



Revista on line de Política e Gestão Educacional
Online Journal of Policy and Educational Management



¹ Associate Professor in the Department of Education, Social Sciences, and Public Policy, as well as in the graduate programs in School Education and in Public Policy Planning and Analysis.

² Associate Professor in the Department of Education and in the graduate program in School Education at São Paulo State University (UNESP), Araraquara, São Paulo, Brazil.



INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT DIRECTED TO PLANNING AT THE UNIVERSITY

A AVALIAÇÃO INSTITUCIONAL DIRECIONADA AO PLANEJAMENTO NA UNIVERSIDADE

EVALUACIÓN INSTITUCIONAL DIRIGIDA A LA PLANIFICACIÓN EN LA UNIVERSIDAD

Hilda Maria Gonçalves da SILVA¹

hilda.silva@unesp.br

Sebastião de Souza LEMES²

ss.lemes2@gmail.com



How to reference this paper:

Silva, H. M. G. da.; Lemes, S. de S. (2025). Institutional assessment directed to planning at the university. *Revista on line de Política e Gestão Educacional*, 29, e025083. <https://doi.org/10.22633/rpge.v29i00.20722>

Submitted: 30/09/2025

Revisions required: 06/10/2025

Approved: 04/11/2025

Published: 20/11/2025

ABSTRACT: This article analyzes institutional assessment from the perspective of the composition and regulation of educational planning. The objective is to highlight the contribution of the evaluation methodology in the process of developing evaluation instruments capable of offering a more qualitative portrait of the different dimensions and sectors of the institution, in addition to supporting the construction of future actions in a systematic way and aligned with the university's reality and advances.

KEYWORDS: Institutional assessment. Planning. In-Process assessment. University.

RESUMO: Este artigo analisa a avaliação institucional sob a ótica da composição e da regulação do planejamento educacional. O objetivo é evidenciar a contribuição da metodologia de avaliação em processo na elaboração de instrumentos avaliativos capazes de oferecer um retrato mais qualitativo das diferentes dimensões e setores da instituição, além de subsidiar a construção de ações futuras de forma sistematizada e alinhada à realidade e aos avanços da universidade.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Avaliação institucional. Planejamento. Avaliação em processo. Universidade.

RESUMEN: Este artículo analiza la evaluación institucional desde la perspectiva de la composición y regulación de la planificación educativa. El objetivo es resaltar el aporte de la metodología de evaluación en proceso en el desarrollo de instrumentos de evaluación capaces de ofrecer un retrato más cualitativo de las diferentes dimensiones y sectores de la institución, además de apoyar la construcción de acciones futuras de manera sistemática y alineada con la realidad y los avances de la universidad.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Evaluación institucional. Planificación. Evaluación en proceso. Universidad.

Article submitted to the similarity system



Editor: Prof. Dr. Sebastião de Souza Lemes

Deputy Executive Editor: Prof. Dr. José Anderson Santos Cruz.

INTRODUCTION

Institutional assessment in universities has often been reduced to a limited exercise of providing clarifications on actions carried out over a five-year period or, in an even more restricted manner, to a management accountability report. Within this perspective, assessment tends to focus exclusively on quantitative indicators and to assume a retrospective character, functioning as a rear-view mirror that fails to promote critical reflection or to support forward-looking institutional planning.

It is necessary to move beyond the understanding of assessment as an end in itself, reduced to the presentation of results. Planning the future actions of a university is a complex undertaking that requires far more than the mere collection of information; it demands the production of qualified knowledge about the institution's situational reality—a "situation" understood here through the lens of Situational Strategic Planning (PES) (Matus, 1987).

Accordingly, it becomes essential to understand the qualitative and quantitative dimensions of teaching, research, outreach, and university management from the perspective of the institution's various social actors. Such knowledge must emerge from a collective and systematized approach, grounded in an evaluative process oriented toward strengthening the institution in its functions and within its context of operation.

PES and institutional assessment

PES, developed by Carlos Matus (1987) as an alternative to traditional governmental planning, was conceived in the late 1970s but remains highly relevant in contemporary public planning.

When public agents initiate a planning process—from its conception to monitoring, evaluation, and necessary course adjustments—they must recognize that they are dealing with a complex, dynamic, and conflict-ridden reality. Thus, planning within the sphere of social policy, such as education, is a complex task that involves uncertainties, negotiations, and multiple social actors.

