

# Navigating the Accreditation Landscape: The Intersection of Evaluation, Assessment & Measurement

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# Agenda

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- Introduction and purpose
- U.S. educational system and stakeholders
- Evolution of the accreditation landscape
- Education providers balancing accountability and learning
- Role of the evaluator
- Where evaluation, assessment and measurement intersect
- Instrument design to improve outcome measures
- Limitations, recommendations and conclusions

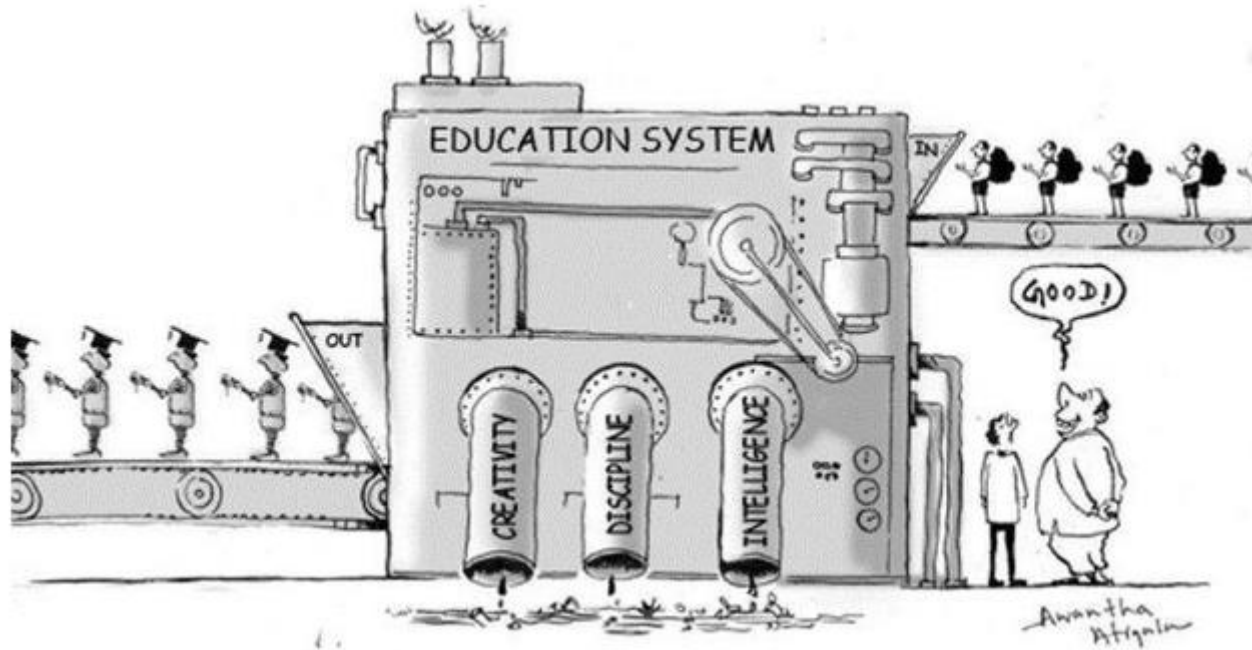
# Introduction

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- Background information
  - Standardized Testing
  - Instructional Psychology and Technology
    - Educational Measurement and Evaluation
  - Academic Assessment in Postsecondary Education
- Evidence-based outcomes = Direct measures
  - What evidence demonstrates that the intervention resulted in increased learning?
- Improving Outcomes, Building Knowledge
  - Finding What Works

