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UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

ASSESSMENT

WHAT IS ASSESSMENT

Assessment involves the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data to evaluate the effectiveness of an institution, division, or agency (Schuh et al., 2016).



The Assessment Cycle is the broader process that validates and supports a concept, idea, or task.

- Objective what do you hope to accomplish and how will you provide those opportunities?
- Assess: how will you observe or obtain the information needed to see if the objective is being fulfilled?
- Analyze: review the data for trends or important markers?
- Improve: How do the results affect the objective and your action plan to better meet it?

WHY IS ASSESSMENT IMPORTANT

Assessment efforts can showcase the quality, significance, political navigation, strategic planning, policy development, and costeffectiveness of programs (Henning & Roberts, 2023.



The Objective and Outcomes Cycle is a guide for developing objectives, with each step offering greater detail on the process. It outlines four steps for creating an objective-based assessment.

- Establish Learning Goals (Objective)
- Provide Learning Opportunities (Outcome)
- Observe Student Learning (Goal)
- Use the Results (Assess)

Objective & Outcome Cycle

WRITING A GOAL

The program wants people to know or do, specifically outlining what the program will do to ensure students can perform. These goals are measured by evaluating outcomes related to the objectives.

When developing objectives, consider the following key elements:

Audience— Who does this pertain too? Behavior— What do you expect them to know or do? Condition— Under what conditions will learning occur?

Example: Using the B.E.A.M. Model

Belonging: "Students in Living Learning Communities will demonstrate a sense of belonging by actively participating in community events and discussions."

WRITING AN OUTCOME

These are detailed statements derived from goals, defining what you want people to gain from the experience (e.g., program vs. learning outcome).

When developing outcomes...

The statement should declare an achievable or desired task.

Example: Using the B.E.A.M. Model

"Students will engage in a co-curricular activity"

WRITING A STRATEGY

Goals are defined as actions that help achieve an overall outcome. More importantly, goals should be measurable.

When developing outcomes...

Always follow the goal with a "how" statement—how will this be accomplished?

Example:

"Students will achieve this learning outcome by completing Strategy 1 and Strategy 2."



- Write down everything you expect to happen, aiming high and without worrying about achieving the goal.
- Don't be concerned with being right or wrong, or how to measure it yet.
- Ensure it's something you are teaching or influencing, and use action verbs (refer to Bloom's Taxonomy) to make it measurable.
- Focus on one concept per outcome, unless they are inseparable.

After reviewing these tips, narrow your list to areas where you have the most influence.

WHAT ARE PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Program Outcomes are the end result of what a program or process is to achieve or accomplish. Program out- comes can be as simple as the completion of a task or activity (although this is not as meaningful as it could be and does not provide information for improvement). For an effective outcome, try to assess whether the program accomplishes what it should be accomplishing in the most efficient manner possible. Program outcomes, just like learning outcomes should be measurable, manageable, and meaningful.

Example:

"Student Health Services will be able to admit students for check-ups within 24 hours."

WHAT ARE KPI'S?

Organizations use Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to track progress toward goals. While KPIs often support outcomes, their targets may shift as goals evolve or near completion.

Things to consider

Can you quantify and influence these measures? Do they indicate future developments?

Example:

"Retention rates of underrepresented students over four years..."



HOW SHOULD I MEASURE?

Measurement refers to the methods used to gather information for assessment (Schuh et al., 2016). These methods fall into three categories: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed. Each has pros and cons, so it's crucial to choose the most appropriate for the situation.

WHAT IS QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

Qualitative methodologies involve detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, behaviors, and the use of direct quotes to capture experiences, attitudes, and beliefs. They also include analysis of documents, records, and case histories (Patton, 1990). Qualitative assessment is like drilling for oil, requiring deep exploration to uncover valuable insights. This often involves direct observations, focus groups, interviews, and case reviews.

Pros:

- 1. Provides in-depth understanding of individuals' actions, motives, and thoughts.
- 2. Focuses on intangible, impactful influences.

Cons:

- 1. Difficult to generalize, as findings are specific to a small group.
- 2. Time-consuming to collect, analyze, and interpret.





WHAT IS QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT

Quantitative methodologies assign numerical values to objects, events, or observations based on set rules (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). This often involves using established scales, properties, and statistical methods to analyze data and draw conclusions. Quantitative assessment is like mowing the lawn: over-sampling can lead to survey fatigue, negatively affecting future responses.

Pros:

- 1. Data is abundant, easy to collect, and requires minimal effort.
- 2. Effective for identifying surface-level issues across large populations.

