Developing an Assessment Plan

The primary purpose of developing and implementing an assessment plan is to examine how well a unit is fulfilling its purpose. This is accomplished by developing an annual plan that documents the achievement of expected outcomes and promotes continuous improvement.

All support units should assess the effectiveness of their operations, processes and programs on a continual basis.

Step 1: Develop a Purpose Statement

The purpose statement serves as a direct link between the mission and goals of the college and the outcomes specific to the unit.

Consider the following questions:

- Who is served?
- What are the primary functions of the unit?
- What are the core activities?

Step 2: Determine Outcomes

Consider the following questions:

- What results should be expected after providing services?
- What indicates that a unit is both efficient and effective?
- What does the end user experience through interaction with the unit?

Unit Outcomes may be concerned with:

- Level or Volume of activity
  - Support units often justify their existence based on the amount of service provided
- Efficiency
- Compliance
- Client satisfaction
- Gains made by those served

Examples of Outcomes:

- The college bookstore will provide textbooks to students in a timely manner
- Students will be satisfied with advising processes
Step 3: Devise the Measures for evaluating Outcomes

There must be a procedure in place for measuring the attainment of outcomes.

- What, why, how, when, and who

Common type of assessments:

- **Attitudinal** – measures of satisfaction from those you serve.
- **Direct** – counts of unit services
- **External** – validation by a neutral party, auditor, etc...

Step 4: Define the Achievement Target

The criteria for success should answer this question: “If our unit is functioning the way we think, what will our target or score be?”

*Example Targets:*

- At least 80% of eligible employees will participate in training
- 90% of transcripts will be processed and mailed to students within 3 days

Step 5: Implement the Plan

Put the plan into action and begin collecting data. Check for any activities that may already be available within the unit that would clearly demonstrate evidence of the outcomes.