



Office of Academic  
Planning and Assessment



**INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT**  
T E X A S A & M U N I V E R S I T Y

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# The Development and Evolution of Assessment Review Processes at Two Texas Institutions

# A quick question to start...

- ◆ How many of you have a system for evaluating the quality of assessment plans?
- ◆ How many are implementing such a system?
- ◆ How many don't have such a system yet, but want one?
- ◆ Did we miss anyone?

# Common elements of SHSU and TAMU Assessment Review Processes

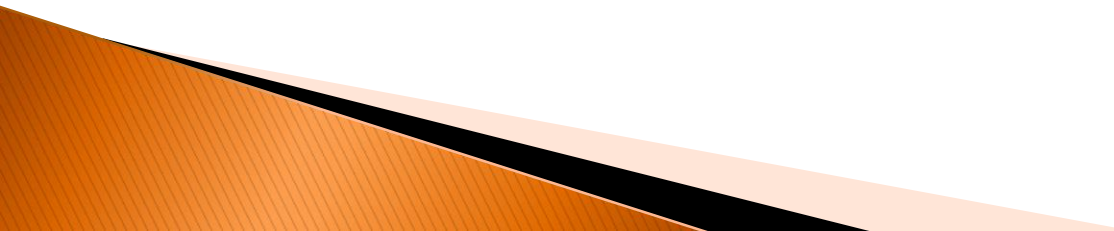
- ◆ Both utilize a formal rubric
- ◆ Both rubrics include quantitative and qualitative elements
- ◆ Both encompass some form of annual review cycle
- ◆ Both provided formative and summative feedback



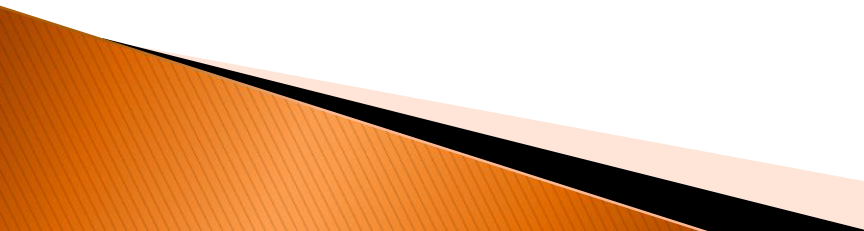
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# Meta-assessment at Sam Houston State University

# SHSU needed to...

- 1) Provide formative and summative feedback to programs for assessment improvement
  - 2) Demonstrate the resolve of university leaders to promote effective, robust programmatic assessment
  - 3) Gather institutional-level data regarding the effectiveness of programmatic assessment
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# How is it being used?

- ▶ Formative feedback is provided to units for use in improving their on-going assessment practices
  - ▶ Summative results used by colleges and university to direct resources and training in assessment practices and track improvement longitudinally
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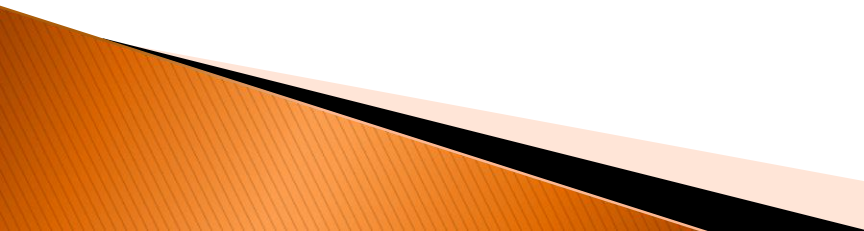
# **(Very) Brief Overview of SHSU's Assessment System**

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## **The Online Assessment Tracking Database (OATDB)**



