

Formative Assessment in Higher Education



Jenna Ralicki

Enterprise Consultant

Enterprise and Emerging Products

Campus Labs

Session Overview:

1

Assessment Overview

2

Deep Dive into Formative
Assessment

3

Additional Resources and
Questions

Learning Outcomes

Describe at least three benefits of formative assessment in an online setting

Select at least two ways you can leverage formative assessment in an online format

Create a plan for adapting at least one method of feedback in your course

Continuous Improvement

Pressures on Higher Education Today

Regional
Accreditors

Lawmakers

Employers

Taxpayers

Parents

Departments

Faculty

Students

Identifying Outcomes
Providing Objectives
Articulating Goals
Developing Plan
Defining Structure

PLAN
Document foundational framework (mission, goals, outcomes, etc.) and make a plan to assess

Collecting Data
Measuring Results
Entering Findings
Gathering Evidence

ACT
Close the loop on impact of actions taken to drive continuous improvement

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

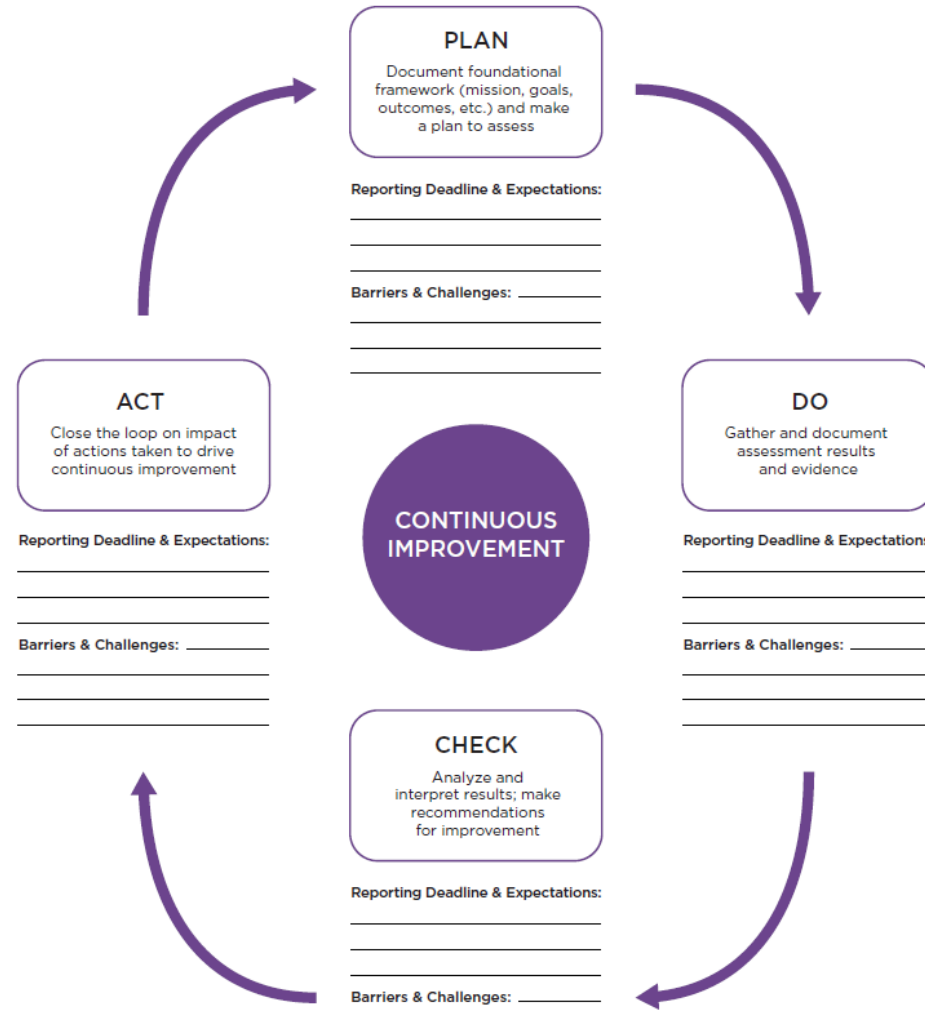
DO
Gather and document assessment results and evidence

Use of Results
Actions Taken
Closing the Loop
Implementing Change
Adjusting Program

