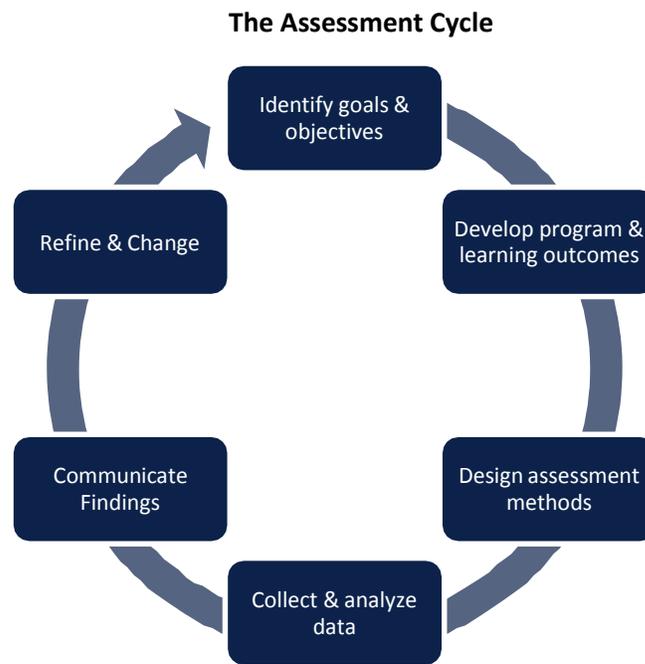## Assessment & Research: Closing the Assessment Loop

During the 2016-2017 academic year, Assessment & Research (A&R) administered a survey shortly after the end of the year to better understand division-wide assessment activity and develop a sense of how units used assessment findings to inform decisions in their practices. A survey was sent to a representative from each unit/department within the division. This survey seeks to examine ways in which divisional units closed the loop, which is the process of converting student and institutional performance data into action that makes a difference (Blaich & Wise, 2011). The cycle of assessment provides a framework to guide this continuous process, which involves clearly articulating expectations for learning, as well as collecting and using evidence to improve outcomes (Baker et al., 2012). **Approximately 92% of divisional units indicated that they planned or completed an assessment on their own or with consultation from Assessment & Research.**

The Assessment Cycle

Identify goals & objectives

Develop program & learning outcomes

Design assessment methods

Collect & analyze data

Communicate Findings

Refine & Change

Findings

Types of Assessment Conducted

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the types of assessment projects that were planned and or completed during 2016-2017. The 3 most frequently used assessment types were tracking assessment, outcomes assessment, and satisfaction assessment. Findings highlight increased efforts across the division to effectively and efficiently track participant and usage data.

	2016-17	2015-16
Tracking Assessment	**65%**	60%
Outcomes Assessment	**60%**	52%
Satisfaction Assessment	**55%**	76%
Benchmarking Assessment	32%	32%
Needs Assessment	13%	36%
Student Cultures and Campus Environments	10%	16%
Cost Effectiveness Assessment	0%	8%

Types of Data Informed Decisions

Survey respondents were asked how they "closed the assessment loop" using their assessment findings. The top 3 data informed decisions made by units included changing/creating a program, conducting/planning for additional assessment, and changing/creating a service or process.

	2016-17	2015-16
Changed/created a program	**39%**	73%
Conducted/planned for additional assessment	**32%**	50%
Changed/created a service	**29%**	45%
Changed/created a process	**29%**	36%
Reallocated staff/funding/resources	29%	18%
Changed/created policy	13%	14%
Identified a new target group	10%	23%
Changed/created product	3%	18%

5 Most Important Data Informed Changes

The survey asked respondents to describe the most important change their units made using assessment results. Responses reflect an active practice of self-study and a desire to constantly strengthen the student experience and their associated outcomes. A sampling of anticipated data-informed changes are as follows:

- Enhanced career-readiness programming for student employees
- Improved programs, services, and curriculum
- Improved planning for future assessment
- Increased levels of professional and student staffing
- Extended service hours to meet students' needs
- Made current practices more effective

Top 5 Audiences for Sharing Assessment Results

The survey asked respondents to identify with whom they shared their assessment results:

- Department/Unit Leadership
- Department/ Unit Staff
- SAEM/AISS Leadership
- Academic and Executive Leadership
- Academic College Administration

Blaich, C. & Wise, K. (2011). *From gathering to using assessment results: Lessons from the Wabash national study.* National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. Retrieved at http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/documents/Wabash_001.pdf