

Mentors in Measurement: Building Institutional Capacity to Conduct Assessment

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2015 AIR Annual Conference *
Denver, Colorado
May 26-29

Agenda for the Morning

- Introductions and Learning Outcomes
- Purpose of and Need for Assessment in IR
- Requisite Skills for Assessment
- Strategies for Teaching Assessment
- Time to Develop Training Session
- Small Group Activity/Feedback
- Q & A

Learning Outcomes

- ▶ Be able to identify at least two new pedagogical strategies for teaching assessment in a classroom or workshop setting.
- ▶ Create an outline or plan for least one course session or workshop related to assessment.
- ▶ Be able to describe challenges associated with teaching assessment in a classroom or workshop setting and explain approaches for addressing these challenges.
- ▶ Be able to identify resources needed to develop effective assessment courses/workshops.

Who Are We?

Who Are You?

- Name, Institution, Role
- What are you seeking to improve in relation to assessment?

Purpose and Need for Assessment in IR

- ▶ For the students - Understand contributions to student learning
- ▶ For ourselves - Promote continuous improvement
- ▶ For the university - Increase focus on data-driven decision making

Moment of Reflection (worksheet)

- ▶ What type of sessions or workshops work well on your campus?
- ▶ What kind of session are you hoping to create? What areas are you going to focus on? Why now?

Skills Needed to be Effective in Assessment

- ▶ Basic Knowledge of Assessment
 - ▶ Ability to develop a clear purpose.
 - ▶ Ability to develop measurable learning outcomes.
 - ▶ Ability to articulate a feasible and consistent plan and skills to carry out the plan.
- ▶ Interpersonal Skills:
 - ▶ Ability to interact effectively with multiple stakeholders.
 - ▶ Ability to negotiate among multiple demands, politics.
 - ▶ Ability to accept critique.
 - ▶ The right balance of confidence and collaboration.
 - ▶ Ability to seek out assistance when needed.
- ▶ Written/Visual Communications Skills:
 - ▶ Ability to create reports for appropriate audiences.
 - ▶ Ability to explain assessment process and results professionally.

Skills Needed to be Effective in Assessment

- ▶ Research Skills:
 - ▶ Basic competency in conducting and understanding quantitative or qualitative methods.
- ▶ Understanding of Institutional Context, Culture, and Politics
 - ▶ Who are the decision makers?
 - ▶ Who are the Allies? Advocates? Obstacles?
 - ▶ Political issues?
 - ▶ How do decisions get made?
 - ▶ What is the campus support for assessment?

Strategy 1: How to quickly assess individuals' interest/knowledge of assessment

▶ Why is this important?

▶ You need to determine your:

▶ Advocates

▶ Allies

▶ Pains in the Asses

▶ Pains in the Assessment Process

Strategy 1: How to quickly assess individuals' interest/knowledge of assessment

▶ Why is this important?

- ▶ Assess level of expertise
- ▶ Assess reason for doing assessment
- ▶ Get a sense of interpersonal and political issues

Assessing Your Assessment Status

If you were to choose a song that best describes assessment activity in your department, which song would you choose?

Call Me Irresponsible

You're right – not the most reliable.

I just didn't know where to start.

No one has really asked for the information.

I know, excuses, excuses....

But I do want to know what students learn and want to do assessment....



We have surveyed students.

We handed out evaluation forms.

Only to get some data.

Oh, we have so much data...

We've written learning outcomes. **But We Still Haven't Found What We're Looking**

We've done **For.** focus groups...

Transcribed interviews, and sometimes coded them too.

And we analyzed some data.

But, we're not really sure what it all means.



This doesn't sound good.

Assessment makes me want to "Gag" a.

We tried it, not going so well 

There's emotion there, just not sure it's the healthy kind...

Bad Romance

Pressure

OMG! Budget cuts, public scrutiny,
media reports saying we are not
doing our job.



Pressure

We needed the
assessment data
yesterday.

We need to justify our existence!

Pressure

PRESSURE

Yahoo!!!



Celebrate Good Times

Life is wonderful!

**We've done assessment
and found remarkable
things!**

**We've linked our assessments
to learning outcomes!**

**We've made improvements in
areas that weren't going so
well.**

**We deserve to
celebrate!**

Strategy 1: Stand if this phrase describes you:

- ▶ Has participated in an assessment process.
- ▶ Has been a part of a formal assessment process.
- ▶ Has participated in accreditation.
- ▶ Is a faculty member
- ▶ Works in student affairs
- ▶ Work in an administrative area
- ▶ Is interested in student learning
- ▶ Thinks assessment is enjoyable
- ▶ Assessment is just an add-on to another busy schedule
- ▶ Has experience in qualitative research.
- ▶ Has experience in quantitative research
- ▶ Is a perfectionist.

