



Assessing Student Learning

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What is Assessment?

Assessment is a ...

systematic process for collecting, reviewing, and using evidence/data for the purposes of overall improvement and enhancing student learning.

Assessment is not static or “one time”.

How do we know that we are doing what we say we are doing?

How well are we doing what we say we are doing?

Why do Assessment?

The Purpose of Assessment

Assessment activities are a critical element of effective program development. A well designed assessment program will allow us to:

- Utilize resources more effectively
- Measure the extent to which we are doing what we say we are doing
- Engage in continuous program improvement
- Achieve stakeholder satisfaction
- Maintain professional standards and best practices
- Benchmark
- Evaluate learning outcomes
- Demonstrate value
- Facilitate strategic planning
- Make informed decisions for policy development

Types

- Tracking/Usage: Who is using services?
- Needs: What do our constituents need?
- Satisfaction/Quality: How well are we doing?
How satisfied are the constituents?
- Climate study: How would our constituents describe their environment?
- Learning outcomes: What are students learning?
- Benchmarking: How do we compare to others?

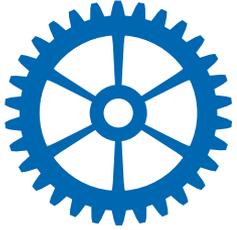
Learning outcomes assessment

Outcomes assessment is the **most valid way** of demonstrating the effectiveness of services, programs, and facilities, especially in **defending and promoting higher education**, and also in **meeting accreditation standards**. It is also the most difficult, complex and misunderstood of all the assessment methodologies.

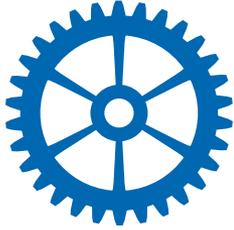
(Upcraft & Schuh, 2001)



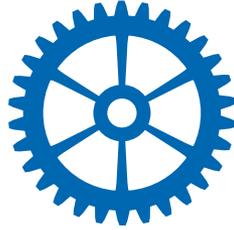
Learning



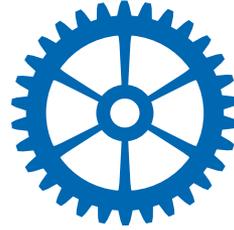
Program



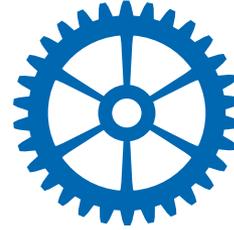
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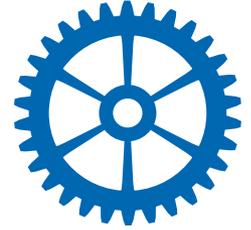
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Program



Program



Program



DEFINING LEARNING



Learning outcomes

Learning Outcomes examine cognitive skills that students (or other stakeholders) develop through department interactions; measurable, transferable skill development.

Statements indicating what a participant (usually students) will **know, think, or be able to do** as a result of an event, activity, program, etc.

Needs to be specific and measurable!

ABCD Structure of a Learning Outcome

(Heinich, et al, 1996)

Audience/
Who

- Who does the outcome pertain to?

Behavior/
What

- What do you expect the audience to know/be able to do?

