeness. They failed to use musical elements to organize musical ideas or form.

Step 3: Gather, Analyze, and Interpret

- ✓ Evaluates specific strengths and/or weaknesses related to the SLO;

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Students struggled with craftsmanship. Many students presented one complete musical idea. However, composition lacked overall completeness. They failed to use musical elements to organize musical ideas or form.

Step 3: Gather, Analyze, and Interpret

Upon review, students also scored lowest on the “craftsmanship” section of the rubric assignment last year. Overall student performance is on par with the previous year. Students’ scores lowest in craftsmanship last year as well.

The findings suggest that students need additional opportunities to practice and develop composition skills related to craftsmanship in this course.

Step 3: Gather, Analyze, and Interpret

- ✓ Analyze trends and results from previous years

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Step 3: Gather, Analyze, and Interpret

- ✓ Proposes strategies for improvement as a result of the analysis

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Step 4: Using Results to Improve Student Learning

- 1. How is assessment information about the quality of learning shared and used for program decision making in areas such as curriculum, pedagogy, and other aspects that impact learning?**
- 1. What actions do the results suggest need to be implemented?**
- 1. What concrete actions will the program take to sustain or improve this outcome? What is the timeframe of these actions?**

Step 4: Using Results to Improve Student Learning

ACTION PLANS

Based on the final composition findings and discussions with faculty, an additional assignment focused on developing craftsmanship skills will be added to the course. The curriculum committee will complete a curriculum map for this outcome to evaluate how students are developing these skills sets over time.

Step 4: Using Results to Improve Student Learning

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Based on the final composition findings and discussions with faculty, an additional assignment focused on developing craftsmanship skills will be added to the course. The curriculum committee will complete a curriculum map for this outcome to evaluate how students are developing these skills sets over time.

- ✓ Action plans are developed directly from, and are aligned with, the findings

Step 4: Using Results to Improve Student Learning

ACTION PLANS

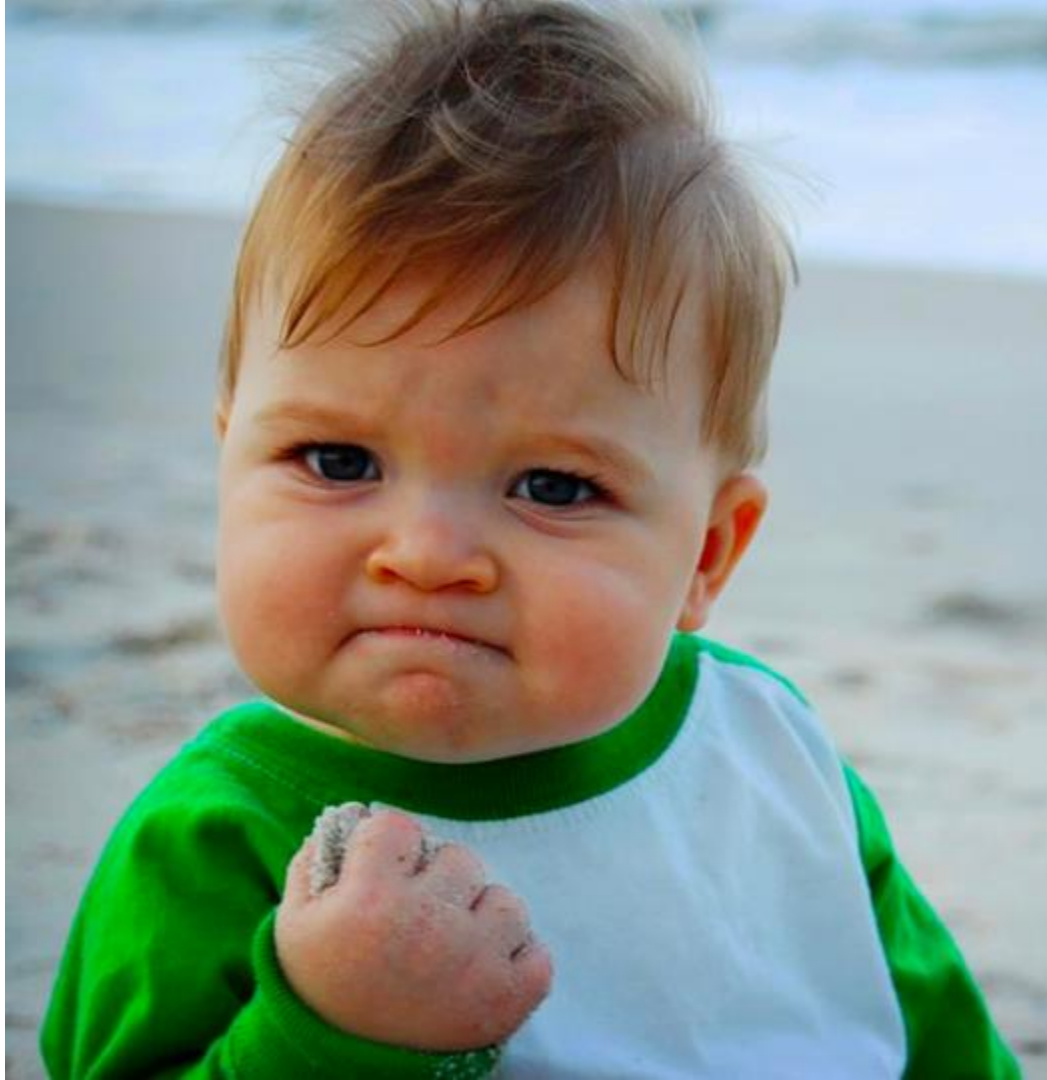
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- ✓ Actions are intended to improve program, teaching methods, or curriculum

