Assessment 101

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS & ENROLLMENT SERVICES
ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

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I. Introduction

This guide is an introduction to assessment for the University of Houston Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services. It serves as a review for current employees and a component of the onboarding process for new employees (including graduate students). While it covers numerous sections and is quite extensive, it is not exhaustive; there is always more to learn and incorporate in utilization of assessment.

Happy Assessing!

Special thanks to the 2016-2017 Assessment Committee Co-Chairs Douglas Eck and Priyanka Raut for their leadership and direction in the finalizing of this document. Additional thanks to the 2016-2017 Assessment Committee members for their efforts to make updates to this guide. These members include: Rebecca Szwarc, Darryl Creeks, Lear Hickman, Crystal Hutchinson, Jennifer Skopal, Raven Jones, Michael Crook, Mark Smith, Lauren Ellzey, Katy Kaesebier, Eve Esch, Curtis Wallace, Jordan Sass, Mirum Washington-White, Amy Fitzjarrald, Rosa Gouveia Correia, Elijah Hill, Lauren Berryhill, and Jamesia King. Lastly, thanks to Dr. Pam Shefman, Director of Assessment and Planning, and Julie Neisler, Research Assistant for Assessment and Planning, for their additional work on this document.

Additional thanks go to the 2018-2019 Assessment Committee Co-Chairs Eve Esch and Jennifer Skopal for editing the document to be current and to ensure it is relevant to the Division.

II. Definition of Terms

Assessment – The gathering and analyzing of data about a program, service, or activity, and then using that information to make informed decisions for improvement.

Assessment Plan - The annual plan that guides assessment efforts for a UH department. The plan includes a department's mission, vision, goals for the year, a number of assessment 'activities' to accomplish throughout the year, results, and next steps based on results.

Department Review/ Program Review - Every seven years, each department within the DSAES is reviewed by a team of professionals in the field (external to UH) to ensure they are meeting CAS standards. Additional information on department/program reviews can be found here.

Direct Assessment - Assessment that demonstrates learning and focuses on students' achievements of learning outcomes. A demonstration or display of actual knowledge, thought process, skills, accomplishments, or achievements.
Example: Someone *accurately* answers 2 + 2 = 4 on a quiz.

Fiscal Year (FY) – A period that a company or organization uses for accounting, budgeting and reporting purposes. The fiscal year at the University of Houston is defined as September 1st - August 31st.

Formative Assessment - This form of assessment monitors student learning through ongoing feedback to improve instructor's teaching and student's learning. It can be formal or informal and occurs in the short term. Feedback to the learner is immediate, to enable the learner to change their behavior and understandings right away. Examples: a very interactive group discussion; an on-the-spot performance evaluation.

Indirect Assessment – Assessment that describes learning and measures perceptions and behaviors during the learning process. Indirect assessment may provide feedback on how learning is valued and student perception on their own level of learning. Can be a reflection on and/or self-report about knowledge, thought processes, learned skills etc., or a perception of an accomplishment or achievement.
Example: Someone *tells* you that they can answer a math question like 2 + 2 = 4 on a quiz.

Interim Assessment – This form of assessment takes place occasionally throughout a larger time period. Feedback to the learner is quick but may not be immediate. The learner should be given the opportunity to re-demonstrate performance once the feedback has been digested and acted upon. Interim Assessments can help identify gaps in understanding and ideally address these before moving on to additional responsibilities. Examples: Mid-semester evaluation; mid-program Q&A or evaluation (ex. Raise your hand if you've learned something new already).

Learning Outcome - Statements that describe the knowledge or skills students should acquire by the end of an assignment, class, course, or program.

Mapping - The process of connecting annual department goals to DSAES strategic initiatives. Goals are "mapped" to initiatives they support.

Operational objectives/outcomes - A service or administrative outcome that documents how well an operation works.
Example: All incoming admissions applications were reviewed, and a decision was made within a 6-week period.

Program Objective - A statement written ahead of time that will measure the impact your program or department had overall.
Example: Decrease time to graduation.

Progress Card - A progress card is an excel spreadsheet that tells the story of impacts on student success for the division. A card may contain the utilization, outreach efforts, attendance in programs and overall productivity, retention and/or graduation rates, and persistence by aggregate numbers only.