Various ways to gauge experience:

- ▶ Stand up
- ▶ Continuum
- ▶ Use of technology: “Clickers”, Smart Phones
- ▶ Create wordles
- ▶ Small groups and discussions
- ▶ Brief survey before the meeting
 - ▶ Develop activities based on results.

Strategy 2: Developing strong learning outcomes.

- ▶ Examples from Student Affairs and Academic Affairs
- ▶ Different needs, structures, motivators, and barriers
- ▶ Focus on practicing, modeling, and adaptable strategies

“We really don’t know all of this assessment lingo.”

“Our faculty/staff can’t agree on anything, so I doubt we could have a constructive conversation about learning outcomes.”

“We really don’t know all of this assessment lingo.”

- ▶ Develop a shared language around outcomes
- ▶ Provide templates and frameworks
- ▶ Define what success looks like

“We really don’t know all of this assessment lingo.”

▶ **Develop a shared language around outcomes**

- ▶ Learning outcomes - Describe what a student will **know** (knowledge), **be able to do** (skill), and/or **value or appreciate** (disposition) as a result of a learning experience, **NOT** what you are doing for the student

“We really don’t know all of this assessment lingo.”

▶ **Provide templates and frameworks**

Written in the form:

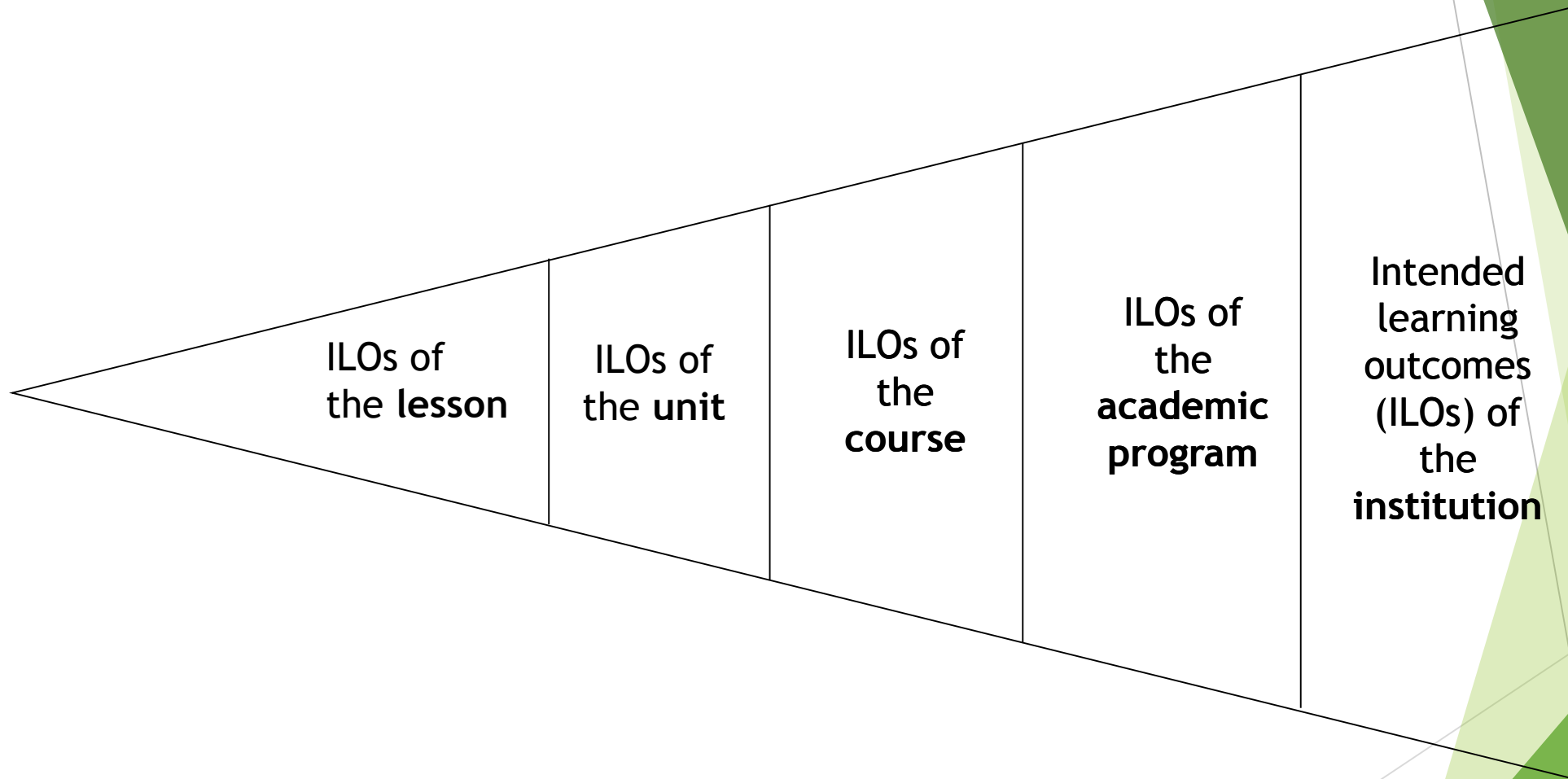
Students can/will be able to (action verb) [specific action/skill they will be able to do]

