DEFINING OPERATIONAL OUTCOMES

Assessment of Learning – Fall 2016
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GOOD ASSESSMENTS:

- Provide useful information
- Are focused, simple and cost effective
- Give us reasonably accurate, truthful information
- Systematic, transparent and consistent
- Fair and ethical
- Qualitative and well as quantitative

(Suskie, 2006, p. 22-23)
Define the purpose

Identify outcome

Connect with programs/services

Gather data

Review, analyze and interpret results

Share/use information
Learning outcomes

- Examine what a **student** (or other stakeholders) is to know, think or be able to do, as a result of the program, course, service.

Operational outcomes

- Examine what a **program or process** is to do, achieve or accomplish for its own improvement; generally needs/satisfaction driven.
Based on your purpose/topic

1. What priority, purpose or goal are you focused on?
2. Is that operational or learning?
3. If it’s learning – do you have a specific learning experience that can be tied to this goal?
DRAWING FROM A FRAMEWORK...
WHAT OUTCOME DO YOU NEED?

- Diagnose or clarify problems
- Compare courses of action
- Justify a decision/action
- Be held accountable by external sources
- Inform daily practice
- Manage meaning, culture, motivation

(Knapp, et. al, p. 7)
CONNECTING OUTCOMES AT THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Hartwick College: Organizing Principle and Strategic Framework

Maximize Financial Performance
- Implement strategic budgeting
- Increase community participation in budget process
- Create incentives for cutting waste
- Monitor critical indicators and benchmark performance

Improve Student Experience and Satisfaction
- Increase graduation rate
- Maximize student satisfaction
- Align capital projects with student and learning needs

Maximize the Academic Program
- Fully implement assessment plan
- Fully integrate experiential learning programs
- Implement external review cycle across all programs
- Fully implement the new curriculum

Expand Our Financial Base
- Maximize annual revenue
- Comprehensive fundraising campaign
- Explore alternative sources of revenue

Maximize College Governance
- Board leadership and succession plan
- Develop a generative approach to governance
- Focus Board work on critical, cross-institutional issues
- Strengthen information flow and cooperation

Maximize Employee Performance
- Annual performance reviews
- Establish merit system linked to performance
- Improve longevity and celebrate it
- Focus on best practices
- Celebrate success

Improve College’s Image and Reputation
- Clarify our brand
- Fulfill the promise
- Increase visibility
- Promote student success to all constituents
- Strengthen affinity with alumni

We will be the best at melding a liberal arts education with experiential learning
CONNECTING OUTCOMES AT THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Hartwick College General Education Student Learning Outcomes: Our Commitment to the Liberal Arts in Practice

- **LO 1.1** Communicate effectively in written English.
- **LO 1.2** Communicate effectively in spoken English.
- **LO 2** Communicate in one non-native language.
- **LO 3** Express relationships in formal logical or mathematical language and interpret relationships so expressed.
- **LO 4** Identify and evaluate the consequences of individual and collective values, beliefs, ideas and actions.
- **LO 5** Develop, test, and evaluate hypotheses using appropriate information and methods.
- **LO 6** Produce interpretive or problem-solving creative work.
- **LO 7** Apply knowledge through practical experience.
STRATEGIES FOR CONNECTING….

Connect Up
• Write outcome at program level and connect to institutional level

Connect Down
• Start at institutional level and decide what outcomes you can focus on
Based on your purpose/topic

1. What priority, purpose or goal are you focused on?
2. Is that operational or learning?
3. If it’s learning – do you have a specific learning experience that can be tied to this goal?
4. How does that connect with Hartwick’s institutional goals and/or LAiP outcomes?
GETTING STARTED
WRITING SPECIFIC AND MEASURABLE OUTCOMES (S.M.A.R.T.)

- **Specific** means that anyone can read your outcome and know exactly what you are hoping to accomplish.

- **Measurable** means that you can look at it and say, “This is how I plan to prove it.”

- **Achievable** means you can accomplish this outcome in a specific time and place.

- **Relevant** means it is valuable to find out this information.

- **Time Sensitive** means that the outcome is happening within a specific period of time.
THE BIG QUESTION...

What do you hope will be the result or what will change at the end of the time period?

HINT: Be specific and avoid strategies (e.g., we are going to recruit students (strategy) vs. we are going to meet budget targets)
ONE POPULAR FORMULA ...

- **Audience**: who will be participating
- **Behavior**: action verb what will be the result
- **Condition**: this could also be timeframe or the experience
- **Degree**: to what extent will something be accomplished
ANOTHER POPULAR FORMULA...

- **Timeframe**: By the end of the semester...
- **Office/service to change**: Parking Services...
- **Action Verb**: will increase
- **Intended results/reason**: satisfaction by 10%
LET’S TRY ONE...

- Audience:
- Behavior:
- Condition:
- Degree:
Hartwick will improve faculty and staff diversity.

By the end of the academic year, the Office of Academic Affairs will increase faculty diversity by 10%.
Assessment plans will be evaluated

By the end of the Fall semester, 65% of all assessment plans will be rated as a level 3 or higher on the assessment plan rubric.
TIPS AND POINTERS

Beware of “and” – it usually means 2 outcomes in one

Watch for trigger words that we think are specific but they aren’t – effective, improve, assess

Check back to your original purpose – many operational outcomes end up being strategies

Always check to make sure the outcome is something you can have control over or an effect on (e.g., retention and GPA are difficult!)
WORKSHEET TIME...
“Good Feedback Is the KEY to Improvement”
CREATE A PLAN TO MEASURE YOUR OUTCOME
COMING NEXT....

Finding Your Purpose
Monday, August 1st
10:00-11:30 am
Golisano 301

Defining Learning Outcomes
Tuesday, August 2nd
10:00-11:30 am
Golisano 301

Constructing Assessment Plans
Thursday, August 4th
10:00-11:30 am
Golisano 301

Defining Operational Outcomes
Wednesday, August 3rd
10:00-11:30 am
Golisano 301

Setting Targets & Using Metrics
Friday, August 5th
10:00-11:30 am
Golisano 301

Assessment Plan Writing/Feedback Session
Set aside some time to write your assessment plan, get feedback, ask questions, etc.
Friday, August 5th
1:00-3:00 pm - Golisano 301

Unable to attend a session?

Materials will be available on the Assessment Website after August 1st