



# A utilization-focused approach to stating and assessing student learning outcomes

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Foreign Language Program Evaluation Project  
supported by  
National Foreign Language Resource Center



**Citation:**

Watanabe, Y., & Davis, J. (2009). *A utilization-focused approach to stating and assessing student learning outcomes*. Workshop presented at the 2009 Middle Eastern Languages Western Consortium Workshop, Austin, TX.

# I. Introduction

College foreign language educators and administrators are increasingly asked to engage in student learning outcomes (SLOs) assessment, yet institutionalizing and integrating assessment into daily program operations remain challenging. Many campuses now have an assessment or evaluation office that facilitates SLOs assessment in general, but foreign language educators need more detailed decision-making processes on assessment that are specific, meaningful, and useful. Thus, the goal of this workbook is to guide you and your colleagues in determining a feasible, useful, and meaningful assessment plan for FL programs, from conceptualizing and stating SLOs to ensuring that assessment findings inform program actions.

## II. Understanding & contextualizing outcomes assessment

### A. What is student learning outcomes assessment?

Outcomes embody the essential purpose of an educational program: developments in knowledge, skills, dispositions of learners.

Outcomes are essential bases for aligning curriculum, instruction, and learning as well as for clarifying what to assess. The focus is on what students will be able to perform and gain, and not on the delivery of instruction.

**"Assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning. It involves making our expectations explicit and public; setting appropriate criteria and high standards for learning quality; systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards; and using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance.** When it is embedded effectively within larger institutional systems, assessment can help us focus our collective attention, examine our assumptions, and create a shared academic culture dedicated to assuring and improving the quality of higher education" (Angelo, 1995, p.7).

### B. Why focus on outcomes?

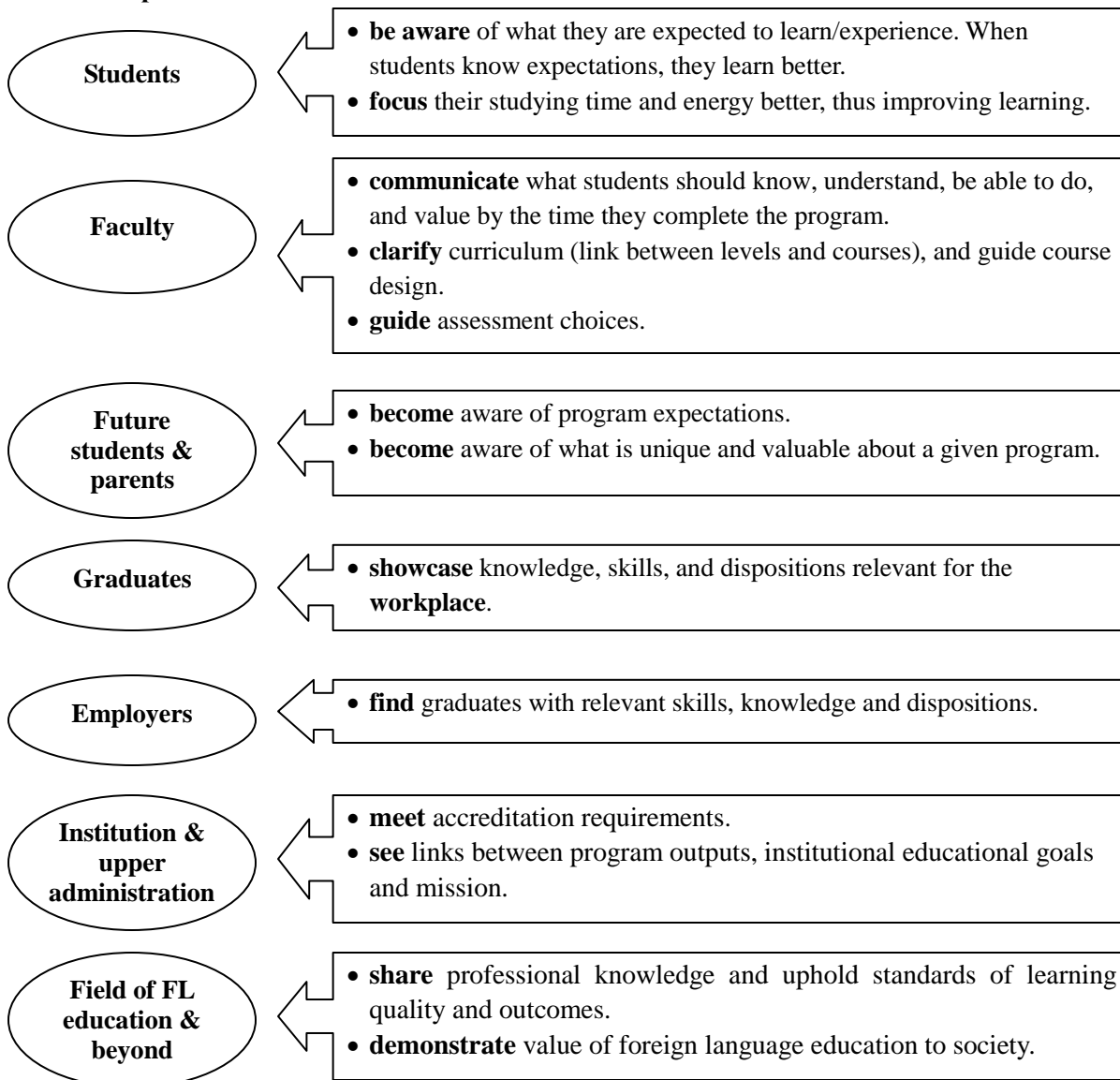
**Question:** In institutional accreditation Standards, accreditation bodies emphasize student learning outcomes assessment as a way of achieving public accountability. Why do we need to focus on outcomes (as opposed to what or how we teach)?

# PART I: Stating SLOs

## I. Why should we state student learning outcomes?

Through stating learning outcomes, educators communicate what the program strives to achieve. Stating outcomes is the very first step towards understanding and improving the quality of student learning.

It can help ...



“...specification of the outcomes of college FL programs provides us with a decisive opportunity to state **who we are, why we exist, what our value is to learners, institutions, and society**, and, quite frankly, **why we should not be shut down and why we should play a serious role** in any comprehensive approach to a truly liberal education. Without outcomes, or with simplistic outcomes (e.g., behavioral objectives), who we are will not be well understood and what we do will not be valued to the extent that most of us would argue it should be” (Norris, 2006, p. 577)

## II. Writing student learning outcomes

### A. Mission, goals, outcomes

In general, many foreign language programs have a department mission statement, goal statements, and possibly outcomes statements for each degree program, as well as outcomes and goals for each course.

**TASK-part 1:** Identify which statement is a mission, a goal statement, or a learning outcome.

Example from the **University of Evansville, Department of Foreign Languages**

#### 1.

- (a) to **prepare** majors for successful competition in professional programs, graduate school and the workplace.
- (b) to **foster** the development of the four language skills- speaking, writing, reading and comprehending the living languages currently offered on campus; French, German, Japanese, Russian and Spanish.
- (c) to **impart** a knowledge of the literatures and cultures represented by these languages.
- (d) to **continue** its excellent record of teaching through a diverse and innovative curriculum that meets the expectations and needs of our students.
- (e) to **expose** students to an environment that fosters the development of the linguistic, communicative, and semiolinguistic competencies to be applied to conversing, reading, and writing critically about the general object of study.

#### 2.

- (a) Students **express** themselves confidently in a variety of oral and written registers, keeping in mind the communicative context and conventions of the particular culture.
- (b) Students **read and comprehend** texts in the target languages tailored to a variety of communicative needs.
- (c) Students **write** documents in the target languages tailored to a variety of communicative needs, keeping in mind the conventions of the particular cultures.
- (d) Students **employ** a variety of coping strategies to communicate both verbally and nonverbally in the target languages.
- (e) Students **demonstrate understanding** of language variation (social, dialectal and contextual.)
- (f) Students are able to **perform** a linguistic (synchronic and diachronic) analysis of language.
- (g) Students **read** literary texts in the target languages and **analyze** them critically using a theoretical framework.
- (h) Students **understand** literary and artistic movements and the history of ideas.

#### 3.

Foreign languages are an essential component of the great tradition of teaching and learning in the liberal arts. By teaching students to communicate in other languages, allowing them to gain knowledge and an understanding of other cultures, helping them to make connections with other disciplines, providing them with insight into the nature of language and culture, and requiring them to participate in multilingual communities both at home and abroad, the programs in the Department of Foreign Languages play a critical role in preparing students for the personal and professional challenges of a multicultural society and a global marketplace.

**TASK-part 2:** How would you describe the differences between mission, goal and outcome?

## B. SLO components & characteristics:

Learning outcomes are statements that specify what learners will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity. Outcomes are usually expressed as knowledge, skills, or dispositions. General characteristics of outcomes statements include an action completed by learners. Below are guidelines for outcomes statements adapted from Suskie (2004). However, bear in mind that the most important aspect of stating SLOs is that they reflect the educational value of the program in a comprehensive manner. Preciseness of SLO expressions can be realized when a program operationalizes SLOs into pedagogy and when assessing student achievement of SLOs.

### Qualities of program-level outcomes statements (adapted from Suskie, 2004):

- (a) express what **students** should be able to do (they do NOT express what instructors, departments, or programs will do);
- (b) express what students should be able to **do** (they do NOT express what students think, or internal states (e.g. *have an understanding of*);
- (c) use concrete action words and describe concepts in explicit terms (they do NOT use “fuzzy” concepts, e.g. *think critically*);
- (d) are neither too specific nor too general (e.g., *Specific*: students can write relative clause sentences longer than 10 words. *General*: students will demonstrate proficiency in speaking);
- (e) include an assessable expectation;
- (f) focus on the ends, not the means; that is what students will do after they have successfully completed the program, not what they do on the way to completing the program.

**TASK:** Based on the given characteristics of SLOs, consider the SLOs below. What types of outcomes are they (i.e., knowledge, skills or dispositions)? Do they work?

Example SLOs: Minor in Arabic Asian and Near Eastern Languages, Brigham Young University	Knowledge	Skills	Dispositions
(a) <b>speak Arabic</b> at the ACTFL Advanced Level, <b>demonstrating</b> an ability to negotiate both survival and basic professional situations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) <b>read and understand</b> Arabic newspapers, specifically front page, international page and Arab World page news articles, without the use of a dictionary or other aids.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) <b>listen</b> to Arabic news broadcasts, <b>understanding</b> the basic topics and main points of the majority of items.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) <b>write</b> notes and short essays in Arabic at least at the ACTFL Intermediate High level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) <b>value</b> the contributions of Islamic religious and cultural traditions (including music, art and literature) to world civilization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(f) <b>view</b> themselves as agents for promoting understanding and dialogue between the Islamic World and the West, with the ability to articulate cultural differences between the two particularly in regard to politeness and interpersonal relations, and to interpret current Middle Eastern events from a variety of viewpoints, explaining how others view those events.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**TASK:** Based on the given characteristics of SLOs, critique the following SLOs and discuss how you might improve them (if they need improvement).