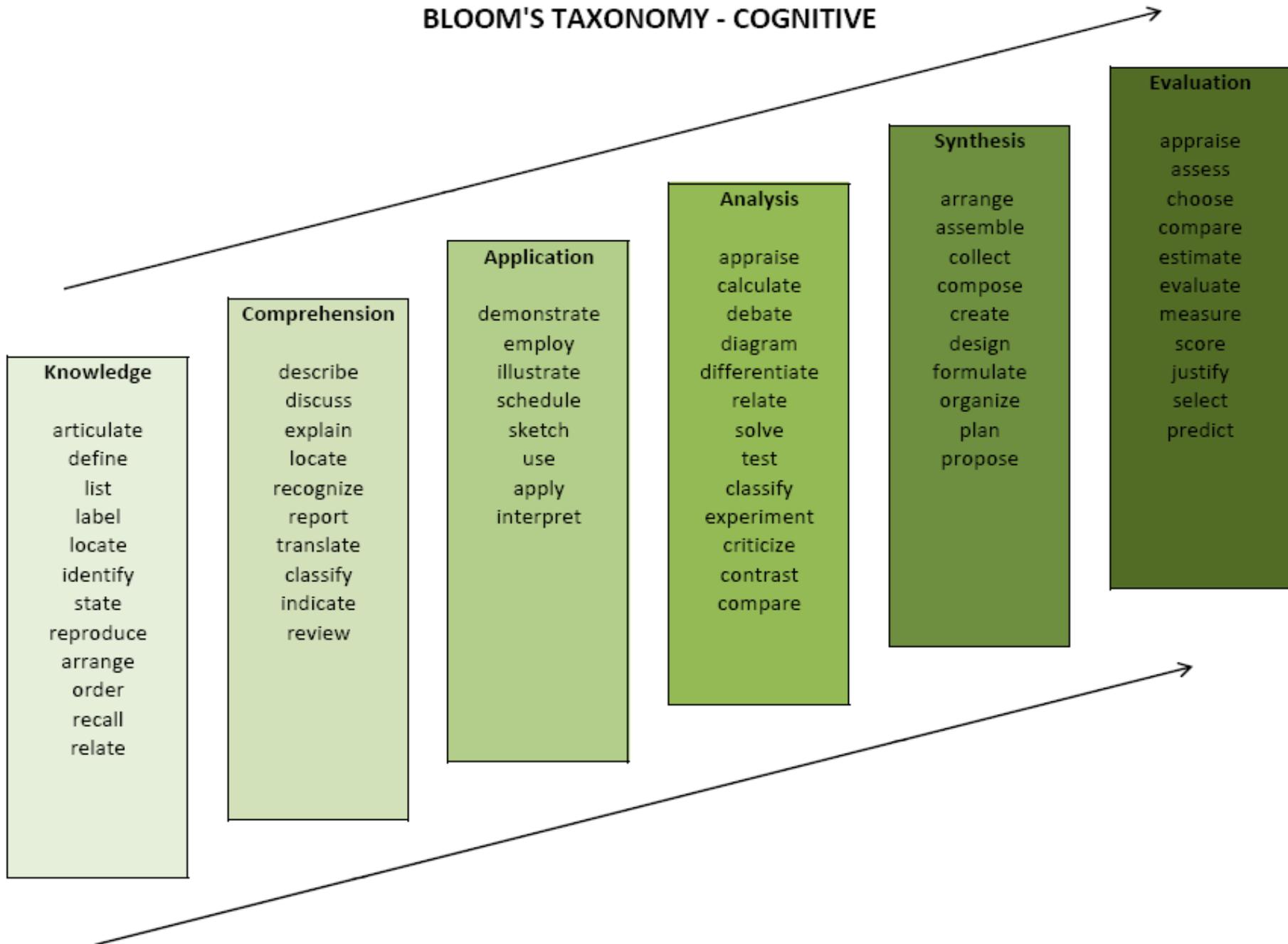
Condition/
How

- Under what conditions or circumstances will the learning occur?

Degree/How
much

- How much will be accomplished, how well will **the behavior** need to be performed, and to what level?

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY - COGNITIVE



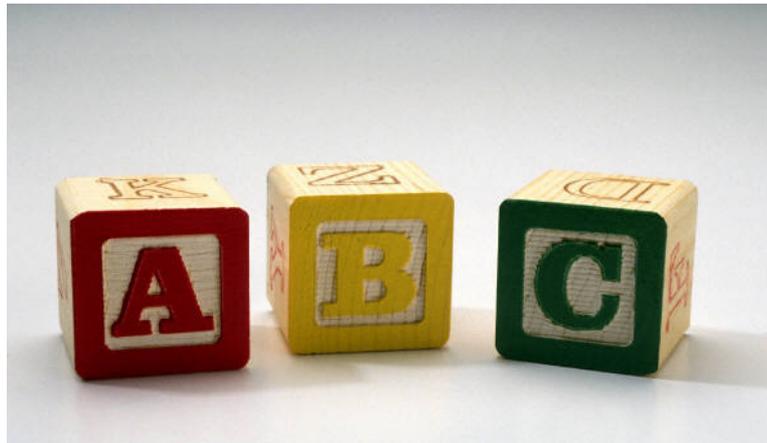
Learning Outcome Statement:

A - Students will ...

