

SLO's Made Simple: Using the Nichols Model to Close the Assessment Loop

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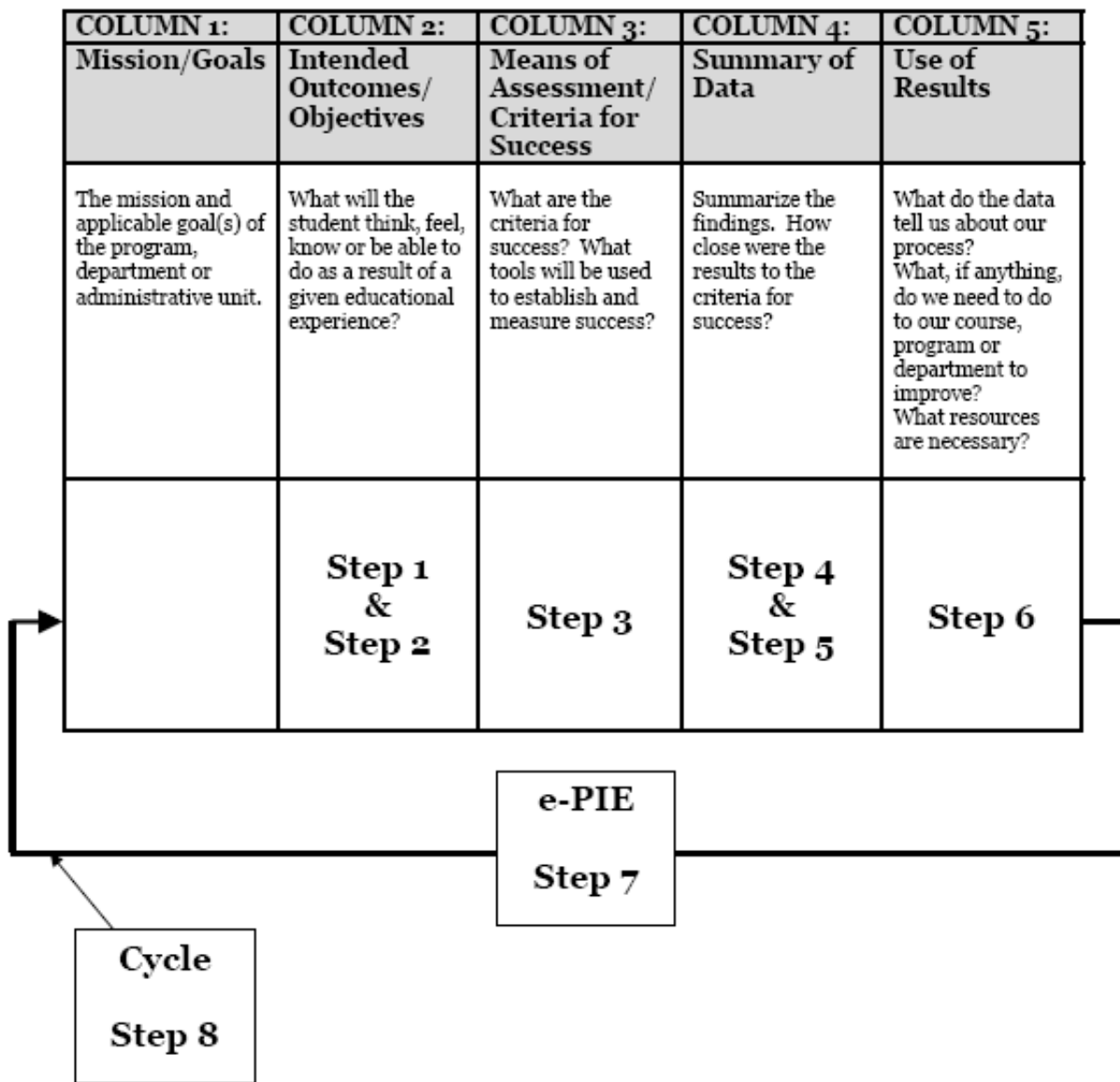
Today's session:

- What exactly is the “Nichols Model?”
- What our model looks like, and how it makes the process simple.
- How you can use this model to create meaning from the process.
- Practice applying the model to one of your courses.