**Example statement**

**Critique**

1. We strive to provide opportunities for both individuals and group work to foster collaboration and cooperation, as well as independence



2. Students will have an understanding of basic features of German culture: food, holidays, treatment of guests, etc.



3. Students will be able to demonstrate competency in speaking.



4. Students will be able to interact with a group of colleagues in the field in order to promote effective and ethical professional environments



5. Students enjoy critical engagement with the target culture.



### C. Guiding questions for stating degree-level SLOs

The task of stating degree-level SLOs may appear simple, but to be maximally effective, it generally involves **extensive discussion about what stakeholders really expect students to learn** by the end of the program. Coming to consensus on SLOs may not be easy, since faculty (and other stakeholders) may view education differently depending on their disciplinary background and beliefs. However, the process of coming to consensus is an opportunity for faculty to collectively reflect upon their educational values. Below are some guiding questions you may want to ask when generating or revising SLOs.

#### Guiding questions for generating and revising SLOs:

- Who should be involved in stating and revising the SLOs? Whose perspectives should be reflected?
- On what basis should the SLOs be stated? Was contextual information surrounding the degree-level program is relevant? For example, department mission, institutional outcomes, Standards for Foreign Language Learning, etc.
- Is there any evidentiary basis for generating or revising the SLOs? If not, what kind of information should you gather and from whom?
- Do the SLOs reflect the department and institutional mission?
- To what extent do the SLOs accurately reflect the reality of the curriculum and pedagogic orientation, and learning values in the program?
- Are SLOs stated in terms of what students are expected to learn (knowledge, skills, and dispositions)?
- Are SLOs specific and clear enough to provide information useful for assessment and curricular improvement?
- What role do the SLOs play in your program and beyond? Who is being communicated to via these outcomes statements?

### III. Empirical processes for stating SLOs

How can you empirically generate SLOs that will capture various stakeholders' perspectives? Note that SLOs are not set in stone forever once they are generated. Programs should create a system to periodically review the appropriateness of SLOs, acknowledging the fact that the context surrounding the program can change (e.g., student demographics, students and societal needs and expectations, etc.).

#### A. Multiple ways of generating SLOs:

Ideally, SLOs are developed by gathering information from multiple sources; however, we need to remind ourselves that often the best method is pragmatic and practical—so, find the most feasible method that works best within the daily operation of the program.

#### An example of SLOs development from the University of Evansville Department of Foreign Languages (UEDFL)

SLOs development was part of a departmental evaluation project to understand and improve UEDFL programs. Understanding and improving programs involved evaluating educational effectiveness. To do this the UEDFL faculty and other stakeholders decided that an important indicator of *effectiveness* was the degree to which students meet learning outcomes. No outcome statements existed. Thus SLOs were developed by the UEDFL evaluation committee in the following way:

**Step 1** → The committee (chair, one tenured and one non-tenured faculty) reviewed examples of outcomes statements from various college foreign language programs across the United States. The committee members drafted tentative statements with input from an external consultant.

**Step 2** → The committee members organized several departmental meetings with all faculty members, all languages (“brainstorming sessions and discussions”) that produced three successive and more refined versions of SLOs.

**Step 3** → A draft of the SLOs was sent to seven student foreign language majors for suggestions and reactions.

**Step 4** → Another departmental meeting was convened for final vetting of outcomes statements, taking into account feedback from different stakeholders: students, colleagues, and external consultants.

**Step 5** → The evaluation committee mapped new outcomes statements to the curriculum. Course documentation was reviewed in order to locate where curriculum and SLOs aligned and where gaps existed.

**Step 6** → Curriculum changes were made (and planned) to better align UEDFL programs, across all languages, with programmatic SLOs.

If the program allows ample time and resources to be spent on developing SLOs, below is another way to go about gathering data and gaining consensus.

### An example process for generating program-level SLOs

**Step 1** → **Seek multiple sources of information** where SLOs may be documented or embedded in program-internal documents (e.g., mission statement, syllabi, course description, course materials, various needs analyses). Also, gather any relevant program external documents that would inform program outcomes (e.g., FL Standards, institutional vision). Extract learning outcomes.

**Step 2** → **Gather** relevant stakeholders' (e.g., faculty, current students, graduates) **perceptions** on the type of skills, knowledge, and dispositions students should achieve by the end of the program (**open-ended**).

**Example question:** *What skills, knowledge, and dispositions will the students need to have after graduation?*

**Step 3** → **Conduct a thematic analysis of the open-ended data, and compare the list of potential SLOs from the stakeholder perception data with the SLOs from the document-based data (step 1).** Create a master list of all potential SLOs. **Condense SLOs that overlap,** so that the length of the master list is reasonable.

**Step 4** → Turn the SLOs master list into a **survey with a rating scale** asking the extent to which a respondent considers the outcome to be important and necessary for the students to perform/have. Along with a rating scale, create space for the respondent to provide comments/justification for their ratings.

**Step 5** → **Summarize the survey results and present them to the intended users (faculty).** Based on the results, discuss what SLOs they should state.

**NOTE:** The prioritization technique described here is a modified version (the first two steps) of the **Delphi technique**. The Delphi technique is an iterative process that involves administering repeated rounds of questionnaires to a selected group of respondents considered to be experts in a given subject matter area. Responses to the first round are collected, summarized and integrated into the second round questionnaire that seeks agreement, disagreement, and insights. The technique enables experts to come to consensus of opinion when the issues at stake are subjective, but priorities are still needed.

Refer to Appendix B for an example of using assessment data for revising SLO statements.

**TASK:** Draft a few priority student learning outcomes for your own program. If you brought your own outcomes, check if each SLO meets the three requirements listed.

<b>Outcomes</b>	Does it reflect your view on the targeted changes (achievements) in students' knowledge, abilities, & dispositions?	Does it state what students gain, rather than what your program aims to deliver?	Does it accurately communicate the value of courses, requirements, and degree programs?
<i>Skills:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe
<i>Skills:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe
<i>Knowledge:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe
<i>Knowledge:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe
<i>Dispositions:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe
<i>Dispositions:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe

**Nota bene:** For program-level outcomes, it is important that outcomes statements cover a complete set of competencies, not just those easily 'measured.' Do yours? If not, what competencies are missing?

# PART II: Assessment

## I. Why assess? Stating is not enough!

Stating outcomes is one step toward expressing program value and holding ourselves accountable by making expectations public and letting the learners know what they are entering into. However, while it accomplishes important consensus building, stating itself is probably not enough.

Outcomes assessment is **a means for changing and improving student learning**, not an end. It enables the program to modify and adjust teaching practices on an evidentiary basis by gathering information on the extent to which learners achieved the outcomes the program expects.

From the Foreign Language Program Evaluation Project (PI: John Norris, 2006—2009), the case study participants focusing on assessing SLOs found two distinct types of uses for assessment: *findings use* and *process use* (Patton, 2008).

- ※ **Findings use** is defined as *the use of the assessment findings for program change, adjustment, advocacy, etc.*

**Examples: Faculty found that the assessment...**

- created coherence in the curriculum by aligning outcomes across levels and courses;
- improved pedagogical practices, curricular scope and sequence;
- clearly communicated the outcomes of the program to the external constituents.

- ※ **Process use** is defined as *the learning that happens by engaging in the process of assessment itself*. Assessment can be done in such a way that the experience of going through the assessment can be educational and illuminative, creating a potential for organizational transformation and learning.

**Examples: Faculty found that the assessment...**

- generated collaborative opportunities
- resulted in shared understanding of program identity, values, and goals.
- enhanced the understanding of the course content and task types taught.
- raised visibility of the program in the institution and beyond (by doing a good job on assessment).

**TASK:** Below is a typical assessment template provided by an assessment/evaluation office. What is missing from the table that would increase the likelihood of the assessment resulting in findings use or process use?

Outcomes	Are there learning opportunities in the curriculum? Indicate course name and the level of mastery expected  I= introduced, D= developed & practiced w/feedback, M= demonstrated at the mastery level	Method(s) to gather evidence	When will the data be collected?	Criteria for assessing data	Reporting: % of students meeting the expectation		
					Fully meet	Substantially meet	Substantially fail
Outcome 1:							
Outcome 2:							

## II. What is a utilization-focused student learning outcomes assessment?

### A. The approach

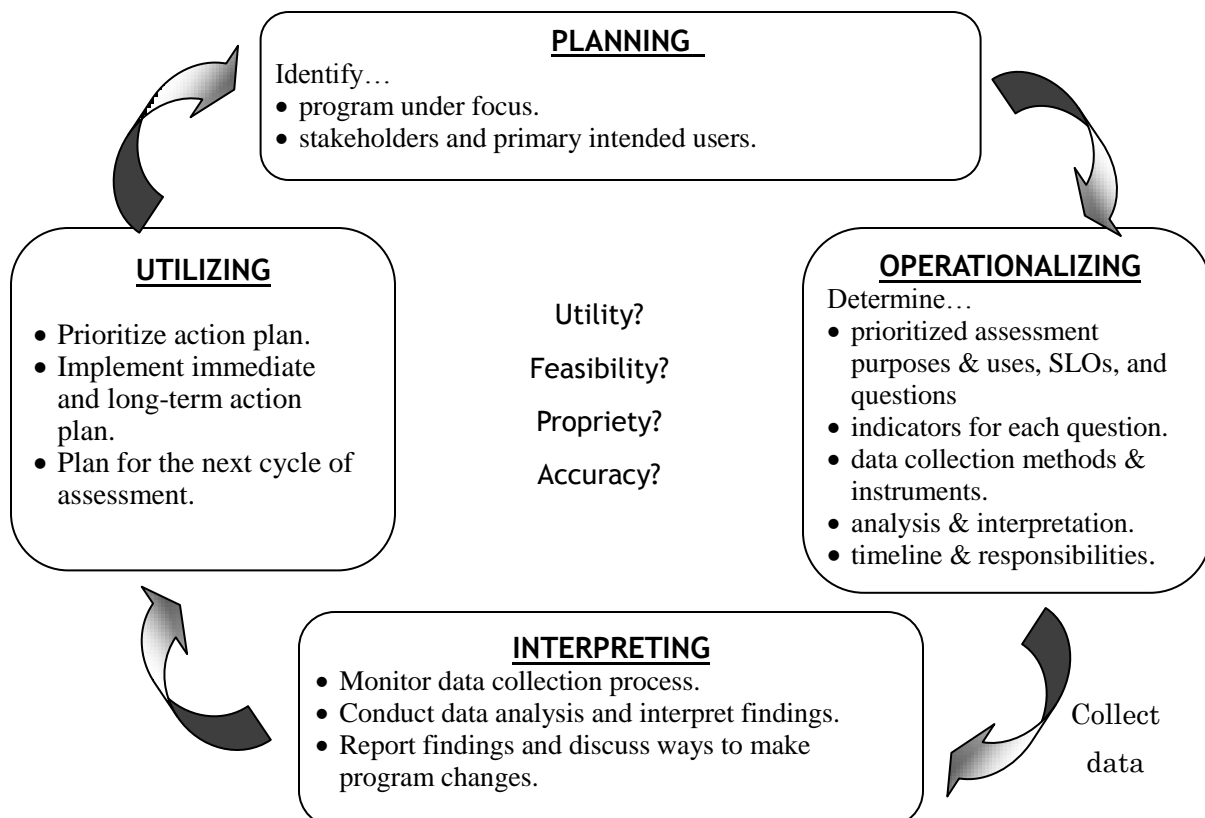
**Utilization-focused SLOs assessment** is an approach to ensure and maximize use of assessment by the intended users of the assessment, from the onset of outcomes assessment planning to action-taking on the basis of assessment data. Thus, the outcomes assessment starts with the following question: “**Why are we doing outcomes assessment? For whom and for what purpose?**”

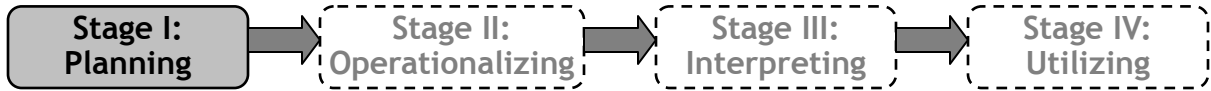
The original utilization-focused framework has been developed extensively by Michael Quinn Patton (1978, 1997, 2008) and researched by others (Alkin & Taut, 2003; Cousins & Shulha, 2006, among many others) in the field of evaluation. Taking an evaluative approach, the utilization-focused SLOs assessment follows the principles of **utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy** (Program Evaluation Standards by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1994).

