Developing Goals and Measurable Outcomes

Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness

Office of Academic Programs and Educational Effectiveness

Lehman College, The City University of New York

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About The Workshop

This is a 90 minutes online interactive workshop

Purpose

To discuss assessment goals and outcomes.

Workshop Learning Outcome

To be effective, assessment must be guided by clear goals and outcomes.

At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Differentiate between goals and outcomes

- Distinguish between student learning, support, and performance outcomes
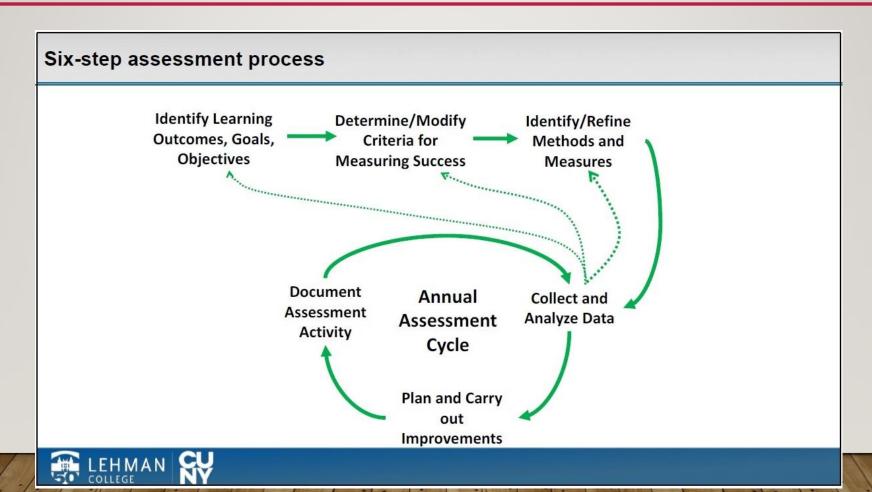
- Write clear goals and outcomes

The Basics: Why Assessment?

- Are we meeting our unit's goals?
- Are students learning what we want them to learn?

Continuous improvement.

Lehman College's 6-Step Process

Six-step assessment process

Identify Learning Outcomes, Goals, Objectives → Determine/Modify Criteria for Measuring Success → Identify/Refine Methods and Measures → Collect and Analyze Data → Plan and Carry out Improvements → Document Assessment Activity

Annual Assessment Cycle

Goals

- Broad statements

- Focused on programs, courses, or units

- May or may not include student learning

- Useful to intended audiences (students, faculty, staff, administrators)

Goals

Three categories:

- Student Learning

- Support (or student support)

- Performance (operational)

Should support and be linked to the institutional mission and goals

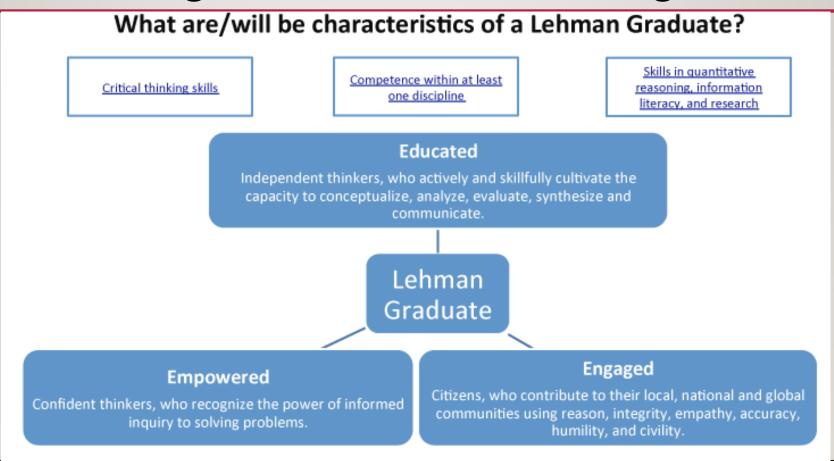**Linkage to those goals can provide insight into goal attainment**

Goals

Underlying questions:

- Student Learning: What do we want students to know/be able to do?

- Support (or student support): What do we seek to do to help students succeed?

- Performance (operational): What does this unit do? What do we want to accomplish?

Lehman College's Institutional Learning Goals

What are/will be characteristics of a Lehman Graduate?

Critical thinking skills

Competence within at least one discipline

Skills in quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and research

Educated
Independent thinkers, who actively and skillfully cultivate the capacity to conceptualize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize and communicate.

Lehman Graduate

Empowered
Confident thinkers, who recognize the power of informed inquiry to solving problems.

Engaged
Citizens, who contribute to their local, national and global communities using reason, integrity, empathy, accuracy, humility, and civility.

Outstanding communication skills in diverse media

Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team

Potential for leadership

Multicultural, global and ethical awareness of diverse peoples and communities

Learning More About Your Unit's Operations

Does your unit contribute to student learning?

Is the student learning centered around the characteristics of a Lehman graduate and the College's 90x30 goal?

How do you know if you are succeeding?

Factors to Consider When Assessing Performance

Leading causes of the strategy-to-performance gap:

- Inadequate or unavailable resources

- Poorly communicated strategy

- Actions required for execution are not clearly defined

- Unclear accountability for execution

- Organizational silos and culture block execution

- Inadequate performance monitoring

- Other factors:

Source: Michael C. Mankins and Richard Steele, "Turning Great Strategy into Great Performance," Harvard Business Review, July-August 2005

Objectives

- Statements concerning the intended strategies for each goal
- Specific

Focused on who delivers the service (program, unit, faculty, staff)

Outcomes

- Specific

- Measurable

- Focused on students, customers, end-users

- Focused on the ends related to an activity

Outcomes operationalize goals

Outcomes

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ARE:

- Detailed Expectations of Students

- Knowledge

- Skills

- Disposition

- About the Impact of the Unit on Students

SUPPORT OUTCOMES ARE:

- Detailed Expectations of Support Provided by Units

- Focused on the Delivery of Services, Processes, Activities, or Functions to Students, Faculty, or Staff

- About the Nature of the Unit

Source: Christopher Shults, PH.D. and Tammie Cumming, PH.D., "Building the Framework for Effective AES Assessment: Developing Mission, Goals, And Outcomes, May 11, 2018.

Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) concern:

- Knowledge (course content: facts, theories, etc.)

- Skills (capacities: critical thinking, information literacy, etc.)

- Dispositions (global perspectives, tolerance, civic engagement, etc.)

Student-centered

Support/Performance Outcomes

Support/Performance Outcomes concern:

- Delivery of a function or service (how it is delivered, how efficiently it is delivered, etc.)

- Impact of the delivery of a function or service (on students, other stakeholders, or the unit/institution)

Good Outcomes

Key characteristics:

- Aligned with mission/goals

- Specific

- Measurable

- Focused on priorities, high-impact areas

Promote meaningful improvement

Writing Outcomes

- Be clear

- Be descriptive

- Be specific

Communication matters: clearly describe specific outcomes

Writing Outcomes

Guiding Questions (at the heart of goals, objectives, and outcomes):

- What do we expect students to know?

- What do we expect students to be able to demonstrate?

- What dispositions or attitudes do we expect students to possess?

- How do we deliver student learning?

- What services do we provide?

- How do we support students?

- What need would go unmet if our program or office did not exist?

Writing Outcomes

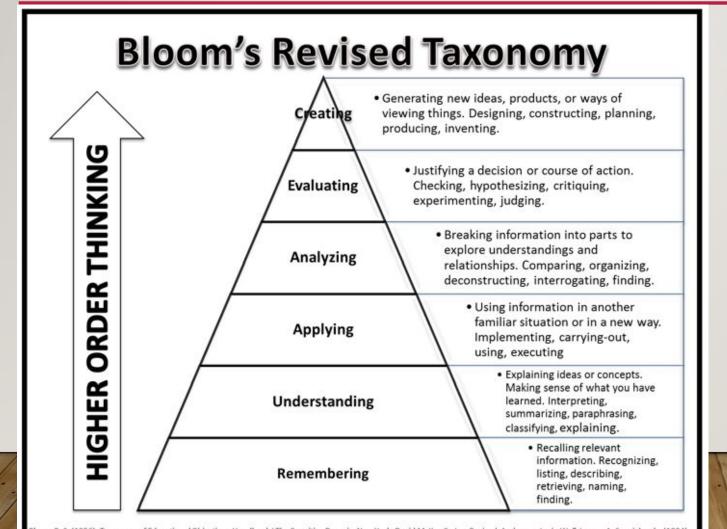Tip: Focus on what can be demonstrated, produced, or done.

Ambiguity is a roadblock to success

Writing Outcomes

Bloom's Taxonomy is a useful tool for articulating goals and outcomes.

Bloom's Taxonomy: Student Learning

Bloom's Taxonomy: Performance or Support

Source: Shults Dorime Williams Support Outcomes Taxonomy

Examples

CLI 101: Introduction to Climate Change:

Goal	Objective(s)	Outcome(s)
Students will understand the dominant cause of recent ongoing climate change	The course will cover: The Greenhouse Effect Climate forcings (anthropogenic and natural) Climate "Fingerprints" Paleoclimate evidence	Students will be able to define and describe the Greenhouse Effect. Students will be able to identify the major climate forcings and distinguish between natural and anthropogenic forcings. Students will describe the warming troposphere-cooling stratosphere and assess whether an enhanced Greenhouse Effect could produce that outcome. Students will list at least three lines of paleoclimate proxies and describe areas of agreement among those proxies during the past 2,000 years.

Examples

LEH 101: Student Orientation

Goal	Objective(s)	Outcome(s)
Incoming students will be empowered to succeed at Lehman College.	Introduce students to the history of Lehman College, its mission and its values Provide students with information about Lehman College's student support services Introduce students to Lehman College's student activities Inform students about Lehman College's major policies	Students will be able to navigate Lehman College's website to locate information on Lehman's history, mission and values. Students will be able to identify and match support services for various needs. Students will explain where the Student Center is and describe the kinds of co-curricular activities that are available at Lehman College. Students will locate the Undergraduate Bulletin and then find the College's academic integrity policies.

Examples

Budget Office

Goal	Objective(s)	Outcome(s)
To provide high quality, objective, accurate and timely financial information	Provide timely information concerning the College's revenue and expenses Ensure strategic priorities are adequately funded Provide regular budget projections	The Office will analyze the College's revenue and expenses relative to revenue and expense targets. Allocations will be matched with the College's strategic priorities. The Office will project key financial metrics under a baseline and one or more alternative scenarios. Financial projections will be reasonably accurate when the realized outcomes are substituted for underlying assumptions (enrollment, net tuition, etc.)

Workshop Exercise

Develop one or more outcomes for the Department of Psychology and Office of International Students (OIS):

Consider:

- The institutional mission

- The departmental and office mission

- The departmental and office goals

- Bloom's Revised Taxonomy

Communication to Stakeholders

- Communication makes goals and outcomes explicit

- Explicit goals and outcomes enhance credibility and strengthen commitment

- Credibility and commitment increase the probability of attainment

Communication to Stakeholders

The website is a central location at which external and internal stakeholders can lean about programs, departments, units and offices.

Communication to Stakeholders

Best practices (website):

- Mission Statement

- Goals

- Objectives

- Learning, Support, Performance Outcomes

For Further Information

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