Program Quality Assessment:
The Master's Focused Institution

Robert M. Augustine

Dean

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Workshop Topics

I. Overview of Indicators of Quality

II. Relationship Between Quality Assessment and Ongoing Program Development

III. How to Link Program Assessment to Budget, Planning, & Fellowships

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Eastern Illinois University

❑ Master's Comprehensive

❑ 12,000 students

❑ 1,800 graduate students

❑ 28 graduate degree programs

❑ 7 identified as First Choice

❑ 7 seeking First Choice designation

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Literature on Indicators of Program Quality

- Burgess, 1997; Rhodes, 2001
- Conrad, Haworth, Millar, 1993, 1996, 1997
- Kohl & LaPidus 2000; Hamblin, 2000
- Council of Graduate Schools, 2004

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Literature on Indicators of Quality in Assessment

- American Association of Higher Education, 2003

- Banta, 1996

- Wiggins, 1998

- Suskie, 2004

- Allen, 2004

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EIU Criteria
Assessment *Integrated* with 5 Criteria

1. ***Diversity***
2. ***Assessment***
3. ***Curriculum*** [Rigor]
4. [Student] ***Scholarship***
5. [Faculty] ***Mentoring***

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EIU Process
Assessment *Integrated* with 4 Processes

1. **Mission Driven**

2. **Use Driven**

3. **Faculty Driven**

4. **Integration with University Values**

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Mission Driven

"Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process for improving what we really care about."

Banta, 1996

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Resources

Mission

Program
Review

Assessment

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Three Levels of Mission at EIU

- ☐ Institutional Mission
  - ■ Superior graduate education
- ☐ Graduate School Mission
  - ■ Diversity, Assessment, Rigor, Student Research, Faculty Scholarship
- ☐ Program Mission
  - ■ Communication Disorders: Meet requirements for clinical practice, certification and licensure