# Systems of Education

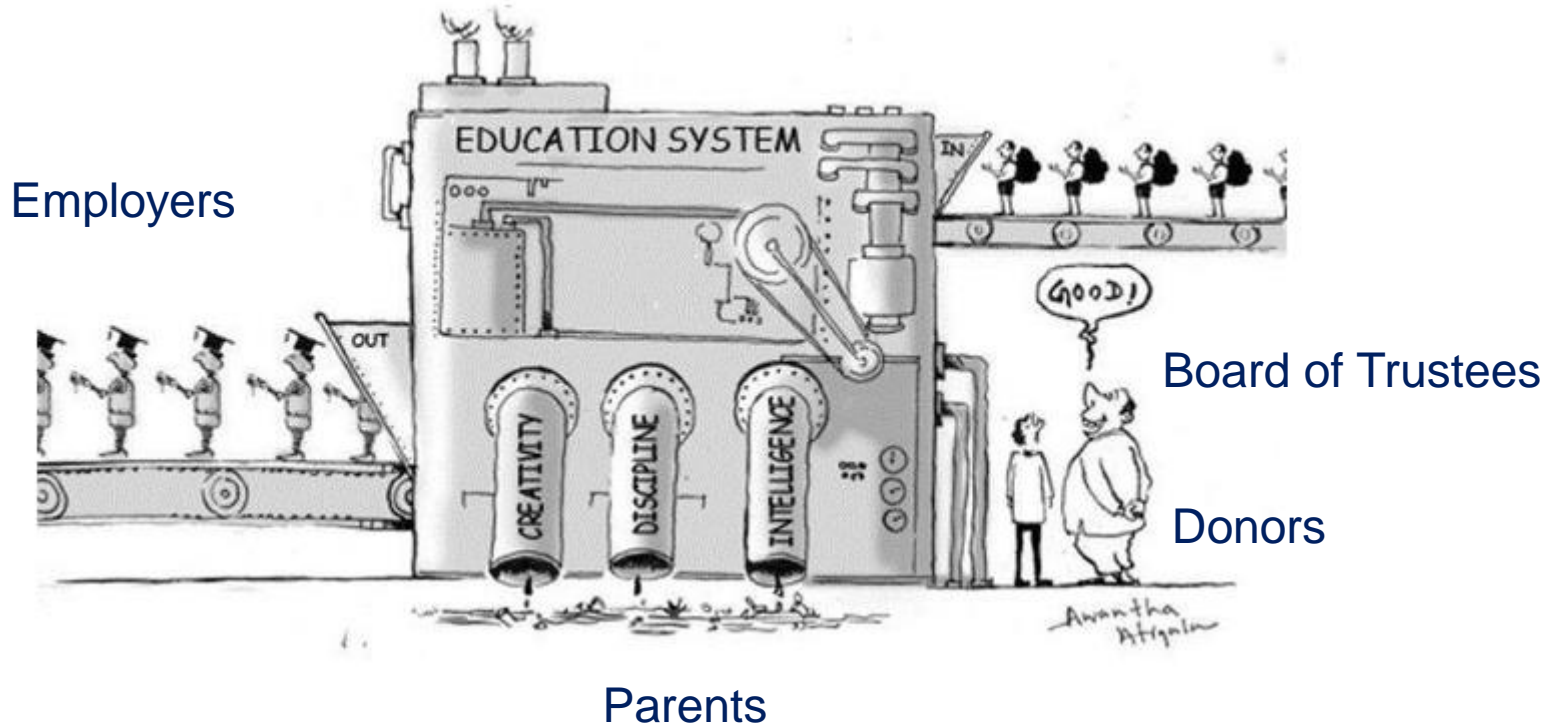
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# Stakeholders

