



Why do we keep talking
about Assessment?

WHY?

Middle States tells us we have to have assessment?

We have class grades, what about those?

Is it for job security?

The Department of Education tells us we have to assess?

It is a way to prove I am a good teacher?

What about graduation rates, isn't that enough?

I don't need a rubric; I have been teaching for a very long time and I know how /when I see "good" work.

Assessment is what you do everyday...

- ▶ The bread you made didn't rise?
- ▶ Your car will not start?
- ▶ Your cholesterol numbers are too high?

We stop to assess the situation.....

We look for answers as to why something happened.

If everyday you howled at the moon.....



"My question is: Are we making an impact?"

Original Cartoon, New Yorker, 8-5-91, Sam Gross)

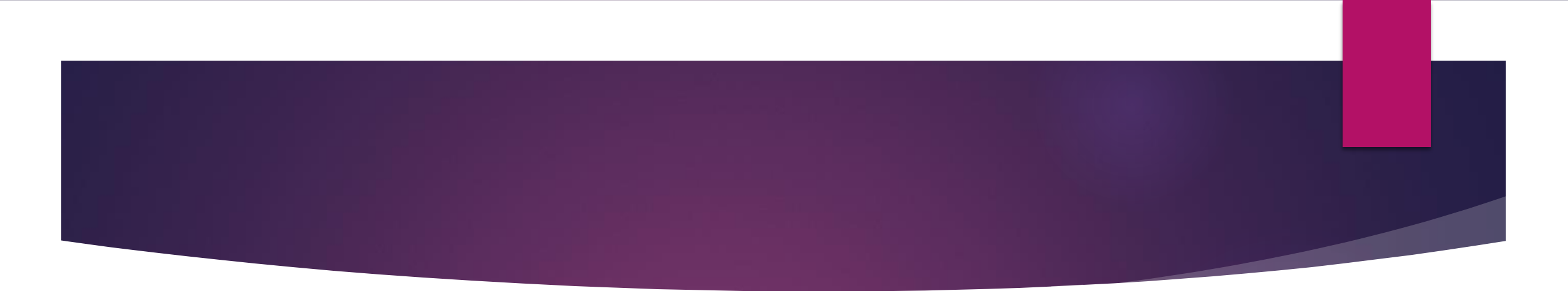
Assessment is.....

- ▶ The action of measuring our accomplishment against our goal establishes the continuous improvement cycle, whether it is in the classroom, on the soccer field, in the financial aid office, and everywhere in between, we measure our progress in relationship to our goals.



We ask our students to provide evidence for their conclusions/decisions.

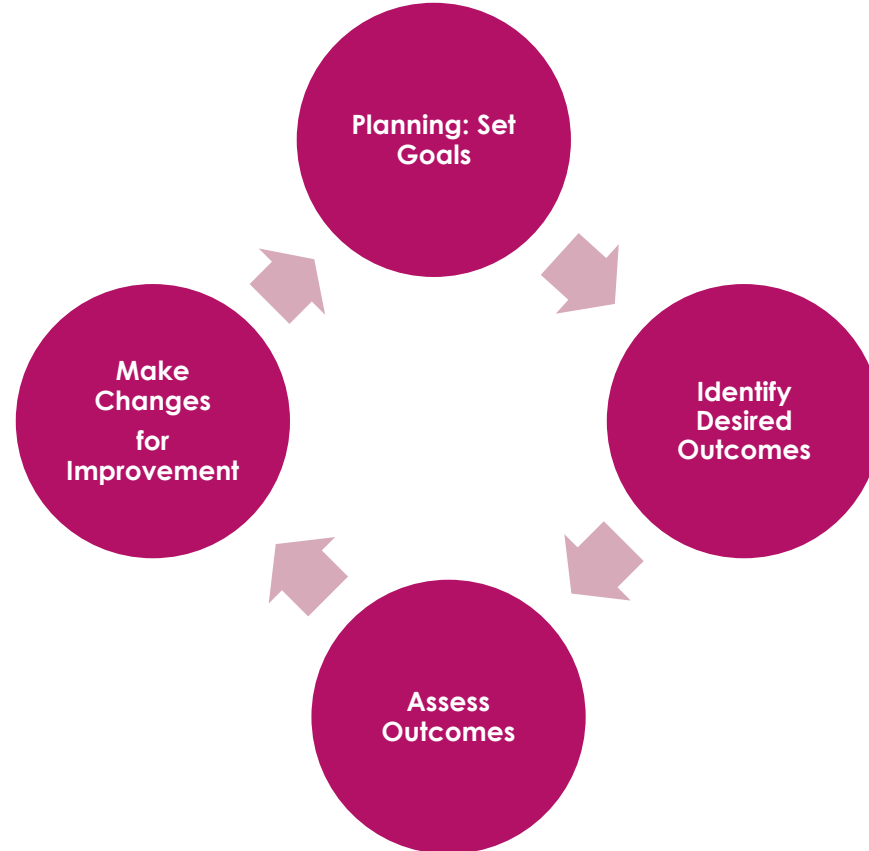
Much like evidence based research we are looking for substantial evidence that will prove that we have met our goals, and if we haven't met our goals, what we need to do to meet those goals.