CHECK
Analyze and interpret results; make recommendations for improvement

Evaluating Data
Analyzing Results
Reflecting
Creating Action Plan
Sharing Findings

Continuous Improvement Worksheet Resource



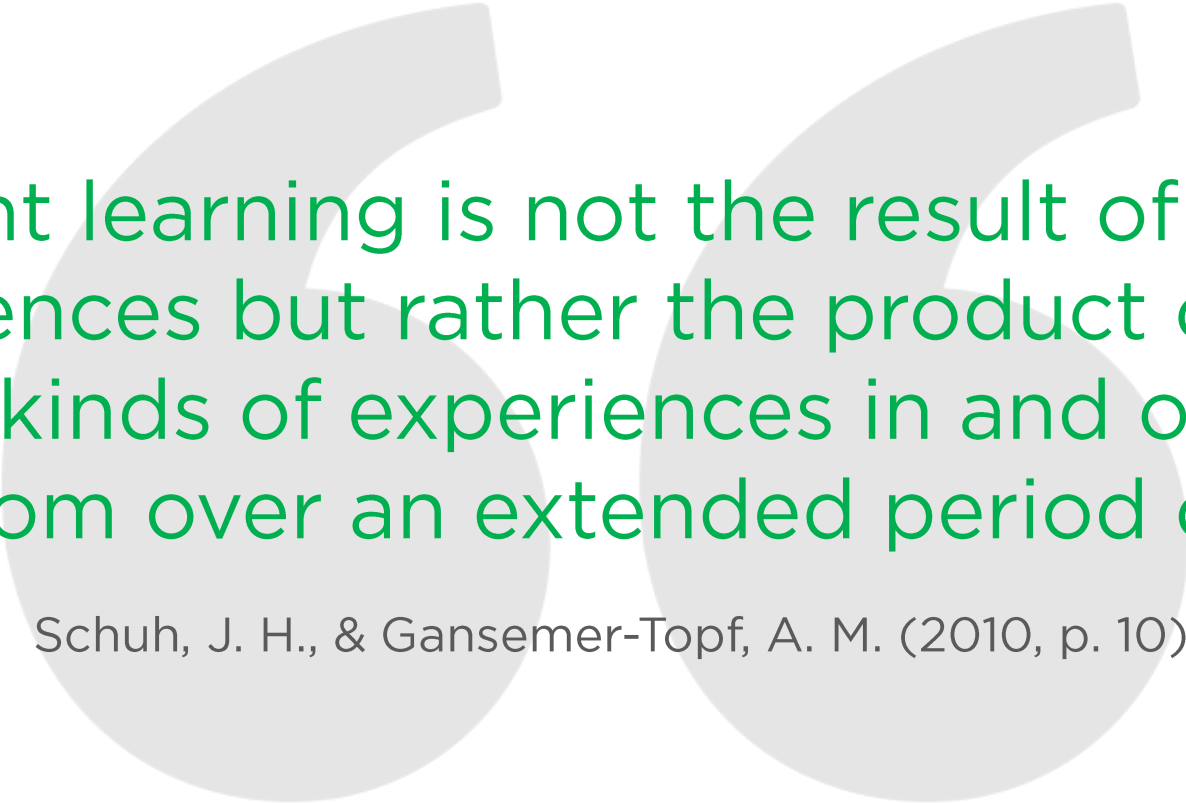
"_____ is the Primary Reason Assessment is Conducted at My Institution."

Reason	Faculty	Administrators
Accreditation	38%	52%
Accountability	13%	14%
Compliance with Governmental Mandates	6%	4%
Improving Student Learning	36%	4%
Tradition	2%	2%

Sam Houston Survey (2018)

A group of five diverse professionals are gathered around a table in a meeting. A man in a light blue shirt is gesturing while speaking to a woman in a white blazer. Other participants include a man with glasses, a woman in a white sleeveless top, and a man in a blue shirt. A laptop, a white mug, a green mug, and some papers are on the table. The background is a blurred office setting with a whiteboard.

Learning Outcomes



“Student learning is not the result of discrete experiences but rather the product of many different kinds of experiences in and outside the classroom over an extended period of time.”