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Mission Verification Model

EIU: Superior Graduate Programs

CGS: Diversity, Assessment, Rigor, Student Research, Faculty Mentoring

CDS: Practice, Certification, Licensure
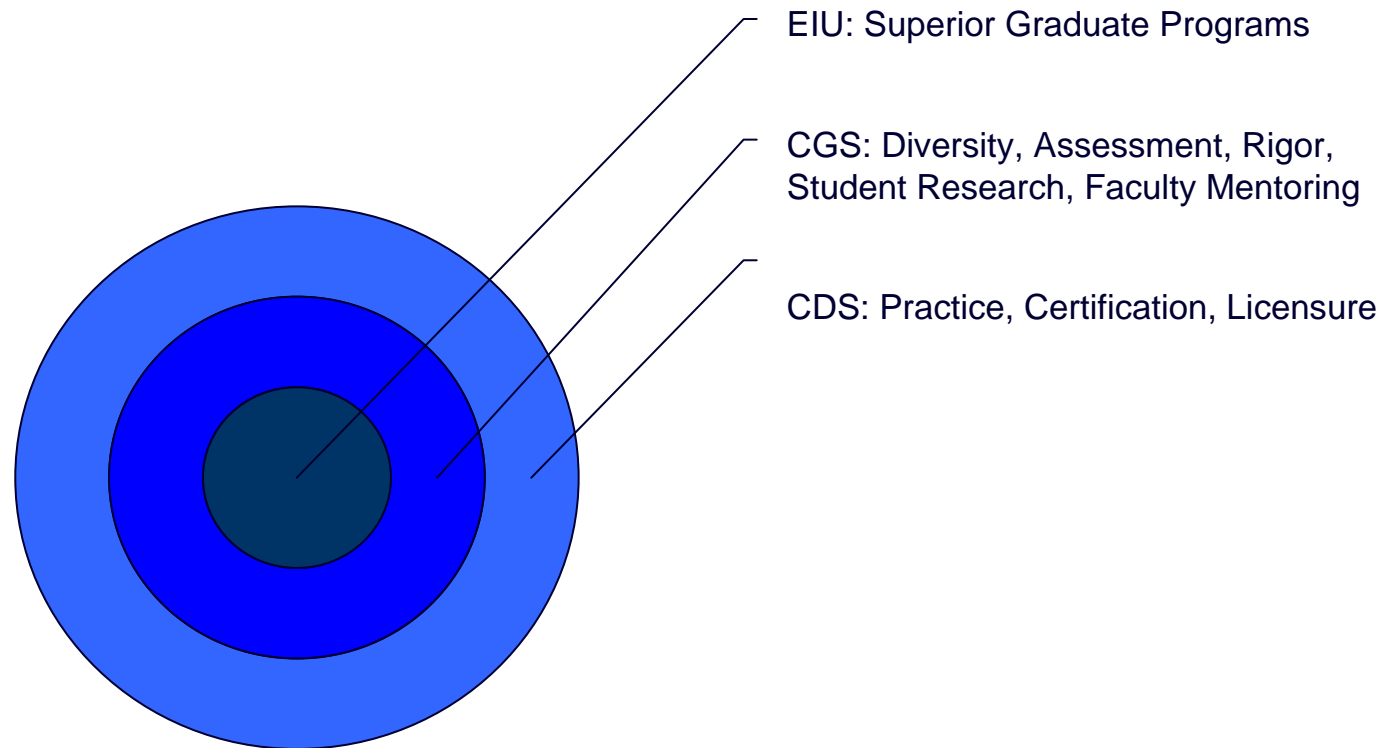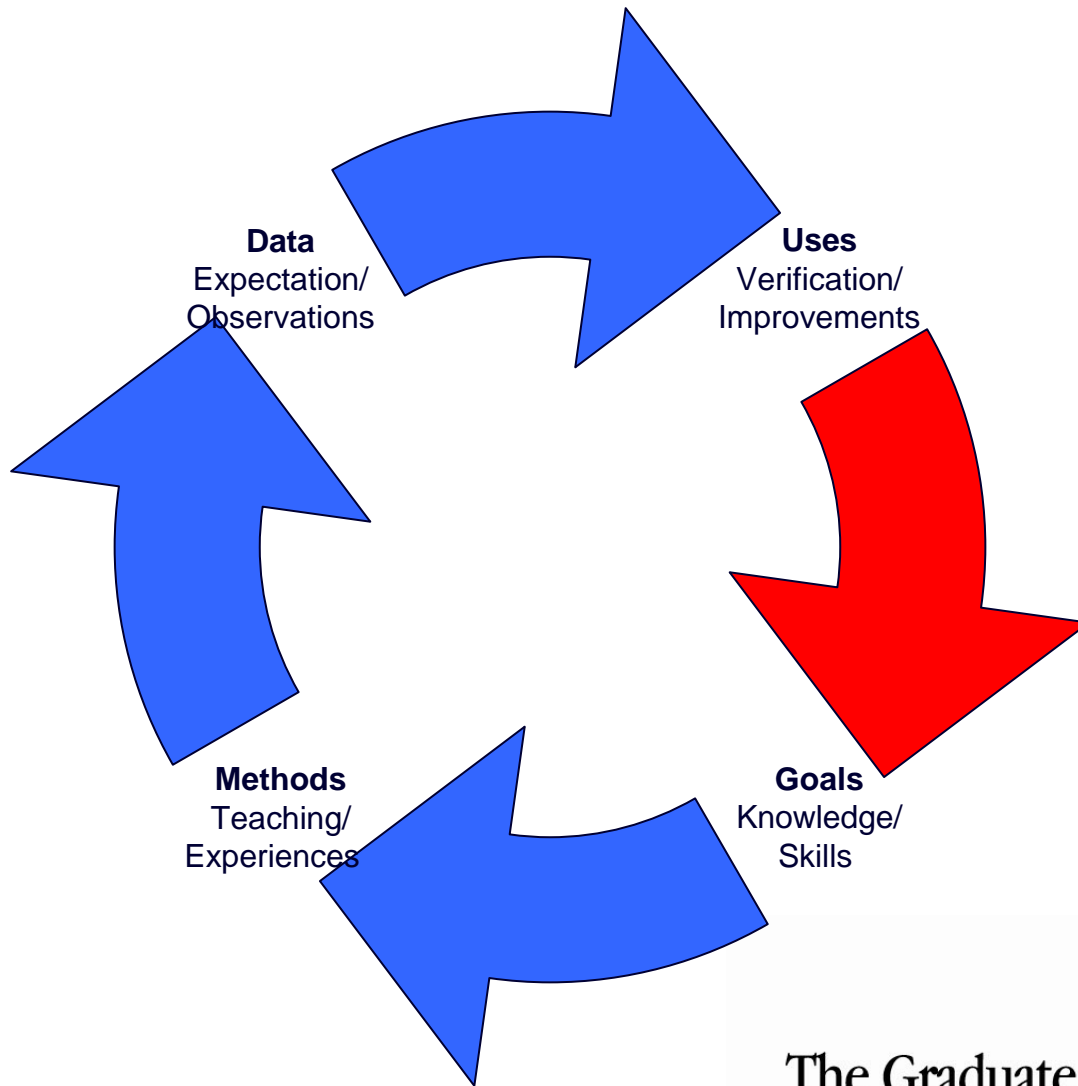
Best Practice 2
Use Driven Assessment