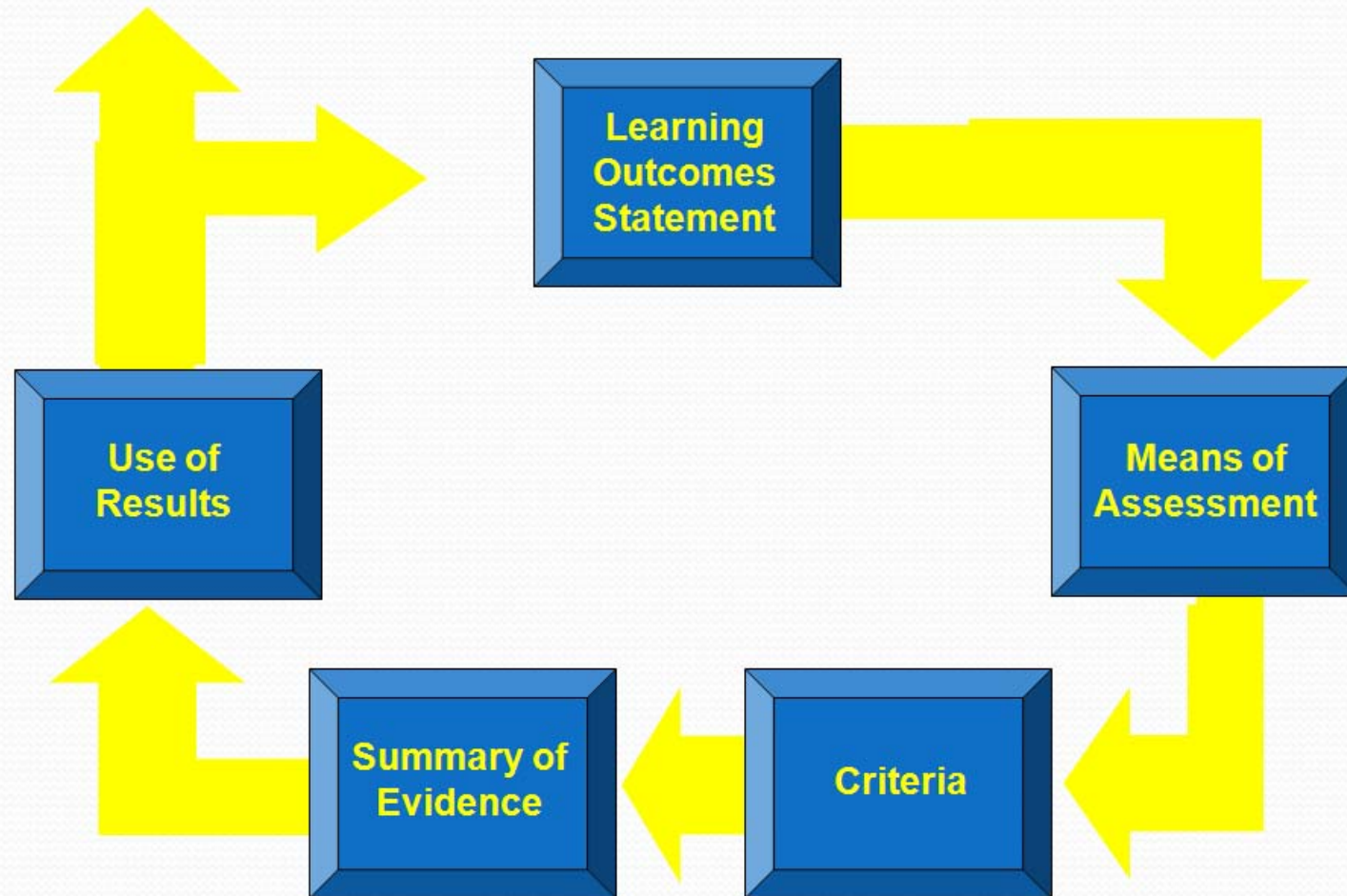
What is the “Nichols Model?”

- A process pioneered by James O. Nichols, aimed at connecting institutional effectiveness with assessment of intended Student Learning Outcomes.
- Distilled into a 5-step process, sometimes referred to as the “5-column model”
- Functions as a learning-driven model for institutional effectiveness/improvement.

Table 2. Nichols' 5-column model



What our Nichols Model looks like:



Why does it Make SLOs simple?

