

Workshop 1
Common Language &
Approaches to Student Learning
Outcomes

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Assessment & Program Review

Kansas State University

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Main Source: Susan Hatfield, *Departmental Assessment Plans*, Academic Chairs
Conference, February 2004, Orlando, Florida; Shatfield@winona.edu

The Workshop Series

Understanding Assessment

Departmental Assessment Plans, Nuts and Bolts:

- Common Language & Approaches to Student Learning Outcomes**
- Developing an Outline for Assessing Student Learning Outcomes**
- Identifying the Tools for Assessing Student Learning Outcomes**
- Developing a Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning in a Degree Program**

Workshop 1

- Understanding Assessment
 - Definition and background
 - Evolution and shifts
 - Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning
- Common Language & Approaches to Student Learning Outcomes
 - Language of Assessment/ Terminology
 - Constructing and Revising Student Learning Outcomes

Assessment

Assessment is:

- ✓ an ongoing process,
- ✓ aimed at understanding and improving student learning.

It involves:

- ✓ making our expectations explicit and public,
- ✓ setting appropriate criteria and high standards for learning quality,
- ✓ systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards,
- ✓ using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance.

Assessment

When it is embedded effectively within larger institutional systems, assessment can help us focus our collective attention, examine our assumptions and create a shared academic culture dedicated to assuring and improving the quality of higher education.

North Central Association (NCA) Higher Learning Commission

<http://www.ncacihe.org/>

- In 2002, K-State was reaccredited by NCA for another 10 years, however, two main areas that need improvement were identified:
 - (1) Assessment of student learning, and
 - (2) Diversity education
- **Thus, the institution was granted reaccreditation with the *condition* that an Assessment Focused Visit will be conducted in spring 2005.**

Highlights from NCA's Observations of Assessment K-State, October 2001

Evidence that requires institutional attention and Commission follow up:

- ⊗ “There is not presently a coherent, widespread understanding that the purpose of assessment is the continuous improvement of student learning”
- ⊗ “Faculty ownership of assessment in academic programs has not developed consistently across campus, and assessment in graduate education has not begun.
- ⊗ “Students have not participated in the development or implementation of the University's assessment program.”

Highlights from NCA's Observations of Assessment K-State, October 2001

Evidence that requires institutional attention and Commission follow up (continued):

- ☒ “The K-State assessment program is in its infancy; the supporting infrastructure has not been fully developed. ... to develop the structures needed for
 - a) educating the University community about assessment,
 - b) providing administrative leadership that will lead to embedding the assessment process in the institutional culture, and
 - c) ensuring the sustainability of the assessment program.”

NCA's Expectations for the 2005 Focused Visit

- ❖ “The Team recommends a focused visit to evaluate whether the institutions is making progress in implementing a program to assess student learning outcomes. **By the time of the focused visit in 2005, there should be evidence that K-State is moving toward maturing levels of continuous improvement and that faculty, students, and administrators across the University are involved in the assessment process.**” [Bold was added to the original quote.]

Source: *NCA's Final Report for K-State, 2001, Section 2, p. 14*

In other words, NCA and other constituents are looking for:

Evidence of broad participation by faculty and students in the development of Assessment Student Learning (ASL) programs.

Evidence that we are clear about expectations for learning outcomes and that we are communicating that to students.

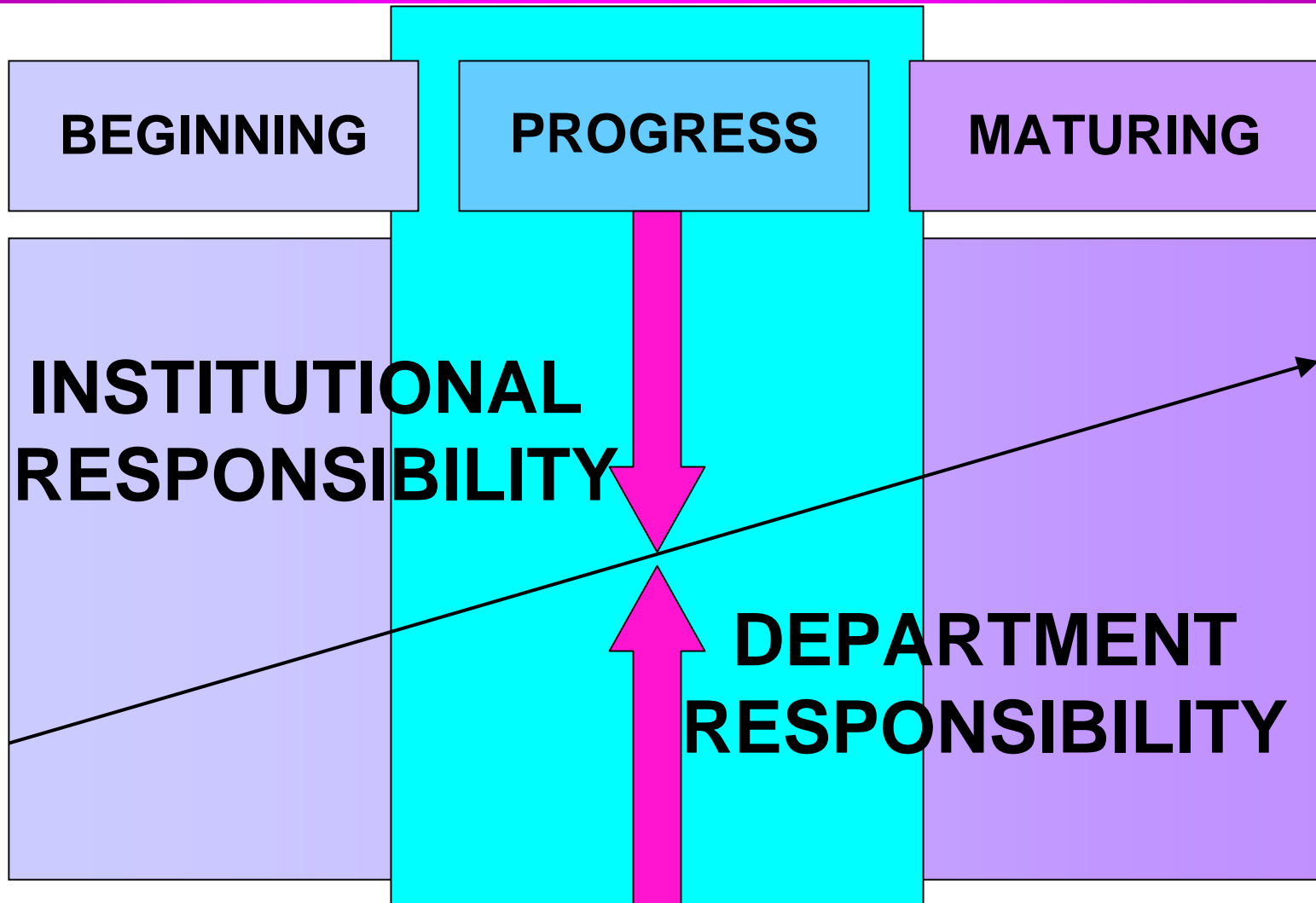
Evidence that students (as a group) are learning from those learning opportunities.

Evidence that we are using the results of our ASL activities to improve student learning.

