

# Assessment 201: Moving From Assessment Fundamentals to Closing the Loop

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# Presentation Objectives

- Review basics of establishing assessment program for SA
- Discuss steps in moving forward to "Close the Loop"
- Highlight: Learning Outcomes for SA
- Your questions/dialogue throughout

# The Fundamentals: Establishing the SA Assessment Program

- Identify a coordinator
- Figure out what it is: learn from others
  - Define outcomes
  - Creating assessment plans
- Identify latent assessment and document
- Identify areas of need based on outcomes
- Train & empower your staff
  - Needs & sat first, climate & learning second
  - Use templates, forms as guides

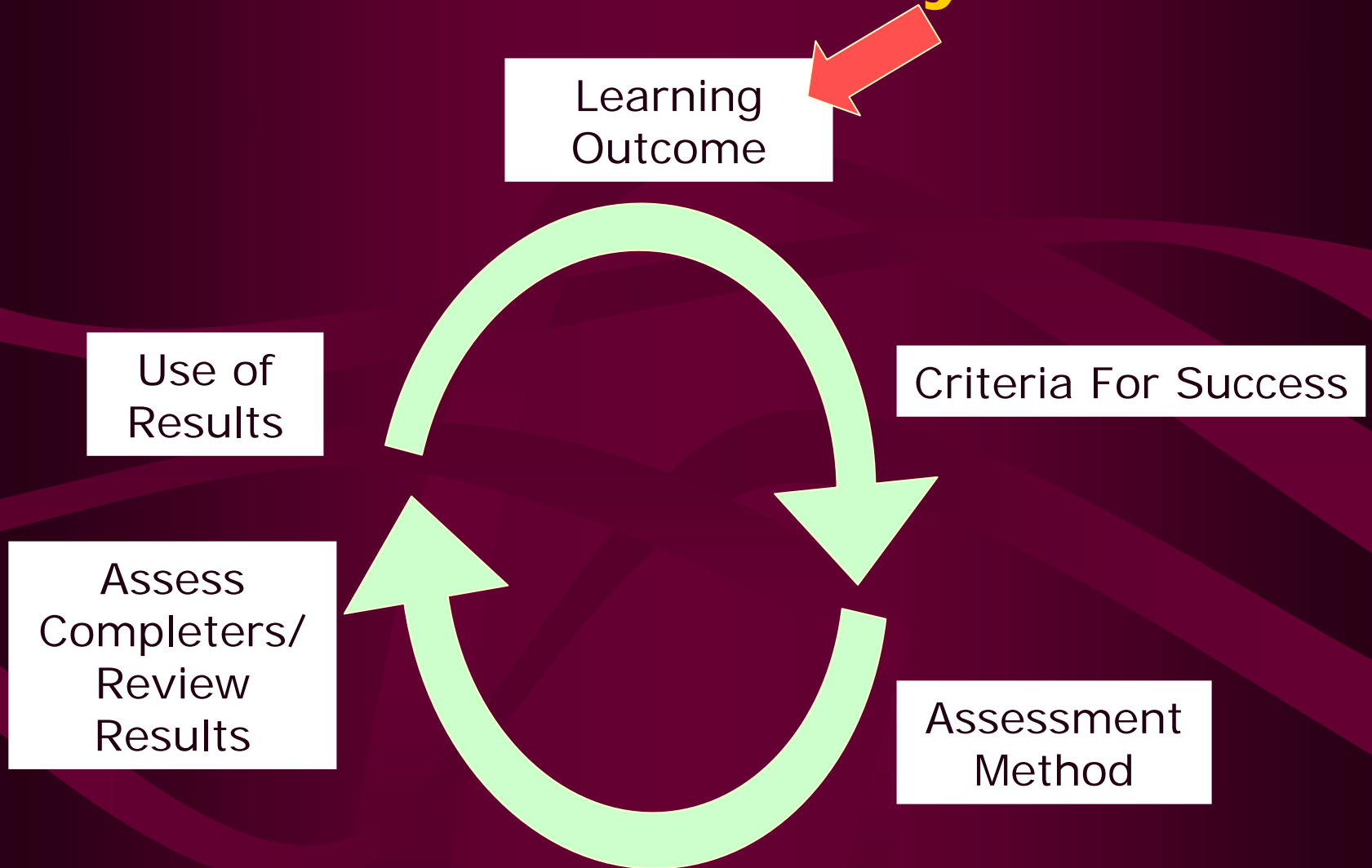
# Other Helpers for Establishing Assessment Foundation

