Engaging the Assessment Process: Part I & II

Phyllis Walker, PhD

Associate Dean

College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

850-412-7824

phyllis.walker@famu.edu

Kiwanis Burr McTier

Assistant Director

Office of University Assessment

850-412-5264

kiwanis.burr@famu.edu

Part I – Terminology and Tools in the Assessment Toolkit

Terminology

Thought is the blossom; language the bud; action the fruit behind it. –Ralph Waldo Emerson

Terminology

- Sources
  - Departmental terms
  - Specialized accreditor lexicon
  - Institutional terminology
  - *Various external origins*

- Issues
  - Lack of knowledge of basic definitions
  - Lack of consistency in use
  - No centralized access

Terminology

- Case study: Institutional terminology
  - Similar terms used in assessment, institutional research and analytics, and program quality
  - Desired increased understanding of how terms were used across division
  - Creation/updating of a divisional glossary

Term	Description	Similar Terms
Accountability	A standard of informing the public about the quality of education that students are expected to receive from an institution.	
Assessment	The process of collecting and analyzing data for the purpose of evaluation and continuous improvement.	
Assessment Measure	The portion of the assessment plan that identifies artifacts or metrics that are selected to evaluate improvement on a given objective/outcome; may be direct or indirect. Direct measures are actual artifacts or measures of performance, competency, or achievement that demonstrate that learning or improvement has occurred.	Direct Measure (IE); Indirect Measure (IE)
Assessment Plan	A document that outlines what data will be collected, by whom, learning outcomes, process for reviewing the data, and process for modification to course or curriculum to improve	
Attachments	The documentation that is submitted with the assessment plan and report to demonstrate the type of data that will be collected during assessment (plan) or to provide evidence of the findings that have been presented (report).	
Benchmark	A defined measurement or standard that serves as a point of reference by which peformance is measured.	Criterion (UA)
Closing the Loop	The term associated with completing a cycle of assessment in which assessment results are used to prompt program change and improvement. Faculty discuss assessment results, reach conclusions about their meaning, determine implications for change, and implement them.	
Context	The circumstance or environment in which an assessment takes place.	
Course Modality	The instructional delivery method used by a course instructor; current options are traditional/face-to-face, online, or hybrid in Nuventive.	Instructional Delivery Method (IR)
Course Outcomes	The competencies/skills/knowledge that students are expected to gain from participation in a course.	
Criterion	The portion of the assessment plan that indicates the guidelines used for judging the level of student performance or efforts for continuous improvement; the desired level of performance for the direct and indirect measures.	Benchmark (IE)
Cumulative Grade Points	Total institutional grade points generated in current degree level by student at reporting institution, based on a 4.0 system.	
Cumulative Hours Earned	Total hours earned in current degree level , including any transfer hours and any non-instructional credit awarded.	
Cumulative Hours for GPA	Total number of credit hours attempted in current degree level at reporting institution to be used for calculation of the Grade Point Average, based on a 4.0 system.	
Current Course Load	The total number of credit hours for which a student is enrolled this term.	
Curriculum Map (UA)	A visual tool used to demonstrate linkages between program outcomes, course outcomes, student learning outcomes and student assessment.	
Curriculum Map (IE)	A matrix showing where goals and student learning outcomes are covered in each program course or experience; it shows where and how program outcomes are addressed in the	
Degree Level Sought	The level of degree that will be awarded pending successful completion of the student's current degree program.	
Direct Assessment	Assessments that involve examination of student work or performance.	Assessment Measure (UA)
Evaluation	Qualitative and quantitative descriptions of student behavior and performance.	
Excess Credit Hours	The total number of term credit hours in excess of the number of credit hours required to complete the bacccalaureate degree program in which the student is enrolled	
Final Admission Action	Final or most recent admission action (Admitted, Denied, Cancelled Prior to Admission Decision..).	
Formative Assessment	A process for gathering information or data about student learning during a course or program that is used to guide improvements in teaching and learning.	
Gender	Identifies the person by female or male classification.	
Goals	A broad statement about the types of learning desired and facilitated within a course, department or curriculum.	
Grade Awarded	A rating or evaluation of a student's achievement. Most frequently expressed on an A,B,C,D, and F or numeric scale but sometimes expressed as satisfactory (S) and unsatisfactory (U).	
Highest Degree Held	The highest educational degree, certificate or diploma held by the individual.	
Improvement Narrative	The portion of the assessment report that conveys the desired or planned changes that are developed due to the findings communicated in the result summaries.	
Indirect Assessment	Assessments that supplement and enrich what faculty learn from direct assessments, based on opinions or perceptions.	Assessment Measure (UA)
Institutional Assessment	An on-going process designed to monitor and determine the extent to which curricular, co-curricular and institutional areas and processes support the achievement of student learning outcomes as defined by the mission of the college.	
	Assessment to determine the extent to which a college or university is achieving its mission. The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves	