For Matus (1987), designing an institutional plan capable of guiding future actions and readjustments requires understanding the provisional nature of reality within a context marked by circumstances, power correlations, and a multiplicity of actors. His methodology is grounded in five basic principles: the political dimension, reality as situation, problems as the basis for action, participation, and dynamism.

In this sense, planning as a political field is not the outcome of neutral decisions; such decisions are fundamentally shaped by worldviews, interests, and paradigms. It is, therefore, a space of conflict that demands ongoing negotiation. Conceiving reality as a situation requires

acknowledging its subjective dimension, as this reality is shaped by the lived experiences of the social actors who inhabit the environment in which planning occurs.

Because public problems involve multiple social actors, participation is crucial, as it enables the inclusion of diverse perspectives—one of the core features of the complexity inherent to public planning. The dynamic nature of the institutional environment, characterized by its different social actors, continually reconfigures the space in which planning unfolds. As such, planning takes place within a living, constantly evolving system.

Based on these principles, PES understands public planning as a process that goes far beyond the formulation of a plan. It is a process of acquiring knowledge about the institution's situation, engaging in continuous negotiation and adaptation, and pursuing systematic and strategic intervention aimed at improving the quality of action and advancing social justice. PES comprises four stages: explanatory, normative, strategic, and tactical-operational.

The explanatory stage seeks to understand the broader environment in which the planning will operate. It aims to identify problems, their levels of complexity, their causes and consequences, and, consequently, the institution's situational reality across its various dimensions.

From this understanding, priorities and goals can be established. In the normative stage, objectives and targets are defined, outlining the transformations to be achieved. To this end, the strategic stage assesses the feasibility of the emerging plan, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, as well as the social actors involved, their interests, conceptions, and level of engagement.

Finally, the tactical-operational stage focuses on defining the concrete actions that will gradually lead to the desired transformations. It includes establishing timelines, assigning responsibilities, determining the frequency of monitoring and evaluation processes, and allocating the resources required for execution.

In the field of education, planning conceived along these lines requires an institutional assessment understood as a continuous process, since grasping the full complexity of the environment in which planning will occur is essential to ensuring greater precision and effectiveness across all stages of the planning cycle.

A Conception of Ongoing Evaluation

Ongoing evaluation refers to the intent to reveal and appraise the reality of the object under assessment when data or information are insufficient to fully explain the context in which they acquire meaning. Its purpose is, fundamentally, to disclose—from a contextual perspective—the situational aspects of the object within its circumstantial reality; to guide,

redirect, and control components and variables; and to provide documentation that enables the recording and storage of information related to the entire process.

It is essential to emphasize that, within this understanding of evaluation, the needs and characteristics of the object—in this case, the university—define the evaluative components, support the construction of instruments, and inform the analytical and operational procedures. Evaluation is not an act of power or domination; rather, it is a dimension used for oversight, one in which we must continuously evolve (Bonniol & Vial, 2001, p. 357). Furthermore, it must enable the “revelation,” in the sense of knowledge, of this reality in transformation.

A planning process that aims to be strategic and, above all, situational, in Matus’s (1987) terms, cannot dispense with evaluations of this nature—both at the starting point of planning (its conception) and throughout the monitoring and regulation of its goals, strategies, and actions. Planning and evaluation thus become intertwined procedures, in the broadest sense of the term: they share a complex relationship, are complementary, and are closely connected.

In this regard, the development of instruments for ongoing institutional evaluation must generate material capable of supporting data collection for evaluative analysis. This leads to key questions: What questions must be answered? What outcomes are expected? How will these outcomes be used? Ultimately, what situations must be identified and understood? For whom, and for what purpose?

Institutional evaluation, conceived as an ongoing process articulated with planning, is transformative in its methodology, content, and form. It represents a proposal to redefine the starting point, the trajectory, and the decision-making process. To discuss and problematize these issues, it is necessary to deepen reflection on the principles that constitute the structural foundation of evaluation.

At the outset, it is necessary to recognize that any evaluation requires a “circumstance” that defines it and an instrument that materializes it. There is no evaluation without an assessed object; evaluation does not exist independently or autonomously from the object that precedes and defines it.

Given this premise, what occurs when the evaluative instrument is predetermined and imposes numerous constraints on the components that must or will be appraised? This issue demands a broader discussion. If the aim is to redefine both the starting point and the trajectory, one must ask: toward what end? Depending on the desired destination—particularly in the case of a university, an institution with clearly defined foundational principles, including normative ones—many of the components that characterize and define this destination are established a priori, leaving no room for redefinition. The trajectory, however, may be negotiable.