US Department of Education

State Governments

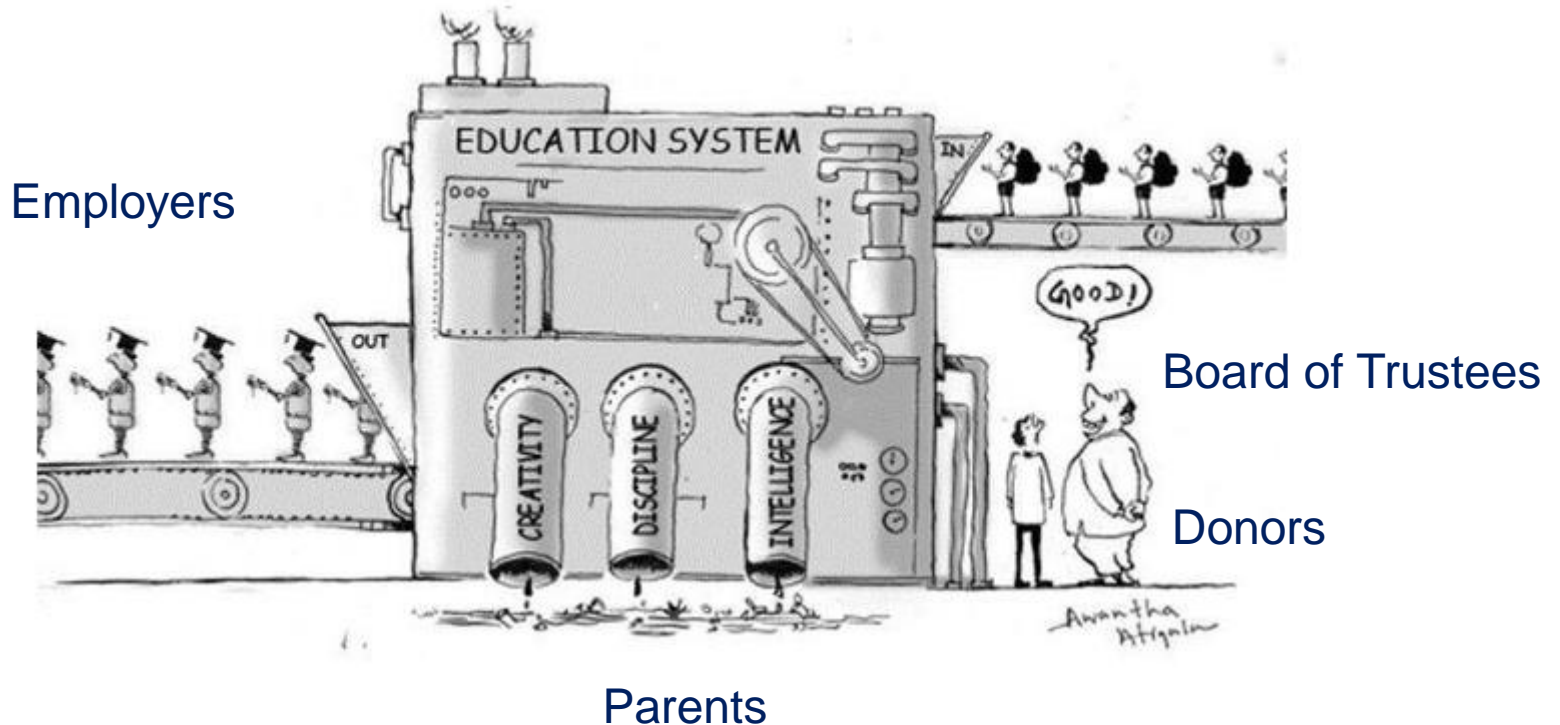


# Accreditation Landscape

US Department of Education

Regional & Specialized Accreditors

State Governments



# Accreditation Landscape

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- Process to ensure that education providers meet, and maintain minimum standards of quality and integrity
- Voluntary – based on principle of self-governance
- Accrediting agencies recognized by both federal and state governments for oversight responsibility
- Emphasis: good evidence to support decision making
- Limited involvement with federal government
  - eligible to participate in federal programs (financial aid – ½)