Master | UA | IR | IE

Terminology

- Suggestions for creating consensus around language in assessment
  - Survey/document the language used by relevant sources
  - Compile terms in one area, noting areas of convergent/divergent meanings and use
  - Create a centralized location for stakeholders to access your terms

Terminology

- Activity #1: JEOPARDY!

What is the term that refers to the process of using assessment results to develop program improvements?

An assessment plan refers to what?

What is the process of collecting and analyzing data for the purpose of continuous improvement?

Toolkit

Assessment reporting and planning comprise your tools for effective continuous improvement.

Toolkit – Assessment as a tool in Continuous Improvement

- Critical component in creating documented evidence linking planned action with realized improvement

- Assessment
  - In class – focused on evaluating (at the individual level) progress in achieving desired competencies
  - Reporting – focused on evaluating (at the program level) progress in achieving desired competencies

Identifying measures and benchmarks for success

Plan

Report

Analyzing evidence and identifying successes & remaining challenges
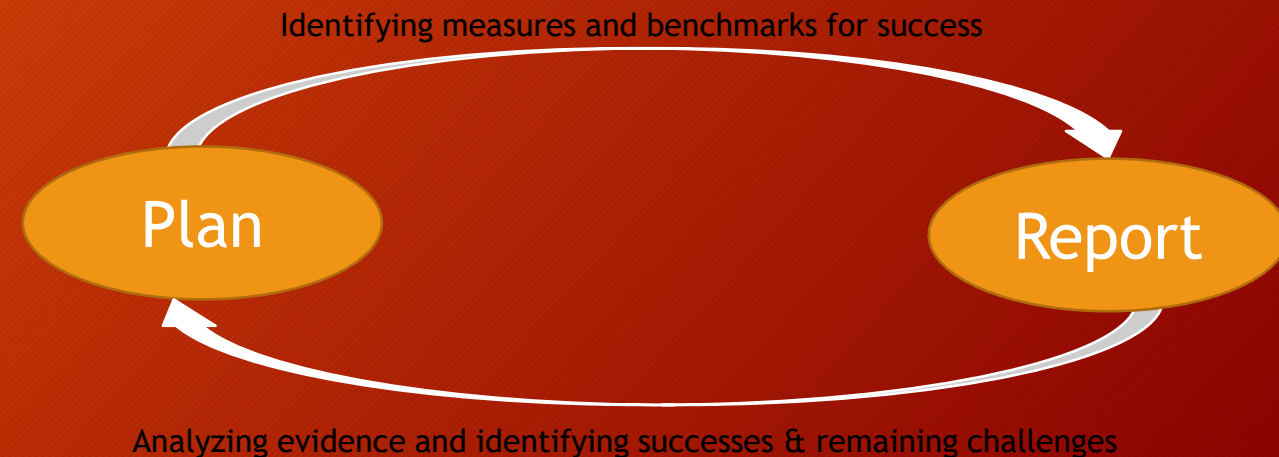
Toolkit – Assessment Plan Tools

Objective/Outcome → Objectives/outcomes are expectations as to what the program, unit, faculty, staff or students will be able to achieve or accomplish at the end of a learning experience or event.

➢ Upon completion of the program, students will evaluate the most appropriate resources to include in professional portfolios for their future job search.

Strategic Linkages → Connections between objectives/outcomes and the strategic direction of the university, division/college/school, and the individual unit.

➢ College/School/Division Strategic Plan
➢ FAMU Strategic Goals
➢ FAMU Strategic Priorities

Assessment Measures → Artifacts or metrics selected to evaluate improvement on a given objective/outcome; may be direct or indirect.

➢ Portfolio evaluations
➢ Departmental pre- and post-tests
➢ Departmental surveys

Criterion → The desired level of performance for the assessment measures.

➢ 75% of students completing the quantitative foundations assessment will achieve an at least 10% increase in their score from pre- to post-test.

Attachments* → Examples of the assignment/task that will be assessed or the data that will be collected *at the plan phase*.

