



So who (and what) is it for?

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(SLO) Assessment for the rest of us

- Who does SLO assessment serve?
- How does it serve them?
- How does that fit with what (they say) they want?
- And how are those "who's" and "how's" interconnected?

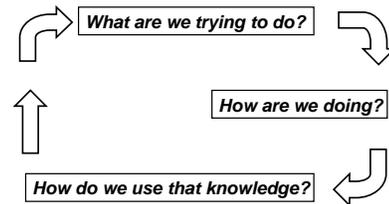
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Who does assessment serve?

- Faculty
- (Current) Students
 - And their parents
- Prospective students & their parents
- Graduates' employers
 - &/or Graduate-school mentors
- Administrators
 - Geneseo
 - SUNY
- Accreditors
- Legislators
 - & legislative bureaucracies

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Assessment is...



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Assessment is for...

- Program planning and improvement
- Accountability reporting – “Telling the story “
- Keep planning & improvement first!
 - Watch out for “accountability thinking” (e.g.: “assessment is only for reporting”)
- Information...
 - useful for planning helps you tell your story
 - just for reporting may or may not help planning & improvement

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Planning courses & programs

Knowledge / skills / abilities we want our students to have by the end of a segment, course, or program

- Or: “How clear are we about our desired learning outcomes?”

How the pieces work together

- Or: “Do we really have a program?”

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“Do we really have a program?” Looking across courses

Mapping the curriculum

- What do your courses indicate that your program outcomes are?
- What do your program outcomes mean for what should be in your courses?

Generates faculty discussion about

- ...what we want them to know & be able to do
- ...and what puzzles us about their learning

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“Are our learning outcomes clear?”

From the student perspective...

- “Will this be on the test?”

“What should I be able to do with this?”

- In other words:
 - Effective instructions
 - Effective feedback

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“Are our learning outcomes clear?”

From the faculty perspective...

- “Does this course address all the learning outcomes I planned for it?”
- “Where does it address each outcome?”

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“We give grades...”

Grades may...

- Collapse information about several learning outcomes
- Reflect other aspects of student performance

	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	
Outcome 1	A	A	B	A	A-
Outcome 2	C	B	D	C	C
Outcome 3	B	A	B	A	B+
	B	A-	C	B+	

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Making the information more specific

“I know good work when I see it”

- How? What do you look for?
- Sorting into piles for grading = implicit rubric

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Making the information more specific

An outcomes-based approach to grading

- Separate grades/ratings for each outcome/aspect
- Rubrics to make the categories explicit

For faculty members

- Consistency
- Easy to explain

For students

- More effective *formative* feedback

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Which outcomes?

“Whatever helps me get a job”

- Public opinion: “Getting a good job” is the most important reason to:
 - Go to college
 - Choose a particular college
- Legislative/DOE focus on:
 - Graduates’ employment rates & initial earnings
 - Competency-based programs

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What do employers want?

- Critical thinking
- Clear communication
- Ethical judgment and integrity
- Ability to
 - solve complex problems,
 - locate, organize, and evaluate information from multiple sources, and
 - work with colleagues, customers, and/or clients from diverse cultural backgrounds

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What do employers want?

- Demonstrated application of these skills, in:
 - Collaborative projects
 - Internships & other workplace experiences
 - Community & workplace engagement

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What do employers want?

- ...but they don’t necessarily mean the same things faculty do. E.g., for employers...
 - Critical thinking & problem-solving =
 - Identify the right problem(s) to solve, identify new solutions
 - “On their feet” – i.e.: use these skills in real-world situations
 - Clear communication =
 - “On their feet,”
 - ...to a range of audiences & backgrounds

Implication:
Include employers in assessment planning

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What about discipline-specific knowledge & skills?

Graduate programs view these things in the context of the discipline

- Demonstrated discipline-specific knowledge & skills (grades, courses taken, GRE scores)
- Discipline-specific communication
- Hands-on experience (demonstrated ability to use discipline-specific skills/knowledge)
 - Research, internships, practicums, etc.

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Telling the story

Your audiences want to know

- “What will
 - I experience as a student here?
 - I / my child / my constituents get from being here?”
- “Will that be what I / they need?”
- “Do you really pay attention to how it’s going?”