- If an assessment doesn't help improve teaching and learning activities, why bother with it?

- In order to be useful "*assessment must correspond to your key learning goals and your curriculum.*"

- Suskie, 2004

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Use Concepts

1. ## Use
   - Verification/improvement of critical knowledge

2. ## Goals
   - Desired critical knowledge

3. ## Methods
   - Ways to learn critical knowledge

4. ## Data
   - Observations vs. expectation knowledge

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Data
Expectation/
Observations

Uses
Verification/
Improvements

Goals
Knowledge/
Skills

Methods
Teaching/
Experiences

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Continuum of Assessment Use

Initial ⟶ **Advanced**

- Verifies achievements

- Verifies strengths

- Identifies weaknesses; ways to improve

- Verifies mission achieved

- On-going goal, method, and/or data advancements related to assessment

- Integrates assessment into program review

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Use Focused Assessment

- Explain/define what a program wants to do before any other actions are taken

- Link assessment with action to verify/improve the program

- Retain the focus on taking action NOT completing a task

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Best Practice 3
Faculty Driven Assessment & Review

"Assessment of student learning for program improvement is really transformational. We went into this process convinced that we were doing good work in preparing ESL/Bilingual educators and after two full rounds of assessment work we are even more committed and enthusiastic about our work as educators."

Chris Cartwright, Portland State University

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Guidelines for Faculty Engagement

1. Ease of Process/Clear/Understood
2. Resources
3. Recognition

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EIU Commitment to Faculty Engagement

1. Graduate School Criteria

2. Integration with Center for Academic Support & Achievements

3. Streamlined Processes

4. Access to Resources

5. Recognition

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Best Practice 4
Integration with Program Review

- Assessment leads to improvement under these conditions:
  - Integrated with a larger set of conditions that promote change (Program Review)
  - Integrated part of decision making

- Banta, 2004

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Program Review Criteria

- Diversity
- Assessment
- Curriculum [Rigor]
- [Student] Scholarship
- [Faculty] Mentoring

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Criterion 1 Diversity

- Enrollment/Diversity Plan
- Assistantship/Scholarship Plan
- Matriculation Management
- Graduate Placement

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Criterion 2 Assessment

- Written & Oral Communication

- Depth of Knowledge (Technology & Ethics)

- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving

- Research & Scholarship

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Criterion 3 Curriculum

- Mission Leadership
- Curricular Leadership
- External Review Validation
- Capstone Rigor
- Student Leadership
- Alumni Leadership
- External Partnerships

