

# Laying the Foundation: Assessment Basics

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Assessment isn't an activity.  
It's a state of mind.

2

## Session Outcomes

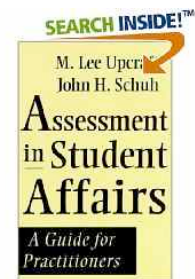
- Articulate the definitions of important assessment terms
- Articulate how to align assessment
- Articulate the different types of assessment
- Articulate the importance of anchoring assessment



3

## Definitions

- **Assessment:** Any effort to gather, analyze, and interpret evidence which describes institutional, departmental, divisional, or agency effectiveness.

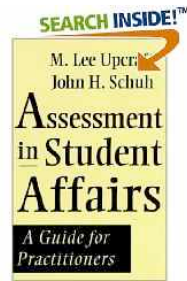


Upcraft, M. L. & Schuh, J. H. (1996). *Assessment in student affairs: A guide for practitioners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. P. 18.

4

# Definitions

- **Evaluation:** Any effort to use assessment evidence to improve institutional, departmental, divisional, or agency effectiveness.



Upcraft, M. L. & Schuh, J. H. (1996). *Assessment in student affairs: A guide for practitioners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. P. 19.

5

# Definitions

- **Research:** The collection and analysis of data to build or confirm theory and conceptual foundations.

6

# Assessment Planning

- Assessment and planning are linked, intertwined, and interrelated
- Systems theory
- “Backward design”
- “Starting with the end”

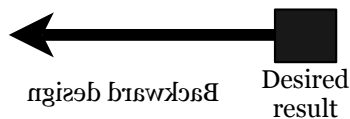


image adapted from <http://eduwithtechn.wordpress.com/>

7

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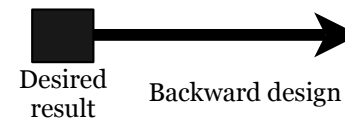
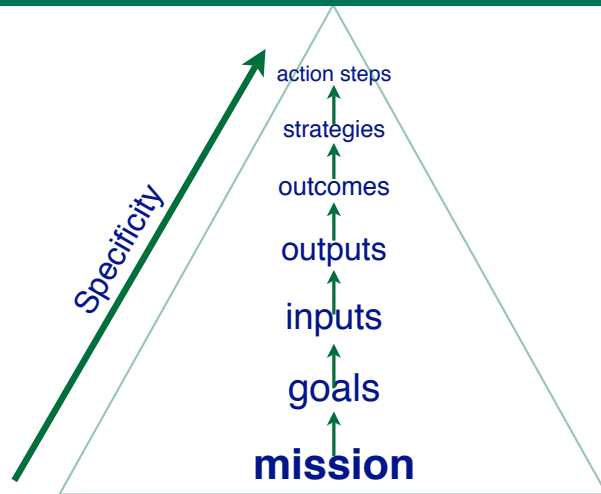


image adapted from <http://eduwithtechn.wordpress.com/>

8

# Language of Outcomes



9

# Mission

- **Mission:** A mission clarifies an organization's purpose or why it should be doing what it does (Bryson, 2004, p. 102).

Who What

- Example: Dartmouth College educates the most promising students of this generation to be the leaders of the next generation with a faculty of scholars dedicated to teaching and the creation of new knowledge.

Why How

18

# Mission

- **Mission:** A mission clarifies an organization's purpose or why it should be doing what it is does (Bryson, 2004, p. 102).
- Example: The principle purpose of the Office of the Dean of the College is to enhance undergraduate education. The various offices in this area work with students, administrators, and faculty in order to coordinate and integrate the academic and non-academic lives of the students so that their educational experience is the best it can be.

19

# Mission Alignment

- **Mission**
  - Dartmouth College educates the most promising students of this generation to be the leaders of the next generation with a faculty of scholars dedicated to teaching and the creation of new knowledge.
  - The principle purpose of the Office of the Dean of the College is to enhance undergraduate education. The various offices in this area work with students, administrators, and faculty in order to coordinate and integrate the academic and non-academic lives of the students so that their educational experience is the best it can be.

20

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19

## Goal

- **Goal:** A goal is an end result written in broad terms.
- Example: As a result of participating in the Emerging Leaders Program, students will increase their leadership skills.



