Outcome Assessment

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This review process serves many purposes at the University:

- It is the best way for programs to identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Programs are given the opportunity to make “data-driven” decisions about needs and future issues.
- It is the best way for the University to demonstrate outcomes assessment and the use of results.
- It is our research-based evaluation process.
Why Is This Process So Important?

A committee was pulled together in 2006 by the then Secretary of Education to:

- Look at student preparation in K-12 and the impact it has on higher education
- Identify the outcomes of higher education and if students are meeting them
- Address the issues and conditions of higher education
- Make suggestions to the Secretary of Education
There Is a Call for Greater Accountability

- As a result, the U.S. Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings, released their report “A Test of Leadership: Charting the Future of U.S. Higher Education.” This report addresses the need to transform higher education.
  - “There is inadequate transparency and accountability for measuring institutional performance, which is more and more necessary to maintaining public trust in higher education.” (p. 14)
  - “To meet the challenges of the 21st century, higher education must change from a system primarily based on reputation to one based on performance. We urge the creation of a robust culture of accountability and transparency throughout higher education.” (p. 21)
Faculty must be at the forefront of defining educational objectives for students and developing meaningful, evidence-based measures of their progress toward these goals.” (p. 24)

“The results of student learning assessments, including value-added measurements that indicate how students’ skills have improved over time should be made available to students and reported in the aggregate publicly.” (p. 24)
Here Comes Institutional Effectiveness

- First appeared in 1984 when adopted as part of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) revision of institutional accreditation requirements.
- Came about because they thought the term “assessment” was too contentious after the publishing of *A Nation at Risk*, also in 1984.
This level of accountability hit the public schools first (K-12) and started the testing mania that arose in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

It spread to social services agencies, grant funding agencies and some government funded initiatives by the mid to late 80s.

It hit the higher education institutions in the south in the mid 1980s (but they were unclear for years, many still are.)

The term has shown up in all six regional accrediting agency language, but many people still don’t understand assessment.
Where We Are Today

Despite the best attempts of some to ignore this trend,

THE EMPHASIS IS NOW ON OUTCOMES:

- LEARNING OUTCOMES
- ADMINISTRATIVE OUTCOMES
- PROGRAM OUTCOMES