

Self-Study Institute

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Understanding MSCHE Expectations for Assessment

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What is Assessment of Student Learning?



- Deciding what we want our students to learn
- Making sure they learn it!

--Jane Wolfson, Director, Environmental Science & Studies Program, Towson University

The Teaching-Learning-Assessment Cycle

2. Learning Opportunities

1. Learning Goals

3. Assessment

4. Using Results



The Planning-Assessment Cycle

2. Programs & Services

1. Goals



3. Assessment

4. Using Results



**What the Heck is Going on with
Accountability & Assessment?**

The US Accreditation “System”

- Regional accreditors
 - National accreditors
 - Specialized accreditors
 - State licensure
-
- All accreditors voluntary, membership-controlled

1965 Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA)

- Title IV funds go only to colleges accredited by Federally recognized accreditors.
- Accreditors must comply with HEOA criteria to be recognized.

1980s and 1990s

- **HEOA reauthorization**
 - **1986**: First outcomes assessment language
 - **1998**: Assessment language strengthened
 - Regional accreditors rewrote standards to emphasize student learning assessment
- **“Learning-centered” movement**
 - **1980s**: Movement—and assessment movement—began
 - **1995**: Barr & Tagg’s seminal article in *Change* published
 - Research on what promotes student learning & success

2008 HEOA Requires MSCHE to Require...

- **Success with respect to student achievement in relation to the institution's mission,**
- which **may** include different standards for different institutions or programs, as established by the institution,
- including, **as appropriate,**
 - *consideration of state licensing examinations,*
 - *consideration of course completion, and*
 - *job placement rates.*

**How Does
MSCHE Define
HEOA's
"Student
Achievement"?**



Standard 14:

Assessment of Student Learning

- Assessment of program, general education, & institutional student learning goals
 - including **direct evidence of student learning**
 - *Tests (local or published)*
 - *Rubrics (local or published)*
 - *Certification or licensure exams*
 - *Field experience supervisor evaluations*

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

- Educational offerings conducted at levels of **appropriate rigor** for the programs or degrees offered

Standard 8: Student Admissions & Retention

- Ongoing assessment of student success,
 - including but not necessarily limited to **retention**
 - through the pursuit of the student's educational goals

Optional and **Insufficient** by Themselves

- **Indirect evidence** of student achievement of institutional, general education, & program learning goals
 - *Job placement rates & salaries*
 - *Course grades & pass rates*
 - *Transfer rates*
 - *Surveys*

Will Assessment Ever Go Away?



- Federal regulations
- Other calls & mandates for accountability
- “Learning-centered” focus

