

Assessment of Academic Advising 101: An Overview

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Overview

Assessment is not a bad word! Do you hear the term *assessment* and cringe? Do red flags fly with the thought of data collection and tracking? Assessment is a tool used to demonstrate how academic advising impacts student success and is vital to moving advising programs forward on any higher education campus.

In this [Assessment of Advising Community](#)-sponsored webinar, NACADA [Assessment Institute Faculty](#) members will look at how to apply assessment tools to show the value of your contributions and academic advising practices to your administrators, funders, supporters, and students.

The presenters will define assessment, explain its value, and describe the Assessment Cycle, including what to do with the data once you've gone through a cycle.

Focusing on the various steps of the Assessment Cycle, the presenters will take you through how assessment works and introduce you to the NACADA Assessment Institute and Assessment Pocket Guides as additional tools to help you develop and hone your assessment skills.



THE ASSESSMENT CYCLE

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Outcomes

Participants will be able to:

- Value assessment as a tool to demonstrate how academic advising impacts student success.
- Define assessment in the context of academic advising
- Identify the components of the Assessment Cycle
- Understand how to use data to make change on their campuses

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What is Assessment?

Assessment processes provide an opportunity for institutions to ensure that **significant learning** is the core experience a student has when engaged in academic advising. Keeping student learning as the central focus is the foundation of creating a **culture of academic advising focused on continuous improvement**.

-Zarges, Adams, Higgins & Muhovich, 2018

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Assessment vs. Evaluation



Assessment is

- Did we accomplish what we set out to do?
- Did we achieve the intended outcomes?
- Do we know what we do well and where we can improve our services?

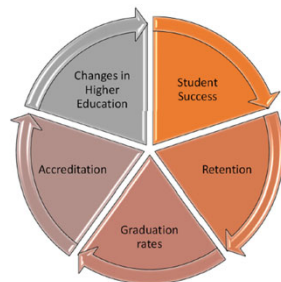


Assessment is not

- Student happiness
- Episodic
- Just about measurement
- Easy or quick
- Solely an administrative process
- Evaluation of individual performance

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The Value of Advising Assessment



Zarges, K., & Chandler, D. (2021) *Creating a Culture of Assessment* [PowerPoint slides].

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Stakeholder Buy-In



Involving stakeholders, both internal and external, from **all areas tied to the advising program** including administrators, faculty, staff, and students as well as campus partners (e.g., institutional research, alumni affairs, accessibility services, athletics, and parents), is necessary to create and sustain a **culture of continuous improvement**.

- Maki, 2017

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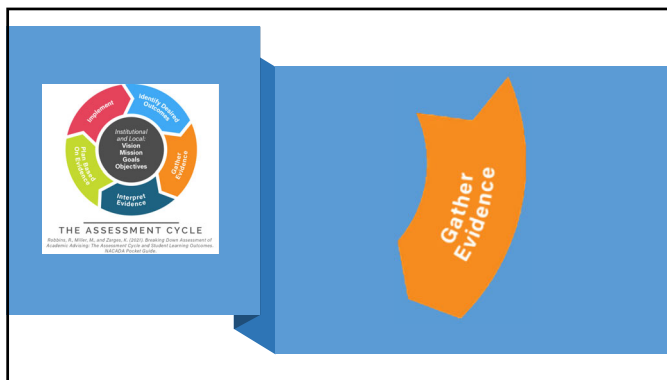
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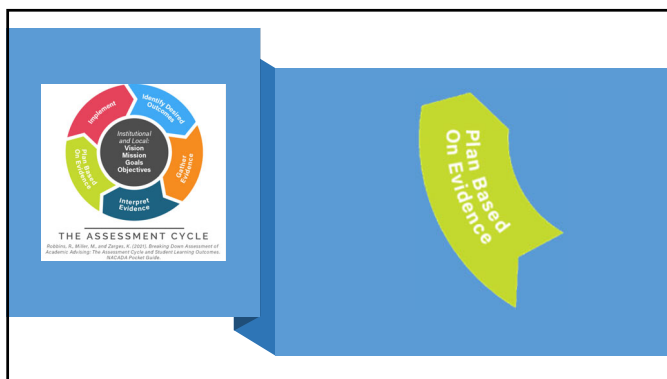
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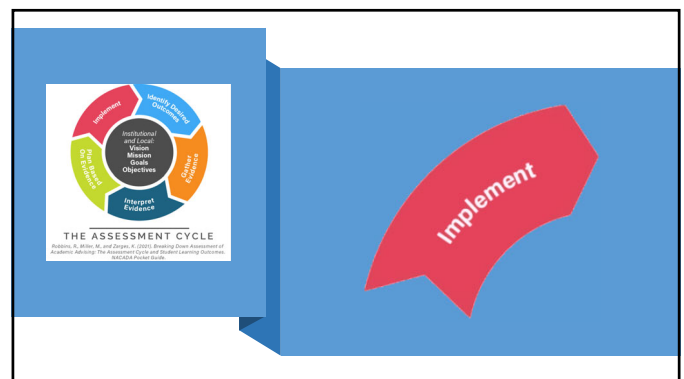
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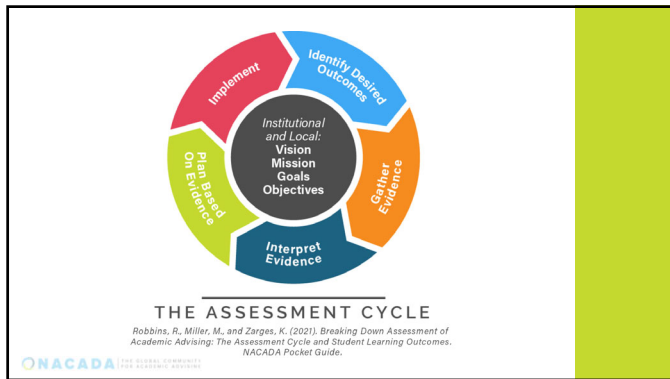
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Making Change With Your Annual Report

