



# *CHEA Workshop on Accreditation and Student Learning Outcomes*

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## *Background on the Issue: What's Pushing This Issue?*

- Increased Emphasis from DOE
- Escalating Stakeholder Interest (Citizens, Employers, Students)
- New Kinds of Institutions and Programs





## *The Challenge to Accrediting Bodies: What is Needed?*

- Coherent and Understandable Way to Explain Our Position(s)
- A Language to Communicate About the Issue Inside the Community
- Common Resources for Agencies and Institutions





# *A Taxonomy of Terms Commonly Used in Connection with the “Assessment” of Student Learning Outcomes*

<b>Units of Analysis</b>	<b>Ways of Looking at Performance</b>	<b>Ways of Looking at Outcomes</b>	<b>Ways to Review Performance</b>
<b>Institution</b>	Efficiency Productivity Effectiveness	Behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employment</li><li>• Further Education</li><li>• Career Mobility</li><li>• Income</li></ul>	Evaluation
<b>Program</b>	Output Productivity	Satisfaction	Measurement Indicator
<b>Student</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowledge</li><li>• Skill</li><li>• Ability</li><li>• Attitude/Disposition</li></ul> <b>Attainment</b> <b>Development</b>	Assessment <b>Evidence of Achievement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examinations</li><li>• Performances</li><li>• Student Work</li></ul>





## *Exercise 1: Types of Evidence*

- Rate Each Example of Evidence in Terms of its Appropriateness to Demonstrating the Quality of Student Learning Outcomes
- Comment Briefly Why You Rated the Item as You Did
- Review Your Ratings/Comments with Your Group





## *Sources of Evidence: Direct Assessment*

- “Capstone” Performances
- Professional/Clinical Performance
- Third-Party Testing (e.g., Licensure)
- Faculty-Designed Examinations





## *Sources of Evidence: Indirect Assessment*

- Portfolios and Work Samples
- Follow-Up of Graduates
- Employer Ratings of Performance
- Self-Reported Growth by Graduates





## *Four Principles for Judging Evidence*

- *Comprehensiveness*: Submitted evidence should cover knowledge and skills taught throughout course or program
- *Multiple Judgments*: Submitted evidence should involve more than one source or involve multiple judgments of student performance
- *Multiple Dimensions*: Submitted evidence should provide information on multiple dimensions of student performance—i.e., they should yield more than single summative grade
- *Directness*: Submitted evidence should involve at least one type based on direct observation or demonstration of student capacities—i.e., they should involve more than simply a self-report







## *General Characteristics of Good Evidence*

- Relevant
- Verifiable
- Representative
- Cumulative
- Actionable





## *Dimensions of Policy Choice*

- *Prescription of Outcomes*: The extent to which an accreditor specifies particular learning outcomes
- *Unit of Analysis*: The extent to which an accreditor is concerned about either individual student attainment or overall program effectiveness
- *Focus of Review*: The extent to which an accreditor examines direct evidence of student achievement or the adequacy of the processes used to assure particular levels of student attainment





