

# BUILDING BRIDGES (AND BUY-IN) FOR ASSESSMENT AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

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# Key Learning Outcomes

In this session, participants will:

- Learn effective tips and strategies for repairing damaged assessment relationships, improving upon negative conceptions of assessment, and increasing support and capacity for departmental assessment and continual improvement.
- Evaluate their current processes and approaches for building assessment buy-in and capacity at their institutions.
- Explore ways in which they might strengthen their own processes and approaches for working with and supporting their colleagues and constituents.

*Once upon a time...*



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# Reasons for Burnt Bridges at CSUSB

- Top-down, meaningless mandates
- Exercises in box-checking
- Focused solely on accountability and/or accreditation
- Perceived waste of time
- Wholly unconnected to teaching and learning
- Prescriptive



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# Possible Reasons for Burnt Bridges at Your Institution (or Others)?

- Take just a few moments to think about assessment at your own institution.
- What are the existing or potential barriers you see with regard to building a strong culture of assessment? (If you're unsure of your own institution, please feel free to think of GIHE, Generic Institution of Higher Education.)
- Feel free to work alone or with those near you.

# Possible Reasons for Burnt Bridges at Your Institution (or Others)?

*Just a few examples...*



# Results of Burnt Bridges

Accreditation/  
Accountability  
Needs



Outcomes  
Articulated



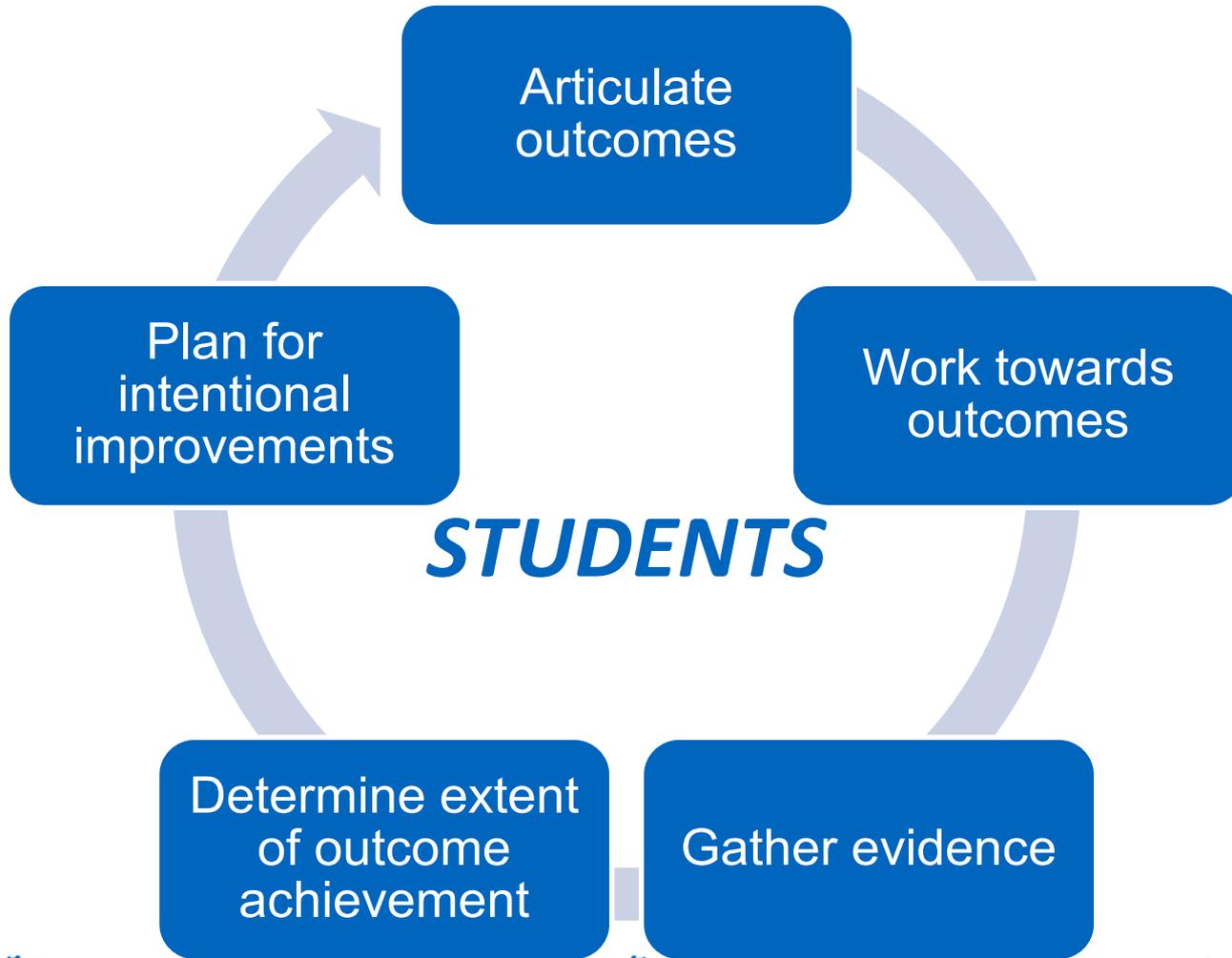
Data Collected



Report  
Submitted



# A Different Approach



# Strategies to Repair and Rebuild

## ■ Honor expertise

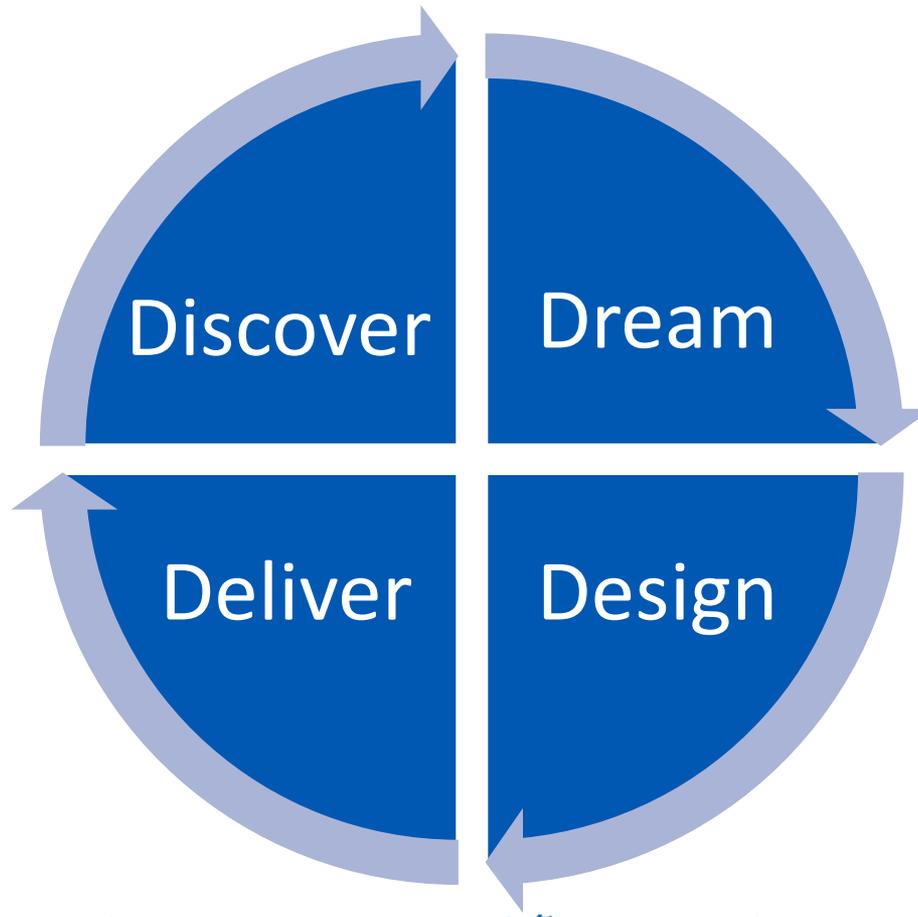
- Expertise of faculty and staff considered mission-critical to all work
- Institutional Effectiveness Associate *not* an expert in the various fields, but rather there to support program design, articulation, and assessment

## ■ Be flexible

- No one-size-fits-all method or format
- Different programs have different needs...and that's perfectly alright
- Non-prescriptive approach to assessment activities, forms, and reports

# Strategies to Repair and Rebuild

- Engage in appreciative inquiry



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# Strategies to Repair and Rebuild

- Engage in appreciative inquiry
  - Willingness to tease out, hear, and honor what colleagues hope to accomplish with their programs, what they value, what they deem important, what works well already, where they see their program in the future, etc.