Action verbs such as demonstrate, articulate, illustrate, conduct, define, describe, apply, compose, integrate, convince, create, plan, compare, and summarize

Active verbs developed based on Bloom's Taxonomy

Knowledge	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
define identify describe label list name state match recognize select examine locate memorize quote recall reproduce tabulate tell copy discover duplicate enumerate	explain describe interpret paraphrase summarize classify compare differentiate discuss distinguish extend predict associate contrast convert demonstrate estimate express Identify indicate Infer relate	solve apply illustrate modify use calculate change choose demonstrate discover experiment relate show sketch complete construct dramatize interpret Manipulate Paint Prepare produce	analyze compare classify contrast distinguish infer separate explain select categorize connect differentiate discriminate divide order point out prioritize subdivide survey advertise appraise Break down	reframe criticize evaluate order appraise judge support compare decide discriminate recommend summarize assess choose convince defend estimate find errors grade measure predict rank	design compose create plan combine formulate invent hypothesize substitute write compile construct develop generalize integrate modify organize prepare produce rearrange rewrite role-play

Design Backward

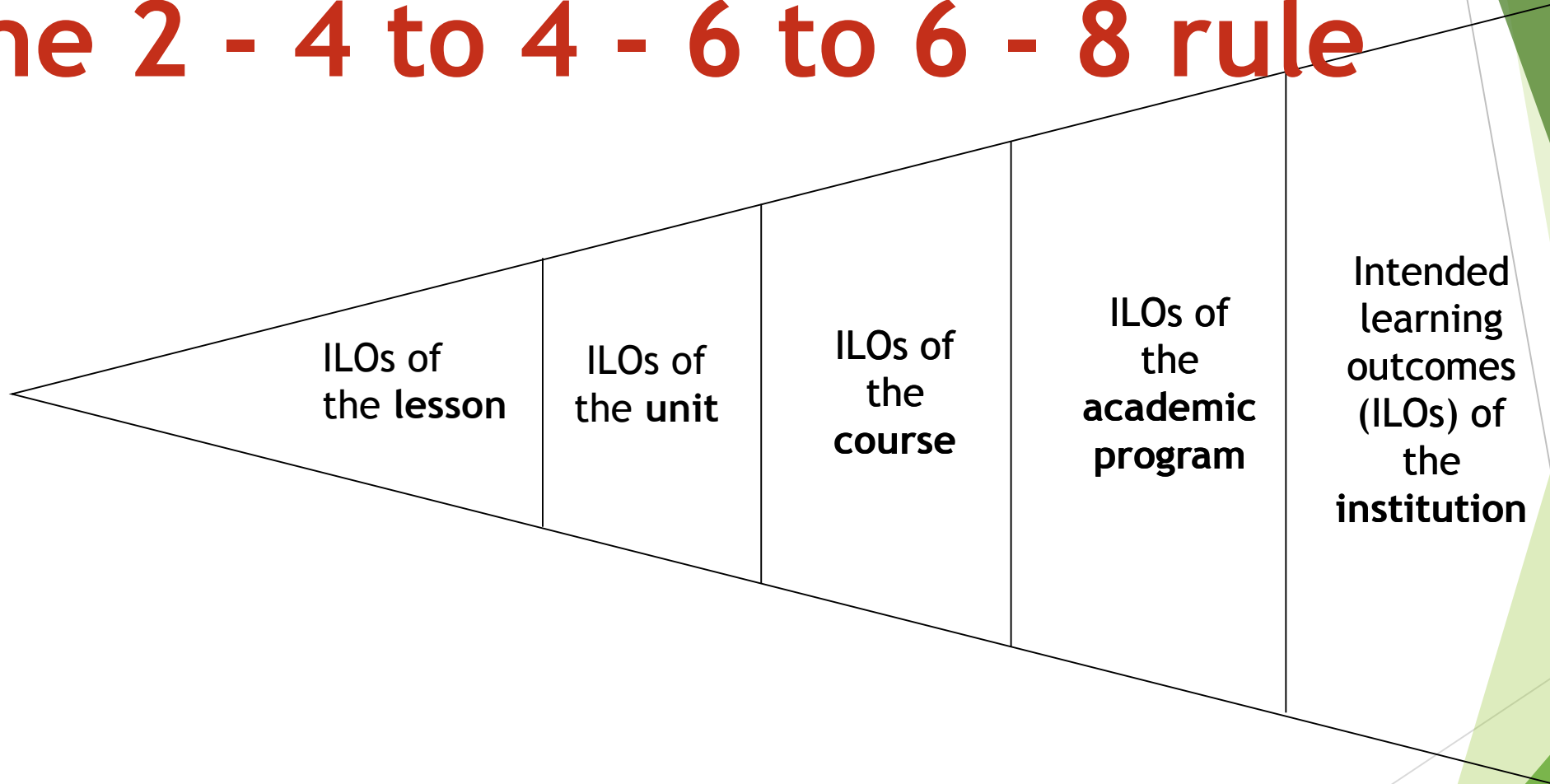


Deliver Forward

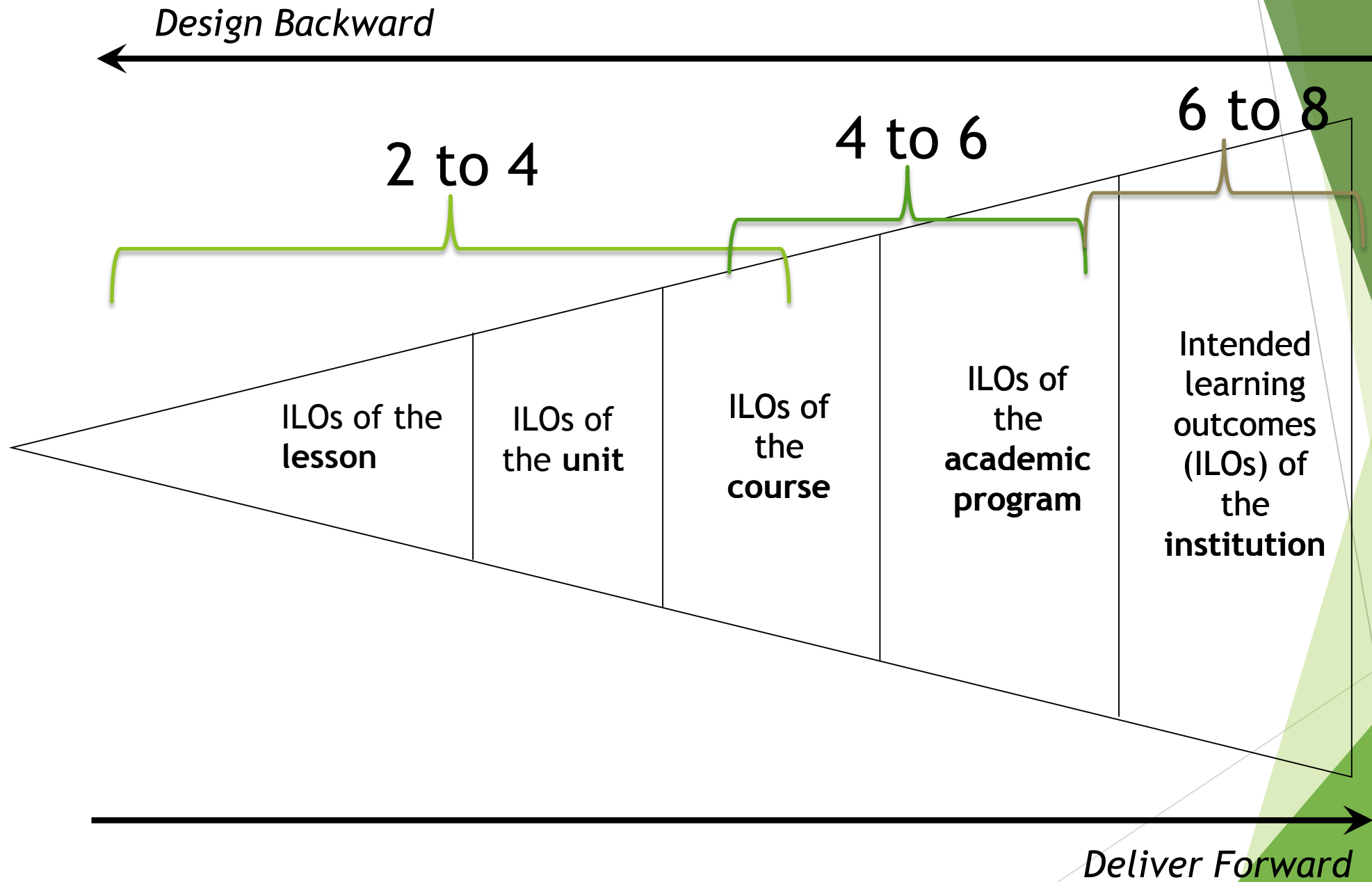
Design Backward



The 2 - 4 to 4 - 6 to 6 - 8 rule



Deliver Forward



“We really don’t know all of this assessment lingo.”

► **Define what success looks like**

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)			
	Beginning	Developing	Proficient
Aligned with Mission, Vision, Values, or Goals?	__ Outcomes are not aligned with mission, vision, values, or goals.	__ Outcomes are somewhat aligned with mission, vision, values, or goals.	__ Outcomes are consistently and clearly aligned with mission, vision, values, or goals.
Learning Outcome Language & Measurable/Observable	__ Outcomes are not written in learning outcome language and are not measurable / observable.	__ Outcomes are mostly written in learning outcome language and are somewhat measurable / observable.	__ Outcomes are written in learning outcome language and are measurable / observable.
Clarity	Outcomes do not clearly define intended student learning in these areas: __ knowledge __ skills/abilities __ dispositions	Outcomes somewhat clearly define intended student learning in these areas: __ knowledge __ skills/abilities __ dispositions	Outcomes clearly define intended student learning in these areas: __ knowledge __ skills/abilities __ dispositions
Utility	__ Scope and detail of outcomes do not clearly reflect what is at the core of the program.	__ Scope and detail of outcomes somewhat reflect what is at the core of the program.	__ Scope and detail of outcomes clearly reflect what is at the core of the program.

“Our faculty/staff can’t agree on anything, so I doubt we could have a constructive conversation about learning outcomes.”

▶ Provide strategies that can be adapted



Imagine it's graduation day . . .

You are watching your students complete their degrees. As they cross the stage to accept their diplomas, what characteristics would you like them to possess?

(knowledge, skills, values/attitudes)

