

# You're Teaching...

## What are your Students Learning?

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# Presentation Overview

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- Overview of Outcomes-Based Assessment (OBA)
- What OBA is really trying to accomplish
- The Importance of OBA
- Questions



# Ask Yourself These Questions

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- What decision did you make about a program/curriculum last year?
- What evidence did you use to inform that decision?
- What was it that you were trying to influence about that program/curriculum when making that decision with the stated evidence?

# That is Outcomes-Based Assessment (Bresciani, 2006)

- Most people do capitalize on their innate intellectually curiosity to find out what works
- Most people just don't articulate their intended end results (e.g., outcomes) ahead of time
- Most people don't document the decisions made based on their results
- Most people don't follow up later to see if their decisions made the intended improvement



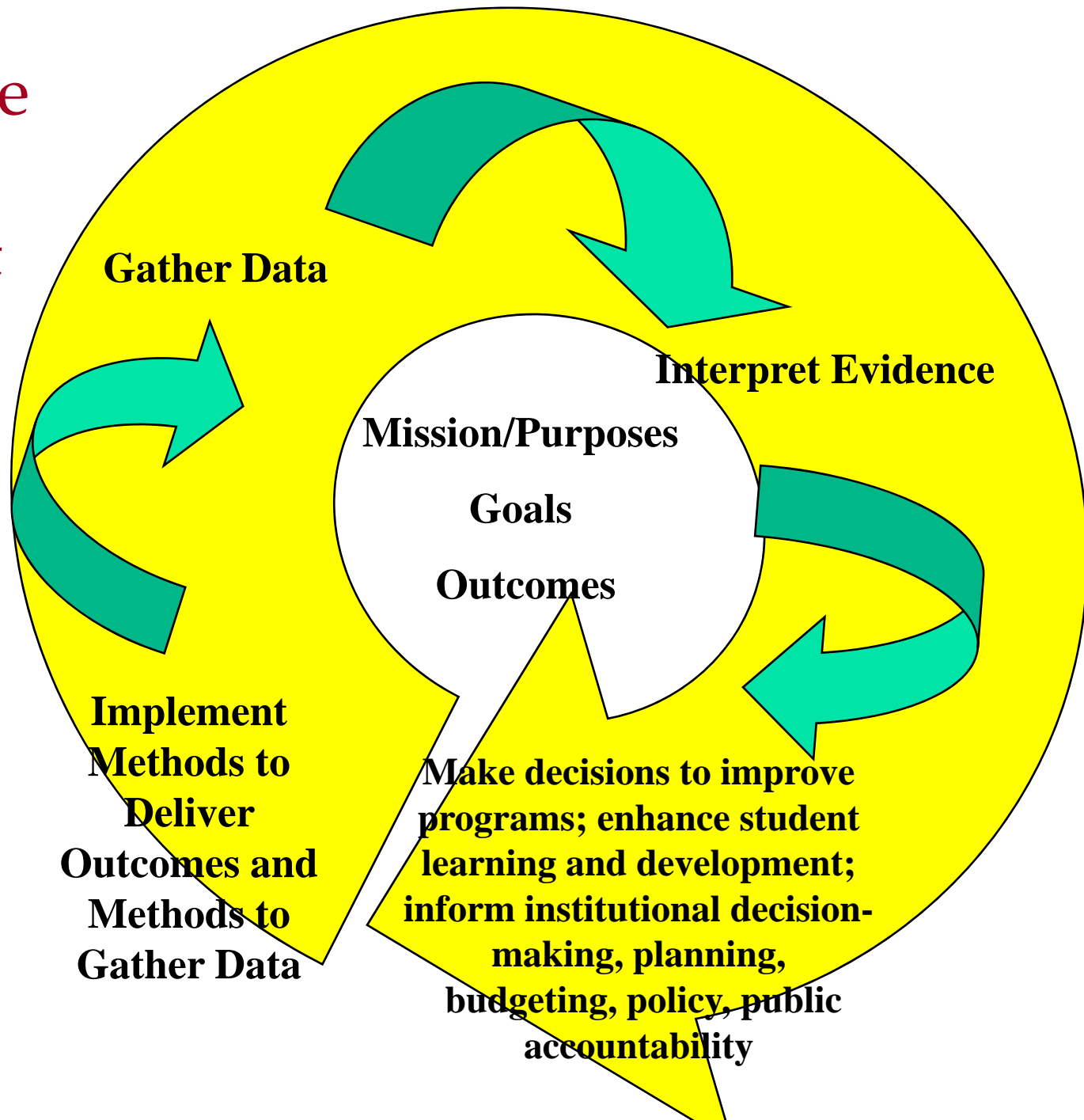
# The Assessment Cycle (Bresciani, 2006)

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- The key questions...
  - What are we trying to do and why? *or*
  - What is my program supposed to accomplish? *or*
  - What do I want students to be able to do and/or know as a result of my course/workshop/orientation/program?
  - How well are we doing it?
  - How do we know?
  - How do we use the information to improve or celebrate successes?
  - Do the improvements we make contribute to our intended end results?

