ASSESSMENT PLANNING FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS:

A PRACTICAL WORKBOOK

University Office of Evaluation and Educational Effectiveness
**Arizona State University**
October 2009

INTRODUCTION

In today's workshop, we will not focus on the nature and purpose of program assessment.

We will focus on the practical steps involved in developing an assessment plan for an academic program. At the end of this workshop, you will have developed the core components of an assessment plan, and will have the skills to complete the process with your faculty.

If you are interested in background information on program assessment, please visit www.asu.edu/oue/assessment.

For today's activity, we will begin from the position that ongoing participation in the assessment system is required for all academic programs (major, minor, certificate) at ASU.

Program assessment is an ongoing process that occurs throughout the academic year and across multiple academic years. There are several stages to the process. Today's workshop will focus on the assessment planning stage.
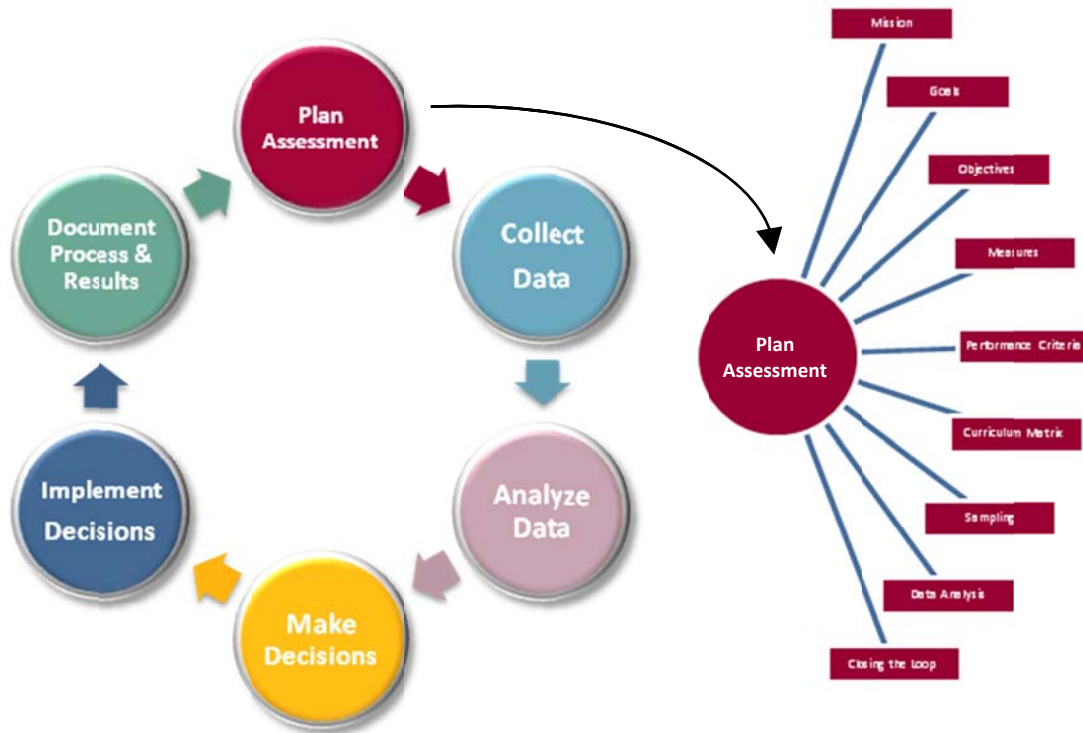
The assessment planning stage is the most complex and time-consuming stage of program assessment, but good planning is a necessary foundation.

Let's begin working through the assessment planning stage together. The practical exercise that follows will include examples for a fictitious program, a Master of Science in Justice and Policy Studies (MS JPS). Our program is in a fictitious department, Justice Administration (JA), in a fictitious college, the College of Public Administration (CPA).

The college, department, and program may have similarities to some at ASU, but those similarities are unintentional. No documents or activities from any actual ASU college, department, or program were used in the preparation of this workbook.

We will use examples from the MS JPS to illustrate the steps involved in assessment planning. For each step, space is provided for you to draft the same component for your academic discipline.

