

Undergraduate Academic Program Review: Making it Meaningful and Manageable

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The Question

- How do I engage in assessment so that it is meaningful and manageable to me, while fulfilling the requirements of my College, the University, and all of the accreditors?

Overview

- What is Undergraduate Academic Program Review (UAPR)?
 - Where did it come from?
 - What does it mean?
 - What is required?
- How do I make it meaningful to me?
 - Assessment Overview
 - Resource Overview

Undergraduate Academic Program Review at NC State

The old process

- Every course, every curriculum at least once every 10 years
- More often if major revisions
- UCCC and administration judged the method ineffective
 - Bureaucratic checklist: no real sense of outcomes
 - Rapid growth/changes created severe backlogs
 - Reports on a bookshelf

Undergraduate Academic Program Review at NC State

Changing the process

- Moratorium on curriculum reviews
- Committee on Undergraduate Academic Program Development and Review Process Improvement (CUAPDRPI)
 - Ad hoc committee 1996-1998
 - Faculty and administrators
 - Charged with studying the problem, proposing a better process

Ad Hoc Committee on Undergraduate Academic Program Development and Review Process Improvement (CUAPDRPI)

- During the Spring 1997 semester, the Committee agreed on four objectives that would guide its work over the following two years.
 - replace the existing ten-year academic review cycle with continuous self-study of courses and curricula by departments and provide for frequent review (every five years) by the college and university;
 - integrate the (internal) academic review process with other departmental concerns, notably student outcomes assessment, institutional effectiveness, and accreditation;

CUAPDRPI

- Objectives (cont'd)-
 - recognize departmental responsibility in academic decision-making, while reducing the reporting burden on departments by providing for input and assistance from college and university sources;
 - enhance the informational component of academic reviews by making parts of the review materials publicly accessible via the Worldwide Web.

CUAPDRPI

- Through yearly updating by departmental personnel, these materials would thus represent the most comprehensive information source available for each course and curriculum offered by this university.

CUAPDRPI

- **Recommendation 1:** That the existing ten-year cycle of mandatory reviews of undergraduate academic programs be replaced by continuous portfolio-based monitoring by departments of undergraduate programs. The proposed review process would essentially consist of three activities:
 - First, continuous monitoring by departments of their undergraduate programs;
 - second, the entry of information pertinent to the monitoring or review into electronic and paper portfolios;
 - third, periodic reporting of the nature and outcomes of the review process to the University and, where appropriate, to external agencies.

CUAPDRPI

Recommendation 5: Task Force

Recommendation 6: Departmental Teams

CUAPDRPI

Statement on Departmental Autonomy

- A goal of this committee was to envision a program review process that would simultaneously enhance the self-assessment activities of departments as well as program (departmental) autonomy. Indeed, the lure of continuous assessment and development for any department will be an increased degree of decision making about program delivery. This should encompass curriculum design, courses taught, structure and outcomes of courses, and the ability to modify such program designs. Departments should have much autonomy to alter program details, based on the assessment of outcomes.

Undergraduate Academic Program Review (UAPR)

What are we talking about?

- Assessment-based program review
- Placing authority in the hands of program faculty
- Respecting program individuality
- Being sensitive to outside accreditation demands

UAPR: Expectations

- Program faculty will:
 - Draft student learning outcomes for program
 - Implement procedures to measure
 - Collect, analyze data
 - Draw conclusions
 - Make programmatic changes as a result of data analysis
 - Document this process and the decisions made
- Continuous and on-going

Details of Undergraduate Academic Program Review (UAPR)

- http://www.ncsu.edu/provost/academic_programs/uapr/portfolioprep/UAPRportfolioprep.html
- **Preparing and Submitting Program Review Portfolios:**
 - [Undergraduate Academic Program Review Guidelines \[effective January 2001\]](#)
 - [Common Language for Assessment](#)
explanation of terms and concepts used in the above Guidelines
 - [Timetable for Undergraduate Program Review Submission](#)

Purpose of Assessment

- 1) Reinforce or emphasize the mission of your unit
- 2) modify, shape, and improve programs and/or performance (formative)
- 3) critique a program's quality or value compared to the program's previously defined principles (summative)
- 4) inform planning

Purpose of Assessment, Cont.