## *Three Dimensions of Policy Change*

Complete  
Institutional  
Discretion

**Prescription  
of Outcomes**

Outcomes  
Dictated by  
Accreditor

Competency  
Attainment for  
Individuals

**Unit of  
Analysis**

Overall Program/  
Institutional  
Effectiveness

Processes  
for Quality  
Assurance

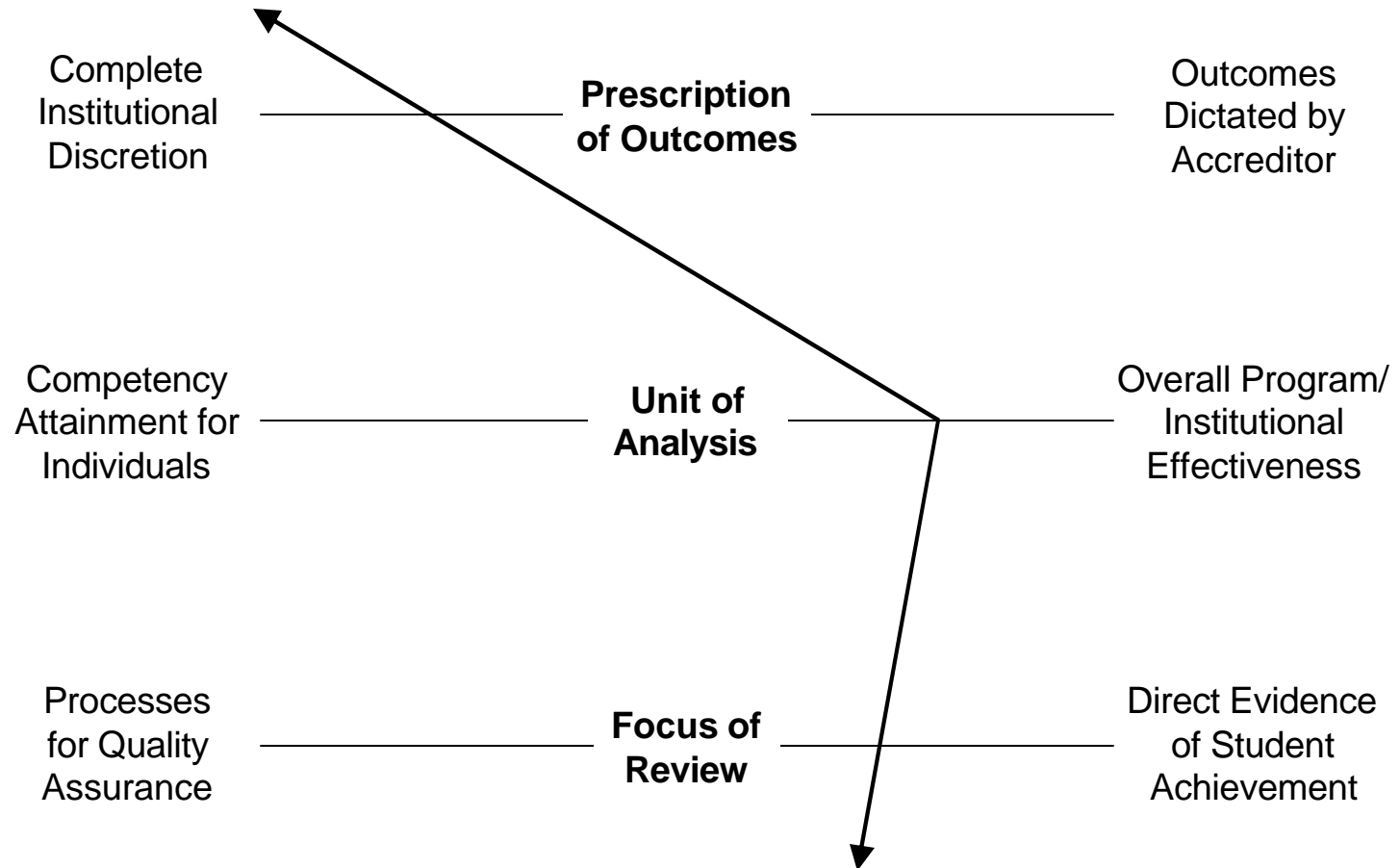
**Focus of  
Review**