B - <learn what>

C - <under these circumstances / conditions>

D - <to this level of efficiency / effectiveness>



Learning outcome examples

1. After attending a financial aid session, **students** will be able to accurately fill out the FAFSA form.
2. As a result of three meetings with an academic coach, **students** will be able to compare study strategies that is appropriate for their learning style.
3. After participating in a leadership retreat, **organization presidents** will be able to differentiate between tasks to complete themselves versus those to delegate to their executive board before their first spring semester planning meeting.

The 3 M's of learning outcomes

Meaningful

- How does the outcome support the departmental mission or goal?

Manageable

- What is needed to foster the achievement of the outcome? Is the outcome realistic?

Measurable

- How will you know if the outcome is achieved? What will be the assessment method?

Beware of these common challenges

- Too vast/complex, too wordy
- Multiple outcomes in one learning outcome statement (the word “and” is usually your first clue!)
- Not specific enough (e.g., effective communication skills)
- Not measurable
- Describe program outcomes, rather than learning outcomes



Improve it!

Students will improve their communication skills.

Students will identify **two** strategies for **facilitation in the classroom** after attending the **Communication Skills for Educators** session.

Audience, Behavior, Condition, Degree

Improve it!

Students and parents will know what kinds of career services exist on campus after orientation.

Students and parents will be able to list three career exploration services available at the Career Center after participating in the Career Center session at Orientation.

Audience, Behavior, Condition, Degree

As a result of attending the leadership 101 workshop, students will be able to identify their leadership style.

As a result of serving as an organization president, students will be able to evaluate their leadership strengths and weaknesses.

As a result of completing a group project in UNIV 101, students will be able to facilitate cohesion among group members.

As a result of serving as a peer mentor, students will be able to recognize the ethical components of leadership.

As a result of living in the Leadership LLC, students will be able to recall opportunities to develop or practice leadership on campus.

As a result of participating in the Global Leaders retreat, students will be able to compose a personal leadership statement.

*As a result of attending the leadership 101 workshop, students will be able to **identify their leadership style.***

*As a result of serving as an organization president, students will be able to **evaluate their leadership strengths and weaknesses.***

*As a result of completing a group project in UNIV 101, students will be able to **facilitate cohesion among group members.***

*As a result of serving as a peer mentor, students will be able to **recognize the ethical components of leadership.***

*As a result of living in the Leadership LLC, students will be able to **recall opportunities to develop or practice leadership on campus.***

*As a result of participating in the Global Leaders retreat, students will be able to **compose a personal leadership statement.***

Activity # 2



Assessing Learning Outcomes



Learning outcomes assessment

Outcomes assessment is the **most valid way** of demonstrating the effectiveness of services, programs, and facilities, especially in **defending and promoting higher education**, and also in **meeting accreditation standards**. It is also the most difficult, complex and misunderstood of all the assessment methodologies.

(Upcraft & Schuh, 2001)

Outcomes assessment...

- Clarifies divisional and departmental “fit” with institutional vision, mission, goals and/or strategic plans
- Clarifies to students and other constituents what students can expect to gain and what the program will accomplish
- Provides different kinds of data and evidence about services - moves beyond satisfaction and tracking use to describing effectiveness
- Links Student Affairs and Academic Affairs; links curricular and co-curricular

Challenges to assessing learning

- Students do not experience college in a way that makes outcomes assessment simple.
- Some learning outcomes may take months, years, or a lifetime to manifest.
- A survey may not cut it.
- Assessing learning is more time consuming and more difficult, compared to other assessments.
- Can be difficult to specifically identify what you want students to learn

CRITERIA FOR METHOD SELECTION



Direct Methods

Any process employed to gather data which requires subjects to **display** their knowledge, behavior, or thought processes.

