

Taking Aim at Student Learning



*Connecting
Learning Outcomes
to Your Goals*

Office of the Vice President for Student Life
The University of Iowa

Outline

- Define *assessment, student learning assessment, and learning*
- Describe the relationship between student learning assessment and Division of Student Life goals and values
- Define *student learning outcomes* (SLOs) and describe their format and desired characteristics
- Where to go from here
- Questions
- Brief Assessment

At the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Define *student learning outcomes* (SLOs) and describe their format and desired characteristics
- Describe how assessment can help you in your work
- Write an effective student learning outcome using the SWiBAT format

Who gets
excited when
you hear the
word
“assessment”?

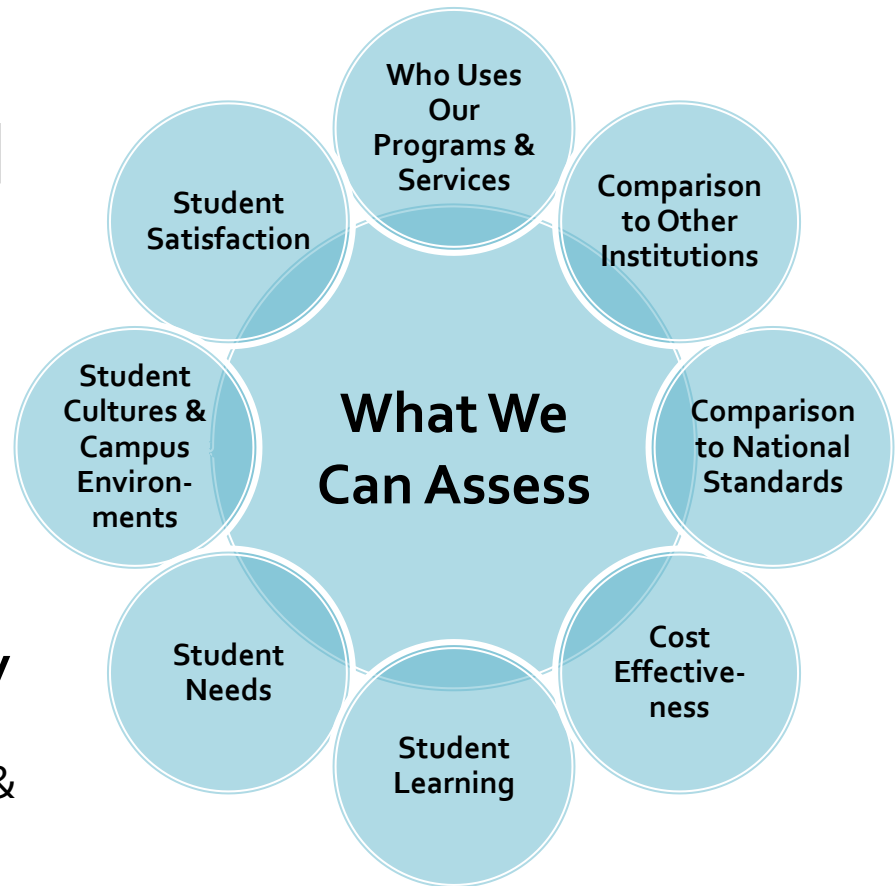


**Are we excited when we talk
about the ways students grow as a
result of our programs and
services?**

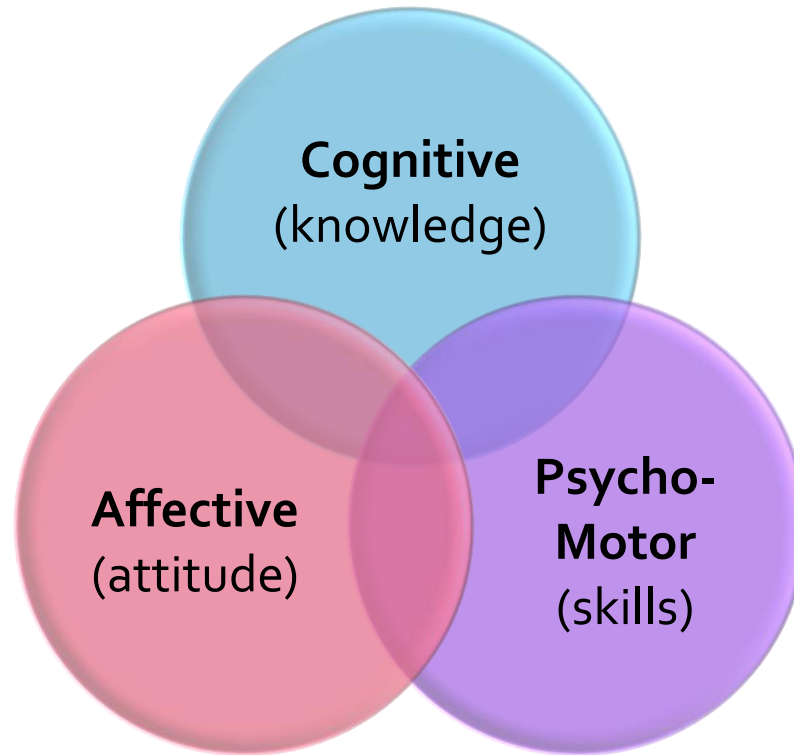
**Assessment is a
means to these ends.**

What is assessment?

- “Any effort to gather, analyze, and interpret evidence that describes institutional, departmental, divisional, or agency effectiveness” (Upcraft & Schuh, 1996, p. 18)



What do we mean by *learning*?

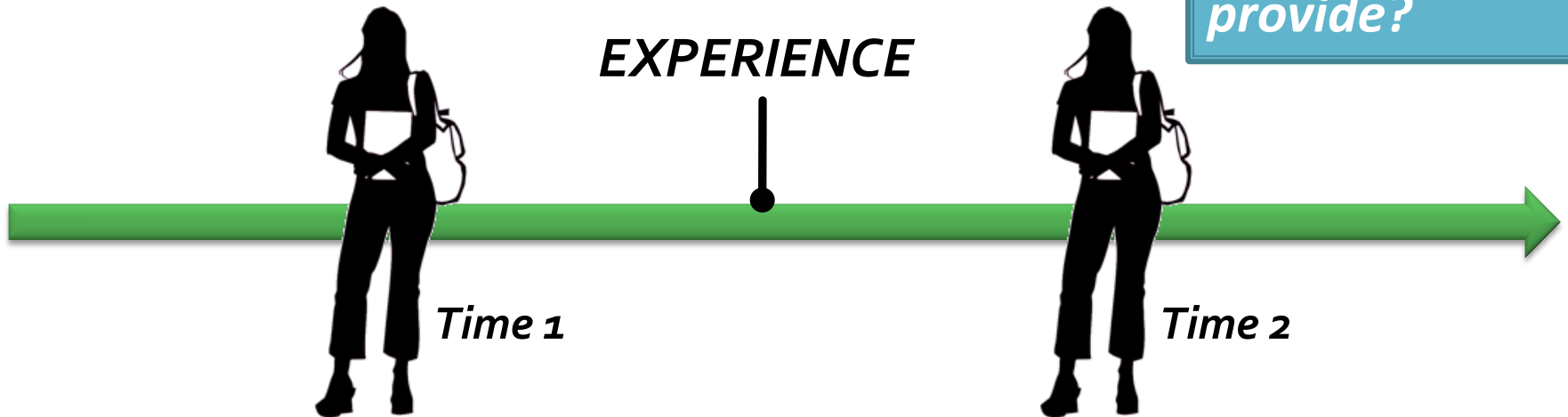


DOMAINS OF LEARNING

What are student learning outcomes (SLOs)?

- Goals that describe “the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits of mind that students take with them from a learning experience” (Suskie, 2009, p. 75)