Cons:

- 1. Limited to interpreting responses without understanding underlying meaning or motivation.
- 2. Ease of distribution can lead to survey fatigue from lengthy or frequent surveys.

WHAT IS MIXED-METHODOLOGY

Mixed-method assessment combines the strengths of both approaches, offering extensive data from a large population (quantitative) along with context (qualitative) to make the data more meaningful.

BLOOMS TAXONOMY

Bloom's Taxonomy refers to a classification of the different objectives set for student learning to create a more holistic form of education.

Remembering: Recall of data or information.

Key Words:

choose, define, draw, find, how, identify, label, list, locate, match, name, omit, outline, recall, recite, relate, repeat, select, state, show, spell, tell, write

Questions:

- (What/where/how/why) is...?
- How would you show ...? Can you recall ...?

Understanding: Understand the meaning, translation, interpolation, and interpretation of instructions and problems. Can state a problem in one's own words.

Key Words:

classify, compare, confirm, contrast, demonstrate, discuss, explain, extend, illustrate, infer, interpret, outline, predict, relate, rephrase, show, summarize, translate

Questions:

- How would you compare...? contrast...?
- What is the main idea of...?
- Which statements support...?

Applying: Use a concept in a new situation or unprompted use of an abstraction. Applies what was learned in the classroom into novel situations in the workplace.

Key Words:

apply, build, choose, construct, develop, experiment with, identify, interview, make use of, model, modify, organize, plan, produce, select, solve, utilize

Questions:

- How would you solve using what you've learned...?
- What approach would you use to...?
- What other way would you plan to ...?

Analyzing: Separates material or concepts into component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood.

Distinguishes between facts and inferences.

Key Words:

analyze, assume, categorize, classify, compare, conclusion, contrast, discover, distinguish, divide, examine, function, infer, list, motive, relationships, simplify, survey, theme

Questions:

- What is the theme...?
- What is the relationship between...?
- What conclusions can you draw...?

Evaluating: Make judgments about the value of ideas or materials.

Key Words:

agree, appraise, assess, award, choose, compare, con- clude, criteria, criticize, decide, defend, determine, dis- prove, dispute, estimate, evaluate, explain, importance, influence, interpret, judge, justify, measure, opinion, per- ceive, prioritize, prove, rate, recommend, support, value

Questions:

- Do you agree with the actions...? with the outcome...?
- How would you prove ...? disprove ...?
- What would you recommend...?
- How would you justify ...?

Creating: Builds a structure or pattern from diverse elements. Put parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure.

Key Words:

adapt, build, change, choose, combine, compile, conclude, construct, create, delete, design, develop, discuss, elabo- rate, estimate, formulate, happen, imagine, improve, in- vent, justify, make up, maximize, modify, original, originate, plan, predict, propose, solution, solve, suppose, test, theorize

Questions:

- How would you improve...? Can you invent...?
- Suppose you could ____, what would you do...?
- Can you construct a model that would change...?

BLOOMS TAXONOMY FLOWCHART

Produce new or original work

Design, assemble, construct, conjecture, develop, formulate, author, investigate

Justify a stand of decision

appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, critique, weigh, investigate

Draw connections among ideas

differentiate, organize, relate, compare, contrast, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test

Use information in new situations

execute, implement, solve, use, demonstrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch

Explain ideas or concepts

classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate

Recall facts and basic concepts

define, duplicate, list, memorize, repeat, state



WRITING EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS

Key Considerations Before Writing Questions:

- **Target Population:** Who are you assessing (e.g., gender, age, student classification)?
- **Focus:** What are you assessing (e.g., student perception, program quality)?
- **Methodology:** Which method works best (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed)?
- **Tools:** What tool will best gather the needed data (e.g., surveys, focus groups)?
- **Existing Assessments:** Are there similar assessments? What do they reveal?

Phrasing

Question wording directly influences the responses and can skew results.

Rules for Good Question Writing:

Evoke Truthful Responses – Question is not off-putting and evokes no fear in answering the question truthfully.

Bad – Do you have a history of alcoholism in your family? **Good** – (B.E.A.M. Example): How do you engage in maintaining your personal well-being??

Focus on One Dimension Per Question - One question for one response.

Bad - Do you like the organization and the workload of this program? **Good -** (B.E.A.M. Example): How satisfied are you with the program's organization? and How do you manage your workload within this program? **Ensure Comprehensive Answer Choices**— Provide clear, non-overlapping options.

Mutually exclusive options— No ambiguity in the mind of the respondent.