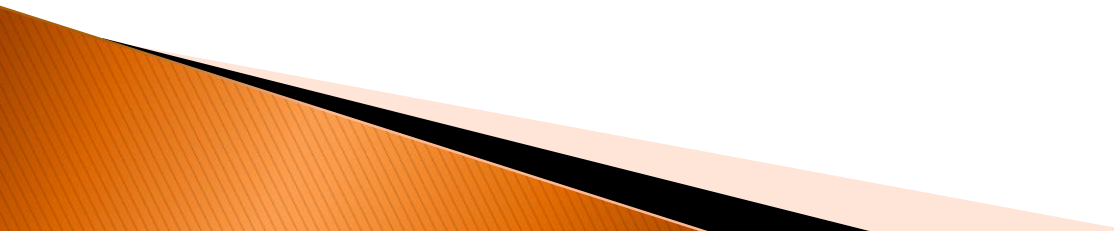
# Assessment Plan Elements

- ▶ Goals
  - ▶ Objectives
  - ▶ Indicators / Criterion (for Learning Objectives)
  - ▶ KPIs (for Performance Objectives)
  - ▶ Findings / Results
  - ▶ Actions
  - ▶ Plan for Continuous Improvement elements
    - Part 1: Progress update of the previous cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement
    - Part 2: New Plan for Continuous Improvement
- 



# Structure of the Rubric (Handout)

# Rubric needed to...

- ▶ Be detailed and easy to use
  - ▶ Match the structure of our assessment database, the OATDB
  - ▶ Work for both academic and non-academic units
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# Rubric Elements (Handout)

- ▶ Quantitative Feedback
  - Each assessment plan, and assessment element, can be scored as “Developing,” “Acceptable,” or “Exemplary”
- ▶ Qualitative Feedback
  - Check boxes and comments section provided for each assessment element


# Pilot implementations

- ▶ Small-scale Pilot – Conducted Spring 2013
  - Interoffice scoring of assessment plans from the 2011–2012 assessment cycle to test the applicability of the rubric
- ▶ Large-scale Pilot – Conducted Fall 2013/Spring 2014
  - Scoring assessment plans from 2012–2013 Academic Degree Programs
    - Also helped to identify weaknesses within Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1 prior to our 5<sup>th</sup> Year Interim Report, due in March 2015
  - Scoring assessment plans from 2012–2013 Division of Student Services Assessment Plans
    - Served to fully test the efficacy of the rubric for academic support areas

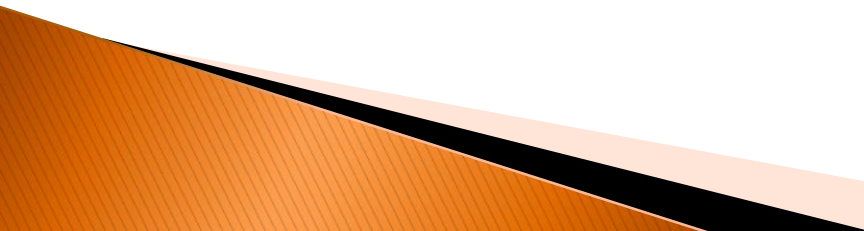
# Large Scale Pilot Scoring Methodology

- ▶ Group norming sessions were utilized sessions to align raters.
- ▶ Each assessment plan was scored by two raters.
- ▶ 134 assessment plans reviewed from 7 academic colleges
  - 18 assessment plans per reviewer
- ▶ 14 total assessment plans reviewed from Division of Student Services
  - 4 assessment plans per reviewer

# How were the data used?

- ▶ Used by programs to improve the quality of their assessment practices for the next assessment cycle.
  - ▶ Used by college administrators to gain an overview of the quality of assessment practices within their respective colleges
  - ▶ Used by the assessment office to identify institutional-wide areas for improvement prior to SHSU's 5<sup>th</sup> year Interim Report for the SACSCOC.
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# Next Steps for Meta-assessment at SHSU

- ▶ Formalize locally administered meta-assessment processes within each college and the Division of Student Services
  - ▶ Continue to pilot meta-assessment within remaining divisions, beginning with our Division of Academic Affairs
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# Assessment Review at Texas A&M University



TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY.



# History of Assessment Review at Texas A&M

- Assessment liaisons
- Academic assessment review
- Support office assessment review
- University-wide memo sent to Provost and President
- SACSCOC Reaffirmation



# Current Assessment Review Model

- Assessment liaisons request
- Vice Provost and Provost request
- Office of Institutional Assessment (OIA) conducted comprehensive review of all programs (500+) for 2012-13
- OIA to repeat review of 2013-14
- Provost expectations



# Assessment Review Methodology

- Each report was scored using a 3-point rubric
  - <http://www.assessment.tamu.edu>



# Mission Statement

## Mission Statement

A concise statement outlining the purpose of the program, who it serves, in what ways, and with what result.

