



STRAYER
UNIVERSITY

A Comparative Analysis Process to Maximize Insights and Leverage Actions across Programs

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Abstract

It's important to continuously refine our processes so that our students benefit from the best practices in assessment, and that students have a fair evaluation of their learning. We adjusted our process from using the Peregrine assessment to a comparative analysis because the objective assessment of Peregrine did not align with how our students learned, particularly when our students are accustomed to learning through project based or rubric based assessments. The misalignment caused stress for both students and faculty, so developing a new process for comparison alleviated that stress and ensured a better comparison of student learning.

Purpose and Goals

1. Identify the essential components of a comparative analysis process.
2. Explain the value, significance and benefit of comparative program analysis to drive actionable insights for program improvement.
3. Discuss how the refinements of a comparative analysis process can better serve students.
4. Generate ideas to improve an existing comparative analysis process.





Strayer University

- An over 130-year-old institution offering diploma, certificate, associate, bachelor's, master's degree credentials.
- Serving more than 35,000 nontraditional students who are:
 - 71% Women; 25% Men; 4% other & unknown
 - 2% Asian; 55% Black or African American; 8% Hispanic or Latino; 29% White
- Strayer students primarily study in online and hybrid courses and 90% take courses on a part-time basis.

Mission statement: Through Strayer University's innovative approach to an exceptional educational experience and our commitment to student success, our students are empowered to achieve their personal and professional aspirations.

21 degree offerings

65 concentrations and specializations

6 certificates

1 diploma

business (71%)
criminal justice (13%)
information systems & technology (14%)
education (1%)
public administration (1%)



Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

University core competencies

Assessed within programs and across degree levels

Program outcomes

Including general education and certificates

Course outcomes

Assessed through key assessments in course



An opportunity for continuous improvement

What's the right approach?

A comparative analysis process may be more aligned with the way students learn course content at some institutions and in certain programs. Many external comparative analysis processes rely on results from objective, nationally normed standardized testing of students.

However, designing a process that better aligns with teaching methodologies and relies on internal measures of programs within the same schools or colleges, at the same degree level, within the same disciplines or which are similarly situated may better yield more relevant, meaningful outcomes and illuminate actionable results.

**Aligning measures
with teaching
methodologies**

**Capturing relevant,
meaningful
outcomes**

**Achieving
actionable results**



The importance of comparative analysis

Why does it matter?

It is a process that validates program curricula. Comparative analysis:

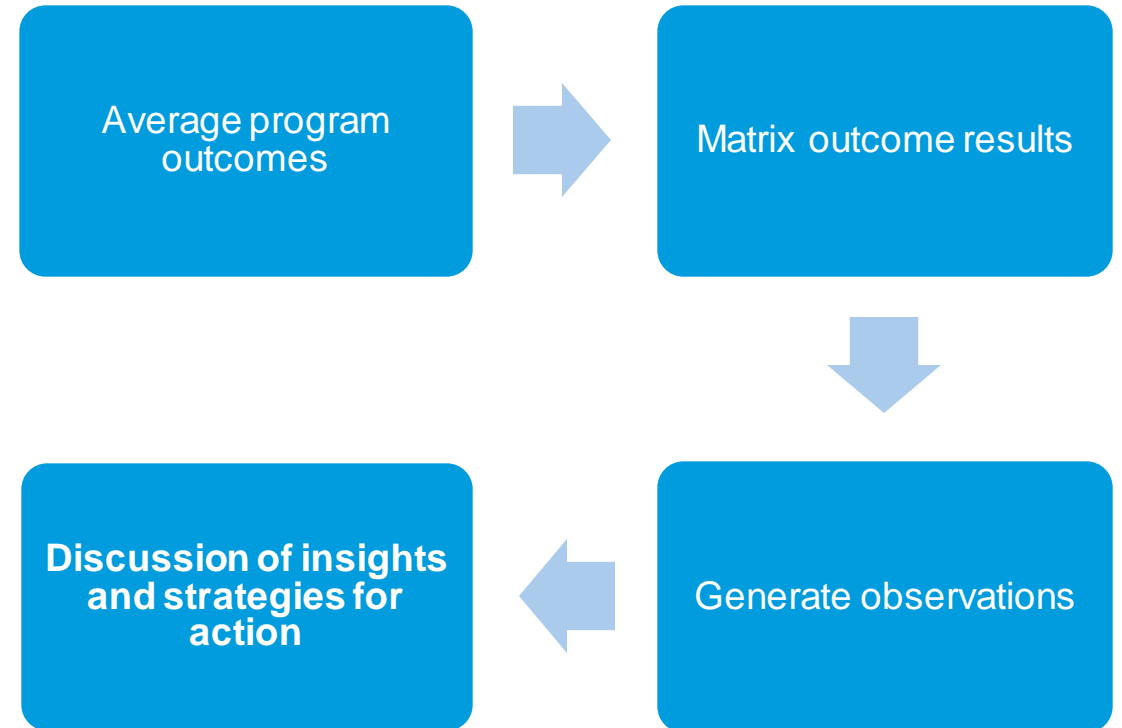
- Enables comparing performance between programs.
- Provides *critical context*.
- Allows stakeholders to leverage performance information to create action plans to improve student learning, and *ultimately students' learning experience*.