PROGRAM MISSION

It is important to have a mission or purpose statement for the program. The program's mission will guide the development of program outcomes.

The program mission must have a clear connection to the mission statements of the University, the college, the department, and/or the school.

An outsider who reads your program mission statement and those of the department, college, and University, should have a clear understanding of why the program exists and the purpose it aims to serve. He should also be able to see the relationships among the various mission statements.

University Mission Statement (ASU Design Imperatives)

1. ASU must embrace its cultural, socioeconomic, and physical setting: leveraging place
2. ASU must become a force, and not only a place: societal transformation
3. A culture of academic enterprise: ASU as knowledge entrepreneur
4. Pasteur's principle: use-inspired research
5. A focus on the individual: outcome-determined excellence / a commitment to intellectual and cultural diversity
6. Intellectual fusion: interdisciplinary / multidisciplinary / transdisciplinary / postdisciplinary
7. Social embeddedness: public service / community engagement / outreach
8. Global engagement: transnational / transcultural

College of Public Administration Mission Statement

The College of Public Administration (CPA) prepares students for public service careers in the not-for-profit and public sectors. The College strives to uphold the highest ideals of ethical and responsible public service and seeks to produce public leaders and managers who will exemplify those values in their professional practice. The administration and faculty of the College are committed to teaching, research, and social engagement that support and serve our local, regional, national, and global communities.

Does the CPA Mission Statement support the ASU Design Imperatives? The CPA Mission Statement supports most of the ASU Design Imperatives. It might also be considered to give greater emphasis to some Design Imperatives than others. If you review the Mission Statements of all ASU colleges, you will find that each gives particular emphasis to those Design Imperatives most related to its college-specific purpose; you will also find that, overall, the University's colleges support the overall mission communicated in the Design Imperatives.

   ✓ ASU must embrace its cultural, socioeconomic, and physical setting: leveraging place
   ✓ ASU must become a force, and not only a place: societal transformation
   ✖ A culture of academic enterprise: ASU as knowledge entrepreneur

- ✔ Pasteur's principle: use-inspired research
- ✔ A focus on the individual: outcome-determined excellence / a commitment to intellectual and cultural diversity
- **?** Intellectual fusion: interdisciplinary / multidisciplinary / transdisciplinary / postdisciplinary
- ✔ Social embeddedness: public service / community engagement / outreach
- ✔ Global engagement: transnational / transcultural

Department of Justice Administration Mission Statement

The Department of Justice Administration (JA) prepares students for professional careers in the criminal justice, social justice, and other law-related fields. The JA department provides its students a comprehensive and multidisciplinary education in the social, behavioral, historic, legal, and administrative aspects of the American system of justice. At the core of each JA academic program is the study and application of ethics-based decision making so that graduates are prepared to serve as ethical and responsible practitioners and leaders at the local, regional, or national levels in their chosen careers.

> *Does the department mission statement support the college mission statement?* The JA mission statement supports the elements of the CPA Mission Statement. It might also be considered to give greater emphasis to some elements than others. If you review the mission statements of the other departments in this college, you might find that each gives particular emphasis to those mission elements most related to its college-specific purpose; you will also find that, overall, the CPA departments support the overall mission communicated in the CPA mission statement.

- ✔ prepares students for public service careers in the not-for-profit and public sectors.
- ✔ strives to uphold the highest ideals of ethical and responsible public service
- ✔ seeks to produce public leaders and managers who will exemplify those values in their professional practice.
- ✔ teaching, research, and social engagement that support and serve our local, regional, national, and global communities.

Master of Science in Justice and Policy Studies Program Mission Statement

The mission of the MS in Justice and Policy Studies program is to educate the justice system's future leaders, policy makers, and practitioners. The MS JPS program provides a high-quality education in the history and foundations of the American system of justice as well as the current legal, social, ethical, and administrative skills necessary in an increasingly complex society. MS JPS graduates are prepared for further study at the doctoral level or in law school, or for employment in the justice profession as researchers, administrators, or law enforcement officers.

> *Does the MS JPS Mission Statement support the JA Mission Statement?* The MS JPS Mission Statement supports the elements of the JA Mission Statement. It might also be considered to give greater emphasis to some elements than others. If you review the

mission statements of the other programs in this department, you might find that each gives particular emphasis to those mission elements most related to its program-specific purpose; you will also find that, overall, the JA programs support the overall mission communicated in the JA mission statement.

