



University of Wisconsin  
**Stevens Point**



# Writing Learning Outcomes

March 30, 2016  
Ellen Meents-DeCaigny

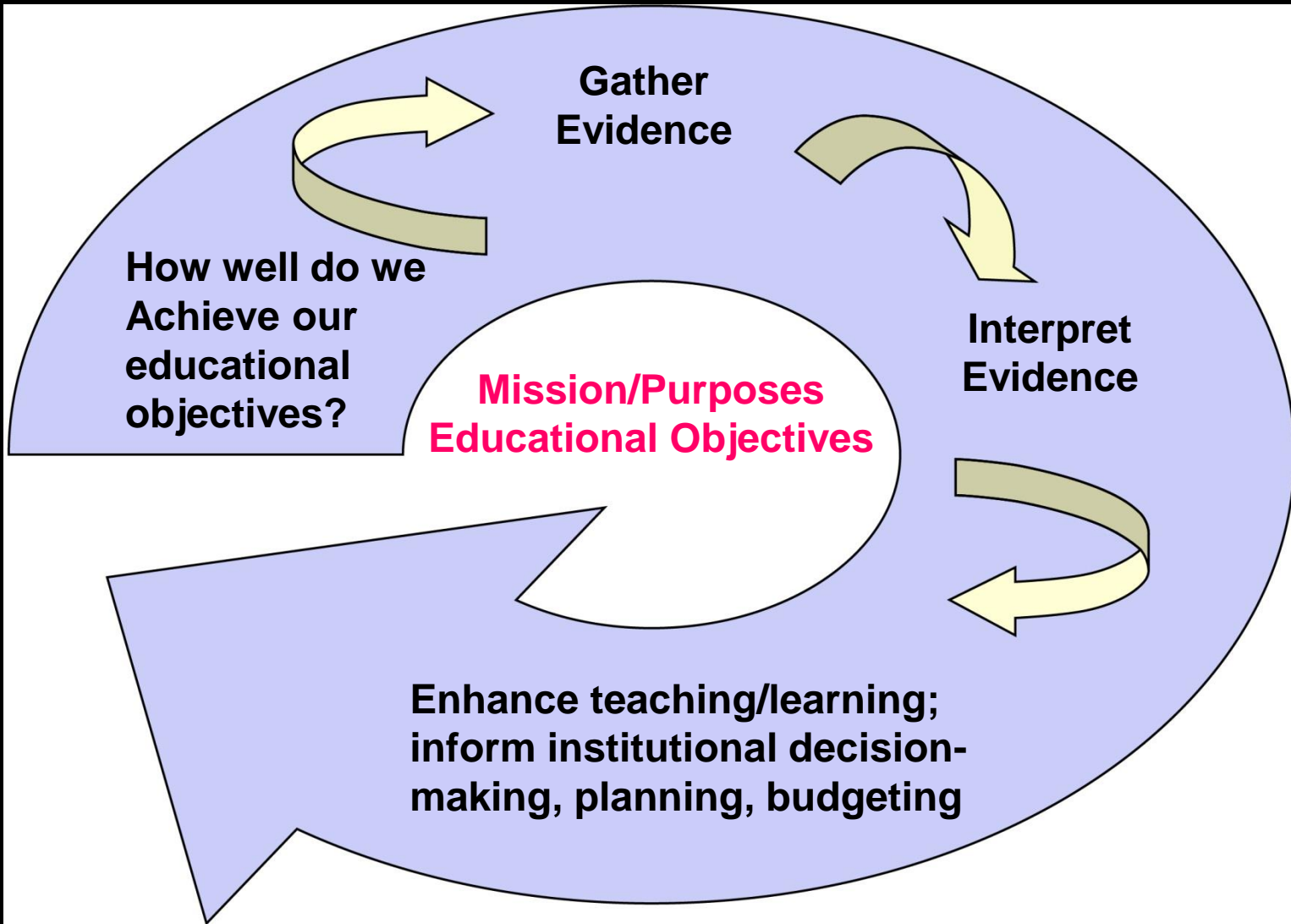
# Goals of Session

- **Part 1:** Highlights from yesterday
- **Part 2:** Integrated learning and levels of learning outcomes
- **Part 3:** Writing learning outcomes
- **Part 4:** Review direct vs. indirect assessment of learning
- **Wrap-Up:** Next steps in developing and assessing learning outcomes

# Benefits of Assessment

- Ensure we are delivering high quality programs, courses, and activities.
- Provide data to inform decision-making.
- Opportunity to focus in on a particular aspect of student learning in your program.
- Understanding learning as it occurs across multiple courses, activities, and student experiences.
- Opportunity for professional development for faculty, staff, and students.

