

The Language, Process, and Cycle of Assessment

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Whittier Law School

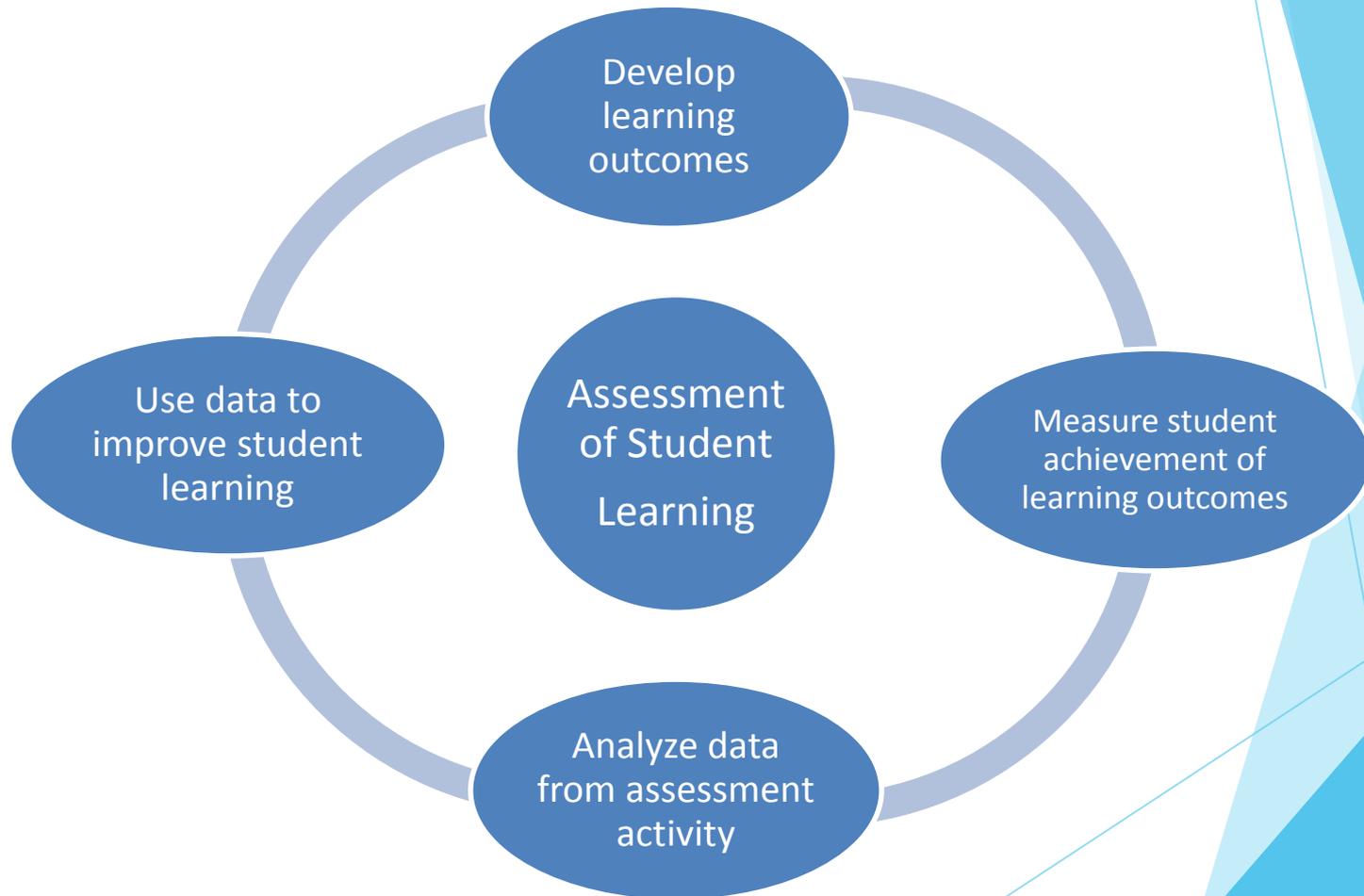
Why Assessment?

- ▶ Providing students with the best possible educational experience
- ▶ Accreditation
 - ▶ Regional Accreditors
 - ▶ American Bar Association

Assessment Terminology

- ▶ Assessment of Student Learning vs. Assessment of Non-Academic Goals
- ▶ Levels of Student Learning:
 - ▶ Institutional, Programmatic, Course

Assessment



Learning Outcomes

- ▶ Terminology:
 - ▶ Outcomes, objectives, goals
 - ▶ ABA “outcomes”
- ▶ Knowledge, Skills, and Values
- ▶ Levels of Outcomes- Institutional, Programmatic, Course

Levels of Outcomes

University Learning Outcome:

Scholarship: Students will demonstrate advanced habits of academic inquiry.