List three sections that should be listed on your resume:

Indirect Methods

Any process employed to gather data which asks subjects to **reflect** upon their knowledge, behaviors, or thought processes.

I can name all of the sections that should be included when I create my resume.

Strongly agree

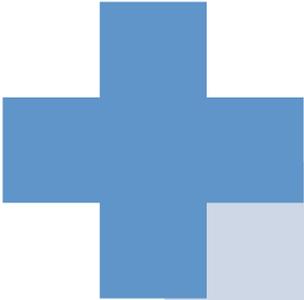
Moderately agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Moderately disagree

Strongly disagree

Indirect measures



Do provide:

- ✓ Evidence of students' attitudes, perceptions, and experiences
- ✓ Evidence that may help to explain student performance levels

Do *not* provide:

- ✓ Work that represents evidence of student learning

Direct or indirect?

Direct!

After attending a financial aid session, **students** will be able to accurately fill out the FAFSA form.

Evaluating FAFSA forms to see how many fields are filled out correctly/incorrectly

Direct or indirect?

Direct!

As a result of three meetings with an academic coach, **students** will be able to compare study strategies that are appropriate for their learning style.

Asking students to tell you how they are studying and comparing that to the study strategies guide

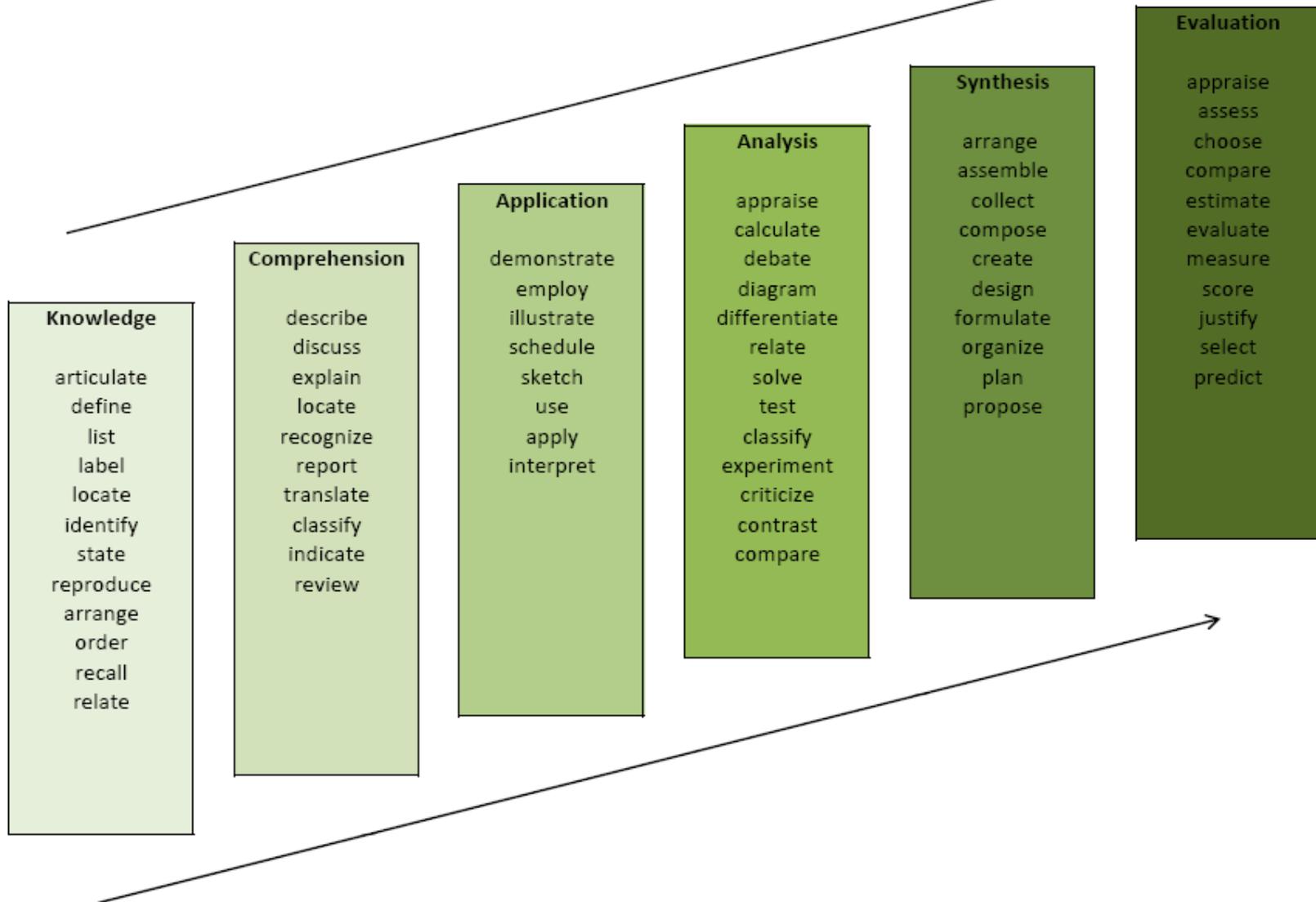
Direct or indirect?