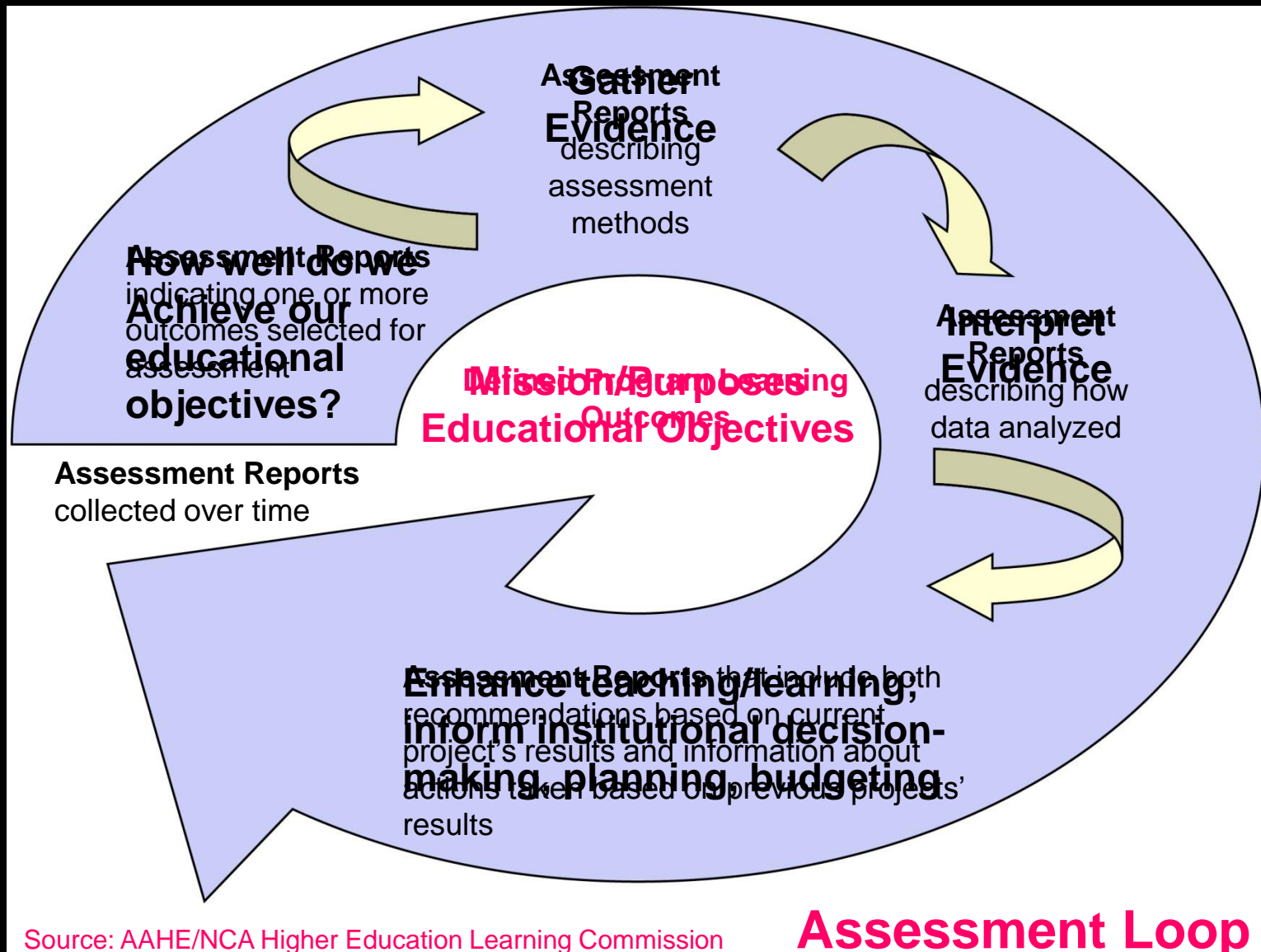
# Assessment Process



Source: AAHE/NCA Higher Education Learning Commission

**Assessment Loop**

# Evidence of Assessment Process



# Purpose of Divisional Outcomes

- To define the learning important to your work
- To connect your work to the work of the university
- To give focus to your assessment of learning which will increase your ability to articulate contributions to student learning and improve student learning
- To help meet strategic objectives and guide future planning
- To help streamline programs and resources based on priorities and determine gaps in programs

# Keep in Mind

- The division is responsible for a variety of programs and services
- Divisional outcomes only apply to programs and services that are tied to learning
- If a program or service is not tied to learning it does not mean that it is unimportant

# Student Affairs Learning Domains

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- Personal Development
- Interpersonal Competence
- Social Responsibility
- Cognitive and Practical Skills



# Student Affairs Learning Outcomes

- PD: Students who engage with Student Affairs programs, activities or services will **be able to identify and demonstrate a positive personal sense of self, and a code of ethics and integrity.**
- IC: Students who engage with the Student Affairs programs, activities or services will **demonstrate healthy, respectful, and collaborative relationships with others.**

