

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTES	1
<i>J. Fredericks Volkwein</i>	
1. The Assessment Context: Accreditation, Accountability, and Performance	3
<i>J. Fredericks Volkwein</i>	
This chapter discusses the drivers for assessment: accountability, accreditation, educational improvement, and performance evaluation. These quality assurance activities play out on three major levels: institutional, programmatic, and individual.	
2. A Model for Assessing Institutional Effectiveness	13
<i>J. Fredericks Volkwein</i>	
This chapter proposes a model for assessing institutional effectiveness and provides a foundation for the rest of the volume. Institutional effectiveness may be demonstrated in a variety of ways, but student outcomes assessment supplies some of the most important evidence for institutions with educational missions.	
3. Assessment with Open Eyes: Pitfalls in Studying Student Outcomes	29
<i>Patrick T. Terenzini</i>	
The author identifies key problems and describes how to avoid or minimize them in developing and operating a successful student assessment program. Potential problems and solutions in three major areas are examined: the purposes and definitions of assessment, program implementation, and assessment designs and methods.	
4. Overcoming Obstacles to Campus Assessment	47
<i>J. Fredericks Volkwein</i>	
Based on an accreditation self-study at a research university, the author offers four practical suggestions for implementing campus assessment programs: avoid the paralysis of the grand plan, start with an outcomes model or conceptual framework, conduct an inventory of existing information, and use the results for constructive organizational change.	
5. Basic Skills Assessment	65
<i>Alexander C. Yin, J. Fredericks Volkwein</i>	
The authors examine basic skills assessment by articulating its purposes and reviewing the various instruments associated with assessing basic skills, including a summary of advantages and disadvantages of each.	

6. Assessing General Education Outcomes	79
<i>Alexander C. Yin, J. Fredericks Volkwein</i>	
The authors first examine and compare the definitions of general education published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the six regional accrediting agencies. They then describe issues and challenges surrounding general education assessment and conclude by identifying and evaluating general education assessment methods, measures, and instruments.	
7. Assessing Student Learning in the Major Field of Study	101
<i>J. Fredericks Volkwein</i>	
This chapter outlines the foundations for assessing student learning in the major, summarizes the instruments and strategies used for assessing these particular outcomes, and discusses some important considerations in the process.	
8. Assessing Personal Growth	111
<i>Ying (Jessie) Liu, Alexander C. Yin</i>	
The authors summarize the dominant student development theories, note important noncognitive outcomes, and review several assessment instruments that measure student personal growth.	
9. Assessing Alumni Outcomes	125
<i>J. Fredericks Volkwein</i>	
Alumni studies can provide valuable evidence of institutional effectiveness and lend themselves to both locally designed and commercial survey instruments for data collection.	
10. Measurement Issues in Assessment	141
<i>J. Fredericks Volkwein, Alexander C. Yin</i>	
The authors summarize the top ten problems that arise in most assessment research projects: the inadequacy of course grades as indicators of student learning, Institutional Review Boards, research design as a compromise, standardized testing, self-reported measures, missing data, weighting data, conditional effects, HLM versus OLS regression, and correlation and causation.	
11. Reporting Research Results Effectively	155
<i>J. Fredericks Volkwein</i>	
Many assessment researchers spend all their efforts on planning and executing the research project, with little attention to closing the loop at the end. If assessment findings are not communicated effectively, the process becomes merely an expensive exercise in research design and data collection. This chapter concludes the volume with helpful tips and best practices for preparing written reports, verbal presentations, and supporting visuals.	
INDEX	165