Rubric - An evaluation form that is used to measure a program, department, or performance to a particular standard. A rubric can communicate expectations of quality around a task. In many cases, scoring rubrics are used to delineate consistent criteria for evaluation, which can be complex and subjective.

Strategic Initiative - The means through which the vision of the Strategic Plan is translated into practice.

Student Learning - Different than student satisfaction, your assessment plan may include measurements of what the student learned, or what new skills they gained *as a result of* your training, program, or service. The assessment tool should have students demonstrate or report their learning.
Example: a post-program survey could say, "Please list two resources or services offered by our office that you learned about in this training."

Strategic Plan - DSAES has a five year strategic planning cycle. The plan provides our guiding mission, values, strategic initiatives, and provides a timeline for accomplishing these goals/initiatives.

Student Success - There are a variety of factors that contribute to student success and can be measured with your assessment plan. Some examples are extracurricular involvement, connectedness to campus, financial support, awareness of campus resources etc. The items that are reported on the progress card are the key performance indicators (KPI) for student success and are defined as G.P.A., retention, persistence and graduation rates.

Summative Assessment – This form of assessment takes place at the end of a large chunk of learning, with the results being primarily for the learner's use. Results may take time, feedback is usually very limited, and there is usually no opportunity to be reassessed. These assessments are heavily used to identify strengths and weaknesses, with improvements affecting the next year's results. Examples: Exit interview; end of program evaluation; annual performance review.

III. The Importance of Assessment & How it is Used

Assessment is the process of determining "what is." It provides us with evidence, numerical or otherwise, from which we can develop useful information about our students, programs, departments, services, and outcomes. The information we collect can assist us in making decisions about student learning and development, effectiveness, and program/service quality.

For many years, assessment was equated to satisfaction surveys. Students would report if they were satisfied with a program, service, or outcome, which was then generally used as the barometer of success in evaluations. As the focus shifted to measuring if/how/what students are learning, the need to measure program and learning outcomes moved to the forefront of good assessment.

Good assessment and evaluation practices support the success of students, programs, and institutions through clearly communicated learning outcomes, solid methodology, and the informed use of data. It also allows departments and the division to make educated decisions regarding allocations of resources and funding.

Additionally, assessment is crucial to the university's accreditation. Accreditation is important because it helps determine if an institution meets or exceeds minimum standards of quality. With an accredited institution, a student has some assurance of receiving a quality education and gaining recognition by other colleges and by employers of the course credits and degrees earned.

Within the Division, assessment is used to ensure that departments maximize their efforts to provide services and programs that foster student success. An ongoing assessment cycle is used to examine the efficacy of past and ongoing initiatives. Departments can use assessment to plan for future focuses, learn about student perceptions, determine if a program is achieving intended outcomes, determine satisfaction of services, provide support for accreditation/review processes, and justify the need for additional resources.

Examples: An example of departmental use of assessment could be SHRL's (Student Housing and Residential Life) use of MAPWorks. All first-year students are highly encouraged to take the MAPWorks' initial assessment in order to see how students are adjusting to life at UH. This "early alert" program helps the staff in SHRL reach out to students who may need additional services or support. Another example could be IES' (Integrated Enrollment Services) customer service survey of

students who visit the Welcome Center or call the Call Center. IES uses the data daily to determine quality of services provided.

IV. What to do Before Starting an Assessment Project

Before starting an assessment project, think through the assessment cycle. This involves **planning** ahead, knowing how data will be collected, **reflecting** on what has been learned, and figuring out how the collected data will be used.

- o **Plan** - This step involves thinking through all steps of the assessment cycle. Depending on what is being assessed, this may also include:
    - ▪ Reviewing and revising program mission and goals of the department keeping in mind students, faculty, and staff
    - ▪ Identifying an assessment team, participants, timeline, and previous methods and tools used.
    - ▪ Determining the assessment methods along with criteria and sample population size.

  It is imperative to ask "what are we interested in figuring out/knowing/verifying with regard to our programs and services?" These questions can help determine "what" needs to be known and the possible methods for data collection.

- o **Collect** the data/information. For each of the assessment initiatives, determine who will and how data will be collected. There are a variety of means to collect data. This could be formal or informal, direct or indirect, formative or interim, etc.

