



**Session 3:**  
**12:00pm-12:50pm**

**Student Learning Assessment**

# Session Facilitators

Rajade M. Berry-James, PhD



Associate Professor  
North Carolina State University  
School of Public and International Affairs  
Campus Box 8102  
Raleigh, NC 27695-8102  
Email: [rmberryj@ncsu.edu](mailto:rmberryj@ncsu.edu)  
Phone: 330-519-7519

Calvin C. Johnson, PhD



Visiting Professor  
Bowie State University  
Management, Marketing and Public Administration  
14000 Jericho Park Road  
Bowie, MD 20715-9465  
Email: [ccjohnson@bowiestate.edu](mailto:ccjohnson@bowiestate.edu)  
Phone: 301-455-2047

# Facilitators' Bios

## RaJade M. Berry-James, PhD

- NC State University, School of Public and International Affairs
- Associate Professor
  - MPA Capstone, Social Equity, Cultural Competence, Program Evaluation
- NASPAA Executive Council
- NAPA Fellow
- NASPAA Committee on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)
- Chair of COPRA, NASPAA

## Calvin C. Johnson, PhD

- Visiting Professor, Bowie State University
  - Public Policy Analysis, Evaluation Research
- Deputy Assistant Secretary, Research, Evaluation and Monitoring (HUD)
- University of Pennsylvania
- Executive Office of the Mayor, District of Columbia
- The Urban Institute
- PhD, University of MD

# Overview

- Discuss sustainable assessment approaches.
- Discuss rationale, basic assumptions and basis of judgment for Standard 5.1.
- Examine assessment cycle that links program mission and goals to objectives and student learning competencies.

Standard 7 Matching  
Communications with Mission

Standard 6 Matching Resources  
with Mission

Standard 5 Matching Operations with  
Mission: Student Learning

Standard 4 Matching Operations  
with Mission: Serving Students

Standard 3 Matching Operations with  
Mission: Faculty Performance

Standard 2  
Matching Governance with Mission

Standard 1  
Managing the Program Strategically

# Visual Roadmap



# Student Learning Assessment

- Defined as:
  - A **written plan** which includes the frequency and strategies underlining the assessment of student learning outcomes as well as the program's approach to programmatic improvement
  - The assessment plan details direct (and indirect, as needed) measures, the use of rubrics for evaluation, faculty and stakeholder involvement, analysis procedures, and how analysis is used for overall program improvement.

## Standard 5.1 | Universal Required Competencies

As the basis for its curriculum, the Program will adopt a set of required competencies determined by its mission and public service values. The required competencies will include five domains, the ability:

- to lead and manage in the public interest;
- to participate in and contribute to the public policy process
- to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make evidence-informed decisions in a complex and dynamic environment;
- to articulate, apply, and advance a public service perspective;
- to communicate and interact productively and in culturally responsive ways with a diverse and changing workforce and society at large.

# Standard 5 | Rationale

- Graduates should be able to:
  - apply their knowledge, understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments, and within broader or multidisciplinary contexts related to public nonprofit affairs, administration, and policy.
  - identify, collect, analyze and use qualitative and quantitative data to inform decision making that best serves the well-being of the public;
  - actively engage others to learn, understand, and respect different cultures and contexts;
  - make decisions that address and adapt to the needs, interests, and norms of different cultural groups.
  - recognize, adapt to, and make decisions in changing and increasingly complex environments.
  - reflect upon the social and ethical responsibilities and the equity implications linked to the application of their knowledge and judgments.
- An accredited program should implement and be accountable for delivering its distinctive mission through the course of study it offers and through the learning outcomes it expects its graduates to attain. While all accredited degree programs must meet these standards, NASPAA recognizes that programs may have different missions with varying emphases.
- The curriculum should demonstrate consistency and coherence in meeting the program's mission. The program being reviewed should demonstrate how its curricular content matches the emphasis of its overall mission and public service values.