- ✓ prepares students for professional careers in the criminal justice, social justice, and other law-related fields
- ✓ provides students a comprehensive and multidisciplinary education
- ✓ in the social, behavioral, historic, legal, and administrative aspects of the American system of justice.
- ✓ study and application of ethics-based decision making
- ✓ graduates are prepared to serve as ethical and responsible practitioners and leaders
- ✓ local, regional, or national levels in their chosen careers.

Use the space below to write your college's mission statement

_____

_____

_____

_____

Does your college mission statement support ASU's mission statement? Check each ASU Design Imperative supported by your college's mission statement.

____ ASU must embrace its cultural, socioeconomic, and physical setting: leveraging place

____ ASU must become a force, and not only a place: societal transformation

____ A culture of academic enterprise: ASU as knowledge entrepreneur

____ Pasteur's principle: use-inspired research

____ A focus on the individual: outcome-determined excellence / a commitment to intellectual and cultural diversity

____ Intellectual fusion: interdisciplinary / multidisciplinary / transdisciplinary / postdisciplinary

____ Social embeddedness: public service / community engagement / outreach

____ Global engagement: transnational / transcultural

Use the space below to write your school or department's mission statement

_____

_____

_____

_____

Does your school/department mission statement support your college's mission statement? Return to the college mission statement you wrote on the previous page and underline those elements that are supported by your school/department mission statement.

What graduate program in your department or school will you use for today's exercise? Please list the program below

_____

Use the space below to write the mission statement for this program.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Does the program mission statement above support your school/department mission statement? Return to the school/department mission statement you wrote on the previous page and underline those elements that are supported by the program mission statement above.

PROGRAM GOALS

What goals do faculty have for program graduates three to five years after graduation? Some examples are:

- Further academic study (admission to graduate/professional school)
- Employed in field of study
- Professional licensure/certification
- Contribution to scholarship of the discipline (research, publication, teaching)

Program goal for the MS JPS program:

Graduates of the MS JPS program will be employed as effective and ethical police administrators.

Use the space below to list two or three long term program goals for your program.

_____

_____

_____

Do the goals above support the program mission statement? Return to the program mission statement you wrote on the previous page and underline those elements that are supported by the program goals above

Choose one program goal from the list above that you will use for this exercise. You and your faculty may decide to use the other program goals as you develop your full assessment plan. You may also decide to revise the list or add other program goals not listed above.

Program goal for your program:

_____

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Program outcomes are the intended learning outcomes of an academic program. They are the answers to the question, "What should program graduates know and be able to do?" Another way to think of program outcomes is the set of knowledge and skills program graduates will need if they are to achieve the long term goals you have for them.

Examples of knowledge and skill areas are shown in the table below. You might identify others that are appropriate for your academic discipline.

Knowledge	Skills
Content knowledge	Research methods
Theory	Problem solving
	Critical thinking
	Oral/written communication
	Application of theory/knowledge
	Analysis

Program faculty should identify at least three, and not more than seven, program outcomes during a single assessment cycle. Programs with more than seven important outcomes, particularly those specified by an external accrediting body, should divide those into subsets for consideration across two or more assessment cycles.

For today's exercise, we will develop a single program outcome in support of the long term goal you identified for your program.

There are several important guidelines to consider when writing program outcomes.

1. *Flow directly from, and support, the program mission.* Think about the program mission statement you wrote previously. The connection to that mission (and those of the department/school, college, and University) should be evident in your program outcomes.

2. *Relate directly to the academic discipline and reflect the knowledge & skills students should acquire.* It can be tempting to write program outcomes that are based on knowledge or skills that are important, but may not be attributable to the curricular content of the program. It is very common to see program outcomes that emphasize writing or critical thinking. Everyone would agree that these are important skills, but students ordinarily acquire those skills across an undergraduate curriculum as general education outcomes. Are they directly attributable to learning acquired in your program? You may consider writing or critical thinking to be very important for graduates of your program. If so, think

about how you expects student to demonstrate those skills within the context of your academic discipline.