# Student Affairs Learning Outcomes

- SR: Students who engage with Student Affairs programs, activities or services will **describe, identify and demonstrate multi-cultural competence and citizenship, and apply that knowledge to create safe, healthy, equitable, and thriving communities.**
- C&PS: Students who engage with Student Affairs programs, activities or services will **develop and use cognitive and practical skills that will enable them to live healthy, productive, and purposeful lives.**

# Integrated Learning and the Co-Curricular Experience

# Learning as an Integrated Process

- Learning is defined as “a complex, holistic, multicentric activity that occurs throughout and across the college experience (Learning Reconsidered, 2004).”
- Impossible to separate learning, development, and context (Jones & McEwen, 2000; Abes & Jones, 2004)

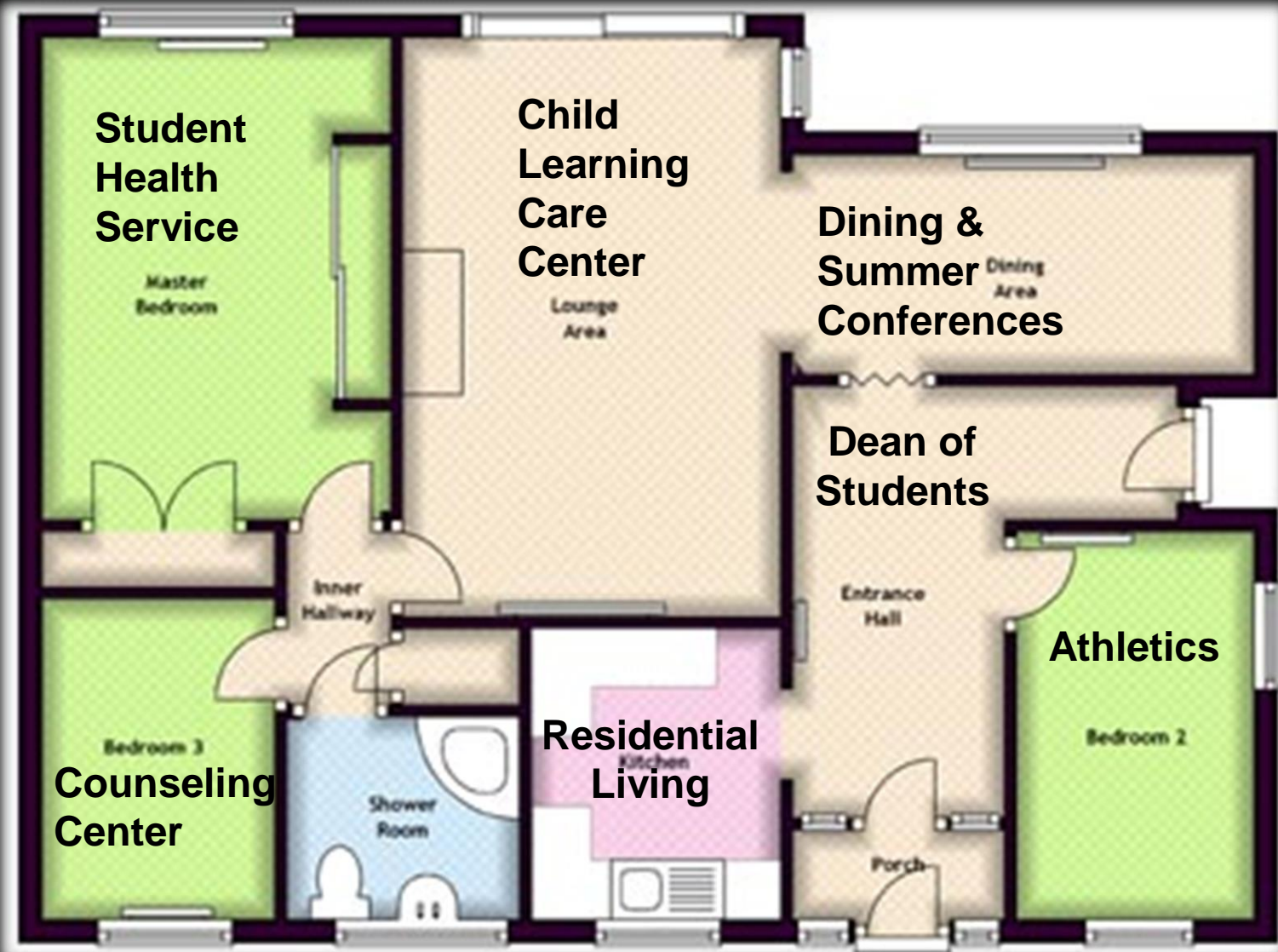
# How Students Experience Student Affairs

- Cumulative and collective experience over time
- Weave in and out of different programs, department involvement
- May not distinguish where one department's role begins and ends

# Disconnect between Student Experience and Learning Outcomes

## Departmental and Activity Silos





# Student Affairs Learning Domains

- Personal Development

CC, DSC, DCA, ATH, RL, HEC

- Interpersonal Competence

RL, DSC, CC, SIEO, CLC, DCA, DOS, USTR, UC, CA

- Social Responsibility

DCA, SHS, SIEO, DOS, HWP, ATH, HEC, CA

- Cognitive and Practical Skills

CLC, HWP, SHS, USTR, ATH, UC, RL, DSC



# Levels of Learning Outcomes

■ **Divisional**



■ Departmental



■ Programmatic



■ **Activity**

Each informs the other mapping where and how learning occurs

# Community Service Example

## Activity:

- First year students participating in New Student Service day will be able to identify one societal inequity and a community agency addressing that particular issue.