# Strategies to Repair and Rebuild

- Scaffold, support, and empower
  - Wherever folks are is absolutely ok.
  - Role as supporter of program design and assessment learning, not as enforcer of assessment “rules”
  - Translate assessment basics into relatable terms programs can apply on their own
- Provide opportunities and assistance for intentional program design
  - Encourage the experts to begin with the end in mind
  - Facilitate departmental conversations centered around hopes and expectations for students’ learning

# Strategies to Repair and Rebuild

## ■ Tangible workshop takeaways

- No office/department leaves a workshop without *something* completed (or well on its way)
- Bulk of workshop time set aside for actual program design and assessment work
- Less talking head/lecturer, more facilitator



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# Possible Strategies to Repair, Rebuild, and/or Strengthen at Your Institution

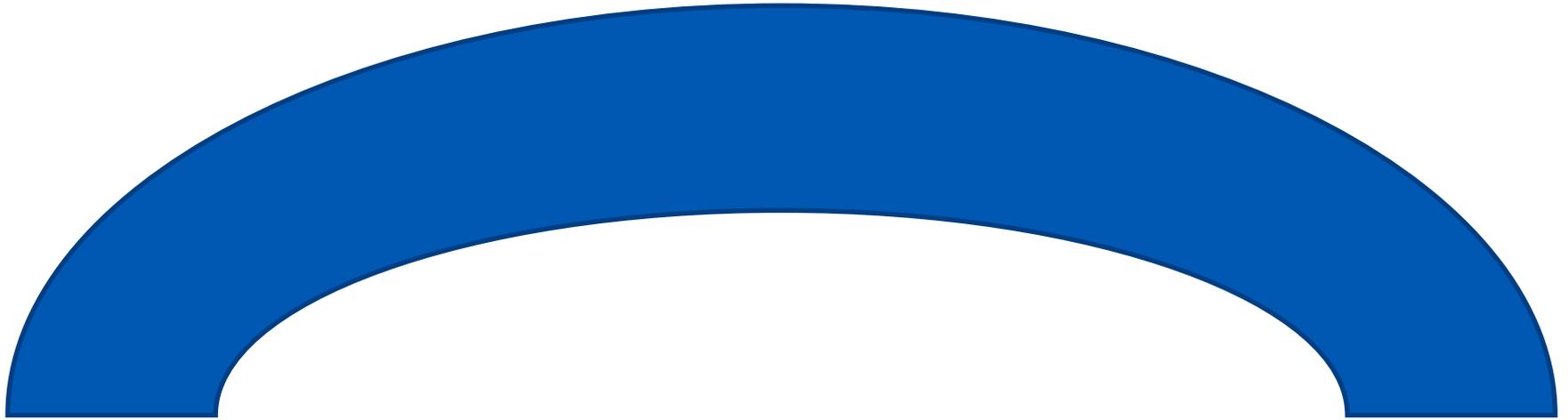
- Take just a few moments to think, again, about your own institution.
- Given your particular barriers/burnt bridges, what strategies might best be suited to repair, rebuild, and/or strengthen bridges?
- Feel free to work alone or with those near you.

# Possible Strategies to Repair, Rebuild, and/or Strengthen at Your Institution

*Just a few examples...*



# Newer, Stronger Assessment Bridges



*Intentionally*

Program design  
and assessment  
processes that  
honor expertise

&

*Assessment*

Continual  
improvement  
for student success



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DESCRIPTION

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Fueled in part by accreditation and accountability movements, assessment has become a contentious topic and undertaking at many institutions, with faculty and staff alike balking at efforts to build and maintain an ongoing, integral culture of assessment on campus. This session will explore how one IE professional worked to build not only capacity for assessment among faculty and student support professionals, but also persisting buy-in that has enabled ongoing programmatic reflection and improvement to support student success. Various tips and strategies for building lasting collaboration, capacity, and buy-in will be

THANK

YOU!



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