



**ASSESSMENT 101: ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT**  
Five Steps to Continuous Improvement of Student Learning

Council Oak Assessment  
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# Assessment Questions and Steps

1. What should program graduates know and be able to do? (Step 1)
2. How do we know whether graduates know and can do these things? (Step 1)
3. Did student performance meet our expectations? (Steps 1,2,3)
4. How can we improve student learning? (Steps 3,4)
5. What will it take for us to improve student learning? (Steps 4,5)







# Measures

## Assessment Question #2 (Step 1)

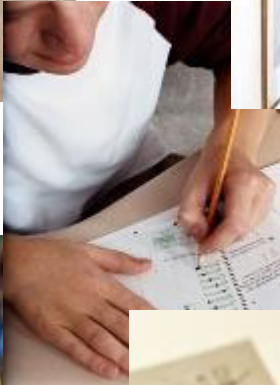
How do we know whether graduates know and can do these things (*the outcomes*)?

*“If you cannot measure it, you cannot improve it.”*

(Baron Kelvin, 19<sup>th</sup> century physicist known for his work in thermodynamics).



**Where do students  
have opportunities to  
ACQUIRE the  
knowledge or skill in  
your outcome?**



**Where do they have opportunities  
to DEMONSTRATE their knowledge  
or skill?**

# Direct and Indirect Measures

Direct	Indirect
Capstone (project/paper/portfolio)	Student surveys & focus groups
Standardized tests (ETS field tests, etc.)	Exit surveys and interviews
Presentations/oral defenses	Alumni surveys and interviews
Classroom exams or quizzes	Employer surveys and interviews
Classroom/homework assignments	Job placement data
Course projects	Admission to further academic study
Papers (research, term, creative, etc.)	Course evaluations (depending on the items)
Internships or practicums	
Design projects	
Practical clinical assessments*	
Artistic creations or performances	
Classroom discussions	
Online discussion threads	
Licensure/certification exams	
Publications/presentations	
Master's theses or doctoral dissertations	

# Guidelines for Good Measures

1. Three measures for each outcome. Two direct, one indirect
2. Measure student learning on the outcome near the end of the program.
3. Avoid purchasing or creating additional tests or other assessment activities simply to satisfy your assessment data collection needs.
4. Course grades and course completion are NEVER appropriate measures of student learning.

Assignment	Weight	Student A	Student B
Attendance	0.10	100.0	0.0
History quiz	0.15	90.0	92.0
Homework	0.15	90.0	96.0
Midterm	0.30	89.0	98.0
Final	0.30	88.0	100.0
<i>Total</i>		<b>90.1</b>	<b>87.6</b>
<b>Course Grade</b>		<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>

# Guidelines for Good Measures, cont.

5. An overall grade for an exam, project, etc. may or may not be appropriate.
6. Be specific.
7. Don't write a long description of the measure.
8. Don't combine multiple measures as one.
9. Don't use pre-post measures.

	PRETEST			POSTTEST		
Section	<i>Poss Pts</i>	<i>Mean (Pts)</i>	<i>Mean (Pct)</i>	<i>Mean (Pts)</i>	<i>Mean (Pct)</i>	<i>Gain (%)</i>
001	25	8	32	18	72	40
002	25	17	68	21	84	16

10. Use the same measure for more than one outcome, if relevant.
11. Rubrics are not measures.

# JPS Measures

**Direct:** Final exam in JPS 442 (Policy Analysis)

**Direct:** Policy development project in JPS-443 (Senior Capstone).

**Indirect:** BSU undergraduate alumni survey items that ask whether students are employed, and how closely related their job is to their undergraduate program at BSU.