### Exemplary

- Clear and concise.
- Specific to the unit (identifies what it does that separates it from other units).
- Addresses the larger impact of the program.
- Identifies stakeholders.
- Aligned with the college and division mission and with respective professional organization, if applicable.

### Acceptable

- Statement of the program's purpose and who it serves.
- Aligned with the college and division mission statements.
- Scope and reach may be limited.

### Developing

- General statement of the intent of the program.
- Identifies the functions performed but not the greater purpose.
- Does not identify stakeholders.
- Fails to demonstrate clear alignment with college or division mission.
- Too general to distinguish the unit or too specific to encompass the entire mission.

# Outcomes/Objectives

## Outcomes/Objectives

Specific statements that articulate the knowledge, skills, and abilities students should gain or improve through engagement in the academic program or learning experience; for administrative units, outcomes describe the desired quality of key services.

### ● Exemplary

- Observable and measurable.
- Encompass a discipline-specific body of knowledge for academic units (may also include general competencies); focus on the cumulative effect of the program.
- Reasonable number of outcomes identified - enough outcomes to adequately encompass the mission while still being manageable to evaluate and assess.
- Uses action verbs.
- Describe the level of mastery expected, appropriate to degree type (BS/BA, MS, PhD) if applicable.
- Align with college and university goals and with professional organizations, where applicable.
- Accurately classified as "student learning" or "not student learning".
- Associations (to goals, standards, institutional priorities, etc.) are identified, where appropriate.

### ● Acceptable

- Observable and measurable.
- Encompass the mission of the program and/or the central principles of the discipline.
- Aligned with program, college, and university mission.
- Appropriate, but language may be vague or need revision.

### ● Developing

- Describe a process, rather than an outcome (i.e. language focuses on what the program does, rather than what the student learns).
- Unclear how an evaluator could determine whether the outcome has been met.
- Incomplete - not addressing the breadth of knowledge, skills, or services associated with the program.
- Outcomes identified don't seem important/aligned with the program mission.
- Fails to note appropriate associations (to goals, standards, institutional priorities, etc.).



# Measures

## Measures

The variety of methods used to evaluate each outcome; the means of gathering data.

### Exemplary

- Multiple measures for some or all outcomes.
- Direct and indirect measures used; emphasis on direct.
- Instruments reflect good research methodology.
- Feasible - existing practices used where possible; at least some measures apply to multiple outcomes.
- Purposeful - clear how results could be used for program improvement.
- Described with sufficient detail (documents attached in Document Repository, where appropriate).

### Acceptable

- At least 1 measure or measurement approach per outcome.
- Direct and indirect measures are utilized.
- Described with sufficient detail.
- Implementation may still need further planning.

### Developing

- Not all outcomes have associated measures.
- Few or no direct measures used.
- Methodology is questionable.
- Instruments are vaguely described; may not be developed yet.
- Course grades used as an assessment method.
- Do not seem to capture the "end of experience" effect of the curriculum/program.

# Targets

## Achievement Targets

Result, target, benchmark, or value that will represent success at achieving a given outcome.

### ● Exemplary

- Aligned with measures and outcomes.
- Represent a reasonable level of success.
- Specific and measurable.
- Meaningful - based on benchmarks, previous results, existing standards.

### ● Acceptable

- Aligned with measures and outcomes.
- Target identified for each measure.
- Specific and measurable.
- Some targets may seem arbitrary.

### ● Developing

- Targets have not been identified for every measure, or are not aligned with the measure.
- Seem off-base (too low/high).
- Language is vague or subjective (e.g. "improve", "satisfactory") making it difficult to tell if met.
- Aligned with assessment *process* rather than results (e.g. survey return rate, number of papers reviewed).

# Other Considerations

- Is it likely that this assessment plan will yield information useful for making improvements in the student learning experience and/or the program?
- Are internal and/or external stakeholders (may include students, customers, faculty, staff, administrators, advising boards, employers, etc.) involved in the assessment process?
- Is the plan feasible with current resources and staff?
- Is there a plan for collecting, tabulating, and analyzing assessment results? Who will be responsible for this work and when will it be done?