## Departmental:

- Students who participate in Community Service programs and activities will be able to challenge oppressive systems and behavior and work to create change.

# Dean of Students Example

## Activity:

- Students on the verge of homelessness will be able to identify community housing resources in order to secure a more affordable living environment.

## Departmental:

- Students who engage with Dean of Students' programs and services will be able to identify and utilize appropriate university/community resources to address and manage personal and academic challenges.

# Levels of Learning

# Levels of Learning Outcomes

- **Divisional**



- **Departmental**



- **Programmatic**



- **Activity**

Each informs the other mapping where and how learning occurs

# A Bridge for Learning



# Levels of Learning Outcomes

- **Divisional Learning Outcomes**

*allows for integration, shared responsibility for student learning across departments*

- **Departmental Learning Outcomes**

*students can learn through multiple programs and services offered within the department*

- **Programmatic Learning Outcomes**

*students can achieve through participating in one or more activities or services within one program area of a department*

- **Activity Based Learning Outcomes**

*students can achieve through participation in a singular activity or service at one point in time*

# Vincentian Community Service Office

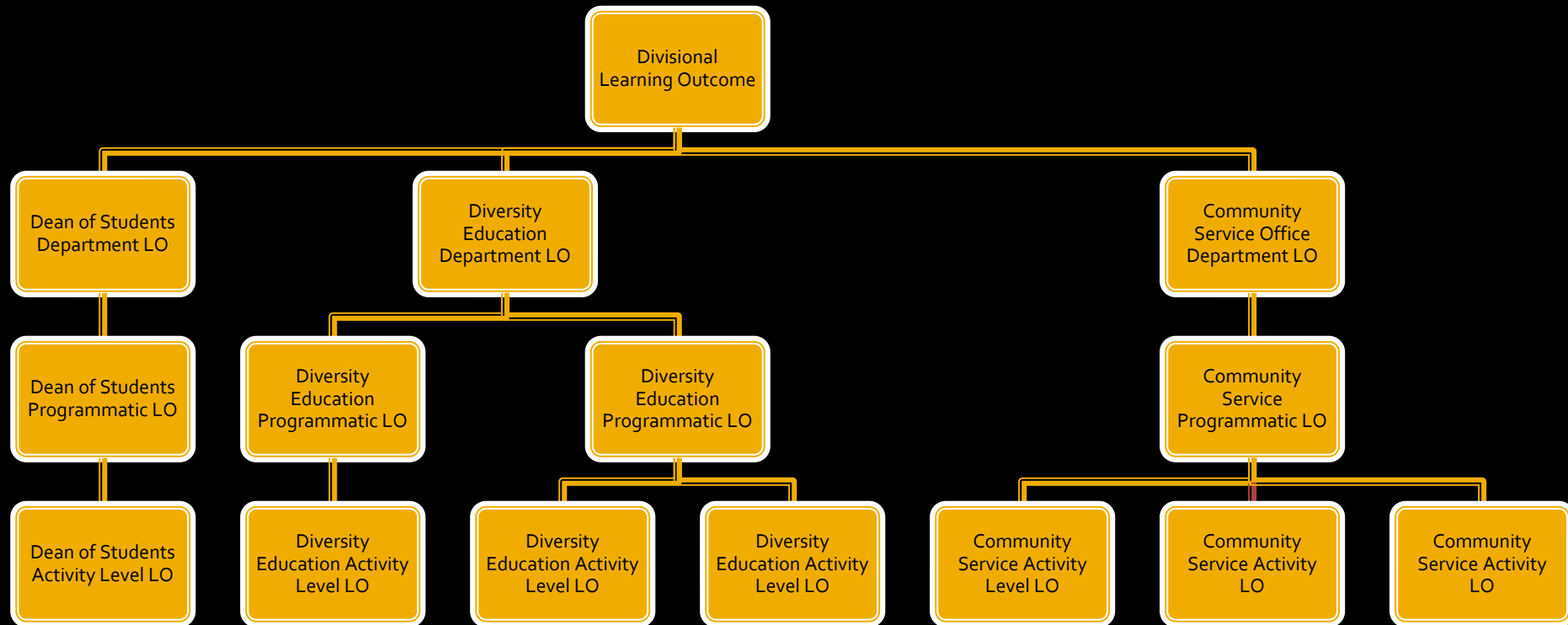
- **Divisional**: Students who participate in **Student Affairs programs and services** will, as leaders, demonstrate integrity, show that they take seriously the perspective of others, and contribute to positive social change.
- **Departmental**: Students who participate in **Vincentian Community Service Office (VCSO) programs** will demonstrate their Vincentian responsibility in systemic change at the individual, and global levels.
- **Programmatic**: Students who participate in **fighting injustice (direct service, advocacy, activism)** will be able to describe different approaches to systemic change and articulate their role as Vincentians in Action/Vincentian responsibility.
- **Activity**: Students who meet social justice advocates during the **Service Immersion** experience will identify different approaches to systemic change.