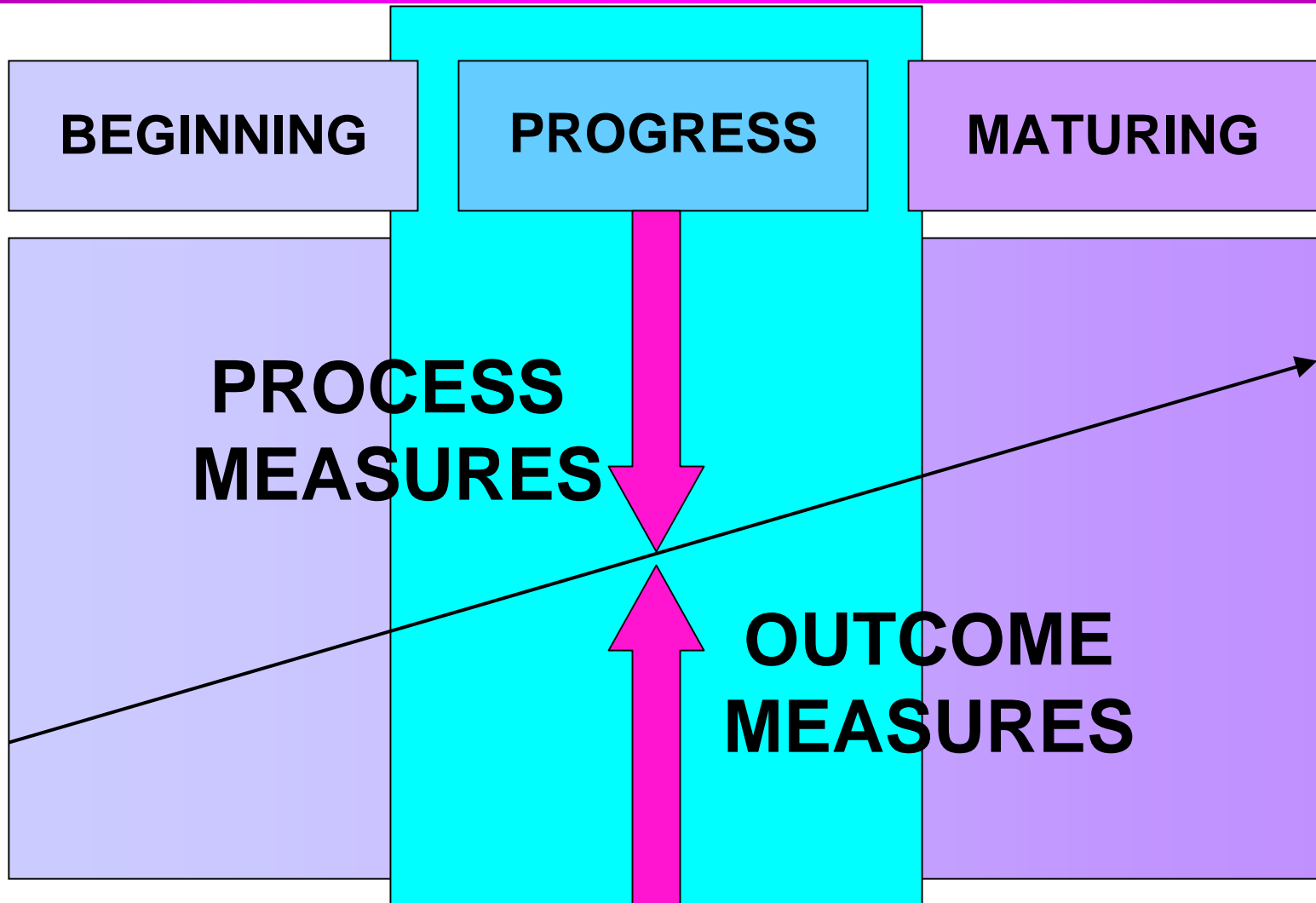
Understanding Assessment

- **Assessment initiatives evolve**

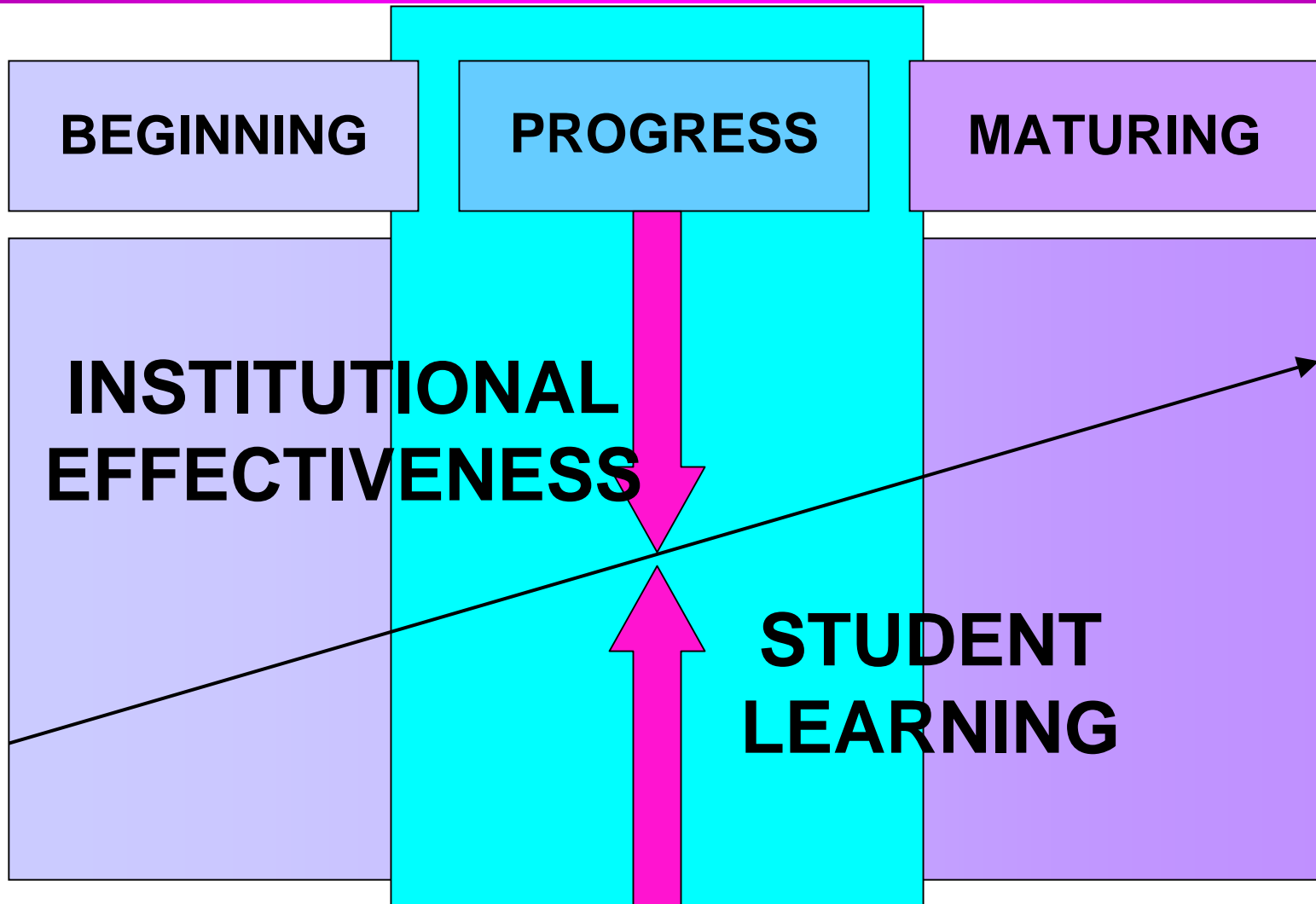
Maturing Assessment



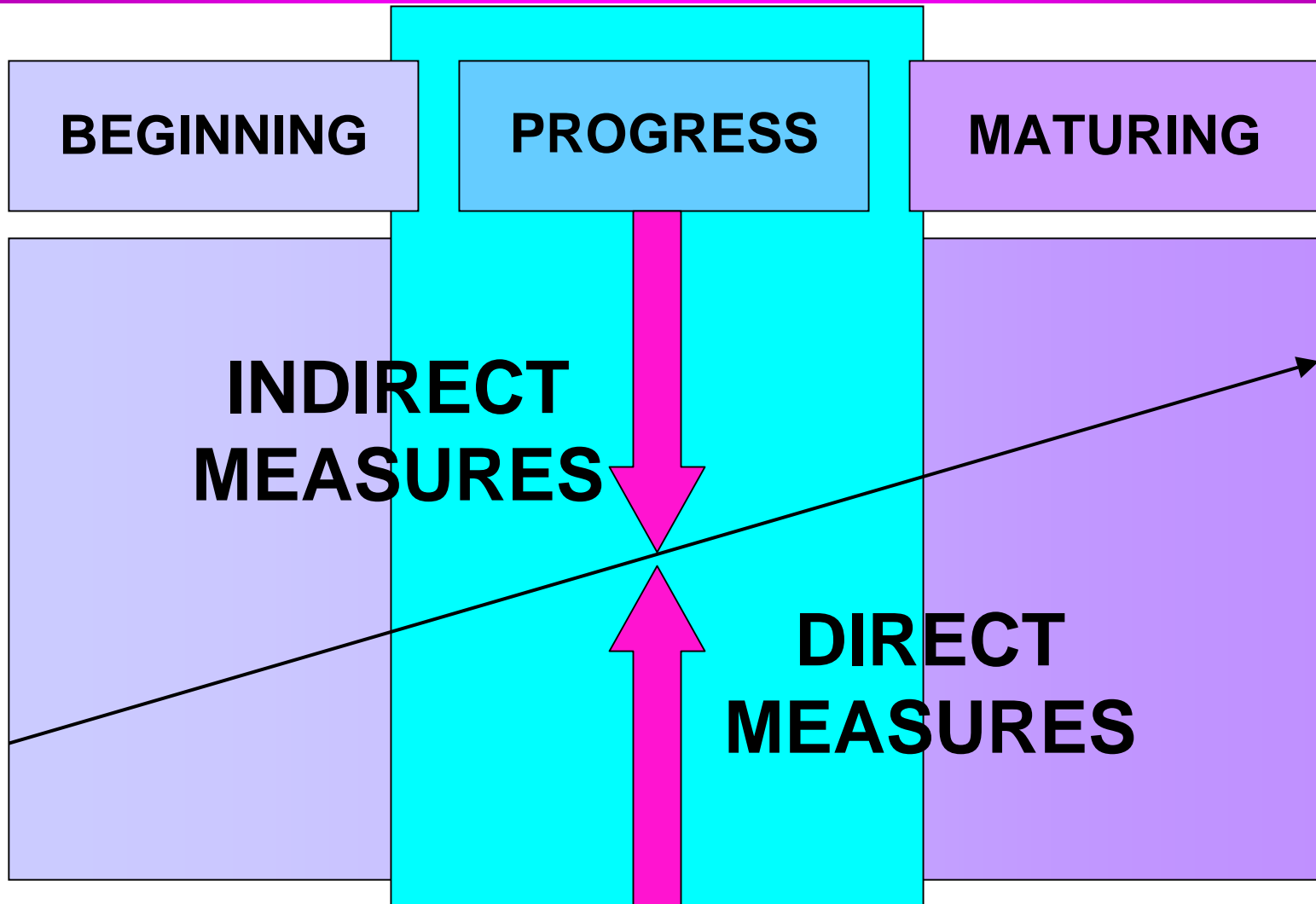
Maturing Assessment



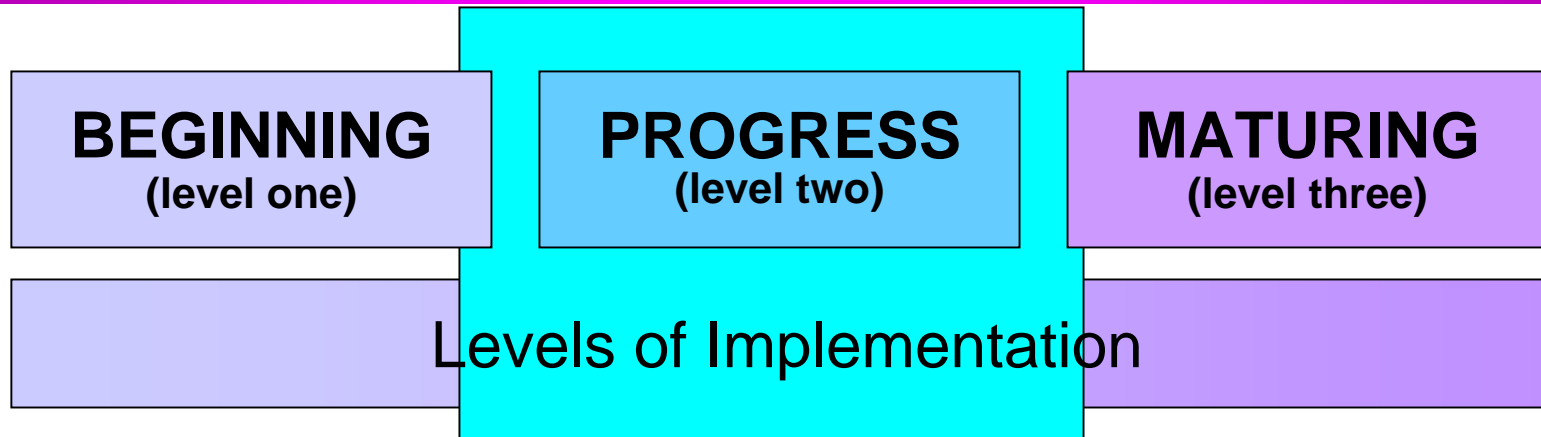
