

# Best Practices in Course-Based Assessment and Survey Design

Danielle Duffourc, Ph.D.

Clair Wilkins-Green, Ph.D.

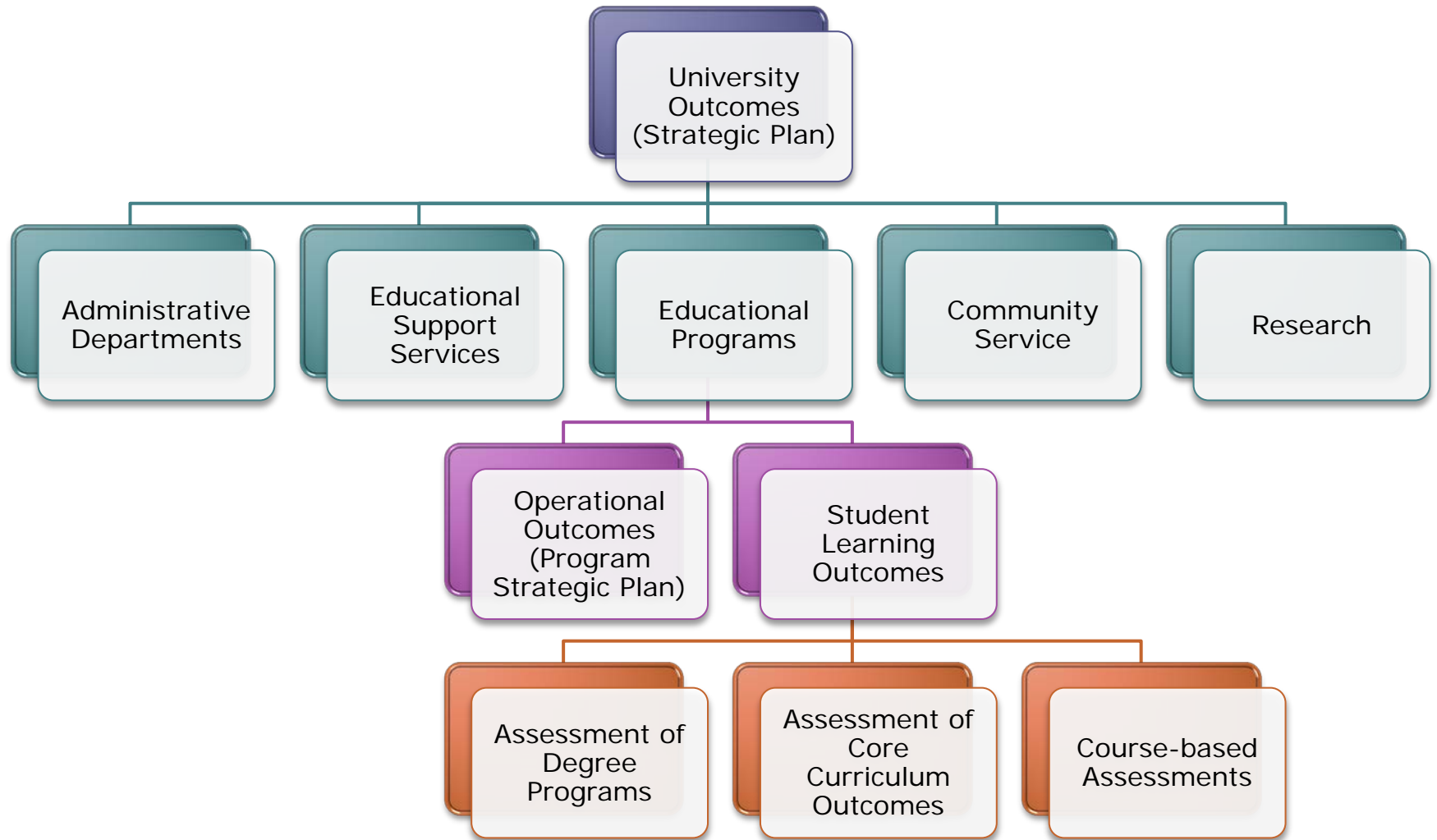
Office of Planning, Institutional Research and  
Assessment

# Course-based Assessment

“Grades alone for the assessment of educational programs or student learning outcomes are insufficient.”