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Criterion 4 Scholarship

- ☐ Record of Student Scholarship

- ☐ Record of Research & Travel Grants

- ☐ Record of Showcasing Scholarship

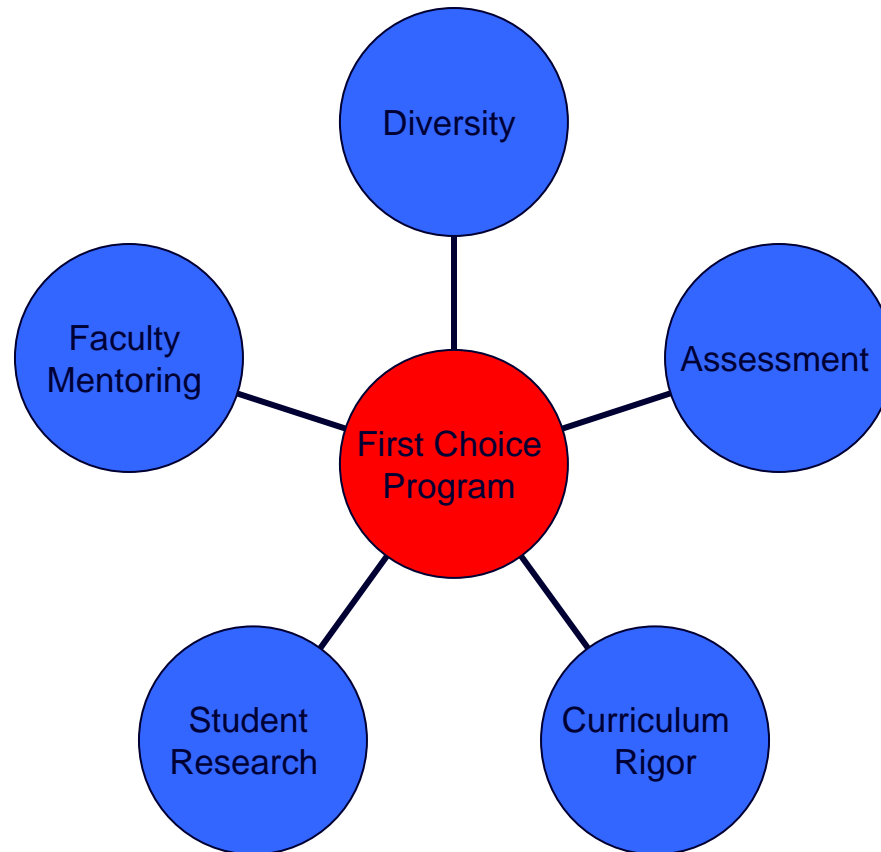- ☐ Record of Awards for Scholarship

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Criterion 5 Mentoring

- ☐ Record of Coordinator Leadership
- ☐ Record of Faculty Scholarship

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New Resources Enhance Mission

- ☐   Higher stipends

- ☐   More assistantships

- ☐   Travel awards

- ☐   Initiative awards

- ☐   College and Provost investments

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Diversity

Faculty
Mentoring

Assessment

First Choice
Program

Student
Research

Curriculum
Rigor

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Horizontal and Vertical Analysis

Enrollment…..Assistantships…..**DIVERSITY**…Matriculation…..Placement

Communication….Depth….**ASSESSMENT.**…Critical Thinking…..Research

Mission…Rigor...Capstone...**CURRICULUM**...Students...Alumni...Partners

Research….Grants…**STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP**…Showcase…Awards

Coordinator Leadership…**FACULTY MENTORING**…Faculty Scholarship

ELE: Assessment *One* of Multiple Criteria Failures

- ☐ Diversity: Declining enrollments

- ☐ Assessment: Disconnected from uses

- ☐ Curriculum: Rigor compromised

- ☐ Student Scholarship: Devastated student scholarly achievements

- ☐ Mentoring: Teaching loads decimate scholarship and mentoring

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Elementary Education Criteria Analysis

Enrollment…..Assistantships…..**DIVERSITY**…Matriculation…..Placement

Communication….Depth….**ASSESSMENT.**…Critical Thinking…..Research

Mission....Rigor….Capstone...**CURRICULUM**...Students...Alumni...Partners

Research….Grants…**STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP**…Showcase…Awards

Coordinator Leadership…**FACULTY MENTORING**…Faculty Mentoring

ELE: Program, Graduate School, EIU Missions Not Achieved

Not Achieved: Superior Graduate Programs

Not Achieved:
Diversity, Assessment, Curriculum, Student Research,
Faculty Mentoring

Not Achieved:
Best teaching practices, multiple pathways
And diversity, communication excellence,
Research excellence