Maturing Assessment



Maturing Assessment



Maturing Assessment



- I. Institutional Culture**
 - a) Collective/ Shared Values
 - b) Mission

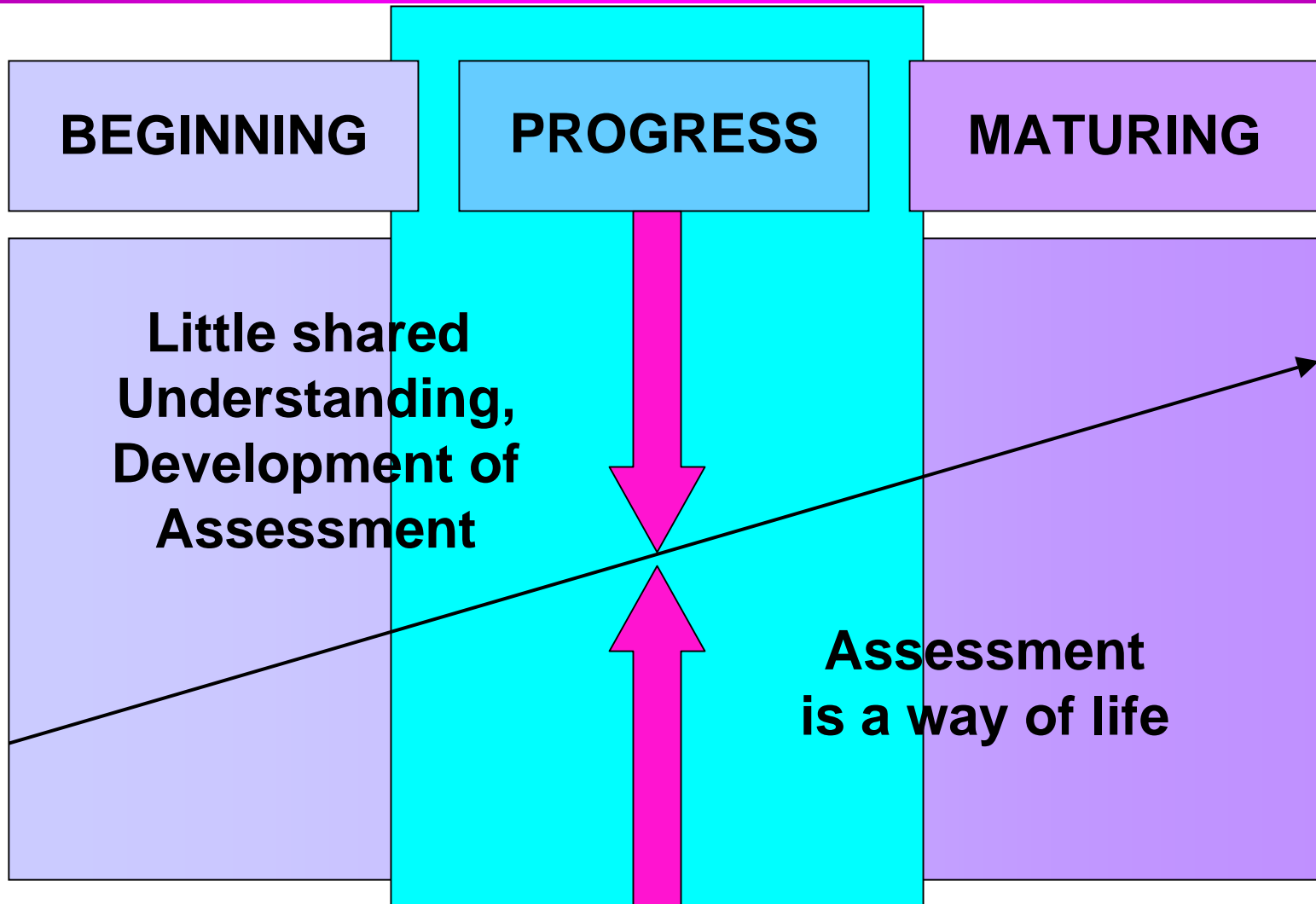
- II. Shared Responsibility**
 - a) Faculty
 - b) Administration and Board
 - c) Students