- 5) inform decision making
- 6) evaluate programs not personnel
- 7) assist in the request for additional funds from the university and external community
- 8) assist in meeting accreditation requirements, models of best practices, and national benchmarks
- 9) Celebrate successes

Assessment

- Most importantly, assessment should be
 - Meaningful
 - Manageable
 - Flexible
 - Truth-seeking/objective/ethical
 - Inform decisions for continuous improvement or provide evidence of proof
 - Move toward instituting a culture of assessment

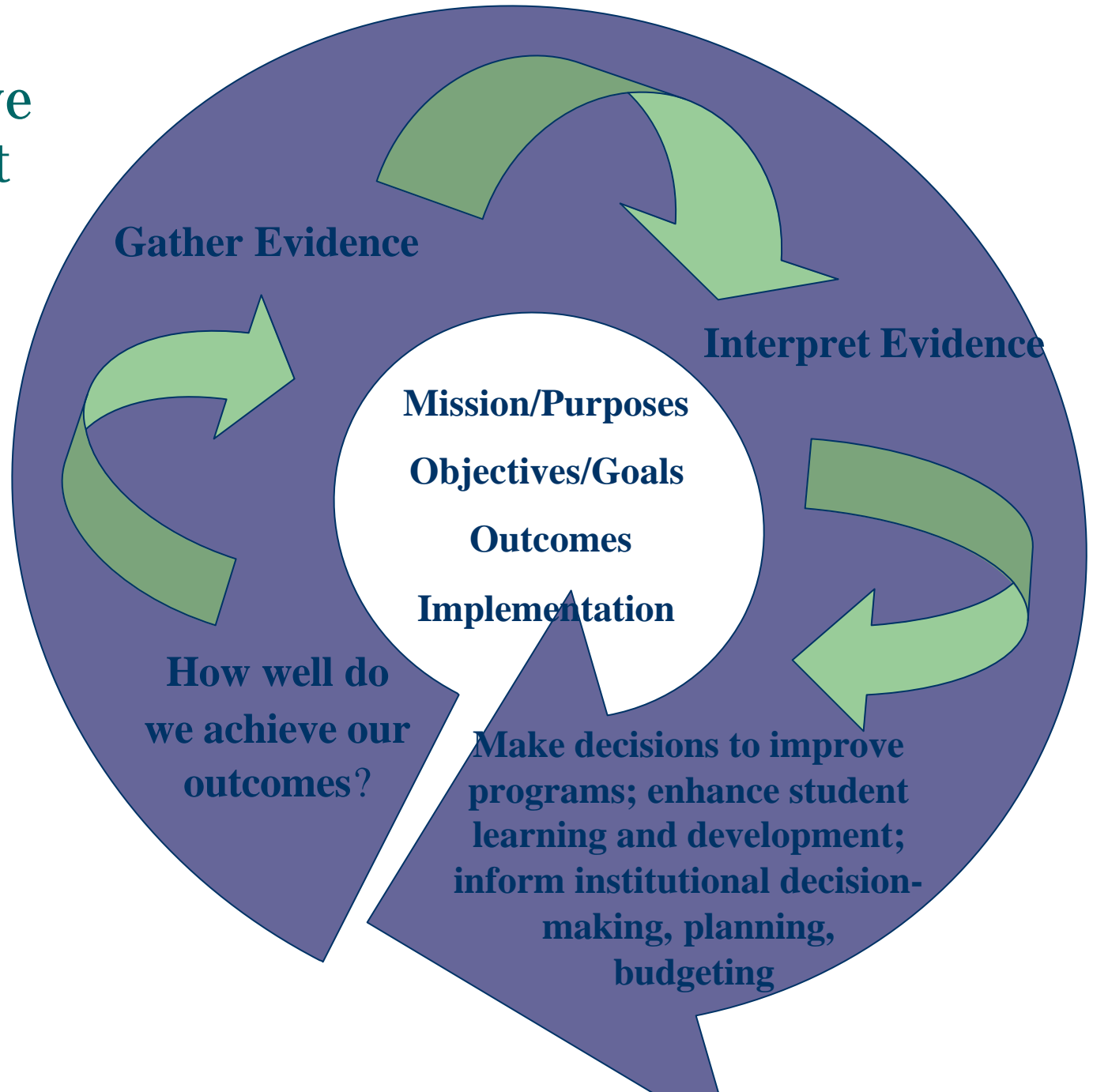
The Assessment Cycle

from CUPR Guidelines

- The key questions...
 - What are we trying to do?
 - How well are we doing it?
 - How do we know?
 - How do we use the information to improve?
 - Does that work?

The Iterative Assessment Cycle

Adapted from
Peggy Maki, Ph.D. by
Bresciani, M.J.



Typical Components of An Assessment Plan

- Mission
- Objectives
- Outcomes
- Evaluation Methods
 - With criteria and by Outcomes
- Implementation of Assessment
 - Who is Responsible for What?
 - Timeline
- Results
- Decisions and Recommendations

The Question

- How do I engage in assessment so that it is meaningful and manageable to me, while fulfilling the requirements of my College, the University, and all of the accreditors?
- Remember, the University is not dictating outcomes for your program. If you use the Compact Planning process or an accreditor, then they may have outcomes dictated to you. Your College may as well. However, the University wants you to assess that which you value.

Helpful Reminders

- Go ahead and write every program outcome down but...
- Don't try to assess every program outcome every year.
- You may want to start by documenting what you are already doing.
- You may want to start with course outcomes and build program outcomes from those.
- Then, move to implementing the entire assessment cycle one outcome at a time making everything for that systematic - - In other words, we want to begin to form “habits” of assessment

Suggestions to Promote The Process

- Remind each other of the benefits of assessment
- Share examples with each other
- Celebrate assessment victories
- Advertise your assessment learnings and decisions made
- Incorporate students in all facets of assessment planning and implementation, if you are ready