Elementary Education Disengaged from Processes

- ☐   Mission: Failing all levels

- ☐   Uses: Assessment isolated; data shelved

- ☐   Faculty: Coordinator unfilled; faculty not engaged with graduate program

- ☐   Integration: Program disconnected from University values

- ☐   Resources: Hold

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Elementary Education Process Action Plan

1. Mission: Define clear curriculum mission

2. Use: Specify uses to achieve mission

3. Faculty: Secure faculty commitment

4. Integration: Identify enrollment, rigor and scholarship expectations

5. Resources: hold/reduce resources until plan executed

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PLS: Assessment *One* of Multiple Levels of Achievement Focus

- Diversity: Enrollment plan achieving diversity
- Assessment: Advancing mission
- Curriculum: Internal & external validation
- Scholarship: Exemplary
- Mentoring: Exemplary

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PLS: Multiple Achievements
Remaining Question: Diversity

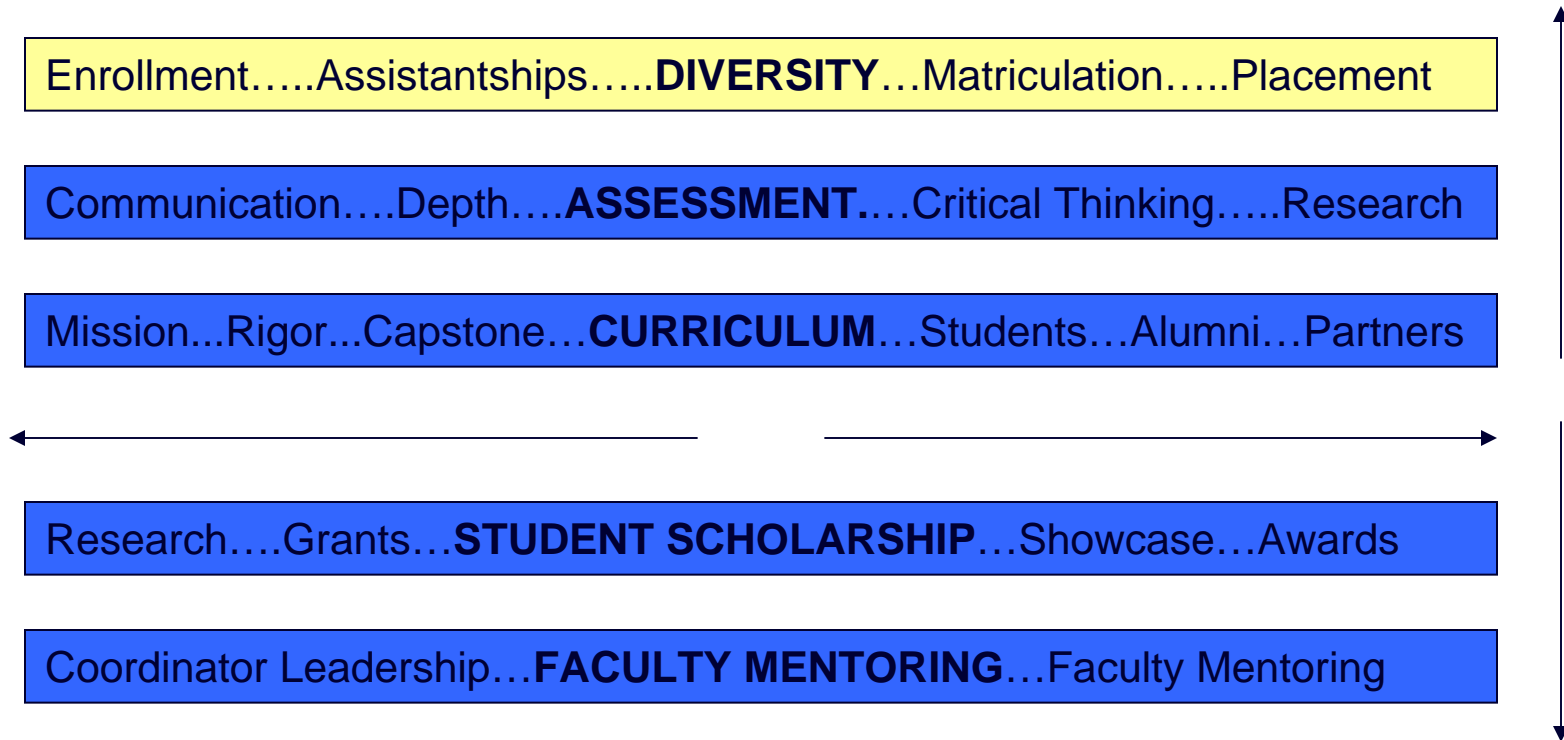Enrollment…..Assistantships…..**DIVERSITY**…Matriculation…..Placement