- ❖ **Utility** → Assessment will **serve the needs of intended users.**
- ❖ **Feasibility** → Assessment is **practical, prudent, and frugal to the intended users.**
- ❖ **Propriety** → Assessment is **conducted ethically and appropriately** to protect the rights and welfare of those who are affected by the assessment findings.
- ❖ **Accuracy** → Assessment **reveals and conveys appropriate and credible information about student learning** in the eyes of intended users.

### B. Step-by-step process to utilization-focused assessment

The following figure depicts basic steps involved in the utilization-focused assessment process.





### A. Which program?

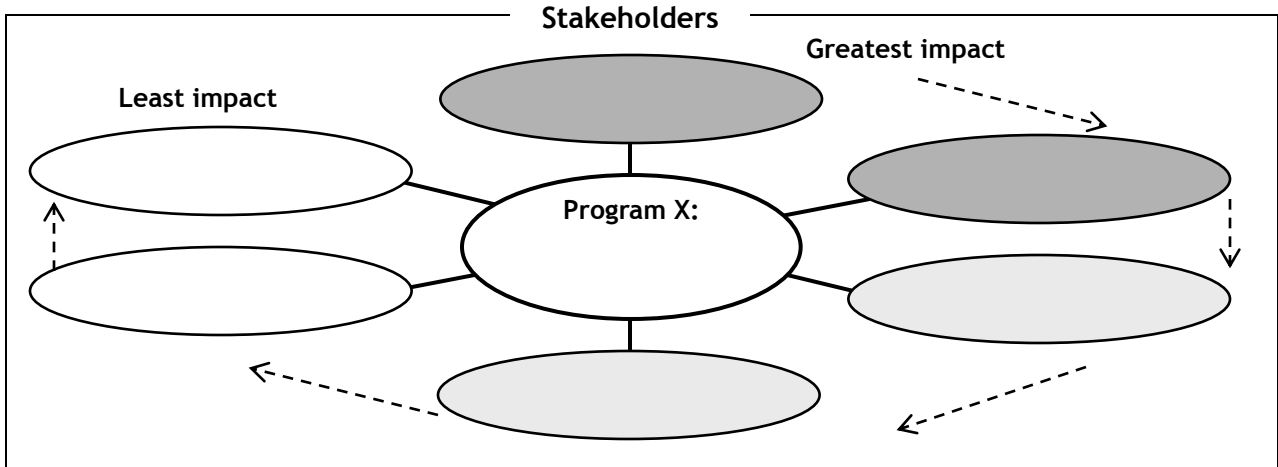
Which program is in need of urgent attention? There may be various sub-programs within the program where student learning happens. Within a typical language department, you may have ...

- language requirement program
- study abroad program
- extra curricular program
- majors, minors
- certificate
- service-learning program

### B. Who is involved in the program?

Who has a stake in your program? It is important to determine who might be interested—and who might play a role—in the assessment.

**TASK:** Identify key stakeholders of your program and list them clockwise according to the degree (greater to lesser) of impact they can potentially make in program decision making.

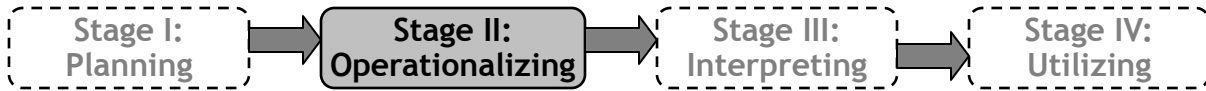


### C. Primary intended users

- If we want to ensure that assessment findings will be used, those who are **likely to play a key role in making decisions on the basis of SLOs assessment** (i.e., *intended users*) need to be involved in the assessment process.

- Example intended users in college FL programs:**
- program chairs
  - curriculum coordinators
  - assessment specialists
  - instructors
  - teaching assistants
  - student representatives.

- These users will have distinct assessment purposes and uses in mind, thus the final decision of the assessment will be negotiated among the *primary intended users*, **those who are responsible for making decision about the program and intend to use the assessment results for improving the quality of student learning.**



### A. Defining purposes and uses of outcomes assessment

It is important to consider outcomes assessment purposes and uses with an assessment committee or colleagues in our program before jumping into deciding on the methods of assessment. There are various outcomes assessment uses associated with each purpose.

**FORMATIVE**  
**Improve, develop, advocate**  
**Example USE:** By assessing outcomes, we can identify which skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are not reaching to expected performance criteria. The results can be USED to improve and develop course content and tasks to address those outcomes that were not achieved as expected.

**SUMMATIVE**  
**Hold accountable, demonstrate value, judge**  
**Example USE:** By using student assessment information, we can demonstrate and justify to the university administration (or others) how our program is performing, perhaps compared to programs in peer institutions. Administration can be provided a basis for judging the value of the program.

**ILLUMINATIVE**  
**Understand learning/programs, test theory**  
**Example USE:** By reviewing progress of students, we can shed light on how students are learning and what works in terms of teaching and learning. The more faculty understand the nature of student progress, the better we can organize pedagogy as well as teacher training, locally and more publicly.

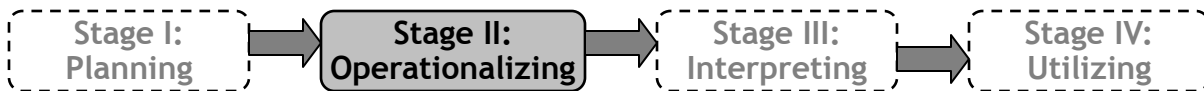
**PROCESS**  
**Motivate, empower, educate**  
**Example USE:** By engaging learners in the assessment process, the process itself is used to unveil and advocate learners' views on learning. Assessment will also be used to enlighten the learners (and teachers) by revealing how much they have learned in the program.

**Guiding question**

- Would **different stakeholders** be interested in **distinct assessment purposes**?  
 If so, how might you engage intended users in the committee or otherwise in the assessment process?

**TASK:** Identify possible purposes and uses of outcomes assessment for your program.

<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>Purpose:</b>
<b>Use:</b>	<b>Use:</b>



## B. Prioritization

Now that you have brainstormed possible SLOs assessment purposes and uses, consider **what you should prioritize for the first round of outcomes assessment** (Remember, assessment is a cyclical practice!).

**ASK** → Which use should be prioritized? Which SLOs should be prioritized?

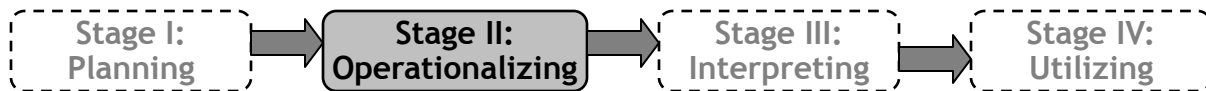
**Why do we need to have a prioritization process?**

Not all SLOs need to be assessed at the same time. By focusing attention on high priority needs and uses of particular outcomes, the assessment process should become **feasible, practical, and meaningful** to the primary intended users. The end product of this process will be **a series of questions (assessment questions)** to answer by gathering fitting evidence.

### Example of a prioritized learning outcome and assessment use

**Context:** University academic writing unit providing English courses for matriculated undergraduate and graduate students who speak English as an additional language but who have not yet demonstrated sufficient academic English proficiency to enroll in university degree programs.

Learning outcomes	Justification	Prioritized use
<p><i>It is expected that students will be able to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>analyze discipline and genre-specific academic English writing conventions and effectively apply that knowledge to writing tasks. <b>PRIORITIZED SLO</b></li> <li>self-assess their strengths as academic writers, as well as areas for continued development, incorporating personal reflection and feedback from others.</li> <li>appropriately incorporate a variety of reliable information sources that are relevant for doing graduate-level research in their academic writing.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unit assessment plan stipulated focus on <b>one outcome per semester</b> to (1) <b>allow for robust information collection</b> and (2) <b>minimize time and resources required of personnel.</b></li> <li>The SLO was already being targeted in a capstone-type course. Assessments which tapped outcome-related performances, already existed.</li> <li>Unit wanted to pilot new assessment methods (teacher questionnaires, writing rubrics, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To document for ELI staff and students, institutional bodies within the University of Hawaii, and other interested parties, the degree to which valued educational outcomes have been achieved</li> <li>To provide feedback on how to better demonstrate the degree to which students are achieving outcomes</li> <li>To get feedback on the effectiveness of assessment instruments, and inform modifications</li> </ul>



### C. Defining indicators of student learning

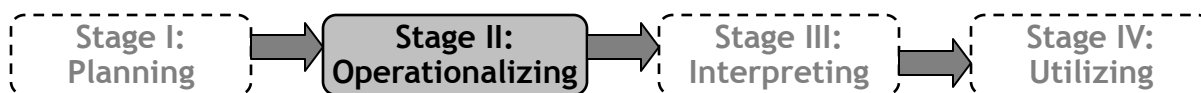
#### What is an indicator?

Indicators are “Contextually relevant quantitative or qualitative descriptions that have the potential to alert the programme personnel as to whether the language center...is performing as it should” (Mackay & Wellesley, Tasman, & Bazergan, 1998, p. 119). In other words, **it is the evidence/phenomena that will be useful in answering assessment questions.**

**ASK** → When deciding on the indicator, ask “**what does learning ‘look like’? How can we know that students are learning what we teach?**”

**TASK:** For each SLO below, what are some of the observable phenomena that might indicate various aspects of student learning?