- 
- ▶ In education, the term **assessment** refers to the wide variety of methods or tools that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs of students.
 - ▶ In the service areas, the term **assessment** refers to the methods that we use to evaluate the level and the efficiency of services that we have provided to the university community.

and yes.....there is Middle States

- ▶ The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.
- ▶ Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.

Assessment is about continuous improvement.



With these documents you are ready to begin the process.

- 1. Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes.**
- 2. The Three- Five Year Assessment Plan.**
- 3. Matrix of Courses to the Program Outcomes.**

A Goal or an Outcome must be Measureable.

Are these measureable?

- ▶ A student will know.....
- ▶ A student will understand.....
- ▶ A student will be able to demonstrate.....
- ▶ A student will be able to illustrate.....
- ▶ A student will be able to construct....

Take 10.....

- ▶ Share one or more of your **Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes** (PSLO) at your table.
- ▶ As a reference in the Guidebook on page 13 is a copy of Bloom's taxonomy.
- ▶ Review the outcomes and look for the verbs that make this PSLO measurable.
- ▶ Since we are looking at Program outcomes many of these will be at the analyzing, evaluating, and creating level of the taxonomy. If we are assessing course level they could be at any of the levels.

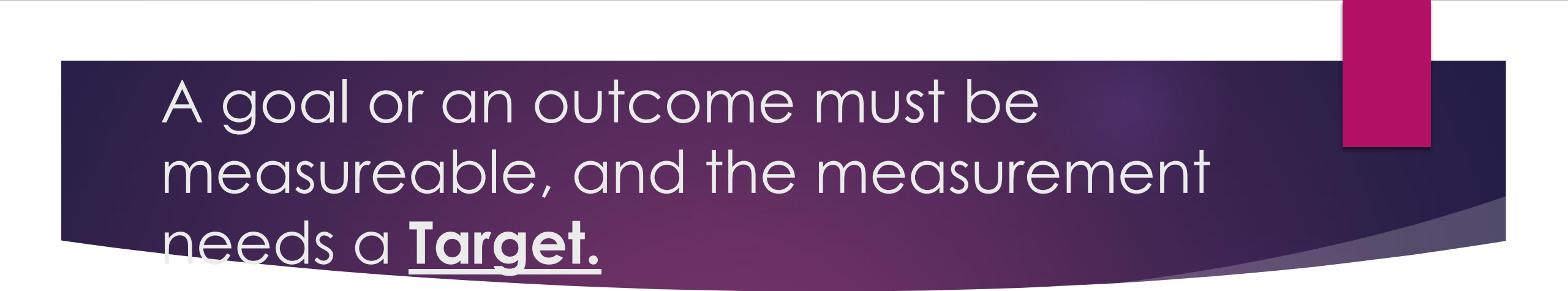
Take 10

- ▶ Share one or more of your **Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes** (PSLO) at your table.
- ▶ Invite someone not from your department to read an outcome and to suggest how you might measure if a student has met this outcome.
- ▶ On pages 8 and 9 are example of measurements: direct/indirect and qualitative/quantitative.
- ▶ Make a list of potential measurements.

A word about grades

“We can conclude from a grade of a B in an Organic Chemistry course for example, that the student has probably learned a good deal about Chemistry. But the grade alone cannot in point aspects of Organic Chemistry she has or has not mastered.”

▶ Linda Suskie, 2009



A goal or an outcome must be measurable, and the measurement needs a Target.

- ▶ The target could be a benchmark set by an outside agency.
- ▶ The target could be test score.
- ▶ The target could be an improvement from previous year.
- ▶ The target could be a rubric score of mastery or competent.

Take 5...

- ▶ Discuss at your table what targets you have used in the past.
- ▶ Do they seem appropriate or attainable?
- ▶ Have you be over shooting or under estimating?