Law School Learning Outcome:

Graduates will demonstrate competency in analytical and problem-solving skills.

Criminal Law Course Outcome:

Students will accurately diagram a criminal statute.

Creating Learning Outcomes

1. Create a list of knowledge, skills, and values but don't recreate the wheel

- ABA Standard 302

- Sample Learning Outcomes

2. Incorporate your law school's mission into your learning outcomes

3. Consult your institution's materials

4. Seek input from faculty, the bench, bar, and others

5. Make the outcomes measurable

6. State outcomes and performance criteria explicitly, simply, in plain English, and without educational or legal jargon

7. Ensure that outcomes are reasonable in number and in light of the abilities of students and faculty

Standard 301. OBJECTIVES OF PROGRAM OF LEGAL EDUCATION

- (a) A law school shall maintain a rigorous program of legal education that prepares its students, upon graduation, for admission to the bar and for effective, ethical, and responsible participation as members of the legal profession.
- (b) A law school shall establish and publish learning outcomes designed to achieve these objectives.

Standard 302. LEARNING OUTCOMES

A law school shall establish learning outcomes that shall, at a minimum, include competency in the following:

- (a) Knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law;
- (b) Legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem-solving, and written and oral communication in the legal context;
- (c) Exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system; and
- (d) Other professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession

ABA Interpretations

Interpretation 302-1

- ▶ For the purposes of Standard 302(d), other professional skills are determined by the law school and may include skills such as, interviewing, counseling, negotiation, fact development and analysis, trial practice, document drafting, conflict resolution, organization and management of legal work, collaboration, cultural competency, and self-evaluation.

Interpretation 302-2

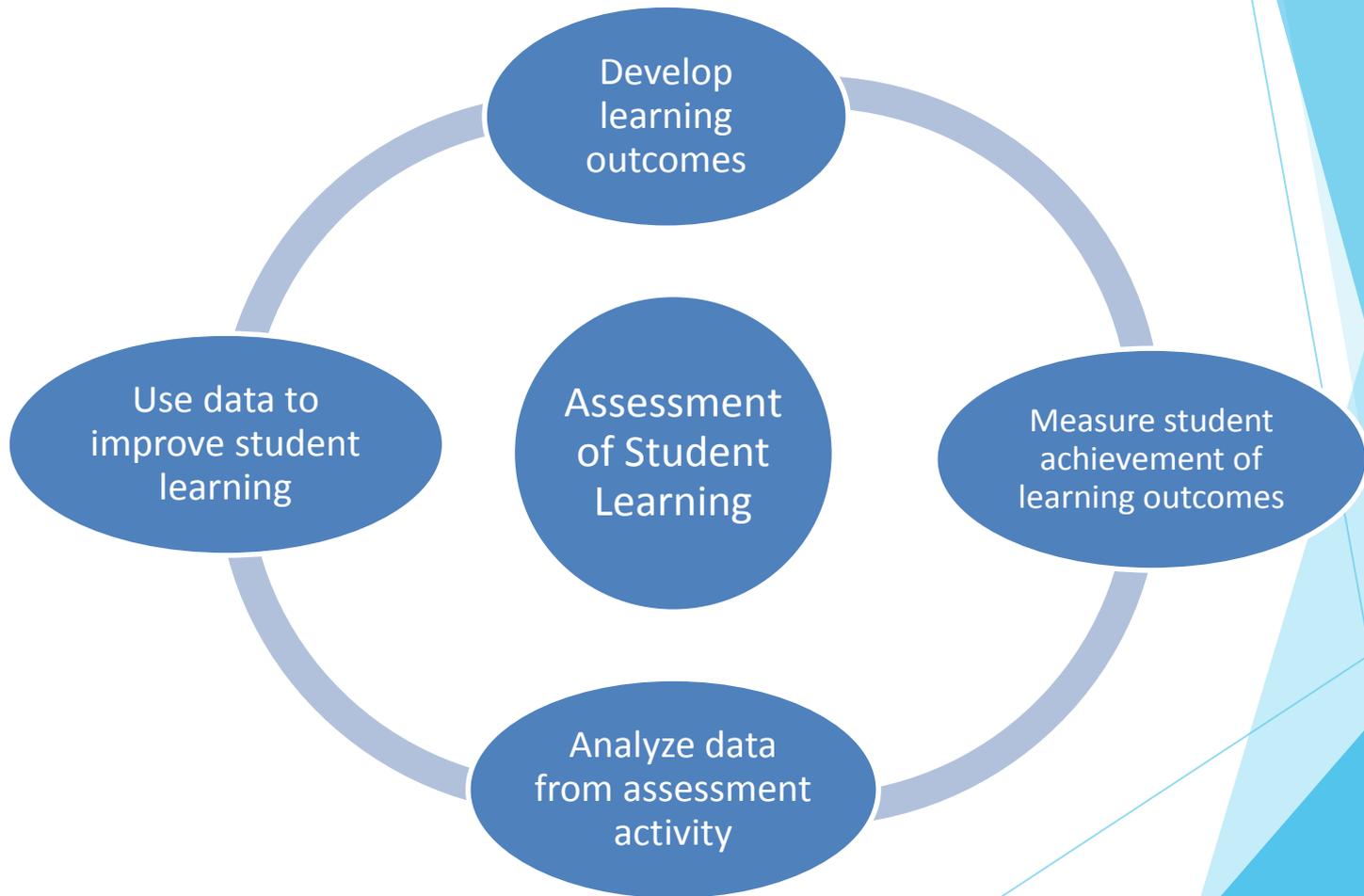
- ▶ A law school may also identify any additional learning outcomes pertinent to its program of legal education.