- III. Institutional Support**
 - a) Resources
 - b) Structures

- IV. Efficacy of Assessment**

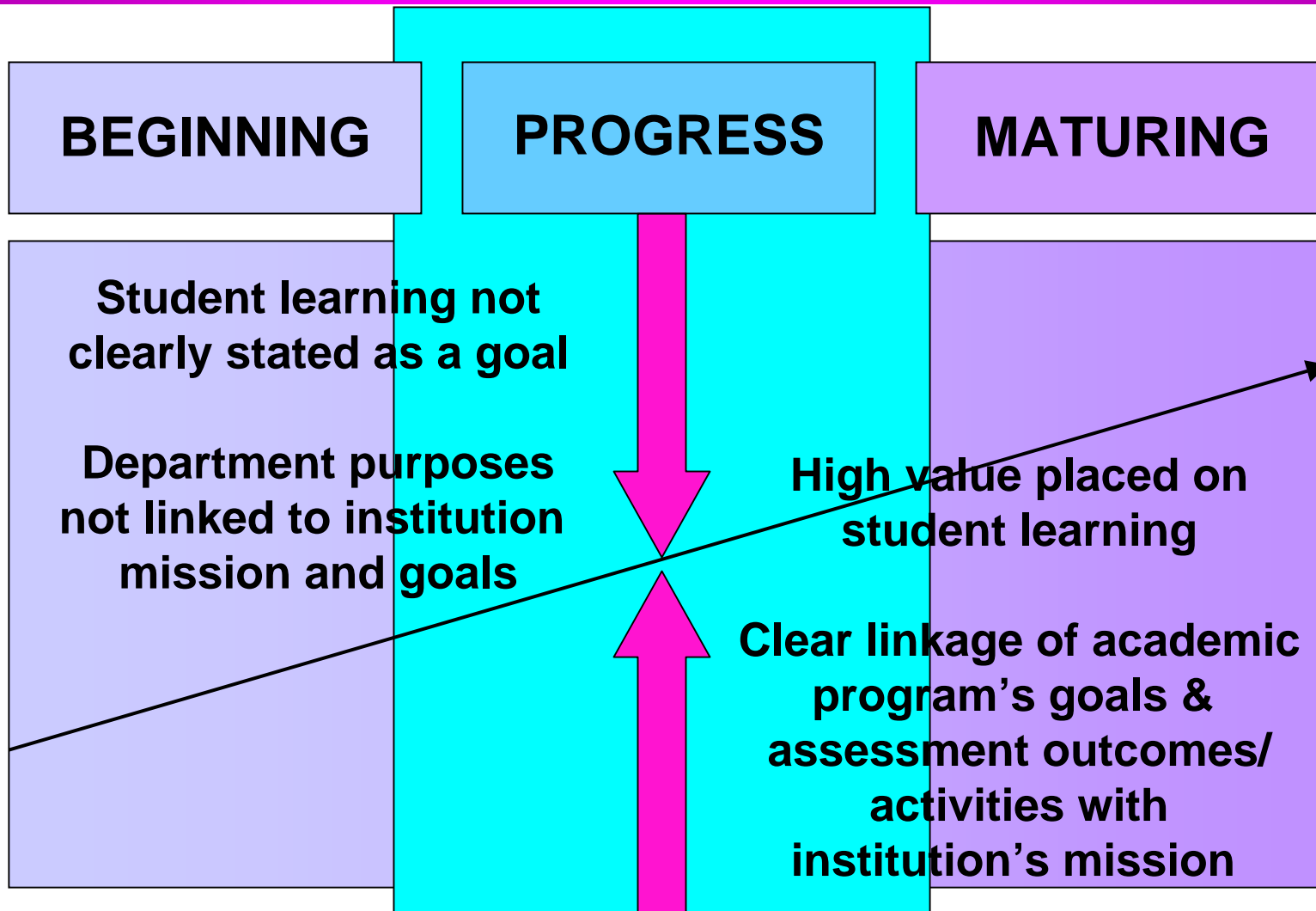
I. Institutional Culture: a) Collective/ Shared Values