✓	Three measures (two direct, one indirect?)	<i>Correct. This isn't required, but I used a capstone measure that built on work from the previous course. The capstone assignment is shown on p. 30 and the scoring rubric is on p. 45.</i>
✓	Near the end of the program	<i>Correct. This is the capstone.</i>
✓	No unnecessary extra tests	<i>Correct.</i>
✓	No course grades or course completions	<i>Correct.</i>
✓	Overall assignment/test grade (may or may not be OK)	<i>Correct. I only listed the full project, but will be specific in my targets.</i>
✓	Be specific.	<i>Correct.</i>
✓	No long description.	<i>Correct.</i>
?	No multiple measures	<i>The indirect measure may appear to be multiple measures, but we ask whether students are currently employed, then filter responses to count only those who respond that they are.</i>
✓	No pre-post measures.	<i>Correct.</i>
✓	Try to get "bang for your buck."	<i>Correct. This project can be used to measure several outcomes.</i>



Questions?

## **Exercise – 10 minutes**

Go back to the final outcome you wrote during the morning session.

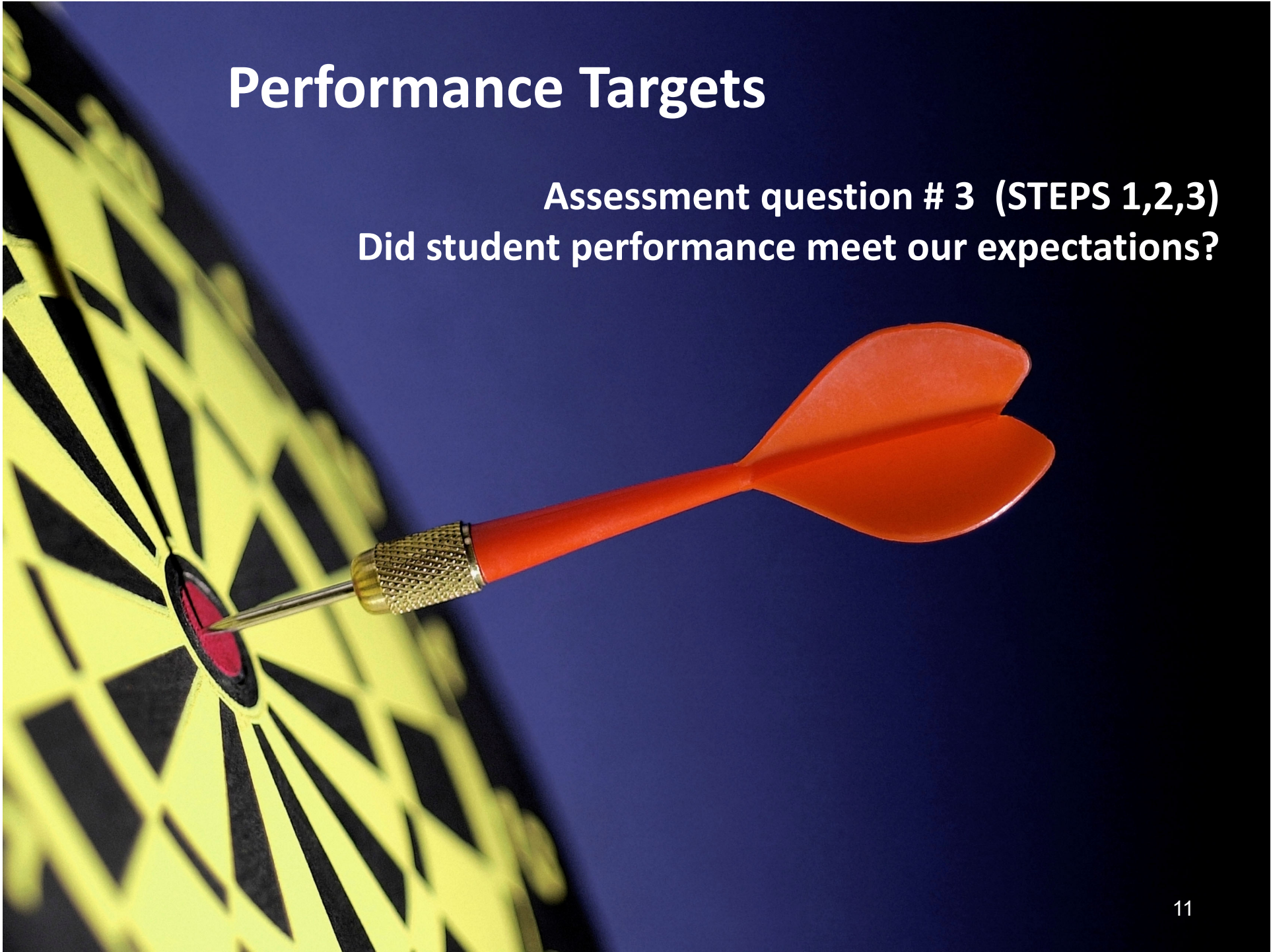
Use the exercise sheet to write a direct measure and an indirect measure for that outcome.

