Communicating Assessment Results

(RE) Opening the Assessment Toolbox (Part 2)

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Communicating Assessment Results

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Presentation Outline

- Ways to Deliver Results
- Knowing your Audience
- Presenting Useable Results

- What is Assessment and Why Is It Important
- Using Graphics
- Oral Presentations

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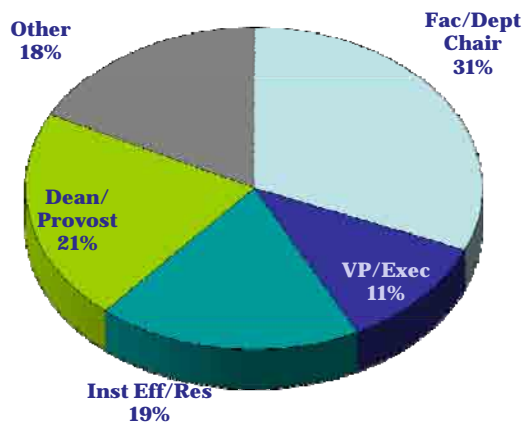# Ways of Delivering
Assessment Results (not mutually exclusive)

- Written Report
- Web Presentation
- Handouts
- Graphics Tables and Charts
- Oral Presentation
- Mixed Formats

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Know Your Audience

- Fac/Dept Chair 31%
- VP/Exec 11%
- Inst Eff/Res 19%
- Dean/Provost 21%
- Other 18%

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Appreciating Multiple Perspectives

- With regard to assessment results, what are the concerns of . . . .
  - Presidents . . .
  - Provosts . . .
  - Department Chairs/Faculty . . .
  - Institutional Effectiveness/Assessment/ Institutional Research Officers . . . .
  - Others On Campus . . .
  - External Constituencies
- Liberal arts and sciences vs. professional academic programs
  - Presence or absence of professional/ specialized accreditation requirements
  - Licensure/certification requirements of graduates
  - World view differences
  - Research methods and standards of evidence

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Moving from Analysis to Presentation

- **Knowing when to leap from analysis to presentation**
- **Discussing methodology – with a roomful of experts with differing opinions – be prepared to defend your position**
- **Use of triangulation across different types of data collections – look for converging evidence**

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Presenting Usable Results

- Presenting assessment results in such a way that they can be used to support decisions and make changes
- Organized, coherent, telling a story
- Know what the key decisions are
- Look for teachable moments
- Be prepared to provide just-in-time analyses

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Delivering Meaningful Results

- To some extent, depends on quality of research design and execution . . .
- Major goal in providing assessment results:
  - Does the format and presentation paint a clear picture of the meaningful, actionable results?
  - Can a policy decision be made based on the data provided?

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Explaining What Assessment Is and Why it is Important

- **When you prepare to present assessment results, you should <u>be prepared to</u>:**
  - Respond to challenges regarding the legitimacy and motivation of assessment activities
  - Explain the importance of assessment and its role in improving academic programs (and not "administrative busy work")
  - Defend the choice of various methodologies
  - Explain that assessment is not being used for the purpose of faculty evaluation

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Explaining What Assessment Is and Why it is Important

- A common question:
  - We give the students grades, so shouldn't that be enough to demonstrate they have mastered the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required?
  - Yes, for the purpose of certifying student satisfactory course completion
  - No, for the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of the program
- An important distinction:
  - Measuring student performance and assessing the effectiveness of the program (using student learning outcomes)
- Goal: using program objectives/student learning outcomes as the basis for program assessment

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Jim Nichols'
Grade Book Analogy:
How you can use student performance to assess program strengths and weaknesses? – a way to conceptualize the process

Typical Grade Book

	Grading Dimensions						
Student							Student Performance
#1							
#2							
#3							
#4							
#5							
#7							
#8							
#9							
#10							

Typical Grade Book

- Rows represent individual students
- Dimensions across the top most typically represent measures of student performance at various points in time and/or results different measures or instruments
- Student performance at the end of the semester is summarized and a course grade results.
- Student performance may vary across the columns, but, in general, is not important in summarizing student performance in each row.
- Presumably, the objectives or targeted learning outcomes are met on the average, but does not allow a close examination, but an overall summary.

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Adding Learning Outcomes

	Program Learning Outcomes						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Student	Outcome 1 Desc.	Outcome 2 Desc.	Outcome 3 Desc.	Outcome 4 Desc.	Outcome 5 Desc.	Outcome 6 Desc.	Student Performance
#1							
#2							
#3							
#4							
#5							
#7							
#8							
#9							
#10							
Outcome Performance							

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Adding Student Learning Outcomes as Column Dimensions

- Unit of analysis changes from an individual course to the academic program
- Individual student performance is mapped based on achievement of particular outcomes
- Achievement of each outcome may be measured at one or more times and in one or more ways during the course of the program

Focus on the Columns: Learning Outcomes

- As in the grade book previously, analyzing the *row* data results in a summary of individual student performance.
- HOWEVER, analysis of the *column* achievement should identify strengths and weaknesses of the program which are not apparent when looking at student summary data only.

A Conceptual and Functional Tool

- Again, how the student performance data is mapped into this matrix can vary depending on the particular measures used.
- Once particular strengths and weaknesses are identified, analysis of how the curriculum is delivered should ensue.

A Concrete Example

Political Science
B.A./B.S. *Intended (Student) Outcomes*

- Understanding of the *central themes, concepts, and political institutions* in political science.
- Develop *analytical and critical thinking skills.*
- Develop *effective writing communication skills.*
- Develop effective *verbal communication skills.*
- Students will learn *research and methodological skills* and develop *effective computer skills.*
- Students will gain *multidisciplinary knowledge* and a *multicultural perspective.*

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	Political Science B.S./B.A.					
	Learning Outcomes					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Student	know concepts, institutions	Analytical critical think skills	effective writing	effective verbal comm skills	res method, computing skills	multidisc know, multicult pers
#1						
#2						
#3						
#4						
#5						
#7						
#8						
#9						
#10						

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Political Science B.S./B.A.								
	Learning Outcomes							
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**		
Student	**know concepts, institutions**	**analytical critical think skills**	**effective writing**	**effective verbal comm skills**	**res method, computing skills**	**multidisc know, multicult pers**	**Student (Row) Measure - Average**	**Std Dev**
#1	80	79	85	65	77	80	78	6.7
#2	90	93	92	82	96	96	92	5.2
#3	79	80	82	71	72	66	75	6.3
#4	98	96	94	89	98	92	95	3.6
#5	82	82	84	78	78	80	81	2.4
#7	68	62	70	68	60	58	64	5.0
#8	90	92	94	87	89	88	90	2.6
#9	78	72	78	68	72	82	75	5.2
#10	95	95	91	84	94	88	91	4.4
Column Measure-Average	84	83	86	77	82	81	82	3.1
column std. dev	9.5	11.6	8.1	9.1	13.1	12.3	10.2	