

What's the Deal with Assessment, Again?

A Refresher on All Things Assessment at Howard

*Presented by Pavithra Suresh, PhD
Associate Director of Assessment
Institutional Research and Assessment at Howard University*

Agenda

What do we mean
by assessment?



What does
assessment look like
at HU?



Getting started

What do we mean by *assessment?*

Assessment is the process institutions use to determine the degree to which they are meeting their goals and outcomes.



Why do we do assessment?

- Assessment is a necessary process for accreditation, but we also want this process to directly serve your unit.
- We strive for units to **meaningfully** complete their assessment plans. This will allow you to record, track, and facilitate the incredible work that is likely already underway in your unit.

...so what does assessment look like?

Assessment Tools in Higher Ed

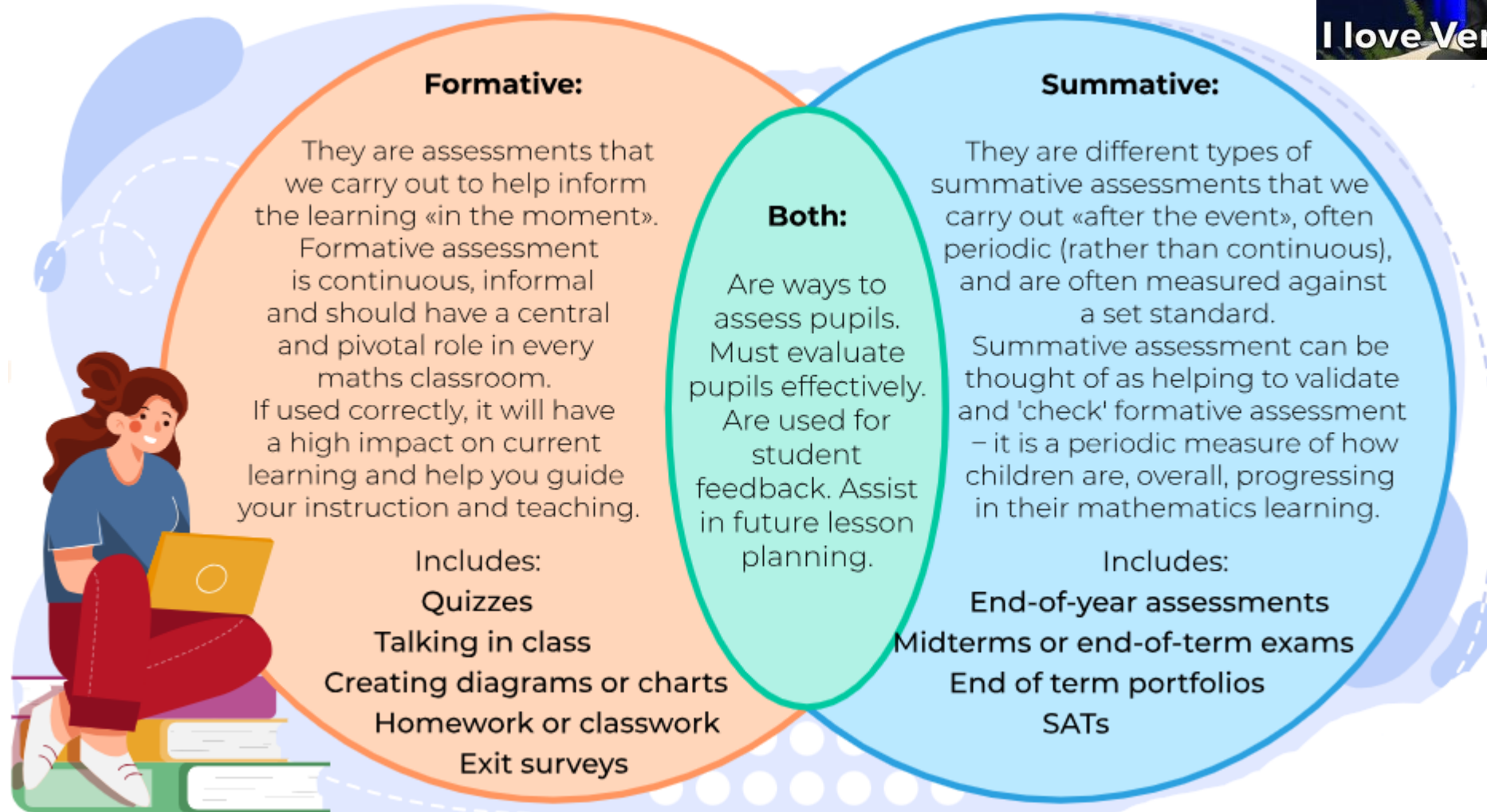
- Surveys & Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Rubrics
- Direct Observations
- Focus Groups
- Learning Analytics
- Assessment Of Student Artifacts
- Juried Performance Assessments



Assessment types and methods

Formative Assessment	Involves ongoing evaluation of student learning. <i>During the learning module / program</i>
Summative Assessment	Used to evaluate learning outcomes at the end of a program. <i>At the end of the learning module/program</i>
Performance-Based Assessment	A test of the ability to apply knowledge in a real-life setting. <i>In the 'real' world</i>

Assessment types and methods



Formative Assessment

An instructor might approach formative assessment by incorporating **active learning techniques**: Think, Pair, Share; anonymous polls; observing small group discussions.