# Findings

## Findings

A concise summary of the results gathered from a given assessment measure.

### Exemplary

- Complete, concise and well-organized.
- Appropriate data collection/analysis.
- Align with the language of the corresponding achievement target.
- Provide solid evidence that targets were met, partially met, or not met.
- Compares new findings to past trends, as appropriate.
- Supporting documentation (rubrics, surveys, more complete reports\*, etc.) are included in the document repository.

*\*Reports must be free of student-identifiable information.*

### Acceptable

- Complete and organized.
- Align with the language of the corresponding achievement target.
- Address whether targets were met.
- May contain too much detail or stray slightly from intended data set.

### Developing

- Incomplete or too much information.
- Not clearly aligned with achievement targets.
- Questionable conclusion about whether targets were met, partially met, or not met.
- Questionable data collection/analysis; may "gloss over" data to arrive at conclusion.

# Action Plans

## Action Plans

Actions to be taken to improve the program or assessment process based on analysis of results.

### Exemplary

- Action plans clearly follow from assessment results and directly state which finding(s) was used to develop the plan.
- Identifies an area that needs to be monitored, remediated, or enhanced and defines logical "next steps."
- Contains completion dates.
- Identifies a responsible person/group.
- Number of action plans are manageable.

### Acceptable

- Reflects with sufficient depth on what was learned during the assessment cycle.
- At least one action plan in place.
- Actions plans follow from assessment results.

### Developing

- Not clearly related to assessment results.
- Seems to offer excuses for results rather than thoughtful interpretation or "next steps" for program improvement.
- No action plans or too many to manage.
- Too general; lacking details(e.g. time frame, responsible party).

# Analysis Questions

## Analysis Questions

Program's answer to:

- Based on the analysis of your findings, what changes are you currently making to improve your program? Identify the specific findings you analyzed and how they led to your decision.
- Provide an update for completed or ongoing action plans from the previous year(s). Highlight your improvements.

### Exemplary

- Demonstrates thorough analysis of findings.
- Elaborates on specific findings used to make program improvements.
- Makes a clear connection between finding(s) and action plan(s).
- Provides thorough status update of previous and/or ongoing action plan(s).

### Acceptable

- Completed analysis question.
- Identifies finding(s) used to make program improvements.
- Changes/improvements made to program relate to finding(s).
- Refers to previous and/or ongoing action plan(s).

### Developing

- Analysis question incomplete, or
- Vague or unclear response to question.
- Failure to identify finding(s) used to make program improvements.
- Does not refer to previous and/or ongoing action plan(s).

# Reporting

- Green/Yellow/Red reports
- Departments compared to:
  - College/Support
  - University
- 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 Review



College of [REDACTED]  
Executive Summary  
Assessment Review 2012-2013

Program/College	Mission Statement	Outcomes/ Objectives	Measures	Achievement Targets	Findings	Action Plans	Analysis Question
[REDACTED]	2	2	3	1	2	1	1
[REDACTED]	3	2	2	1	1	1	1
[REDACTED]	2	1	3	2	3	1	2
[REDACTED]	2	1	3	2	3	1	1
[REDACTED]	3	3	2	1	1	1	2
[REDACTED]	3	3	2	1	2	2	2
[REDACTED]	3	3	2	1	1	2	2
[REDACTED]	1	3	2	1	1	1	2
[REDACTED]	3	3	3	3	2	1	1
[REDACTED]	3	3	2	1	2	1	1
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[REDACTED]	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
[REDACTED]	3	3	2	1	1	1	1
[REDACTED]	3	3	1	2	1	1	2
[REDACTED]	3	3	1	1	1	1	2
[REDACTED]	3	2	2	2	2	3	2
[REDACTED]	3	2	2	1	1	3	2
[REDACTED]	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
College [REDACTED]	2.6	2.5	2.1	1.6	1.7	1.4	1.5
Texas A&M University	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

3: Exemplary

2: Acceptable

1: Developing



# What we have learned:

- Strengths and weaknesses of assessment reports across campus.
- Departments and colleges want to know about the quality of their assessment practice from a third party.
- Refocusing office mission



# Questions?

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- ◆ Ryan McLawhon – [ryan.mclawhon@tamu.edu](mailto:ryan.mclawhon@tamu.edu)