## Mission-Goal Alignment

- **Mission:** The principle purpose of the Office of the Dean of the College is to enhance undergraduate education. The various offices in this area work with students, administrators, and faculty in order to coordinate and integrate the academic and non-academic lives of the students so that they can be leaders in both the campus and global community.
- **Goal:** As a result of participating in the Emerging Leaders Program, students will increase their leadership skills.

22

## Input

- **Input:** The raw materials that are used to develop a program or intervention which can include staff, budget, facilities, etc.
- Example: \$1500 and two staff members will be responsible for the Emerging Leaders Program.



16

# Output

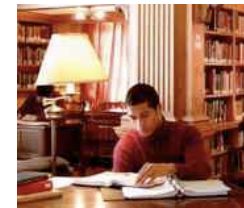
- **Output:** Metrics that document progression towards an outcome.
  - Example: 200 students will participate in the Emerging Leaders Program at the end of the 2008-2009 academic year.



17

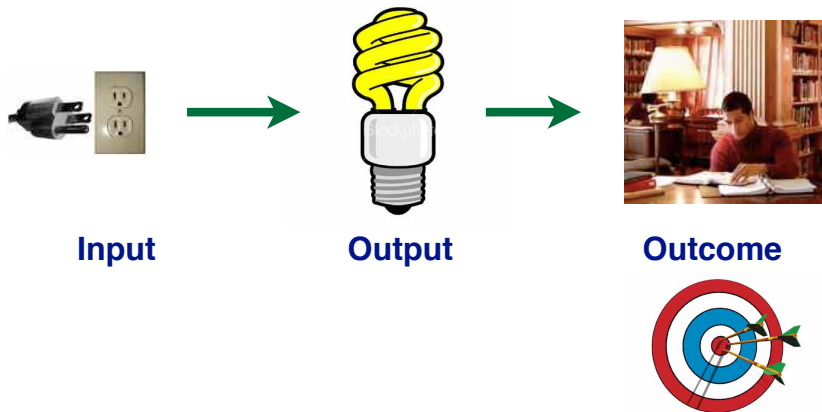
# Outcome

- **Outcome:** An outcome is the desired effect of a program, service, or intervention but is more specific than a goal. It is participant centered.
  - Example: As a result of participating in the Emerging Leaders Program, students will develop and hone meeting facilitation skills.



25

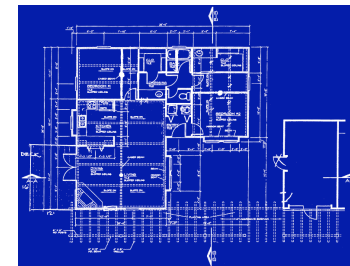
# Input-Output-Outcome



19

# Strategy

- **Strategy:** A strategy is a means to achieving an outcome or goal.
  - Example: In order for students to increase their meeting facilitation skills, they will identify and describe three best practices in meeting facilitation.



27

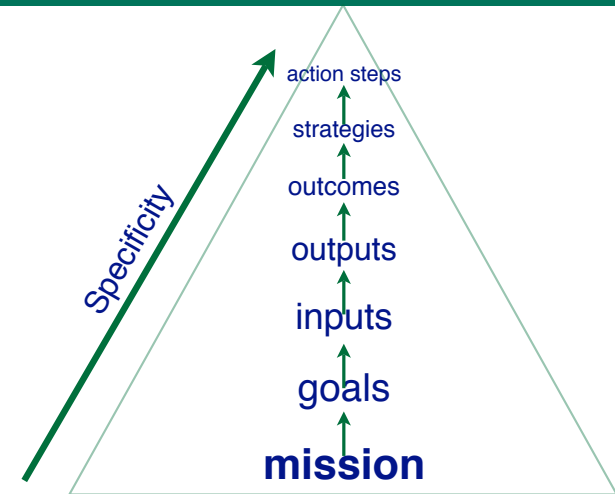
## Action Step

- **Action step:** An action step is a way to implement a strategy to achieve an outcome or goal.
  - Example: If the strategy is to have students identify and describe three best practices in meeting facilitation, action steps might include identifying meetings to attend, developing an opportunity for reflection, developing a framework for that reflection, evaluating the experience, etc.