# New Student And Family Engagement

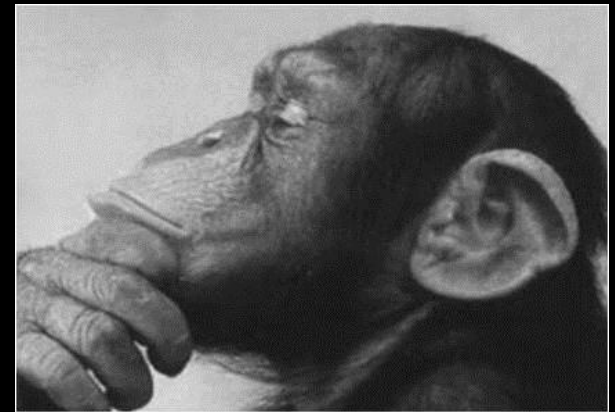
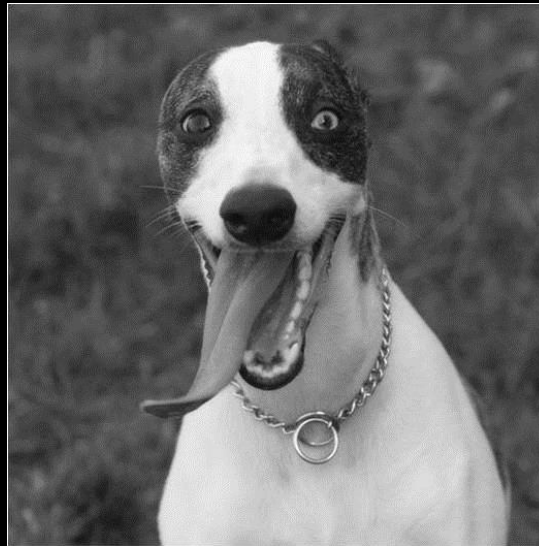
- Divisional: Students who participate in **Student Affairs programs and services** will acquire intellectual and practical skills that will enable them to live productive and healthy lives during and after DePaul.
- Departmental: Students who participate in **NSFE programs and activities** will utilize appropriate academic and social resources to navigate their transition to DePaul.
- Programmatic: **New students** who participate in **orientation programs** will demonstrate knowledge of academic and social resources to help navigate their transition to DePaul.
- Activity: New students participate in **College presentations and academic advising sessions** will explain the role of the Liberal Studies Program in their DePaul education.

# Division of Student Affairs



# Writing Learning Outcomes

# Outcomes & You



# How many outcomes?

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(No magic number)  
4 divisional outcomes

2-3 department outcomes

Every department outcome should have at least 2  
program outcomes associated with it

Every program outcome should have 3-5 activity  
level outcomes associated with it

# What is a learning outcome?

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A statement in specific and measurable terms of what a student will know or be able to do as the result of having successfully completed a program (or experience).

# Characteristics of Learning Outcomes

(Maki, 2010)

- Describes what a student should be able to demonstrate, represent, or produce
- Relies on active verbs
- Aligns with collective divisional and institutional level educational intentions

# Purpose of learning outcomes

- Learning outcomes inform **students** of what knowledge and skills they will gain through the course of a program of study.
- They indicate what knowledge, skills and abilities **students** will have mastered (and the level of mastery) at the end of their course of study.
- They communicate expected standards of performance.
- They provide a structure for evaluating **student learning**.



# Best Practices in writing learning outcomes

- Student-centered
- Clear and concise
- Use action verbs
- Manageable number
- Tied to core curricular and co-curricular mission/goals/values

# Best Practices in Writing Learning Outcomes

- Measurable
- Observable
- (Realistically) Aspirational/Developmental  
(at the right level for your students)
- Transferrable
- Meaningful

# The A.B.C.D. Method

- **A** Audience—Who is the learner?
- **B** Behavior—What is the measurable behavior?
- **C** Condition—Under what circumstances should the learner be able to perform?
- **D** Degree—*At what level does the behavior need to be performed?*

# Program Learning Outcome Format

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Students who participate in (fill in the name of the program) will be able to...