➢ Assignment rubrics
➢ Portfolio instructions
➢ Assignment instructions

Toolkit – Assessment Report Tools

Result Summary

Reporting of the results of the data analysis for each individual measure.

Overall, 76% of students submitting an ePortfolio received a rating of 3 or above on the rubric relating to evidence of professional development and engagement. 98% of students in the face to face modality met the criterion while 54% of students in the online modality met the criterion.

Improvement Narrative

Planned changes based on the findings in the result summaries; identify changes at the measure specific level that should be implemented due to the achieved results.

The results indicated the face to face students outperformed their online peers. Faculty triangulated these results with departmental survey results and found students in the online course did not feel they received sufficient feedback on the ePortfolio. Faculty will revise the course syllabus to ensure students receive a standard amount of time to complete the portfolio.

Overall Reflection

Synthesis of broad, program level changes that should be made based on the overall findings in the report: 'closing the loop'.

➢ Tell us what worked well
➢ Tell us where there are still challenges
➢ Tell us an action plan to address the challenges

Attachments

Evidence of the results that are indicated *at the report phase*.

➢ Descriptive statistics from surveys
➢ Spreadsheets of scores
➢ Portfolio submissions

Toolkit – Activity

- Activity #2: Match it up!

1. 80% of students enrolled in the course will earn at least 15 out of 20 points on a rubric evaluating content knowledge on the research proposal.

2. Indirect – Departmental student satisfaction survey

3. 77% of students exhibited proficiency by scoring at least 20 points on the portion of the rubric evaluating written communication.

A. Result Summary

B. Objective/Outcome

C. Overall Reflection

D. Criterion

E. Improvement Narrative

F. Assessment Measure

Part II – Using Data for On-Going Improvement

…with all thy getting, get understanding. – Proverbs 4:7

Assessment & Evaluation

Assessment

Purpose: what can we as a program/unit do to enhance learning outcomes for our students

Assessment	Both	Evaluation
is ongoing	require criteria	provides closure
is positive	use measures	is judgmental
is individualized	are evidence	is applied against standards
provides feedback	driven	shows shortfalls
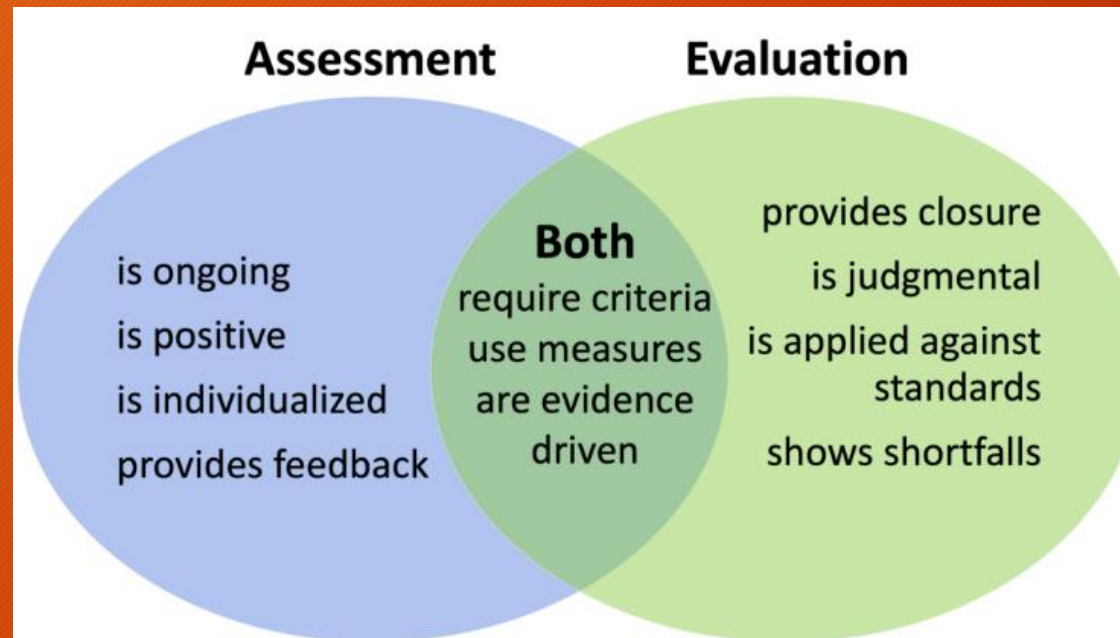
Evaluation

Purpose: did the student meet the requirements for the class

- Evaluation can be considered to be a part of the assessment process
- At the university, the focus is assessment for continuous improvement