Bad - Where did you grow up? Country, Farm, or City? *Good -* (B.E.A.M. Example): Where did you grow up? Rural, Suburban, or Urban?.

Avoid Leading Questions - Be careful not to lead the respondent into giving the answer you would like to receive. Leading questions typically have negative phrasing or conjunctions.

Bad - "Wouldn't you like to participate in more student engagement programs?" **Good -** (B.E.A.M. Example): "How likely are you to participate in student engagement programs?

Use Clear and Familiar Language – Avoid using emotionally charged or vaguely defined words, as they can lead to varied interpretations based on personal views.

Somewhat, Very, Big, Small, Old, New, etc.

Eliminate unfamiliar words or abbreviations – Write the questionnaire to the audience you are addressing.

Bad - Did your RA explain the FHS policy? **Good** - Did your Resident Assistant explain the Fire, Health, and Safety policy?

Transitions – Ensure smooth and logical transitions between questions. Group similar questions together, especially when using scale items, to improve flow and clarity.

SCALE DEVELOPMENT

A Likert scale is commonly used in survey research. Some argue against using a 5-point scale, favoring a 4- or 6-point scale, as it forces respondents to take a stance (slightly agree or disagree) and reduces neutral responses. Avoid using a 1-10 scale, as it provides too many options, making it harder to distinguish between adjacent values (e.g., 3 vs. 4 or 6 vs. 7).

Questions to Ask Yourself

- What is the focus of your inquiry (agreement, frequency, importance, quality, likelihood, etc.)?
- How many scale points will you use?
- Will allowing neutral responses lead to data loss?

Types of Scales

Unipolar Scales: (Extremely, Very, Moderately, Slightly, Not at All)

Pros: Paired with a follow-up question, they are ideal for Mixed-Methods assessments.

Cons: Difficult to interpret intent, as respondents may define scale words differently.

Bipolar Scales: (Very "x", Moderately "x", Neutral, Moderately "y", Very "y")

Pros: Commonly used for perceptions and attitudes, as they offer both positive and negative response options.

Cons: The wide range of variations (e.g., 4-point vs. 10-point scales) can make it difficult to choose the most appropriate option.

Response order on a scale can influence a respondent's perception:

Less than once a month	Less than twice a week
About once a month	About twice a week **
About once in two weeks	About four times a week
About once a week	About six times a week
About twice a week **	About once every 24 hours
More often	More often

Indiscriminate order or distinguishing between Items: How concerned are you about your risk of _____?

A lot

Somewhat



A little

Language usage can add confusion, so use common language:

I feel my life is worthless I am often blue I become despondent easily I rarely enjoy myself	I feel my life has no value. I often feel down. I get sad easily. I become sad easily I rarely have fun.
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Recommended Attitudinal Scales

Agreement, Frequency, Importance, Quality, Likelihood, Satisfaction, Proficiency, Interest, & Expectations

These can be found In the appendix section and were adapted from Devillis's "Designing Multi-item scales" and Student Voice's recommended scales.

INTERPRETING DATA

Data can be interpreted in various ways. Below are recommended steps for each methodology.

Steps for Qualitative Analysis

- 1. Familiarize yourself with the data: Conduct an initial review, reading through the data to gain an overall understanding.
- 2. Generate initial codes: Break the data into smaller segments, assigning labels or codes that capture key concepts.
- 3. Identify themes: Group similar codes together to identify broader patterns or themes across the data.
- 4. Review and refine themes: Refine themes by ensuring they are distinct and relevant to the research question.
- 5. Define and name themes: Clearly define each theme and give it a descriptive name to capture its essence.
- 6. Interpret and report findings: Organize the themes logically and relate them to existing literature, drawing conclusions based on the data.

Qualitative Coding

- 1. Read through the data: Familiarize yourself with the content by conducting an initial review.
- 2. Assign initial codes: Label important segments of data with short descriptors or tags.
- 3. Organize similar codes: Group related codes into categories or clusters.
- 4. Refine and consolidate codes: Review and merge overlapping codes or split complex ones.
- 5. Identify patterns: Group codes into broader themes that reflect key ideas in the data.
- 6. Document the coding process: Keep track of decisions and ensure transparency throughout.

Steps for Quantitative Analysis

- 1. Conduct an initial review of the data: Skim through the data set to get a general understanding without making any judgments or notes.
- 2. Review the data again for key trends: Highlight any patterns, anomalies, or observationsthat catch your attention.

Example: A survey of first-year LLC students shows high engagement levels, providing evidence that supports the data collection.

3. Analyze correlations: Identify relationships between different variables or demographic groups to assess trends, strengths, and areas of interest.

