Purpose of Consultation

- Plan a robust assessment strategy for Student Affairs, based on the adoption and integration of the appropriate functional area standards of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS).

- Increase the capacity of leaders and staff in Student Affairs to conduct sound and trustworthy assessments of student learning and operational effectiveness in accordance with those standards and using other metrics pertinent to their units.

- Develop and implement assessment methods through which to demonstrate how Student Affairs supports student development, learning, and success.
“Assessment of Assessment” Process

› Review of documents and data supplied by the University—including the Student Affairs 360 evaluation data, University and divisional organization charts, and pertinent institutional budget data.

› Telephone interviews with 16 UVic administrators, faculty, managers, coordinators and leaders conducted from July through September 2014.

› Comparative analysis with Carleton University, Simon Fraser University, and the State University of New York at Geneseo.

Assessment Analysis: First Steps

› Student Affairs has been strengthened under current leadership.

› UVic has taken important first steps in establishing and nurturing a culture of assessment including public commitment of leadership, designating a CAS Steering Committee, and organizing a primary professional development initiative.

› Attitudes toward assessment are positive; there is a strong appreciation for assessment as a means of improving the quality of programs and services.

› Both formal and informal partnerships are common among departments and units as well as with faculties and off-campus communities.
Assessment Analysis: Concerns Focus on Implementation and Resources

- Reassurance about the eventual uses of assessment studies is important.
- Diversity of methods, metrics, and indicators of success is needed.
- Common language of assessment is also needed.
- Careful assessment planning, method selection, and data interpretation are essential.
- Staffing and limitations in IT have constrained recent and past assessment efforts.
- Having the necessary knowledge, staffing, and time to collect, analyze, and report findings of assessments, and the freedom to experiment and practice, are essential.

Assessment Analysis: Varying Levels of Assessment Knowledge, Capacity, and Use

- Differences in capacity among units, within units, and among directors, managers, coordinators, and other staff are anticipated and normative.
- Many staff are familiar with various methods of data collection with, and/or use of, external, national instruments and assessments (e.g., NSSE, CUSP, NCHA, Canadian Health Survey, Maclean’s).
- Data interpretation will be a primary challenge with assessment practice—especially around interpreting findings and “closing the loop.”
- Assessment is occurring in various departments across Student Affairs, but there is limited coordination, communication, and collaboration.
Operational and process assessment is common but learning assessment is a broadly acknowledged growth area across Student Affairs.

Assessment, when well planned and executed, promotes student learning, enables accountability, supports institutional effectiveness, advances the academic and organizational missions of universities, and provides key data with which to further student engagement, learning, and success.
Learning is how the mind (and the student) **changes**.

Assessment is how operations, programs, services, and learning experiences—and therefore curriculum, pedagogy, and the institution itself—**change**.

**Assessment is how institutions learn.**

Assessment guides **change**.

---

**Assessment:**  *Observation*  →  *Story*

- Explaining the work we do, what we accomplished, and what difference that makes in ways that *people who are not us* can understand and remember.

- **What matters?**
  - **Operational Effectiveness** (operational, or process, goals and objectives)
    utilization, quality, satisfaction, efficiency—What happened?
    We’re used to doing this. We often do it very well.
  
  - **Learning Effectiveness** (learning outcomes)—What changed? How are students different?
    We’re not used to doing this.
### Types of Assessment in Post-Secondary Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject of Assessment</th>
<th>Student Academic Performance</th>
<th>Operational/Institutional Effectiveness</th>
<th>Student Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student (individual learner)</td>
<td>Institution or some component of it (division, department, program, activity)</td>
<td>Learning experiences (environment, curriculum, course, class, activity, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is Being Measured</td>
<td>Knowledge (“content”) acquisition and application; sometimes, short- or intermediate-term retention</td>
<td>Performance; inputs, operations, outputs</td>
<td>Purpose of post-secondary education: higher learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usual Measurements</td>
<td>Examinations and student products; grades and scores; GPA; portfolios</td>
<td>Actuarial: retention and graduation rates, student:teacher ratio, entrance test scores, utilization, satisfaction, etc.</td>
<td>Student learning outcomes; CLA, MAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards</td>
<td>Professor (individual educator)</td>
<td>Comparative benchmarks</td>
<td>Institution or component; national</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Institutional Effectiveness
**Operations / Process**
- Were elements of the learning outcomes established?
- Did students *like* the program?
- How many students used the service?