Schuh, J. H., & Gansemer-Topf, A. M. (2010, p. 10)

Outcomes Assessment...

Clarifies divisional and departmental “fit” with institutional vision, mission, goals and/or strategic plans

Clarifies to students and other constituents what students can expect to gain and what the program will accomplish

Provides different kinds of data and evidence about services—moves beyond satisfaction and tracking use to describing effectiveness

Links Student Affairs and Academic Affairs; links curricular and co-curricular

Outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL OUTCOMES

Examine what a program or process is to do, achieve or accomplish for its own improvement; generally needs/satisfaction driven.

Effective Learning Outcomes...

Are student-focused

Focus on learning resulting from an activity rather than the activity itself

Reflect the institution's mission and the values it represents

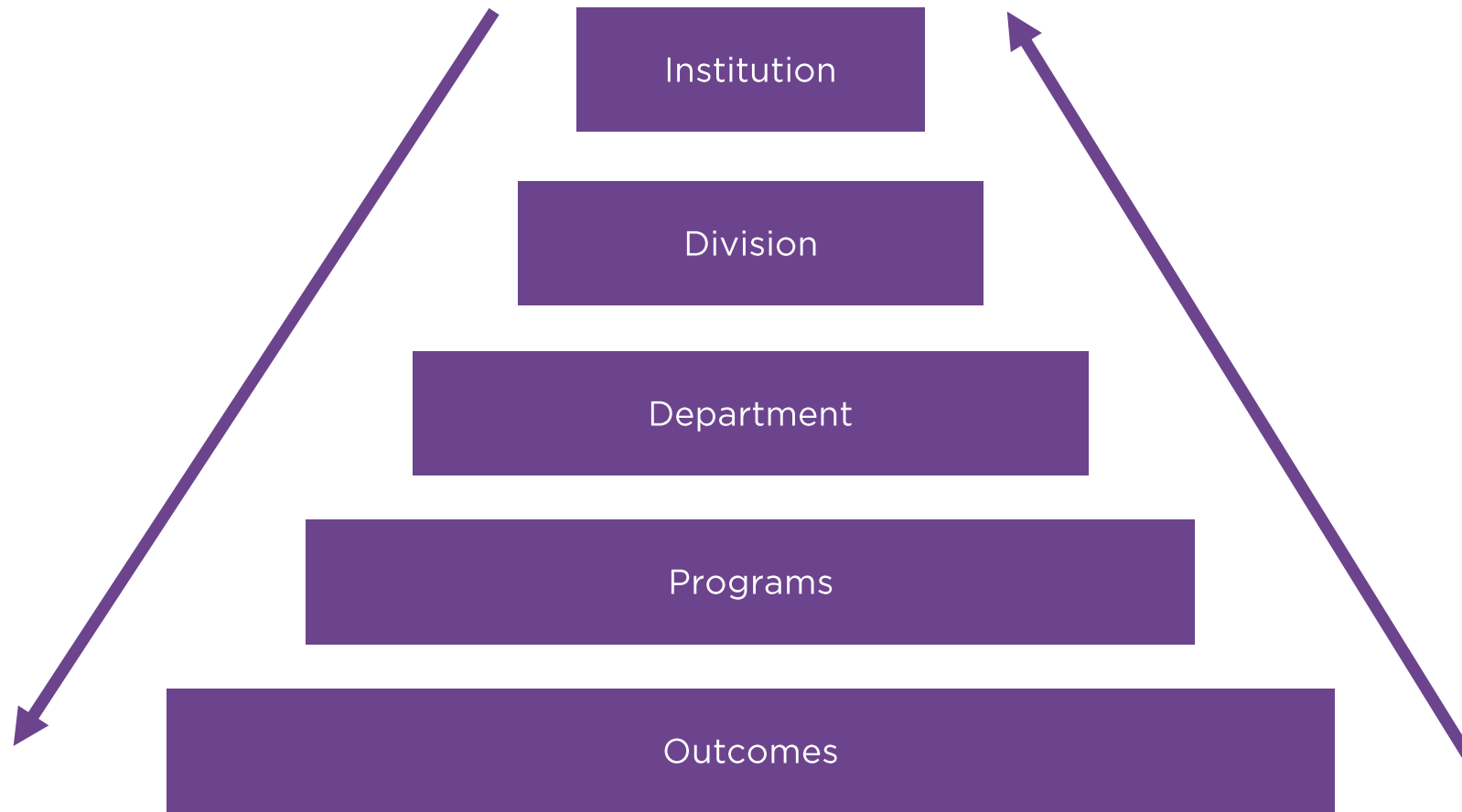
Align at the course/program, academic program/department, divisional, and institutional levels