- o **Reflect** on the results. What does the data indicate? Does the data confirm or contradict previous knowledge? Do the results indicate something entirely new? This is when the data can develop into a new story.

- o Know how to **use** the data, once it is collected and synthesized. Before launching an assessment project, know in advance what you plan on doing with the data. Will the data be helped to measure student learning and guide future decision making? Will the data be used to validate program/personnel effectiveness and shared with an audience? Will the data be used as a starting point for measuring elements of a program/service even further?
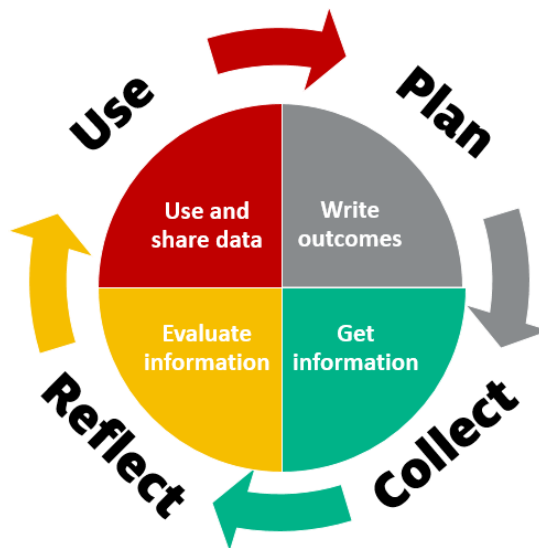
V.   Writing Learning/Program/Operational Outcomes

Learning outcomes identify what the learner will know and be able to do by the end of a course, activity, or program. Program or operational outcomes are results or impacts from an activity that may not include learning but are measures of success.

Learning outcomes are statements that describe significant and essential learning that learners / participants have achieved and that can be reliably demonstrated at the end of a course, activity, or program. Learning outcomes should:

- Reflect broad conceptual knowledge and adaptive vocational and generic skills, reflect essential knowledge, skills or attitudes;
- Focus on results of the learning experiences;
- Reflect the desired end of the learning experience "to what degree?"
- Answer the question, "What should a student take away?"

Learning outcomes statements may be considered exit behaviors and may be broken down into three main components:

1. An *action word* that identifies the performance to be demonstrated; Bloom's Taxonomy* (see Section XIV) is a great resource for selecting verbs.
2. A *learning statement* that specifies what learning will be demonstrated in the performance;
3. A broad statement of the *criterion* or standard for acceptable performance.

Learning Outcome Formula

By _____ (doing what?), _____ (audience) will be able to _____ (Action verb from bloom's taxonomy) _____ (complete the sentence).

Example:

By *attending an Inclusive Language workshop* facilitated by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, *attendees* will be able to *identify one language change* that that they will change to be more inclusive.

Tips on Writing Learning Outcomes/Objectives:

- The verb generally refers to the intended cognitive process.
- The object generally describes the knowledge students are expected to acquire.
- Precede each objective with a phrase like "Students will be able to…"
- Avoid verbs that are vague and hard to measure, such as:
  - Understand
  - Appreciate
  - Know about
  - Become familiar with
  - Learn about
  - Become aware of

VI.   Assessment Plans

The purpose of an assessment plan is to report departmental activities to the Division, which will be reported through annual divisional reporting. Each department in the Division develops and submits an assessment plan draft in June and then completes a summary of the results and action to be taken at the conclusion of the assessment activities.

The plan ensures:

- each department is measuring the effectiveness of selected the activities.
- all departmental programs and activities are intentional, have a purpose, and are aligned with goals and DSAES Strategic Initiatives.

All departmental plans are published on the [Assessment and Planning](#) website thus reflecting the DSAES value of transparency and accountability.

