

# Assessment Tools

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# Introduction

- Who Am I
- Goals of this workshop (5)
  - Why Assess
  - Assessment Measures
  - SACS Core Requirements and Comprehensive Standards
  - General Education
  - QEP

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# Why Assess?

- Public demands for accountability
- Institutional needs for accreditation
- National expectations concerning the improvement of higher (especially undergraduate) education

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## Assessment Essentials

- Agree on goals and objectives for learning
- Design and implement a thoughtful approach to assessment planning
- Involve individuals from on and off campus
- Select or design and implement data collection approaches
- Examine/share and act on assessment findings
- Regularly reexamine the assessment process
  - From C. Palomba & T. Banta, 1999

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## Liberal Education

• Liberal Education: education for free citizens; promotes the study of history, mathematics, languages, and sciences (American Academy for Liberal Education)

• Competing and/or Complementary Goals: enhance among students their content knowledge of a specific field of study vs. **facilitating thinking and reasoning skills among students so that they can solve ill-structured, real-world problems**

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## What are Student Learning Outcomes?

- Encompass a wide range of student attributes and abilities, both cognitive and affective, which are a measure of how their college experiences have supported their development as individuals (R. Frye).
  - <http://www.aacwu.edu/~dialogue/issue2.html>
- ETS Major Field Tests
  - <http://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/MFT/demos/infudemindex.html>
- ACT Alumni Outcomes Survey (Self-report)
  - <http://www.act.org/ess/fouryear.html>
- ACT College Outcomes Survey (Self-report)
  - <http://www.act.org/ess/fouryear.html>
- Collegiate Learning Assessment Project
  - [http://www.clae.org/content/peo\\_collegiate.htm](http://www.clae.org/content/peo_collegiate.htm)

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## Major Field Tests

- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Criminal Justice
- Economics
- Education
- History
- Literature in English
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physics
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Sociology
- MBA

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## ACT Outcomes Surveys

- Developing problem-solving skills
- Broaden my awareness of diversity among people, their values and cultures
- Developing leadership skills
  - Likert Scales
  - Self-report/indirect measure

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## Collegiate Learning Assessment

- You are the assistant to Pat Williams, the president of DynaTech, a company that makes precision electronic instruments and navigational equipment. Sally Evans, a member of DynaTech's sales force, recommended that DynaTech buy a small private plane (a SwiftAir 235) that she and other members of the sales force could use to visit customers. Pat was about to approve the purchase when there was an accident involving a SwiftAir 235. You are provided with the following documentation:

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## Collegiate Learning Assessment

- 1: Newspaper articles about the accident
- 2: Federal Accident Report on in-flight breakups in single engine planes
- 3: Pat's e-mail to you & Sally's e-mail to Pat
- 4: Charts on SwiftAir's performance characteristics
- 5: Amateur Pilot article comparing SwiftAir 235 to similar planes
- 6: Pictures and description of SwiftAir Models 180 and 235

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## Collegiate Learning Assessment

- Please prepare a memo that addresses several questions, including what data support or refute the claim that the type of wing on the SwiftAir 235 leads to more in-flight breakups, what other factors might have contributed to the accident and should be taken into account, and your overall recommendation about whether or not DynaTech should purchase the plane.

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## Assessing Critical Thinking

- ACT: Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP): designed to measure gains in critical thinking during the first two years of college
  - <http://www.act.org/caap/>
- California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST): designed to measure critical thinking and reasoning skills; CCTDI
  - <http://www.insightassessment.com/test-cctst.html>

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## Assessing Engagement

- National Survey of Student Engagement
  - <http://www.nsse.iub.edu/>
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement
  - <http://www.ccsse.org/>
- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement
  - <http://nsse.iub.edu/fsse/index.cfm>
- College Student Experiences Questionnaire
  - <http://cseq.iub.edu/>
- College Senior Survey
  - <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/herisurveys.php>

