

# ***Assessing Administrative and Support Areas***

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***NC State University  
Undergraduate Assessment Symposium  
April 14-16, 2005***

# *Session Objectives*

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## *Yes*

- *Ways to think about outcomes assessment in administrative & support areas*
- *Applications to your own assessment process*

## *No*

- *A “how to do it” formula*

# *Assessment is...*

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*The basic question: Does it work?*

- *What are we trying to do?*
- *How well are we doing that?  
How do we know?*
- *How do we use that information  
to guide us?*
- *Keep asking*

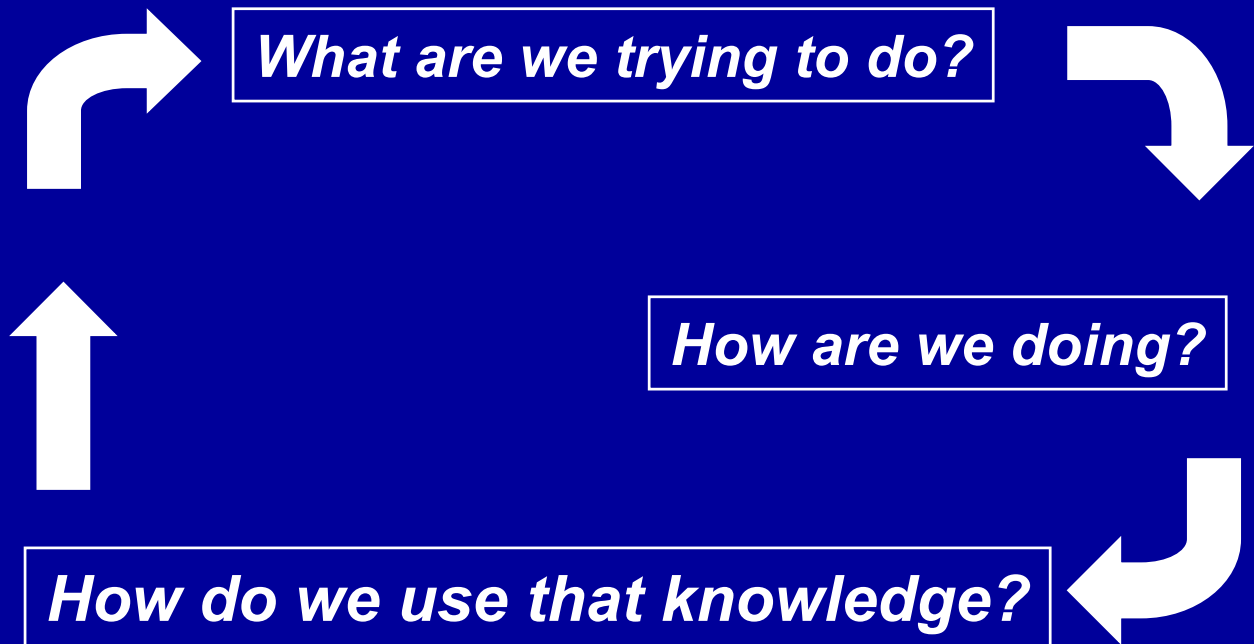
# *Jargons & models*

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- *Student learning outcomes assessment*
- *Total Quality Management (TQM)*
- *Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)*
- *Balanced Scorecard (BSC)*

# Assessment is...

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# *There's no "one size fits all"*

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## *Units are different*

- *Mix of management / service functions*
- *Different administrative levels*
- *The most effective approach fits the unit's internal style*
- *Variability is OK*

*There are common issues...*

# ***Much is already in place***

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***Is this really new? Yes and no...***

- ***Monitoring accounts and processes***
- ***Ad-hoc assessment***
- ***Some already***
  - ***do “learning assessment”***
  - ***participate in academic outcomes assessment***
- ***Existing outcomes assessments may not be recognized***

# **Processes and Clients**

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## ***Client-focused objectives are:***

- ***Easiest to see when “clients” are clear***
  - ***Human Resources, Student Affairs...***
- ***Harder in units that focus on processes***
  - ***Budget & Finance, University Advancement, Facilities Management...***
    - ***Can client focus help the bottom line?***
  - ***Deans / upper-level administration***
    - ***Can client focus help strategic goals?***