Maturing Assessment



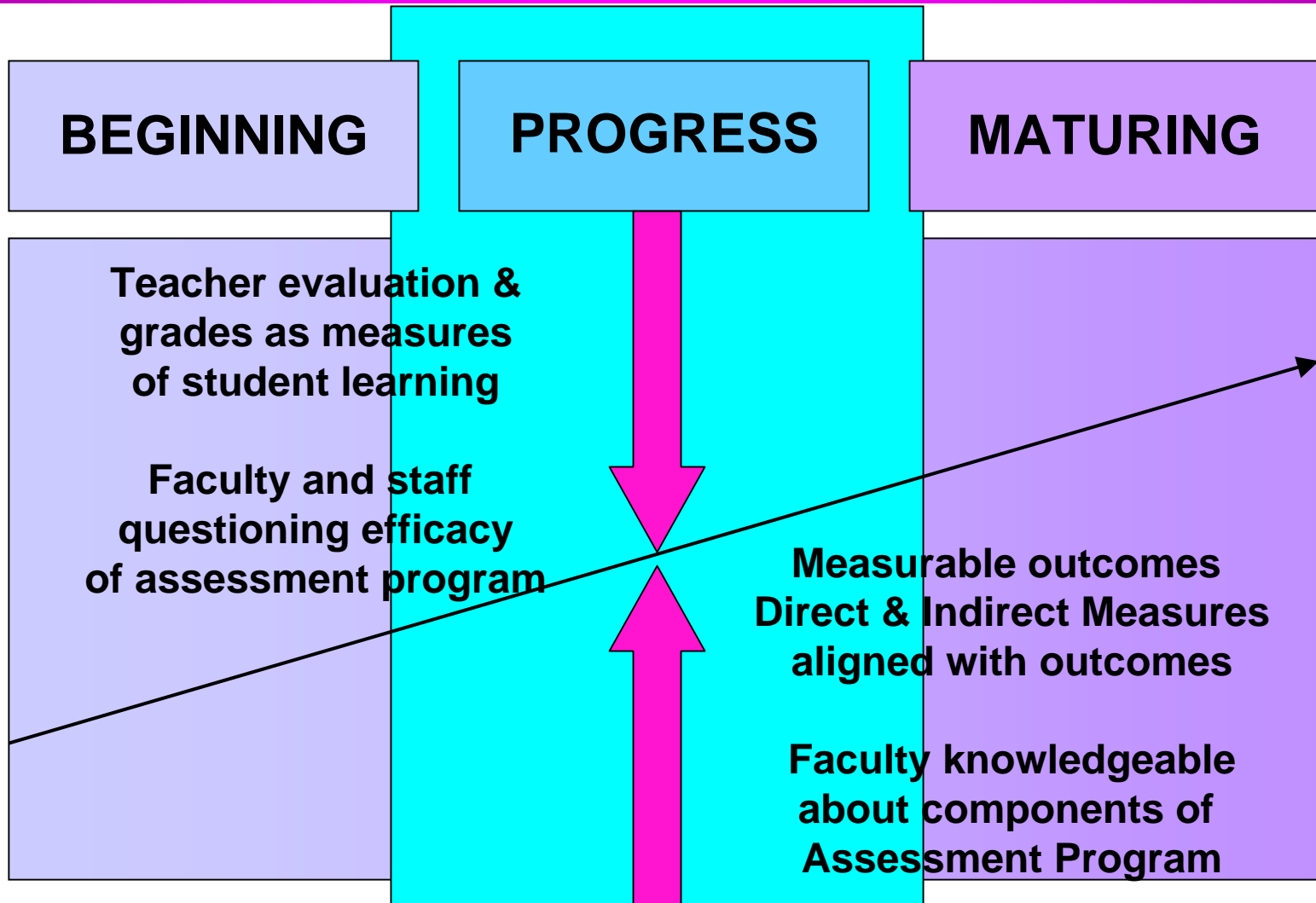
I. Institutional Culture: b) Mission

Maturing Assessment



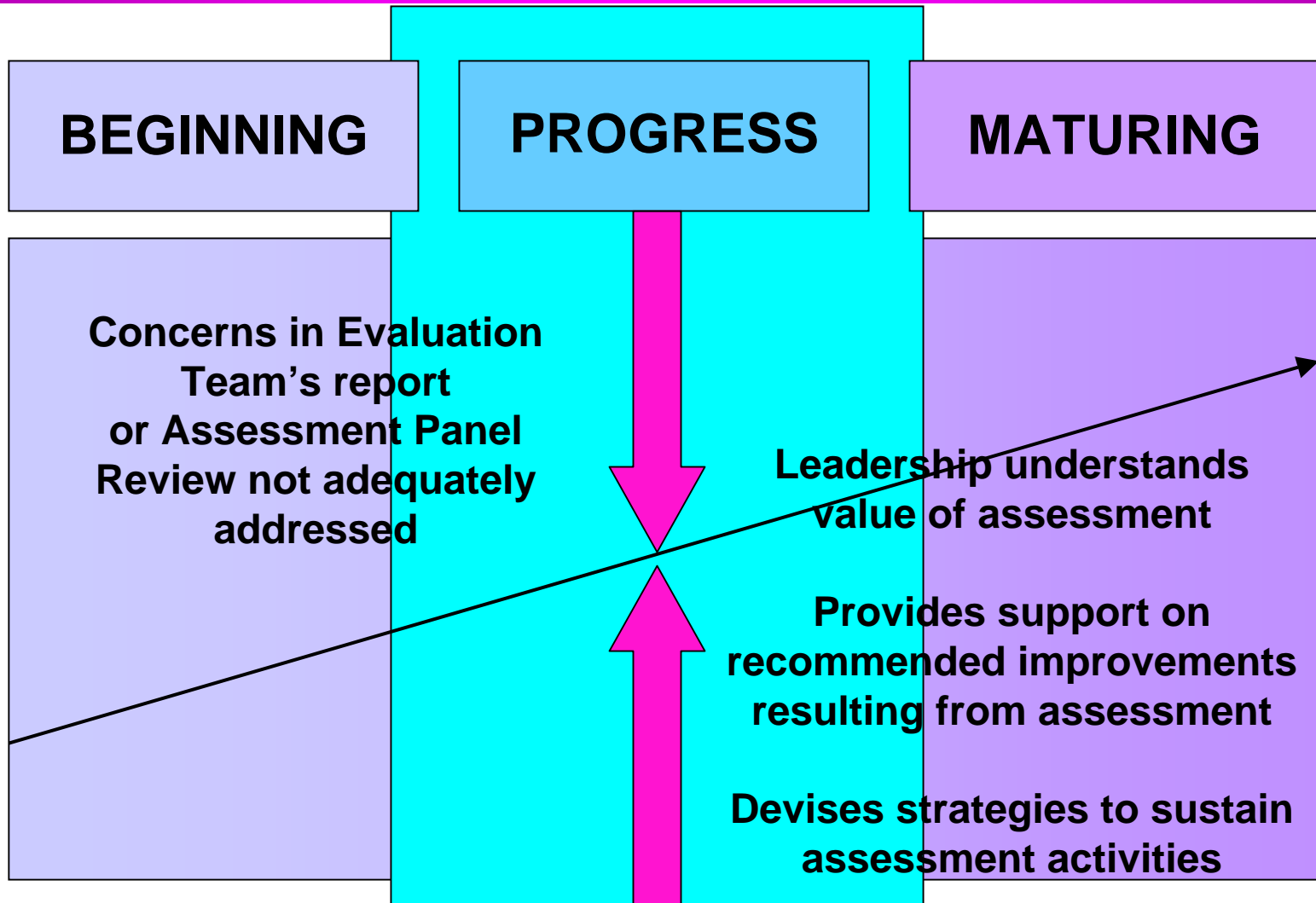
II. Shared Responsibility: a) Faculty

Maturing Assessment



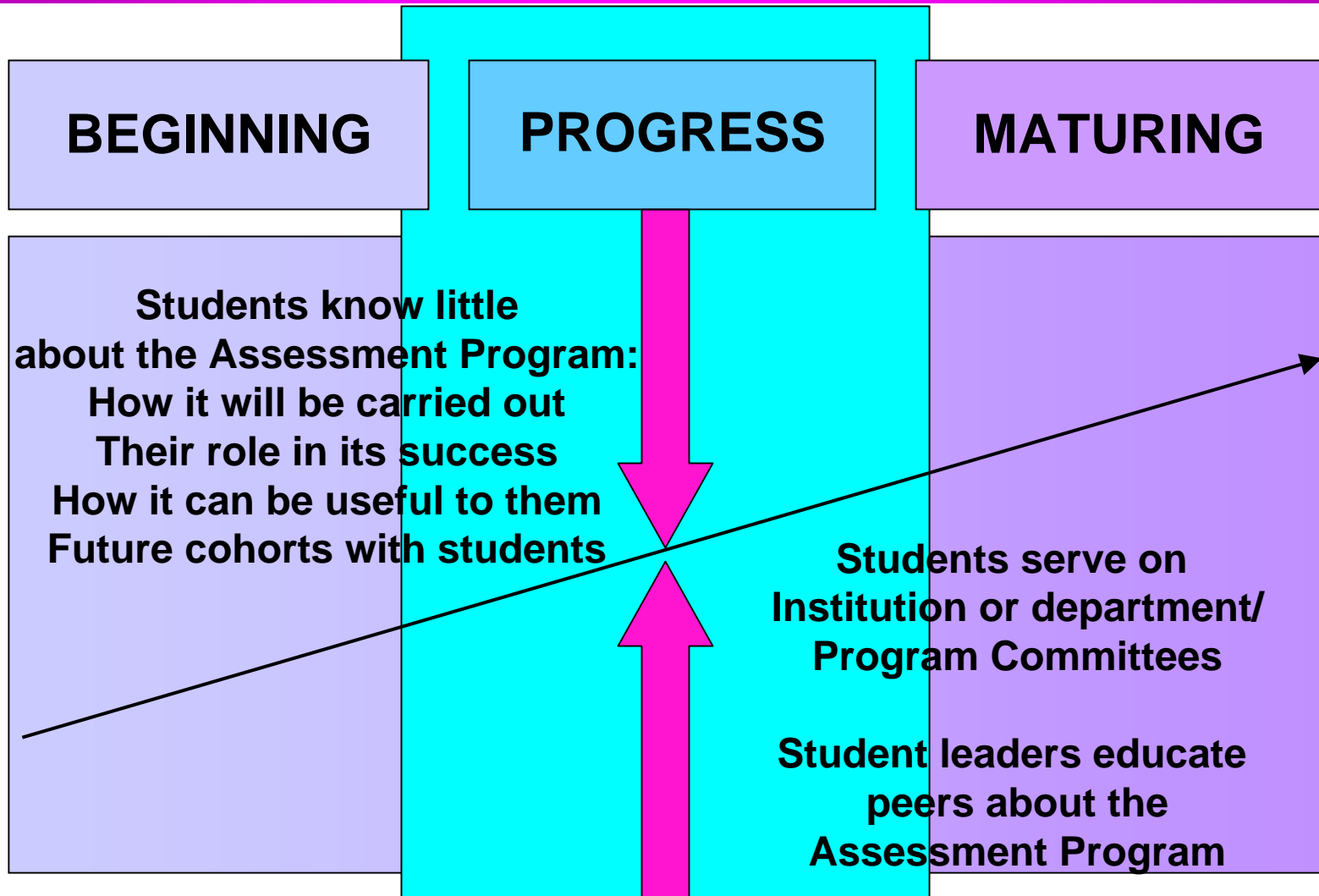
II. Shared Responsibility: b) Administration & Board