Consider the example below.

Weak	Better
Graduates of the MS in Justice and Policy Studies program will be critical thinkers	Graduates of the MA JPS program will analyze a current issue in criminal justice, evaluate evidence, and construct an argument

3. *Must be observable and measurable.* Focus on observable behaviors rather than what students know, think, understand, appreciate, etc. We cannot measure what students know or understand, but we can measure how well they demonstrate evidence of knowledge or understanding.

Consider the example below.

Weak	Better
Graduates of the MS JPS program will understand the 4th Amendment to the Constitution.	Graduates of the MS JPS program will analyze a search and seizure issue from a current court case.

4. *Focus on knowledge & skills graduates should possess rather than curriculum design, department resources, faculty characteristics, or instructional methods.*

Consider the example below.

Input Focused	Outcome Focused
Faculty will improve their content knowledge through participation in professional development activities. OR Department labs will be equipped with state-of-the-art instruments.	Graduates of the Art History program will analyze the religious and political influences on 18th century European artists.

5. *Consider external standards such as accreditation or certification standards, but they often focus on curriculum design or other inputs rather than student outcomes.*

Consider the example below.

External Standard	Outcome Aligned with Standard
American Bar Association Standard 704. TECHNOLOGICAL CAPACITIES: A law school shall have the technological capacities adequate for its current program of legal education and for program anticipated changes.	Graduates of the Juris Doctor program will demonstrate effective use of technology in legal research.

6. *Write program outcomes that do not combine multiple outcomes in a single statement.*

Consider the example below.

Multiple outcomes (5)	Single outcome (1)
Graduates of the psychology program will be **lifelong learners** who **understand the concepts of psychology** and can **apply those concepts** to **design** and **conduct research studies.**	Graduates of the psychology program will be **able to design a research study**.

Are program outcomes for undergraduate and graduate programs different?

The choice of program outcomes for your assessment plans should always be guided by your program mission and long term goals for your graduates. Program faculty may identify program outcomes that seem appropriate for both an undergraduate program and a graduate program in the department, yet believe that it is important to differentiate between the two levels of study. We recommend choosing from the following options.

- Select different cognitive levels for undergraduate and graduate program outcomes that express your expectations of students. For example, you might define an undergraduate program outcome at Bloom's comprehension level and a graduate program outcome at the evaluation level. A table of verbs for the cognitive domain levels of Bloom's taxonomy is shown later in this section.
- Use the same program outcome for an undergraduate and a graduate program, but identify different measures for students in the two programs. You might decide to use multiple choice exam items or a short constructed response question for the undergraduate measure and a complex project or comprehensive exam question for the graduate measure.
- Use the same program outcome and same measure for both the undergraduate and graduate programs, but develop one rubric for use in scoring undergraduate work and another for use in scoring graduate work. For example, you might develop a complex test question for use on the final exam in an undergraduate capstone course and for use as a master's level comp question. Because you expect more

complexity and sophistication in your master's students' responses, you would write separate scoring rubrics for students at the two levels.
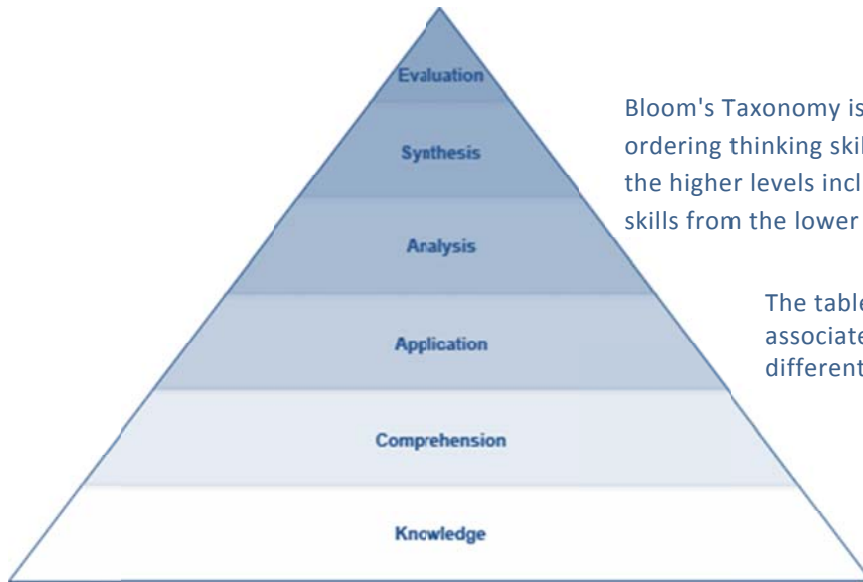
Bloom's Taxonomy is a hierarchical system of ordering thinking skills from lower to higher, with the higher levels including all of the cognitive skills from the lower levels.

