Assessment With Soul:
A People-Centered Approach

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Learning Objectives

Participants in this session will:	Learn about ways presenters and participants have engaged faculty, staff and students in the assessment process.
	Explore assessment process(es) at their own institution through the lens of people-centered frameworks.
	Brainstorm new ideas for meaningfully engaging faculty, staff and students in the assessment process at their own institutions.

Austin Peay State University

- Located in Clarksville, TN

- ~10,000 Enrollment, diverse student body

- Associates, Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral programs offered

- SACSCOC accredited

- Assessment Cycles include:
    - ~60 Non-Degree Units
    - ~90 Degree and Certificate programs

- Let's Go Peay! *(yes, we really chant that...)*

Your Presenters

Amanda Wornhoff, Ed.D.

Assistant Provost

- 15 Years in Higher Ed
  - Faculty Affairs
  - Curriculum
  - Student Success
  - Assessment
  - Accreditation
  - General Education

Allie Michael, Ed.D.

Assistant Director, IEA

- 16 years in Higher Ed
  - Annual Giving and Alumni Relations
  - Accreditation
  - Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)
  - Student Engagement
  - Adjunct Support
  - Assessment
 - Grant Writing and Management

Frameworks

- Backwards design (Kezar & Maxey, 2015; Wiggins & McTighe, 1998)
  - Work backward from the intended outcome

- Bolman and Deal Four Frames Model of Leadership
  - Structural, Human Resources, Political, Symbolic

- What is Your Philosophy of Assessment? Activity
  - [National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment](#)
  - Compliance, Student-Centered, Teaching & Learning, Measurement

- Defining assessment culture and operationalizing meaningful engagement
  - Fuller, Henderson, & Bustamante (2015)
  - We often speak about the importance of assessment culture, but we rarely talk about HOW to make that culture happen.

What do we even mean by meaningful engagement and assessment culture in our own institutions?
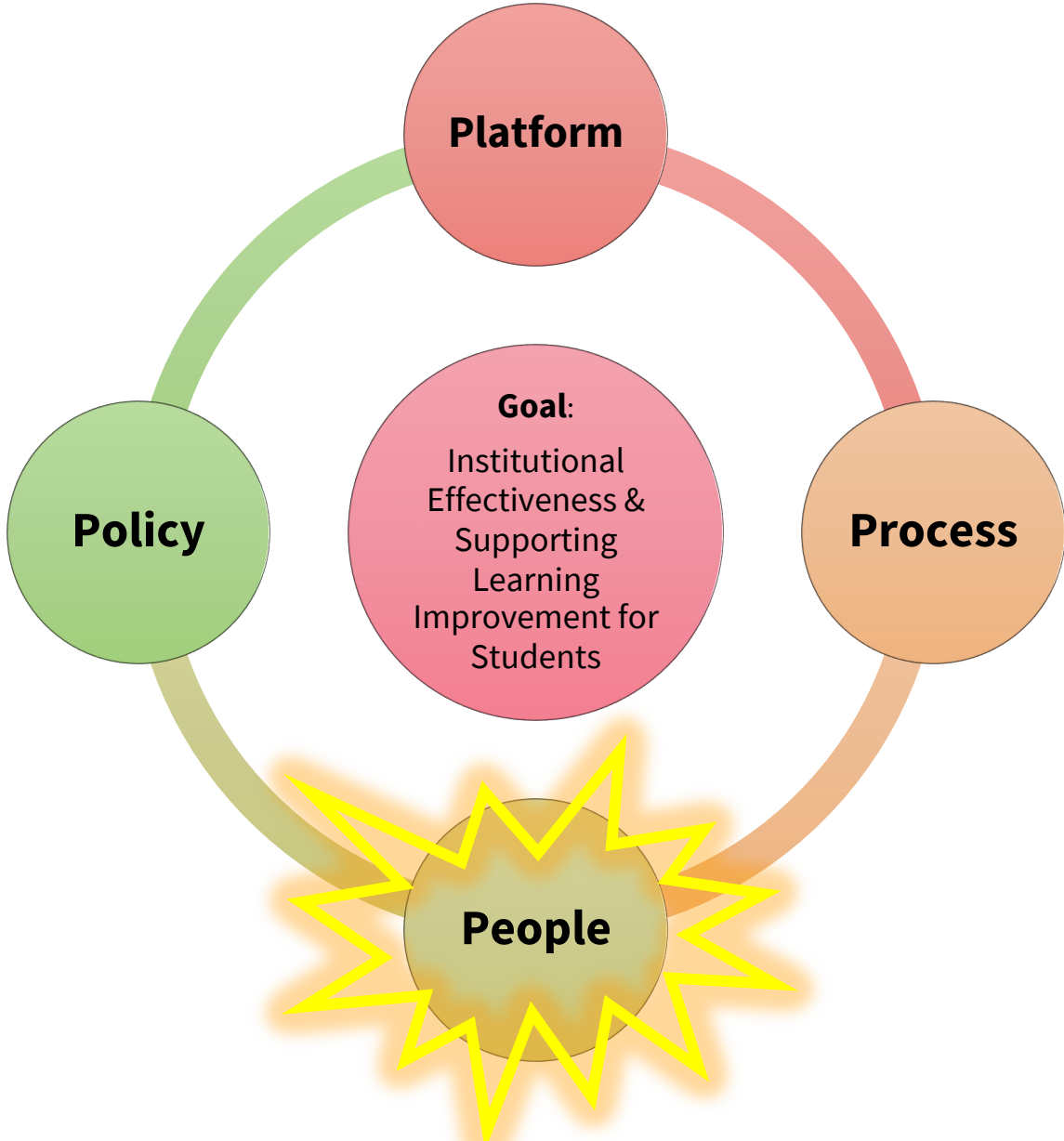
Platform

