Should We Assess LESS, MORE, or DIFFERENTLY?

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Spectrum of Assessment
Spectrum of Assessment

simple

complex

TRACKING USAGE

BENCHMARKING

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

SATISFACTION SURVEYS

PROGRAM REVIEW
Levels of Assessment
Levels of Assessment

- University
- Division
- Department/Team
- Program/Office
So, it looks like this...
Thinking about Assessment…

- First, what do you want to know?
- Second, what questions need to be asked?
- Third, what is the best way to gain the answers to these questions?
Part 1

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?
Possible “Whats”

- Process improvements
- Evidence of student learning
- Effective use of funds/resources
- Customer service/satisfaction
- Support for strategic goals
- Accreditation measures
- University requirements

…What bugs you? What needs attention?
Maybe Assess Less

- Eliminate “nice to know” information.
- Only gather information that you will be able to 1) collect, 2) analyze, and 3) use.
- If you aren’t doing anything with the results, stop collecting the data!
- Ask: How will we use the results?
- Use an assessment audit.
Part 2

WHAT QUESTIONS NEED TO BE ASKED?
Maybe Assess More

- What questions are critical for…
  - Program Success (Program Goals/Outcomes)
  - Department Success (Dept. Strategic Plan)
  - Divisional Success (VPSA Strategic Plan)
  - University Success (GRIP; UTSA Plans)

- Think of the questions in terms of measures…
  - What does success look like?
  - How would that be measured?
  - On-going process of continuous improvement
WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO GAIN THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS?
Maybe Assess Differently

- Alternate the timeframes, populations or use samples.
- Align measures with your program’s goals!
- Utilize technology.
- Use different methods such as interviews, reflections, rubrics, and visual images.
- Use surveys from other departments or develop joint projects.
- Use existing data and tools…
# Assessment Resources

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<td>Data Warehouse</td>
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<td>University Surveys</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.utsa.edu/ir/reports.html">http://www.utsa.edu/ir/reports.html</a></td>
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<td>Campus Labs</td>
<td>Survey, rubric development and administration.</td>
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</tr>
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<td>TracDat</td>
<td>Reporting on high-level measures.</td>
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The data warehouse is a collection of student data which can be accessed by authorized University Executives, Faculty, Staff, Administrators, and Researchers. The data warehouse was developed to provide the institution with the following benefits:

- **Tools To Combine Data Differently** – The data warehouse environment gives users a tool for looking at data differently. This tool allows decision makers to ask new questions and an opportunity to solve problems differently
- **End User Empowerment** – The warehouse empowers institutional decision makers by placing inquiry and analysis tools at their fingertips
- **Timely Information Access** – The data warehouse shortens the time span between user reporting data needs and information delivery giving decision makers instant access to historical (static) data through the use of adhoc query and reporting tools
- **Future Vision From Historical Trends** – Effective business analysis frequently includes forecasting and trending using historical multiple academic years, or terms, worth of data using various points in time—snapshots
UTSA Data Warehouse

Fours Areas of Assessment:

Student Terms

• Answers questions focused on student demographics during or across terms or academic years.
• Examples of variables through this template are: Admissions Nation, Admissions State, Age Group, Campus, Classification, Declared College, Declared Concentration, Declared Degree, Declared Department, Declared Major, Declared Minor, Declared Program, Ethnicity, Full or Part Time, Gender, High School, Completed College Level Credits, Credit Hours Semester SCH, Cumulative Completed College Level Credits, Cumulative Credit Hours Overall Completed, Cumulative Credit Hours Semester, FTE Total, GPA Cumulative Overall
UTSA Data Warehouse

Fours Areas of Assessment:

**Student Degrees**

- Answers questions focused on degrees awarded and student demographics associated with the awarded degrees during or across terms or academic years.
- Examples of variables through this template are: Awarded College, Awarded Concentration, Awarded Degree, Awarded Department, Awarded Major, Awarded Minor, Awarded Program, Degree Level, Ethnicity, Gender, High School
UTSA Data Warehouse

Fours Areas of Assessment:

Class Sections
• Answers questions focused on the course sections offered across terms or academic years.
• Examples of variables through this template are: College and Department, Course Level, Faculty Member, Instructional Mode, Location Building and Room, Section Number, Subject and Course, Average Class Capacity, Average Class size, Average Student Age, GPA, GPA Credits, Grade Points, Rate of Completion, Rate of Success, Semester Credit Hours, Student Contact Hours, Total Class Size, Total Withdrawals
UTSA Data Warehouse

_Fours Areas of Assessment:_

**Student Classes**

- Answers questions focused on student demographics and the classes they are taking across terms or academic years.
- Examples of variables through this template are: Grade, Retention End of Term Status, Retention Start of Term Status, Subject and Course (Subject, Level, Course Number and Section Number), Taking Flex Class, Credit Hours Attempted, Credit Hours Completed, Credit Hours Semester SCH, GPA, GPA Credits, Grade Points, Rate of Completion, Rate of Conclusion, Rate of Success, Times Retaken
UTSA Data Warehouse

*How can this be used to assess differently?*
Comparison analysis and assessment with the UTSA population

Scenario One: Compare the Overall UTSA Cumulative GPA with that of your program’s or specific population

Scenario Two: Compare the courses successfully (A-C) completed each semester with that of your program’s or specific population

Scenario Three: Compare the degrees awarded by ethnicity and gender for each semester with that of your program’s or specific population

Scenario Four: Enrollment of specific course sections for Space Utilization assessment
OIR Data Request

Metric data that is not already public (Institutional Research Publications) and cannot be retrieved by the Data Warehouse or WEBI can be requested from the Office of Institutional Research.

*Important Note:* The data that OIR can provide is comprehensive, but not all encompassing; *We will work with you on your request.*

Scenario One: How many students were part of our UTSA first time cohort who participated in a high school Outreach program?

Scenario Two: How many students earned a STEM degree who were awarded a specific UTSA general scholarship? How many years did they take?
Good News!

- You know the importance of assessment.
- You can change what you are doing.
- This is a continuous process...let go of the concepts of perfection and finality.
- The more meaningful the assessment, the more meaningful the results.
- You can share this with others now!
Scenario-what would you do?

Students were asked via survey if their employment in a department contributed to their professional development overall. All students said “yes” and 100% (=criterion met) was entered into TracDat. From an assessment point of view, what could the next steps be for this on-going (5-year) outcome: Students will understand how their employment assists them personally and professionally?
Scenario-what would you do?

Your department has gone through some transitions. New employees have joined your team and duties have been re-assigned across the function areas. It seems like you are assessing a lot, but there is no overall coordination to eliminate any duplication and ensure that the important questions are being addressed.
As a part of the UTSA summer orientations, your department makes a presentation about your services. After each session, a paper survey with 9 questions is administered. Totals for all questions are figured manually, with students averaging 91% correct answers for all surveys. (over 3,000 total respondents) Originally, the feedback was used to improve the presentations, but that is no longer the case. Results are not used/publicized in any other way.
Reflection Questions

- Do you think you need to assess less, more, or differently?

- What is one step that you will take to clarify your assessment direction?