Outcomes-Oriented Goal Writing for the Assessment of Administrative and Academic Support Services

2021 Assessment Institute

Alison Soeder, Assessment Specialist
Agenda

I. What are goals and why do support units need them?
II. Process: Developing relevant goals
III. Utilizing a Taxonomy of Goals
IV. Process: Guided goal writing
V. Conclusion and Contact Information
Founded in 1889
A&M University System
Public, Research Doctoral
11,624 students

195 assessment units
118 Academic Programs
77 Support Units
Accreditation Requirements

7.3 The institution identifies expected outcomes of its administrative support services and demonstrates the extent to which the outcomes are achieved. (Administrative effectiveness)

8.2 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results in the areas below:

a. Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs. (Student outcomes: educational programs)

b. Student learning outcomes for collegiate-level general education competencies of its undergraduate degree programs. (Student outcomes: general education)

c. Academic and student services that support student success. (Student outcomes: academic and student services)
Types of Expected Outcomes

Assessment of Expected Outcomes

Academic & Student Support Services
- Quality of service targets

Student outcomes

Administrative Support Services
- Quality of service targets
With a range of types of administrative and academic/student support services needing to assess an array of types of outcomes, how do we help these areas develop meaningful goals for assessment?
A&M-Commerce IE Plans

Goal Statement

**Goals**

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<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Assessment Methods</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Service Satisfaction</strong> - Visitors to University dining locations will be satisfied with the service they receive.</td>
<td><strong>Survey</strong> - Dining Services will distribute a survey via Qualtrics in November of each academic year to all faculty, staff, and students. The survey will assess satisfaction and feedback on dining services and food offerings. The Director of Dining Services is responsible for distributing the survey and collecting the results.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goal Status:</strong> Active</td>
<td>Satisfaction questions will be rated on a four point scale: 1= Very Dissatisfied; 2= Dissatisfied; 3= Satisfied; 4 = Very Satisfied</td>
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<td>*** Planned Assessment Cycle:** 2019 - 2020, 2020 - 2021</td>
<td><strong>Standard of Success:</strong> 80% of survey respondents will indicate that they are “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with the service they receive at on-campus dining locations.</td>
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<td><strong>Start Date:</strong> 03/19/2020</td>
<td><strong>Note:</strong></td>
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Method of Assessment

Standard of Success
Why are goals important?

- Guide strategic planning for the unit
- Identify achievable quality improvements
- Create a framework for assessing overall effectiveness of the unit

“Assessment gives us several ways to gather, interpret, and use data to provide information we need to take appropriate action.” (Walvoord, 2010)
What is a goal?

A goal is considered an observable and measurable outcome that assesses a particular process, service, or experience.

It represents an impact or quality improvement the unit would like to see as a result of its actions (Outcome).

A goal is NOT what you do but rather the desired intended effect of what you do.
Focusing on Outcomes

**Outputs**
- Describe and count what the unit does
- Outputs are delivered through the unit’s processes, services, and experiences

**Outcomes**
- A level of performance or achievement
- Describes the impact or quality of a unit’s processes, services, or experiences
Taxonomies

Bloom’s Taxonomy

- Create
  - Design, formulate, build, invent, create, compose, generate, derive, modify, develop.
  - Example Learning Objective: By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to design an original homework problem dealing with the principle of conservation of energy.

- Evaluate
  - Choose, support, relate, determine, defend, judge, grade, compare, contrast, argue, justify, support, convince, select, evaluate.
  - Example Learning Objective: By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to determine whether using conservation of energy or conservation of momentum would be more appropriate for solving a dynamics problem.

- Analyze
  - Classify, break down, categorize, analyze, diagram, illustrate, criticize, simplify, associate.
  - Example Learning Objective: By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to differentiate between potential and kinetic energy.

- Apply
  - Calculate, predict, apply, solve, illustrate, use, demonstrate, determine, model, perform, present.
  - Example Learning Objective: By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to calculate the kinetic energy of a projectile.

- Understand
  - Describe, explain, paraphrase, restate, give original examples of, summarize, contrast, interpret, discuss.
  - Example Learning Objective: By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to describe Newton’s three laws of motion to in her/his own words.