Understanding Standards 7 & 14



1. Mission & Goals

2. Planning

3. Resources

4. Leadership/Governance

5. Administration

6. Integrity

8. Admissions

9. Student Support Services

10. Faculty

11. Educational Offerings

12. General Education

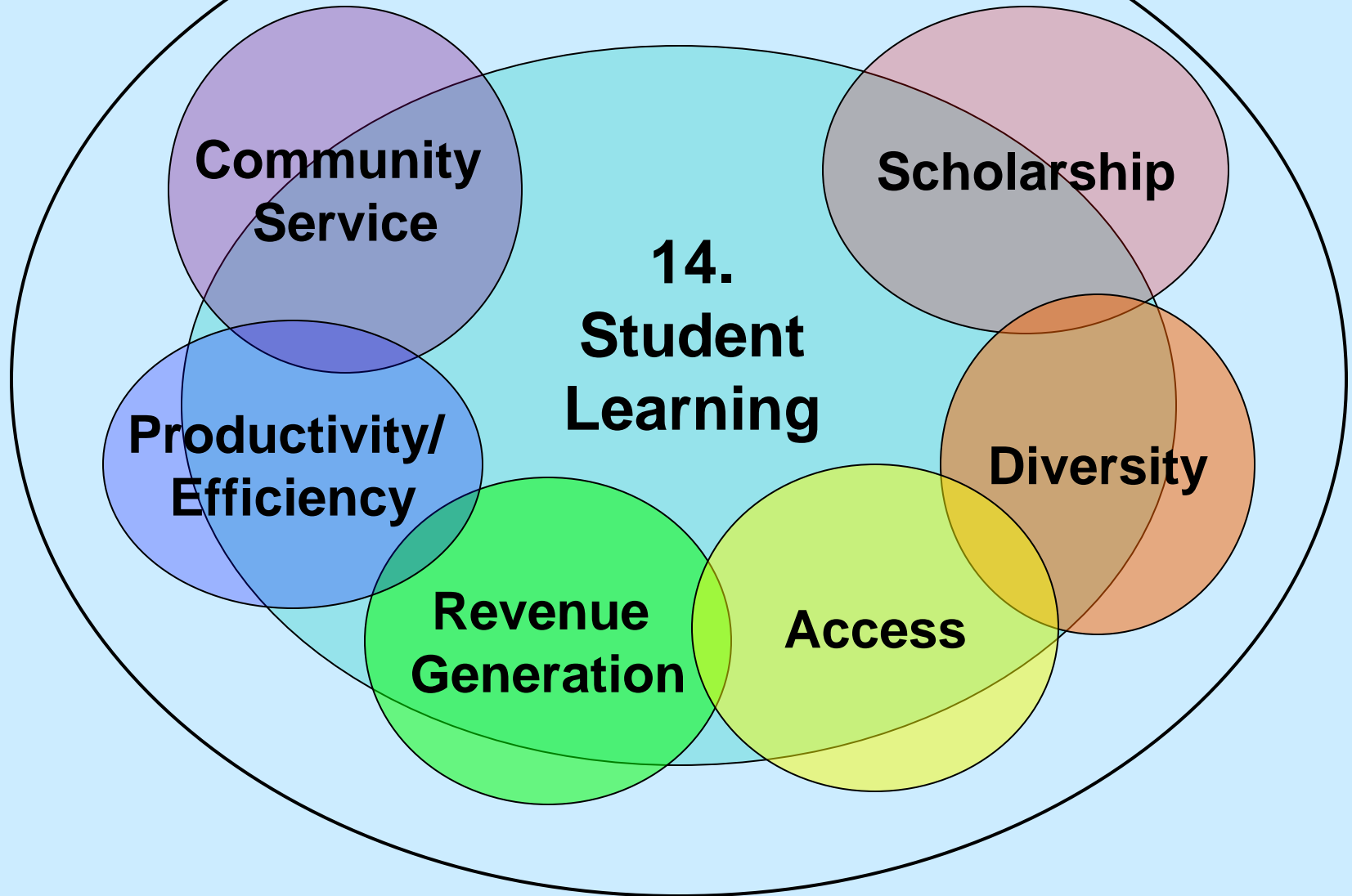
13. Related Educ. Activities

7. Institutional Assessment

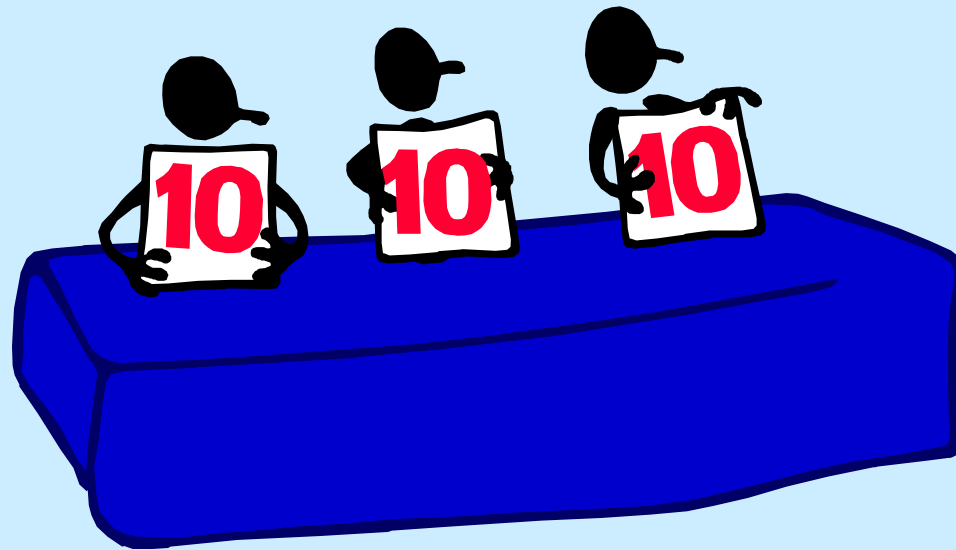
14. Asmt. of Student Learning

Institutional Effectiveness: *Are We Achieving...*

7. Mission & Goals



So What Does MSCHE Want?





Have a goal for anything you do.

- Institutional goals (mission & strategic plan)
 - Administrative goals
 - *Division goals*
 - Administrative unit goals
 - Student learning goals
 - *Institutional*
 - *Gen Ed curriculum*
 - *Academic programs*
 - *Student development programs*
 - *Support programs*

Make sure your students graduate with the learning you value.

- What knowledge, skills, competencies, and attributes does a successful student have?
- Why do you think these are important?
- How are you making sure?