ANNUAL REPORT
2022 - 2023

ACADEMIC ADVISING CENTER

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Share your story aligned with the strategic priorities of your institutions

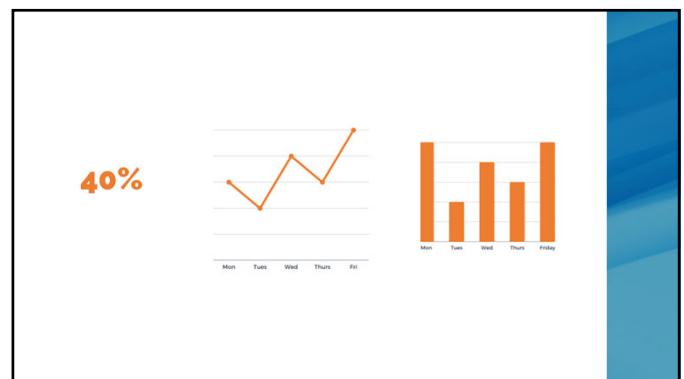
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Include data that shows impact

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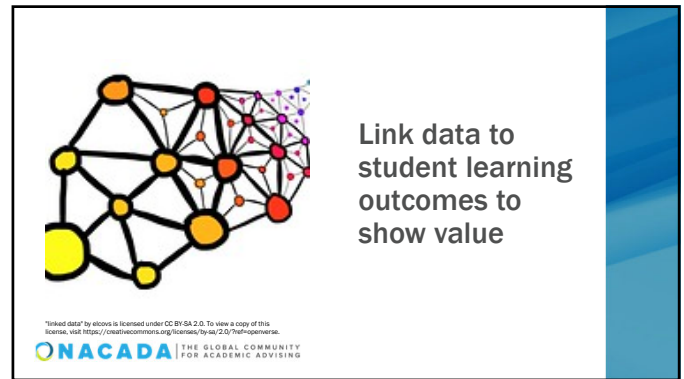
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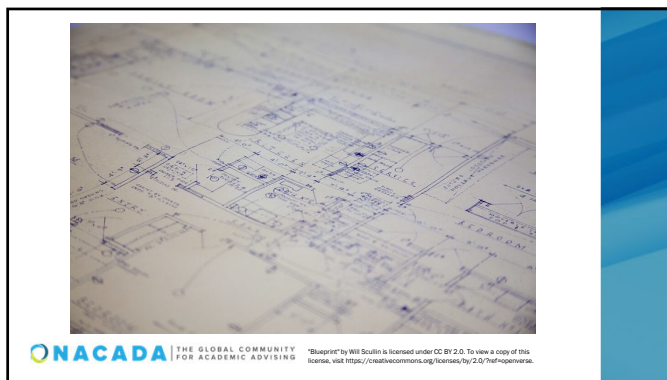
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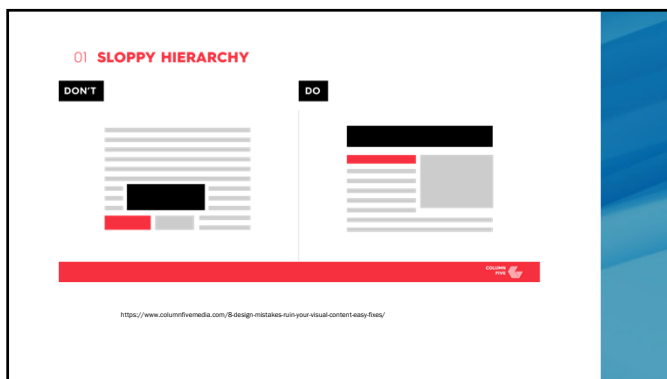
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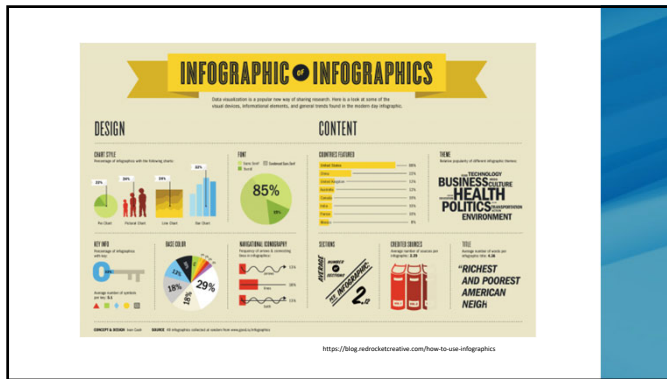
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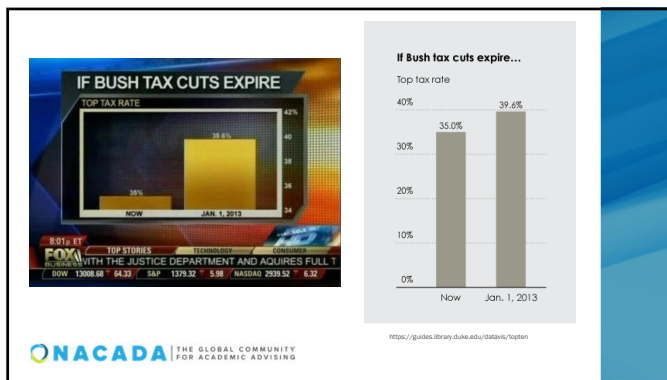
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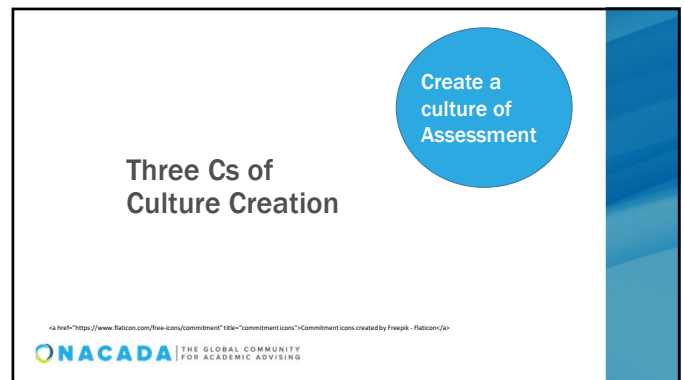
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Ad Hoc Reports

Verify the accuracy of student records, including the certification of documents and recommendations for student information system (the data and processes).

Description of the Measure: Automation of the application of credit in Degree Works will continue to improve, so that fewer manual adjustments are necessary (POO - direct quantitative). **Desired Level of Performance (Target):** Less than 3000 exceptions (substitutions) will be applied to student records in 2016, which would be a reduction of more than 35% from 2015.

Key/Responsible Personnel: Susan Vance, Colleen Ward & Lindsay Stewart

Findings for Reduced Exceptions in Degree Works

Summary of Findings: We were able to drastically reduce the amount of substitutions necessary in the Degree Works system. Through the end of November, the total number exceptions (or substitutions) was just under 2300, so the total for the year should be well under the goal of 3000. The improvements were a combination of clearer curriculum, work with the academic departments to clarify "faculty approved" areas, and overall system improvements.