- Remember
  - List, recite, outline, define, name, match, quote, recall, identify, label, recognize.
  - Example Learning Objective: By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to recite Newton’s three laws of motion.
### Support Unit Taxonomy of Goals

This taxonomy can be used to consider what actions the support unit may engage in and what indicators of the effectiveness of these actions they may wish to measure in order to assess desired outcomes—answering the question, “What do we do and what would it look like to do it more effectively?” These categories are intended to be representative of but not exclusive to all of the processes, services, and experiences of support units.

#### Outputs: What is your unit going to do?

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<th>Areas of Action</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Sample Verbs</th>
<th>Sample Behaviors</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maintain records, processes, or units</td>
<td>Processes overseen or monitored by the unit</td>
<td>Maintain, monitor, regulate, oversee, manage, supervise</td>
<td>Maintain faculty records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform tasks</td>
<td>Tasks performed by the unit</td>
<td>Submit, record, track, control, process, compile, implement, prepare, organize</td>
<td>Process financial transactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide services and resources</td>
<td>Services developed and offered by the unit to constituents</td>
<td>Develop, offer, provide, advise, train, instruct, educate, counsel, assist</td>
<td>Provide assistance to graduate students in the enrollment process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resolve problems</td>
<td>Efforts to resolve complaints, disputes, or problems for constituents</td>
<td>Resolve, adjudicate, improve, support</td>
<td>Resolve customer service complaints</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate information</td>
<td>The communication, distribution, and promotion of relevant information to constituents</td>
<td>Communicate, promote, market, publicize, share, distribute</td>
<td>Promote unit services to the university community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create relationships and partnerships</td>
<td>Efforts to bring in new constituents and stakeholders to serve or partner with in unit activities</td>
<td>Recruit, establish, partner with, network, create, build, cultivate</td>
<td>Establish partnerships with industry internship providers</td>
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### Outcomes: What is the desired impact or quality improvement of your unit’s action?

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<td>Improvements in the quality of the process/experience/service - flaws or errors resolved and value improvements made</td>
<td>How will the process/experience/service have more value because of this?</td>
<td>The error rate will be reduced</td>
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<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>Processes are streamlined, resources are conserved, and productivity is increased</td>
<td>How will the processes/services operate more efficiently because of this?</td>
<td>The application process will be streamlined to eliminate redundancies</td>
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<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>Time to completion is reduced and timeliness or relevant deadlines are achieved</td>
<td>How will relevant timeliness be positively impacted by this?</td>
<td>The report will be submitted prior to the agency deadline</td>
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<td>Cost</td>
<td>Operating or student costs are reduced and optimized</td>
<td>How will costs be positively impacted by this?</td>
<td>Expenditures will be reduced by 5%</td>
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<td>Reach</td>
<td>Increases are made in the number of people reached, impacted, or served by the process/experience/service</td>
<td>How many people/processes/units will be impacted by this?</td>
<td>The number of student research presentations will increase by 15%</td>
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<td>Perceptions</td>
<td>Changes are made in perceptions or attitudes about the unit’s processes/services</td>
<td>How do constituents view the processes/services?</td>
<td>95% of students will rate the academic advising they received as “Satisfactory” or “Very Satisfactory”</td>
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<td>Behavioral changes</td>
<td>Services offered produce intended behaviors</td>
<td>What student/faculty/staff behaviors will change because of this?</td>
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<td>Learning outcomes</td>
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Provide recreational programming to students, faculty, and staff

A. Output
B. Outcome
Maintain student academic records

A. Output
B. Outcome
Participation rates in the residential life safety program will increase

A. Output
B. Outcome
Students who attend leadership development training will be able to identify one or more crisis resolution strategies

A. Output
B. Outcome
Implement training programs to support global social justice initiatives

A. Output
B. Outcome
Students in the STEM living and learning community will be retained at a higher rate than the general first time, full time student population

A. Output

B. Outcome
Application
Sample formulas for writing goals

Formula #1:
[Description of desired impact or quality improvement]