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Telling the story

“We do pay attention to how it’s going!” Here’s:

- How we’re doing
- How we know
- What we do/did as a result

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Telling the story to SUNY

General education areas

Knowledge & Skills	
Mathematics	Other World Civilizations
Natural Sciences	Humanities
Social Sciences	Arts
American History	Foreign Language
Western Civilization	Basic Communication
Competencies	
Critical Thinking	Information Management

Telling the story to Middle States

Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment)

- Develop key goals
- Assess achievement of those goals
- Use the results to improve programs & services

Standard 14 (Assessment of Student Learning)

- Develop clear learning outcomes
- Design relevant courses, programs, & experiences
- Assess student achievement of the outcomes
- Use the results to improve teaching & learning

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“But it’s extra work...”

- ...and different from what we already do
 - It may be more explicit, but it’s not fundamentally different
- Can’t somebody else do it?

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Take-aways

- Who are the audiences and what do they want to know?
- We really do pay attention to how it’s going
- Can I use the information for program planning?
- You already know how to do this
- Watch out for “accountability thinking”

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Finishing up

The handout, with live updated links, is online at

- http://higheredassessment.com/presentations/geneseo2013_keynote.pdf

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Resources & References

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General resources

- *Internet Resources for Higher Education Outcomes Assessment*
 - Large “meta-list” of links, maintained at North Carolina State University.
 - <http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/archives/assmt/resource.htm> -- or simply Google *outcomes assessment*.
 - The links are annotated, so you can use your browser’s (F)ind function to search for entries that include specific words such as “general education” or “survey.”
- “How to” books on assessing academic programs
 - P. Maki (2010). *Assessing for Learning: Building a sustainable commitment across the institution*. 2nd edition. Stylus Publishing, Sterling VA.
 - L. Suskie (2009). *Assessing Student Learning: A common sense guide*. 2nd edition. Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco.
 - B. E. Walvoord (2004). *Assessment Clear and Simple: A practical guide for institutions, departments, and general education*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.
- Examples of assessment in individual disciplines
 - Many of the individual institutions’ assessment pages available from the *Internet Resources* meta-list include discipline-specific assessment plans. A few institutions have also made lists of examples by discipline. These can be a good place to start. Links to them are at the top of the *Internet Resources* meta-list’s section on “*Assessment of specific skills or content*.”
 - T. W. Banta, et al (1996). *Assessment in Practice: Putting Principles to Work on College Campuses*. Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco.
 - T. W. Banta, E. A. Jones, & K. E. Black (2009). *Designing effective assessment: Principles and profiles of good practice*. Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco. Chapters 6 (*Undergraduate academic majors profiles*) & 13 (*Graduate program profiles*).
 - C. A. Palomba & T. W. Banta (Eds., 2001). *Assessing Student Competence in Accredited Disciplines*. Stylus Publishing, Sterling VA.
 - The Association for Institutional Research’s (AIR) series on *assessment in the disciplines* includes volumes on assessment of business, chemistry, engineering, mathematics, & writing-across-the-curriculum programs (<http://www.airweb.org/EducationAndEvents/Publications/eLibrary/Pages/default.aspx>).

Slide #5: Assessment is for...

- In the ASSESS discussion-list archive (<http://lsv.uky.edu/scripts/wa.exe?A0=ASSESS>) see the June 2010 posts on *Balancing assessment* and *Balancing assessment, etc etc*. (These came out of, and include other posts from, a thread on what details SACS wants. Scroll down to Michael Johnson’s comments, which starts the “balancing” discussion.)
- T. Banta, Can assessment for accountability complement assessment for improvement? *Peer Review*, Spring 2007, http://www.aacu.org/peerreview/pr-sp07/pr-sp07_analysis2.cfm.
- R.L. Swing & C.S. Coogan (May 2010). Valuing assessment: Cost-benefit considerations. NILOA Occasional Paper, <http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/occasionalpaperfive.htm> (pdf file). See especially their discussion of evaluating the benefits of assessment activities, pp. 11ff.
- C.M. Wehlburg (Mar-Apr 2013). “Just right” outcomes assessment: A fable for higher education. *Assessment Update*, vol25 no2, pp. 1-2, 15. (*Assessment Update* is available online through Milne Library.)