Example: Returning students had a deeper understanding of the LLC mission, suggesting that they benefit from long-term exposure.

4. Examine standout groups: Focus on specific demographics or subgroups that display noticeable trends and assess if there are significant correlations.

Example: First-year students displayed higher community buy-in compared to returning students, suggesting a need to review signature returner outreach strategies.

- 5. Organize findings systematically: Structure your results clearly, ensuring that the data flows logically and supports your analysis.
- 6. Present the data comprehensively: Include details of the assessment tool, demographics, analysis, findings, and conclusions when reporting quantitative results.

Questions to Ask Yourself When Making Meaning of Data

- 1. What is the context and intent behind the data?
- 2. How does it compare to past or external benchmarks?
- 3. Does the data match your expectations? Why or why not?
- 4. Are the responses sufficient to draw meaningful conclusions?
- 5. What are the key themes, patterns, and implications?
- 6. Are you imposing personal bias on the findings?
- 7. Does the sample accurately represent the population?
- 8. Do other assessments support or challenge your conclusions??
- 9. Have you identified all meaningful differences and similarities?

SHARING DATA

After completing an assessment, it is essential to share the results with stakeholders. The way data is presented greatly affects how it is received. People tend to prefer positive news, so if the findings are negative, present them in a constructive way that encourages change. Data is typically shared through two formats: written reports and oral presentations.

Tips to Consider Regardless of Medium

Understand the Audience:

Who are they? What are their priorities and perspectives?

Methodology:

Explain the method used and why. Acknowledge limitations (e.g., low response rates, over/underrepresentation).

Use Visual Aids:

Consider audience learning styles. Use tables, graphs, and charts to make the data more engaging.

Emphasize Findings:

Highlight key takeaways briefly, using bullet points or summaries.

Recommend Action Steps:

Provide clear, timely, and realistic recommendations. Focus on solutions without assigning blame to specific units.

Written Reports

Different types of reports can be used based on the audience's needs. A full report, similar to a research study in a NASPA or ACPA journal, provides a comprehensive view. An executive summary is a concise, two-page document that highlights key points.

Key Tips:

- Proofread thoroughly before distribution, as you cannot recall a report once sent.
- Use formatting (italics, bold, underlining) sparingly, as it can affect how your message is interpreted.

Oral Reports

Oral reports are typically presented during staff, departmental, or divisional meetings.

Key Tips:

Time Management:

- Practice with "dry runs" to stay within the time limit.
- Decide if questions will be taken during or after the presentation.

Effective Presentation Techniques:

- Start with something intriguing to capture attention.
- Be engaging, using varied tone and inflection.
- Adapt to different learning styles to ensure understanding.
- Avoid jargon; use clear and accessible language.
- Break down ideas into smaller sections to prevent overwhelming the audience with too much text or data

LIKERT ATTITUDINAL EXAMPLES

Agreement

Frequency			
 Very Frequently Frequently Occasionally Rarely Very Rarely Never 	 Always Very Often Sometimes Rarely Never 	 More than once a week Once a week Once a month Once a year Never 	 Almost Always To a Considerable Degree Occasionally Rarely

Importance

- Very Important
- Important
- Moderately Important
- Of Little Importance
- Unimportant

- Very Important
- Moderately Important
- Unimportant

Quality

- Very Good
- Good
- Barely Acceptable
- Poor
- Very Poor

- Extremely Poor
- Below Average
- Average
- Above Average
- Excellent

- Great
- Fair
- Poor

Likelihood

ADDITIONAL SCALES

Satisfaction:

Very Satisfied, Moderately Satisfied, Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied, Moderately Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied

Proficiency:

Beginner, Developing, Competent, Advanced, Expert

Interest:

Extremely Interested, Very Interested, Moderately Interested, Slightly Interested, Not At All Interested

Expectations:

Exceed Expectations, Fully Meet Expectations, Does Not Fully Meet Expectations, Does Not Meet Expectations At All

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The primary color palette adheres to UCF's brand: black, gold, and white. Feeling connected, accepted, and valued within a group or community.

BELONGING



ENGAGING

The hands represent the unity and teamwork present when engaging in activities.



ACHIEVING

The mountains demonstrate the journey to achieving our goals, while the star and dot represent our goals and aspirations.



The circled lines represent the path to finding meaning, concluding in the radiant feeling of finding fulfillment. Identifying values and interests that lead to a sense of purpose, significance, and fulfillment.

BEAM measures student success through four distinct domains. The four points represent these domains, while radiating excitement.

NOTES