Formula #2
[Constituents] who [description of constituents’ participation in Unit’s services] will [verb describing impact or quality improvement]

Outcomes related to:
- Quality
- Efficiency
- Timeliness
- Cost
- Reach

Outcomes related to:
- Perceptions
- Behavioral Changes
- Learning Outcomes
Sample formulas for writing goals

Formula #1:
[Description of desired impact or quality improvement]

Formula #2
[Constituents] who [description of constituents’ participation in Unit’s services] will [verb describing impact or quality improvement]

Participation rates in the residential life safety program will increase

Students who attend leadership development training will be able to identify one or more crisis resolution strategies
Guided goal writing

3 Guided Questions

• What is the overall purpose of the unit? *(mission)*
• What does the unit do to support this purpose? *(output)*
• What additional impact or quality improvement would the unit like to see as a result of those actions? *(outcome)*
Example #1 – Study Abroad

What is the overall purpose of the unit? (mission)

- To enrich teaching & learning and student preparedness for a global workforce through exposure to cross-cultural learning experiences

What does the unit do to support this purpose? (output)

- Organize study abroad trips for students

What additional impact or quality improvement would the unit like to see as a result of its actions? (outcome)

- Increase the percentage of study abroad travel costs covered by grant funding

Cost
Example #1 – Study Abroad

What is the overall purpose of the unit? (mission)

- To enrich teaching & learning and student preparedness for a global workforce through exposure to cross-cultural learning experiences

What does the unit do to support this purpose? (output)

- Organize study abroad trips for students

What additional impact or quality improvement would the unit like to see as a result of its actions? (outcome)

- Increase the number of students who participate in study abroad travel
Example #2 – Marketing & Public Relations

What is the overall purpose of the unit? (mission)

- Act as a source of communication on behalf of the university

What does the unit do to support this purpose? (output)

- Respond to external news media inquiries

What additional impact or quality improvement would the unit like to see as a result of its actions? (outcome)

- All inquiries from the news media will be answered in a timely manner.
Example #2 – Marketing & Public Relations

What is the overall purpose of the unit? (mission)

• Act as a source of communication on behalf of the university

What does the unit do to support this purpose? (output)

• Respond to external news media inquiries

What additional impact or quality improvement would the unit like to see as a result of its actions? (outcome)

• News outlets contacting the university for information will utilize the media inquiry contact form.

Behavioral change
Example #3 – Campus Dining

What is the overall purpose of the unit? (mission)

- Provide quality food and exceptional service to the university community

What does the unit do to support this purpose? (output)

- Operate dining services at three on-campus dining locations

What additional impact or quality improvement would the unit like to see as a result of its actions? (outcome)

- Visitors to University dining locations will be satisfied with the service they receive
Example #3 – Campus Dining

What is the overall purpose of the unit? (mission)

• Provide quality food and exceptional service to the university community

What does the unit do to support this purpose? (output)

• Operate dining services at three on-campus dining locations

What additional impact or quality improvement would the unit like to see as a result of its actions? (outcome)

• The internal audit food inspection pass rate will be 90% or higher.
3 Tools for Outcomes-Oriented Goal Writing

**Taxonomy of Goals**

**Sample Formulas for Writing Goals**

**Sample formulas for writing goals**

**Formula #1:**

[Description of desired impact or quality improvement]

**Formula #2:**

[Constituents] who [description of constituents’ participation in Unit’s services] will [verb describing impact or quality improvement]

**Outcomes related to:**

- Quality
- Efficiency
- Timeliness
- Cost
- Reach

**3 Guided Questions**

**3 Guided Questions**

- What is the overall purpose of the unit? *(mission)*
- What does the unit do to support this purpose? *(output)*
- What additional impact or quality improvement would the unit like to see as a result of those actions? *(outcome)*
Final Considerations

Can the goal be used to identify meaningful areas to improve?

Do the goals accurately reflect the strategic planning of the unit?
Contact Information

Alison Soeder
Alison.Soeder@tamuc.edu

Check out the resources on our webpage:
www.tamuc.edu/ie

Assessment Institute:
https://assessmentinstitute.iupui.edu/