The Diverse Functions of Assessment

Assessment FOR learning
occurs when teachers use inferences about student progress to inform their teaching.

for

as

of
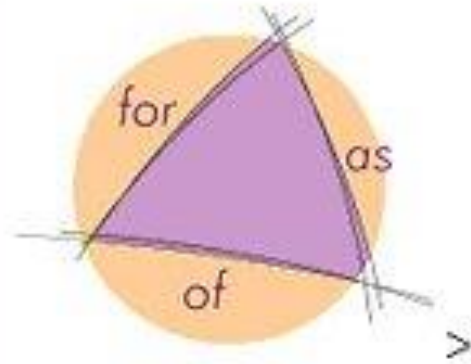
Assessment AS learning
occurs when students reflect on and monitor their progress to inform their future learning goals.

Assessment OF learning
occurs when teachers use evidence of student learning to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards.

Engaging the Assessment Process within Nuventive
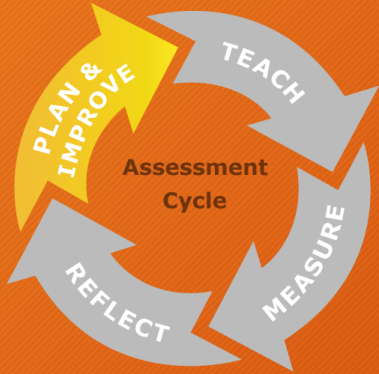
- ➢ Assessment Plan
  - o Outcome/Objective (SLO and/or PO)
  - o Strategic Linkages
  - o Assessment Measure (Measurement Tool)
  - o Criterion
  - o *Attachment*

- ➢ Assessment Report
  - o Result Summary
  - o Improvement Narrative
  - o Attachment

- ➢ Overall Reflection

The STARS Approach
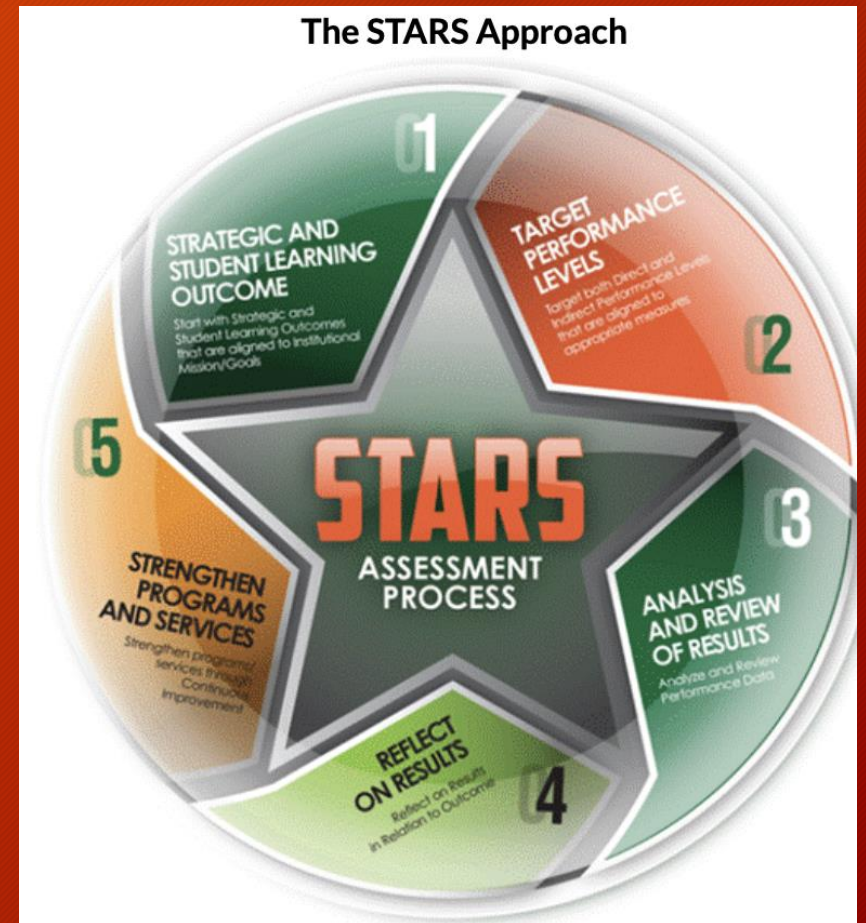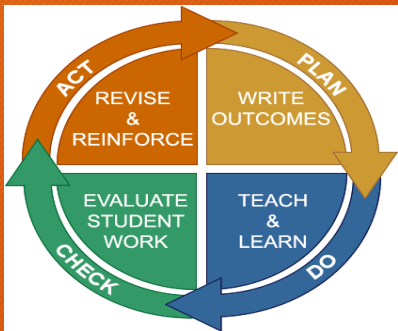
The Assessment Process: Planning