Adapt the Exercise to Speak to your Audience

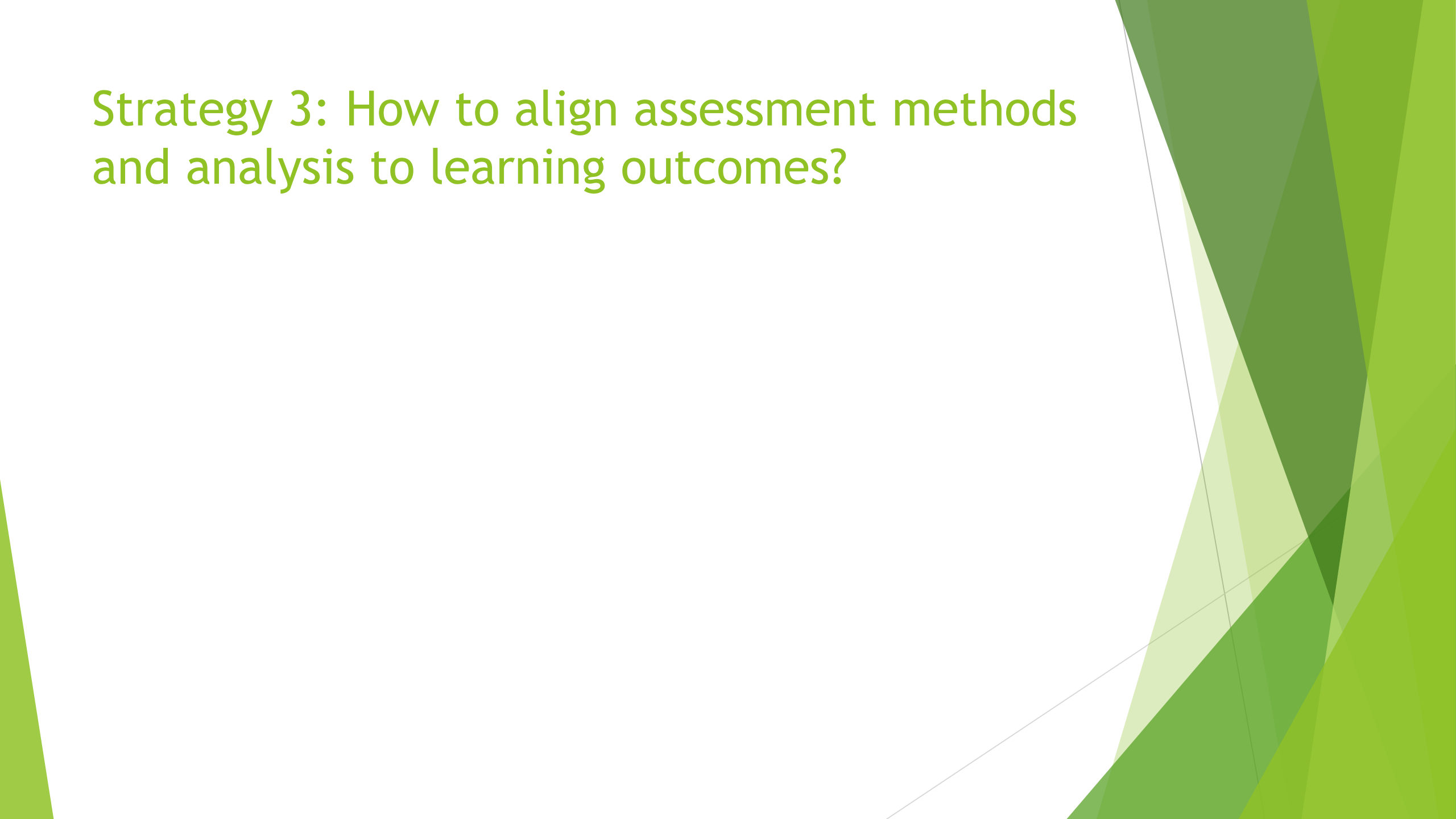
Fast forward 5 years. . . your program has been selected #1 in the nation for its impact on students and their learning. What knowledge, skills, and dispositions are your students able to demonstrate that set it apart from the rest?

You are meeting with the top employer for graduates in your field. It is a **highly** competitive organization and you are trying to convince them to begin recruiting at your college or university. Explain to this employer the knowledge, skills, and values that your students have that make them worthy of consideration.

“Our faculty/staff can’t agree on anything, so I doubt we could have a constructive conversation about learning outcomes.”

- ▶ Ask for homework to be completed
- ▶ Use worksheets to help them plan the process

Strategy 3: How to align assessment methods and analysis to learning outcomes?



Refining Learning Outcomes - Using Backward Design

Goals



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graph TD; A[Goals] --> B[Enduring Understandings]; B --> C[Key Skills and Knowledge]; C --> D[Evidence]; D --> E[Plan Learning Experience];
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The diagram illustrates the backward design process through five sequential steps, each in a green box with a downward arrow connecting to the next. The steps are: Goals, Enduring Understandings, Key Skills and Knowledge, Evidence, and Plan Learning Experience. The boxes are arranged in a descending staircase pattern from top-left to bottom-right.

Enduring Understandings

Key Skills and Knowledge

Evidence

Plan Learning Experience

Gaining Clarity on Outcomes

Worth being familiar with

- Nonessential terminology (IQR)