## Standard 5 | Basic Assumption

- NASPAA intends the accreditation process to be developmental that is to advance the public esteem for all the programs that it accredits as well as to improve the education effectiveness for each degree program.
- The program that provides accurate information on student learning and student attainment of required competencies will not be held to an ideal standard of perfection.
- The program will be expected to demonstrate that it understands the competencies expected of graduates, that it has instituted teaching and learning methods to ensure that students attain these competencies, and, where evidence of student learning does not meet program expectation, that action has been taken to improve performance.
- **The overall assumption is that students will graduate from the program with the necessary competencies to embody the program's mission statement and public service values.**

## Standard 5 | Basis of Judgment

- It is expected that all students in a NASPAA-accredited degree program will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills on each of the five universal required competencies.
- The program shows that it requires the five universal competencies of public and nonprofit affairs, policy and administration and links them to the program mission.
- The program defines each of the required competencies in terms of at least one student learning outcome (but there may be more than one) and demonstrates student achievement of those competencies at the program-level.
- The emphasis that a particular program places on each of these competencies is consistent with its mission.
- An accredited program need not assess all competencies every year or cohort, but rather at a frequency appropriate for its mission and goals.
- However, assessing each competency only once during a seven year accreditation cycle would not likely be sufficient for conformance in most programs.

# One Assessment Cycle

## Universal Required Competencies: One Assessment Cycle

For the self-study narrative, the program should describe, for one of the required universal competencies, one complete cycle of assessment of student learning. That is, briefly describe 1) how the competency was defined in terms of student learning outcomes; 2) the type of evidence of student learning that was collected by the program for that competency, 3) how the evidence was analyzed, and 4) how the results were used for program improvement. *Note that while only one universal required competency cycle of assessment is discussed in the self-study narrative, COPRA expects the program to discuss with the Site Visit Team progress on all universal competencies, subject to implementation expectations in COPRA's official policy statements.*

**1. Definition of student learning outcome(s) for the competency being assessed:**

**2. Evidence of learning that was gathered:**

**3. How evidence of learning was analyzed:**

**4. How the evidence was used for program change(s) or the basis for determining that no change was needed:**

# Assessment Planning

Keys to Assessment Planning	Important Questions
Assessment Methods	By what measure(s) will you know that students are meeting programmatic learning objectives?
	From whom, and at what points, will you gather data?
	How will you collect the assessment information?
Assessment Processes	When will you conduct the assessment?
	Who will be responsible for each component?
	What is the overall timeline for the assessment plan?
	How will your data be used to evaluate the program?
<p>Adapted from University of Massachusetts - Amherst. (n.d.) Program-Based Review and Assessment: Tools and Techniques for Program Improvement. Office of Academic Planning and Assessment. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.umass.edu/oapa/sites/default/files/pdf/handbooks/program_assessment_handbook.pdf">https://www.umass.edu/oapa/sites/default/files/pdf/handbooks/program_assessment_handbook.pdf</a></p>	



# Assessment | Linking Objectives to Data Sources

**Assessment Matrix: Linking Objectives to Data Gathering Tools**

<b>Key</b> I = Indirect Methods D = Direct Methods				
Objectives	Enrollment Trends (OIR)	Senior Survey (OAPA)	Capstone Assignment	Focus Groups with Students
Apply scientific method			D	I
Work as professional in field		I	D	

Source: University of Mass- Amherst. (n.d.) Program-Based Review and Assessment: Tools and Techniques for Program Improvement, [https://www.umass.edu/oapa/sites/default/files/pdf/handbooks/program\\_assessment\\_handbook.pdf](https://www.umass.edu/oapa/sites/default/files/pdf/handbooks/program_assessment_handbook.pdf)

# Assessment | Student Learning, Attitudes, Perceptions, and Departmental Processes

## What can you assess?

A key part of deciding on what assessment methods to use is knowing what you want to assess. In general, you will look at assessing student learning, student attitudes and perceptions, and/or department processes. The following offers examples for each category.

