Assessment is…

… the process of asking and answering questions that seek to align our stated *intentions* with documentable *realities*. In higher education, it deals with courses, programs, policies, procedures, and operations.
Components of Good Assessment

- Defined Goals
- Measurable Outcomes
- Gather Evidence
- Evaluate Evidence
- Implement Improvements
Who is asking questions…

...Accreditors

- ABET
- NAAB
- ASCSB
- MSCHE

Determine the reputable from non-reputable institutions and programs.

Ensure that institutional practices support the viability and sustainability of the institution and its offerings.

Represent disciplinary and institutional interests.
Who Should Be Driving Assessment?
Benefits

- Guide Strategic Planning
- Make Evidence-based Decisions
- Direct Resource Allocation
How to Achieve the benefits of Assessment?

- *Coherent* culture of assessment
- *Consistent* culture of assessment
- *Community* of assessment
SUGGESTIONS ABOUT OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO CREATING AND SUSTAINING A CULTURE OF ASSESSMENT?
Developing a Culture of Assessment

From the top ↓
Institutional Expectations
Leadership
Strategic Planning
Resource Allocation

From the bottom ↑
Program and course level adoption
Shared understanding and commitment

http://assessment.uconn.edu/primer/goals1.html
NJIT Institute for Teaching Effectiveness

A faculty-driven center to support, promote, and enhance effective teaching.

• facilitate the professional development of faculty, lecturers, and graduate students as educators through peer review of teaching;
• assist instructors in building a teaching portfolio: developing, implementing, and assessing pedagogical methods;
• promote a university culture that recognizes and rewards excellence in teaching and the scholarship of teaching and learning;
Principles of Assessment

- **Targeted**—Assessment must focus on critical programs with a design that can produce useful results.
- **Cost effective**—The design must always consider the availability of resources and provide answers appropriate for decision-making needs, not more.
- **Candid**—Good assessment is open and honest.
- **Systematic**—The process must proceed at a regular pace and, whenever possible, according to a set plan.
- **Independent**—Assessment must not have any conflict of interest.
Two Areas of Assessment

- **Institutional Effectiveness:** the *results* of operational processes, policies, duties and sites—and their success in working together—to support the management of the academy [Standard 7]

- **Student Learning:** the *results* of curricular and co-curricular experiences designed to provide students with knowledge and skills [Standard 14]
Committee on Assessment of Student Learning

UCRC

Graduate Council

Committee on Assessment of Student Learning

TLT
Student Learning Assessment: NJIT Model
Elements of the NJIT Model

• Coherent: coordination at departmental and institutional levels
  – A common language
  – Define stakeholders
• Inclusive: involve as many faculty/professionals as possible
• Meaningful: faculty driven
• Manageable: takes into account varying resources
• Iterative and systematic

*Promotes a culture of accountability, of learning, and of Improvement*
Student Learning Assessment: Program Review Guidelines

- Evidence-based plan to assess *measurable* student learning outcomes.
- Evidence must include *direct* measures of student learning.
- Assessment at course level must inform achievement of program goals.
- Program assessment must be measured against externally validated standards.
- Embedded areas for review: GUR, information literacy, online learning
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Direct Measures</th>
<th>Indirect Measures</th>
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<td>Course and homework assignments</td>
<td>Course evaluations</td>
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<td>Examinations and quizzes</td>
<td>Test blueprints (outlines of the concepts and skills covered on tests)</td>
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<td>Standardized tests</td>
<td>Percent of class time spent in active learning</td>
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<td>Term papers and reports</td>
<td>Number of student hours spent on service learning</td>
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<td>Observations of field work, internship performance, service learning, or clinical experiences</td>
<td>Number of student hours spent on homework</td>
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<td>Research projects</td>
<td>Number of student hours spent at intellectual or cultural activities related to the course</td>
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<td>Class discussion participation</td>
<td>Grades that are not based on explicit criteria related to clear learning goals</td>
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<td>Case study analysis</td>
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<td>Rubric (a criterion-based rating scale) scores for writing, oral presentations, and performances</td>
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<td>Artistic performances and products</td>
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<td>Grades that are based on explicit criteria related to clear learning goals</td>
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<td>Program</td>
<td>Capstone projects, senior theses, exhibits, or performances</td>
<td>Focus group interviews with students, faculty members, or employers</td>
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<td>Pass rates or scores on licensure, certification, or subject area tests</td>
<td>Registration or course enrollment information</td>
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<td>Student publications or conference presentations</td>
<td>Department or program review data</td>
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<td>Employer and internship supervisor ratings of students’ performance</td>
<td>Job placement</td>
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<td>Employer or alumni surveys</td>
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<td>Student perception surveys</td>
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<td>Proportion of upper-level courses compared to the same program at other institutions</td>
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<td>Graduate school placement rates</td>
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How to Assess Student Learning Outcomes: Best Practices

- General standardized exams (Proficiency Profile, ICT, etc.)—Best for information literacy or GUR core competencies
- Discipline specific exams with content mapping to program goals
- Portfolio evaluation
- External review of final projects or exams
- Student publications, qualifying exams, employment
How to Assess Student Learning Outcomes

There must be an externally validated standard to assure program quality compared to general professional or academic standards.

Faculty grades are not sufficient for assessing student learning outcomes.
Centralized Process: Program Review

• Consistent Guidelines
• Committee members: Faculty and Administrators from each College/School
• UCRC, TLT, and Graduate Council representation

Role of Committee members
• Support the process (train-the-trainers)
• Evaluate process
• Evaluate content (Scoring rubric)
• Makes recommendations to the Deans on program review status: exemplary, qualified, or review for monitoring
Sample decisions driven by evaluation of learning outcomes

- Alter the curriculum content
- Alter the teaching methodology
- Alter the assignments
- Alter the schedule
- Alter the course rotation
Challenges for Developing a Culture of Assessment

• Limited time to conduct assessment
• Limited resources for assessment
• Limited (or no) assessment infrastructure on departmental level
• Limited understanding or expertise in assessment
• Convinced that evidence-based assessment is not needed; benefits of assessment are not substantial
Teaching and Learning in Digital Environments:

- Moodle
- Blogging
- Automated Essay Assessment
- EPortfolios
Online Learning and Assessment

MSCHE Guidelines

- Curricula for online learning offerings are coherent and cohesive

- The institution evaluates the effectiveness of its online offerings and uses the results of its evaluations to enhance the attainment of the goals.
The New Frontier: Online learning and Assessment

Quality Assurance in eLearning Rubric
• Course Organization/design elements
• Course content
• Assessment elements
• Interactivity
• Course Technology
New Frontier in Digital Environments: E-Portfolios

Questions? Comments?