SLOs	Indicators?
Using foreign language skills to locate and use resources (e.g., foreign language texts) in various disciplines. [Kapi‘olani Community College, internationalization core competencies]	→ Research reports (written and spoken) based on target culture/language resources
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>speak Arabic</b> at the ACTFL Advanced Level, <b>demonstrating</b> an ability to negotiate both survival and basic professional situations.</li> <li>2. <b>listen</b> to Arabic news broadcasts, <b>understanding</b> the basic topics and main points of the majority of items.</li> <li>3. <b>value</b> the contributions of Islamic religious and cultural traditions (including music, art and literature) to world civilization.</li> <li>4. <b>view themselves as agents</b> for promoting understanding and dialogue between the Islamic World and the West, with the <b>ability to articulate</b> cultural differences between the two particularly in regard to politeness and interpersonal relations, and to <b>interpret</b> current Middle Eastern events from a variety of viewpoints, explaining how others view those events.</li> </ol>	



## D. Designing an assessment method

Different assessments provide distinct ways of **eliciting, analyzing, and reporting** data: that is, they offer **distinct perspectives on the story of students' knowledge, ability, or disposition**. For any given data collection methodology, there are advantages and disadvantages. Primary intended users need to make an informed decision—based on the intended uses of an assessment—about which methodology is most **appropriate, feasible, cost-effective, credible, and realistic** for getting the information they need.

Assessments (and other methods) come in a variety of forms, offering a number of alternatives to FL educators. One major challenge for FL educators is to know which assessment method, among the variety of available assessment alternatives, to choose in telling a particular story about their students.

**TASK:** What information gathering methods are available in foreign language programs?

### Guiding questions:

- **Review available data collection methods** and consider **strengths and weaknesses**. Identify potential methods that will provide useful information about your target indicators.
- Are **existing data sources** sufficient for meeting some of the information needs? How might they be revised to provide useful information for your specific assessment uses? **Take advantage of what you already have!**
- Consider **technical, time, and resource demands** imposed by different methods, then select methods that meet your needs. Provide **clear and reasonable justifications** for choosing each methodology. Discuss the merits of your methodological selections with an assessment specialist and with your colleagues.
- Begin planning for the **development of data collection tools and procedures**. What **resources** do you need and what is the **timeline**? Who are the **informants**?
- Is there **technical expertise** in your program sufficient for meeting the demands of distinct data elicitation methods? What steps might be taken to compensate for the technical demands?
- Do you need to **pilot test** the instrument to make sure that the instrument is reliable and valid?

## E. Implementing methodological procedures

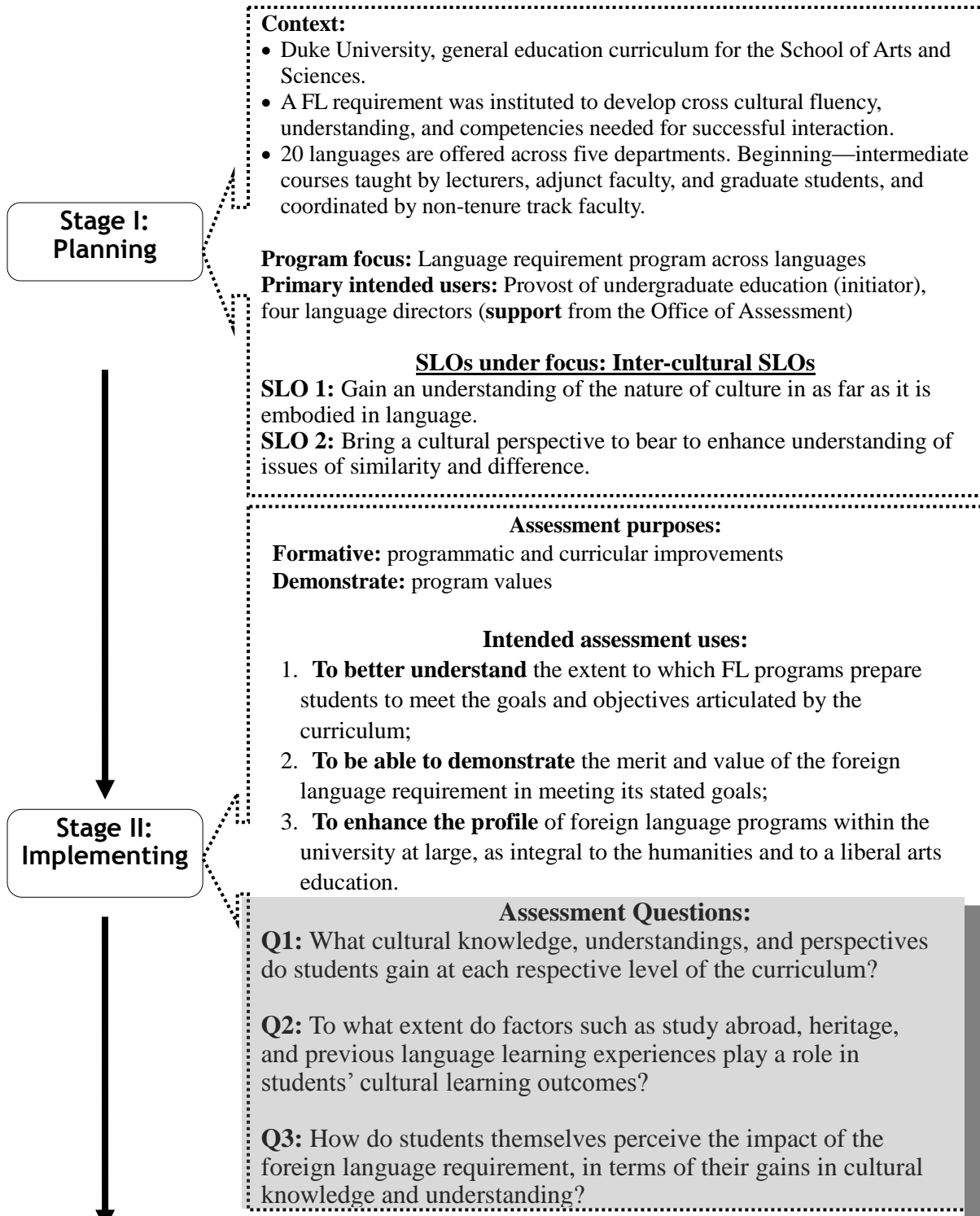
Plan on developing administrative guidelines, instructions, and communication to elicit information. For each method you are planning to implement, consider the following questions:

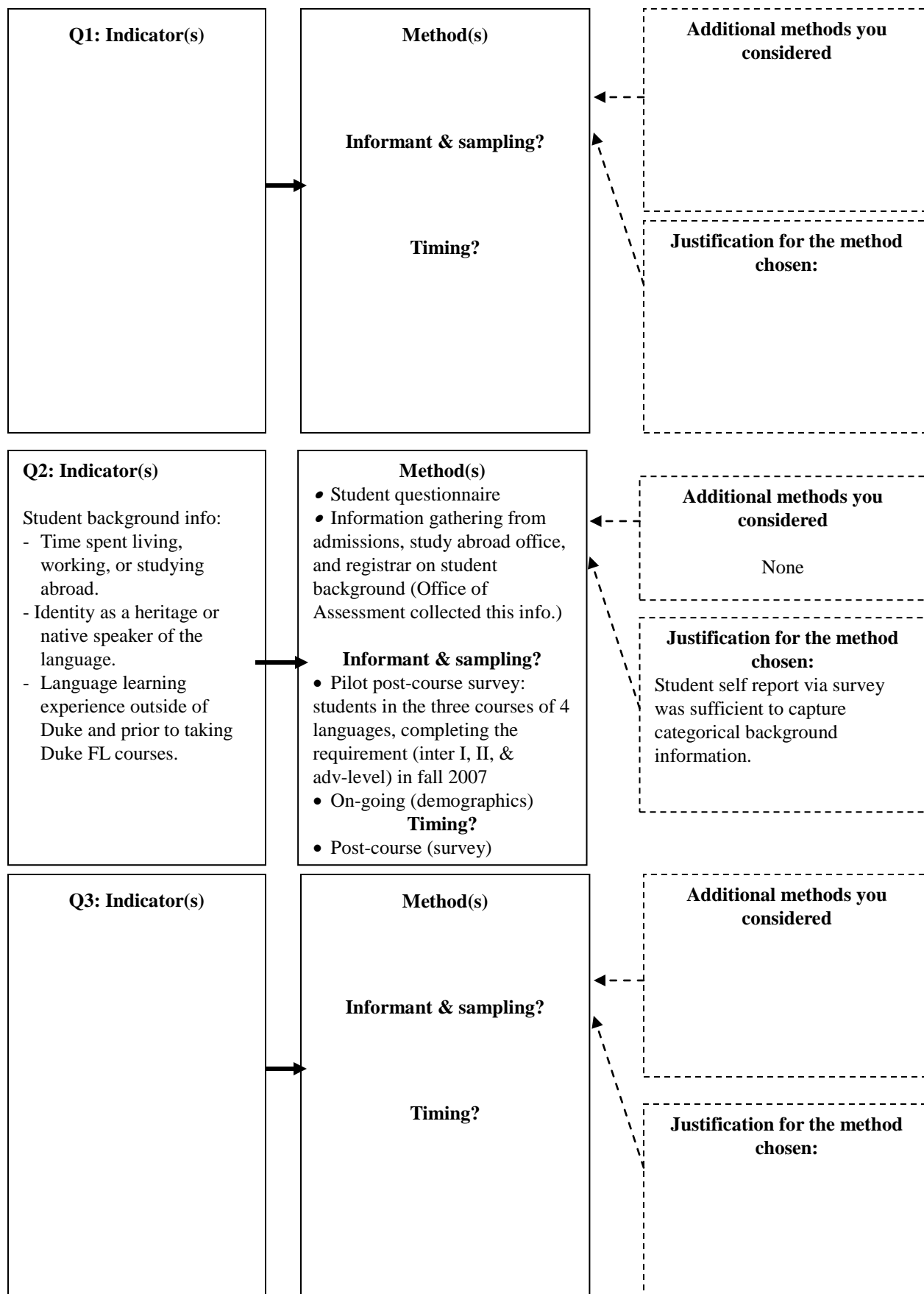
### Guiding questions:

- **Who** is going to collect data? Do you have **access to the data source**?
- How are you going to **recruit the key informants**? When is the **best time** to collect data?
- What are the **technical or resource needs** in order to implement data collection?
- Do you need to get any help in order to accomplish your data collection? **What kind of help** do you need and **where can you seek help**? What resources are available in your institution?
- How do you make sure that the data is **collected accurately**? Do need to **set guidelines**?
- Is **Institutional Review Board clearance** needed in your institution?

**Notes:**

**TASK:** Given the program context, primary intended users, intended uses, and assessment questions indicated, **brainstorm indicators, key informants, sampling, and best timing for the assessment project.** Choose one method among various assessment methods, based on utility, feasibility, accuracy, and appropriateness. **Provide justification** for the method you chose.





Check your answers with what actually happened in practice. Go to Appendix E.