Direct Evidence  
of Student  
Achievement



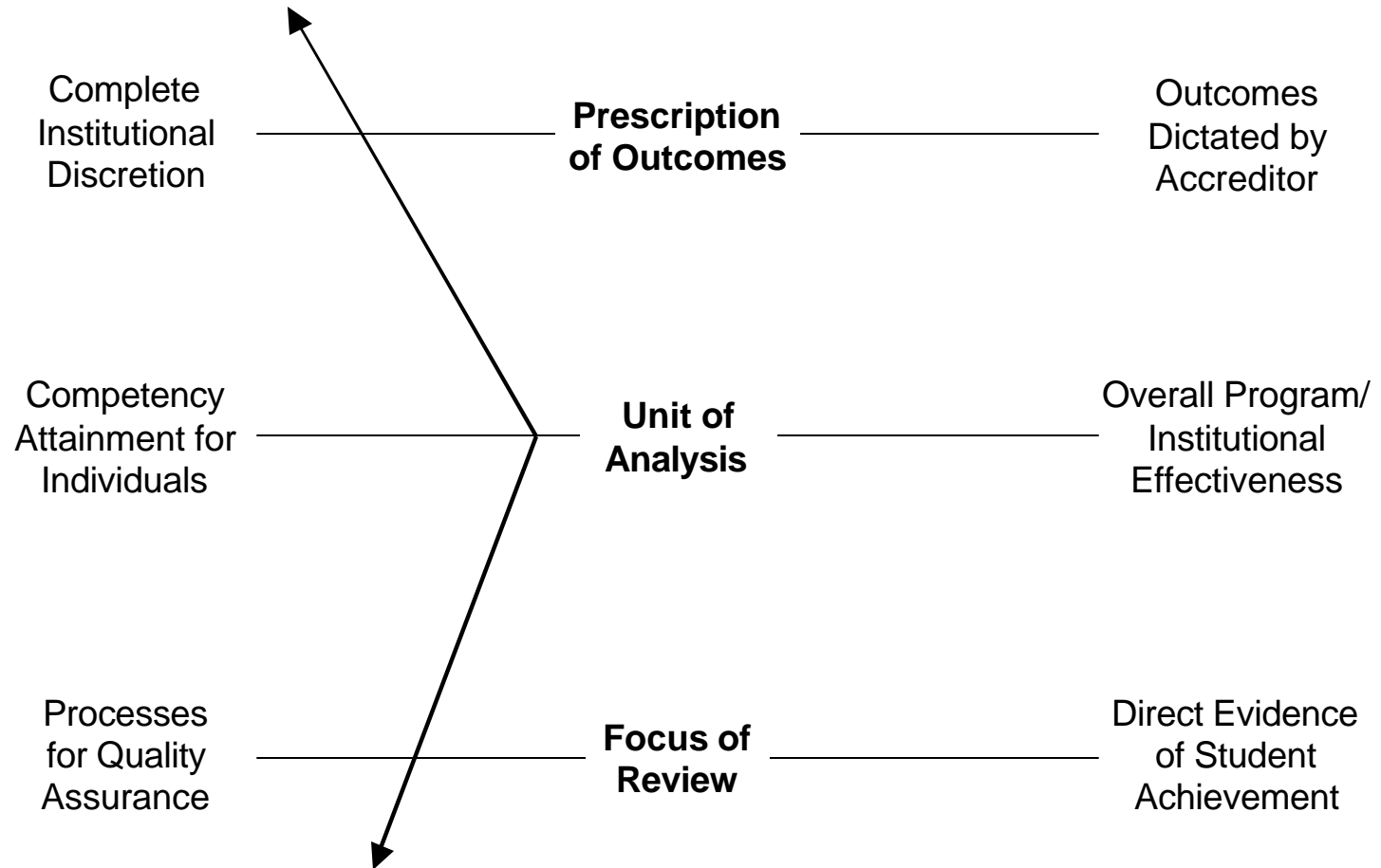


# *Program Assessment*



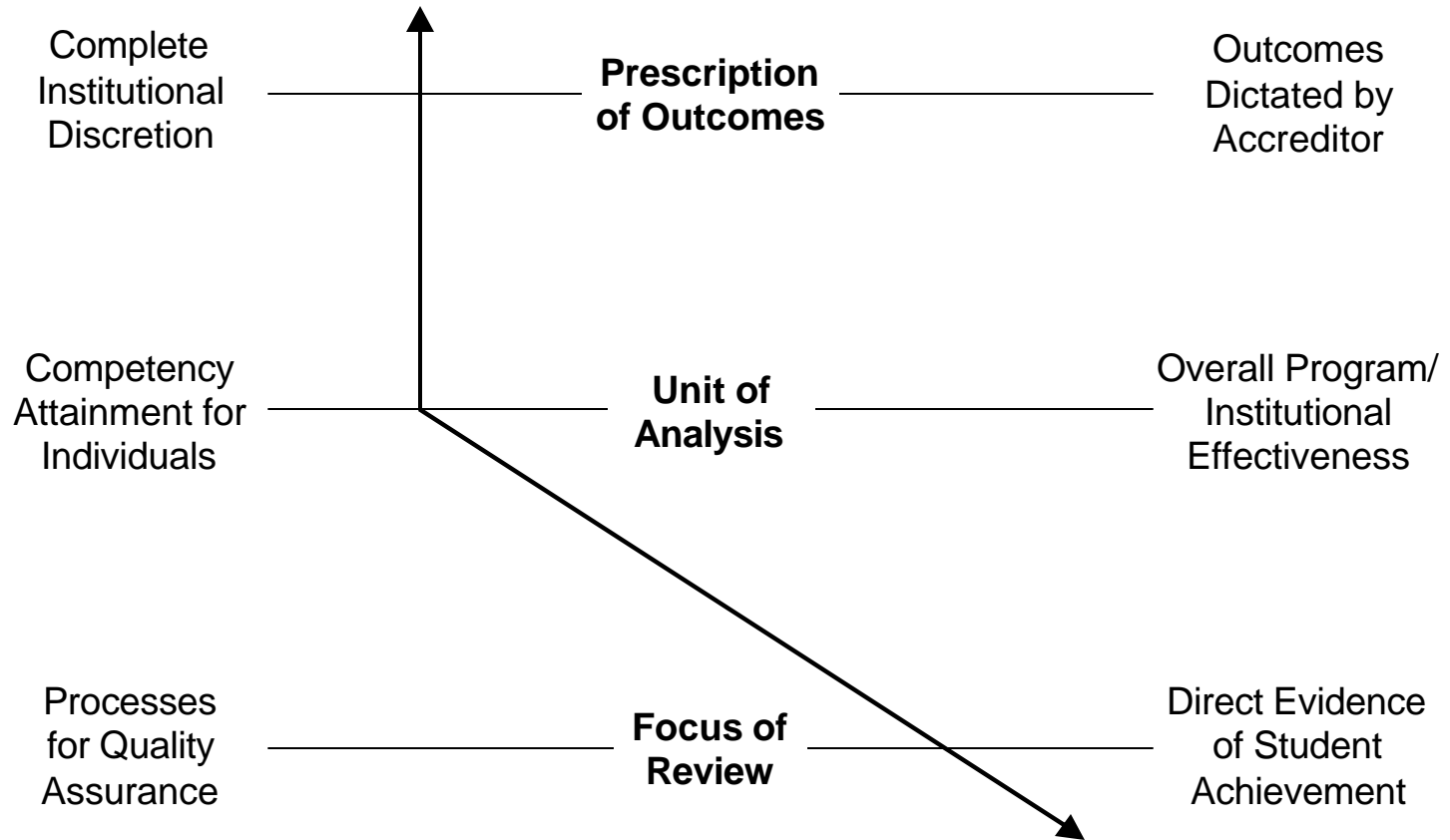


# *Academic Audit*



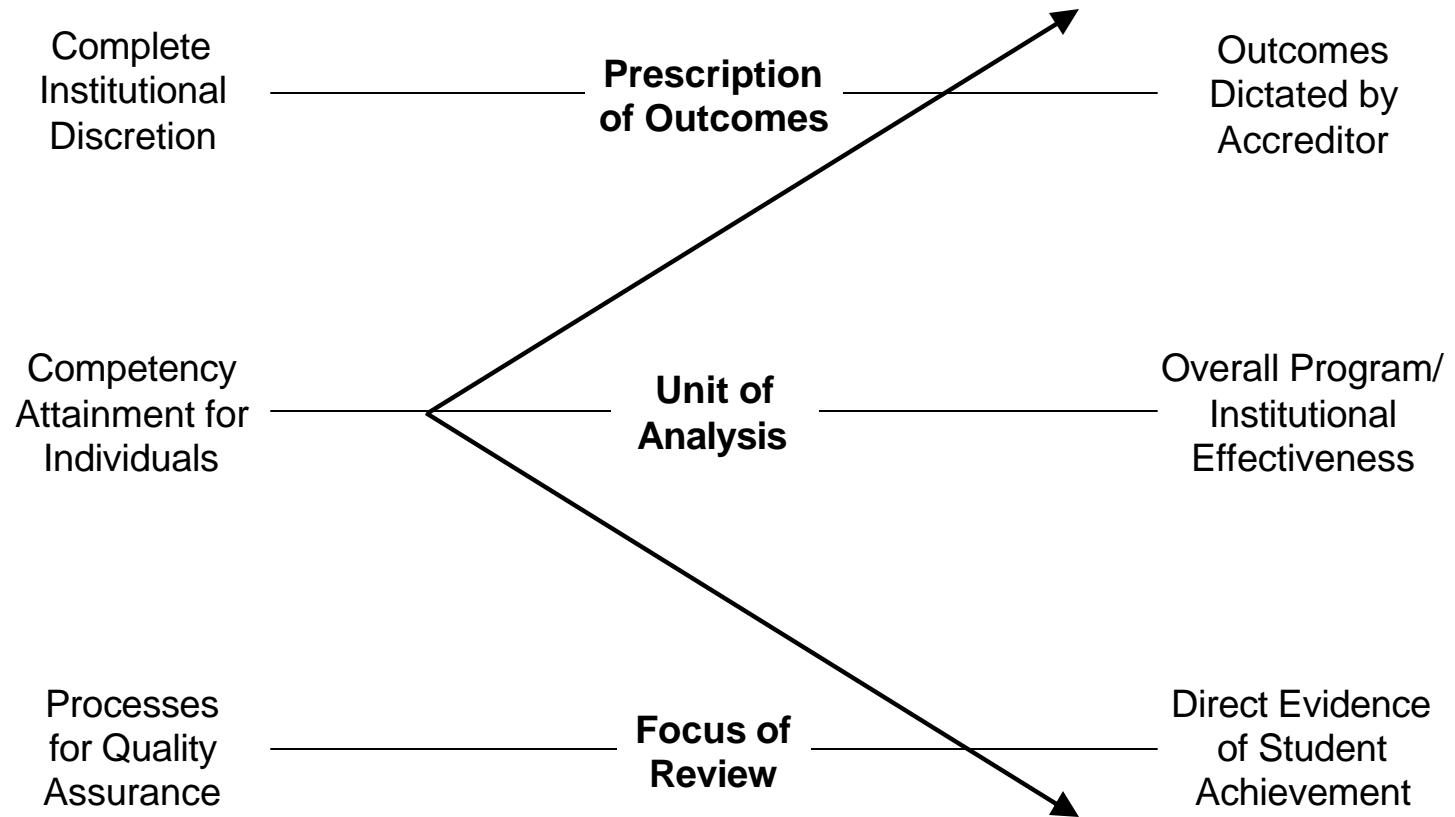


# *Auditing Academic Standards*





# *Third-Party Certification*





## *Exercise 2: Policy Choices*

- Sketch Your Organization's Current "Policy Profile" Regarding Student Learning Outcomes Now and in Five Years
- What are the Implications of These Choices?
- Review Your Answers with Your Group







## *Some Enduring Issues*

- What is Acceptable Evidence of Student Learning?
- Should Accreditors Assess Student Growth or Only Outcomes Attained?
- What Relative Weight Should an Accrerator Place on Outcomes?
- How Much Should Accreditors Look at the Use of Results for Improvement?
- How Much Should Accreditors Emphasize Faculty Involvement?





## *Next Steps*

- What Might Promote a More Proactive Collective Position for Accreditors on this Issue?
- What Resources Need to be Developed (and for whom)?
- What Can CHEA do to Help?