### Learning Effectiveness
**Learning / Outcomes**
- Did individual students achieve the outcome?
- Did cohorts achieve the outcome?
- Whether or not they *liked* the program, did students *learn* anything?
Documenting *both* operational effectiveness and learning

**Integrated Assessment**

- Count
- Ask
- Document outcomes
- Show results

**Learning**

- Curriculum
- Academic major or certificate program
- Course or within-course activity
- Research and internships
- Integrated learning/development experiences (leadership, stress management, health or counselling visits, community service...)
- Experiential learning activity
- Programs or activities designed to help students achieve specific learning outcomes
## Learning Assessment Pathway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Institution and Division understand and embrace learning as a core function, challenge, and identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Launch and Learning</td>
<td>Learning appears prominently in vision and mission statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Secure and Use</td>
<td>Learning is a priority in strategic plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Strengthen</td>
<td>Learning accepted as a continuing, ongoing, Division-wide responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment of learning recognized as essential to fulfilling vision, mission, strategy, and Division's responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Structures created to support, provide leadership/guidance, and energize both learning and assessment of learning — task force, working group, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Central support for assessment of learning put in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Specifications for annual reports for departments and Division include learning goals/outcomes and learning assessment data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Phase 1: Preparation

- Institution and Division understand and embrace learning as a core function, challenge, and identity.
- Learning appears prominently in vision and mission statements.
- Learning is a priority in strategic plan.
- Learning accepted as a continuing, ongoing, Division-wide responsibility.
- Assessment of learning recognized as essential to fulfilling vision, mission, strategy, and Division’s responsibility.
- Structures created to support, provide leadership/guidance, and energize both learning and assessment of learning — task force, working group, etc.
- Central support for assessment of learning put in place.
- Specifications for annual reports for departments and Division include learning goals/outcomes and learning assessment data.
University of Victoria Strategic Plan

- **Vision**: “As members of a diverse and dynamic learning community, we challenge one another to become thoughtful, engaged citizens and leaders…”

- **Mission**: “The University of Victoria enriches its students and society by creating knowledge, fostering academic and experiential learning and serving communities in British Columbia, in Canada and around the world…We are committed to providing a high-quality learning and research environment; integrating teaching, learning, research and civic engagement…”

- **Objectives** include “to ensure that our undergraduate and graduate programs of teaching and learning are of the highest quality, responsive to intellectual development and students needs, inclusive, and organized around best practices in teaching and learning”, “the broader learning environment and an engaged campus”, increase “co-op, internship and other experiential learning opportunities for UVic students” and “opportunities for civic engagement in teaching and learning for all students”, and “to support lifelong learning.”
Phase 1: Preparation [2]

- Division-wide student learning domains affirmed—aligned with University learning outcomes and consistent with CAS learning and development outcomes.
- Professional development provided to prepare and support leadership and staff in all departments/units in developing derivative departmental student learning goals/outcomes; professional development should be comprehensive and curricular.
- All departments develop specific departmental, program, and activity level student learning outcomes for each functional area within their responsibility.
- Schedule and expectations established for initial implementation of assessments of student learning.

Someone who does ___ will be able to do ___ to a degree and it is demonstrated by their doing ___ which can be shown to ___ who requires it for ___
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad Domains of Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Know</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Think and Learn</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prepare for Work and Life</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relate to Self and Others</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engage with Community</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methods: Assessment of Learning

- Surveys—of any kind—require careful preparation, construction, and interpretation.
- Consistency almost always requires rubrics.
- Consider: number, format, character of questions; timing; competition for attention; setting for completion.
- Utilization of qualitative methods almost always requires more human effort.