The table below contains samples of verbs associated with student response at the different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Bloom's Taxonomy of learning. Adapted from: Bloom, B.S. (Ed.) (1956) Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals. Handbook I, cognitive domain. New York ; Toronto: Longmans, Green.

| | | | Critical Thinking | | |
Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Count	Associate	Add	Analyze	Categorize	Appraise
Define	Compute	Apply	Arrange	Combine	Assess
Describe	Convert	Calculate	Breakdown	Compile	Compare
Draw	Defend	Change	Combine	Compose	Conclude
Identify	Discuss	Classify	Design	Create	Contrast
Label	Distinguish	Complete	Detect	Drive	Criticize
List	Estimate	Compute	Develop	Design	Critique
Match	Explain	Demonstrate	Diagram	Devise	Determine
Name	Extend	Discover	Differentiate	Explain	Grade
Outline	Extrapolate	Divide	Discriminate	Generate	Interpret
Point	Generalize	Examine	Illustrate	Group	Judge
Quote	Give examples	Graph	Infer	Integrate	Justify
Read	Infer	Interpolate	Outline	Modify	Measure
Recall	Paraphrase	Manipulate	Point out	Order	Rank
Recite	Predict	Modify	Relate	Organize	Rate
Recognize	Rewrite	Operate	Select	Plan	Support
Record	Summarize	Prepare	Separate	Prescribe	Test
Repeat		Produce	Subdivide	Propose	
Reproduce		Show	Utilize	Rearrange	
Select		Solve		Reconstruct	
State		Subtract		Related	
Write		Translate		Reorganize	
		Use		Revise	
				Rewrite	
				Summarize	
				Transform	
				Specify	

Exercise: Develop a program outcome

In this exercise, we will draft program outcomes for the MS JPS program and evaluate them using the six guidelines we saw earlier. We will finalize a single outcome for this program, then give you an opportunity to develop a program outcome for your program.

Step One: Review a long term program goal and think about the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare your students to achieve that goal. Let's start by reviewing our long term goal for MS JPS graduates.

Graduates of the MS JPS program will be employed as police administrators.

Step Two: Review the examples of knowledge and skill areas on Page 10 of this workbook and jot down a few ideas about the kinds of knowledge and skills program graduates might need. All of them are important for our MS JPS program goal of employment as police administrators.

Knowledge	Skills
✓ Content knowledge	✓ Research methods
✓ Theory	✓ Problem solving
	✓ Critical thinking
	✓ Oral/written communication
	✓ Application of theory/knowledge
	✓ Analysis

What are some examples of the kinds of knowledge and skills MS JPS graduates will need if they are to become police administrators?

- Knowledge of criminal law (statutory)
- Knowledge of criminal procedure (constitutional)
- Knowledge of social and behavioral factors related to crime
- Knowledge of organizational management
- Knowledge of best practices in personnel management
- Knowledge of budgeting and accounting practices
- Ability to apply the knowledge areas above to:
  - solve complex problems related to law enforcement administration
  - analyze existing or proposed policies related to personnel or enforcement practices
  - write personnel and enforcement policies that are legally defensible, socially acceptable, and highly effective
  - communicate and gain stakeholder support for policies
  - evaluate effectiveness of policies for continuous improvement

We've identified several knowledge and skill areas for just one goal. Imagine how many more there would be for the other long term goals we would likely create for the MS JPS program. Identifying only three to seven program outcomes can seem like an impossible task if we don't follow this systematic approach.

For today's exercise, we will focus on a single skill: the ability to write good enforcement policies.