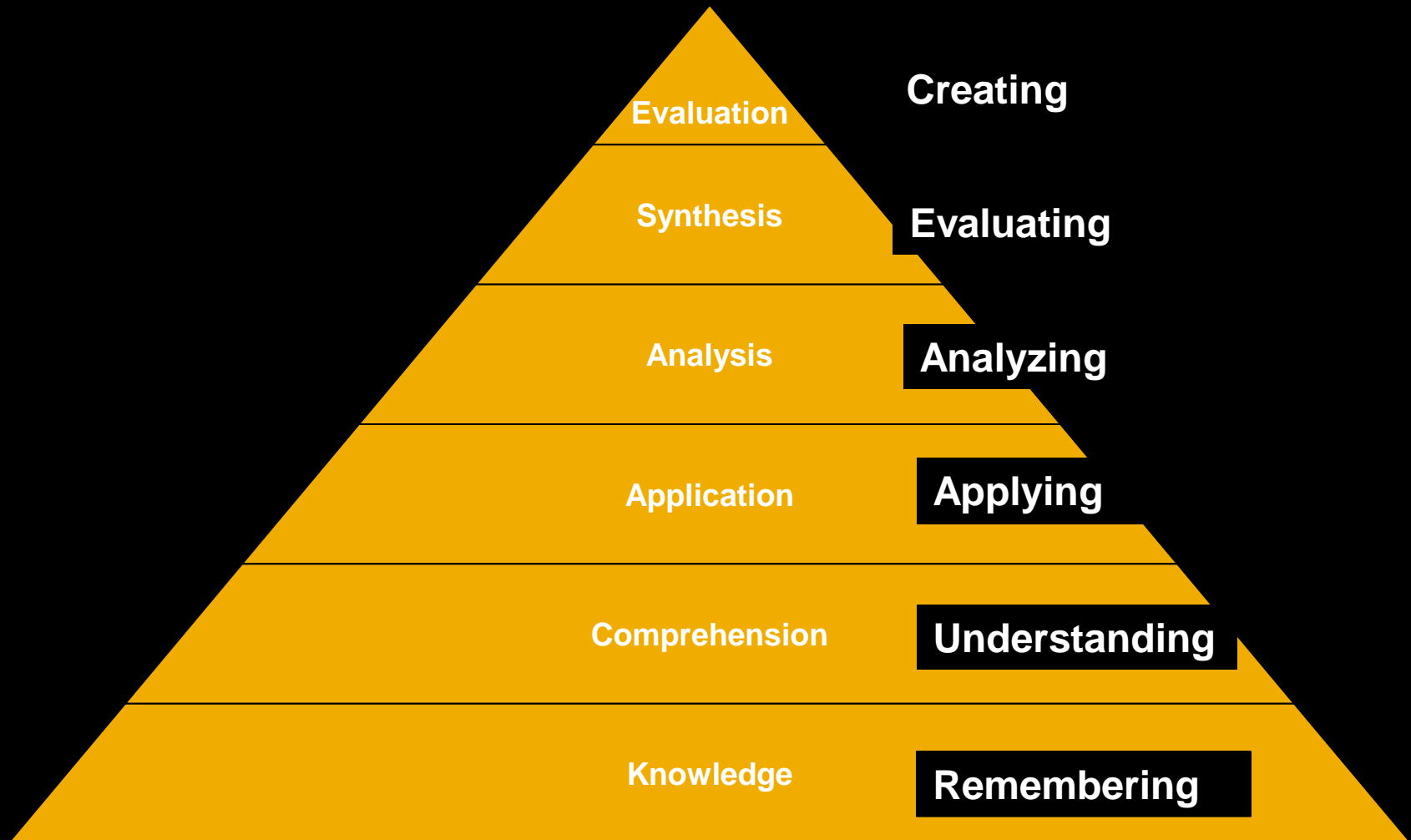
# ABCD Example for Program Level Outcomes

<u>Students</u> <i>Audience</i>	<u>who participate in fighting injustice (direct</u> <i>Condition</i>
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service, advocacy, activism) activities will be able

to describe different approaches to systemic change.