Rubrics Needed

- Students participating in Vikes recreation intramurals will identify successful strategies for collaborating with peers.
- Indigenous students will increase and demonstrate their effectiveness in communicating and sharing their experiences with one another as a result of participating in Talking Circles.
- Students who participate in orientation initiatives through Student Recruitment will be able to explain at least two ways to prevent sexual assault.
- Students employed in Residence Services will develop transferable workplace and career skills.
- Students who complete a workshop on stress management will be able to articulate a personal plan for anticipating and reducing the effects of stress on their academic functioning.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airedale Rubric</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>House training</strong></td>
<td>Never goes in house, even in stressful situations; uses curb/gutter outside</td>
<td>Almost always goes outside; rare exceptions in stressful situations or when left alone too long</td>
<td>Goes when and where he/she feels like it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socialization</strong></td>
<td>Always friendly with other dogs, children, strangers; “what a great/nice/sweet dog,” people say</td>
<td>Mostly friendly, except when surprised; people happy to have him/her around</td>
<td>Growls and snarls at strangers and distant relatives; people steer clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eating/Feeding</strong></td>
<td>Never begs at table; never picky; enjoys various wet and dry foods</td>
<td>Happier when table scraps give variety to food, but generally eats well; begs only by staring</td>
<td>Whimpers and barks at table; steals food from children and the elderly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affectionate Relationships</strong></td>
<td>Warm and cuddly when so desired by humans; exuberant to see humans after brief absences</td>
<td>Tail-wagging, “smiling,” and ears-back demonstrate affection</td>
<td>Not that excited to see humans return; humps strangers at random</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase 2: Launch and Learning

- Each department selects and implements learning assessment for at least one, but not more than two, initial programs or activities.
- Each department learns about both learning and assessment by working “on the ground” with a defined learning outcome and assessment plan.
- Diversity of experience ensues; outcomes vary.
- Departments report results of their learning assessment projects.
- Peers and colleagues review results—but also assumptions, learning goals, methods.
- Departments share what they learned through this process.
- Rinse and repeat.
Typical Learnings in Phase 2

- It's not that easy.
- Resources specifically devoted to assessment are small; defining and assessing learning outcomes is usually not an assigned portion of job responsibilities or time.
- Some assessment projects fail; some stumble along; some soar. We learn from all of them.
- Variations in levels of experience, preparation, capacity, and enthusiasm among staff—and variations in attitudes and support from their colleagues and supervisors.
- Hard to really get down to activity level; higher order outcomes are seductive but assessments of them are rarely convincing.
- Keeping learning and process/operations assessments clearly differentiated (and separated during implementation) is confusing and difficult.
- Indirect and inferential measures of learning are much easier than direct ones.
- Assessment does not require all of us to become statisticians.

Differentiating student learning outcomes from performance measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Performance Indicators/IEPs</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes/SLOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is being assessed</td>
<td>Performance against standards</td>
<td>Achievement of desired learning goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject of assessment</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Learning experience (e.g., training; on-the-job supervision)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form of assessment</td>
<td>Performance evaluation; grades</td>
<td>Varies; common feature = show learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences of assessment</td>
<td>Personnel or academic actions</td>
<td>Program review and improvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Work at the Right Level

- Institutional / University
- Divisional
- Departmental
- Program

Specific Learning Activity

Phase 3: Secure and Use

- Ever onward: use results from launch projects to inform next set of projects/activities.
- Slowly, gradually, incrementally expand portfolio of assessment projects—eventually each functional area of every department should conduct a learning outcome assessment each academic year.
- Change course as needed.
- As assessment data become increasingly more reliable and trustworthy, support program, resource, and priority decisions with those data.
Phase 4: Strengthen

- Clustered activity outcomes support program-level assessment; clustered program assessments support departmental effectiveness assessments.
- Intra-departmental learning outcomes and assessments supplemented with cross- and multi-departmental outcomes and assessments.
- Individual department or program outcomes become indicators for cross- and multi-departmental outcomes and assessments.
- Increasing reliance on both quantitative and qualitative methods; increasing expertise in developing and using rubrics.
- Longer-term, longitudinal, and multi-phase assessments.

Phase 4: Strengthen [2]

- Ongoing, continuing, expanding, resource-requiring professional development is essential.
- Knowledge, skills, and experience in assessment, especially learning assessment, specified in requirements for positions, job descriptions, performance evaluations.
- Intentional recruiting for new staff who have assessment strengths.
- Learning assessment is key factor in program reviews, revisions, and renewals.
- *Learning impact statements* for proposed new programs, positions, facilities.
- “If you can’t assess it, don’t do it.”
- Collaboration with faculty on assessment of collective, cumulative learning outcomes that require both in- and out-of-classroom learning experiences.
- Documentation of contributions of Student Affairs to student learning, engagement, and success.