Maturing Assessment



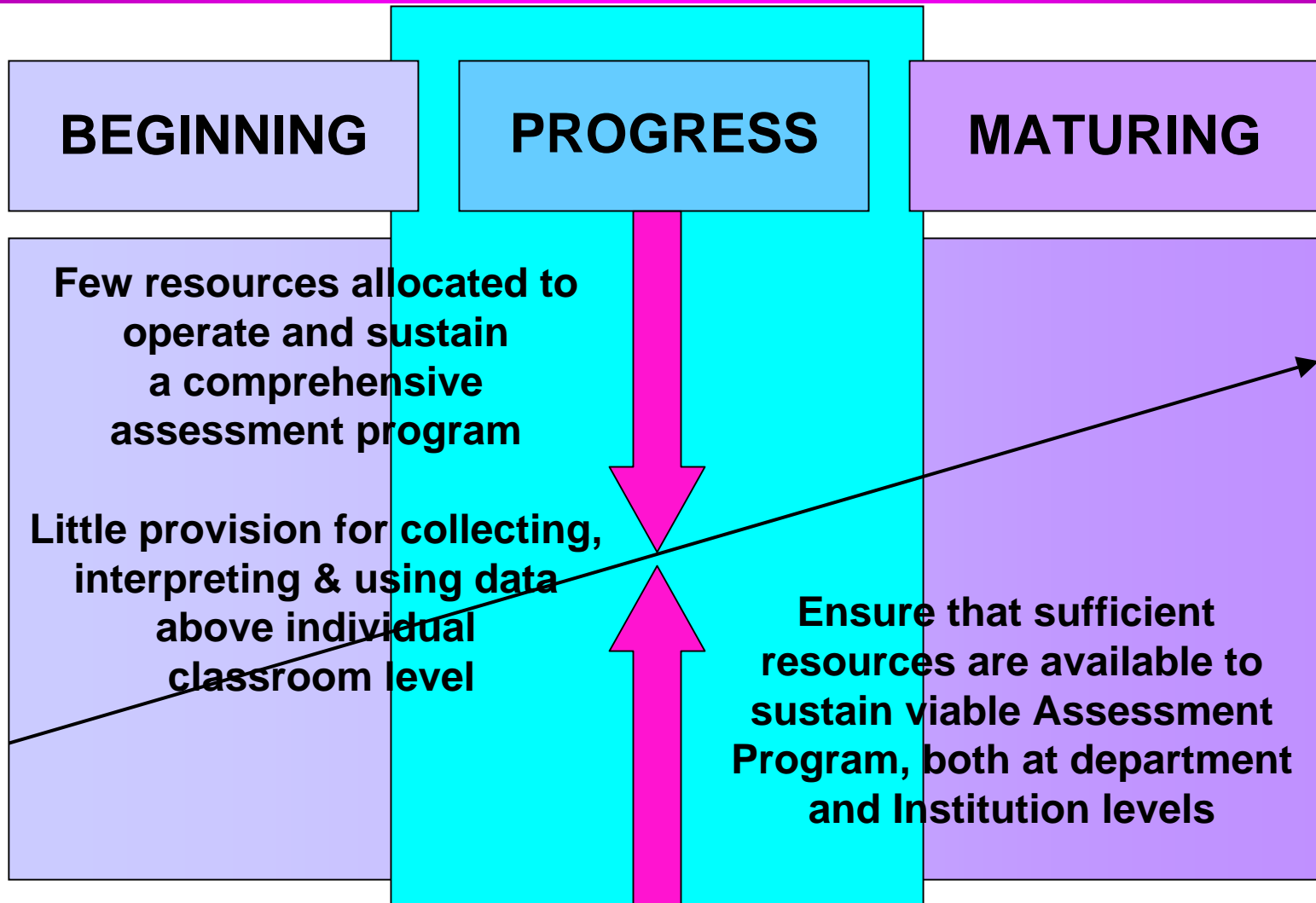
II. Shared Responsibility: c) Students

Maturing Assessment



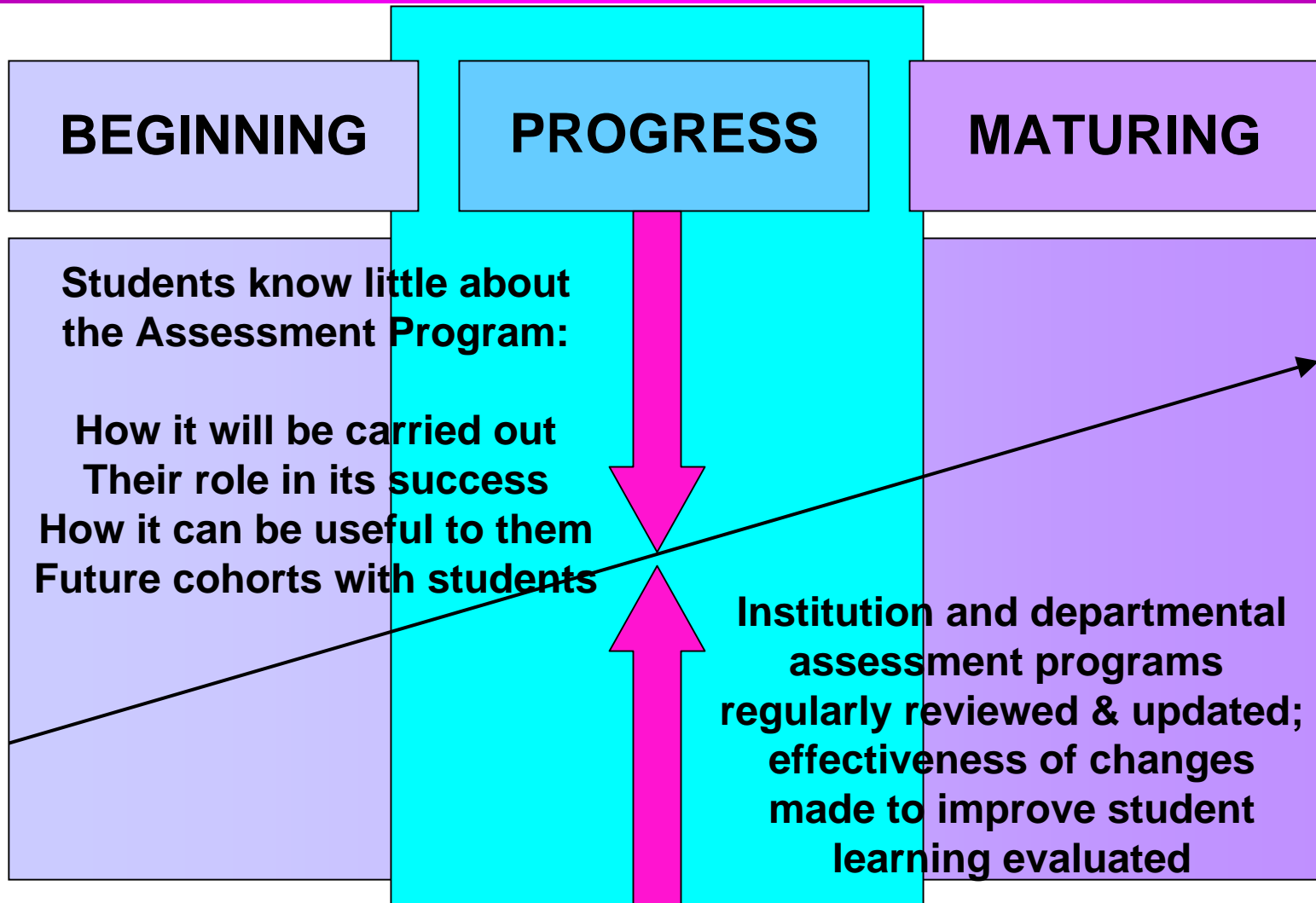
III. Institutional Support: a) Resources