Indirect!

As a result of three meetings with an academic coach, **students** will be able to compare study strategies that are appropriate for their learning style.

At the conclusion of the meeting, asking students to raise their hand if they know what study strategy they will use (and tracking that)

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY - COGNITIVE



Using Bloom's as a guide

If you are trying to assess learning:

- Overall, your assessment method should be a reflection of the learning that you are seeking to assess
- Is what you are asking students to do going to provide you with the evidence you need to make a statement about the learning that occurred?
- Thinking about Bloom's taxonomy, the different levels of thinking would require different assessment methods. (More in-depth thinking level = more in-depth assessment)

Bloom's as a Guide:

- ✓ Knowledge: Quizzes
- ✓ Comprehension: Interviews/Focus Groups or open-ended questions
- ✓ Application: Rubrics for observation or artifact analysis
- ✓ Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation: Rubric to assess reflection paper, portfolio, discussion group (e.g., Resident Assistants evaluating a change in the programming model)

ASSESSMENT EXAMPLES



Direct: Quiz

- Fill-in the blank on surveys
- Multiple choice question
- On-the-spot questions/ pop-quiz

- ✓ Cost-effective – can be done in Baseline!
- ✓ Require grading/tallying
- ✓ Fill-in the blank questions provide best evidence of learning
- ✓ Careful with true/false and multiple choice – otherwise you risk *assessing test taking skills instead of learning!*
- ✓ Can be used in pre/post setting (taking focus off of perception)



SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

Question 32

The U.S. government's "poverty line" for a family of four indicates that annual income below \$20,000 year means the family is living in poverty. The approximate percentage of Americans living below the poverty line is:

- 7%
- 13%
- 25%

Question 33

In the state of California, nearly 19% of children in the state live in poverty. The child poverty rate in San Diego County is:

- 5%
- 16%
- 23%



Northeastern University

2% Complete

Know Your Code 2011

How well do you know your Code of Student Conduct? Take this short test to see. All students who complete a 2 minute survey online at www.northeastern.edu/osccr or at one of our tables during Welcome Week will be entered into a drawing to win a \$100 gift card. Contest ends Friday, September 28, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. Winner will be announced on www.northeastern.edu/osccr on Monday, October 1, 2012.

Question 1

8% Complete

That is correct! No determinations regarding responsibility are made until after you have been given an opportunity to tell your side of the story to a hearing officer or board.

NEXT

Is a quiz right for you?