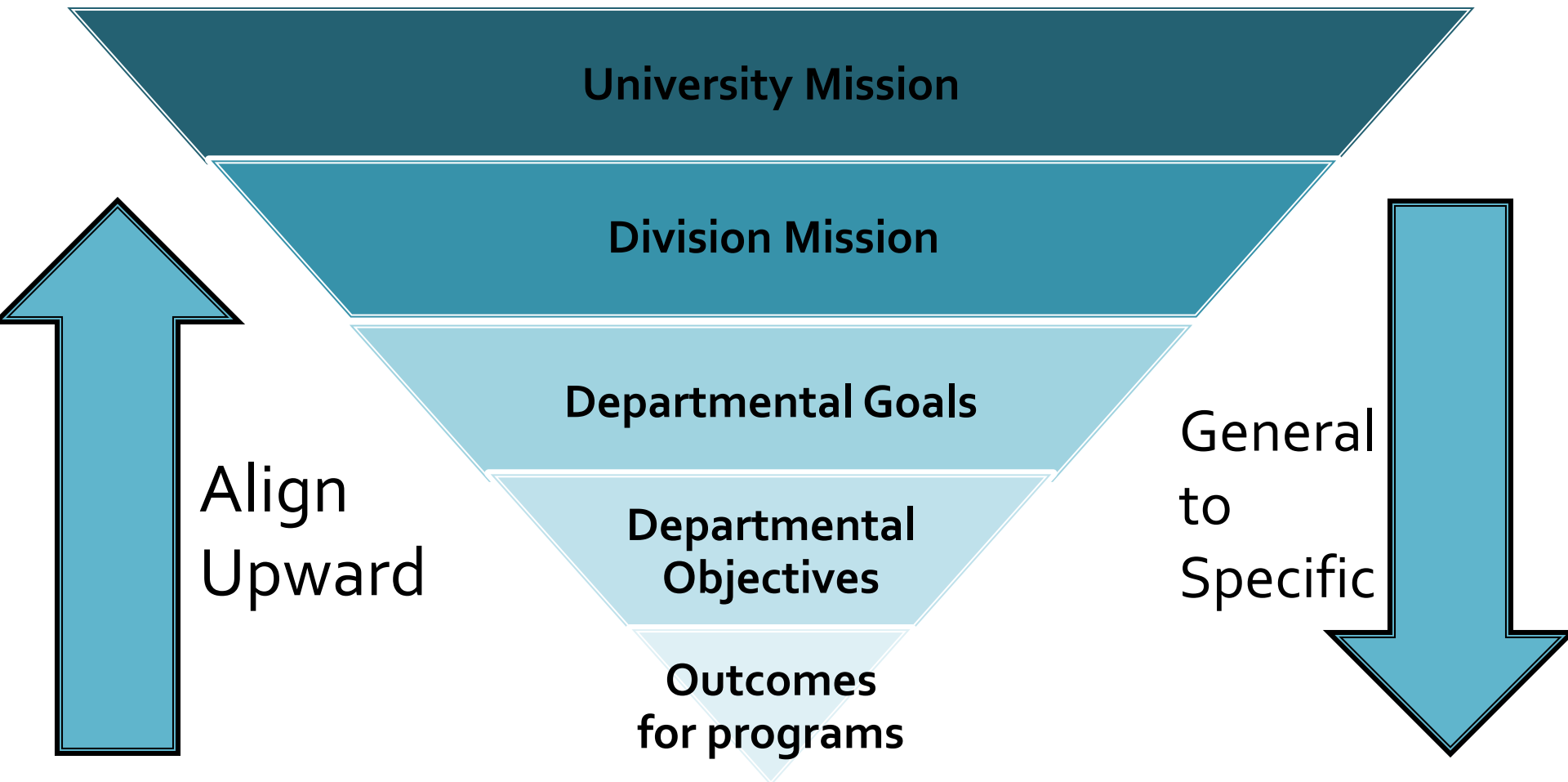
What should students be able to do as a result of the programs and services we provide?



