Assessments and What to Do with the Results Revealed!

Janet Stephens, Ed.S.
John Tyler Community College
Workshop Objectives

• Explain what are assessments and why they are important
• Define learning outcomes
• Differentiate between course and program outcomes
• Explain the components of an assessment plan
• Create an assessment plan
What is Assessment?

Activities undertaken by teachers – and by their students in assessing themselves— that provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged.

Why Assess?

USE the results to IMPROVE student learning and program outcomes
Why Does ABFSE Require Assessments?

- To measure quality and effectiveness of programs
- Accountability movement in higher education (US DOE)
- Federal mandates to regional accrediting institutions
VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) assumes that:

- To achieve a high-quality education for all students, valid assessment data are needed to guide planning, teaching, and improvement;
- Colleges and universities seek to foster and assess numerous essential learning outcomes;
- Good practice in assessment requires multiple assessments, over time;
- The collection of data from multiple assessments across a broad range of learning outcomes while guiding student learning and building self-assessment capabilities;
- Assessment data can inform programs and institutions on progress in achieving expected goals.

What Are Learning Outcomes?

• **Specific, measurable** statements of what graduating/exiting students *should know, be able to do, believe, or value* after completing the program

• Focused on the **results** of student learning, not on the learning process or on teaching

• Derived from the program’s mission statement
Levels of Outcomes

- Outcomes can be identified at many organizational levels:
  - Institutional
  - College/School/Division
  - Department
  - Program
  - Course
  - Class session/Lesson
- *Program outcomes* are the focus for program assessment
An Analogy: Salads and Outcomes

These two pictures have similar ingredients. Why is only one a salad?
The difference in ingredients’ degree of preparation and integration makes only one image a salad.

The ingredients contribute to the salad, but a salad is more than the sum of its parts.
From Salads to Outcomes

- **Course outcomes** identify “the ingredients” that make up the program
  - Incremental knowledge and skills that students develop bit by bit throughout the program
  - Aligned with – but typically narrower than – program outcomes

- **Program outcomes** characterize “the salad” – what individual ingredients make once they are prepared and integrated
  - Students’ **cumulative** learning **across courses** at the end of the program

© Janet Stephens, Ed.S.
Alignment

Course Learning Outcomes

Program Outcomes

ABFSE Aims & Objectives

© Janet Stephens, Ed.S.
Assessing Program Outcomes

• should provide an objective means of supporting the outcomes, quality, efficiency or productivity of programs, operations, activities or services
• should indicate **how** you will assess each of your outcomes
• should indicate **when** you will assess each outcome
• provide at least two ways to assess each outcome
Measurement Toolbox

- Measurements/Methods
  - Course exams
  - NBE
  - Presentations
  - Research papers
  - Lab practical
  - Case studies
  - Portfolio
  - Capstone projects

- Tools
  - Embedded test questions
  - Rubrics
THE ASSESSMENT PLAN
Components of An Assessment Plan

• Student Learning Outcomes

• Method of Assessment
  – What method from the measurement toolbox will you use?
  – What tool will you use to evaluate student learning outcomes?

• Performance Targets
  – What is your criteria for success when using the tool (i.e. 90% of students will score 80 or better on the established rubric)

• Assessment Results
  – Results of the method of assessment you used (i.e. 10 students out of 5 (50%) scored 80 or better on the established rubric)

• Findings
  – Was the outcomes mastered or achieved?

• Use of Assessment Results
  – How your results can change/improve the program?
  – What is your action plan?
Steps to Assess Program Learning Outcomes

1. Identify student learning outcomes for your program
2. Align SLOs & ABFSE Aims and Objectives.
3. Determine methods of assessment
4. Collect and analyze assessment data.
5. “Close the Loop”
   - Review and interpret results
   - Recommend actions
   - Make changes
Review Assessment Findings

• Data Analysis
  • What do the results say?
  • What will you do?
  • Any surprises?

• Questions to consider about data meaning
  • What is the data telling you about what and how well students are achieving the learning outcomes for the program?
  • Do the findings make sense?
  • What additional information is needed?
  • In what areas do students often have difficulty in the program or course?
  • How consistent is student learning across multiple sections of the same course?
Creation an Action Plan

• Questions to consider
  • What additional information or evidence is needed to understand how well students are achieving program goals?
  • How will you use the information to improve student learning?
  • How can the program improve learning more effectively in a time of tight or limited resources?

• Take Action
• Implement
What to do with the Data?
Steps to “Closing the Loop”

• Consider the outcome addressed
• How? What practices/techniques are used?
• Where are the gaps?
• What can be changed?
  o Short-term? Long-term?
• Possible types of recommendations:
  o Changes to pedagogy
  o Changes to curriculum/program
  o Resources/materials used
• Keep in mind that you can’t fix everything at once—so start small
## Assessment Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABFSE Aims &amp; Objectives</th>
<th>Your Program Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Course Outcomes is Assessed</th>
<th>Measure/Assessment Method</th>
<th>Performance Indicator %</th>
<th>Frequency/Timeline</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Action Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance of funeral service personnel as: members of a human services profession</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of funeral service personnel as: members of the community in which they serve</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To emphasize high standards of ethical conduct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To enlarge the background and knowledge of students about the funeral service profession</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Re-visit your assessment plan to ensure it is still valuable
• If your outcomes are mastered, raise the bar, do something different
EXERCISE
• Select one of your program outcomes and align it to a ABFSE Aim & Objective
• What course will you measure the outcome?
• How are you going to measure the outcome?
• What will be your performance indicator?
• When will you assess? (i.e. semester, 3rd quarter, annually)
• What are your findings?
• How will you use the data to improve student/program outcomes?
Contact

Janet Stephens
jstephens@jtcc.edu
804-706-5066
ASSessment

Thank You!