## A. Developing data analysis procedures

After collecting information, the data has to be organized in a way that is analyzable and interpretable to the primary intended users. **The goal of data analysis is to provide order and structure in making sense of the information.** When planning for data analysis, start by reviewing the assessment questions. **The key consideration is to whose eyes the analysis process and the results have to be credible and trustworthy.**

### Guiding questions:

- **Who should be involved** in data analysis? Any strategies to avoid suspicion of data manipulation.
- How can data be extracted and organized?
- What data analysis techniques will be used? **Don't go for technocratic criteria** for analyzing data. Think of **the best way to extract and analyze data in order to answer the question.**
- How can **reliability/trustworthiness of analyses be maximized**? For example, for student writing data, reliability can be assured by using multiple coders (two coders for each dataset), depending on how feasible it is to have additional coders.

## B. Interpretation of findings

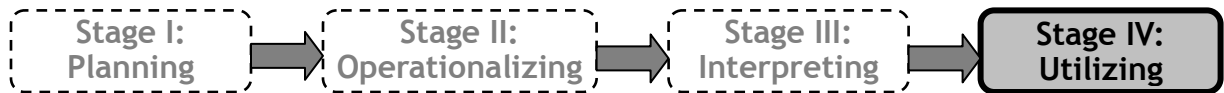
Based on the results of data analysis, interpretation and value judgments have to be made in order to respond to assessment questions. Since interpretation is often affected by personal perspectives, careful consideration of the human factor will be necessary.

### Guiding questions:

- **Whose perspective counts? Who should be involved** in data interpretation? Why?
- How will interpretation be checked? Is **triangulation of sources and perspectives** necessary?
- What is the judgment based on? Are there any **pre-set criteria for judgment**?
- **To what extent should findings lead to implications for program change**?
- **Who gets to draw implications**, and who gets to **make recommendations**?
- Are the **interpretations and recommendations evident** from the data and clearly articulated in **understandable language** for the intended users (and other stakeholders)?

### **Nota bene: Recommended resources!**

- **University of Texas at Austin:** Step-by-step guide to analyzing and interpreting data for various methods (document analysis, focus group, interview, observation, survey).  
Visit → <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/assessment/iar/programs/?step=report>
- **University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension:** Detailed reader friendly guide to qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods.  
Visit → <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/Collecting-Analyzing-Data-C237.aspx>
- **The National Capital Language Resource Center:** How-to guide on portfolio assessment for FL educators. Visit → <http://www.nclrc.org/portfolio/modules.html>



Reports that are not used or acted upon are a waste of time and resources. In the utilization-focused approach, reporting also starts with identifying purposes, uses, and users. Reports need to be (a) useful and informative, (b) timely, and (c) relevant and meaningful for the audience/users. Most importantly, reporting should generate and facilitate program action planning.

## A. Reporting

### Guiding questions:

- Who are the **audiences** of reporting? Administration, curriculum committee, faculty, students?
- **Who should report** the assessment findings?
- Are there any **reporting demands** from distinct intended users? What is the **purpose** of reporting?
- What is the **best format** of reporting to respond to the primary intended users' purpose and to maximize use?
- When is the **best time** to report? How much time do you think the preparation for reporting will take?
- Who should be involved in the **reporting process**, and **how much involvement** should there be?
- Collaborative or non-collaborative interpretation and reporting? More interactive or less interactive format?

### Consider the best format that maximizes access to and use of the findings. Reporting options:

- |  |                           |                     |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------|
| - full written report                                | - brochure                | - workshop          |
| - executive summary                                  | - online communication    | - oral presentation |
| - research monograph                                 | - online conference       | - meeting           |
| - newsletter article                                 | - video-tape presentation | - poster            |
| - website, posting (e.g., PPT with voice recordings) |                           |                     |

## B. Putting assessment findings to use

### Guiding questions:

- What kind of results do you anticipate?
- **What actions** would you take based on those anticipated results?
- What are some of the **contextual constraints** in taking an action, and what **strategies** can you take to move forward?
- What **additional resources** would help the audience to plan for future action?

## C. Planning for the next assessment cycle

### Guiding Questions:

- Based on the assessment findings, did you find any **change necessary in the SLOs**?
- Do you need to **collect data further** in order to answer the assessment questions?
- Did **additional questions** come up during the assessment process?
- **Which SLO or assessment use** needs attention next?

## Cyclical Assessment Process: Findings to action and actions to planning

Georgetown University German Department: “Developing Multiple Literacies”

Examples of Prioritized (Outcomes) Assessment Cycles in Undergraduate Program

Timeline	Assessment Focus	Actual Use (actions taken)
Spring, 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specification of <b><u>intended uses</u></b> for all assessments</li> <li>• Development of departmental <b><u>policies and priorities</u></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Raised awareness</li> <li>→ Generated consensus</li> <li>→ <b>Eliminated useless assessments</b></li> </ul>
Summer–Fall, 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Placement exam</u></b> development with new curriculum</li> <li>• Short-cut <b><u>estimates</u></b> of German FL textual processing abilities (C-Test, RCT, LCT)</li> <li>• Pre-post semester study of <b><u>student development</u></b> on placement exam</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Articulated student placements with new curricular structure</li> <li>→ Understood primary indicators of student development in new curriculum</li> <li>→ Ensured that students’ are developing as predicted</li> </ul>
Fall, 1999– Fall, 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L2 writing outcomes <b><u>expectations</u></b> specified</li> <li>• Curriculum-embedded task-based <b><u>writing assessment</u></b> system developed</li> <li>• End-of-level prototypical writing <b><u>genre/task performance</u></b> identified and trialed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Agreed upon learning outcomes in high-priority skill area</li> <li>→ Shaped writing instruction to lead to outcomes</li> <li>→ Initiated collection of direct, curriculum-relevant evidence of learning outcomes</li> </ul>
Spring, 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program-external <b><u>speaking proficiency</u></b> test (SOPI) collected</li> <li>• All students in first 4 levels/years of instruction completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Engaged in program-UNrelated validation of student learning</li> <li>→ Communicated about student success to external audiences</li> <li>→ Highlighted need for attention to speaking instruction/practice</li> </ul>
Fall, 2000– Fall, 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End-of-level <b><u>writing performances</u></b> collected across 4 levels/years of instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Compared writing development with outcomes expectations</li> <li>→ Revised writing pedagogy</li> <li>→ Adjusted outcomes expectations</li> </ul>
Spring, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L2 speaking outcomes <b><u>expectations</u></b> specified</li> <li>• Task-based <b><u>speaking assessment</u></b> system developed</li> <li>• Level-specific <b><u>genre/task performances</u></b> identified</li> <li>• Regular speaking assessments implemented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Agreed upon learning outcomes in high-priority skill area</li> <li>→ Shaped writing instruction to lead to outcomes</li> <li>→ Enabled collection of direct, curriculum-relevant evidence of learning outcomes</li> <li>→ Reiterated public/performative nature of learning expectations</li> </ul>
<i>{...additional assessment work in the interim...}</i>		
Fall, 2005– Fall, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived and lived <b><u>value</u></b> of the German curriculum and degree</li> <li>• Student questionnaires on current GUGD <b><u>experiences</u></b></li> <li>• Focus groups of graduating seniors on <b><u>value and identity of the major</u></b></li> <li>• Alumni questionnaires on <b><u>outcomes achievement</u></b> and <b><u>personal/professional value</u></b> in terms of language, culture, literature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Sustained revised curriculum (it’s working!)</li> <li>→ Enabled carefully integrated study abroad for all students</li> <li>→ Integrated technology into coursework</li> <li>→ Scaled back on intensity of upper-level courses</li> <li>→ Intensified links to professional opportunities</li> </ul>

<http://www1.georgetown.edu/departments/german/programs/undergraduate/curriculum/>

### III. Resources on SLO assessment

The following resources are selected articles, books, websites on college FL outcomes assessment, language testing, and how-to guides on SLO assessment.

#### **Articles on SLO assessment in language education**

- Brindley, G. (2001). Outcomes-based assessment in practice: Some examples and emerging insights. *Language Testing*, 18(4), 393-407.
- Liskin-Gasparro, J. E. (1995). Practical approaches to outcomes assessment: The undergraduate major in foreign languages and literatures. *ADFL Bulletin*, 26(2), 21-27.
- Brown, J. D., & Hudson, T. (1998). The alternatives in language assessment. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32(4), 653-675.
- Byrnes, H. (2002). The role of task and task-based assessment in a content-oriented collegiate foreign language curriculum. *Language Testing*, 19(4), 419-437.
- Dassier, J., & Powell, W. (2001). Formative FL program evaluation: Dare to find out how good you really are. In *Dimension 2001: The odyssey continues. Selected proceedings of the 2001 conference on language teaching* (pp. 15–30). Birmingham, AL: Southeast Council on Language Teaching.
- Delett, J. S., Barnhardt, S., & Kevorkian, J. A. (2001). A framework for portfolio assessment in the foreign language classroom. *Foreign Language Annals*, 34(6), 559-568.
- Mathews, T., J., & Hansen, C., M. (2004). Ongoing assessment of a university foreign language program. *Foreign Language Annals*, 37(4), 630-640.
- Morris, M. (2006). Addressing the challenges of program evaluation: One department's experience after two years. *Modern Language Journal*, 90(4), 599-602.
- Norris, J. M. (2006). The why (and how) of student learning outcomes assessment in college FL education. *Modern Language Journal*, 90(4), 590-597.
- Norris, J. M., & Pfeiffer, P. (2003). Exploring the use and usefulness of ACTFL Guidelines oral proficiency ratings in college foreign language departments. *Foreign Language Annals*, 36(4), 572-581.
- Phillips, J. (2006). Assessment now and into the future. In A. Heining-Boynton (Ed.), *2005-2015: Realizing our vision of languages for all* (pp. 75-103). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

#### **Selected books on SLOA assessment in tertiary education**

- Knight, P. (Ed.). (1995). *Assessment for learning in higher education*. London: Kogan Page.
- Hernon, P., Dugan, R. E., & Schwartz, C. (eds.) (2006). *Revisiting outcomes assessment in higher education*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.
- Hernon, P., & Dugan, R. E. (eds.) (2004). *Outcomes assessment in higher education: Views and perspectives*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.
- Wiggins, G. (1998). *Educative assessment: Designing assessments to inform and improve student performance*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

#### **Selected books and book chapters on language testing**

- Alderson, J. C. (2000). *Assessing reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). *Language testing in practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, J. D. (2005). *Testing in language programs: A comprehensive guide to English language assessment*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Brown, J. D., & Hudson, T. (2002). *Criterion-referenced language testing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing listening*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Dassier, J.-L. (2008). Testing for proficiency. In D. W. birckbichler (Ed.), *Evaluating foreign language programs: Content, context, change* (pp. 80-102). Columbus, OH: Ohio State University, Foreign Language Center.
- Davidson, F., & Lynch, B. K. (2002). *Testcraft: A teacher's guide to writing and using language test specifications*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Douglas, B. H. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. New York: Longman.
- Douglas, D. (2000). *Assessing languages for specific purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fulcher, G. (2003). *Testing second language speaking*. Harlow: Pearson.
- McNamara, T. (1996). *Measuring second language performance*. New York: Longman.
- Norris, J. M. (ed.) (2002). Special issue: Task-based language assessment. *Language Testing*, 19(4).
- Norris, J. M., Brown, J. D., Hudson, T., & Yoshioka, J. (1998). *Designing second language performance assessments*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Purpura, J. E. (2004). *Assessing grammar*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Read, J. (2000). *Assessing vocabulary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Weigle, S. C. (2002). *Assessing writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### **Comprehensive websites on SLO assessment**