Focus on skills and abilities central to the discipline and based on professional standards of excellence

Are general enough to capture important learning, but clear and specific enough to be measurable

Focus on aspects of learning that will develop and endure but that can be assessed in some form now

Connecting to the bigger picture



Challenges to Assessing Learning

Students do not experience college in a way that makes outcomes assessment simple.

Some learning outcomes may take months, years, or a lifetime to manifest.

A survey may not cut it.

Assessing learning is more time consuming and more difficult, compared to other assessments.

Can be difficult to specifically identify what you want students to learn

The 3 M's of Outcomes

MEANINGFUL

How does the outcome support the departmental mission or goal?

MANAGEABLE

What is needed to foster the achievement of the outcome?
Is the outcome realistic?

MEASURABLE

How will you know if the outcome is achieved?
What will be the assessment method?

ABCD Structure of a Learning Outcome

Audience

To who does the outcome pertain?

Condition

Under what conditions or circumstances will the learning occur?

Behavior

What do you expect the audience to know/be able to do?

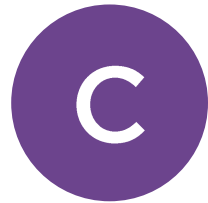
Degree

How much will be accomplished, how well will the behavior need to be performed, and to what level?

Learning Outcome Statement:



Students will



under these
circumstances/conditions



<learn what>



to this level of
efficiency/effectiveness

Audience

Behavior

Condition

Degree

Using Bloom's as a Guide

If you are trying to assess learning:

- Overall, your assessment method should be a reflection of the learning that you are seeking to assess
- Is what you are asking students to do going to provide you with the evidence you need to make a statement about the learning that occurred?
- Thinking about Bloom's taxonomy, the different levels of thinking would require different assessment methods.
(More in-depth thinking level = more in-depth assessment)

CREATING

Putting information together in an innovative way

EVALUATING

Making judgements based on a set of guidelines

ANALYSING

Breaking the concept into parts and understand how each part is related to one another

APPLYING

Use the knowledge gained in new ways

UNDERSTANDING

Making sense of what you have learned

REMEMBERING

Recalling relevant knowledge from long term memory

Learning Outcome Worksheet Resource:

Audience/Who

Who does the outcome pertain to?

Behavior/What

What do you expect the audience to know/be able to do?

Condition/How

Under what conditions or circumstances will the learning occur?

Degree/How much

How much will be accomplished, how well will the behavior need to be performed, and to what level?

- 1) As a result of attending five counseling sessions at the Student Counseling Center, students will be able to identify one or more strategies to cope with their problems.

Audience:

Behavior:

Condition:

Degree:

Assessing Learning and Program

1 Determine your **OUTCOMES**

2 Determine your **METHODS**

Statements indicating what a participant (usually students) will **know, think, or be able to do** as a result of an event, activity, program, etc.



What type of data do you need?

Quantitative

Data that can be expressed as a number/quantified

Easier to report and analyze

Can generalize to greater population with larger samples

Less influenced by social desirability

Can involve less time, money

Qualitative

Data that focuses on text/narrative from respondents

More depth/robustness

Ability to capture “elusive” evidence of student learning and development

Specific sample

Formative Assessment



All those activities undertaken by teachers and/or by their students, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged.