- Outcomes/Objectives
  - Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives: Instructional Programs and Educational Support Units (e.g., Army ROTC, Athletics, Honors Program)
  - Performance Outcomes/Objectives: Deans and ADESUs
  - Note: Instructional Programs and Educational Support Units can also provide performance outcomes/objectives
- Assessment Measures
  - Direct
  - Indirect
- Criterion
- Attachments
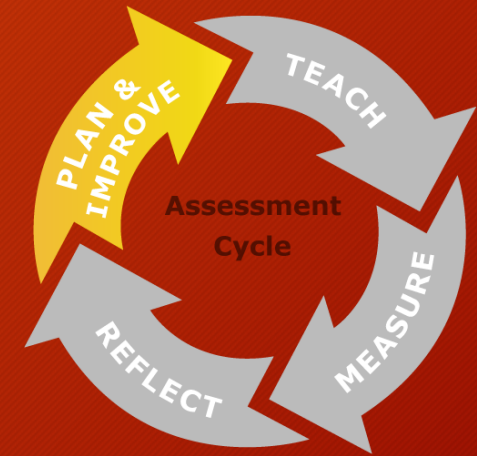
The Assessment Process: Doing & Checking

➤ Implementing the strategies indicated in the assessment plan (derived from previous results)

➤ Documenting any anomalies in the process that may impact results

| Teach (SLO)	Do (POs)
• Integrate instructional strategies • Enact co-curricular activities • Instruct on course content	• Launch initiatives to improve performance • Execute revised processes • Apply new structures

Collect data related to the objectives/outcomes

The Assessment Process: Reporting

➢ **Result Summaries**
o Outcome that the data reflects (e.g., did you meet your criterion?)
o Number of students meeting the criteria
o Number of students evaluated
o Note irregularities/highlights and think about why?
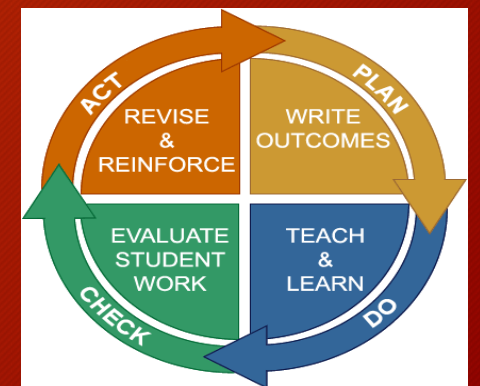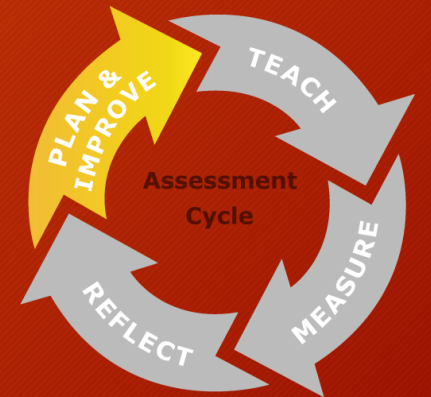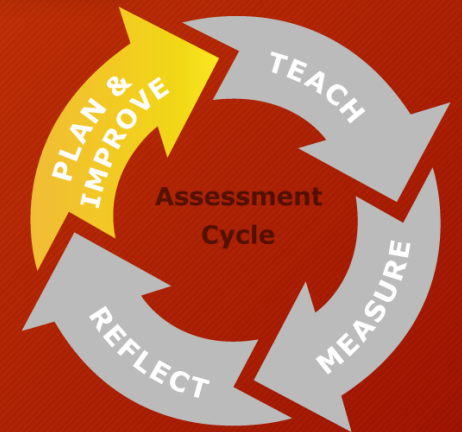
The Assessment Process: Reflecting

➢ Reflection comprises changes at the micro level (improvement narrative) and macro level (overall reflection) in light of the results