- **Assessment in higher education:** Comprehensive resource list, [http://ahe.cqu.edu.au/online\\_articles.htm](http://ahe.cqu.edu.au/online_articles.htm)
- **Bresciani, M. J., & Schuh, J. H.** “Supporting student learning: Assessing the effectiveness of our work”  
[http://www.ncsu.edu/assessment/presentations/assess\\_process/supporting\\_student\\_learning.pdf](http://www.ncsu.edu/assessment/presentations/assess_process/supporting_student_learning.pdf)
- **Central Michigan University:** CMU Assessment Toolkit,  
<http://academicaffairs.cmich.edu/caa/assessment/resources/toolkit.shtml>
- **Northern Arizona University, Office of Academic Assessment:** workshop materials on assessment topics,  
<http://www4.nau.edu/assessment/oaalibrary/workshops.htm>
- **North Carolina State University:** Internet resources for higher education outcomes assessment,  
<http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm>
- **Teagle Foundation:** “Outcomes and assessment” (*focus: Liberal Arts & Humanities*),  
<http://www.teaglefoundation.org/learning/resources.aspx#assessment>

### **College FL degree outcomes and assessment plans in practice**

- **Brigham Young University, College of Humanities:** <http://humassessment.byu.edu/>
- **Montana State University, Modern Languages and Literatures:**  
<http://www.montana.edu/wwwprov/assessment/modern%20languages--plan.pdf>
- **State University of New York, Buffalo, Gen Ed FL requirement:** <http://www.buffalostate.edu/offices/assessment/gened.htm#>
- **University of Alaska Fairbanks, Department of Foreign Languages & Literatures:**  
<http://www.uaf.edu/provost/outcomes/PlansPDFFormat/flba.pdf>

## IV. References

- Alkin, M. C., & Taut, S. (2003). Unbundling evaluation use. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 29, 1-12.
- Cousins, J. B., & Shulha, L. M. (2006). A comparative analysis of evaluation utilization and its cognate fields. In I. F. Staw, M. M. Mark, & J. Greene (Eds.), *International handbook of evaluation*. (pp. 266-291). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. (1994). *The program evaluation standards* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Mackay, R., Wellesley, S., Tasman, D., & Bazergan, E. (1998). Using institutional self-evaluation to promote the quality of language and communication training programmes. In P. Rea-Dickens & K. P. Germaine (Eds.), *Managing evaluation and innovation in language teaching: Building bridges* (pp. 111-131). London: Longman.
- Patton, M. Q. (1978). *Utilization-focused evaluation*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (1997). *Utilization-focused evaluation: The new century text*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilization-focused evaluation* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Suskie, L. (2004). *Assessing student learning*. Bolton, MA: Anker.

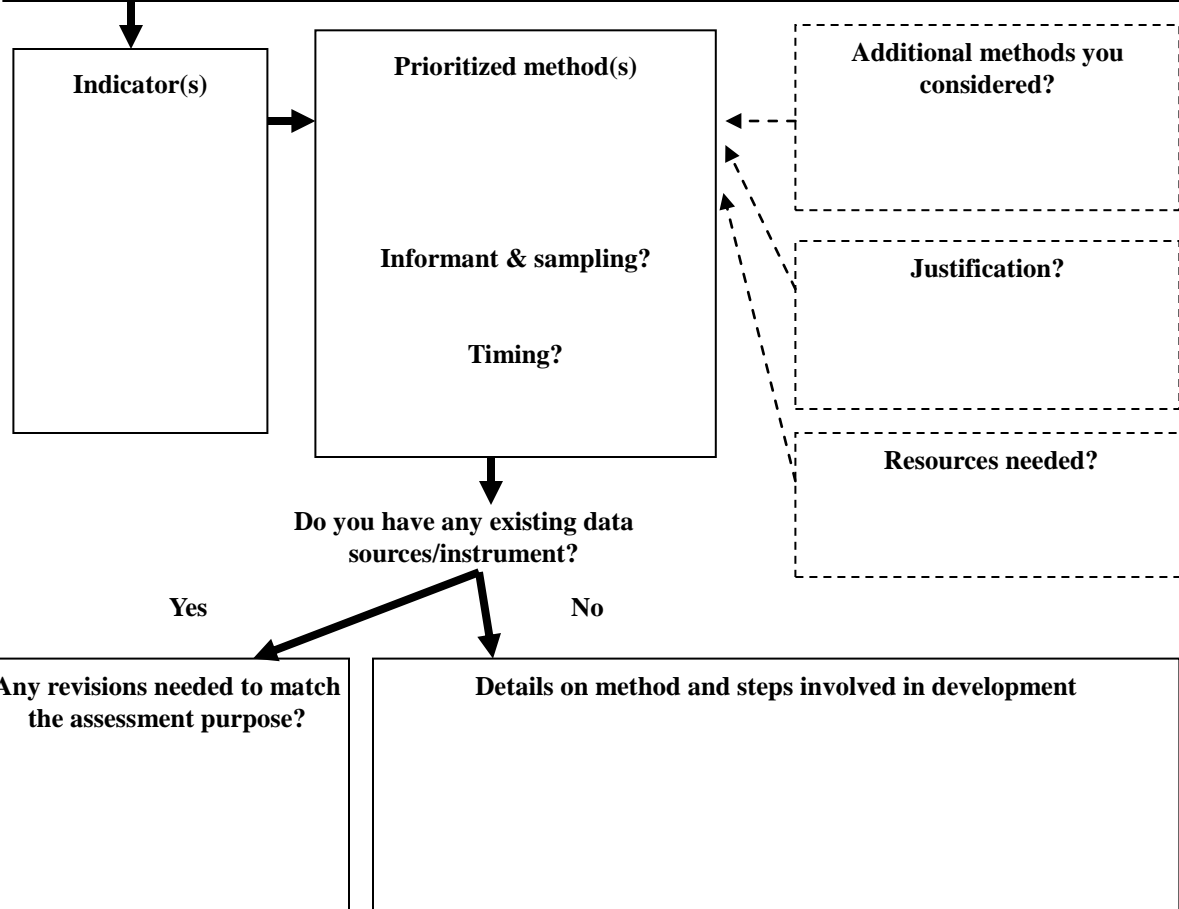
## V. Design your own assessment plan

Stage I: Planning

- Target program:
- Primary intended users of the program:
- Target SLO:

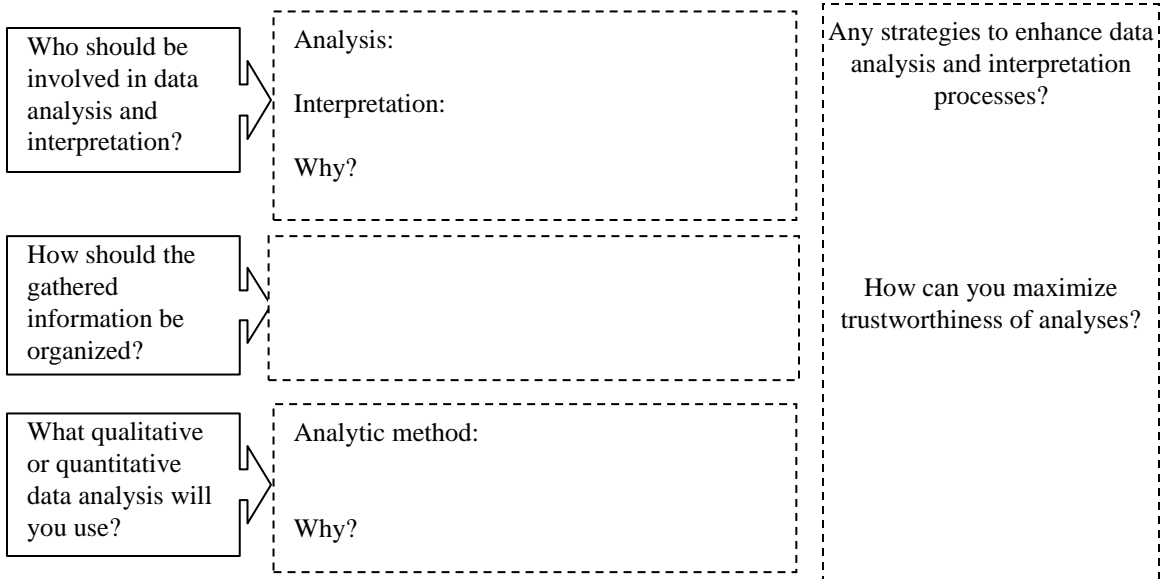
Stage II: Operationalizing

- Prioritized assessment purposes:
- Prioritized assessment uses:
- Prioritized assessment question(s):

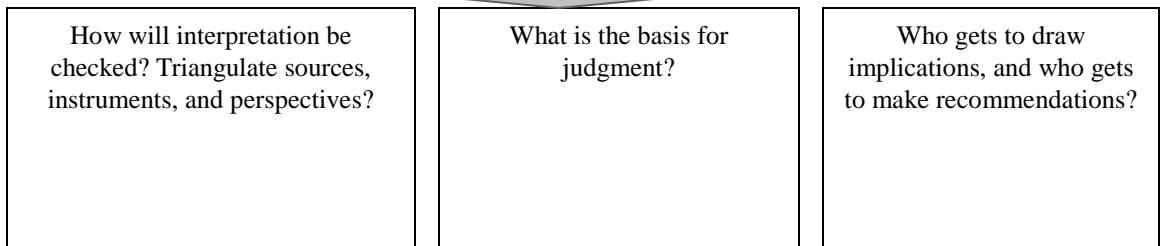


Stage III: Interpreting

Data analysis

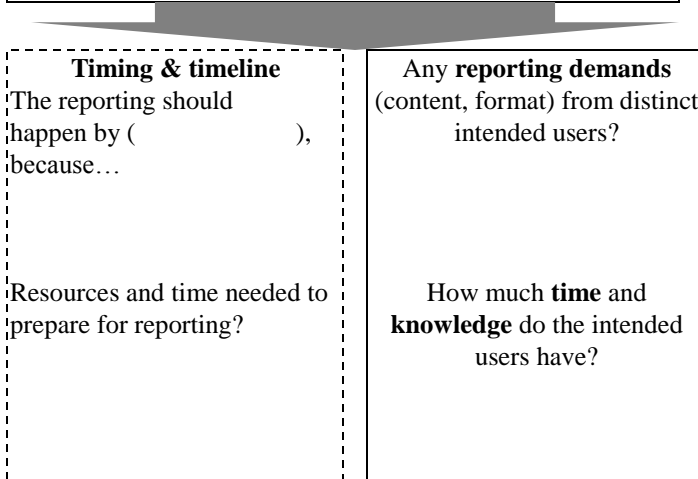
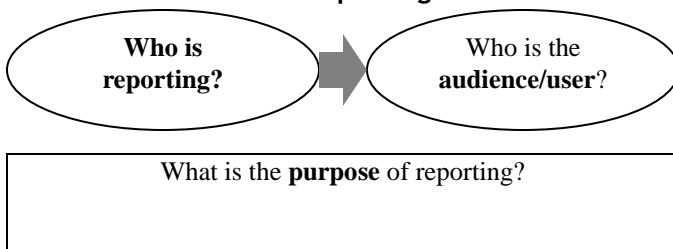