Maturing Assessment



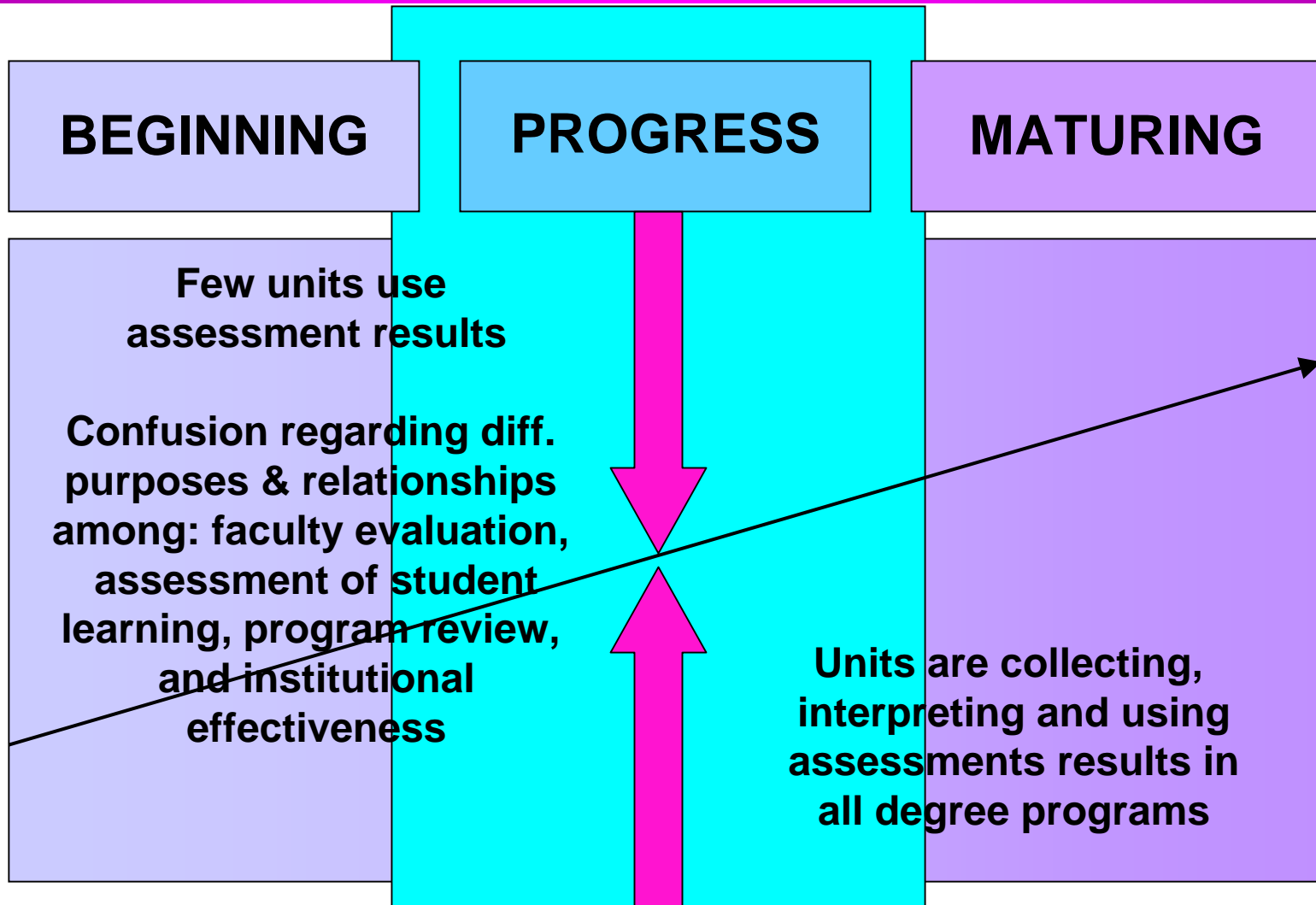
III. Institutional Support: b) Structures

Maturing Assessment



IV. Efficacy of Assessment

Maturing Assessment



Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

- Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.
- Assessment requires attention to outcomes, but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.
- Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic.

Please refer to handout.

Common Reactions to Assessment Initiatives

- Ignoring it
- Bribing someone else to do it
- Complaining about it
- Losing sleep over it
- Sitting down and writing it

Big Mistakes in Assessment

- Assuming that it will go away
- Trying to do too much, too soon
- Expecting to get it right the first time
- Not considering implementation issues when creating plans

Big Mistakes in Assessment

- Borrowing plans and methods without acculturation
- Demanding statistical research standards
- Doing it for accreditation instead of improvement

Big Mistakes in Assessment

- Confusing institutional effectiveness with student learning
- Making assessment the responsibility of one individual
- Assuming collecting data is Doing Assessment

Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes

- » The knowledge, skills/abilities, and attributes we want our students to be able to demonstrate.
 - From their learning experiences both curricular and co-curricular activities.

Characteristics of Student Learning Outcomes

They are:

- Learner Centered
- Specific
- Action oriented
- Cognitively Appropriate

Student Learning Outcomes

Basic Format:

- Students will be able to <<action verb>> <<something>>

Example:

- Students will be able to apply research methodologies to examine issues within the discipline.

COMPREHENSION**EVALUATION****KNOWLEDGE****APPLICATION****SYNTHESIS****ANALYSIS**

Cite	Associate	Apply	Analyze	Arrange	Appraise
Count	Classify	Calculate	Appraise	Assemble	Assess
Define	Compare	Classify	Calculate	Collect	Choose
Draw	Compute	Demonstrate	Categorize	Compose	Compare
Identify	Contrast	Determine	Classify	Construct	Criticize
List	Differentiate	Dramatize	Compare	Create	Determine
Name	Discuss	Employ	Debate	Design	Estimate
Point	Distinguish	Examine	Diagram	Formulate	Evaluate
Quote	Estimate	Illustrate	Differentiate	Integrate	Grade
Read	Explain	Interpret	Distinguish	Manage	Judge
Recite	Express	Locate	Examine	Organize	Measure
Record	Extrapolate	Operate	Experiment	Plan	Rank
Repeat	Interpolate	Order	Identify	Prepare	Rate
Select	Locate	Report	Inspect	Prescribe	Recommend
State	Predict	Restructure	Inventory	Produce	Revise
Tabulate	Report	Schedule	Question	Propose	Score
Tell	Restate	Sketch	Separate	Specify	Select
Trace	Review	Solve	Summarize	Synthesize	Standardize
Underline	Tell	Translate	Test	Write	Test
	Translate	Write			Validate

Hands-on Exercise #1

In small groups, draft 1-2 student learning outcomes for students graduating in your discipline.

Example (psychology):

- » Students will be able to apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues.

Worksheet for Exercise #1

Students will . . .

Student Learning Outcomes

- How to revise student learning outcomes into a simpler and easier to use format.
- The proposed format will help in the selection of applicable assessment tools, measures, assignments, performances, etc.

Example #1

Gather factual information and apply it to a given problem in a manner that is relevant, clear, comprehensive, and conscious of possible bias in the information selected

BETTER: Students will be able to apply factual information to a problem.