Pros:

- Cost-effective – can be done in Baseline!
- Provide direct evidence of learning
- Clear right/wrong answers

Cons:

- Require grading/tallying
- May measure test taking skills instead of learning
- Only appropriate for lower levels of Bloom's

Next steps for quizzes

1. Develop your instrument
2. Submit a project request in Baseline so we can give you feedback; note correct answers if multiple choice
3. Select an administration method (online, mobile, paper)
4. Collect data
5. Grade/score
6. Report!

Direct: Rubric

Artifacts

- Essays or reflections
- Portfolios
- Short responses
- Blogs
- Resumes
- Posters
- Photos
- Videos
- Applications

Observation

- Interviews
- Presentations
- Mock scenarios / role plays
- Training
- Group work

33% Complete

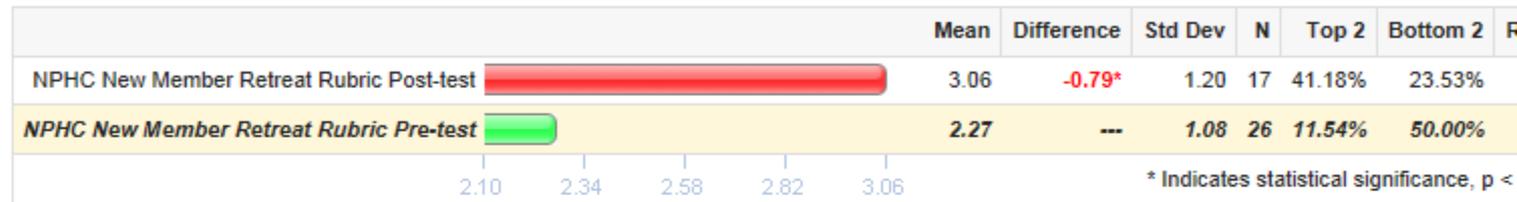
Question 7

Question 8

Question 9

Can you describe your fraternity/sorority standards?

 Graph



	 NPHC New Member Retreat Rubric Post-test	 NPHC New Member Retreat Rubric Pre-test
Beginner (Awareness or base level knowledge): Can't articulate the values to self or others	17.65%	34.62%
Transition (From novice to intermediate)	5.88%	15.38%
Intermediate (Apply the concept somewhat): Can recite the values, but lacks ability to define in own words	35.29%	38.46%
Transition (From intermediate to advanced)	35.29%	11.54%
Advanced (Intentional and effective application): Can clearly explain the values in own words to others	5.88%	0.00%



	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Accomplished 3	Exemplary 4	Score
Assessment of the Situation	Staff did not identify the key areas of concern in the case study	Staff identified some of the key areas of concern in the case study	Staff identified the most significant areas of concern in the case study	Staff identified all areas of concern in the case study	
Approach with Student(s)	Staff recommended an approach with the student (s) that is inappropriate and/or unprofessional	Staff recommended an approach that was acceptable, but could be improved	Staff recommended an approach that was professional and suitable for the situation	Staff recommended an approach that was exactly what is expected	
Referrals to Campus Resources	Staff did not make any referrals to campus resources	Staff acknowledged the resident's need for a referral, but didn't provide any specific examples	Staff acknowledged resident need for referral and gave appropriate examples	Staff acknowledged resident need for referral, provided appropriate ones, and offered to personally assist resident to obtain services	
Reporting	Staff did not recommend reporting the situation to the appropriate person and did not write an incident report	Staff only reported the situation to the RD or wrote an incident report – not both.	Staff reported the situation to the supervisor and wrote an incident report	Staff informed the RD, wrote an incident report, and mentioned keeping the RD continuously informed of any follow up	
Community Education	Staff did not recommend any community education as a result of the scenario	Staff mentioned community education but did not provide examples.	Staff recommended specific community education components	Staff recommended a variety of community education components	
Follow Up	Staff did not follow up with the student(s) involved after the initial contact	Follow up was done, but not appropriately	Staff followed up with the student(s) regarding the initial concern.	Staff followed up with the student regarding the initial and also maintained a positive relationship with the student over time.	
Comments:					Overall Average:

Student Interview Competencies

	1 - Beginner	2 - Developing	3 - Accomplished	4 - Advanced
Verbal communication skills	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nervous, incomplete thoughts, not articulate; No use of professional language; Response riddled with "um's, uh's, er's" etc. 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spoke in a somewhat nervous manner; Lacked confidence in knowledge; Occasional use of professional language; Many "um's, uh's, er's" etc. 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spoke articulately most of the time; Used general words instead of details; Integrated a good amount of professional knowledge throughout response; Some "um's, uh's, er's" etc 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spoke clearly and articulately; Was confident in knowledge; Integrated professional language throughout the response; No "um's, uh's, er's" etc.
Listening skills	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not demonstrate an understanding of the question asked or answered an unasked question. 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer reflected a partial understanding of the question asked. 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer reflected a general understanding of the question; May have missed a detail. 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer reflected an explicit understanding of the question asked.
Non-Verbal Communication	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body language conveyed disinterest or extreme nervousness. Slouched or moved nervously through the interview. Limited or no eye contact. Gestures were not evident or distracting. 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body language was difficult to interpret. Sat upright at times, but slouched occasionally. Intermittent or inconsistent eye contact. Gestures were somewhat limited, unnatural or stiff. 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body language conveyed interest in responding, sat in an upright manner, seemed fairly natural. Appropriate and consistent eye contact, Gestures were appropriate and added to the effectiveness of the response. 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body language conveyed eagerness to respond, sat upright in an alert manner, seemed natural and at ease. Sustained appropriate and natural eye contact, conveyed interest in the topic and the listener. Gestures enhanced the responses.
Ability to link academic background to position	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not connect academic background and skill sets to position/industry. Can not 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasionally connects academic background and skill sets to position/industry. Has 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often connects academic background and skill sets to position/industry. Clearly 	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently connects academic background and skill sets to position/industry. Has

Some more ideas....

- Student Government President leads weekly Senate meetings.
- Students on an Alternative Spring Break blog or journal each day about their experiences.
- Outdoor adventure club members take photos and video of their experience.
- Diversity workshop participants participate in a round table describing privilege, their identity development, etc.

Is a rubric right for you?

Pros:

- Clearly states standards and expectations
- Can be used for a learning and assessment tool
- Provides for consistency in rating/grading
- Participant can use rubric to gauge his/her own performance
- Provides both individual and program-level feedback
- Provides both numbers and descriptive information

Cons:

- Developing a rubric takes time
- Training of raters is needed
- Limited in use for just student learning outcomes
- Beware of inter-rater and intra-rater reliability
- Depending on technology resources, combining aggregate data can take time

Next steps for rubrics

1. View Campus Labs templates (click on Rubrics tab)
2. Search for examples in Community tab
3. Attend Rubrics webinar
4. Select a template or create a draft
5. Send to Campus Labs for review
6. Collect data in Baseline
7. Report!

Surveys

Indirect!

- Used when you want quantitative data (with some opportunity for qualitative from open-ended)
- What you can gather:
 - Self-report of learning
 - Self-report of behavior
- Opportunity to combine with other assessment types (needs, satisfaction)

Ways to gather survey self report

As a result of _____, I can _____:

Agreement: Strongly agree, Moderately agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Moderately disagree, Strongly disagree (another version removes the “moderately” qualifier and/or uses “neutral”)

To what extent did _____ help you _____:

Extent (5 pt): A great deal, Considerably, Moderately, Slightly, Not at all

How would you rate your ability to _____:

Proficiency: Beginner, Developing, Proficient, Advanced, Expert

What did you learn about _____?

Can you _____?

Yes, No



Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - I use appropriate communication methods for different situations and audiences.

