**Goals/Purposes of Assessment**

The four main purposes of assessment should be:
1. **To improve** – The assessment process should provide feedback to determine how the administrative unit can be improved.
2. **To inform** – The assessment process should inform department heads and other decision-makers of the contributions and impact of the administrative unit to the development and growth of students.
3. **To prove** – The assessment process should encapsulate and demonstrate what the administrative unit is accomplishing to students, faculty, staff and outsiders. *(Adapted from WEAVE and Wisconsin).*
4. **To support** – The assessment process should provide support for campus decision-making activities such as unit review and strategic planning, as well as external accountability activities such as accreditation.

**Of Note**

**Characteristics of Effective Assessment**

Effective administrative unit assessment should answer these questions:
1. What are you trying to do?
2. How well are you doing it?
3. Using the answers to the first two questions, how can you improve what you are doing?
4. What and how does an administrative unit contribute to the development and growth of students?
5. How can the student learning experience be improved?

*(Adapted from Hutchings and Marchese, 1990)*

Additionally, assessment is effective when:
1. Assessment is viewed as a comprehensive, systematic and continuous activity.
2. Assessment is viewed as a means for self-improvement.
3. Assessment measures are meaningful.
4. Assessment utilizes multiple measures and multiple sources.
5. Assessment is used as a management tool.
6. Assessment results are valued, and are genuinely used to improve administrative units’ structure, services, and processes.
7. Assessment is coordinated by one person or a team and reviewed by a committee.
8. Assessment should involve the participation and input of all faculty and staff.
9. Assessment includes student involvement.

When developing the assessment plan for your unit, always refer back to the four main functions of assessment.