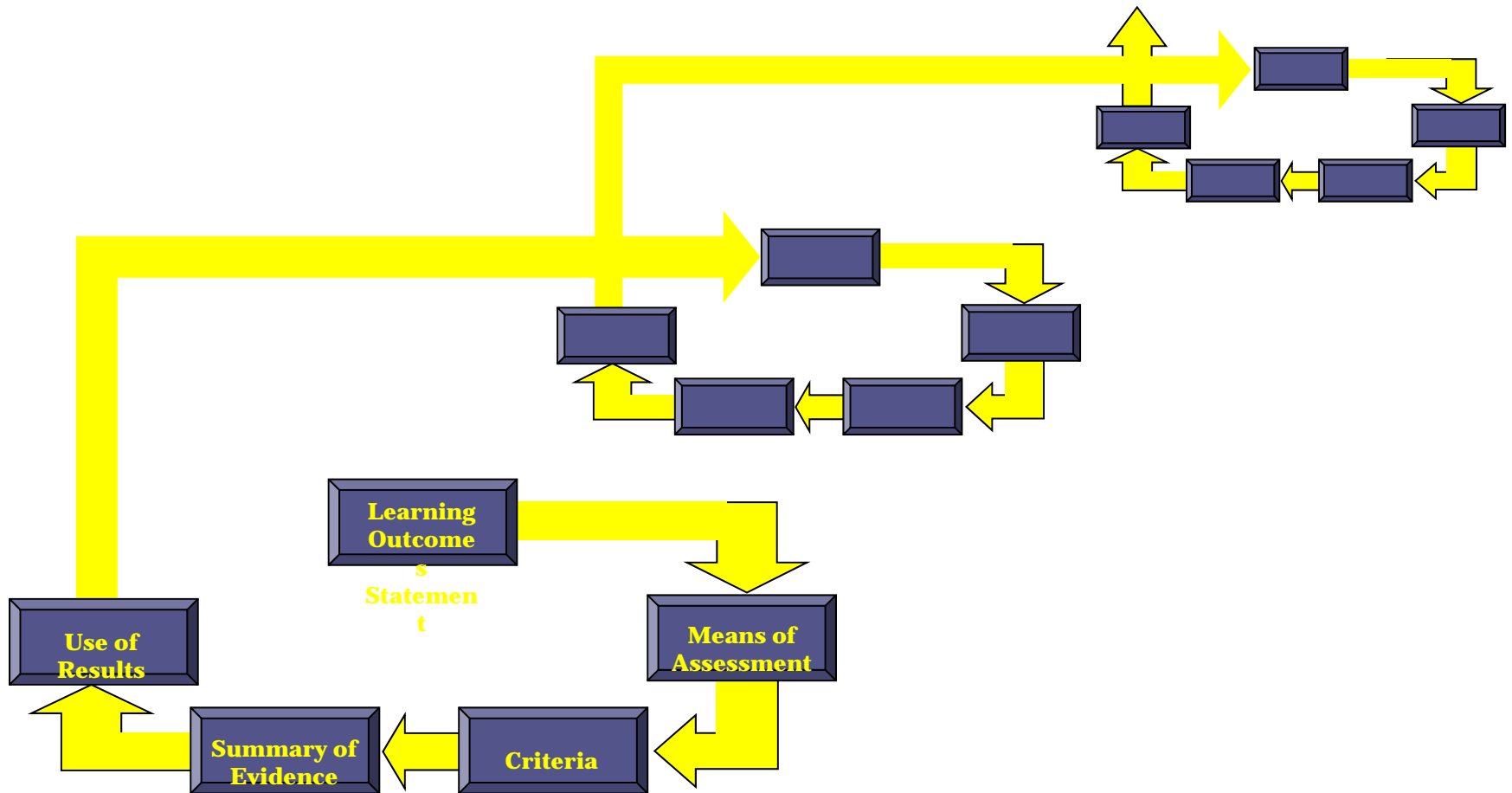
- Puts the whole process in a more practical context.
- Focuses energy on the most important goals and issues.
- Effectively summarizes what is working/not working in your course.
- Closing the Loop: using what is learned from this process to make improvements.

What are the 5 steps?

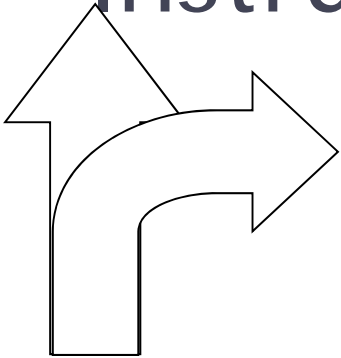
1. Write/Revise the Learning Outcome.
2. Choose a method to measure the outcome.
3. Set a benchmark/criteria for success.
4. Carry out the assessment/collect evidence.
5. Discuss the evidence & use results for improvement.

lather-rinse-repeat...

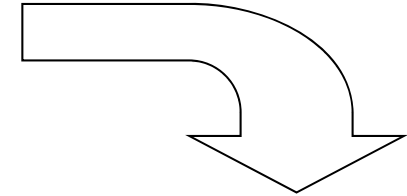
Continuous Improvement



Instruction Example:



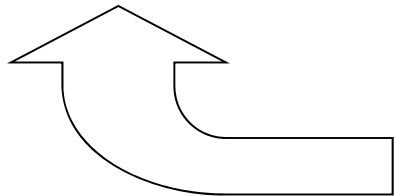
1. SLO – “Students appreciate one’s own physical, mental and emotional health, and demonstrate the knowledge and/or skills associated with actions necessary for optimum health and physical efficiency.”



5. Use of Results (Implications for Program Improvement & Planning) –The Fitness goals were too easy to achieve. Higher fitness standards will be set. However, few of the students set dietary goals and were assessed.

More focused attention on dietary implications on overall health will be pursued.

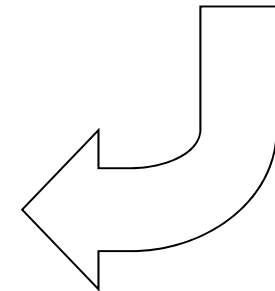
2. Means of Assessment (Measurement Method)
– Students pursue a personal change/improvement project, aimed at improving their own health or physical condition.



4. Summary of Data Collected (Results) Looking at the scores most students showed at least some degree of improvement. 81% of students showed improvement in overall fitness level, whereas 15% showed improvement in Diet.

3. Criteria for Success (Benchmark) –

All students (100%) to demonstrate improvement, based on a pre-/post-test of their fitness level or diet.



Let's Practice:

- Focus on a course that you currently teach.
- Using the template, complete each step of the cycle.
- Assume that you have assessed the course, and complete Box 4 as if you have data.
- Given the data, come up with some ideas for using the results for improvement. Write these in Box 5.