<b><i>Student Learning</i></b>	Knowledge of the discipline (What do students know?) Skills (What can students do?) Values (What do students care about?)		
<b><i>Student Attitudes and Perceptions about:</i></b>	Advising Campus facilities Course scheduling Preparation for work or graduate school	Curriculum Mentoring Teaching	Campus climate Co-curricular activities Student services
<b><i>Departmental Processes. Are students served efficiently and effectively when they need services such as:</i></b>	Advising Library assistance Computer assistance New student orientations	Counseling Ombudsman services Financial Aid Transcripts	Graduation checks Tutoring Health care

*adapted from California State University, Bakersfield, PACT Outcomes Assessment Handbook (1999).*

Source: University of Mass- Amherst. (n.d.) Program-Based Review and Assessment: Tools and Techniques for Program Improvement, [https://www.umass.edu/oapa/sites/default/files/pdf/handbooks/program\\_assessment\\_handbook.pdf](https://www.umass.edu/oapa/sites/default/files/pdf/handbooks/program_assessment_handbook.pdf)

## Examples of Assessment Approaches Available

Data	Assessment Tool	Who or What is Analyzed?	What Can Be Assessed?
Self-reports	classroom assessment focus groups interviews phone surveys/interviews reflective essays surveys (home-grown or standardized)	alumni employers enrolled students faculty graduating students entering students off-campus supervisors parents staff	<i>Perceptions about:</i> campus climate perceived learning evaluate processes value-added educational outcomes attitudes values
Achievement Tests	test score analysis content analysis scoring rubrics	competitions embedded questions on exams locally developed exams oral thesis defenses oral exams, recitals standardized tests	mastery and knowledge of principles, skills value-added
Observations	case studies observations	campus events (sports, theater) classes club meetings faculty offices fieldwork sites student services offices	attitudes campus climate interactions processes services student involvement student learning
Student Academic Work	content analysis scoring rubrics	capstone course products homework papers portfolios presentations, performances publications research reports term papers, theses videntanes	mastery and knowledge of principles, skills values processes value-added
Campus Documents	course x program objectives matrix course assignment x program objectives matrix content analysis analysis of forms	administrative units departments programs student services offices course syllabi, etc. student transcripts	accuracy cohesion/consistency efficiency structure for promoting objectives processes

**Direct Measures**

# Best Practices



- **Multiple measures** – direct and indirect.
- **Rubrics** or other assessment tools used.
- **Validity:** Faculty (or other stakeholders) who have not taught the course assess student work.
- **Reliability:** Two or more faculty reviewing common work.
- **Achievement of performance targets:** If your program finds that students are not meeting targets, the temptation is to change the targets or the process rather than reflecting on what substantive changes should be made to curriculum, pedagogy, or the like, based on the evidence you found.
- **Use results:** Inform program enhancement decisions based on the evidence you found.

# Before you leave ...

- Do you understand how to create a sustainable assessment strategy for your graduate degree program?
- Is your assessment plan realistic, given your program realities? Your program's self-study timeframe?
- Does your assessment strategy include the collection of direct measures as well as indirect measures?
- Is your assessment plan sustainable, with a SMART Program Goals and Objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) identified?
- Do your program resources support your assessment processes? Have you identified an assessment committee? Did you charge the committee?
- Are you following best practices in student learning assessment?

# Peer Examples | Assessment Plans

- [Eastern Kentucky University](#)
- [Georgia State University](#)
- [Georgia Southern University](#)
- [Indiana University, Bloomington](#)
- [Northeastern University](#)
- [The KDI School of Public Policy and Management \(Assessment Visual\)](#)
- [San Francisco State University](#)
- [Syracuse University](#)
- [The University of Georgia](#)
- [University of Minnesota](#)
- [University of North Texas](#)
- [The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#)
- [West Chester University](#)
- [Adapted Assessment Plan Self-Evaluation Tool](#)
- [Sample Assessment Plan Template](#)

Source: NASPAA Peer Assessment Plans, <https://www.naspaa.org/accreditation/standards-and-guidance/peer-examples>

# Thank You!

## After Lunch, Join Us for **Session 4**

WORKSHOP

### Accreditation Institute | Session 4: Questions! Ask us anything



**Calvin Johnson, PhD**  
Bowie State University  
Visiting Professor of Practice



**Rajade Berry-James, PhD**  
North Carolina State University  
Associate Professor

🕒 2:00 PM - 2:30 PM EDT on Wednesday, October 14

[Add to Calendar](#) ✓

Accreditation Institute | Session 4: Questions! Ask us anything

### Keywords

ASSESSMENT

Session 4 **Questions! Ask Us Anything!** @ 2PM Online at <https://naspaa2020.pathable.co/meetings/virtual/i2JThuoDn4jdpjFZo>