

Assessment Basics

What is assessment?

Assessment is an ongoing activity in all academic and administrative/student support units on campus; however, all degree-granting programs, degree-dependent and standalone certificates, and many of the administrative and student support units participate in the annual program assessment documentation process.

Source: Office of Institutional Evaluation and Effectiveness, Texas A&M University

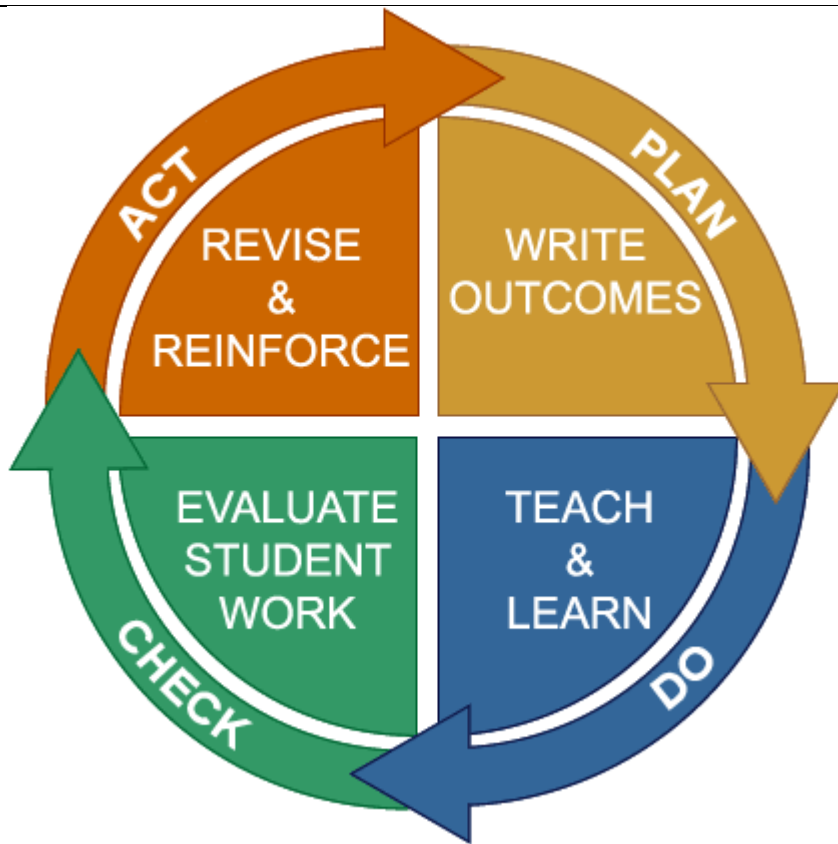
Why do we assess?

Because we care about our students, we want to...

- 1) Educate students. We want to ensure students are learning what we believe they will need to be successful in the careers and career pathways they enter after completing our programs.
- 2) Improve. By measuring performance against learning outcomes and examining the results, faculty and program administrators are able to discern what strategies or techniques are working well and what needs to be changed or modified.
- 3) Compete. According to Value Colleges ("Does Accreditation Matter", 2018) —one of the most important factors in acquiring a successful education and furthermore, a dependable career, is choosing a reputable college. When a college goes through a rigorous process like assessment, it gives students more likelihood of success.
- 4) Grow. When assessment is embedded effectively within our institutional system, assessment can help us focus our collective attention, examine our assumptions, and create a shared academic culture dedicated to assuring and improving the quality of higher education (Thomas A. Angelo, AAHE Bulletin, November 1995, p.7).

How do we assess?

It's simple...follow the Plan-Do-Check-Act model



Ask

Source: Westminster College, Office of Accreditation and Assessment

Plan - What are we going to do?

- What do we want students to learn?
- Establish program's Mission, Goals and Outcomes
- Identify student learning experiences and opportunities (curriculum mapping)
- Setting appropriate performance criteria

Do - Let's do what we said.

- How do I teach effectively so that I can be sure students grasp what I want them to learn?
- Coordinate with others involved in providing evidence of student learning or other items
- Systematically gather data

Check - Have we met our expectations?

- Determine how well performance matches expectations and standards
- Did we choose the right measure for this?

Act - Do we need any changes? Where do we go from here?

- Improvements should be planned and enacted in response to the findings.
- Repeat the cycle