Step Three: Draft a program outcome that identifies the knowledge or skills program graduates should possess. Evaluate the draft using the six guidelines, and revise until all six guidelines have been met.

Draft program outcome:

MS JPS graduates who enter the law enforcement profession will have high clearance rates for their investigations.

Guidelines	Are the guidelines met?
Support program mission.	☒ High clearance rates are important to any law enforcement agency, but unrelated to the MS JPS program mission. *Remember to base each program outcome on a long term goal to ensure consistency with program mission.*
Directly related to discipline	☒ The MS JPS program trains its students in criminal justice administration, not investigative techniques.
Observable and measurable	☑ Crime statistics are readily available through a number of public sources.
Focused on outcomes rather than inputs	☑ Solving crimes and closing cases is an outcome rather than a curricular input.
Consider external standards, if any	☑ No accreditation standards apply.
Avoid combining multiple outcomes	☑ This is a single outcome.

Draft program outcome (second draft, or more if needed)

MS JPS graduates will apply knowledge of social, behavioral and constitutional issues to develop well-written policies that are legally defensible and socially acceptable to key stakeholders.

Guidelines	Are the guidelines met?
Support program mission.	☑ This outcome is directly related to our long term goal, so we know that it supports the program mission
Directly related to discipline	☑ This outcome is directly related to Justice and Policy Studies
Observable and measurable	☑ There are many ways in which faculty can ask students to demonstrate their constitutional knowledge and policy-writing skills.
Focused on outcomes rather than inputs	☑ Demonstration of content knowledge and skills is outcome-focused.
Consider external standards, if any	☑ No accreditation standards apply.
Avoid combining multiple outcomes	☒ This is multiple outcomes combined in a single statement: 1. apply knowledge of social issues 2. apply knowledge of behavioral issues 3. apply knowledge of constitutional issues 4. develop well-written policies 5. that are legally defensible 6. acceptable to most stakeholders

Draft program outcome (final draft)

MS JPS graduates will be able to write appropriate enforcement policies.

Guidelines	Are the guidelines met?
Support program mission.	☑ This outcome is directly related to our long term goal, so we know that it supports the program mission
Directly related to discipline	☑ This outcome is directly related to Justice and Policy Studies
Observable and measurable	☑ There are many ways in which faculty can ask students to demonstrate their constitutional knowledge and policy-writing skills.
Focused on outcomes rather than inputs	☑ Demonstration of content knowledge and skills is outcome-focused.
Consider external standards, if any	☑ No accreditation standards apply.
Avoid combining multiple outcomes	☑ This is a single outcome.

Use the space below to draft one program outcome. *Indicate on the right whether the outcome meets the guidelines. Additional space is provided for up to three drafts.*

Program Outcome	Are the guidelines met?
	☐ Support program mission.
	☐ Directly related to discipline
	☐ Observable and measurable
	☐ Focused on outcomes rather than inputs
	☐ Consider external standards, if any
	☐ Avoid combining multiple outcomes

Program Outcome	Are the guidelines met?
	☐ Support program mission.
	☐ Directly related to discipline
	☐ Observable and measurable
	☐ Focused on outcomes rather than inputs
	☐ Consider external standards, if any
	☐ Avoid combining multiple outcomes

Program Outcome	Are the guidelines met?
	☐ Support program mission.
	☐ Directly related to discipline
	☐ Observable and measurable
	☐ Focused on outcomes rather than inputs
	☐ Consider external standards, if any
	☐ Avoid combining multiple outcomes

Use the space below to write your final program outcome.

MEASURES

Identify two or three measures of student performance for each program outcome

At least one must be a direct measure, and the others may be direct or indirect. Examples of direct and indirect measures are shown below.

Direct	Indirect
Capstone (project/paper/portfolio)	Student surveys & focus groups
Standardized tests	Alumni surveys
Presentation/oral defense	Employer surveys
Performance assessment	Job placement data
Classroom assignments, cases, exams	Acceptance by graduate programs
Internship or practicum	Exit interviews

In general, it should not be necessary to create additional tests or other assessment activities simply to satisfy your assessment data collection needs. It should be possible to identify tests and other measures of student performance that already occur as part of your existing instruction and testing activities. If you have difficulty identifying appropriate measures for your assessment plan, you may want to consider whether students are being adequately tested on the outcome – or whether the outcome may not be an appropriate one for your assessment activities.