One year later

—

Success





**Step 4: Using
Results to
Improve Student
Learning**

ACTION PLANS



LEARNING IMPROVEMENTS

Step 4: Using Results to Improve Student Learning

LEARNING IMPROVEMENTS

Evidence from direct or indirect measures and reassessment that supports substantive student learning improvement due to program modifications.

(Fulcher, Good, Coleman, & Smith, 2014)

Step 4: Using Results to Improve Student Learning

LEARNING IMPROVEMENTS

An opportunity for programs to tell their story as it relates to student learning and programmatic improvements. Improvements should be developed from previous action plans or assessment findings.

LEARNING IMPROVEMENT SANDWICH



Photo by Handsome Biscuit

LEARNING IMPROVEMENT SANDWICH

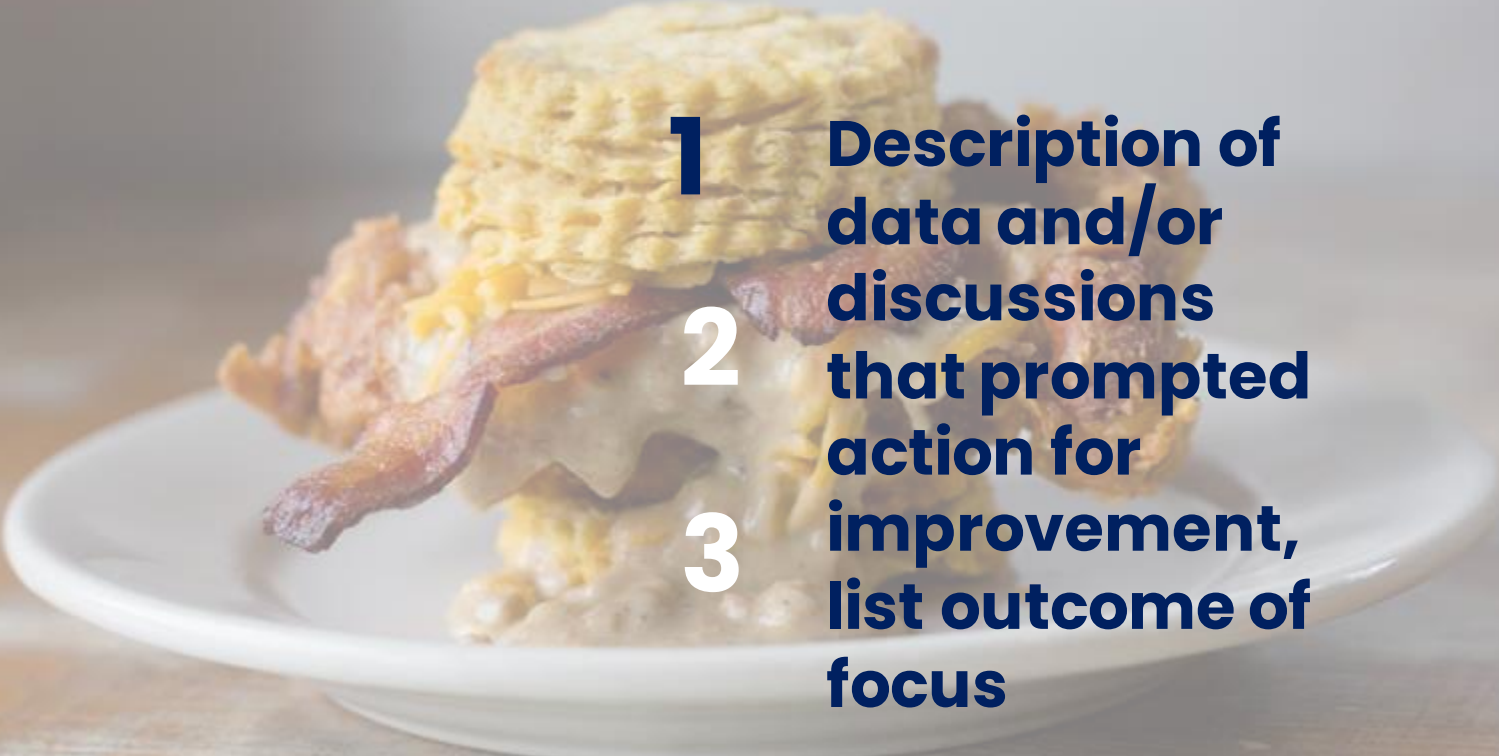
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- 1** Description of data and/or discussions that prompted action for improvement,
 - 2** list outcome of focus
 - 3**

