Quick Guides

Non-Instructional Units: Assessment Measures (Metrics)

Assessment measures are the instruments or tools by which outcomes will be evaluated to determine if the desired outcome has been achieved. An outcome is simply a measureable change. Measures are the tools you use to identify the increments of change as a result of what your unit does. They can also be the instruments you use to collect data. Measures can specifically identify the incremental changes in assets, value, demand, quality, efficiency, effectiveness, satisfaction, specific behavior, perceptions, knowledge, and skills. Some examples of assessment measures are listed below.

Per unit costs

Cycle time

Response time

Backlog

Staffing ratios

Space or equipment utilization

Number of customers served

Overall program achievement

Proportion of service without error

Customer and/or employee satisfaction

Rankings benchmarked against peers

Return on investment

Participation or attendance rates

Financial audit performance

Safety performance (e.g. accident-free days)

Employee skills

Employee training

Number of applications

Number of users

Website hits

Selecting appropriate measures for assessment is an essential step in ensuring the success of the assessment process. The selection of assessment measures should

- reflect the culture of the program and provide decision makers with useful information.
- be simple to use, require little extra time or effort, and still provide data that are easily interpreted, actionable, and not ambiguous.

Using multiple assessment measures is recommended for each outcome. By using more than one measure, different components of one outcome can be assessed with a high level of accuracy, authority and trustworthiness.

An inventory of existing sources of data, such as routine reports, is useful before adding any measures to the assessment plan. It is also valuable to determine beforehand if there are available resources to assist in data collection. When possible, avoid selecting assessment measures that require complex data collection techniques.

An assessment matrix is a useful tool for linking current assessment efforts to your unit's mission, goals and outcomes. Assessment matrices can be used to identify various configurations of how outcomes are being measured.

Outcomes	External Audit	Client satisfaction survey (student, faculty)	Energy Usage Reports
Improve the performance of the Facilities and Grounds operation.	X	X	
Improve the image of the University's physical environment	X	X	
Reduce energy consumption on campus	X		X

Worksheet

1. Choose one of your unit's outcomes and change it into a question. *Example: How can we show that we have reduced energy consumption on campus?*

2. Using the verb as a guide, what are the ways the unit can demonstrate that action? *Example: We can demonstrate reduced energy consumption with lower energy costs and reduction in annual kilowatt hours.*

3. How can you collect data to show the result? *Example: We can review annual energy reports and bills.*

4. How do you define successful attainment? *Example: We will be successful if our average energy consumption for the last 3 years is less than the average energy consumption for the previous 3 years.*

5. Describe how often you plan to collect the artifacts, how they will be evaluated, who will evaluate the artifacts, and when staff or administrators will analyze the results. *Example: We will collect data every year. Every 3 years we will take the average energy usage and compare it to the previous 3 years. We will then analyze activities that we have taken to reduce energy consumption to see if they have been effective. If so, we will continue to use them. If not, we will discontinue those and try new strategies.*