DATA INTERPRETATION

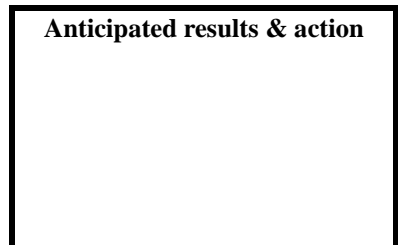
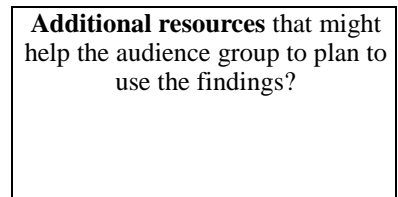
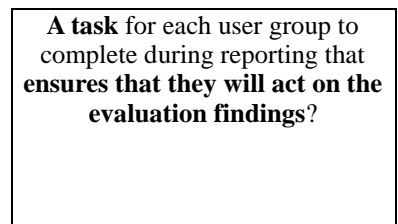


Stage IV: Utilizing

Reporting



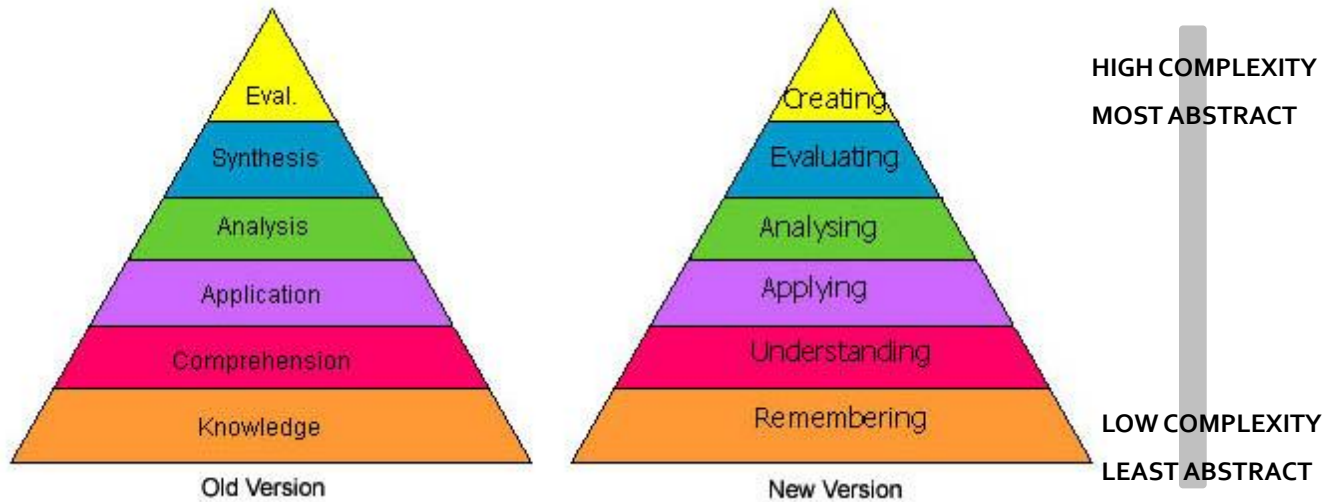
Program action



## APPENDIX A

### Bloom's Taxonomy (1956)

Bloom's taxonomy is a classification of levels of intellectual behavior important in learning. The graphic below shows new terminology associated with Bloom's Taxonomy. Note the change from Nouns to Verbs (e.g., Application to Applying) to describe the different levels.



From: [http://www.odu.edu/educ/lschult/blooms\\_taxonomy.htm](http://www.odu.edu/educ/lschult/blooms_taxonomy.htm)

Old terminology		New terminology*	
Evaluation	To judge the quality of something based on its adequacy, value, logic, or use	Creating	Putting elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganizing elements into a new pattern or structure through generating, planning, or producing.
Synthesis	To create something, to integrate ideas into a solution, to propose an action	Evaluating	Making judgments based on criteria and standards through checking and critiquing.
Analysis	To identify the organizational structure of something; to identify parts,	Analyzing	Breaking material into constituent parts, determining how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose through differentiating, organizing, and attributing.
Application	To apply knowledge to new situations, to solve problems	Applying	Carrying out or using a procedure through executing, or implementing.
Comprehension	To understand, interpret, compare and contrast, explain	Understanding	Constructing meaning from oral, written, and graphic messages through interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, and explaining.
Knowledge	To know specific facts, terms, concepts, principles, or theories	Remembering	Retrieving, recognizing, and recalling relevant knowledge from long-term memory

\* From Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. R. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching and assessing: A revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of educational objectives*. New York : Longman

<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Comprehension</b>	<b>Application</b>	<b>Analysis</b>	<b>Synthesis</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Remembering</b>	<b>Understanding</b>	<b>Applying</b>	<b>Analyzing</b>	<b>Evaluating</b>	<b>Creating</b>
cite	arrange	apply	analyze	arrange	appraise
define	classify	change	appraise	assemble	assess
describe	convert	compute	break down	categorize	choose
identify	describe	construct	calculate	collect	compare
indicate	defend	demonstrate	categorize	combine	conclude
know	diagram	discover	compare	compile	contrast
label	discuss	dramatize	contrast	compose	criticize
list	distinguish	employ	criticize	construct	decide
match	estimate	illustrate	debate	create	discriminate
memorize	explain	interpret	determine	design	estimate
name	extend	investigate	diagram	devise	evaluate
outline	generalize	manipulate	differentiate	explain	explain
recall	give examples	modify	discriminate	formulate	grade
recognize	infer	operate	distinguish	generate	judge
record	locate	organize	examine	manage	justify
relate	outline	practice	experiment	modify	interpret
repeat	paraphrase	predict	identify	organize	measure
reproduce	predict	prepare	illustrate	perform	rate
select	report	produce	infer	plan	relate
state	restate	schedule	inspect	prepare	revise
underline	review	shop	inventory	produce	score
	suggest	sketch	outline	propose	select
	summarize	solve	question	rearrange	summarize
	translate	translate	relate	reconstruct	support
		use	select	relate	value
			solve	reorganize	
			test	revise	

Verbs that represent intellectual activity at each level, and used for writing learning outcomes\*

\*From Gronlund, N. E. (1991). *How to write and use instructional objectives* (4th ed.). New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **An Example of Revising Existing SLOs Using Assessment Information**

SLOs assessment data can be put to a number of uses, one of which is revision of SLOs statements themselves. As with other SLOs developmental processes, revisions should come from evidence-based research and include as many stakeholders as possible (i.e. administrators, teachers, students, etc.).

#### **Step 1 → Collect SLOs assessment data**

- Teachers implement SLO assessments; student products and performances are collected and assessed
- Teachers provide feedback on issues related to assessment implementation and/or data collection (via survey, meetings, focus-group) → Results used for revision of assessment plan
- A student questionnaire is administered on perceived achievement of SLOs, and other issues related to SLOs

#### **Step 2 → Analyze and interpret SLOs assessment data**

- Results are summarized and reported to administrators and staff (e.g. via informal meeting, formal report)
- Collaborative interpretation of results by administration and staff

#### **Step 3 → Revisions of SLOs, curriculum, and assessment tools and plans**

- Based on student performance and self-assessment data, discuss any revisions necessary for SLOs statements, (as well as curriculum and assessment tools)
- Seek additional necessary information that would inform SLOs revision
- Check links between new SLOs and current assessments, course-level goals/outcomes, institutional education goals, university mission, etc.
- Make necessary revisions to curricular documents and assessment tools
- Repeat assessment cycle

**APPENDIX C**  
**Assessment Methods**

<b>DIRECT METHODS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PURPOSES</b>	<b>ADVANTAGES</b>	<b>DRAWBACKS</b>
Embedded assignments, tests or quizzes	Course tests/quizzes/ assignments that provide information on a student learning outcome. Students complete these as a regular part of the course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine student achievement of outcomes.</li> <li>• Ascertain extent to which program elements meet goals.</li> <li>• Provide feedback to teachers, students, admin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of learning is generated as part of normal workload.</li> <li>• Faculty members more likely to use results because they are active participants in the assessment process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time required to develop and coordinate; to create a rubric to evaluate the assignment; to actually score the assignment.</li> </ul>
Portfolios	A collection of student work such as written assignments, personal reflection, and self assessments. Developmental portfolios typically include work completed early, middle, and late in the students' academic career so growth can be noted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine student achievement of outcomes over time.</li> <li>• Understand student progress within program.</li> <li>• Ascertain extent to which programs meet goals.</li> <li>• Provide feedback to teachers, students, admin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a comprehensive, holistic view of student achievement and/or development over time.</li> <li>• Students can see growth as they collect and reflect on the products in the portfolio.</li> <li>• Online submission and review of materials possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources needed: costly and time consuming for both students and faculty.</li> </ul>
Culminating project: capstone projects, senior theses, senior exhibits	Students produce work(s) that showcase their cumulative experiences in a program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine student achievement of outcomes.</li> <li>• Ascertain extent to which programs meet goals.</li> <li>• Provide feedback to teachers, students, admin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a sophisticated, multi-level view of student achievement.</li> <li>• Students have the opportunity to integrate their learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating an effective, comprehensive culminating experience can be challenging.</li> <li>• Faculty time required to develop evaluation methods (multiple rubrics may be needed).</li> </ul>

<b>DIRECT METHODS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PURPOSES</b>	<b>ADVANTAGES</b>	<b>DRAWBACKS</b>
National FL exams or standardized tests	ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview, SOPI, DIALANG, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare student achievement/proficiency to other programs/institutions.</li> <li>• Demonstrate achievement to outside audiences via commonly known instruments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External comparisons can be made.</li> <li>• Reliability and validity are monitored by the test developers.</li> <li>• External organizations can handle test administration and evaluation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test may not align with the curriculum and/or outcomes.</li> <li>• Information from test results is too broad to be used for decision making.</li> <li>• Cost.</li> </ul>
Observation of student performing a task	Professor or an external observer rates a student's classroom performance using an observation checklist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine student achievement of outcomes.</li> <li>• Ascertain extent to course performances meet programmatic goals.</li> <li>• Judge course/program effectiveness.</li> <li>• Provide feedback to teachers, students, admin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Captures data that is difficult to obtain through written texts or other methods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be difficult to interpret seen behaviors.</li> <li>• Can be complex to categorize observations.</li> <li>• Observer can influence behaviors of observed.</li> <li>• Can be expensive and time-consuming.</li> </ul>
Culminating project: capstone projects, senior theses, senior exhibits	Students produce work(s) that showcase their cumulative experiences in a program. The work(s) are evaluated by a pair of faculty members, a faculty team, or a team comprised of faculty and community members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine student achievement of outcomes.</li> <li>• Ascertain extent to which programs meet goals.</li> <li>• Provide feedback to teachers, students, admin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a sophisticated, multi-level view of student achievement.</li> <li>• Students have the opportunity to integrate their learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating an effective, comprehensive culminating experience can be challenging.</li> <li>• Faculty time required to develop evaluation methods (multiple rubrics may be needed).</li> </ul>
Student publications or conference presentations	Students present their research to an audience outside their program. Faculty and/or external reviewers evaluate student performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publically demonstrate student achievements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives students an opportunity to practice being a professional and receive feedback from career professionals or community members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timing of professional conferences and cost for attendance may be an issue.</li> <li>• Will be challenging to organize public presentation opportunities for all students with many graduates.</li> </ul>