Comparing average program performance

How is it done?

- Leverage annual program outcomes data
- Develop program outcomes matrix
- Stakeholder meetings



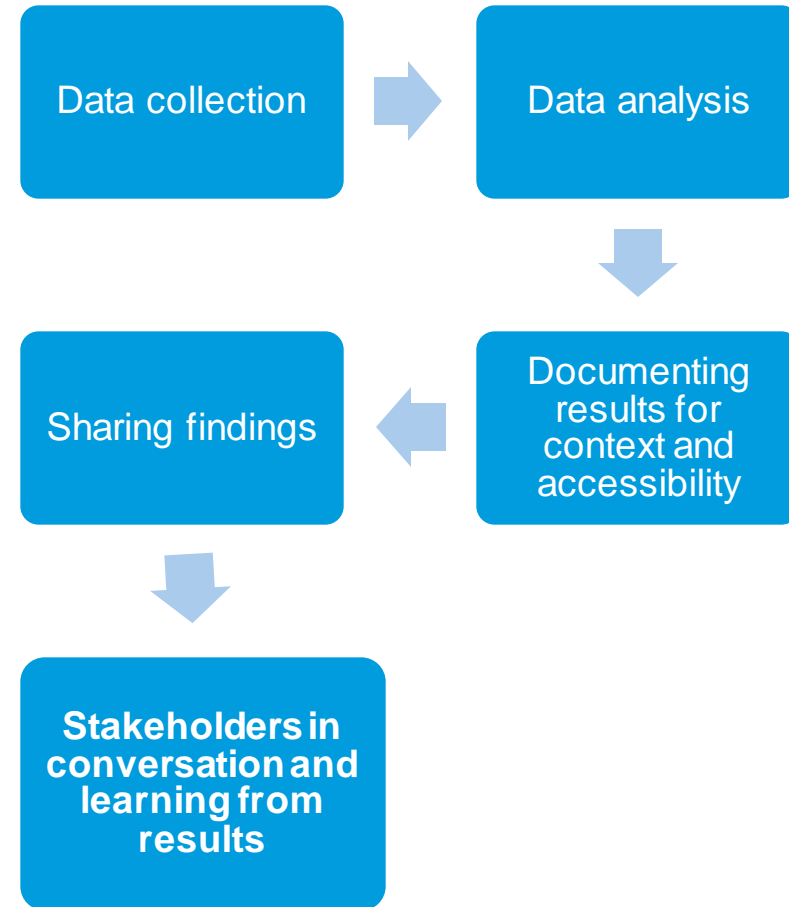


An internal comparative analysis process emerges

What are the considerations?

The essential components of an improved process include:

- Designing a process to include all programs and provide relevant context
- Gaining the ability to compare average program performance
- Surfacing notable observations to drive conversations





Creating comparables

What does it look like?

Programs	Comparable Programs					Highlights
	Discipline	Accounting	Associate	Bachelors	Masters	How do average program outcomes compare within a discipline across degree levels?
	Programs	Accounting	Business	Mathematics		How do average program outcomes compare with related programs at the same degree levels?
		All associate degree programs				What can be learned from top performing programs for students studying at this degree level?
		All bachelor's degree programs				
	All master's degree programs					



Realizing the benefits of an internal comparative analysis process

Who benefits?

- Deans – Provides helpful context and valuable insights to help them identify and prioritize program enhancements and beneficial best practices
- Leaders – Gain contextualized insights about program outcomes performance
- Assessment professionals – Acquire broader program outcome performance knowledge, in context, to connect and leverage other learning outcomes data
- Students/student learning – New strategies emerge that deans, curriculum teams and faculty apply in course rooms and in teaching practices/approaches



Questions



Continue the dialogue

Contact us

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