➢ Improvement narratives: planned changes based on result summaries
  o Respond to irregularities noted in the result summary
  o If the criterion was not met…reflect on why and what can be changed to enhance learning
  o If the criterion was met…what can be done to enhance results, are we confident that this is an area where learning is occurring, do these results hold across future cohorts of students
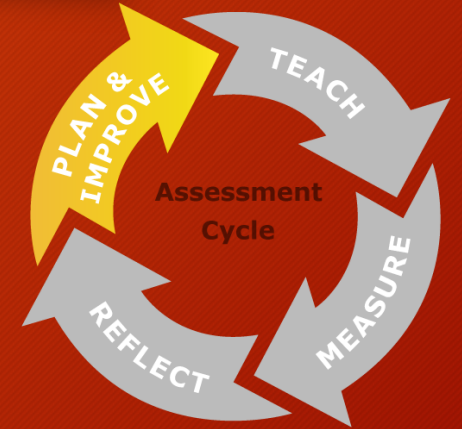
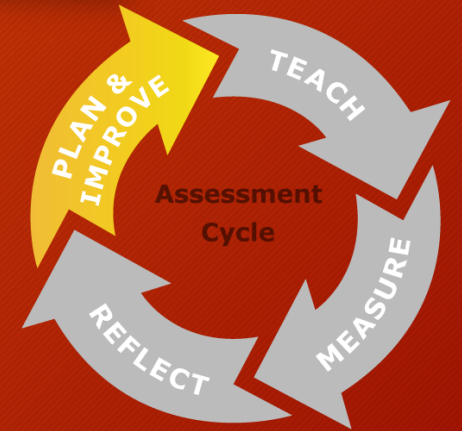# The Assessment Process: Reflecting

Improvement options to consider

➢ Change in assessment assignment
➢ Change in instructional strategy
➢ Change in program/classroom policy
➢ Revision of a rubric
➢ Change in established procedures/processes
➢ Enhance advertising efforts
➢ Implement new programs

The Assessment Process: Reflecting

➤ Overall reflection: the synthesis of broad, program level changes that should be made based on the overall findings in the report.

  ❖ What worked well? Tell your success stories.
  ❖ What needs improving? How is your unit continuously improving and addressing challenges?
  ❖ What are the action plan steps for improvement?

The Assessment Process: Activity

- Activity #3: Use the result summary example below to create an improvement narrative and match it to an improvement type.

Indirect – Focus Group

Due to the continued impact of the COVID19 pandemic, the committee did not conduct student focus groups for the academic year.
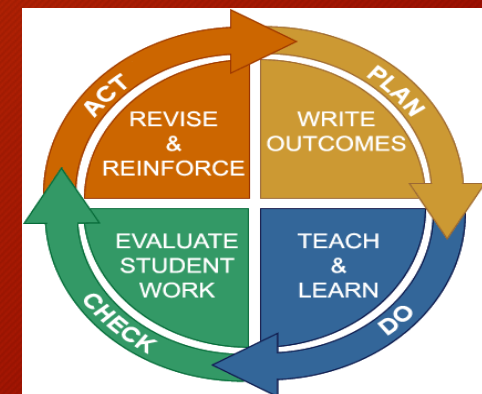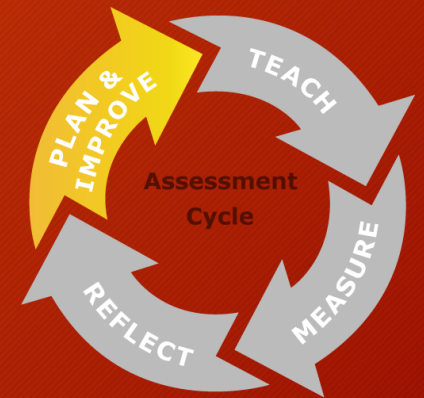
Administrative Change
Assessment Method Change
Co-Curricular Change
Curriculum Changes
Increase Accuracy
Increase Satisfaction
Operational Change
Other (if other please specify in field below)
Pedagogy Change
Professional Development
Reduce Costs
Reduce Cycle - Time
Satisfaction
Seek Professional Development
Target Performance Level Change

The Assessment Process: Closing The Loop

Use Improvement Narrative and Overall Reflection information
to develop the new Assessment Plan

What needs to be included in the new Assessment Plan to continue promoting improvement?

➢ Remove, Change, Revise Outcomes?

➢ New or enhanced assessment measures?

➢ Changes in criterion?

➢ Revised assessment process?

Thank You!

For additional support:

Office of University Assessment

850-412-5265

assessment@famu.edu

http://www.famu.edu/administration/strategic-planning-analysis-and-institutional-effectiveness/university-assessment/