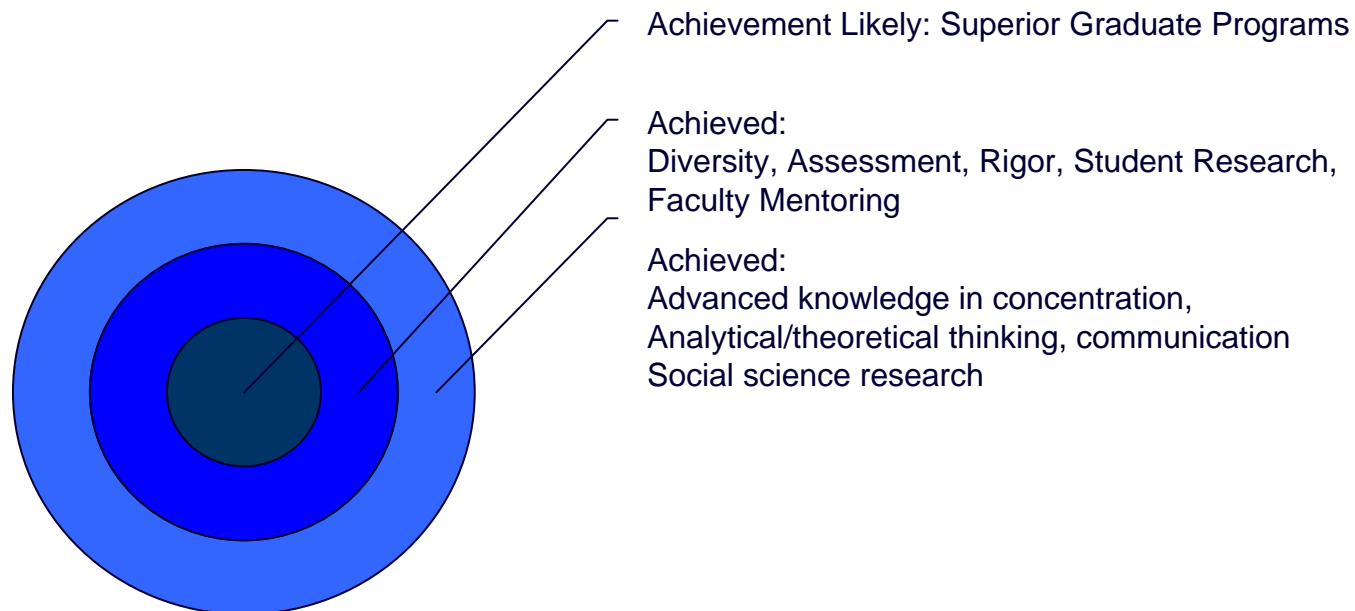Communication….Depth….**ASSESSMENT.**…Critical Thinking…..Research

Mission...Rigor...Capstone…**CURRICULUM**…Students…Alumni…Partners

Research….Grants…**STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP**…Showcase…Awards

Coordinator Leadership…**FACULTY MENTORING**…Faculty Mentoring

Political Science: Program, Graduate School and EIU Mission Analysis

Achievement Likely: Superior Graduate Programs

Achieved:
Diversity, Assessment, Rigor, Student Research, Faculty Mentoring

Achieved:
Advanced knowledge in concentration,
Analytical/theoretical thinking, communication
Social science research

Political Science Process Analysis

- Mission: Driving assessment

- Use: Assessment ease/advancing mission

- Faculty: Coordinator leading/faculty engaged

- Integration: Working toward First Choice designation

- Resources: Considered for additional resources

CDS: Assessment *One* of Multiple Program Achievements

- ☐ Diversity: Achieved
- ☐ Assessment: Exemplary/Awards
- ☐ Curriculum: Internal & external validity
- ☐ Scholarship: Exemplary/Awards
- ☐ Mentoring: Exemplary/Awards