Use the guideline checklist to check your work and make revisions.

We will monitor the Q&A and try to answer any questions that come up.

# Performance Targets

Assessment question # 3 (STEPS 1,2,3)  
Did student performance meet our expectations?



# Guidelines for Targets

1. The target must be directly related to the measure.
2. Write targets in this format: “XX% of students will earn a grade/rating of YY or higher on the [*name of exam/project*].” Or “XX% of students will [*pass/successfully defend*] the [*licensure exam, dissertation*] on the first attempt.” or “XX% of respondents will report that [*use scale points from survey item*].”
3. Course grades and course completion are not appropriate for use with targets. As with measures, it is important to focus on the specific exam, project, etc., that will be used to measure student learning on the outcome.
4. No pre-post targets. See the discussion of pre- and post-tests in the Measures section.



# Examples of Targets

- (P) → 80% or more of students will earn 75% or higher on the [subset of outcome-related test items] on the final exam. (Primary)¶
- (S) → No more than 10% of students will earn below 60% on [subset of outcome-related test items] on the final exam. (Secondary)¶
- (P) → 75% or more of students will earn a rating of “Meets Expectations” or better on the research paper. (Primary)¶
- (S) → No more than 5% of students will earn a rating of “Does not Meet Expectations” on the research paper. (Secondary)¶
- (P) → 90% or more of student papers will be evaluated at a Level 3 or higher on the VALUE rubric for Ethical Reasoning. (Primary)¶
- (S) → No more than 20% of student papers will be evaluated at a Level 1 on the VALUE rubric for Ethical Reasoning. (Secondary)¶
- (P) → 85% or more of alumni survey respondents will report that they are currently employed in a field that is related or closely related to their degree program. (Primary)¶
- (S) → No more than 15% of alumni survey respondents will report that they are not currently employed in a field that is related or closely related to their degree program. (Secondary)¶
- (P) → 80% or more of exit survey respondents will report that the BS JPS program contributed “Quite a Bit” or “Very Much” to the development of their critical thinking skills. (Primary)¶
- (S) → No more than 10% of exit survey respondents will report that the BS JPS program contributed “Very Little” or “Not at All” to the development of their critical thinking skills. (Secondary)¶

## **Exercise – 5 minutes**

Go back to the measures you wrote in the last exercise.

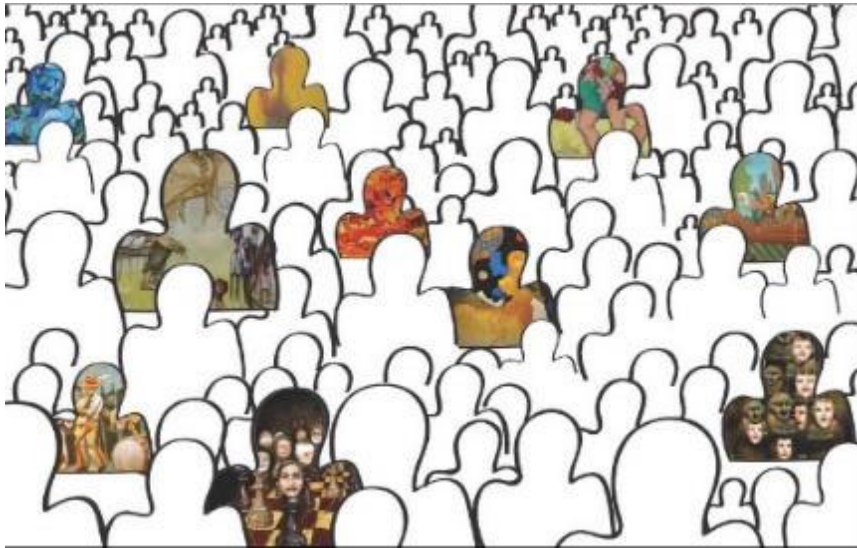
Use your exercise sheet to write a performance target for one measure you created in the last exercise.