# Bloom's Taxonomy: Cognitive Domain

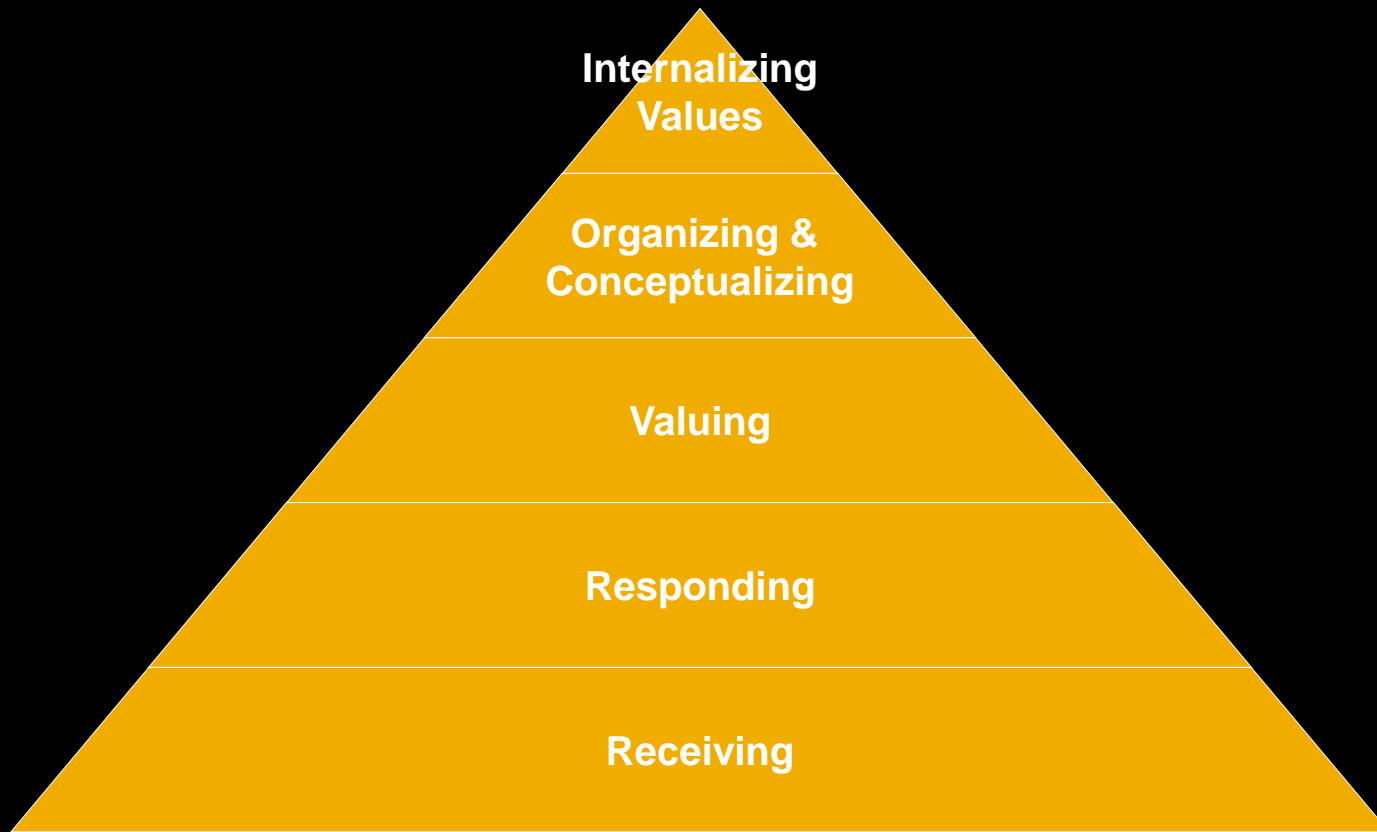


# Cognitive Domain Verbs

					Evaluation
				Synthesis	Evaluation
			Analysis	Synthesis	
Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
<p>Definition: Ability to recall previously learned material.</p> <p><i>Sample Verbs:</i>            identify            label            recall            reproduce            state</p>	<p>Definition: Ability to show a basic understanding of material.</p> <p><i>Sample Verbs:</i>            define            describe            explain            paraphrase            provide example</p>	<p>Definition: Ability to apply learning in new situations.</p> <p><i>Sample Verbs:</i>            apply            demonstrate            determine            prepare            use</p>	<p>Definition: Ability to logically differentiate between the content and structure of material.</p> <p><i>Sample Verbs:</i>            analyze            compare/contrast            differentiate            distinguish            investigate</p>	<p>Definition: Ability to create new content and structures.</p> <p><i>Sample Verbs:</i>            construct            create            design            develop            generate</p>	<p>Definition: Ability to judge the value of material for a given purpose.</p> <p><i>Sample Verbs:</i>            assess            critique            evaluation            justify            support</p>

Adapted from: Bloom B. S. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain*. New York: David McKay Co Inc.

# Bloom's & Krathwohl's Taxonomy: Affective Domain



Adapted from: Krathwohl, D., Bloom, B., & Masia, B. (1956).  
Taxonomy of educational objectives. Handbook II: Affective domain. New York: David McKay.