Black, P and D. William. (1998). Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards Through Classroom Assessment. Phi Delta Kappan 92 (1): 81-90

Assessment Types

Formative

Conducted during the program

Monitor student learning

Purpose is to provide feedback

Use to shape, modify
or improve program right now

Summative

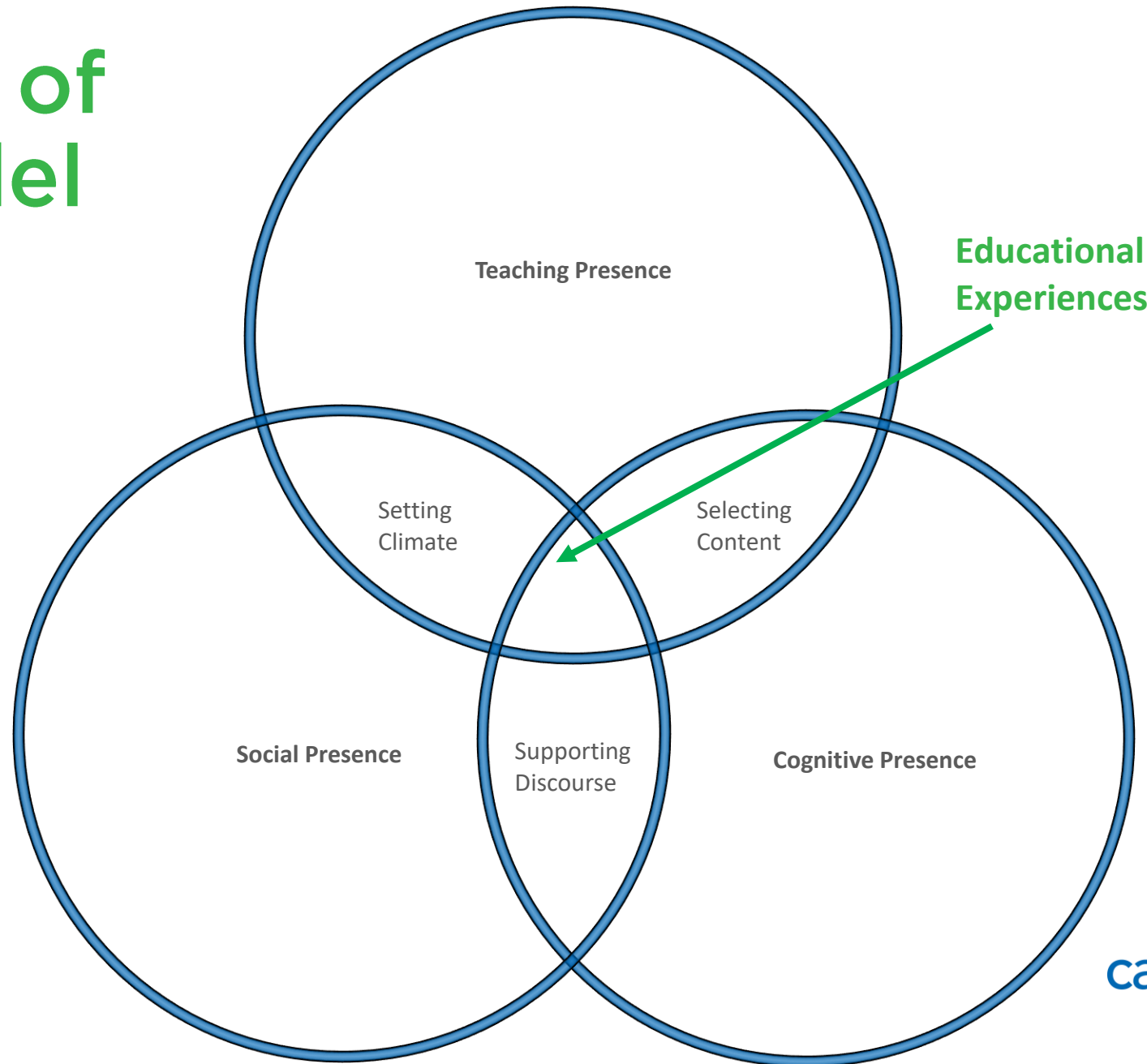
Conducted after the program

Evaluate student learning

Makes judgment on quality,
worth, or compares to standard

Can be incorporated into future
plans

The Community of Inquiry Model



Formative Assessment

Conducted during the program

Monitor student learning

Purpose is to provide feedback

Use to shape, modify or improve program right now

- Concept map
- Pop quiz
- End of class reflection
- 1-minute paper
- User focus group

Classroom Data Source

Gives professor a climate reading on how their students are learning and how effective their teaching is

Make adjustments based off of immediate student feedback

No need to ask, “Am I getting through?”

