

Picking the Right One:  
How to Know Which Assessment Method is Best?



#assessmentisfun  
Assessment Training Series

December 1, 2015  
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## Introduction

Explain why this topic was selected:

Based on results from DSA Needs Assessment staff wanted to know more about deciding on the best assessment method.

Additionally, from looking at department assessment plans, this is an area that was scored the lowest on a rubric

## Objectives

- Participants will:
  - Learn key points to consider when determining an assessment method
  - Understand the difference between a direct measure and indirect measure
  - Feel confident in selecting the best assessment method for their programs and services



## Knowing The Available Tools



Different tools help you do different tasks.

The same is true with assessment measures – they can be used to measure different things.

What are some tools (measures) available?



You would not use a rake to mow your yard and the same can be said for certain assessment methods. Some are better designed for certain tasks.

What are some examples of assessment methods?

After getting a few examples, share the list with everyone and go over the different available options.

To mow your yard, you might use more than one tool – a mower, an edger, maybe a blower or broom. It is also the same with measuring something and you may need to use more than one tool or measure.

To help decide on the best tool or measure to use, what do you need to know or what data do you need?

# What Do You Need to Know?

Quantity?

Quality of a program or service?

What students learned?

Effectiveness?

Other information?



To help decide on the best tool or measure to use, what do you need to know or what data do you need?

If you are gathering numbers, what might be some options?

Tracking, card swipes, counting

If you are looking at the quality of a program or service, what could you do?

Feedback cards, satisfaction surveys, secret shoppers

If you are documenting student learning, what tools could you use?

Demonstration of a skill, rubric, case study, quiz, portfolio

If you need to know the effectiveness of a program or service?

Observation for ability to do a task, rubric, change in behaviors

## Direct vs. Indirect Measures



What is a direct measure? What is an indirect measure?

Direct measures involves students demonstrating what they know.  
Indirect measures is usually students self-reported knowledge.

Example:

A student demonstrating public speaking by giving a speech and being scored on a rubric would be a direct measure.

A student reporting on a survey they know the elements to give a good speech would be an indirect measure.

How do you decide what is the best option for you?

Look at the outcome and see how it is written – really focus on the verb.

Is the verb about opportunities to learn or information being available? Then an indirect measure is fine.

If the verb is about demonstrating or showing growth, then you need to look at direct measures.

## Deciding the Best Option



What is your outcome or what you are trying to measure? What tool will help you do this job?

Decide if you need a direct vs. indirect option based on the outcome.

Keep in mind what is manageable and meaningful – this could be based on the number of students or time to collect data.

If you have 3 student leaders you might be able to do some things that you might not be able to do with 30 student leaders.

## What Measure Would You Pick?

- Outcomes:
  - Students will articulate the connection between their student employment and their future career.
  - Students will demonstrate problem solving skills.
  - Students will increase their awareness of <aggie program>.
  - After completing <aggie training>, students will articulate basic content knowledge.
  - Students will demonstrate effective written communication.



Students will articulate the connection between their student employment and their future career.

- Rubric (by supervisor and self evaluation by student) used at different times during the year

Students will demonstrate problem solving skills.

- Rubric (by supervisor and self evaluation by student) used at different times during the year

Students will increase their awareness of <aggie program>.

- Survey following the program

After completing <aggie training>, students will articulate basic content knowledge.

- Survey with quiz like questions to determine content knowledge – before and after the program

Students will demonstrate effective written communication.

- Rubric used by multiple staff after students write a report during the year

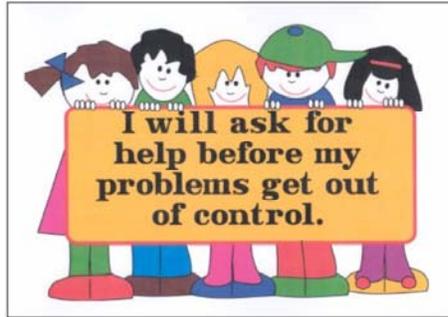
## Review Key Points

- Know your available tool.
- Decide what data you need.
- Know which is the best approach – direct vs. indirect.



Quick review of these key point.

## Contact Student Life Studies for Help



### Student Life Studies

Phone: 862-5624

Email: [sls@tamu.edu](mailto:sls@tamu.edu)

Website:  
[studentlifestudies.tamu.edu](http://studentlifestudies.tamu.edu)



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Any questions?

Please contact Student Life Studies – we can help you determine assessment measures options and what might be the best for you.

## Spring 2016 Workshops

Workshop Title	Date	Time	Location
What Does This Mean? Understanding quantitative and qualitative data.	Wednesday, January 13	1 – 2 pm	Koldus 146
How Do You Know What Students Can Do? Documenting student learning.	Monday, February 8	11 – 12 am	Koldus 146
Sharing Assessment Data and Marketing Results	Tuesday, April 5	2 – 3 pm	Koldus 146
Turning Findings into Action Plans: How to use assessment results	Wednesday, May 18	8:30 – 9:30 am	Koldus 146



Mark Your Calendar Now!



Assessment  
Boot Camp

Tuesday, May 24  
8:00 – 5:00  
Koldus 144