Finally we close the loop

- ▶ Did we meet or not meet our target?
- ▶ Either way what is the narrative?
 - ▶ Do we assess this again?
 - ▶ Do we set the target higher?
 - ▶ Do we need to look at the sequence of classes?
 - ▶ Do we need an additional class or different content?

Improvement?

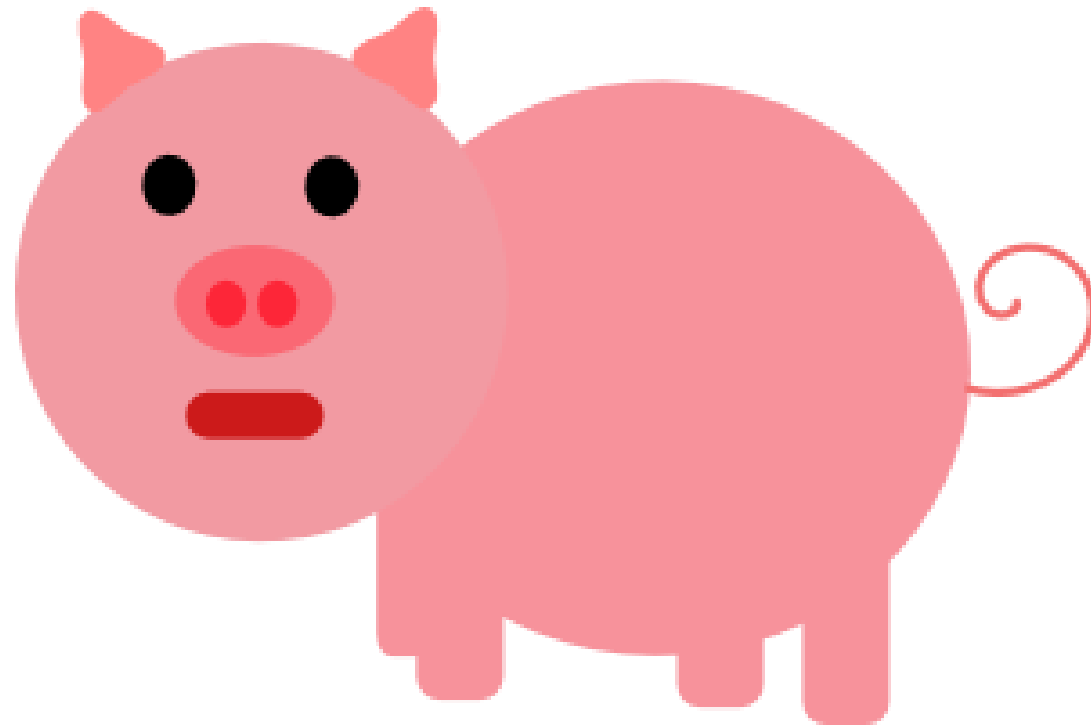
- ▶ How do we know if a change is an improvement?
- ▶ Improvement is not only about measurement?
- ▶ But....if you can't measure it, you can't improve it.

To see if we accomplished what we set out to do?

To see if that new process improved our service?

To continuously improve?

You can't fatten a pig by weighing it.





The Assessment Cycle of Continuous Improvement at Chatham University

Student Learning Outcomes or Departmental Goals

Develop or redevelop Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes or
Departmental Goals that are meaningful and measurable.

Measure

Decide how you will measure that outcome or goal, directly or indirectly, surveys, projects, exams, etc.

Target

Choose a Target to reach.

The target could be a national norm,
or an improvement from last year,
or an expected target by professionals in the field.

Findings

Collect the data and determine to what extent the outcome was reached or the goal met.

Action Plan

Devise an action plan
for the next steps.

Time Table

▶ **August**

- ▶ Opening Assessment time. Review last year's assessment.
- ▶ Discuss final results, findings, and possible action plan.
- ▶ Determine course of action for this year.

▶ **September**

- ▶ Enter final results from the previous year into software.

▶ **October**

- ▶ Enter plan for the current academic year into software.



- ▶ **September to May/August**

- ▶ Collect data for this year's assessment.

- ▶ **November to January**

- ▶ Assessment Committee reviews previous year's assessment.

- ▶ **April**

- ▶ Assessment Committee provides feedback from past year's assessment.

- ▶ **May**

- ▶ Closing the assessment year. Determine what additional data is needed to finalize this year. Discuss challenges and strengths.

You can't fatten a pig by weighing it.

