



# Developing and Aligning Learning Outcomes

*Well-designed learning outcomes are critical to implementing effective assessment of a program or event. Outcomes articulate what students should be able to know, do and value as a result of their engagement, and guide the methodologies, tools, and analysis used to better understand and tell stories about the student experience. This session helps guide admin units in writing or re-writing learning outcomes adhering to the HAAP to identify the appropriate next steps to complete their assessment plan.*

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# Session Learning Outcomes

As a result of participating in this session, you will be able to:

- Be informed of the Howard Annual Assessment Process
- Understand the assessment cycle
- Utilize tips for creating learning outcomes for the HAAP
- Recall best practices for creating outcomes

# Howard Annual Assessment Process

- Process for continuous improvement
- Creates benchmarks for target and aspirational goals
- Produces evidence for institutional effectiveness
- Reinforces what is already being done
- Every department is a stakeholder in the process!

October 15<sup>th</sup>- plan is due

- Contains mission, learning outcomes, and measures

Mid May to Mid August

- Results and actions are due, overall assessing of how well divisions met their goals
- REMINDER RESULTS AND ACTIONS WERE DUE AUGUST 15<sup>th</sup>

# Assessment Cycle





# Creating Learning Outcomes

# Foundational Documents

- Mission
- Vision
- Goals
- Professional standards
- Code of ethics
- Division/institution guiding documents
- Strategic plans
- Curriculum



# What are Learning Outcomes?

- The intended consequence of a learning experience, not the act of learning

The Difference Between Goals and OUTCOMES	
GOALS	OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Broad statements</li><li>General intentions</li><li>Intangible</li><li>Abstract</li><li>Generally hard to measure</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Specific</li><li>Precise</li><li>Tangible</li><li>Concrete</li><li>Measureable</li></ul>

## Formula for Creating Outcomes

The mission of **<the name of your department>** is to **<your primary purpose(s)>** by providing **<your primary functions/activities/service s>** to **<your stakeholders>**.

# Career Services Example

Mission	Outcomes	Measures
<p>The mission of <i>Career Services</i> is to <i>empower students and alumni throughout their career journey</i> by providing <i>resources, strategies and opportunities to assist in identifying skills, interests, and values to discover meaningful professional experiences</i> collaborating with <i>university departments and potential employers to holistically serve students and alumni.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver programs and career counseling that gives students and alumni the tools to develop as career professionals.</li> <li>• Be innovative in the face of an ever-demanding job market</li> <li>• Offer recruiting and other employment services to assist in the job search process.</li> <li>• Strengthen communication with campus and community constituencies.</li> </ul>	<p>a) Create a career exploration network whereby students can interview and/or job shadow established professionals            b) Establish collaborative working relationships with personnel in Academic Affairs            c) Provide targeted outreach to first-year students</p>

# ABCD's of Learning Outcomes

- **Audience:** Who are the learners, those doing the action?
- **Behavior:** What will the students be able to think, know or do?
- **Condition:** Under what circumstances/context will the learning occur?
- **Degree:** How well or how much must the behavior be performed?  
Also known as the **measure of success**

# Examples

- Career Services staff will provide 45-minute sessions to at least 80% of all University 101 classes during fall semester.
  - Audience: Career Services staff
  - Behavior/Observable action: Provide sessions
  - Condition/Context: University 101 classes
  - Degree/Measure of success: 80% of classes
- Students who attend a University 101 Speaker session will be able to list two professional preparation tasks they should complete their first year.
  - Audience: Students
  - Behavior/Observable action: List professional preparation tasks
  - Condition/Context: Professional preparation tasks
  - Degree/Measure of success: two tasks

# Tips & tricks to Writing Effective Outcomes

- Avoid double-barreled outcomes. Measure one action per outcome.
- Observable action or behavior, not a thought or belief
- Quality, high priority outcomes over quantity
- Start small, meaningful and manageable

# Words To Avoid When Creating Learning Outcomes

Naughty Words	Why?	Better Choices
1. Understand 2. Know 3. Comprehend 4. Learn	Ambiguous – what does it mean to “understand” something?	Describe List Recall recognize
5. Explore 6. Reflect 7. Think critically about	These are mental processes that we cannot see, and therefore cannot measure	Analyze Assess Evaluate
8. Appreciate 9. Enjoy 10. Believe 11. Value 12. Experience	These are subjective emotional responses – not indicators of learning	<u>List</u> (acknowledge) multiple perspectives <u>Describe</u> your feelings <u>Summarize</u> your experience

# Characteristics of Bad Learning Outcomes

Expectations are too vague.

EX: Students will explore many forms of psychological testing.

How can we make this better?

Expectations are not measurable.

EX: Students will value the diversity at Howard University.

How can we make this better?

Describes a task.

EX: Students will finish a written homework assignment.

# Characteristics of Bad Learning Outcomes

Too many action verbs

recognize how mental health affects bodily functions, describe the impacts of drug use on students, evaluate toxins, and differentiate between addictive properties in narcotics

Complex wording that makes it difficult to understand the goal

utilize an established cyclical approach to compose prose that contains evidence based arguments



# Characteristics of Good Learning Outcomes

**Specific:** Be explicit about what will happen, where and to whom

**Measurable:** Establish concrete criteria for success

**Attainable:** know the outcome is something your students can accomplish

**Relevant:** the outcome must connect to your objectives, goals, and mission

**Time specific:** the outcome should be bound to a specific time frame

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Relevant

Time-bound

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# Aligning Outcomes

- Is the outcome aligned with foundational documents?
- Does the outcome describe what the program intends for students to know, think, or do? Or does it describe what the program intends to accomplish or achieve?
- Is the outcome **S.M.A.R.T.**?
- Can the outcome be used to make decisions on how to improve a program or service?



# GROUP ACTIVITY TIME!



Please join the breakout room associated with your academic/administrative division.

You will use this time to brainstorm ways in which you can develop two outcomes based on the mission of the department provided to you.

You will then create at least one measure for each outcome.



## Administrative Unit's Mission

The mission of the Center for Academic Excellence is to provide comprehensive academic advising services and programs to first- and second-year students to ensure their success and continued progress towards degree completion in a timely manner.

The Department of Public Safety works in partnership with the university community to enhance the safety and quality of life for students, faculty, staff, and visitors through effective law enforcement and proactive crime prevention efforts.



## Academic Unit's Mission

Howard University's Department of Theatre Arts is dedicated to the continued growth and development of African-American theatre by training competent professionals in the fields of Acting, Dance Arts, Musical Theatre, Theatre Arts Administration, and Theatre Technology.

The purpose of the Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) program is to equip the student for the practice of ministry at a maximum level of professional competence.



Group Share Time!  
What outcomes  
have you created?



# SAVE THE DATE

## Upcoming Workshops

Proactive Assessment Planning: October 12, 2022 12 PM ET

Exploring Equity in HBCU Assessment: November  
16, 2022 12 PM ET

HAAP Check-In: November 16, 2022 2-4 PM ET



Questions?