# Affective Domain Verbs

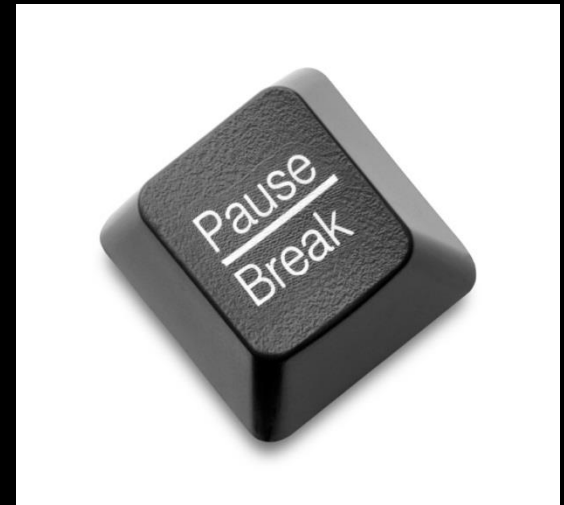
				Internalizing Values
Receiving	Responding	Valuing	Organizing/ Conceptualizing	Acting in accordance with the new value.
Being aware of or sensitive to ideas or phenomena.	Actively responding to or showing new behaviors as a result of new ideas or phenomena.	Showing involvement or commitment.	Integrating values into one's priorities/set of values.	
<i>Sample Verbs:</i> accept acknowledge attend listen observe	<i>Sample Verbs:</i> clarify contribute question react respond	<i>Sample Verbs:</i> demonstrate join justify participate support	<i>Sample Verbs:</i> commit modify prioritize reconcile synthesize	<i>Sample Verbs:</i> act display exhibit perform practice

Adapted from: Krathwohl, D., Bloom, B., & Masia, B. (1956).  
Taxonomy of educational objectives. Handbook II: Affective domain. New York: David McKay.

# Avoiding Pitfalls

- Too many outcomes or not enough outcomes
- Outcomes that are difficult to understand
- Using “understand,” “have knowledge of,” “be aware of,” “appreciate”...
- Including how an outcome will be measured in the written outcome (can limit to one measure)
- Focusing on yourself rather than the student





Assess  
This  
Outcome

# Let's have some fun

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For each of the following learning outcomes decide:

- Is this a good learning outcome?
- If not, how could it be rewritten to be better?

Students demonstrate a reasonably high degree of competency of technical execution appropriate to the chosen medium.

All xxxxx majors will learn the role technology and the new media are playing in the current and future worlds of news gathering and dissemination. Our course work will emphasize that the arrival of internet and broadband technology as well as satellite and video tape technology is as significant in its own way as the Gutenberg Revolution and the introduction of the telegraph were to the future of journalism. Each has accelerated the news cycle as never before and challenged journalists to get the news fast and to get it right. Our students will learn how to do both.

Students who participate in leadership development or leadership training initiatives will determine how leadership theories or models inform their leadership.



# Knowledge of Contracts

In this program, students  
will acquire core  
knowledge in a particular  
technology discipline.

Students who participate in fighting injustice (direct service, advocacy, activism) will engage in critical reflection and identify current local, national, and/or global social justice issues.

# Activity: Identifying Divisional Domains

- In department groups, discuss your major programs and identify 2-3 divisional domains your department contributes to
- Each group will share their domains with the large group

# Student Affairs Learning Domains

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- Personal Development
- Interpersonal Competence
- Social Responsibility
- Cognitive and Practical Skills

# Activity: Drafting Department Outcomes

- Using the ABCD model draft 1-2 department outcomes that captures learning across multiple programs
- Each department will share one outcome with the large group

# ABCD Example for Program Level Outcomes

<u>Students</u> <i>Audience</i>	<u>who participate in fighting injustice (direct</u> <i>Condition</i>
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service, advocacy, activism) activities will be able

to describe different approaches to systemic change.

# Activity: Drafting Program Outcomes

- Each department group should draft 1-2 program outcomes that link to drafted department outcome
- Use the outcome checklist to evaluate the outcome (s)



# Reflections on Developing Outcomes Across the Division

- Great opportunity to increase staff capacity and confidence to write outcomes
- Can help breakdown silos by seeing learning across departments
- Can increase understanding of learning in a broader context
- Help strengthen connections between divisional outcomes and activity level outcomes
- Opportunity to re-think programs and services that contribute to learning

# Direct vs Indirect Assessment of Learning

# Direct and Indirect Assessment of Learning

- *Direct* evidence of student learning is tangible, visible, self-explanatory, and compelling evidence of exactly what students have and have not learned.
- *Indirect* evidence consists of proxy signs that students are probably learning. Indirect evidence is less clear and less convincing.

# Examples of Evidence

## DIRECT

- Ratings of student skills (by advisor, employer, etc.)
- Written work, performances, presentations
- Portfolios
- Observation of behavior
- Student reflections

## INDIRECT

- *Student* self ratings of their knowledge and skills and what they have learned over the course of a program
- Student satisfaction with learning
- Student perceptions
- Retention and graduation rates

# Considerations with Direct Assessment

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- Embedded vs. Add-on Assessments
- Objective vs. Subjective Assessment
- Quantitative vs. Qualitative Assessment

# Recommended Next Steps

- Continue to write and revise department and program outcomes
- Develop a support structure that includes a feedback loop (and perhaps working labs)
- Set clear expectations for how department members will be involved in process and a timeline for the process



# Contact Information

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**Ellen Meents-DeCaigny**

Assistant Vice President, Student Affairs

[emeentsd@depaul.edu](mailto:emeentsd@depaul.edu)

312-362-5680