COMPONENTS:

Relevance

Clarity

Comprehensiveness

Aware of Bias

Hands-on Exercise #2

Students will be able to:

Imagine and seek out a variety of possible goals, assumptions, interpretations, or perspectives which can give alternative meanings or solutions to given situations or problems.

Worksheet for Exercise #2

Better (rephrasing):

Key Components:

Possible Answer

BETTER: Students will be able to provide alternative solutions to situations or problems.

COMPONENTS:

Assumptions

Perspectives

Interpretations

Analysis of comparative advantage

Example #3

Formulate and test hypotheses by performing laboratory, simulation, or field experiments in at least two of the natural science disciplines (one of these experimental components should develop, in greater depth, students' laboratory experience in the collection of data, its statistical and graphical analysis, and an appreciation of its sources of error and uncertainty)

BETTER: Students will be able to test hypotheses.

COMPONENTS

Data collection

Statistical Analysis

Graphical Analysis

Identification of sources of error

Lessons Learned/ Learning Outcome Rules

- » Use **one** cognitive level
- » Focus on outcomes, not processes
(focus on **what**, not on **how**)
- » List **single** accomplishments
- » Do not indicate level of quality
(effective)

**University Mission &
Student Learning Outcomes**



**College Mission &
Student Learning Outcomes**



**Department or Degree Program
Student Learning Outcomes**

**Degree Program
Learning
Outcome**

**Degree Program
Learning
Outcome**

**Degree Program
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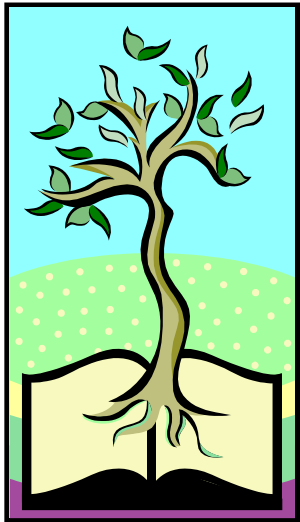
Accreditation reviewers praise institutions' assessment programs that "have clearly linked their assessment activities to their own statements of purpose and goals, and to their objectives for student learning, and in which all of these are reflective of relevant portions of the Institution's Mission and Goals statement and its published educational purposes." (Lopez, 1996.)

Hands-on Exercise #3

Refer to the learning outcomes developed for students in your degree program(s).

Select one learning outcome and determine if you can improve it into a simpler and easier to use format.

- **Identify the Assessment Points in the Curriculum**

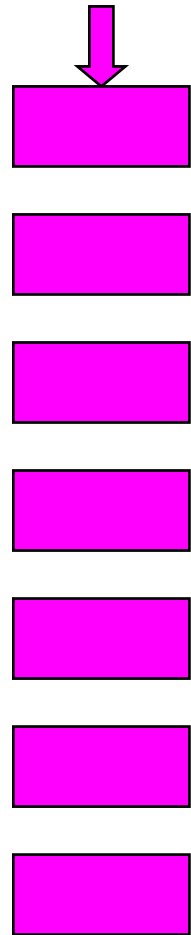


- **Where do you want to target your assessment efforts?**

Example 1

Student Learning Outcomes

Major Courses



	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 4	Course 5
Outcome 1	X		X		X
Outcome 2		X		X	X
Outcome 3		X	X	X	
Outcome 4		X		X	X
Outcome 5	X	X		X	
Outcome 6		X	X		X
Outcome 7	X		X	X	

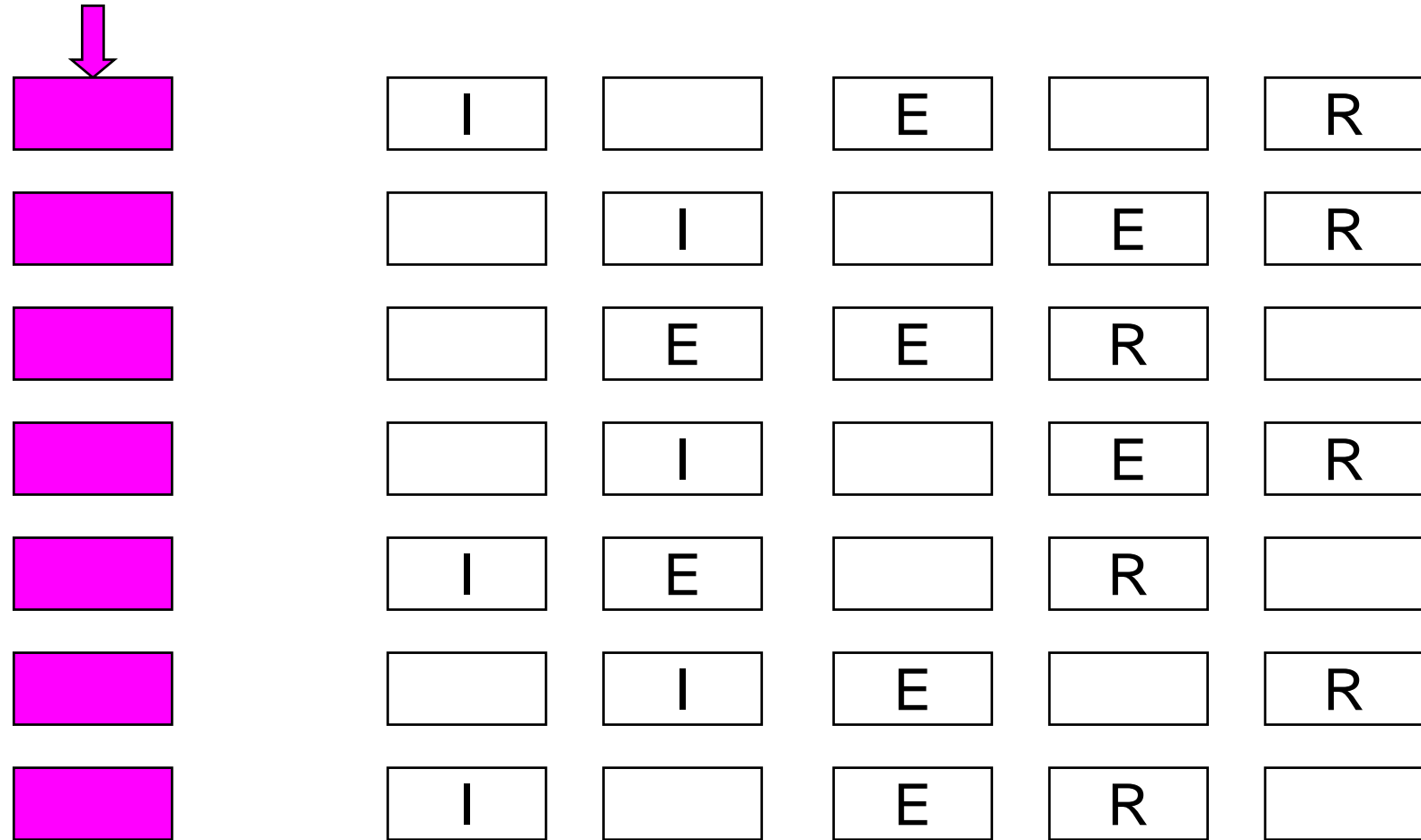
Legend: x = outcome addressed in the course

We can identify where in the curriculum the student learning outcomes are developed.

Example 2

Student Learning Outcomes

Major Courses



	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 4	Course 5
Outcome 1	I		E		R
Outcome 2		I		E	R
Outcome 3		E	E	R	
Outcome 4		I		E	R
Outcome 5	I	E		R	
Outcome 6		I	E		R
Outcome 7	I		E	R	

Legend: I - Introduce
E - Emphasis
R - Reinforced

We can identify where in the curriculum the student learning outcomes are introduced, emphasized or reinforced.

Memo

Journal

Literature
Review

Letter

Writing
(student learning
outcome)

Poster

Pamphlet

*Mechanics
*Style
*Voice
*Structure

Essay

Post
Analysis

Application
Paper

Critique

Questions?