Course grades are not appropriate measures of student performance.
Grades are awarded based on overall satisfaction of course requirements rather than specific performance on a single program-level outcome. Those course requirements typically include several course-level outcomes (which may or may not be directly related to a program outcome), attendance, and extra credit. Course grades alone do not provide specific information about the concepts mastered by students or those concepts that proved challenging – important information for faculty to consider if they want to improve student learning over time.

Consider the following example of two students who successfully completed JA 642 (Policy for the Justice Administrator). The course content included a historical review of common justice policies, exercises in analyzing the effectiveness of past and present policies of a metropolitan police agency, and a final exam in which students analyze samples of policies and recommend improvements. The instructor considers attendance to be important, so 10% of the course grade is based on attendance. Students who miss three or more class sessions receive no credit for attendance.

Assignment	Weight	Student A	Student B
Attendance	0.10	100.0	0.0
History quiz	0.15	90.0	92.0
Homework	0.15	90.0	96.0
Midterm	0.30	89.0	98.0
Final	0.30	88.0	100.0
Total		*90.1*	*87.6*
Course Grade		**A**	**B**

If JPS faculty chose to use grades from JA-642 as a measure of student policy-writing skills, it would appear that Student A had graduated with better policy-writing ability than Student B. In reality, Student B performed much better than Student A on the only direct measure of policy writing from the JA-642 class.

Other measures that would be appropriate for this program outcome include the following:

- The JA-642 final exam that required students to evaluate policies and make recommendations
- Alumni surveys that ask program graduates employed as justice administrators how well the program prepared them to write policies.
- Surveys of senior officials who supervise program graduates employed as justice administrators about how well prepared program graduates were to write policies.

Consider the following example of an assignment that could be used as a final exam for an undergraduate capstone course or a graduate-level comprehensive exam question.

Choose a current social issue that presents an enforcement issue to law enforcement personnel. Write a policy to address enforcement of that issue for a municipal police department. Your response should include the following:
- *a historic summary of the issue you have chosen and an explanation of its development as a social issue as well as a law enforcement issue*
- *an analysis of the cultural, political, or other societal factors that led to the issue you have chosen and how your policy addresses those factors*
- *a discussion of the legal aspects surrounding enforcement of the issue you have chosen. You should address any constitutional, statutory, administrative, or agency policies that are related to your issue and discuss how your policy will withstand legal challenges to its implementation.*
- *a list of the groups of stakeholders who may have strong opinions on the issue or on any enforcement policy that might be implemented. For each stakeholder group, provide a brief description of that group's likely concerns, how they might react if your policy is implemented, and how you would respond to any negative reactions.*
- *a brief discussion of how you might evaluate the effectiveness of the policy, if implemented*

A complex exam item such as the one above can be a valuable assessment tool. This item would be a very good measure for our JPS policy writing program outcome. It would also provide rich information about student knowledge and skills on other likely program outcomes such as legal knowledge, critical thinking, analytic writing, and problem solving. The use of a high-quality scoring rubric to evaluate student performance on such an item would yield information about the learning of individual students as well as overall performance of program graduates. The information gained from such items is valuable for assessment purposes because it can inform faculty decisions about continuous improvement to the curriculum.

Use the space below to list two or three measures for your program outcome. *Remember that at least one measure must be a direct measure of student performance.*

Direct?	Indirect?	Measure
☐	☐	
☐	☐	
☐	☐	

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

For each program outcome, one or more performance criteria will be used to determine the level of performance necessary to determine that the program outcome has been satisfied.

Performance criteria must be identified prior to the collection and analysis of assessment data. When setting performance criteria, it can be tempting to set unreasonably high "nothing but the best" standards or to set unreasonably low "guaranteed to show success" standards.

Both of these practices can be defeating. Over time, it is far more beneficial to a program and its students to set reasonable expectations and work toward meeting them.

Consider the use of primary and secondary performance criteria.

A primary performance criterion, the kind most commonly used, will state that "at least xx% of students will perform at or above …."