Shift in Course Organization

Instructor-Centered

- Designed around the knowledge the instructor wants to transmit to students
- Focused on instructor's teaching process

Student-Centered

- Designed on the needs, abilities, prior knowledge and diversity of students
- Focus on the student's learning process

Instructor vs Student-Centered Course Design

Instructor-Centered

Choose textbook

Create syllabus

Write/revise lectures,
prepare presentations

Write homework, exam

Student-Centered

Formulate broad learning goals

Set specific learning objectives

Design assessments
(formative and summative)

Prepare learning activities



“When the cook tastes the soup, that’s formative; when the guests taste the soup, that’s summative”

– Robert Strake

5 Factors to Improve Learning Through Assessment

1. Providing effective feedback to students
2. Students' active involvement in their own learning
3. Adjusting teaching to take account of the results of assessment
4. Recognizing the profound influence of assessment on student motivation and self-esteem
5. Ensuring students assess themselves and understand how to improve

Black, P and D. William. (1998). Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards Through Classroom Assessment. Phi Delta Kappan 92 (1): 81-90.

Qualities of Formative Assessment:

- Oral/ Written
- Informal / formal
- Embedded in lesson plan / stand-alone
- Spontaneous / planned
- Individual / group
- Verbal / nonverbal.
- Immediate / delayed feedback

Benefits

Faculty

- Receive data as often as you want-
- View impact of changes to instruction
- Spot trends
- View and analyze impact of changes to course

Students

- Communicate directly with faculty
- Use convenient delivery options
- Impact the learning process while you are still taking the course

5 Additional Benefits of Formative Assessment

1. Fostering a Culture of Continuous Improvement
2. Emphasis on a Growth Mindset
3. Improved Student Perceptions
4. Outcome Attainment
5. Decreased Evaluation Anxiety

Conducting Formative Assessment

Formative Assessment Activities

- Pre/Post Assessments
- Muddiest Point
- Chunking
- Group Quiz
- 3-2-1 Response
- Enter/Exit Comment
- Empty Outlines
- Focused Listing

Formative Assessment Activities (part 2)

- Word Themes
- Multiple Grading Opportunities
- One- Sentence Summary
- Benchmark Course Evaluations
- Self- Assessment
- Minute Paper

Methods for Asking for Feedback

In an LMS:

- Discussion Board
- Announcements
- Surveys or Polls
- Assignments

Outside of and LMS:

- Email
- Twitter
- Free Software

Free Software

- Google Forms
- Poll Everywhere
- Socrative
- Kahoot
- Plickers

7 Highly Effective Questions

Six questions on high-impact teaching practices-

Focus on the strengths- what the students perceive as going well

Reflect on the feedback of areas that need improvement and adjust for the next class

When faculty see an upward trend of improvement, they are more likely to gradually work to improve teaching throughout the semester

A single question on students' overall perception of the class- did they understand the material?

7 Highly Effective Questions

The Instructor...

- Displayed personal interest in learning
- Found ways to help answer my own questions
- Demonstrated the importance of subject matter
- Made it clear how topic fit into the course
- Explained material clearly and concisely
- Introduced stimulating ideas about subject
- Did you understand the material?

A group of five diverse business professionals are gathered around a table in a meeting. They are looking at a laptop and discussing documents. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm, professional atmosphere. The text 'Acting on Feedback and Recommendations' is overlaid in the center in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Acting on Feedback and Recommendations

Focus on Growth and Improvement

- Adopt a Growth Mindset
- Focus on Goal Orientation
- Participate in Active Reflection

Suggestions for Incorporating Formative Assessment

- Ask for a Second Set of Eyes
- Focus on One Course at a Time
- Limit the Factors you are Looking at
- Focus on Improvement
- Investigate New Methods



Recommendations

- Clear Criteria
- Encourage Self- Reflection
- Provide Actionable Feedback
- Encourage Dialogue
- Create Opportunities to Close the Gap
- Create Opportunities to Close the Gap
- Evaluate information

List of Follow Up Resources

1. Continuous Improvement Worksheet
2. Learning Outcome Worksheet
3. PDF of PowerPoint Materials
4. Follow up email with additional links
5. More Information on the 7 Highly Effective Questions

Thank You!
Questions?