# The Iterative Systematic Assessment Cycle

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



# Assessment (Bresciani, 2006)

- Most importantly, assessment should be
  - Understood = by professionals (e.g., faculty and staff) and students
  - Inclusive = involve as many professionals as possible
  - Meaningful = professionals drive the process and intended end results
  - Manageable = takes into account varying resources
  - Flexible = takes into account assessment learning curves



# Assessment, cont. (Bresciani, 2006)

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- Truth-seeking/ objective/ ethical
- Iterative and systematic
- Inform decisions for continuous improvement or provides evidence of proof
- Promote a culture of accountability, of learning, and of improvement



So, why is it so important?

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# The Purpose

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- Outcomes-Based assessment does not exist for assessment's sake
- It is taking what most of us already do, and making it systematic
- It is NOT personnel evaluation
- Planning is incorporated into it



# The Purpose, Cont.

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- Its purpose is to reflect on the end result of doing - - are we accomplishing that which we say we are?
- All types of assessment have value (e.g., needs, utilization, satisfaction, learning and development) but we have to pay attention to evaluating student learning

# Drivers of Outcomes-Based Assessment (Ewell, 2003)

- To improve the underperforming student
- Competency Movement in Business and Industry
- International Trade Agreements
  - Affecting higher Education - Competition for new providers in Postsecondary or Tertiary Education
  - Transnational Education or Globalism
  - Massification of Education



# Drivers, Cont.

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- Bologna Declaration of 1999
- Government Conversation, 1985
  - The Higher Education Re-authorization Act Testimonies in USA, 2002 and 2006
    - Response to NCLB Legislation
    - Regional Accreditation – flexibility
      - CRAC – 2003, 2004
        - Both documents focus on student learning



# Drivers, Cont.

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## National Commission on the Future of Higher Education

- Demand for Public Information about Performance
  - Transparency of outcomes and results
  - Comparable measures of quality
  - Demonstration of value-added of the entire educational experience



# Drivers, Cont.

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- Accountability requirements handed back to states
  - Performance indicators
- Discipline Standards could be designed by disciplines
- Federal control over financial aid
- Increased focus on private education



# Drivers, Cont.

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- Other Research on Collaborative/Integrated Learning
  - NSSE Deep Learning Project
  - Wabash Institute
  - Alverno College
  - National Research Council
  - AAC&U Greater Expectations
  - NASPA/ACPA Learning Reconsidered

So, what do we need to document?

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Well...

(insert technical disclaimer)



# Typical Components of An Outcomes-Based Assessment Plan (Bresciani, 2006)

- Program or Course Name
- Program Mission or Course Purpose
- Goals
  - Align with your strategic plan, college goals, division goals, or department goals
- Outcomes
  - Student Learning and program
- Planning for Delivery of Outcomes
  - Concept Mapping
  - Syllabus Design
- Evaluation Methods
  - With criteria for each outcomes
  - Add Limitations, if necessary
  - Link to Division Indicators



# Typical Components of An Outcomes-Based Assessment Plan, Cont.

- Implementation of Assessment Process
  - Identify who is responsible for doing each step in the evaluation process (list all of the people involved in the assessment process at each step of the process)
  - Outline the timeline for implementation
  - Identify who will be evaluated
  - Identify other programs who are assisting with the evaluation
  - Identify who will be participating in interpreting the data and making recommendations and decisions

# Typical Components of An Outcomes-Based Assessment Report

- Program Name
- Outcomes
- Results
  - Summarize the results for each outcome
  - Summarize the process to verify/validate the results
- Decisions and Recommendations
  - Summarize the decisions/recommendations made for each outcome

# Typical Components of An Outcomes-Based Assessment Report, Cont.

- Decisions and Recommendations, Cont.
  - Identify the groups who participated in the discussion of the evidence that led to the recommendations and decisions
  - Summarize the suggestions for improving the assessment process
  - Identify when each outcome will be evaluated again (if the outcome is to be retained)
  - Identify those responsible for implementing the recommended changes



# Resources

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- Your own website –  
<http://assessment.udel.edu>
- Each Other
- University Planning and Analysis (UPA) Assessment website
  - <http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/>
- <http://assessment.tamu.edu>



# Questions?

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# One Minute Evaluation

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- What is the most valuable lesson that you learned from this workshop?
- What is one question that you still have?
- What do you think is the next step that your department/program needs to take in order to implement systematic program assessment?

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