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## Assessing the First-Year Experience

- The First-Year Initiative Assessment College & University Housing
  - <http://www.webebi.com/default.aspx>
- Your First College Year
  - <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/yfcyOverview.php>
- Cooperative Institutional Research Program
  - <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/freshman.html>

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## SACS

- Core Requirement 2.5:
  - The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that incorporate a systematic review of programs and services that (a) results in continuing improvement, and (b) demonstrates that the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission (Institutional Effectiveness)

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## SACS

- Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1:
  - The institution identifies expected outcomes for its educational programs and its administrative and educational support services; assesses whether it achieves these outcomes; and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results

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## SACS

- Comprehensive Standard 3.4.1:
  - The institution demonstrates that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded (a) is approved by the faculty and the administration, and (b) establishes and evaluates program and learning outcomes

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## How to Define Desired Student Learning Outcomes

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| • Top  | • Bottom                       |
| – Excellence                                     | – Diverse Spiritual Traditions |
| – Academic Achievement                           | – Environmental Stewardship    |
| – Local Community                                | – Responsive Citizenship       |
| – Strong and Distinctive Undergraduate Education |                                |

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### **How to Define Desired Student Learning Outcomes**

**•Departmental Goals**

–Students majoring in Theatre Arts & Dance will demonstrate, through jury evaluations and critical reviews, proficiency in Performance/Directing; Dance, Acting, Directing, Choreography, Improvisation (Expressive Arts)

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### **How to Define Desired Student Learning Outcomes**

**•Departmental Goals**

–Students majoring in Spanish will demonstrate an "advanced" level of aural comprehension skills in accordance with ACTFL standards (Humanities)  
–All students majoring in Education will pass the Florida State Licensure Exam for teachers (Social Sciences)

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### **How to Define Desired Student Learning Outcomes**

**•Departmental Goals**

–Students, through volunteer work at the Genius Reserve, will demonstrate an understanding of the criteria and process for preserving natural ecosystems (Environmental Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies)

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## How to Define Desired Student Learning Outcomes

•Students majoring in physics will demonstrate the ability to apply experimental techniques and advanced mathematics to solve problems in both written and graphical form (Sciences and Mathematics)

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## Assessment Measures

•Presentation of directing, choreography, or improvisation projects; Individual Script Analysis Project; Directing or Acting scenes/In class dance presentations; Laboratory application in production; Journals (Theatre)  
•Spanish majors will achieve a rating of "advanced" on a portfolio of writing assignments that will be judged by the Spanish faculty according to ACTFL guidelines

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## Assessment Measures

•100% demonstration of each Accomplished Practice at the Performance level by the end of the Student Teaching experience (Education)  
•Natural Lands Acquisition Project; students utilize model criteria to analyze the Econlockhatchee River and the Wekiva River. After scoring each site, student scores are contrasted to professional assessments (Environmental Studies)

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## Assessment Measures

- Physics majors in the senior year are expected to perform at or above the 50th percentile on the Major Field Achievement Test (MFT) in physics.
- 759 others and counting

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## Use of Assessment

- Students have improved learning outcomes related to directing, choreography and performance since the college developed a second stage series of plays that are produced, directed, designed, and acted by students
- Students have improved their ability to use advanced math to solve problems since the department began requiring students to take Principles of Physics and introductory calculus simultaneously

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## Assessment at Rollins College

- Assessment Matrix
  - See handout
  - <http://www.rollins.edu/provost/assessment/>
- Academic/Administrative Support Rubrics
  - See handout
  - <http://www.rollins.edu/provost/assessment/>
- National Peer Review Guidelines
  - See handout

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## Consortia Benchmarking

- Associated Colleges of the South
  - <http://www.colleges.org/>
- Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium
  - <http://www.e-heds.org/>
- Annapolis Group
  - <http://www.collegenews.org/>
- State Organizations (i.e., Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida, ICUF)
  - <http://www.icuf.org/>