Instructors can also consider **scaffolding** a summative assignment, like a final project, so that students are able to get feedback as they progress through the course.

Examples:

1. Have students turn in a **project proposal** in the first 3 weeks of the course; grade for completion of the assignment but offer feedback and support.
2. Have students submit a **first draft** of an essay. Grade for completion and return to students with comments / suggestions.
3. Have students show you their **first cut** of a film project. Talk through the project with them and ensure they have the necessary resources to finish successfully.

Summative Assessment

Example:

A campus wellness center aims to promote the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of students.

The center wants to assess the effectiveness their new workshop on enhancing students' overall well-being.

In this case, summative assessment can be used to evaluate the outcomes and impact of the wellness center's workshop. Summative assessment could be applied through:

1. Surveys
2. Focus groups
3. Program evaluations

By employing summative assessment, the campus wellness center can gather data on the effectiveness of their workshop, measure student outcomes, and identify areas for improvement.

This information can guide future program planning, resource allocation, and decision-making processes to better meet the wellness needs of students on campus.

Performance-based Assessment

Example:

A student affairs department wants to assess the effectiveness of their new training in developing key leadership skills in students.

They decide to implement a performance-based assessment approach.

To conduct the assessment, the department brings together a panel of experienced professionals from various fields related to leadership.

These experts observe and evaluate the students' performance during the scenarios, using a predetermined rubric that outlines the expected behaviors and outcomes.

This assessment approach helps assessors determine the effectiveness of the training on helping students develop leadership competencies.

In this case, the department designs a performance-based assessment where students are given real-world leadership scenarios and tasks to complete.

The scenarios might involve:

- 1) leading a team through a challenge,
- 2) resolving conflicts, or
- 3) making critical decisions.

Direct and Indirect Methods

- **Direct Assessment:** Direct assessment methods involve evaluating students' performance or demonstration of specific skills or knowledge. Examples of direct assessment methods include tests, quizzes, essays, presentations, projects, portfolios, or performances.
- **Indirect Assessment:** Indirect assessment methods gather information about students' learning indirectly, usually through self-reports, surveys, interviews, or observations. These methods do not directly measure learning outcomes but instead focus on perceptions, attitudes, or beliefs related to the learning experience.

Both are necessary to triangulate the effectiveness of an approach to instruction, course design, or programming. Using direct and indirect assessment methods helps to tell a more holistic story of the effectiveness of an approach.





Assessment at Howard University

How do we do Assessment at HU?

Several processes, including...

- Course Evaluations
- Surveys, like the NSSE, FSSE, and GSES
- The Howard Annual Assessment Process, or HAAP

We're going to focus on the HAAP process

Do I have to do the HAAP? How does it help me?

Every academic and administrative unit that contributes to *Student Learning Outcomes* is asked to complete a HAAP assessment plan in support of the university's goal of continuous improvement.

- These plans are designed to help your unit set goals, evaluate change over time within your unit, and make data-driven decisions.
- **Your unit is likely already doing some degree of assessment:** asking students for feedback, discussing opportunities for improvement at staff meetings, asking event attendees to complete an exit survey, etc.
- The HAAP process allows you to better capture these efforts, track them over time, and clearly communicate your successes.
- This record of **continuous improvement** is essential for accreditation, but can also help you with your own internal accreditation processes, program reviews, grant applications, etc.



How do I do the HAAP?

- The HAAP process takes place on ***Watermark Planning & Self Study***.
- Every assessment chair should have access to this platform – email the assessment office if you do not!
- The process is broken into 2 bookends.
 - The first part is due on **Oct 1** – for which you enter your *Outcomes & Measures*
 - The second part is due on **May 15** – for which you enter your *Results & Actions*

Let's look at these two parts of the HAAP process

Outcomes & Measures – due Oct 1

- **Mission**
 - This is self-explanatory: the specific mission of the program or office.
- **Outcomes**, which can be:
 - *A student learning outcome*: Things you want a student to be able to do upon completion of your course or program.
 - *A student success outcome*: Things you want a student to be able to do after working with your unit.
 - *An operational outcome*: Things you want your unit to achieve to operate functionally.
 - Outcomes should be clearly linked to your mission.
- **Measures**
 - These are targeted ways to assess whether students are meeting specific student learning outcomes.
 - Measures should focus on core assignments, exams, quizzes, projects, presentations, and capstone experiences as these capture a more granular understanding of the program.
 - For administrative units, measures can look like daily functions or targeted assessment practices (surveys, needs assessments, focus groups).
 - Be sure there's a quantifiable **Target** associated with each Measure!