Use the guideline checklist to check your work and make revisions.

We will monitor the Q&A and try to answer any questions that come up.

Questions?

# Sampling – your data collection plan



- 1. Before the fact.**
- 2. Program majors only.**
- 3. Reasonably representative.**
- 4. Written in the correct form.**



# Sampling – examples

All program majors enrolled in a specified course during a specified term:

100% of \_\_\_\_\_ [program] majors enrolled in \_\_\_\_\_ [course number and name] in \_\_\_\_\_ [term(s)].

A sample (e.g., 50%) of program majors enrolled in a specified course during a specified term:

\_\_\_\_\_ [percent] of \_\_\_\_\_ [program] majors randomly selected from \_\_\_\_\_ [course number and name] in \_\_\_\_\_ [term(s)].

All program majors enrolled in all sections of a multiple section course during all three terms:

\_\_\_\_\_ % [percent] of \_\_\_\_\_ [program] majors enrolled in all sections of [course number and name] for all terms of academic year 2021-2022.

All program majors enrolled in a sample of course sections of a multi-section course:

100% [percent] of \_\_\_\_\_ [program] majors enrolled in a sample of sections of [course number, name, section] for all terms (or specific terms) of academic year 2021-2022.

Questions?

## **Exercise – 5 minutes**

Use your exercise sheet to write sampling strategy for one measure you created that exercise.

Use the guideline checklist to check your work and make revisions.

We will monitor the Q&A and try to answer any questions that come up.

**You now have an assessment plan!**

## Step Two: Data Collection



Failure to follow through on assessment plan is THE primary cause of problems.

MUST communicate responsibilities, timelines, etc.

Assessment management system important (homegrown or commercial)



# Step Three: Interpret Results

What are your data telling you about student learning on the outcome?

Drill down.



# Interpret Results - Guidelines

1. Review the sampling strategy in your assessment plan to help you identify the data to be used.
2. Assemble the data to be analyzed.
3. Review the measures and targets from your assessment plan.
4. Do not exclude students who stopped coming to class, failed to complete the assignment.

**Doing “good assessment” is not about achieving all the performance targets for learning outcomes; it is about identifying strengths and weaknesses in student performance and taking action to improve student learning in subsequent cycles.**

# Step Four: Report



Do the data indicate that graduates possess the knowledge or skill identified in the outcome?

Do the data bring new information to light?

What are you going to do?

Maki – the question underlying assessment results is what has the ...program learned about its students' learning?

Baker – and what did you do as a result?

Boyd – so what?

Questions?

# Step Five: Act on Results

## (Questions 4 and 5)



Closing the loop

How will you use the information gained during this assessment cycle to ***improve student learning?***

Assessment results should drive planning and budget decisions.

***MOVE THE  
NEEDLE!***

# Action Planning - Guidelines

1. For any measure or outcome that is Partially Met or Not Met, you must submit at least one action plan.
2. For any measure or outcome that is Met, you may choose to submit an action plan.
3. Action plans flow directly from the data, and our analysis of the data..
4. Action plans ignore pre-conceived wishes, needs or priorities.  
***Remember: if the data do not support the request, you ain't gettin' it!  
(Hummingbird, 2013)***
5. Some action plans will immediately solve a problem in the next cycle, but others are long term and will put you on the path to improvement.
6. Action plans are specific.
7. Action plans may or may not require additional resources.
8. Action plans must be tracked over one or more subsequent cycles.