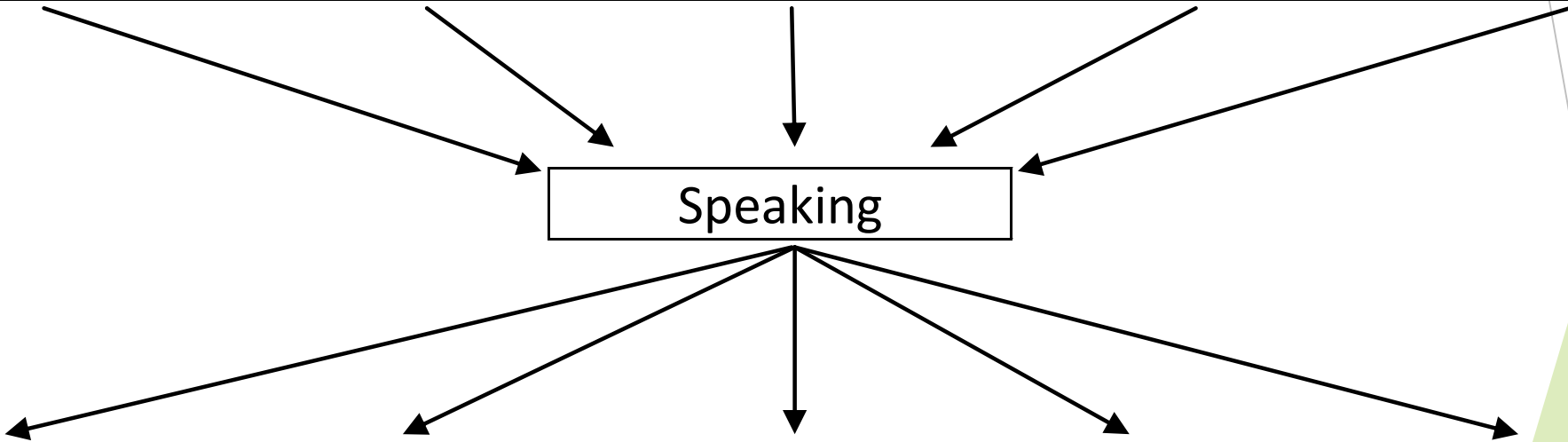
Important to know and do

- Central tendency
- Data displays
- Various techniques

Big Ideas/
Understandings/
Core Tasks

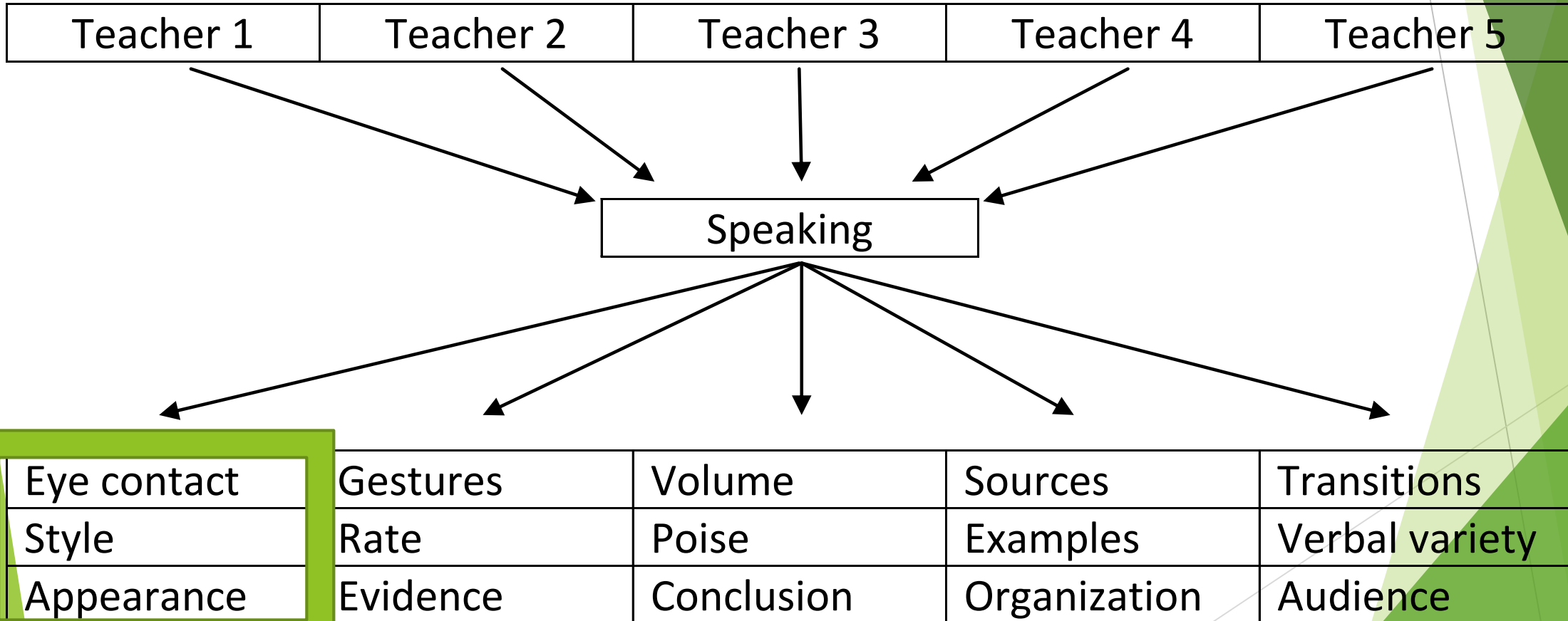
- Degrees of confidence, valid model, reliable data
- Analysis reveals patterns
- Critique analyses and data

Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4	Teacher 5
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Eye contact	Gestures	Volume	Sources	Transitions
Style	Rate	Poise	Examples	Verbal variety
Appearance	Evidence	Conclusion	Organization	Audience

Can our students deliver an effective public speech?



Helpful Strategies

- ▶ Clearly define what students are expected to learn
- ▶ Identify markers that allow students (and us) to know they are achieving the outcome
- ▶ Focus on student learning rather than the learning activity

Types of Evidence

- ▶ Reports
- ▶ Case studies
- ▶ Role-plays/debates
- ▶ Quizzes/exams
- ▶ Threaded discussions
- ▶ Comparative essays
- ▶ Position papers
- ▶ Report on guest lecture
- ▶ Group reports
- ▶ Final projects
- ▶ Poster presentations
- ▶ Experiential and service learning
- ▶ Journals
- ▶ Internship report

Strategy 4: How to design an assessment plan.

- Critical vs Strategic components
 - Critical = Components necessary for “any” assessment plan to be successful
 - Strategic = Components necessary for the assessment plan to reflect the “unique” environment at your institution
- Case Study “DePaul University”



Critical components

- ▶ Develop the outcome
 - ▶ Type of outcome
 - ▶ Appropriate method
- ▶ Communicate results
 - ▶ Who is your audience/stakeholders
 - ▶ What , SPECIFICALLY, do you want EACH to do and/or know
- ▶ Make connections
 - ▶ Institutional mission and outcomes
 - ▶ Accreditation

Strategic Components

- ▶ Organizational climate
 - ▶ Commitment
 - ▶ Politics
 - ▶ Resources
- ▶ Organizational capacity
 - ▶ Skill level
 - ▶ Commitment
 - ▶ Connection
- ▶ Organizational communication
 - ▶ Internal or External Audience
 - ▶ What tactics will you use to share your results
 - ▶ Timeliness

Case Study: DePaul University

Developing the outcome

1. What specific learning outcomes do you plan to assess? **(C)**
2. What are specific programs, workshops, or services in your department that directly influence this outcome? **(C)**
3. What specific decision in your department (or the division) will this project influence?
(If this project will help provide a solution to a problem, what is the problem?) **(S)**
4. How will this project help your department and the division better understand contributions to student learning? **(C & S)**

(C) = Critical

(S) = Strategic

Case Study: DePaul University

Methodology

1. The general audience for your project should be students, but who specifically will you assess? **(C & S)**
2. What ideas do you have for methods you will use to measure learning? **(C)**
3. What type of assistance do you anticipate needing for this project? **(S)**
4. Who are potential partners for this project? **(S)**

Case Study: DePaul University

Results

1. What do you expect to learn as a result of this assessment project? **(C)**
2. Who are the stakeholders who should see your results? **(C &S)**
3. *How will you share results with students?* **(C)**
4. What specific changes do you anticipate will occur based on this project? **(S)**

Case Study: DePaul University

What is your tentative project schedule? (C)

Sample

Week of . . .

November 1 - Confirm outcomes to be assessed and begin developing assessment methods

November 15 - Review relevant research and literature related to your project

November 21 - Finalize methods begin to create assessment tool

December 1 - Confirm audience and test assessment tool

January 1 - Begin assessing students

January 7 - If survey: 1st reminder to survey audience

January 14 - If survey: 2nd and final reminder to survey audience

January 21 - Stop collecting assessment data and begin data analysis

February 15 - Begin writing assessment report

February 28 - Submit report

March - Share results with stakeholders

Individual Time to Develop Training Session



Small Group: Feedback

The slide features a white background with the title 'Small Group: Feedback' in a green, sans-serif font. On the right side, there is a decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, semi-transparent green triangles and polygons in various shades of green, creating a modern, abstract design.

Next Steps



Thank you!

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