



The Role of Assessment in Achieving Institutional Effectiveness

Assessment in Administrative and
Educational Support Services

Why Are We Doing This?

- Collect information through which services can be improved
- SACS reaffirmation



SACS Comprehensive Standard

Institutional Effectiveness

The institution

- identifies expected outcomes for its educational programs and its administrative and educational support services;
- assesses whether it achieves those outcomes;
- provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results.



AES Unit Assessment

Today's Discussion

1. Review the process of assessment as it relates to Administrative and Educational Support (AES) Services
2. Establish common terminology.
3. Determine “where we are” with respect to the level of implementation of assessment with AES units.



Administrative Units

- ☞ Units that provide services which maintain the institution and are essential to its operations, but do not have a direct impact on the institution's instructional programs, e.g.
 - Accounting Office
 - Office of the Registrar
 - Physical Plant



Educational Support Units

- ☞ Units that, while not primarily instructional in nature, contribute directly to student learning or instruction, e.g.
 - Academic Advising Center
 - Library
 - Information Technology
- ☞ Units that provide services that directly relate to the students and are part of the institution's overall learning environment.
 - Career Services Center
 - Minority Student Services



Overview of Assessment Process

1. Each Administrative and Educational Support (AES) Unit identifies what it intends to accomplish to support the Institutional Mission/Purpose.



Overview of Assessment Process

2. AES Unit assesses or measures the extent to which these objectives are being met
 - client satisfaction
 - external evaluations
 - direct measures of unit performance
 - assessment of student outcomes following receipt of service (i.e. what the student knows, thinks, or is able to do as a result of receiving the service).



Overview of Assessment Process

3. AES Unit uses results of assessment to improve services to students or other clientele.



Overview of Assessment Process

4. AES Unit “Closes the Loop” by
 - describing the use of results
 - documenting the use of results to improve services



Working Definition

- ➔ **AES Objectives** - Statements from an Administrative and Educational Support Unit that identify what it intends to accomplish to support the Institutional Mission/Purpose.



Administrative Units

- ☞ Objectives for Administrative Units are primarily “process oriented” and describe the support process or service which the unit intends to accomplish
 - Improve services to handicapped students
 - Monthly accounting reports to academic and administrative departments will be processed and distributed promptly
 - Transcript requests will be filled and returned promptly



Educational Support Units

- Objectives for Educational Support Units contain both “process” and “outcomes” oriented statements
- Outcomes oriented statements
 - Concern the unit’s direct impact upon students or clients served
 - Describe what the client will be able to do after receipt of the service



Educational Support Units

- ☞ Examples of Outcomes Oriented Objectives
 - Students will be able to utilize the library's reference services efficiently
 - Before their last semester in attendance at the institution, graduates seeking employment will prepare an acceptable resume for presentation to potential employers
 - Students will be proficient in logging on the the Internet through the academic computing center.



Additional Sample Objective Statements

☞ Outcome Statements

- Students will learn how to use library resources
- Graduates will have the ability to write a resume



Additional Sample Objective Statements

☞ Process Statements

- Library will be efficient in book acquisitions
- The number of workshops provided by the Career Center will increase
- The Accounting Office will promptly process vendor statements



Long List - Short List

- Identify a long list of administrative objectives supporting the activities described in the Unit Mission Statement
- From the long list, identify two or three objectives for assessment at any one time.



Long List - Short List

☞ Selected objectives should be

- targeted on those areas that the unit staff believe can be improved by using the currently available resources and personnel
- related to the service the unit provides
- relatively easy to assess within one assessment cycle
- directly under control of the AES unit



Working Definitions

- **Criteria for Success** - The benchmarks that the AES Unit set for the objective and against which the objective's performance is judged by the staff within the Unit.
- These criteria are most often stated in terms of percentages, percentiles, averages, or other quantitative measures.



Working Definitions

- **Means of Assessment** - the method, tool, or instrument used to determine whether (and/or the extent to which) the Objective's Criteria for Success have been achieved.



Example - Library

Administrative Objective

The Library will acquire adequate collections of information resources to support curriculum needs

Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success

— The acquisitions rate (as reported on the IPDES Library Survey) will be equal to or greater than the rate reported by peer institutions



Example - Library

Administrative Objective

The Library will acquire adequate collections of information resources to support curriculum needs

Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success

— Institutional faculty survey will indicate an average ranking of at least 3.5 (on a 5 point scale) on items related to satisfaction with library collections.

On no single item related to the library will satisfaction be reported as less than 3.0



Example - Library

Administrative Objective

Students will know how to use library resources

Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success

— 80% of freshmen students enrolled in UC 101 will locate 9 of the 10 resources explained in the Library Orientation workshop



Who Is Involved?

- ☞ The AES Unit Director or Head
 - leads staff in assessment planning, implementation, and service improvement
 - submits assessment plans for the unit
 - resists procrastination
 - avoids closing his or her office door and emerging with the assessment plan



Who Is Involved?

☞ Staff Members

- identify and select administrative objectives
- determine means of assessment
- determine criteria for success



Suggested Steps

☞ Formulating Unit Assessment Plan:

- 1) Establish a linkage to the Institution's Statement of Purpose.
- 2) Prepare the AES Unit Mission Statement
- 3) Formulate Administrative Objectives
- 4) Identify Unit Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success



Suggested Steps

☞ Moving from Planning to Implementation and Use of Results:

5) Conduct Assessment Activities

6) Document Use of Results for Service Improvements



Components of an Assessment Plan Report

- Reference to the institution's missions and goals and its support by the unit's mission statement
- Listing of administrative objectives
- Identification of means of assessment and criteria for success for each administrative objective
- Summary of the data actually collected when the planned assessment took place
- Description of how these data were used to improve services



Where to Begin

- ☞ Conduct inventory of existing assessment activities at the institution
 - survey research related to client-satisfaction measures
 - existing institutional level questionnaires or surveys of graduating students, alumni, etc.
 - services to design, produce, process, and analyze in-depth survey research connected with assessment of specific procedures.



Reference

☞ Information extracted from:

- The Department Head's Guide to Assessment Implementation in Administrative and Educational Support Units, James O. Nichols and Karen W. Nichols, Agathon Press, New York, 2000.