Results: Acceptable Target Achievement: Exceeded

Recommendations: Continue to improve the system, and create greater clarity of degree requirements and the application of coursework. This could be accomplished by focusing on Liberal Studies coursework and an automation of the adjustment of required elective hours.

Substantiating Evidence:

- List of all substitutions in 2016 (through November) (Adobe Acrobat Document)
- Complete list of all substitutions and adjustments that were added to the audit system.

SUMMARY OF "EXCEPTIONS" PERFORMED IN DEGREEWORKS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2016

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT



REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS CIRCLED BY ACADEMIC ADVISING

Ad Hoc Reports

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

As the primary repository for academic program information, improvements in Degree Works lead directly to a better understanding of degree requirements and increased student satisfaction. Because it is the university resource for academic planning, it is important to continuously ensure Degree Works is operating as efficiently as possible.

Great progress has been made in increasing the efficiency and accuracy of Degree Works and presented to students, faculty and staff. "Exceptions" for manual adjustments to student advising were performed in 2015, and - due to improvements in the efficiency of the system - this number was reduced in 2016 to 2016, a 40.5% reduction. Overall, the system is quite efficient, though there are still some areas that may yield more accurate, automated results.

The 2015 report identified several key areas for improvement, and a review of those areas along with an update on the continuous improvement related to those areas is outlined below.

As evidenced here, (1) support fields, (2) "no match" equivalents and (3) graduate programs offer the most opportunity for growth in 2017.

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ACTION ITEMS FROM 2015 REPORT

Support Field Forms

2015 #1731 2016 #1159 (30.7% reduction)

Update:

Automated Support Field approval for **BBA Interdisciplinary Business/BS Business Administration** (new in 2016) and **BS Mathematics** (without master certification) was accomplished in 2016, with the help of the faculty in those programs. In 2015 there were 131 manual exceptions made for support field forms within those two programs; the need for such exceptions was entirely eliminated in 2016.

Recommendations were made for potential support courses to the **BS Computer Science** program (37 support field exceptions in 2015, 72 in 2016), but no formal approvals were received.

Progress was made in establishing automation for **BS Liberal Studies** (170 support field exceptions in 2015, 1012 in 2016), but a lack of clearly defined conventions in Banner makes this difficult, since Degree Works essentially must choose which disciplines a student is pursuing based on their coursework. The department chair is aware of this need, and is planning to revise the program curriculum very soon.

Although not requiring a support field, per se, **BBA Business Management** applies a combination of technical work experience and academic courses to fulfill a "block" requirement (343 exceptions in 2015, 139 in 2016). The application of academic credit in this requirement could be automated.

General Education Core 2015 #1676 2016 #1291 (56.7%)

Update:

Academic Advising worked with Admissions to add general education core "with/without" to transfer coursework in Banner, so that specific Foundational Component Areas from other Texas institutions might retain the designation assigned at that institution. Further progress could be made by improving the accuracy of articulation of courses often recorded as "no-match" (see below for more information).

Graduate Course Use ("Double-Dipping") 2015 #1626 2016 #1010 (100%)

Update:

The dual use of a course was a real issue in 2015, but a mix-up of the presentation of the information completely eliminated the need for such manual adjustments. Matters have been included in the major requirement system for General Studies and Honors (the only two programs requiring a minor), and "double-dipping" is permitted for all other majors. Not only has this aided in clarifying degree advice, but it has also greatly reduced the number of students requiring regarding the duplicate use of courses for major and (optional) minor requirements.

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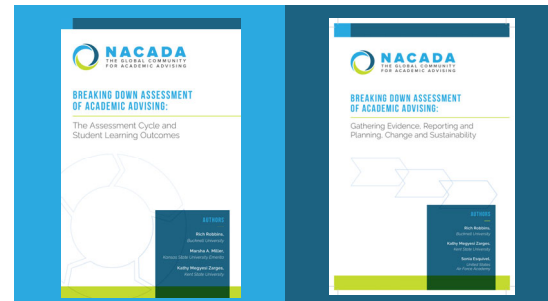
Resources to Learn More

Annual NACADA Assessment Institute

Why you should attend:

- Develop a vision for advising on your campus
- Understand national resources that offer student feedback & information about advising
- Learn how to identify resources & allies in the areas of institutional Research & Institutional Planning
- Learn to connect your plan to the institutional strategic planning process
- Learn how to communicate this information to campus colleagues to generate collaboration & understanding
- Use benchmarking to document the success of your plan

Resources to Learn More



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