<b>INDIRECT METHODS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PURPOSES</b>	<b>ADVANTAGES</b>	<b>DRAWBACKS</b>
Questionnaire	Students/alumni self-report via a questionnaire (online, phone, or paper) about their perceptions, ability, attitudes, and/or satisfaction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain insight into learner attitudes, outcomes about the program.</li> <li>• Elicit stakeholders' perceptions of outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be completed anonymously.</li> <li>• Non-threatening.</li> <li>• Inexpensive and easy to administer.</li> <li>• Easy to compare &amp; analyze data.</li> <li>• Can be administered to large groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not suitable for collecting in-depth info.</li> <li>• Does not get whole story.</li> <li>• Might not generate careful feedback.</li> <li>• Wording can bias respondents. Requires careful writing &amp; sampling.</li> <li>• Impersonal.</li> <li>• Response rates.</li> </ul>
Interview	Face-to-face, one-to-one discussions or question/answer session.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand context, activities, people, and interactions.</li> <li>• Identify needs and areas of improvement.</li> <li>• Understand complex processes like teaching and learning.</li> <li>• "see" what people "say" &amp; "do".</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides rich, in-depth information and allows for tailored follow-up questions.</li> <li>• "Stories" and voices can be powerful evidence for some groups of intended users.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trained interviewers needed.</li> <li>• Transcribing, analyzing, &amp; reporting are time consuming.</li> <li>• Data analysis is complex</li> </ul>
Focus group	Face-to-face, one-to-many discussions or question/answer session.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain insight into group perception of learning.</li> <li>• Identify and understand needs &amp; expectations of group.</li> <li>• Elicit group attitudes towards program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides rich, in-depth info and allows for tailored follow-up questions.</li> <li>• The group dynamic may spark more information--groups can become more than the sum of their parts.</li> <li>• "Stories" &amp; voices can be powerful evidence for some intended users.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trained facilitators needed.</li> <li>• Transcribing, analyzing, &amp; reporting are time consuming.</li> <li>• Data analysis is complex</li> </ul>
Case study	Intense investigation of a class and individual using multiple methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document what actually happened.</li> <li>• Track perceptions, attitudes, &amp; behavior.</li> <li>• Understand individuals' needs &amp; expectations.</li> <li>• Identify obstacles course implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully depicts an individual's experience in a program, a class, etc.</li> <li>• Powerful means to portray program to outsiders.</li> <li>• Can generate thorough understandings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time-consuming to collect, organize, describe, and analyze.</li> <li>• Represents depth of information rather than breadth.</li> <li>• Multiple methods require training.</li> </ul>
Document analysis	Examination of program-related documents (e.g., syllabi, SLOs, webpage, transcripts, curriculum maps)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine trends, patterns, &amp; consistency in a program.</li> <li>• Identify gaps in curriculum.</li> <li>• Gain insight into program and its history.</li> <li>• Preliminary study for other methods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides comprehensive and historical information.</li> <li>• Does not interrupt routine of a program.</li> <li>• Information already in existence.</li> <li>• Few biases about the information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documents or materials may be incomplete or missing.</li> <li>• Data is restricted to what already exists.</li> <li>• Does not evaluate current staff or client opinion, needs, or satisfaction.</li> <li>• Can be time consuming.</li> </ul>

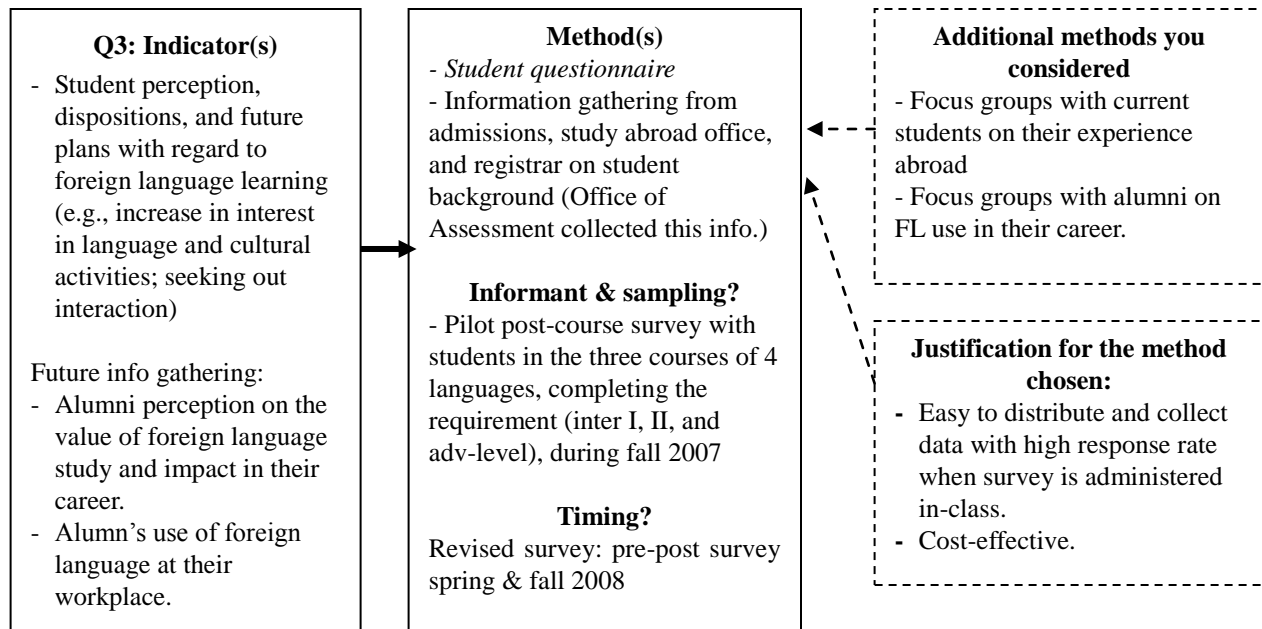
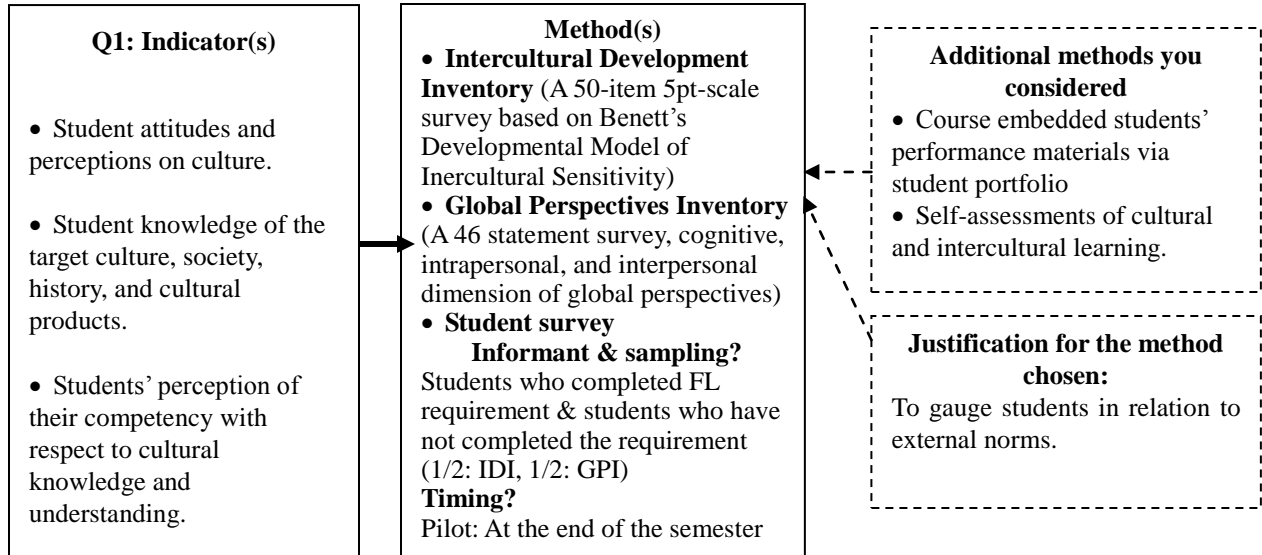
## APPENDIX D

### Example Assessment Practice in College Foreign Language Programs

Institution	Program context	Assessment Users	Assessment use	Assessment questions	Assessment methodology
<b>Evansville</b> (Sempere, Mohn, Pieroni, forthcoming)	University of Evansville Department of Foreign Languages (UEDFL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UEDFL faculty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>come to consensus regarding the basic learning expectations</b> for the degree program</li> <li>• <b>validate the good work</b> that was going on within the program</li> <li>• <b>improve the institutional and public image</b> of the department</li> <li>• <b>justify funding and additional resource requests</b> to the administration</li> <li>• <b>identify strengths and weaknesses</b> in program outcomes for the purpose of improving program delivery</li> <li>• <b>ensure the quality of student learning</b> that takes place within the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent do UE students graduate with the basic knowledge that faculty expect?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portfolio with Q&amp;A</li> <li>• Exit questionnaire (web-based)</li> </ul>
<b>Duke</b> (Ingeborg, forthcoming)	Development of university undergraduate foreign language requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University administrators</li> <li>• Department chairs,</li> <li>• Directors of undergraduate studies</li> <li>• Faculty</li> <li>• Office of Study Abroad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>better understand the extent to which foreign language programs prepare students</b> to meet the curriculum goals/objectives, for programmatic and curricular improvement</li> <li>• <b>demonstrate the merit and value of the foreign language requirement</b> in meeting its stated goals</li> <li>• <b>enhance the profile of foreign language programs</b> within the university as integral to the humanities and to a liberal arts education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What <b>cultural knowledge, understandings, and perspectives</b> are students gaining at each curriculum level?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI)</li> <li>• Student questionnaire</li> <li>• Course embedded assessments (electronic portfolio)</li> </ul>
<b>Stanford</b> (Bernhardt, 2006)	Stanford Language Center (14 foreign languages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stanford Language Center (SLC) administration</li> <li>• SLC Faculty</li> <li>• Students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Demonstrate and communicate language learning progress</b> to students</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrate clear and convincing evidence of program efficacy</b> to the university administration</li> </ul>	(To what extent are the students meeting the proficiency expectation?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video Oral Communication Instrument</li> <li>• SOPI</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX E

### Duke University Example: Indicators and methods



**Notes:**



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**Foreign Language Program Evaluation Project**  
**University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**