# Accreditation Landscape

US Department of Education

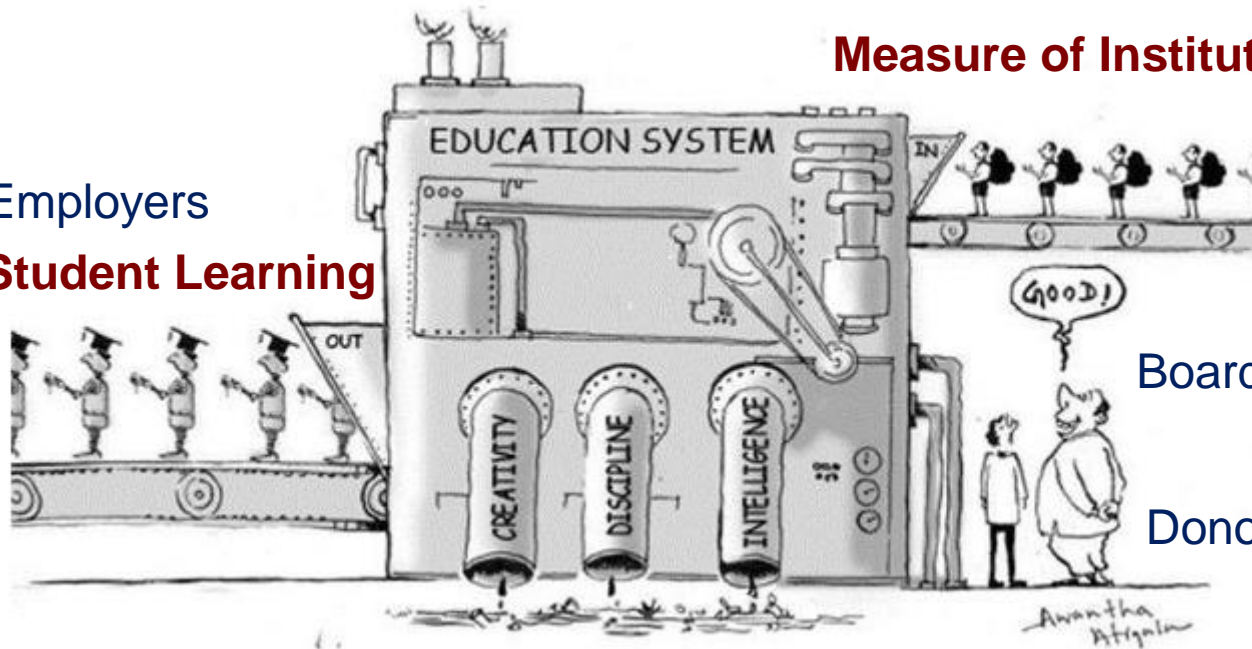
Regional & Specialized Accreditors

State Governments

Measure of Institutional Quality

Employers

Measure of Student Learning



Board of Trustees