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CDS: Horizontal & Vertical Achievements

Enrollment…..Assistantships…..**DIVERSITY**…Matriculation…..Placement

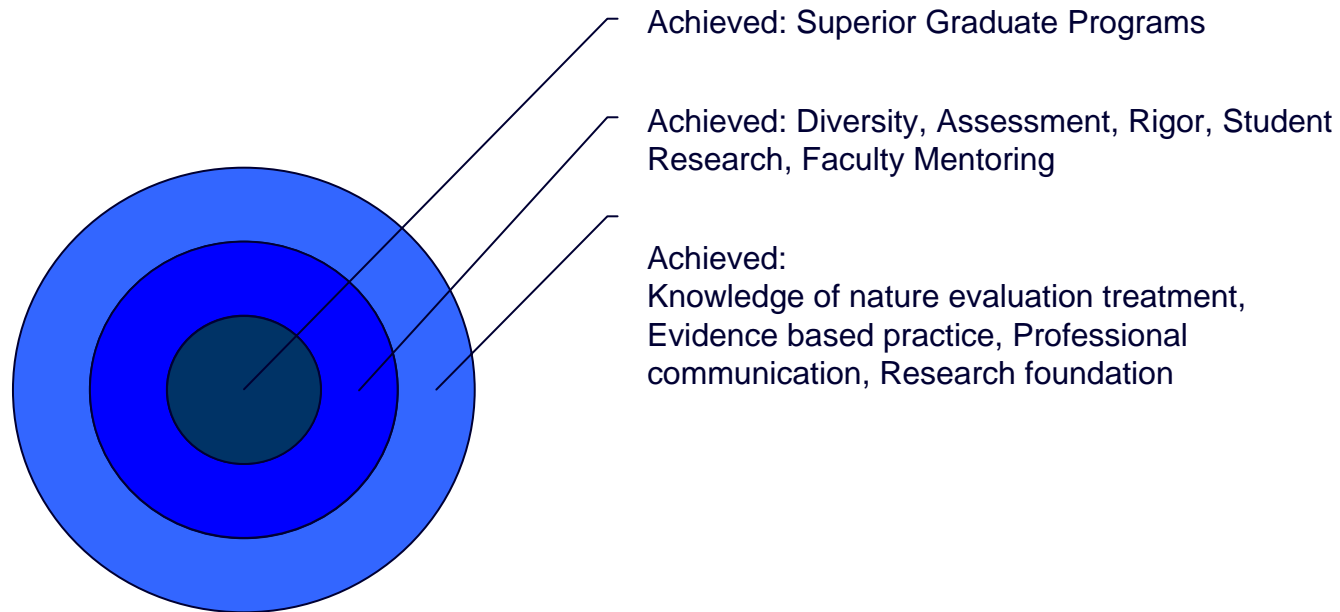Communication….Depth….**ASSESSMENT.**…Critical Thinking…..Research

Mission...Rigor...Capstone…**CURRICULUM**…Students…Alumni…Partners

Research….Grants…**STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP**…Showcase…Awards

Coordinator Leadership…**FACULTY MENTORING**…Faculty Mentoring

CDS: EIU, Graduate School, & Program Mission Met

Achieved: Superior Graduate Programs

Achieved: Diversity, Assessment, Rigor, Student Research, Faculty Mentoring

Achieved:
Knowledge of nature evaluation treatment, Evidence based practice, Professional communication, Research foundation

Communication Disorders & Sciences Process Achievements

- ☐ Mission: Achieved at all levels
- ☐ Use: Assessment advances mission
- ☐ Faculty: Culture of advancement
- ☐ Integration: Named a First Choice Program
- ☐ Resources: Increased & continued consideration for additional support

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Value of Integrating Assessment, Program Review, & Resources

- Consistent Expectations of Quality
- Value of Assessment
- Sharing of Best Practices
- Consistent Process for Addressing Weaknesses
- Resources Tied to Outcomes
- Effective Process for Moving Resources