The open access mission of community colleges demands working with individuals with widely varying academic skill levels and diverse educational backgrounds. As a result, learning outcomes assessment in community colleges presents an array of opportunities and challenges distinctive to these institutions and the students that they serve.
Community College Demographics

- Average age 28
- Median Age 23
- 21 or younger: 39%
- 22-39: 45%
- 40 or older 15%
- First generation to attend college: 42%
- Single Parent: 13%
- Student with disabilities: 12%
Demographics Continued

- The percentage of community college students who must take one or more remedial courses is estimated at about 80%.

- American Association of Community Colleges
Reflection

Take a moment to think about the education Wayne County Community College District provides. Consider that we are a large multi-campus district, our student profile, and the skills, knowledge and values needed within our region. What should graduates from this college have in common?
Core-Abilities

- Be a Life-Long Learner
- Act- (Demonstrate competency)
- Think (Clearly and creatively)
- Value (quality, integrity, and diversity)
- Communicate (with different audiences using varied and appropriate means)
Assessment Definitions

- Assessment involves the use of empirical data on student learning to refine programs and improve student learning. (Assessing Academic Programs in Higher Education by Allen 2004)
- Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning. (Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses: shifting the focus from teaching to learning by Huba and Freed 2000)
Assessment Definitions Cont.

- Assessment is the systematic basis for making inferences about the learning and development of students. It is the process of defining, selecting, designing, collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and using information to increase students’ learning and development. (Assessing Student Learning and Development: A Guide to the Principles, Goals, and Methods of Determining College Outcomes by Erwin 1991)

- Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development. (Assessment Essentials: planning, implementing, and improving assessment in higher education by Palomba and Banta 1999)
Assessment of student learning outcomes –

The systematic gathering, documenting, sharing, analyzing, and interpreting information about student learning outcomes (objectives) as a guide to making decisions about improving student learning, teaching, curriculum, and institutional practices.

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (2011)
WCCCD Definition of Assessment

The systematic measurement of performance to inform decisions about improving student, business, community, and faculty and staff satisfaction and success. Assessment data provides the basis for specific improvement action at the classroom, program, discipline, campus, and district levels. Assessment is an ongoing process that is embedded within WCCCD’s holistic assessment plan and is designed to help faculty and staff make informed professional judgments about quality and effectiveness.
The Cycle for the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (CASLO) is WCCCD’s approach to creating a learner-centered environment in which students, faculty and administrators collaborate to improve student learning. The focus of CASLO is on:

- Assessing the degree to which students achieve the stated goals and learning outcomes for courses, programs, and disciplines.
- Sharing of assessment results among students, faculty members, and administrators as a basis for making and acting upon decisions regarding the improvement of student learning, teaching, curriculum, institutional practices, and measurement/assessment processes.
Six Building Blocks of Assessment

- Research and Reflect on Outcomes
- Improve Practices
- Report Assessment Results
- Carefully Design and Conduct Assessment
- Define Measurable SLO’s
- Analyze Assessment Data
Why Do We Assess?

- To implement strategies that respond to diverse needs.
- To improve effectiveness by:
  1. Measuring how and what students learn.
  2. Develop new and varied educational experiences.
  3. Reveal students mastery of the subject matter.
1. Assessment promotes collaboration amongst disciplines
   - Is dynamic and continuous
   - Ensures quality education
   - Focuses on learning
   - Becomes routine, meaning we integrate it into our daily teaching and planning.
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES SLO’S DEFINED

• Concise measurable statement that specifies what students **will know, be able to do or be able to demonstrate** when they have completed/participated in a program/course/project.

• A measurable result of a specific, planned educational experience for students.
Learning Objectives vs. SLOs

Learning objectives, may outline the material the instructor intends to cover or the disciplinary questions the class will address. By contrast, learning outcomes should focus on what the student should know and realistically be able to do by the end of an assignment, activity, class, or course. MORE STUDENT- CENTERED

*For this reason, learning outcomes often start with a version of the phrase “By the end of this course, students will...”*
What is a Measureable SLO?

Ask yourself do they address knowledge, skills or attitudes as they relate to:

1. Cognitive Domain: Critical Thinking
2. Behavioral Domain: Concrete actions
3. Affective Domain: Feelings and attitudes
Aligning SLO’s

- Workplace Expectations
- Institutional Value
- External Agency Licensure Requirements
- Unique Student Population
- Accreditation Standards
- District Standards
# The SLO Process

What should a student know, what skills are needed?

- Are the outcomes consistent with what is expected in the workplace?
- Do the SLOs reflect industry/accreditation standards?
- Are the SLOs measurable?
- Do the SLOs measure higher level learning?
Questions We Should Ask Ourselves

- Are our teaching practices equally effective for our diverse population?
- How do we know what students are learning?
- How do our students acquire the needed skills and values for the workplace?
- How do we improve our practices to address student success?
- Can our students apply information to real world applications?
Blooms Taxonomy
Lower Level

- Knowledge: The basic ability to recall facts.
- Comprehension: The ability to understand relationships among facts.
- Application: The ability to use factual information in varied contexts. These three constitute the "lower levels" of learning or skill.
Are you kidding me!
Blooms Higher Levels

- **Analysis:** The ability to determine how parts relate to one another and to an overall purpose.
- **Synthesis:** The ability to combine varied information into a new, coherent whole; and **Evaluation,** of the ability to make and defend judgments.
CRITICAL THINKING

JUST GO TO www.criticalthinking.com AND CLICK ON "ANSWERS"!
Blooms New Version!

- **Remembering:** can the student recall or remember the information? define, duplicate, list, memorize, recall, repeat, reproduce state
- **Understanding:** can the student explain ideas or concepts? classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate, paraphrase
- **Applying:** can the student use the information in a new way? choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write.
- **Analyzing:** can the student distinguish between the different parts? appraise, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test.
- **Evaluating:** can the student justify a stand or decision? appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, evaluate
- **Creating:** can the student create new product or point of view? assemble, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, write.
REFLECTION

- As an institution how do we collaborate on SLO’s
- How do we collaborate with other disciplines
- How do you use Best Practice Research to determine:
  1. The skills, knowledge, abilities and attitudes that our student need to be successful
  2. What resources do you use to define mastery of outcomes?
  3. How do you strive to improve your teaching?
EVIDENCE

- Quantitative: capable of numerical manipulation and analysis: grades, attendance
- Qualitative: performance or observational based experiences: focus groups surveys
- Embedded: assessment measures that are built into curricular or program activities: self assessment, peer dialogue
Reflection

- What is the difference between course embedded assessment and classroom assessment?
Analyze Results

- Measure student attainment against a set of criteria.
- Identify interventions if criteria are not met.
Interventions or Improvements

- Modify instruction
- Mentoring of both faculty and students
- Improve student feedback
- Change programmatic structure
- Integrate outcomes into program review
- Link results to planning and resource allocation
Ultimate Goal of Assessment

- Continued Quality Improvement
- Positive changes in teaching and learning
Reflection

- What kind of reflective processes do you currently use to assess whether students are learning?
- How do you translate student learning into improving your teaching style?
LAST WORDS

"Who dares to teach must never cease to learn."

- John Cotton Dana