A secondary performance criterion for the same measure will state that, "no more than xx% of students will perform at or below …"

The use of primary and secondary performance criteria can provide richer information about student learning that will inform decisions about needed curricular improvements.

> ***Primary Performance Criterion for MS JPS program outcome*** *(MS JPS graduates will be able to write appropriate enforcement policies.)*
>
> *At least 80% of MS JPS students will earn an overall rating of 3 or higher on the policy development comprehensive exam item (see rubric below).*
>
> ***Secondary Performance Criterion for MS JPS program outcome***
>
> *No more than 10% of MS JPS students will earn an overall rating of 2 or lower on the policy development comprehensive exam item (see rubric below).*

The structure for a rubric that might be used to score our comp question is given on the next page. If the faculty in the MS JPS program were to fully develop this rubric, it could serve a variety of purposes:

- additional evidence of student performance on other MS JPS program outcomes
- diagnostic information about individual student performance for feedback and coaching purposes
- diagnostic information about overall performance for curriculum revision and improvement
- clear communication to students about performance expectations
- consistent grading by program faculty

Rubric Structure for MS JPS comprehensive exam item

	1 – Unsatisfactory	2 –Needs Improvement	3 – Satisfactory	4 - Exemplary
Issue selection				
Historic summary				
Social analysis				
Policy				
Legal discussion				
Stakeholders				
Evaluation				

Use the space below to list a primary performance criterion for your program outcome.

_____

_____

_____

Use the space below to list a secondary performance criterion for your program outcome.

_____

_____

_____

SAMPLING

Program faculty may decide to include data for all program graduates or for a sample of graduates.

It is not necessary to select a statistically representative student sample, although you may choose to do so. It is important, however, that you collect and analyze data from a group of students that is reasonably representative of the group of program graduates about whom inferences will be drawn.

The decision needs to be included in the assessment plan, and will be driven by such factors as program size, feasibility of collecting and analyzing some types of assessment data, and cost. Regardless of the sampling strategy employed, it is essential that the resulting sample be representative of the group of program graduates about whom inferences will be drawn.

You will provide a brief description of your sampling plan for each program outcome in your assessment plan.

Use the space below to describe the sampling plan for your program outcome.

DATA ANALYSIS

In the data analysis stage of your assessment activities, you will synthesize the student performance data you collected and interpret the results.

Your analysis may be an informal process in which faculty meet and review samples of student work and examine the level of student performance exhibited, or it may be a more formal analytic process. That's a decision for program faculty.

Analytic methods include the following:

- Scoring rubrics (capstone, performance assessments)
- Survey analysis (exit surveys, employer satisfaction)
- Standardized test scores
- Other

Use the space below to describe the data analysis plan for your program outcome.

SUBMISSION OF YOUR ASSESSMENT PLAN

You have now completed each of the steps required for preparation of one program outcome.

You will repeat this process until you have identified two program outcomes.

When you have completed your assessment planning process, please submit your plan to your college's assessment delegate, who will upload the file to SharePoint.

CLOSING THE LOOP

Assessment plans and reports are important pieces of the assessment process, but assessment is an ongoing process without starting and finishing points.

After assessment data have been collected, program faculty review the results, consider what changes in the curriculum and the assessment process might improve student learning as well as the measurement of that learning, and begin the process anew.

Assessment is an iterative process of assessment planning and reporting that flows directly into a new cycle of assessment planning and reporting.

This recurring cycle, and the use of assessment information in curricular decision making is known as closing the loop.

Closing the loop is critical to sound assessment practice. It is this process that ties together the phases of assessment planning, data collection, analysis, and decision making. Closing the loop supports curricular decision-making that is sound, defensible, and most likely to show positive change.

,

FOR MORE INFORMATION

More detailed information, including more examples and links to other sources can be found on our web site at:

http://asu.edu/oue/assessment

Contact information:

Wanda Baker
Associate Director

wanda.baker@asu.edu

480.965.0674

Staff members are available to meet with department chairs, curriculum or assessment committees, or individual faculty to provide additional training or support with your assessment activities.

A .pdf copy of this workbook can be downloaded from the web address shown above. Your faculty may choose to complete this exercise independently, or we can arrange to facilitate a workshop for them.