28

## Language of Outcomes



22

## Forms of Assessment

- Summative
- Formative
- Political



23

## Forms of Assessment

- **Summative:** Is used to determine if a particular organizational activity or function should be continued, enhanced, curtailed, or eliminated. There are used for accountability and strategic planning.



Scriven, M. (1967). The methodology of evaluation. In R. W. Tyler, R. M. Gagne, & M. Scriven (Eds.), *Perspectives on curricular evaluation, no 1*. Chicago: Rand McNally.

24

# Forms of Assessment

- **Formative:** Is used to improve organizational or institutional effectiveness and typically focuses on improving the processes which potentially lead to increased effectiveness.



Scriven, M. (1967). The methodology of evaluation. In R. W. Tyler, R. M. Gagne, & M. Scriven (Eds.), *Perspectives on curricular evaluation, no 1*. Chicago: Rand McNally.

25

# Forms of Assessment

- **Political:** Is used to communicate and defend a program to potential stakeholders, including professional staff, office staff, faculty, administrators, parents, tax payers, and funders.



Brown, R. D. & Podolske, D. L. (1993). Strengthening program through evaluation and research. In R. B. Winston, S. Anchors, & Associates, *Student housing and residential life: A handbook for the professionals committed to student development goals*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

26

# Types of Assessment

- Increasing complexity and integration ↓
- Tracking Usage
  - Needs Assessment
  - Satisfaction Study
  - Culture/climate Assessment
  - Outcomes Assessment
  - Cost Effectiveness Study
  - Benchmarking
  - Program Review
  - Strategic Planning

27

# Anchoring Assessment

- Theory
- Established practice
- Professional standards
  - Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS)
    - [www.cas.edu](http://www.cas.edu)



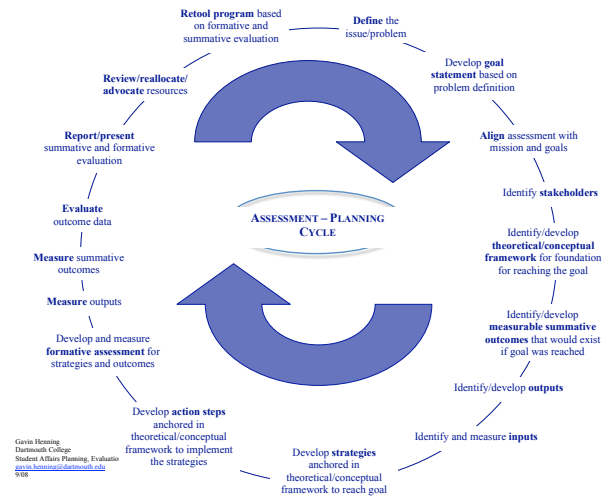
28

# Anchoring Assessment

- White papers/National reports
  - Learning Reconsidered
    - [www.myacpa.org/pub/documents/LearningReconsidered.pdf](http://www.myacpa.org/pub/documents/LearningReconsidered.pdf)
  - Student Learning Imperative
    - [www.myacpa.org/sli/sli.htm](http://www.myacpa.org/sli/sli.htm)
  - Spellings Report
    - [www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/reports/pre-pub-report.pdf](http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/reports/pre-pub-report.pdf)
  - AAHE Principles of Good Assessment
    - [www.iuk.edu/~koctla/assessment/9principles.shtml](http://www.iuk.edu/~koctla/assessment/9principles.shtml)

29

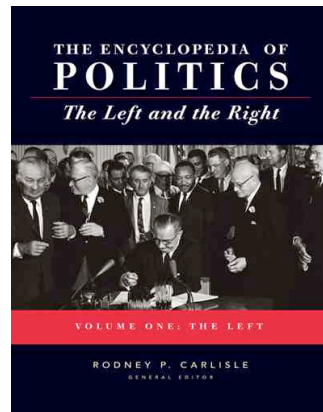
# Assessment-Planning Cycle



30

# Politics of Assessment

- Control/ownership of the issue
  - Stakeholder involvement
  - Position on agenda
  - Resources
  - Communication
    - Timing
    - Spin



31

# Ethical Assessment

- Informed consent
  - Voluntary participation
    - may be reason to mandate
- No repercussions for non-participation
- Confidentiality
- Minimization of risk

32

# Conclusion

- Final questions, comments?