- SACSCOC Resource Manual

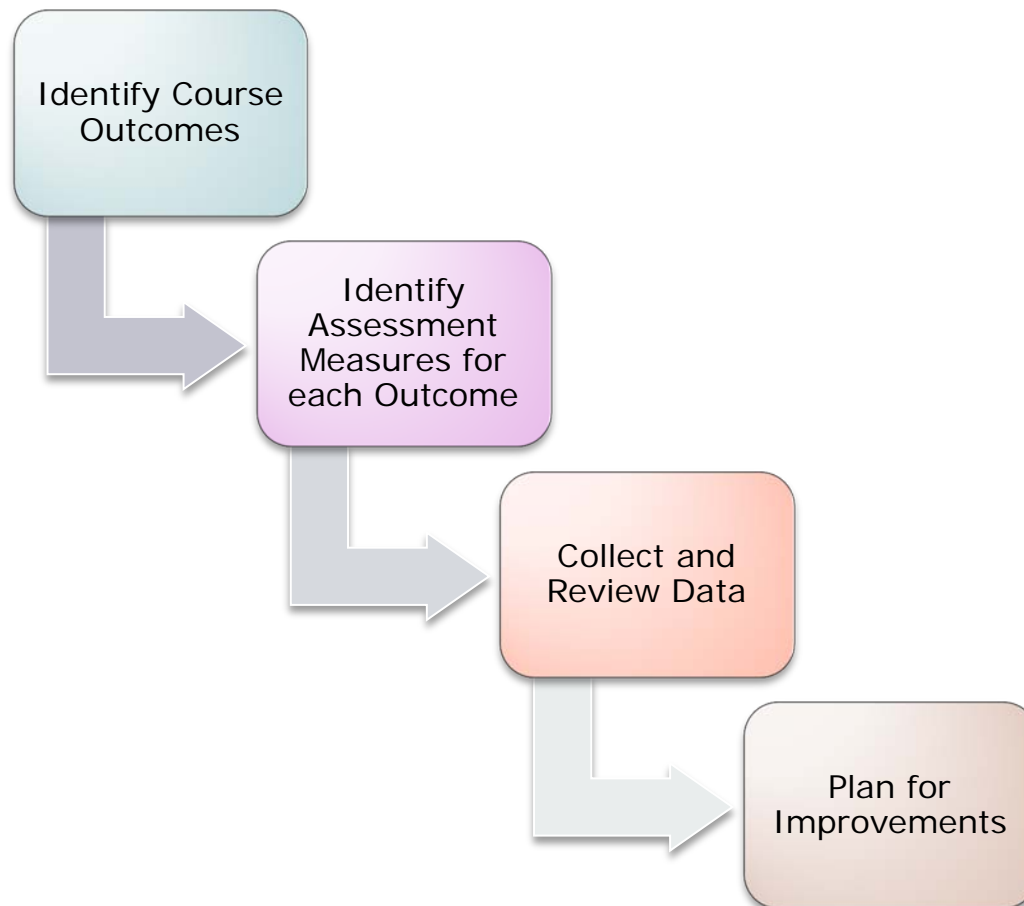
# Levels of Assessment



# Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

- Formative (low-stakes developmental) vs Summative (high-stakes evaluative) Assessments
- Direct vs Indirect Assessments
- Standardized vs Non-standardized Assessments

# Course-based Assessment



# Example

- Outcome: Students will be able to identify and describe the major theories of human development.
  - Measure #1: Homework assignment
  - Measure #2: Questions 1, 3 and 5 on Final Exam
  - Measure #3: Performance on Human Development section of X Standardized Test.
  - Measure #4: Student Survey on Usefulness of Course Components

# Other Measures

- Are all instructors using similar materials?
- Are quizzes of similar difficulty?
- Is every instructor where they need to be?





# SURVEY DESIGN: Common Issues

## Balance not bias: failing to Avoid Leading Words/ Using Unbalanced Statements

- *We think our IR office staff are really awesome. How awesome do you think our IR office staff are?*
  - VS -
- *How helpful do you think our IR office staff are?*
  - VS -
- *On average, how helpful are our IR office staff are?*
- *On average, how frustrated do you get when working with our IR office staff ?*

# Failing to Give Mutually Exclusive Choices

- What is your age?
  - 0–10
  - 10–20
  - 20–30
  - 30–40
  - 40+

# Not Asking Direct Questions

- What suggestions do you have for improving this course?

What exactly are you looking for here?

Is this intended to be purely about course content?

The professor? The means of assessment? What if they tell you, change the professor? The time? To do it online? Don't do exams? Get rid of it?

# Forgetting to Add a “Prefer Not to Answer” Option

- What is your race?
- What is your age?
- Do you like your supervisor?
- What is your sexuality?
- What is your annual household income?

# Failing to Cover All Possible Answer Choices

- You indicated that you eat food from Subconnect once every 3 months. Why don't you eat there more often?
  - It's too far from my office
  - I don't like the taste of the food
  - Never heard of it

# Mismatched Scales and Questions and Using Unbalanced Scales/Anchors

If you did these workshops again, would you choose to take the survey again?

**Strongly disagree**  
**Somewhat disagree**  
**Somewhat agree**  
**Strongly agree**  
**I don't know**

How clear is the content of these slides?

- **Totally unclear (not at all)**
- **unclear**
- **MIDDLE OPTION**
- **clear**
- **Very clear (a lot)**

What about the quality of the survey?

**Poor**  
**1**  
(a bit bad)

**Excellent**  
**5 (or 7)**  
(almost perfect)

# Not Asking Only One Item at a Time

- Xavier's Internet service is fast and reliable all over campus
- How likely are you to recommend these slides and the survey to other colleagues?



# Be cautious with that middle option

- How do you feel about your experience of living in New Orleans in 2017?
- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied

What is the middle option *really* telling you?

# Questions/Assistance

- Danielle Duffourc
  - Director for Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment
  - 103 Admin Annex (x7563)
- Clair Wilkins-Green
  - Director for Institutional Research
  - 108 Admin (x5251)