Graph



	Average of QV 08-12	2012 Orientation Leader Post-Assessment	Experiential Learning Survey	BHLP Tier 2 Project Assessment	Healthy HENS 2012 Leadership & Integrity Development Survey	Recruitment Counselor (Rho Gamma) 2011 Review	Resident Assistant Skill Module	RSO End of the Year Assessment
Strongly agree	65.88%	92.31%	62.75%	80.00%	100.00%	56.41%	73.86%	
Moderately agree	29.22%	7.69%	30.37%	13.33%	0.00%	41.03%	26.14%	
Neither agree nor disagree	4.39%	0.00%	6.02%	6.67%	0.00%	2.56%	0.00%	
Moderately disagree	0.34%	0.00%	0.57%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	
Strongly disagree	0.17%	0.00%	0.29%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	
Total Respondents	592	13	349	15	6	39	88	

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

Q1 I often find myself seeking out knowledge on topics beyond what is taught in class.

Strongly agree [Code = 5]

Agree [Code = 4]

Neutral [Code = 3]

Disagree [Code = 2]

Strongly disagree [Code = 1]

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 1

Q2 I am able to recognize areas in which I excel.

Strongly agree [Code = 5]

Agree [Code = 4]

Neutral [Code = 3]

Disagree [Code = 2]

Strongly disagree [Code = 1]

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 1

Q3 I am confident in my values system regardless of the situation.

Strongly agree [Code = 5]

Agree [Code = 4]

Neutral [Code = 3]

Disagree [Code = 2]

Strongly disagree [Code = 1]

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 1

Is a survey right for you?

Pros:

- Include large numbers
- Relatively fast and easy to collect data
- Lots of resources available
- Requires minimal resources
- Fast to analyze
- Good for surface level or basic data

Cons:

- Survey fatigue and response rates
- Non-responsive
- Limited in type of questions asked
- Lacks depth in data
- Skills set in both designing questions and analyzing data properly

Next steps for surveys

1. Search the Community tab for examples
2. Attend the Survey Design webinar
3. Submit a project request in Baseline so we can give you feedback
4. Attend the Survey Administration webinar
5. Collect data
6. Report!

Focus Groups

Both!

- **Group discussions** where the facilitator supplies the topics and monitors the discussion.
- The purpose is to gather information about a **specific (or focused) topic** in a group environment, allowing for discussion and interaction by participants.
- Similar to interviews, but use when the group interaction will give contribute to a richer conversation

Focus Groups

- Used when you want qualitative data and a better understanding of the learning occurring
 - can help with writing better statements
- Self report of learning:
 - What did you learn at Orientation?
- Self report of behavior:
 - How did you prepare for the Career Fair?
- Can also be combined with other assessment needs

Examples

Dialogues on Diversity participants:

- *How would you describe your identity to another student?*

First year students:

- *What did you learn at Orientation?*

Career Fair participants:

- *How did you prepare for the Career Fair?*

Next steps for focus groups:

1. Attend Focus Groups webinar
2. Draft Questions and send to Campus Labs for feedback
3. Recruit participants
4. Train facilitator (if needed)
5. Facilitate the focus group & take notes
6. Attend Qualitative Analysis webinar
7. Analyze and report on data

Is a focus group right for you?

Pros:

- Helps to understand perceptions, beliefs, thought processes
- Small number of participants
- Focus groups encourage group interaction and building upon ideas
- Responsive in nature
- Relatively low costs involved

Cons:

- Getting participants (think of time/places)
- Data collection and analysis takes time
- Data is as good as the facilitator
- Beware of bias in analysis reporting
- Meant to tell story, may not help if numbers are needed
- Data is not meant to be generalizable

Indirect: Tracking

- Student attendance
- Number of programs
- Student organization involvement
- Student use of departmental services
- Community service hours



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Final considerations

- Mixed-methods
 - Survey & rubric to measure both direct and indirect
 - On the spot quiz combined with focus group to capture both the immediate and the complex & ongoing
- Starting small
 - Pick one area of learning to focus on (e.g., interpersonal development)

Activity # 1



QUESTIONS?