# **Processes and Clients**

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## ***Example: Admissions Office***

- ***Process Objective: Quick access to pre-admission advising***
  - ***Measure: Appointment records***
  - ***Target: 90% within 5 days of appointment request***
- ***Client Objective: Students satisfied with pre-admission advising & counseling***
  - ***Measure: Post-session survey card***
  - ***Target: 70% satisfied/very satisfied***

# ***Processes and Clients***

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## ***Counts and client feedback***

- ***Operational / process measures***
  - ***Such as:***
    - ***Level / volume of activity***
    - ***Cost of activity***
    - ***Compliance with standards***
- ***Client feedback***
  - ***Effectiveness***
  - ***Satisfaction***
    - ***Proxy for effectiveness?***

# ***Processes and Clients***

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## ***Counts and client feedback***

### ***Example: Admissions Office***

- ***Operational / process measures***
  - ***# Applying, accepted, enrolling***
  - ***# Recruiting trips,  
avg. cost / new freshman***
- ***Client feedback***
  - ***Survey student / parent satisfaction with admissions process***
  - ***Conversations with high-school advisors***

# ***“Did it work?”***

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***Vs. “Did we do it?”***

***The key question is “Was it effective?”***

***Example: Freshman Services***

- ***Objective: Advising helps freshmen understand general and major requirements***
- ***Measure: Advising checkout sheet asks whether students understand***
  
- ***Do they really understand the requirements?***
- ***How can you find out?***

# *Hidden assumptions*

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*Can we really draw that conclusion?*

*What assumptions are we making?*

*Example: Freshman Services*

- *Objective: Provide freshman year services that increase retention*
- *Measure: % increase in freshman retention rate*
  
- *Assumed: “If they stay, it’s because of what we did”*
- *How can you test that assumption?*

# *What's "good enough?"*

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## *Targets:*

*"This is what we hope to find"*

- *Experience says...*
  - *Graduation rate might increase by 2%*
- *Aspirational*
  - *We want 90% 2<sup>nd</sup>-fall persistence*
- *Strategic/political*
  - *The budget needs 4% more enrollment*

***“Does it have to be numbers?”***

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## ***Numbers and narratives***

- ***Narratives:***  
***Richer but harder to summarize***
- ***What’s the information for?***
  - ***Narratives help description***
  - ***Numbers help summarize  
across units / time***
- ***Quantify with categories***

# *Braggs as well as problems*

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## *Assessment is for...*

- *Positives*
  - *What's going the way we want*
  - *Bragging points*
- *As well as negatives*
  - *Problems*
  - *Things that need attention*
- *Most results are affirmations!*

# *What did you do as a result?*

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## *Useful*

- *Things that are OK*
  - *How do the results show that?*
  - *What did you do?*
    - *Didn't change anything*
    - *Added further support*
- *Things that need attention*
  - *How do the results show that?*
  - *What did you do?*
    - *Changes made, results so far*
    - *Changes planned*

# *What did you do as a result?*

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## *Not useful*

- *“What changes did you make this year?”*
  - *Whether or not they were related to assessment*
  - *Fosters “change for change’s sake”*

# *Feedback or accountability?*

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## *Assessment is for...*

- *Program planning and improvement*
- *Accountability reporting –  
“Telling the story “*
- *“Accountability thinking” -  
Assessment is for reporting*
- *Keep planning / improvement first!*
- *What information do you / would you  
use for planning / improvement?*

# Assessing your area

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- ***Pick a current objective***
  - *Is it “process” or “client?”*
  - *How do you assess it now?*
  - *How do you decide whether you’ve accomplished the objective?*
    - *What hidden assumptions are there?*
    - *Are you effective?*
    - *What’s “good enough?”*
  - *What do you do with the information?*
  - *From what you’ve heard today -- how would you change this assessment process?*

# ***Making assessment “part of the job”***

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- ***“Bottom-up” design***
- ***“Draw from the top”***
- ***Reward it***
  - ***Recognize participation***
  - ***Recognize good process***
  - ***Use it in resource decisions***

# *Finishing up*

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- *The “Resources” handout*
- *Assessing the workshop*

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