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Slide #7: “Do we really have a program?”: Looking across courses

- Curriculum maps (*courses*outcomes matrix*)
 - See Chapter 5 (*Assessment Plans: Step 3: Connecting objectives to curriculum*) in the University of Arkansas at Little Rock’s *Assessment Handbook for Degree Programs* (<http://ualr.edu/assessment/index.php/home/assessment-handbook-core-courses-and-general-education/degree-programs/>).
 - See *Create a curriculum map* in the University of Hawai’i at Manoa’s *Assessment How-to* (<http://manoa.hawaii.edu/assessment/howto/>)
 - Utah State University’s academic department assessment websites show several ways to map the connections between learning outcomes and specific courses.
 - *Chemistry’s* matrix (<http://www.chem.usu.edu/files/uploads/Assessment/matrix.pdf>, pdf file) and *Biology’s* table (<http://www.biology.usu.edu/hm/assessment/objective-courses/>) indicate which courses contribute to each outcome.
 - *Art’s* table indicates which courses contribute to each outcome, how the outcomes are assessed, and recent assessment results (<http://art.usu.edu/index.php?page=mapping>).
 - *Theatre Arts’s* matrices indicates the extent to which each course contributes to an outcome (<http://theatre.usu.edu/assessment/mapping.cfm>, a pdf file for each program).
 - *Computer Science’s* matrix indicates both whether a course contributes to an outcome and the level at which students are expected to demonstrate the outcome (http://www.cs.usu.edu/files/uploads/Mapping_L_Objectives.pdf, pdf file).
 - SUNY Geneseo Department of Philosophy (<https://wiki.geneseo.edu/display/acadassess/Philosophy>)
- Chapter 3 (*Outcomes: Articulating our learning expectations*) in A. Driscoll & S. Wood’s *Developing outcomes-based assessment for learner-centered education: A faculty introduction* (Stylus Publishing, 2007, pp 49-73) is a very readable description of how the process worked at one university.
- See Chapter 4 in Maki’s *Assessing for Learning* (2nd ed) on designing assessment around research questions about your students’ learning.

Slide #9: Are our learning outcomes clear?”: From the faculty perspective...

- Chapter 8 (*Alignment*) in Driscoll & Wood’s *Developing outcomes-based assessment for learner-centered education*; the example in the slide is on p. 163.

Slides #10-12: “We give grades...”

Making the information more specific

- See the “*Grades as outcomes assessment*” section of the *Internet Resources* meta-list, and pp. 10-11 in Suskie’s *Assessing Student Learning* (2nd ed).
- The University of Hawai’i-Manoa’s assessment workshop *What’s Good Enough? Setting Standards* (<http://manoa.hawaii.edu/assessment/workshops/>, scroll down to this workshop).
- Books & articles on rubric-based grading & assessment
 - *Assessment Update* (available online through Milne Library)
 - Greville, E. C. (Sept-Oct 2009) A rose by any other name: Grading and assessment. *Assessment Update*, vol21 no5, pp 1-2, 13.
 - Bengiamin, N. N. & Leimer, C. (Sept-Oct 2012) SLO-based grading makes assessment an integral part of teaching. *Assessment Update*, vol24 no5, pp 1-2, 15-16.

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- M. E. Huba & J. E. Freed (2000). *Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses*. Allyn & Bacon, Boston.
- B. E. Walvoord & V. J. Anderson (2009). *Effective Grading: A Tool for Learning and Assessment*. 2nd edition. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.
- Resources about *rubrics* for evaluating student work products and exam responses. See:
 - The *Internet Resources* meta-list section on *Assessment Rubrics*.
 - Chapter 9 in Suskie's *Assessing Student Learning* (2nd ed) and pp 219-253 in Maki's *Assessing for Learning* (2nd ed)
 - Some useful suggestions for constructing rubrics:
 - J. Popham (Oct. 1997). What's wrong – and what's right – with rubrics? *Educational Leadership*, V55 No.2, pp 72-75 (<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct97/vol55/num02/What%27s-Wrong%E2%80%94and-What%27s-Right%E2%80%94with-Rubrics.aspx>).
 - R. Tierney & M. Simon (2004). What's still wrong with rubrics? Focusing on the consistency of performance criteria across scale levels. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation* (<http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=9&n=2>).
 - Examples of rubrics for theses and dissertations
 - See B. Lovitts (2007). *Making the Implicit Explicit: Creating performance expectations for the dissertation*. Stylus Publishing, Sterling VA. (A brief version of her main argument, which doesn't include the rubrics, is *Making the implicit explicit: Faculty's performance expectations for the dissertation*, Ch. 6 in P. L. Maki & N. A. Borkowski [2006], *The assessment of doctoral education: Emerging criteria and new models for improving outcomes*. Stylus Publishing. Pp 163-187.)
 - Catholic University of America: *Comprehensive exam and thesis rubrics* (<http://pir.cua.edu/learning-outcomes/faculty-resources/rubrics.cfm>)

Slide #13: Which outcomes?