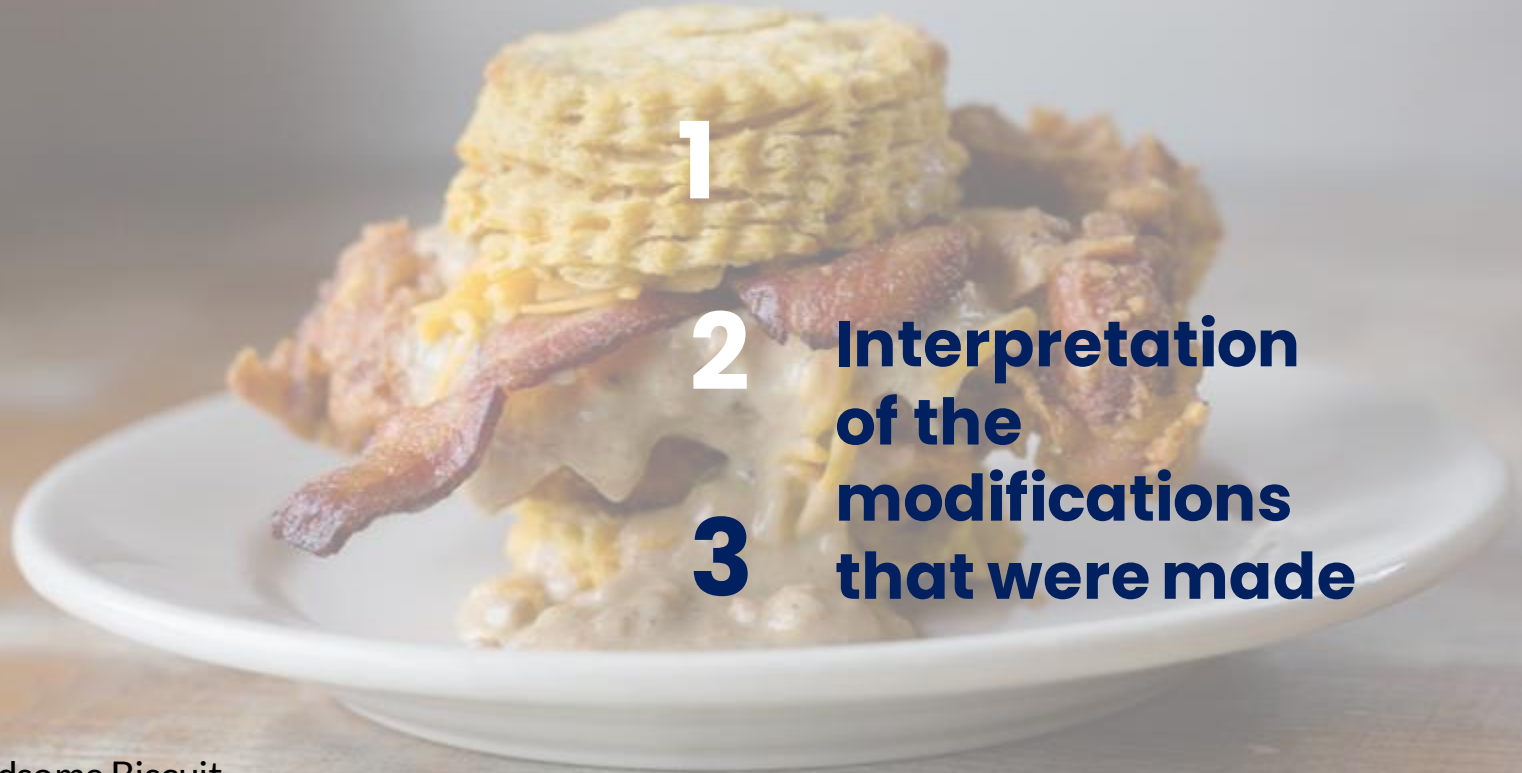
Photo by Handsome Biscuit

LEARNING IMPROVEMENT SANDWICH



1 Description of
the action that
2 was
implemented
3

LEARNING IMPROVEMENT SANDWICH



1

2

**Interpretation
of the
modifications**

3

that were made

Step 4: Using Results to Improve Student Learning

LEARNING IMPROVEMENTS

In 2016–2017, students in MUSC 450 were not meeting the target set by the program.

As a result, the program added an additional assignment to help students develop craftsmanship skills.

With the modifications to this course, student performance increased slightly this year. We hope to see additional improvements in future years as we evaluate the development of this outcome across the curriculum.

Step 4: Using Results to Improve Student Learning

- ✓ Improvements are developed directly from, and are aligned with, previous action plans or findings

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- ✓ Improvements describe previous actions taken to improve program, teaching methods, or curriculum

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Step 4: Using Results to Improve Student Learning

- ✓ Changes in student achievement are stated and, as appropriate, student learning improvement is discussed

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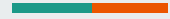
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THE PURPOSE

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improvements.

**What is one takeaway from
today's workshop?**



Thank you