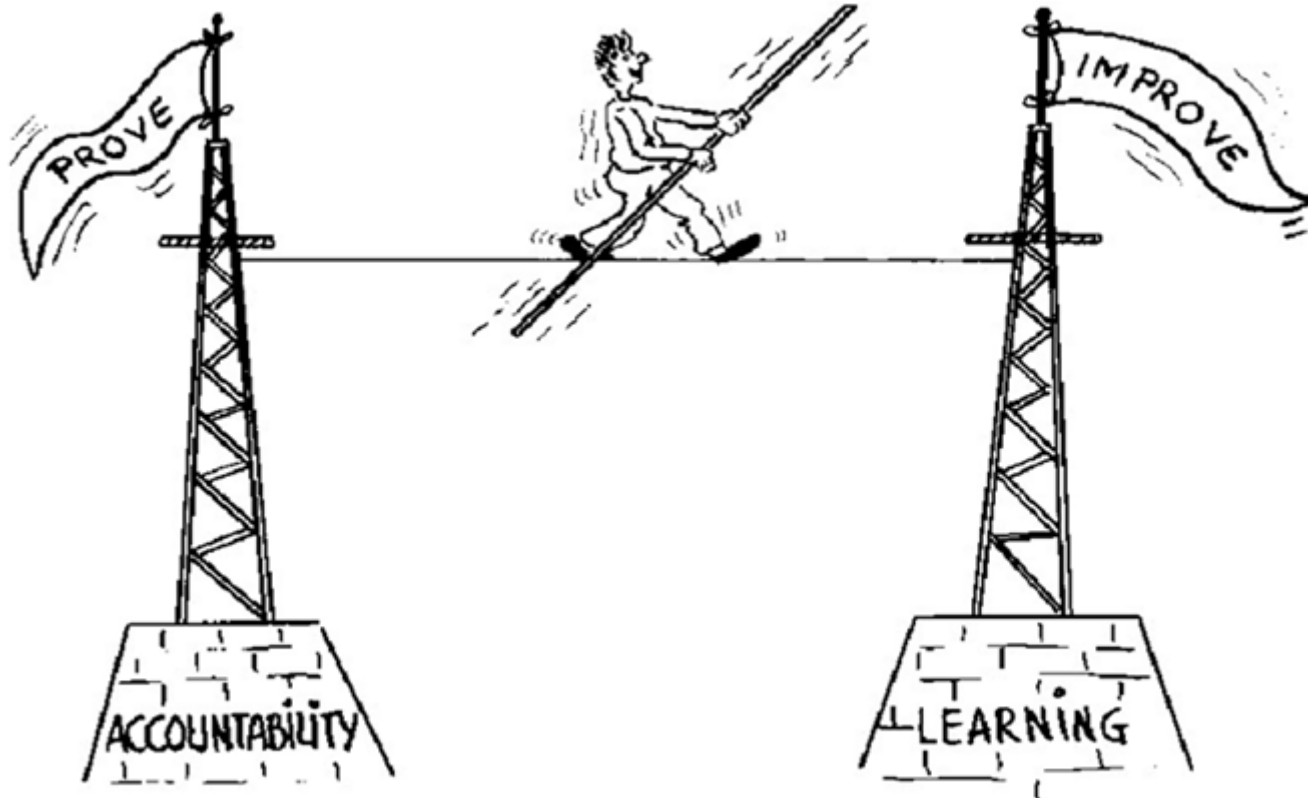
Donors

Parents



# Balancing Accountability & Learning

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Source: Terry Smutylo & Daniel Morales-Gomez

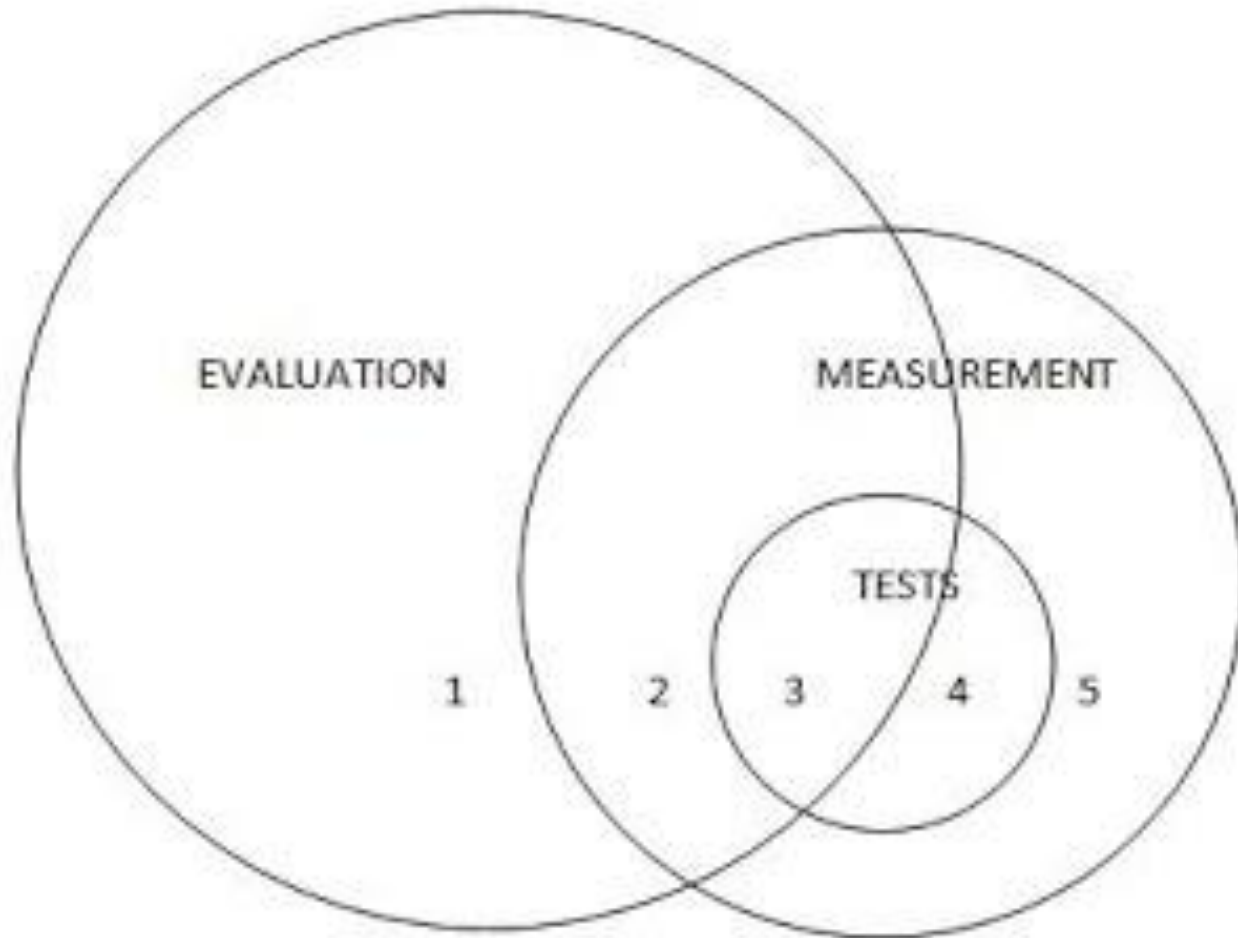
# What Role Does the Evaluator Play?