Suggestions to Aid The Process Continued

- Articulate your College-wide assessment expectations
- Acknowledge and address barriers to assessment
- Understand your role as the “researcher” or the program administrator
- Answer the question, “What happens if I don’t engage in assessment?”

Support for the Process

- UAPR Facilitators
- UGA
- UPA
- FCTL
- CWSP
- Matching Grants for External Reviewers
- TracDat
- On-Line Resources

Questions for Your College

- Will you have your own timeline for implementation of this process?
- Whose internal expertise can you leverage?
- Will there be someone doing the “regular” data collection(e.g. enrollment figures, retention and graduation rates, etc)?
- Will there be someone coordinating the assessment planning process?

Questions for Your College

- Will there be someone in charge of documentation?
- Can key assessment coordinators get release time to get the process established?
- How will you manage College expectations for data with faculty and program expectations of assessment?
- How will you use the assessment results?

Where Do I Go For Assistance?



- UAPR website

http://www.ncsu.edu/provost/academic_programs/uapr/UAPRindx.html

- Tool Kit - links to

- A Conceptual Framework for Assessment
- Who's Doing What Kind of Assessment at NC State
- Creating Objectives & Outcomes
- Assessment Methods
- Frequently-Asked Questions
- Evaluating Assessment Plans
- Guidelines and Time Table

Where Do I Go For Assistance?



- More on UAPR Website
 - CUPR Members' and UAPR Facilitators' Names and Contact Information
 - Workshops - Publishing Opportunities
 - TracDat - an electronic tool to help manage the assessment process
- We can link to your departmental websites for assessment

Where Do I Go For Assistance?



- University Planning and Analysis (UPA) Assessment website

<http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/>

- Other UPA data

<http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/index.htm>

- Undergraduate Affairs website

http://www.ncsu.edu/undergrad_affairs/assessment/assess.htm

Where Do I Go For Assistance?



- FCTL - www.ncsu.edu/fctl/
- CWSP - www2.chass.ncsu.edu/cwsp/
- Each Other
- Accrediting Agencies
- Professional Associations

Questions?

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