Assessment Plan Section Definitions

Department Goals – For this part of an assessment plan, state the goals of the department for the fiscal year of the plan. These goals should align with the DSAES strategic initiatives (*the DSAES strategic initiative number should be listed at the end of a goal). Goals should be measurable. If they are not measurable, include action steps that are measurable. For example:

1. Provide educational and supportive services to a wider range of student populations.
   a. Student Education Program: Do outreach to fraternities and sororities, student orgs, residential hall, etc. hosting a minimum of 4 LGBTQ workshops per year. *SS2
   b. Implement a sexual orientation / gender identity discussion group. *SS5
   c. Refine the mentoring program for LGBTQ student. *SS1
   d. Create and implement a structured intervention for the MAPWORKS respondents. *SS2

Assessment Activity – This is the learning, program, or operational activity within an office that will be measured as part of an assessment plan. Examples of assessment activities include measuring the efficiency of document processing, visitor satisfaction with various components of customer service, student learning of a particular objective, or a program's ability to increase the G.P.A. of its members.

Purpose of Assessment Activity – What will an assessment activity determine? For example, "To determine which components of customer service the office does well, and which components need improvement."

Method – How will data be collected to accomplish the purpose of the assessment? What tools will be used? Be specific. For example, "We will ask 10 to 12 'secret shopper' students who have not been to the center before to visit the center. They will role play various common scenarios and after their interaction with our staff, they will evaluate the customer service experience with a paper copy of our rubric. Professional staff will then evaluate the results."

Frequency/Timeline –What time of the year the assessment will be conducted and how often. Be specific so that the assessment consulting team knows when to follow-up with the department. For example, "'secret shoppers' will visit the Center throughout the fall semester. Results will be reviewed at the end of the term."

Fiscal Year (FY) goals supported – Using the same numbering system that was used for department goals, list which specific department goal an assessment activity supports. For example, SS1.

Summary of this activity – Once an assessment activity is complete, write a narrative of what took place. This is completed by sharing the results and actions to be taken now that results are collected.

Results – What are the findings? I.e. what can be learned? Be sure to include specific numerical data. For example, "on a five-point scale, student staff scored above '4' in all categories, except in the category, 'resources' where they averaged a '3.'"

Action – What are the next steps as a result of the findings? Highlight what will change or continue and what further assessments will be completed. For example, "Professional staff will enhance the student staff training by supplementing campus resource training twice a semester."

Prior FY Assessment Plans can be found here:
http://www.uh.edu/dsaes/about/assessment_planning/departmental_assessment_plans.html

Example:

2 Cougar Involvement Ambassadors

Department/Program Name: Center for Student Involvement

Department/Program Assessment Contact(s) (in addition to the director): Ja'Nelle King

Learning Outcome/Assessment Activity Description: CIA students will be able to show an increase in facilitation skills throughout the year in presenting workshops.

Purpose of Assessment Activity:
To measure their effectiveness in providing group and individual resources and support to registered student organizations.

Method of Assessment: Rubric
Pre/Post Test

Method of Assessment Description:
Self-reported evaluation on skills, rubric developed for staff on perceived skills by each student leader

Frequency / Timeline of Assessment Activity:
September 2017, December 2017, April 2018

Activity Theme: Student Employment (Training & Development)

Results:
Students were given a self assessment at the beginning of the academic year (September) and at the end of the academic year (April) to evaluate their perceived skills in facilitation and presentation to their peers. From the first self assessment, students noted they had opportunities for growth in preparing/reviewing content, speaking clearly and concisely, creating anecdotes, fidgeting, filler words, and eye contact.

Upon the second assessment there was growth in several of these areas:

Reviewing Content - 2.25 --> 3.5 - growth of 1.25
Fidgeting - 2.5 --> 4.25 - growth of 1.75
Filler Words - 2.25 --> 3.5 - growth of 1.25
Telling Anecdotes - 2.5 --> 4.25 - growth of 1.75

Experiences like facilitation training, rehearsals, SOLD/Cougar Connections, Resource Fairs, and speaking engagements helped students to grow in these areas.

There were still areas of growth for students based on the assessment. Students had little to no growth in the areas of speaking clearly (3 --> 3.25), managing Q&A (4--> 4), and managing their time when presenting (sticking to time, or not rushing through information) (3.75 -->3.75).

Action to be taken as a result of the activity:
As a result of the data collected, we will ensure we take more time to help students prepare and rehearse their presentations/facilitation before hand. We will also create more opportunities for Cougar Involvement Ambassadors to facilitate and present to their peers, through SOLD and Cougar Connection sessions, training them to help with Orientation Sessions, and more speaking engagements to help students get involved. By allowing the students to get these experiences, it will help them to gain additional skills needed once they graduate and move on from CSI.