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- Demand for education researchers to account for learning
- State, Federal, and International solicitations
  - Example: NSF is a funding source for approximately 24 percent of all federally supported basic research conducted by America's colleges and universities.
    - annual budget of \$7.5 billion (FY 2016)
  - DRK-12 program solicitation – learning strand
    - “DRK-12 seeks proposals that consider ways in which STEM innovations and approaches could be designed and implemented in a range of learning environments that enhance student learning.”
- Evaluator as a measurement expert

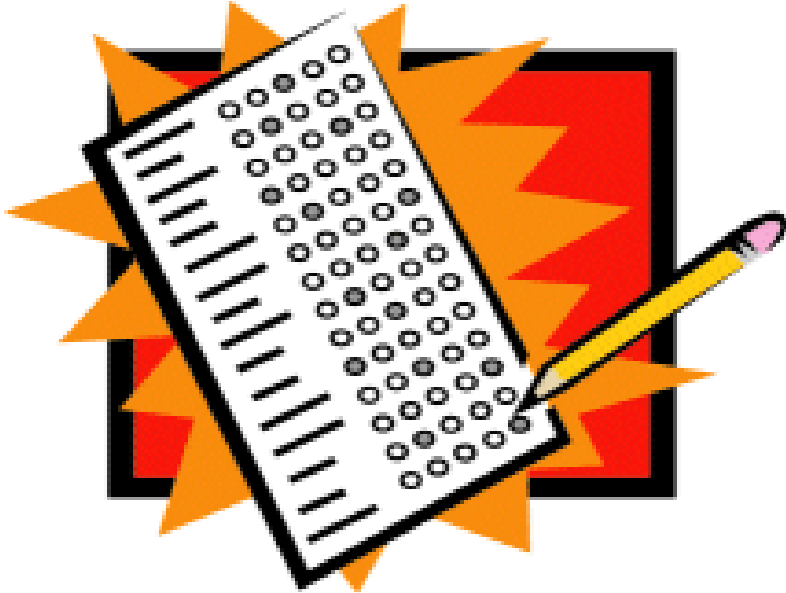
# Evaluation, Assessment & Measurement

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# Assessments / Tests

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- Used interchangeably
- Process of gathering information to monitor progress
  - Includes tests and other methods (e.g., observations)
- Tools used to gauge how much of a trait (e.g., skill, ability, disposition) individuals possess