- Consider “Big Box” National Surveys
  - EBI
  - NSSE
- Consider benchmarks conducted by assessment companies (e.g. StudentVoice)

# Closing the Loop. . .

How to get started

# Assessment Cycle



# Steps to Begin Closing the Loop

- 1. Review assessment plans
  - Helpful to do each year
  - Consider changes to goals/objectives, outcomes
  - Update as needed--circulate

# Steps to Begin Closing the Loop

- 2. Add/Amend Assessment Instruments
  - Review populations, methods, instruments
  - Do rubrics still possess inter-rater reliability?
  - Consider cross-collaborating on larger areas of interest (e.g. leadership)

# Steps to Begin Closing the Loop

- 3. Consider your reporting functions
  - What are you doing now? Does it work? Does staff follow through?
  - Add additional reporting functions to aid accountability
  - At the U: Director's Meeting presentations, Unit & Divisional Annual Reports, SAAER Website as central repository, Unit websites, conferencing, promotional material

# Steps to Begin Closing the Loop

- 4. Revisit your collaborations/working groups
  - Internal: Assessment Thinktank, Unit-level assessment teams (e.g. UCC, Career Services), “go-to” people in each unit
  - Institutional: work with UGS and OBIA, Accreditation Team/Institutional Assessment Team

# Steps to Begin Closing the Loop

- 5. Create/Enforce Accountability Mechanisms
  - Require submission of instrument, aggregate results & executive summary one month following project close date
    - Include: Project overview including sampling, method, reporting percentages; Data highlights; Action Steps
    - Post to Website/disseminate

# Steps to Begin Closing the Loop

- 6. Follow up discussion of action steps
  - In annual report each year
  - As assessment is repeated on annual cycle (or as appropriate)
  - In meetings of assessment committees, with supervisors etc
  - Use to embed a culture of assessment by sharing success stories!

# Steps to Begin Closing the Loop

- 7. Some micromanagement thoughts. . .
  - Assessment coordinator and supervisors should follow up with staff
  - Centralize project request process on website
  - Centralize data collection, reporting, housing as much as possible
  - Streamline data collection (online, pda)
  - Require electronic and hard copies
  - Create master matrix of all work, post to website—include outcomes addressed

# Successful Loop Closing!

- Academic Calendar survey
  - Amendments to academic calendar in '07
- Housing EBI
  - Implementation of residential community diversity initiatives
- Career Services Internship/Coop Survey
  - Data to employers/internship sponsors to increase technological and multicultural awareness opportunities for interns



# Highlight: Learning Outcomes for SA

# Learning Outcomes Defined

- Learning outcomes focus on measurable cognitive, behavioral and attitudinal development of students as they interact with your unit
- They are what students are expected to demonstrate in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes upon completion of an activity, program, etc.

# How Outcomes Differ: Learning v. Program/Process

- Programmatic outcomes focus on what you want your program or unit to do, achieve, or accomplish for its own improvement. Generally driven by needs/satisfaction.

# Why Study Learning Outcomes?

- Clarifies individual unit focus
- Guides strategy development (to attain desired outcomes)
- Clarifies unit fit with missions (SA & Institutional)
- Use data to collaborate across division, Academic Affairs & Institutional Analysis

## Why Study. . . continued

- Assists in development of appropriate assessment instruments/determines utility/need of external assessments
- Use data to improve student experience
- Clarifies to students and other stakeholders what they can expect to gain/for program to accomplish
- Complements existing data collection

# How to Write Learning Outcomes

- Find your guides: Missions, Strategic Plan, Bloom's Taxonomy, Learning Reconsidered, Extant Theory
- Identify skill sets, behaviors, attitudes
- Use Action Verbs! (list, describe, analyze, compare, apply)—what's your criteria for success? What would it 'look like'?
- Frame from student's perspective, NOT program's intent (e.g. Following completion of xyz, the student will be able to demonstrate. . . .)

# Examples of SA Learning Outcomes: UofU

- Students completing the Summer Bridge program will better understand how to apply stress management skills (Educational Opportunity Program)
- Students living on campus will be able to live more cooperatively with others (Housing & Residential Education)
- Student employees of the Union will be able to apply physical space utilization skills (Union)
- Students completing the admissions, registration and financial aid processes will better understand the importance of meeting University deadlines (Enrollment Management)

**Your questions and  
discussion topics. . . . ?**