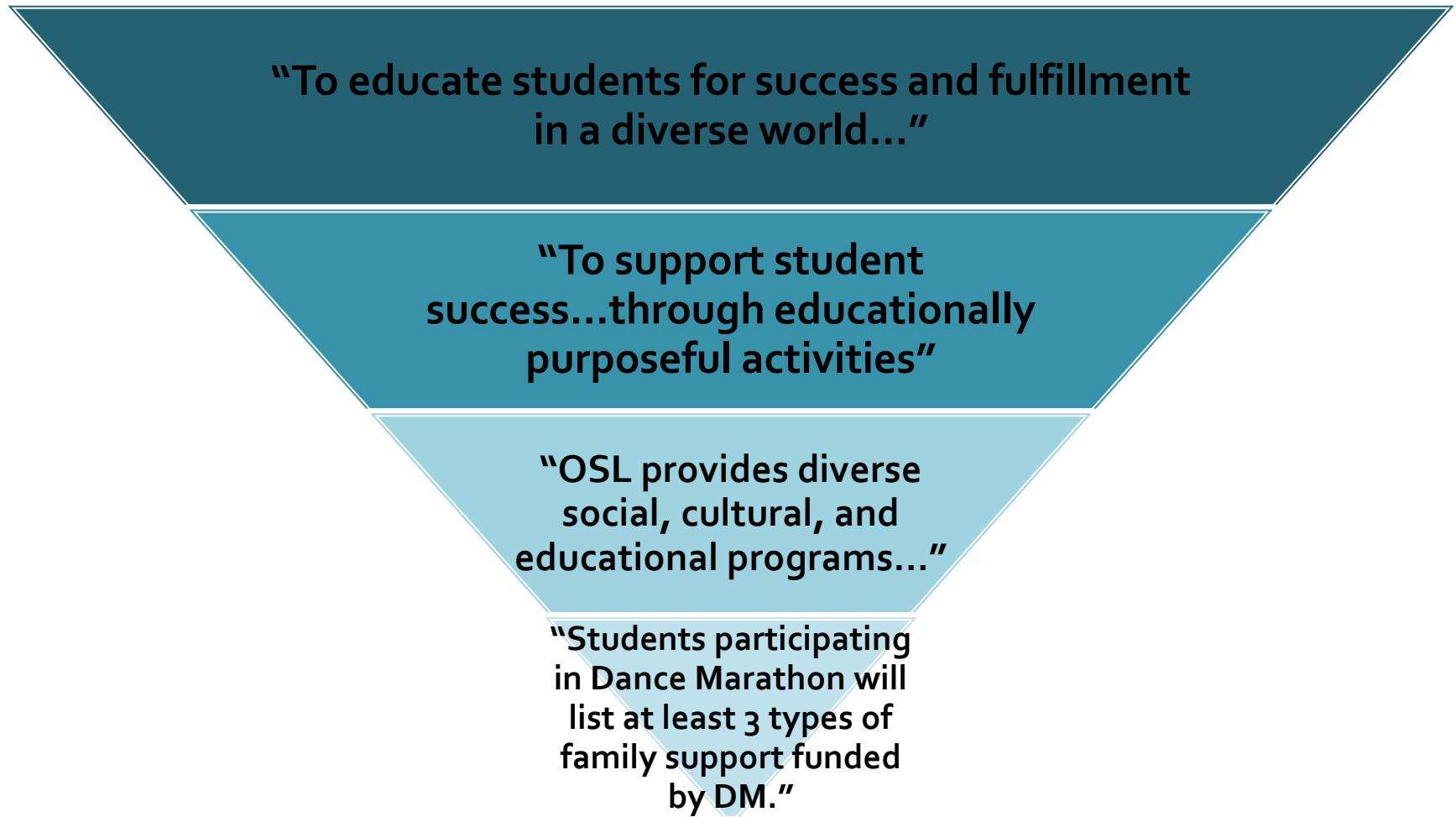
Prioritizing SLOs

- Determine which SLOs are *nice* and which SLOs are *needed*
- Your program or service works *in concert* with others in the department – it does not need to do it all
- Aim for 3-5 SLOs per program or service