VII.   Timelines for Assessments & Reports

The assessment calendar's main use is to track assessment activities and to make conclusions about learning over a period of time. The timeline is a list of events for the systematic collection, review, and use of information about programs and processes. It can use any time scale, which is dependent on the events in the timeline. The timeline also provides the cycle at which an outcome is assessed over a period of time.

Each department is accountable for gathering assessment evidence and for providing reports about findings and decisions for various purposes at specified times. It is critical that each unit's assessment processes be able to meet these purposes within an ongoing process that provides markers regarding the collection, review, and use of assessment information in an identified timetable.

Example Assessment Timeline:

University of Houston
Divisions of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services
Assessment and Planning Calendar
2018-2019

	2018					
	July	August	September	October	November	December
Annual Reporting			Final FY18 report due 9/17/18 to the Director of Assessment and Planning	Feedback provided to the department on final report. Annual reports loaded to A&P website	FY19 Annual report outline distributed to departments	FY18 Executive Summary Posted on A&P website
Assessment Planning	Meetings with Assessment Committee Consulting Teams: Review FY19 Plan	Final FY19 Plans posted on A&P SharePoint and Website	FY18 Summaries Completed Final FY18 Assessment Summaries posted on A&P Website	Assessment Committee Consultant Check-ins	Begin/complete fall 2018 summary preparations	
Strategic Planning	Drafts of the "2019-2023 strategic plan" shared			Final "2019-2023 Strategic Plan" Shared		Begin departmental mapping

Find the current timeline here: http://www.uh.edu/dsaes/about/assessment_planning/resources.html

VIII.   Sharing Results

The distribution of results to the department and relevant audiences in a timely, unbiased, and consistent manner. This is an opportunity to share the lessons learned, the effectiveness of the program and help to identify ways to improve programming, modify program planning, demonstrate accountability, and justify funding.

It is important that the method chosen is geared towards the audience. Sharing results with a large group of students looks very different than sharing results with an AVP. Ask three these questions when preparing to share results:

1)   Who is the audience?
2)   What information needs to be shared?
3)   What does the audience want to know?

4) What is the most effective way to answer both #2 &#3?

The following are ways to share with staff, colleagues, university and community:

- Formal report
- Presentations
- One Page Summary Sheet
- Marketing Campaign (posters or banners)
- Web sites
- Emails
- Newsletters
- Press Releases
- Brochures
- Poster
- Infographics (see Section XIV)

IX. Annual/Semi-Annual Reports

Each department in the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services will submit a semi-annual and comprehensive annual report. The purpose of the report is to document the department's contribution to the division's commitment to supporting student success while reaching the goals of the Division's strategic plan and providing the statistics necessary to populate the President's   and the Division Progress Cards.

Prior Annual Reports can be found here:
http://www.uh.edu/dsaes/about/assessment_planning/department_annual_reports.html

Report includes:

1. Department Name/Overview
2. Department Current FY Goals
3. Utilizations Reports (include progress card reporting data and annual comparisons).
4. Assessment Projects (listed by project)
5. Advancement Opportunities
6. Marketing Highlights
7. Staff Highlights
8. Outside DSAES Engagement
9. Areas for Continuous Improvement
10. Department Points of Excellence
11. Department Upcoming FY Goals

Departments may include supporting documentation in an appendix (additional information may be requested by an AVP to do so). Refer to the "Planning User Guide" to learn the finer details about how to enter the required and needed information.

General reporting deadlines:

1. Semi-Annual: Due early February (reflects September 1 – December 31)

2. Annual: Due Mid-September (reflects September 1– August 31)

X. Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is an organization's process of defining direction and making decisions to allocate resources to pursue strategic initiatives. It may also extend to control mechanisms for guiding the implementation of the strategy.

Strategy has many definitions, including but not limited to: goal-setting, determining actions to achieve the goals, and identifying and/or deploying resources to execute the actions. A strategy describes how the ends (goals) will be achieved by the means (resources). Strategy can be planned (intended) or can be observed as a pattern of activity (emergent) as the organization adapts to its environment.

