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# Are We There Yet? Assessing Our Progress in Assessment

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**DRAFT-----Continuum of Assessment Maturity-----DRAFT**

Note: Categories in the first column are adapted from Trudy Banta's *Hallmarks of Effective Outcomes Assessment*.

Labels for columns are adapted from Culp & Dungy's *Measuring a culture of evidence*.

	BEGINNING (Culture of Good Intentions)	DEVELOPING (Culture of Justification)	MATURE (Culture of Evidence)
<b>PLANNING</b>	Acknowledge that assessment of student learning is needed.	Assessment planning tends to be reactive rather than proactive.	Assessment is regularly discussed and is integrated into courses and activities.
External Influences	Tendency to see assessment as being directed from outside of the department/program.	External influences, including program reviews, direct assessment efforts.	Reports are developed for external as well as internal audiences as needed; locus of control for assessment is understood to be internal to the department/program.
Engaging Stakeholders	Unsure of who should be involved; tendency to "assign" assessment to some individual.	Reports of assessment results are shared with stakeholders whenever the results are positive.	A departmental committee leads the assessment activities and regularly consults with internal and external stakeholders.
Focus on Outcomes	If outcomes have been developed, they tend to be broadly written (for example: "Students will be lifelong learners")	Outcomes have been developed, but change frequently based on external demands.	Clearly-written statements of expected student learning outcomes are used to assess student progress and to make claims about the program's effectiveness.
Developing a Plan	A plan was written when required,	An assessment plan has been developed but faculty and	The assessment plan is used to guide activities, is under constant

	but has been largely ignored	stakeholders have limited awareness of assessment activities.	revision and improvement, and is understood by most stakeholders.
<b>IMPLEMENTING</b>	Assessment activities are sporadic and dependent upon faculty interest	Assessment activities are driven by requirements for program review, accreditation, or other external factors.	Assessment is included as a regular part of departmental activities and results are used to make decisions about programs and operations.
Methods	<p>Methods of assessment have been identified.</p> <p>Assessment methods rely on indirect measures of learning or on student satisfaction.</p> <p>Methods are external to the regular functioning of the department.</p>	<p>Methods of assessment have been identified.</p> <p>Methods focus on gathering data that present programs in a positive light.</p> <p>Criteria for success are set at levels likely to be achieved by all students.</p>	<p>At least two methods of assessment have been identified for each intended student outcome.</p> <p>Methods include direct measures of student learning.</p>
Faculty Development	Faculty are encouraged to attend university-sponsored opportunities to learn about assessment.	Faculty attend assessment-related professional development opportunities when those opportunities support mandated reviews, including accreditation.	<p>Faculty have the opportunity to participate in on-going education concerning assessment methods and uses of assessment data.</p> <p>Multiple faculty within the department participate in faculty development opportunities related to assessment.</p>

Leadership	Leadership for assessment is undefined or left to one faculty or staff member.	Leadership for assessment has been identified.  Assessment leaders emphasize accreditation and program review.	Department chairs assure that assessment methods are implemented on a pre-determined schedule and that results from those assessments are used in decision making.  The department faculty lead efforts to manage, maintain, and improve assessment in the department.
<b>SUSTAINING</b>	The department's assessment efforts are sporadic.	The schedule for departmental assessment activities are linked to internal and external reporting and review requirements.	The department has an assessment committee that meets at least once each semester to review assessment activities and results.
Interpreting Findings	Assessment results have been collected, but analysis of results have been limited or have been completed by an individual rather than a group.	Analysis of results is directed by accreditation and review requirements.	Department faculty analyze results of assessment at least once a year.  Analysis and interpretation involve multiple faculty members and, where appropriate, other stakeholders.
Reporting Results	Assessment results are rarely reported.  Faculty and other stakeholders are	Assessment results are shared in response to reporting requirements set by the institution or accrediting	At least annually, assessment results are reported to the faculty and other stakeholders.  Assessment reports are shared with

	not aware of assessment results.	body.	college and university administration as requested,
Using Results	<p>Programmatic decisions are made without considering assessment results.</p> <p>Curriculum change documents do not reference assessment results as a rationale for change.</p>	<p>Assessment results provide support for decisions made by faculty or other stakeholders.</p> <p>Assessment results may be sought after the decision has been made.</p>	Assessment results are used in making program improvements and to support requests for resources.
Recognizing Success	Assessment activities are identified as departmental service.	Assessment activities are recognized as important in maintaining accreditation or “good standing” in program review.	<p>Assessment activities are acknowledged as professional activity as indicated by department policy statements and tenure/promotion decisions.</p> <p>The department recognizes excellence in assessment through awards or other recognition.</p>
Making Improvements	<p>Program improvements are not directly linked to assessment results or activities.</p> <p>If improvements have been suggested by assessments, no documentation has been kept.</p>	<p>Assessment results may be used to support improvements.</p> <p>Documentation of the relationship between assessment and improvement is kept as required.</p>	<p>The department documents the relationship between assessment results and program improvements.</p> <p>The department goals include continuous program improvement supported by assessment.</p>