Connecting outcomes to the Big Picture



Connecting outcomes to the Big Picture: Example



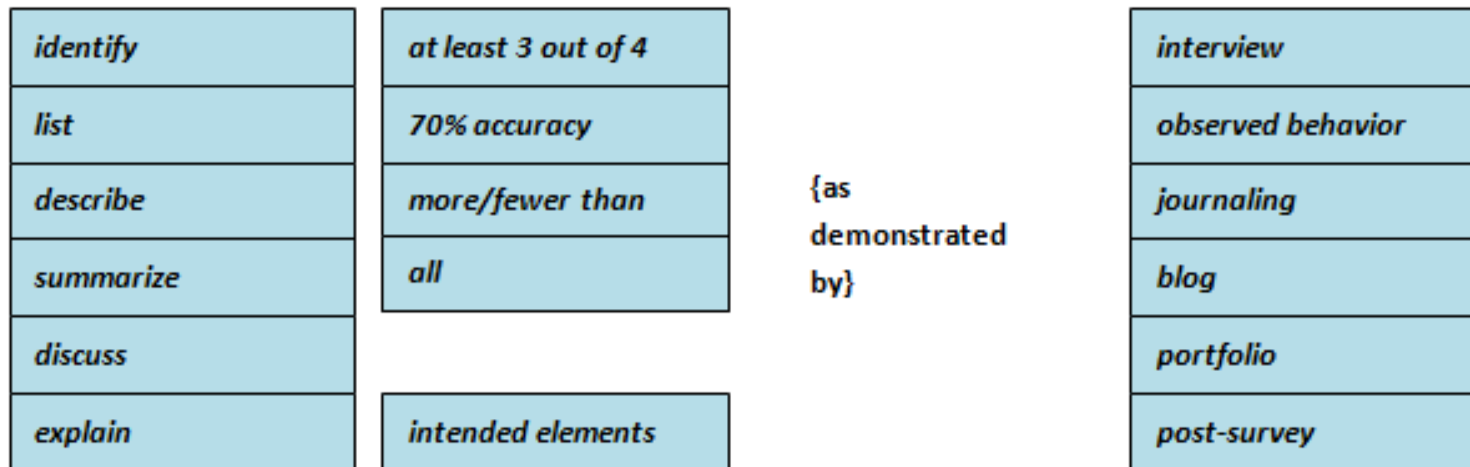
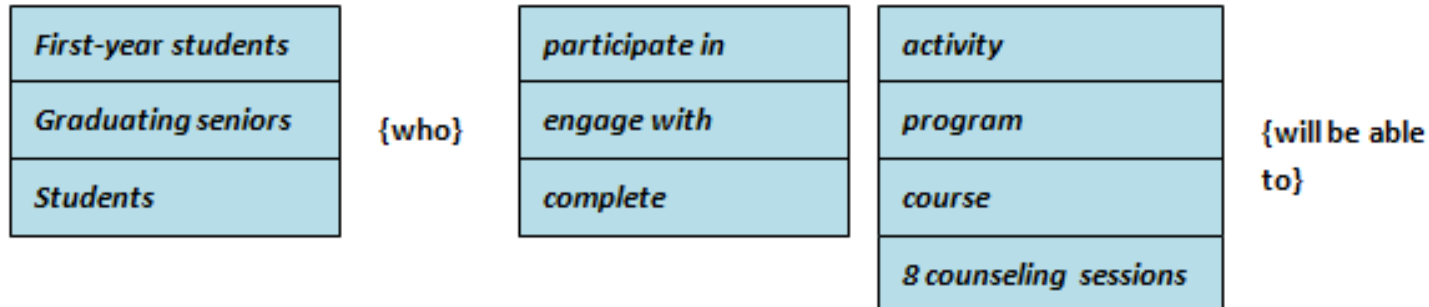
It's all nice, but what's *really* essential?

- What really *has* to happen for you to know that program or service did its job?
- What *must* occur for you to know that the time and energy devoted to that program or service was well spent?

Format of SLOs

- SWiBAT: Students will be able to _____.
- Examples:
 - Students will be able to successfully discuss accommodation needs with their instructors (Student Disability Services)
 - Students who work as intramural officials will be able to demonstrate appropriate conflict resolution skills in an emotional environment (Recreational Services)
 - Students who participate in The Path will be able to identify at least two academic support resources on campus (Residence Life)

Format of SLOs



Desired characteristics of SLOs

- Align with department, division, and institution goals
- Describe a behavior that is:
 - meaningful,
 - specific,
 - measureable, and
 - attainable
- Describe a single behavior
- Describe knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits of mind (i.e., learning)



Common “trip ups”

- Using “action words” that are hard to measure (appreciate, be aware of, understand)
- Multiple outcomes in one
- SLOs that aren’t really about learning



Fixing SLOs

- Students will be able to...
 - ...appreciate the benefits of exercise
 - ...value exercise as a stress reduction tool
 - ...identify at least 3 benefits of exercise
- Students will be able to...
 - ...access resources at The University of Iowa
 - ...develop and apply effective problem solving skills that would enable one to adequately navigate through the proper resources within the university
 - ...identity the university resource most pertinent to their concern

A note about new programs

- Begin with the end in mind: **What is your goal?**
- What should a student know or be able to do to respond to that goal? (**Outcomes**)
- Next, what content will support these outcomes? (**Content**)
- After that, what methods will effectively deliver this content? (**Methods**)
- Finally, how will we know if students have achieved the outcomes (**Assessment**)



Where to go from here