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## Other Useful Assessment Resources

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
  - <http://www.sacscoc.org/>
- Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
  - <http://www.aacsb.edu/>
- National Association of Schools of Music
  - <http://nasm.arts-accredit.org/>
- Association of Theological Schools
  - <http://www.ats.edu/>

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## Other Useful Assessment Resources

- National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
  - <http://www.ncate.org/>
- American Academy for Liberal Education
  - <http://www.aale.org/>
- Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award
  - [http://www.quality.nist.gov/Education\\_Criteria.htm](http://www.quality.nist.gov/Education_Criteria.htm)
- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs
  - <http://www.cacrep.org/>

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### Other Useful Assessment Resources

- Assessment Update
  - <http://www.josseybass.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-AU.html>
- Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
  - <http://www.planning.iupui.edu/conferences/national/nationalconf.html>
  - <http://www.planning.iupui.edu/conferences/international/internationalconf.html>

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### Other Useful Assessment Resources

- Alverno (Student Assessment as Learning)
  - [http://www.alverno.edu/for\\_educators/student\\_as\\_learn.html](http://www.alverno.edu/for_educators/student_as_learn.html)
- North Carolina State
  - [http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/ases\\_ovv.htm](http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/ases_ovv.htm)
- Truman State
  - <http://assessment.truman.edu/>
- University of Wisconsin-Stout (MBA)
  - <http://www.uwstout.edu/mba/>

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### Other Useful Assessment Resources

- University of Wisconsin-Madison
  - <http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/manual/manual2.html>
- University of Colorado-Boulder
  - <http://www.colorado.edu/pba/outcomes/units/unitindx.htm>

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## Analyzing Assessment Results

- External Measures
  - Psychometric properties (reliability/validity) but often are self-reports that rely on Likert Scales or utilize multiple-choice responses (Bloom’s Taxonomy); indirect/reliable/easy to score
- Internal Measures
  - Pilot (Construct Validity)
  - Rubrics (Systematic Observation)
    - More difficult to score/information is rich
    - See handout

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## SACS

- Comprehensive Standard: 3.5.1:
  - The institution identifies college-level competencies within the general education core and provides evidence that graduates have attained those competencies
    - Structure the curriculum so that no matter what choices a student makes within the general education options, it is not possible to pass all courses and not have demonstrated the competencies (few) that the college has identified.

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## SACS

- Core Requirement 2.12:
  - The institution has developed an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan and demonstrates that the plan is part of an ongoing planning and evaluation process

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## What is QEP

The QEP requires a focus on the future

1. An institution should begin work on its QEP at least two years in advance of the scheduled onsite visit
2. The reaffirmation process no longer has an "end". It is now a continuous process focused on improvement
3. Develop specific, well-defined goals—fewer rather than more. "Dig one well—well and avoid digging a well field
4. Characteristics of QEP: creative, nonlinear, recursive, evolutionary—with the possibility of revisions, changes even as the implementation unfolds; a bit messy, a bit uncertain, exciting, challenging and rewarding (we're anticipating exciting and rewarding!)
5. More like creating a stone sculpture than assembling a montage
6. Addressing that "one issue" you've always ignored about your institution
7. Paradigm shift "in Medias Res"

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## A Few QEP Topics

- The Formation of an Academic Resource Center
- Enhancement of Online Education
- Partnership in Achieving Student Success (Academic Advising and College Success Skills Course)
- The Academically Challenging Tutorial Lab
- Do the Right Thing: A Campus Conversation on Ethics

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## QEP: Where to Begin

- Planning
  - "Rollins College Mission Statement" (pretty)
- Research
  - Where do the opportunities for improvement lie?
  - What initiative has the highest opportunity cost if you don't do it?
  - Address a weakness or improve upon a strength

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## QEP: Assessment of the Plan