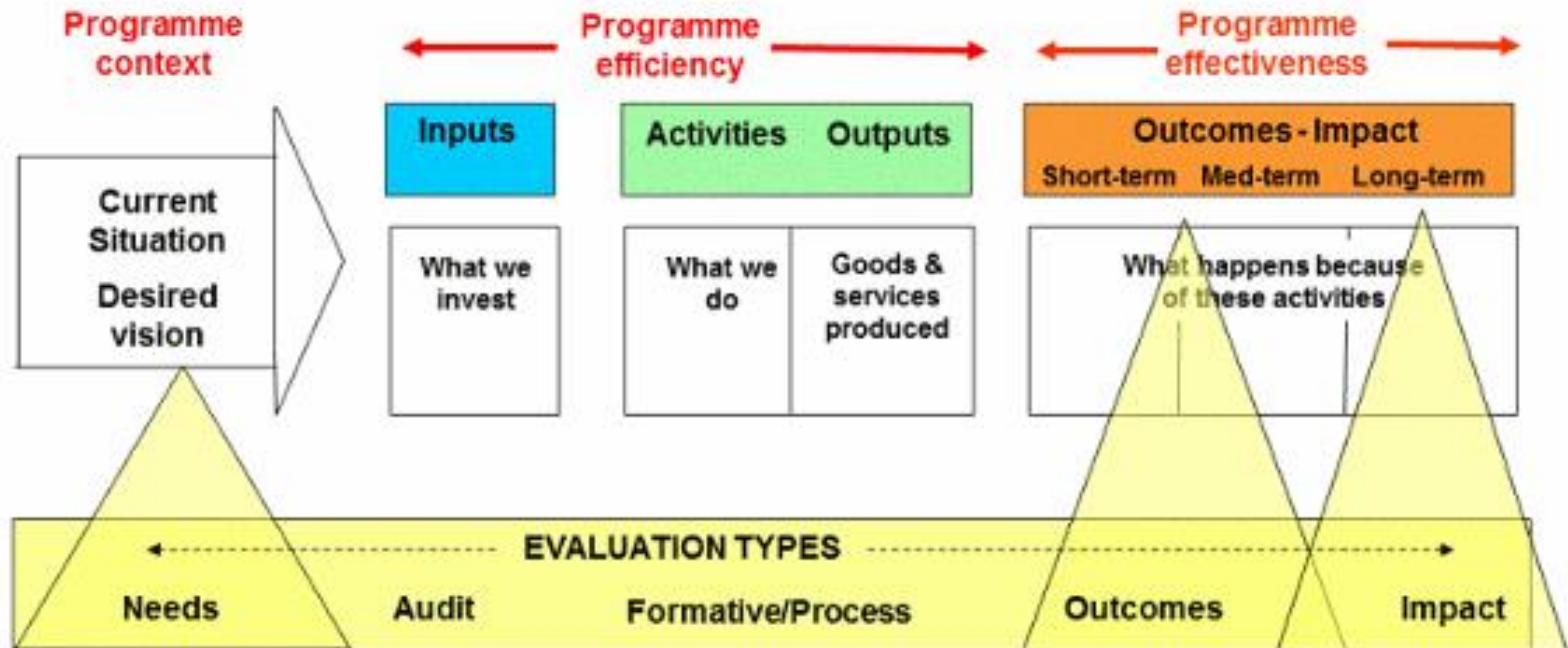
# Measurement

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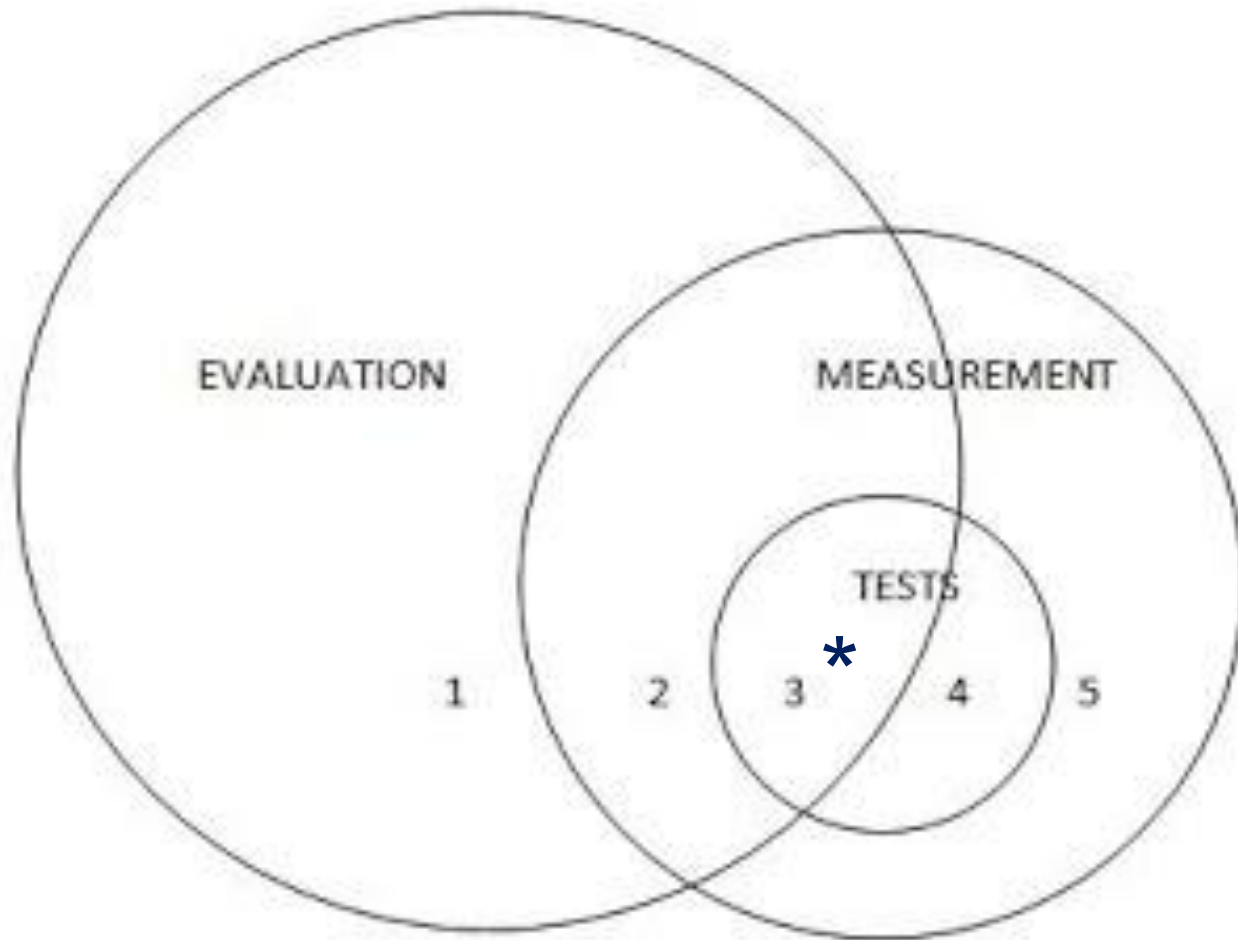
- Scores assigned & reported
- Reliable/consistent
- Valid/meaningful
  - Can't be valid without being reliable
  - Reliability does not guarantee validity
- Actionable/judgement made
  - Useful for learning about subject studying

# Evaluation



# Evaluation, Assessment & Measurement

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# Selecting and Designing an Instrument

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**SURVEYS, TESTS, OBSERVATIONS, INTERVIEWS**

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# Measurement Principles

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- Phase 1: Definitional issues (alignment)
  - Determining and describing the purpose of the assessment
  - Identifying the population of being studied
  - Identifying and defining the relevant constructs

# Measurement Principles

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- Phase 2: Selecting or Designing instruments
  - Phase 2A: selecting an instrument
    - Step 1: locating instruments
    - Step 2: reviewing instruments
    - Step 3: comparing instruments
    - Step 4: making a choice
  - Phase 2B: designing an instrument
    - Step 1: prepare a blueprint (what you want to measure)
    - Step 2: writing/generate item pool
    - Step 3: decide on scale (number, even/odd, description)
    - Step 4: writing directions

# Measurement Principles

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- Guidelines for editing items/statements
  - Write statements that cover the entire range of construct
  - Keep the language of statements simple, clear, and direct
    - Minimize repetition
  - Each statement should include only one complete thought
  - Avoid statements likely to be endorsed by everyone or almost no one
  - Avoid words that are vague or that may not be understood by those asked to respond
  - Statements should not contain irrelevant material

# Measurement Principles

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- Phase 3: Administering the instrument
  - Have initial item pool reviewed by experts
    - Make changes accordingly
  - Administer items to a development sample
    - Include more items to account for attrition
    - Pilot test with a relatively large representative sample
      - rule of thumb (minimum 10x the # of items)
  - Evaluate and improve the technical quality of instrument
    - Reliability, Factor Analysis, Response patterns
  - Optimize scale length
  - Administer instrument

# Limitations, Recommendations and Conclusions

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- True score = observed score + error
- The more valid and reliable the instrument, the more confident we can be about the claims we make
- Apply measurement principles to construct a good instrument
- Money and time is always a factor
- Know when to use your judgement
- Make realistic claims in research and evaluation proposals
- Educate others in properly interpreting the results

# Questions?

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

For a copy of this presentation, email me at [Assunta@hezel.com](mailto:Assunta@hezel.com)

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