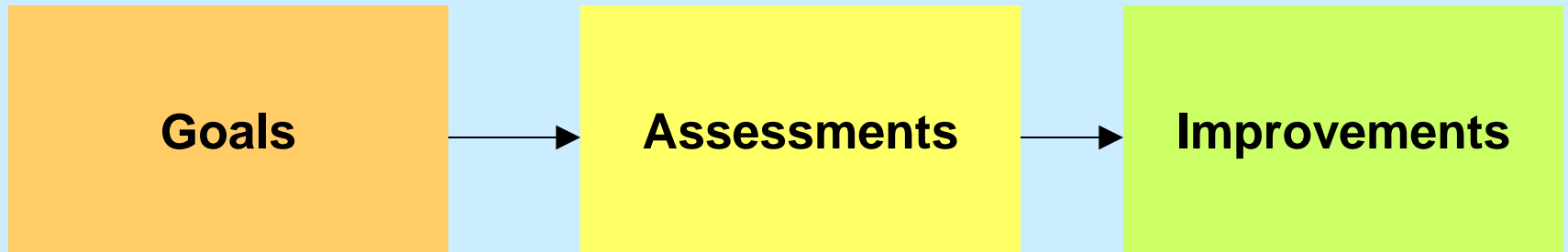
Make sure you achieve whatever else you want to achieve.

- Mission
- Strategic goals
- Other important goals
- How are you making sure?

ASSESSMENT!

Are you satisfied with your results?

- **Why** or why not?
 - *What are your standards for success?*
- If not, what are you doing about it?



Other Questions a Reviewer Might Ask



How Much Has Been Implemented?

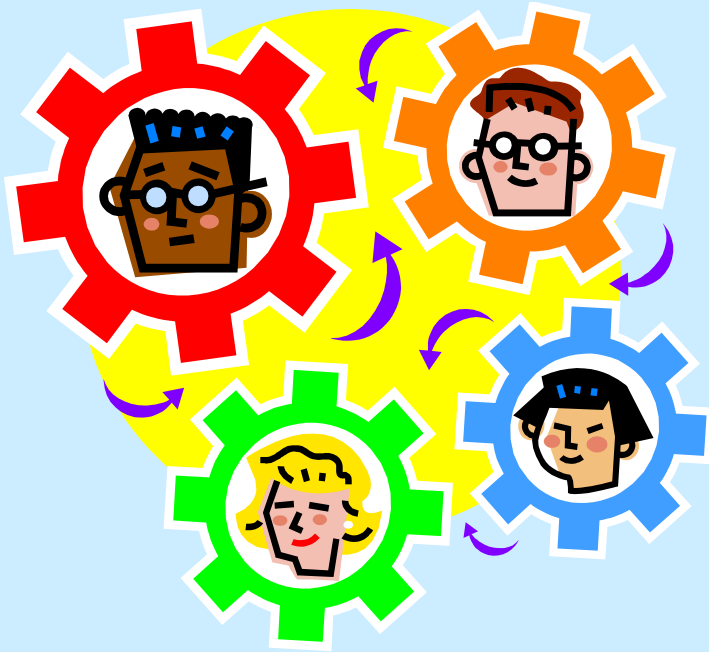


- Are there any significant missing pieces?

Do Institutional Leaders Support and Value a Culture of Assessment?

- Is there adequate **support** for assessment?
 - *Overall guidance, coordination, resources*
- Are assessment **efforts** recognized & valued?
- Are efforts to **improve teaching** recognized & valued?

Sustainable Process?



- Simple
- Practical
- Detailed
- Ownership
- Appropriate timelines

Where is the Institution Going with Assessment?



- Will momentum slow after this review?
- What Commission action will most help the institution keep moving?

What Should Institutions Document?

- Clear statements of goals
- Organized, sustained assessment process
 - *Principles, guidelines, support*
 - *What assessments are already underway*
 - *What assessments are planned, when, & how*
- Assessment results documenting progress toward accomplishing goals
 - *Provide information, not just data*
 - *Not just results but what they say to you*
- How results have been used for improvement

How Might Institutions Document This?

- An overview in the self study
 - *Chart or “roadmap”*
- More thorough information in an appendix, online, and/or burned onto CD
 - *One-page summaries for each institutional goal, gen ed requirement, program, etc.*
 - *Formats can be inconsistent*
- Analysis, not just numbers
 - *What are the results telling you?*
- A few samples of student work?
 - *Exemplary, adequate, inadequate*

Institutional (Strategic) Goal	Key Strategies to Achieve It	How Assessed (Performance Indicators?)	Summary of Results	Use of Results	Plans/ Schedule Going Forward
1.					
2.					
3.					

Program Learning Goal	How/ Where Taught	How Assessed *	Summary of Results	Use of Results	Plans/ Schedule Going Forward
1.					
2.					
3.					

* Provide rubric, survey, etc., so reviewers can verify rigor & match to goal.

Gen Ed Requirmt. Learning Goal	How/ Where Taught	How Assessed *	Summary of Results	Use of Results	Plans/ Schedule Going Forward
1.					
2.					
3.					

* Provide rubric, survey, etc., so reviewers can verify rigor & match to goal.

MSCHE's Fundamental Expectations for Assessment

1. Read the directions.
2. Keep it useful...and used.
3. Tie assessments to important goals.
4. For student learning, include some “direct” evidence.
5. Use multiple measures.
6. Keep doing something everywhere, every year.