Strategy includes processes of formulation and implementation; strategic planning helps coordinate both. However, strategic planning is analytical in nature (i.e., it involves "finding the dots") whereas strategy formation involves synthesis (i.e., "connecting the dots") via strategic thinking.

The Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services began it second strategic plan in the Fall of 2018. It will span a 5-year period and will have annual progress reports on achieving the action steps of the initiatives. More information about the plan can be found here: http://www.uh.edu/dsaes/about/strategic_plan.html

XI. Consultant Teams

Each department is assigned a DSAES assessment consultant team that will assist them with their assessment plans.

DSAES assessment consultation teams are tasked with reviewing and giving feedback related to each departments' annual assessment plan. Assessment team members are also available to assist departments with measuring outcomes related to programs and services, efficiency/effectiveness of business processes, and developing strategic plans. Ideally the relationship between a department and their assessment consultation team is collaborative and not evaluative. Consultation team members are often highly involved in their own department's assessment activities and have expertise in designing assessment projects and developing outcomes. Consultation team members have an outside perspective and assist with reporting efforts to external unites such as SFAC or external review committees.

Benefits of contacting the consultation team:

- They can assist in developing assessment goals for a department
- They can provide informal feedback on a department's assessment plan before official assessment plans are due
- Consultation team members can serve as an external group to help with reports to SFAC (Student Fee Advisory Committee) and external review committees.
- They can help with defining departmental strategic plans as SMART goals that will show significant change at the end of the assessment cycle.
- They can help review survey questions, facilitate focus groups, etc.

Suggested Communication Timeline

It is suggested that to schedule a meeting with the consultation team or assigned consultatnt roughly three times a year.

- March: Check-in regarding spring assessment projects that are wrapping up in May.
- July: Check-in about fall assessment plans, assist with interpreting data for annual reports.
- November: Check-in about fall assessments projects that are wrapping up in December.

Consultant team members and the departments they serve can be found at
http://www.uh.edu/dsaes/about/assessment_planning/assessment_consultation.html.

XII. Expectations for Departments

Department leadership is expected to meet deadlines and participate in annual and semi-annual reporting as well as assessment planning and summarization. Other work that goes into these are the development of department level goals that are aligned to divisional strategic planning (aka mapping) and the development and use of department progress cards. Also, every seven years, departments participate in the department review process which assists in the continuous improvement of the department and helps with the strategic planning.

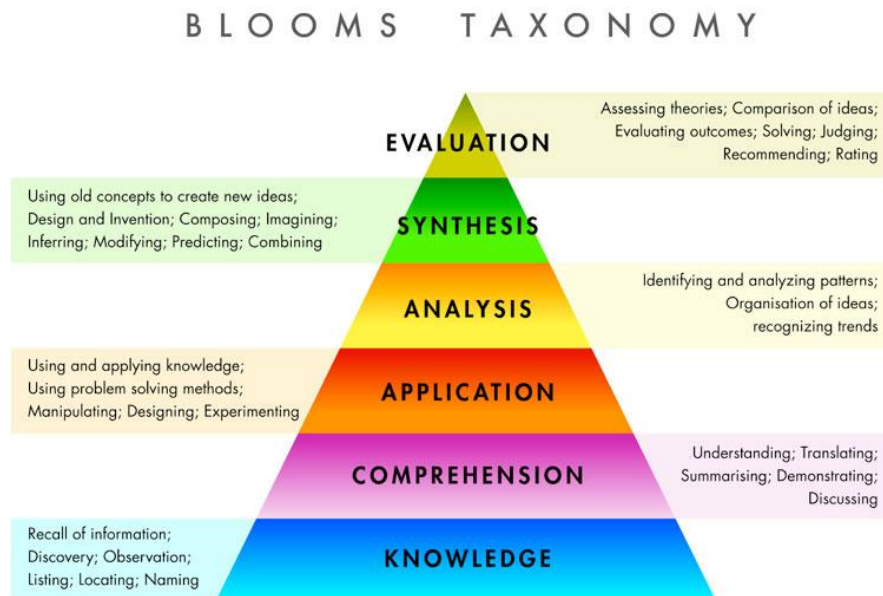Checklist of simplified items that are completed each year:

- Annual & semi-annual reports
- Assessment plans
- Strategic Plan Mapping
- Departmental Progress cards

XIII. Assessment Resources

In addition to the DSAES Assessment Consulting Teams, there are a variety of resources available to reference regarding assessment efforts. This section outlines several available resources.