Measurable Outcomes: Performance Criteria

Learning Outcome 4: Graduates will communicate effectively and efficiently to individuals and groups.

Criterion 1: Students **will write** legal documents that are clear, concise, well-reasoned, organized, professional in tone, appropriate to the audience and the circumstances, and if appropriate, contain proper citation to authority.

Criterion 2: Students **will speak** in a clear, concise, well-reasoned, organized, and professional manner that is appropriate to the audience and the circumstances. . . .



Measurement

Standard 314. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

A law school shall utilize both **formative and summative assessment** methods in its curriculum **to measure** and improve student learning and provide meaningful feedback to students.

Standard 315. EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM, LEARNING OUTCOMES, AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

The dean and faculty of a law school shall conduct ongoing evaluation of the law school's academic program, learning outcomes, and **assessment methods**; and shall use the results of this evaluation to determine the degree of student attainment of competency in the learning outcomes and to make appropriate changes to improve the curriculum.

Measurements

- ▶ **Embedded Activities or Add-on Activities**
- ▶ **Formative or Summative**
- ▶ **Direct or Indirect**
- ▶ **Use the tools you have**
 - ▶ Think outside the box! Use the Curriculum Map!
 - ▶ LSSSEE, Career Services, Field Supervisors
- ▶ **Triangulate data**
- ▶ **Collect only the data you will use**

Implement Assessment Plan

- ▶ Chart Learning Outcomes
- ▶ Choose First Project
- ▶ Choose Assessment Tools/Measures
- ▶ Evaluate
- ▶ Report

It is a Cycle!

Creating and Charting your Assessment Plan

Whittier Law School Assessment Review Cycle Institutional Assessment

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 2011-2012 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Assess Goal 4</u> |
| 2012-2013 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Assess Goals 3 and 5 and begin Goals 1 and 2</u>• Action Goal 4 |
| 2013-2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Assess Goals 1 and 2</u>• Action Goal 4• Action Goals 3 and 5 |
| 2014-2015 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Assess Goals 6 and 7</u>• Action Goals 3 and 5• Action Goals 1 and 2• Re-Assess Goal 4 |
| 2015-2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action Goals 1 and 2• Action Goals 6 and 7• Re-Assess Goals 3 and 5 |
| 2016-2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action Goals 6 and 7• Re-Assess Goals 1 and 2 |
| 2017-2018 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re-Assess Goals 6 and 7 |

Curricular Mapping

- ▶ Curricular mapping is an easy way to analyze the alignment between curriculum and outcomes.
- ▶ It is a tool to help review your curriculum to ensure that students have an opportunity to achieve every goal.
- ▶ Can use a faculty survey and begin by looking at required courses.
- ▶ Organize the data into matrices.
- ▶ Entries can be simple check marks, or you can use categories to determine the level at which each outcome is being developed in the curriculum.
- ▶ Binder Tab 9: WLS Curriculum Mapping Survey and Results.

Different Models of Assessment Planning and Implementation Exist

- ▶ Do what works for your school,
your faculty, and your resources
- ▶ Stay updated on ABA's
interpretations and guidances

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