- *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2013 Almanac: *Backgrounds and beliefs of college freshmen* (<http://chronicle.com/article/BackgroundsBeliefs-of/136771>, select *In deciding to go to college, how important of a reason was being able to get a better job?* from the drop-down menu) The *Chronicle* is available online through Milne Library. See *Facts & Figures* for the Almanac.
- The Obama administration's August 2013 "ratings" proposal
 - *Inside Higher Ed* overview (<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/08/22/president-obama-proposes-link-student-aid-new-ratings-colleges>)
 - *Chronicle* overview with links to the president's SUNY-Buffalo speech and *related content* commentary (<http://chronicle.com/article/Obama-Plan-to-Tie-Student-Aid/141229/>, available online through Milne library).

Slides #14-16: What do employers want?

- AAC&U survey reports:
 - 2010: *Raising the bar: Employers' views on college learning in the wake of the economic downturn* (http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/2009_EmployerSurvey.pdf)
 - 2013: *It takes more than a major: Employer priorities for college learning and student success* (<http://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation/le-sp13/hartresearchassociates.cfm>)
- *Chronicle of Higher Education* 6/17/13 article *Giving employers what they don't really want* (<http://chronicle.com/article/Giving-Employers-What-They/139877/>, available online through Milne Library).

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Slide #17: What about discipline-specific knowledge & skills?

- American Psychological Association gradPSYCH online magazine articles, Nov 2007:
 - *What do graduate programs look for in clinical applicants?* (<http://www.apa.org/gradpsych/2007/11/cover-gradprograms.aspx>)
 - *Standing out as a “bench science” student* (<http://www.apa.org/gradpsych/2007/11/cover-bench.aspx>)
- J. C. Correa, A. J. Kaiser, N. J. Richardson, & E. J. Fox (Winter 2007) *Perceptions of Graduate Admission Directors: Undergraduate Student Research Experiences: "Are All Research Experiences Rated Equally?" Eye on Psi Chi, vol11 no2*, pp. 22-24 (this is a Word document: http://reason.luther.edu/touslo01/assets/how_ug_research_experiences_evaluated_by_grad_prog_directors.doc)

**Slides #20 & 21: Telling the story to SUNY
Telling the story to Middle States**

- SUNY: *Guidelines for the approval of State University general education requirement courses* (http://www.suny.edu/provost/academic_affairs/files/assessment/GenedCourseGuidelines_20120406_20120416112121_120052.pdf); also see the *General Education Assessment Review (GEAR) Group* section in http://www.suny.edu/provost/academic_affairs/assessment.cfm)
- Middle States: *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Requirements of Affiliation and Standards for Accreditation* (<http://www.msche.org/publications/CHX-2011-WEB.pdf>)
 - *Standard 7*: pp 25-30, see especially *Fundamental Elements* (p 28)
 - *Standard 14*: pp 63-68, see especially *Fundamental Elements* (pp 66-67)

TV & Movie Images

- **Slide #1**: Festivus gathering, from the *Seinfeld* 12/18/97 episode *The Strike*.
 - Information about Festivus, including the episode script, is available at <http://www.festivusweb.com/>.
- **Slide #3**
 - Imperial Troopers, from *Star Wars* (1997)
 - Russell Crowe as Inspector Javert, *Les Miserables* (2012)
- **Slide #8**
 - Poster for *National Lampoon's Animal House* (1978)
 - Eddie Redmayne as Maruis, & other student revolutionaries, *Les Miserables* (2012)
- **Slide #11**: Basil Rathbone (Holmes), Nigel Bruce (Watson), Ida Lupino (Ann Brandon); *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1939)
- **Slide #16**: Strother Martin as the Captain, *Cool Hand Luke* (1967)
 - “What we have here is failure to communicate”: #11 in the American Film Institute's *100 Greatest Movie Quotes*: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AFI%27s_100_Years..._100_Movie_Quotes.
- **Slide 22**
 - Charlie Chaplin & Chester Conklin, *Modern Times* (1935)
 - Jim Carter as Mr. Carson, & other *Downton Abbey* staff