Bloom's Taxonomy:

Bloom's taxonomy is a hierarchical model used to classify educational learning objectives into levels of complexity and specificity.

BLOOMS TAXONOMY

EVALUATION — Assessing theories; Comparison of ideas; Evaluating outcomes; Solving; Judging; Recommending; Rating

SYNTHESIS — Using old concepts to create new ideas; Design and Invention; Composing; Imagining; Inferring; Modifying; Predicting; Combining

ANALYSIS — Identifying and analyzing patterns; Organisation of ideas; recognizing trends

APPLICATION — Using and applying knowledge; Using problem solving methods; Manipulating; Designing; Experimenting

COMPREHENSION — Understanding; Translating; Summarising; Demonstrating; Discussing

KNOWLEDGE — Recall of information; Discovery; Observation; Listing; Locating; Naming

CAS Standards:

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education developed 45 sets of functional area standards for higher education programs and services. These standards provide individuals and institutions with means for assessing program and service effectiveness. Additional information on the CAS standards can be found here.

Infographic Example:

Quantitative Data is best be shared through tables and graphs. Qualitative Data is best shared through a vivid story or narrative to give meaning to the numbers and contextualize so the decision makers can relate. UH Wellness exhibits the above mentioned in a campaign called "Potty Talks".

For information about UH's student body, go to the Office of Institutional Research, http://www.uh.edu/ir/reports/. There are a number of reports available, including demographics, graduation and retention rates, college breakdowns, and other statistical data. To request access to current information on the UH dashboard, contact Pam Shefman at pshefman@central.uh.edu.

For more information on getting started and creating a project, access the DSAES Assessment and Planning Resource Page at http://www.uh.edu/dsaes/about/assessment_planning/resources.html.

XIV. UH Summer Assessment Symposium

The Summer Assessment Symposium is offered by the assessment committee to engage in the education and collaborative conversations that are needed in order to continually improve and to celebrate our successes.

Some outcomes for the Summer Assessment Symposium are:

1. Participants will broaden their awareness and understanding of assessment and learning outcomes by:
   a. Being acquainted with the benefits of assessment and focus on student learning.
   b. Engaging curiosity and building energy around assessment and learning outcomes.
2. Participants will broaden their awareness and understanding of the significance of assessment and learning outcomes to the strategic thinking and planning of their institution by:
   a. Understanding how local assessment efforts fit into the mission of the institution
   b. Understanding how an integrated approach to assessing student learning can lead to greater program improvement.
3. Participants will be introduced to a community around assessment and student learning by:
   a. Making connections with others engaged in assessment.
   b. Building a network of support around assessment by sharing ideas with others in order to enhance the overall assessment efforts.
   c. Engaging in dialogue about issues of assessment and student learning.
   d. Recognizing the past, present, and potential commitment to assessment and student learning.
4. Participants will contribute to building a university wide culture for assessment and student learning by:
   a. Taking steps in initiating assessment efforts.
   b. Identifying assessment goals in order to effectively implement assessment plans.
   c. Improving programs through assessment of student learning outcomes.
   d. Communicating the importance of assessment efforts to key stakeholders.
5. Participants will expand their knowledge base of techniques, definitions, and tools in outcomes assessment by:
   a. Learning about new and innovative ways to put assessment of student learning into practice.
   b. Identifying resources including literature, individuals, techniques, and tools available at multiple institutions.

c. Enhancing and expanding upon skills to contribute to their knowledge-base of assessment within their organization.

XV. Conclusion

This document was created by the Assessment Committee members as a tool to assist all the staff of DSAES in our pursuit of a strong culture of assessment and inquiry where decisions are made based on data and best practice.   The work of assessment are **not tasks**. However, assessment **provides tools** used by professionals at the department and division level to make our work better. Use this document to maintain the vision of continuous improvement as we develop cutting-edge programs and services in the service of supporting student success.