# **NEW** Guideline for Targets and Action Plans

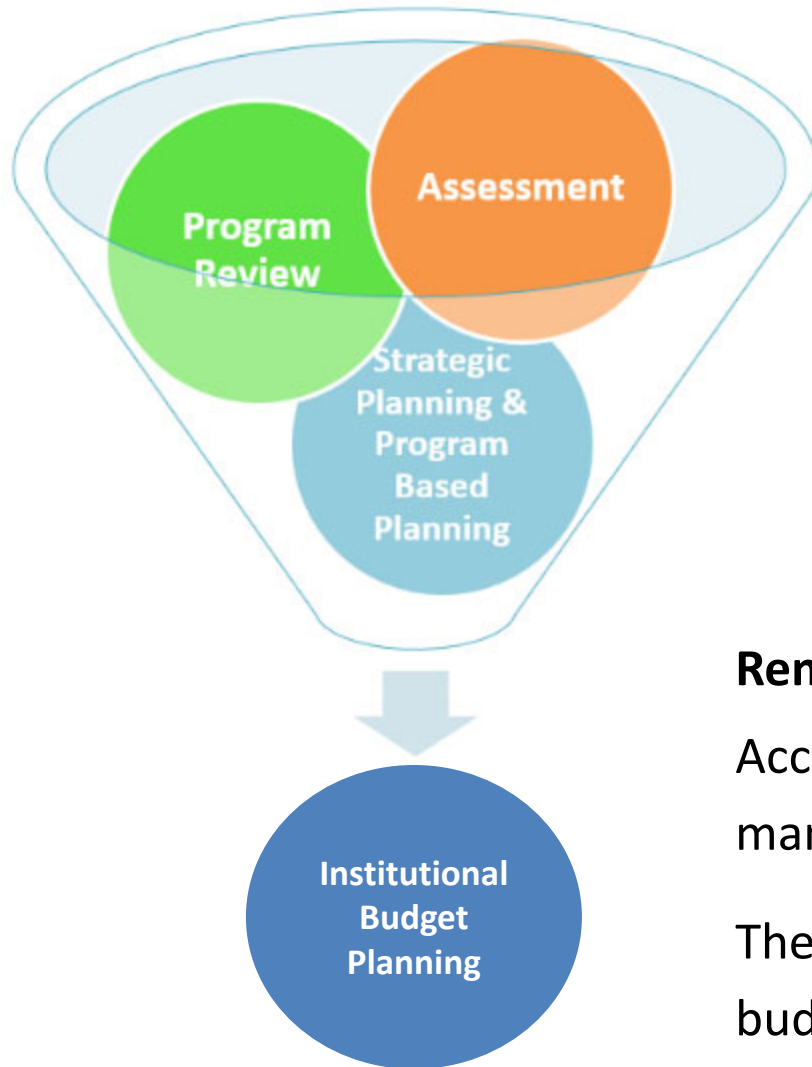
No longer sufficient to show that we're TRYING to improve. Now we MUST improve.

If you use a measure from a previous cycle, what was the level of performance? Set your new target HIGHER than that level. Plan to do the same in subsequent cycles.

Our responsibility to find out what we need to change in our teaching, in our curriculum, in our placement, in our advising – and **MOVE THE NEEDLE!!!**

James Minor, US Dept of Ed Deputy Assistant Secretary for Higher Education Programs  
IUPUI – 10/26/15

## Action plans from all processes feed into institutional decisions



### Remember:

Accreditation agencies don't "grade" us on how many outcomes are met.

They evaluate how well we use information to drive budget and planning decisions at the classroom, program, department, and institutional levels – all focused on continuous improvement.

# Step One: Plan Assessment (again)



Update your assessment plan to reflect the outcomes, measures, targets, and sampling strategies for the new cycle.

Implement your action plans from the previous cycle – and assess them.

Remember ... assessment is an iterative process.

I will be holding two one-hour follow-up sessions with live Zoom audio and video. I'll try to answer any questions you have from the Sunday morning or after noon Assessment 101 sessions - or any other assessment questions you might have. This is on my personal Zoom account, which is limited to 100 participants.

**Wednesday, October 27** at 6:00 p.m. **Central Daylight Time**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84201077482>

**Thursday, October 28** at 11:00 a.m., **Central Daylight time**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81157518555>

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