Results & Actions – due May 15

- Implementation

- This is the stuff that happens behind the scenes
- Collect data throughout the AY: This can be grades uploaded from an exam, feedback to students, a survey of students, etc.

- **Results:**

- Relevant data collected for each **Measure**
- Make sure to clarify if each **Measure** is *met* or *not met*.

- **Analysis**

- A short narrative to unpack the results
- This helps an outside accreditor understand the data included in the plan and any contextual information.

- **Action**

- Based on your results, set a goal for next year – this can be modifying your strategy, getting more resources, or maintaining your strategy, etc.
- This step is essential and helps to facilitate next year's plan



Getting started with HAAP


Welcome to Watermark!


Choose your Watermark Product:


Course Evaluations & Surveys

Planning & Self-Study


System Administration



Home



Organization Management


Plans


Accreditation Self-Studies


Program Review


Strategic Plans


Admin

PLAN TITLE	PLAN SCOPE
HAAP Administrative & Student Development: AY 24-25	Program
HAAP Academic: AY 24-25	Program

Assessment Outcome

No outcomes have been selected for this

SELECT OUTCOMES

0 Outcomes Selected

APPLY SELECTION

Assessment

Select outcomes for assessment for Academic Year 2024-2025.

Assessment Learning Outcomes

Outcomes that articulate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions attained by students through learning and/or co-curricular experiences.

No learning outcomes created yet.

CREATE NEW OUTCOME

Assessment Success Outcomes (4)

Outcomes that articulate other indicators of student success that are not directly tied to mastery of learning outcomes.

HAAP (Howard Annual Assessment Process)

assessment team will manage an institution-wide assessment cycle focused on continuous improvement

*Last Assessed:
Academic 2023-2024*



Course evaluations

IRA will support course evaluation activity for the university

*Last Assessed:
Academic 2023-2024*



Assessment Success Outcomes

HAAP (Howard Annual Assessment Process)

The assessment team will manage an institution-wide assessment cycle focused on continuous improvement

Assessment Plan Quality

No results added.

ADD RESULTS



Assessment Plan Completion

No results added.

ADD RESULTS



New Measure

Fields marked with * are required.

Definition

Details of the measure activity



Method: Completion Rates

Outcome: HAAP (Howard Annual Assessment Process)

Division: Assessment

Title: Assessment Plan Quality

Target: 70% of assessment plans will be rated acceptable or exemplary.

Description: Through the Annual Assessment Academy (AAA), all assessment plans will be evaluated with a rubric upon submission. The rubric will help participants illuminate strengths/weaknesses of the plans. The rubric areas are mission, outcomes/objectives, measures, targets, results/analysis, and actions/proposed improvements. These will be rated on a three-point Likert scale: Exemplary, Acceptable, Developing.

ATTACH DESCRIPTION DOCUMENTS

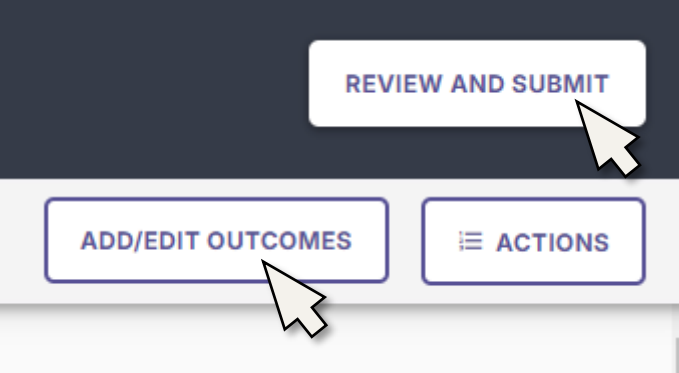
1 of 5 Files
Maximum file size 100 MB

Accepted file types: .pdf, .txt, .log, .xml, .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, .ppt, .pptx, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .csv

AAA Cohort 2021 Rubric.pdf



Results



Need any help?

Email assessment@howard.edu or make an appointment with me.

Reminder: HAAP *Outcomes & Measures* must be submitted by Oct 1.