- Assessment practices are built primarily around the functionality of a specific technology or platform.

- While typically technological in nature, the "platform" is simply whatever means is used to collect the assessment information.

Process

- Assessment practices are built around a specific process that may or may not be directly related to assessment itself.

- Not to be confused with process-based assessment.

Policy

- Assessment practices are driven by policies, whether they be department, program, college, institution, state, or federal in nature.

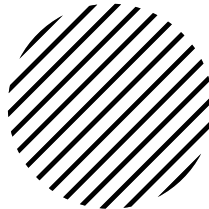- All parts of the assessment process are dictated by policy.

People

- Assessment practices are built around the needs of the people involved and impacted by the process.

- Feedback is encouraged on the process and changes are made based on the feedback received.

Consider these questions...

- Does your process actually reflect the policies?

- Does your platform actually support your process?

- Do people have a say in any of this (platform, process, policy)? Where can people be included? You're not going to be able to change some parts of this, and that is okay – try to find that one scalable area and build on it.

- Is your platform and your process helping or hindering people from engaging in institutional effectiveness and/or learning improvement? How do you think the people involved in the process would answer that question? If you don't know, maybe you should ask them!

What do we mean by "meaningful engagement" in assessment?

Growing People-Centered Assessment Practices

Increase opportunities for meaningful communication and honest feedback
(Not just surveys!)

- Defined points of contact for various constituencies on campus
  - Mobilized key staff and faculty to serve as trusted advisors and points of contact

- Being visible and open to conversation (attending meetings outside your area, speaking up, inviting comment)

○ Growing People-Centered Assessment Practices

Provide regular, positive communications
(not just deadlines and requirements!)
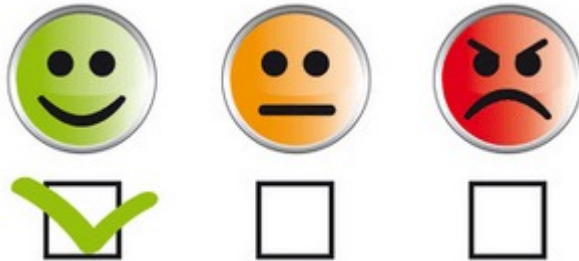
- Monthly IEA Newsletter
  - Celebrate successes
  - Feature articles

- IE Committee Review Rubric – Adding "Kudos" comment section

Growing People-Centered Assessment Practices

Gather demonstrable results of people-centered practices
(data but also examples/anecdotes)

- Better completion/submission of assessment reports
- Increased quality of submissions
- Concrete improvements from Assessment Redesign Institute (ARI) participation
- Connecting assessment to other institutional priorities

Growing People-Centered Assessment Practices

Focus on scaling or institutionalizing one people-centered idea
(start small!)

- Started small:
Adjusted deadlines/processes

- New initiative:
Launched Assessment Redesign Institute (ARI)

- Went big:
Abandoning assessment software for home-grown system

References

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1991). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership.* Joseph-Bass/Wiley.

Fuller, M., Henderson, S., & Bustamante, R. (2015). Assessment leaders' perspective of institutional cultures of assessment: A Delphi study. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 40*(3), 331-351. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2014.917369

Kezar, A., & Maxey, D. (2015). *Adapting by design: Creating faculty roles and defining faculty work to ensure an intentional future for colleges and universities.* The Delphi Project on the Changin Faculty and Student Success.

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. (2020, May). *Activity: What is Your Philosophy of Assessment?* https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Philosophy-Activity.pdf

PLATFORM

Driving Forces: management of data, ease of data collection, resources (funding, manpower, etc.), institutional systems

PROCESS

Driving Forces: institutional organization, institutional memory (i.e., "this is the way we've always done it"), accreditation/reporting deadlines

Goal:
Institutional Effectiveness and Supporting Learning Improvement for Students

POLICY

Driving Forces: accrediting agencies, state & federal policies/legislation, grant requirements, strategic plan reporting, budget processes

PEOPLE

Driving Forces: mindful scheduling/deadlines, individual assistance, needs-based programming/resources, formative feedback opportunities, advocacy