- The institution demonstrates that it has means for determining the success of its Quality Enhancement Plan
  - The institution identified and used relevant internal and external measures to evaluate the plan, such as changes in learning outcomes and/or comparisons with similar institutions or participation in cooperative plans with other institutions or with projects similar to the QEP
  - The institution identified an internal system for evaluating and monitoring the progress of the plan (QEP Steering Committee)
  - The institution described and incorporated evaluation of the plan
  - The institution described the process that will be used to incorporate evaluation findings into the ongoing enhancement of the institution

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## QEP: Assessment of the Plan

- Translation
  - Develop an assessment schedule that
    - Assigns accountability for assessment activities
    - Establishes an early baseline
    - Incorporates appropriate check points

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## QEP: Assessment of the Plan

- Accountability
  - Provost
    - Assistant Provost (early baseline, check points occur biannually)
    - Deans/Directors
    - QEP Steering Committee
  - By Initiative:
    - » Leadership and Citizenship: Director of Community Engagement; Director of Student Involvement and Leadership
    - » Retention and Recruitment: Dean of Admission and Enrollment
    - » Academic and Social Integrity: Dean of the Faculty
    - » Internationalization: Director of International Programs; Director of the International Studies Center
    - » Diversity: Director of Multicultural Affairs

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## QEP: Assessment of the Plan

- Establish an Early Baseline
  - Qualitative Measures: (example: first-year/senior essay: What do citizenship and leadership mean to you?)
  - Quantitative Measures: (example: student responses to the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership)

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## QEP: Assessment of the Plan Check Points

Measures	QEP Assessment Schedule									
	Fa 2005	Sp 2006	Fa 2006	Sp 2007	Fa 2007	Sp 2008	Fa 2008	Sp 2009	Fa 2009	Sp 2010
College Outcomes Survey		X				X				X
College Student Survey				X				X		
Cooperative Institutional Research Program Survey	X				X				X	
C/CIIE Survey								X		X
Deans' Annual Report to QEP Steering Committee		X		X		X		X		X
Faculty Survey of Student Engagement		X				X				X
First-Year Initiative	X				X				X	
Citizenship and Leadership Essay	X				X			X		
National Survey of Student Engagement		X				X				X
Participation Rates	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Residence Life Survey				X				X		
Retention/Graduation Rates	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

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## In Medias Res

- Administrative Changes Occur
  - 2 Presidents, 3 Proverbs, Various Trustees
- Role of QEP Steering Committee Changes
  - Focus on allocating funds rather than assessment
    - Re-constitute QEP Steering Committee, place renewed emphasis on assessment (\$1000), seek proposals for funding (proactive rather than reactive)
- Students graduate and there are other administrative/staffing changes; many of the original "champions" of QEP topic are no longer here

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### In Medias Res

- People generate great ideas (theory); basic
- Often, the people who generate great ideas are not held responsible for implementing those great ideas (action research); applied
  - Similar to creating a mess and then leaving someone else to clean it up; or, here's the problem, now you design the solution/implementation strategy that makes the problem go away

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### In Medias Res

- Difficult to maintain momentum over a couple of years let alone five years
- No assessment will occur without a long-term plan and without people being held accountable for making sure the plan (as described on paper) comes to fruition
- QEP evolves and morphs and everyone will try to link their innovations to it (especially if funding is possible)

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### In Medias Res

- QEP becomes the vehicle to do "all things"
  - (most institutions can do any one thing they might choose to do but none of us can do everything we'd like to do)
- Unintended very positive outcomes
  - A much clearer focus, for Rollins, about our institutional purpose
    - Revised Mission Statement (no longer pretty)
    - Guiding Principles

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## Conclusion

- Assess learning outcomes with multiple measures (qualitative/quantitative; indirect/direct; external/internal)
- Few general education core competencies
- QEP Assessment Plan (Accountability, Schedule, Baseline, Check-points)
- Institutional Integrity
  - 1 year of data may be acceptable
  - Samples of learning outcomes may be acceptable

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