Due to its scale and nature, the university is a highly complex institution. As such, the question of where this institution should be guided is one of the most challenging to answer,

and only the dynamic, harmonious whole of its functional structure can adequately respond. For this reason, before an evaluative instrument determines the dynamics and direction, constructive and constitutive dialogue must be established based on the object of evaluation and its trajectory toward the intended destination. The dynamic and harmonious whole of the university's functional structure also includes a higher management dimension, endowed with responsibilities and prerogatives of considerable significance, ensuring that the trajectory's dynamics align with the intended destination (the goal). If the destination is non-negotiable or not subject to debate, then time and conditions must be.

These considerations underscore the fact that institutional evaluation in universities is inherently complex. One may even assert that the issue of evaluation is as old as civilization itself (Lefton, 1977). Based on written records, Lefton demonstrates that the Sumerians—a society in the Euphrates Valley approximately six thousand years ago—held a distinctive understanding of evaluation and practiced it regularly. They needed to determine the value of the items they traded, such as metals and tools. More importantly, they evaluated what was most advantageous to them and what ensured their prosperity. They understood which material objects influenced social prosperity and how individuals contributed to or hindered such outcomes. Their evaluative practices were grounded in the notion of encouraging improved performance, as they believed this would increase value. As Lefton (1977) suggests, there is much to learn from the Sumerians.

Chiavenato (1994, 1998), in asserting that evaluation practices stem from a not-so-distant past, cites the example of Ignatius of Loyola in the fourteenth century, who employed “a combined system of reports and activity records and, above all, the potential of each Jesuit.” In more recent literature, there is a clear trend toward the use of Performance Evaluation for purposes linked to remuneration, qualification, bonuses, career progression, or any other function that benefits individuals or organizations. Increasingly, variable compensation is tied to the performance of the organization itself over a given period.

McGregor (1960), in presenting his critique of performance evaluation in the field of Human Resources, stresses that it is treated merely as a personnel management technique, when it should be used for broader purposes, such as strategic management. Drawing on various historical foundations—of which dozens could be listed—Bonniol and Vial (2001) appear among the contemporary authors who offer consistent arguments to support deeper discussion of the topic. These authors outline three current conceptions of evaluation: evaluation as measurement, evaluation as management, and evaluation as (and toward) the problematization of meanings.

At this juncture, the conception of evaluation as management appears to best align with the institution's current needs, as it emphasizes process. From this perspective, and according to Bonniol and Vial (2001), evaluation is among the essential procedures of any

managerial activity, given that it constitutes the core of system regulation within its transformative dynamics.

Drawing on a conception supported by several models—such as Tyler’s (1974) evaluation of domain mastery through objectives or Bloom’s (1956) evaluation through achievement—we approach the model in which evaluation is associated with intervention and decision-making. Bonniol and Vial (2001) argue that the decision-making model highlights the connection between information gathered and the actors responsible for making decisions. These authors assert emphatically that evaluation is not an act of power or domination but a dimension used for oversight and one whose evolution must be continuously monitored. Nonetheless, oversight itself relies on coherence and homogeneity.

Evaluation, in its specificity, is situated in the realm of signifier and meaning, which entails questioning significance. Oversight relies on well-constructed and as transparent as possible mechanisms, whereas evaluation represents, within this context, a process and procedure that necessarily and invariably contains zones of irreducible opacity. Lemes (2001), in discussing ongoing evaluation, argues that evaluation must enable the revelation, in the sense of understanding, of the reality of the object in its procedural circumstance.

Accordingly, evaluation must today be regarded as a regulatory instrument within processes that require proper mediation. Still following Lemes, this context must consider the arguments of Jacques Ardoino and Berger (1986), who state that “the complex behaviors involved in evaluation commit it to the pursuit of the praxeological and epistemological reality of the object—whether this complexity is systemic or dialectical” (p. 124).

Without attempting, at this stage, a more exhaustive inquiry—and far from intending to settle the matter—it is evident that institutional evaluation, as framed here, begins with mapping and characterizing institutional needs, thereby enabling planning to be more effectively oriented toward its objectives and goals and aimed at enhancing and qualifying the most significant components within each segment and across the institutional structure as a whole.

From this perspective, the instruments are centrally constructed and the respondents defined, as well as the analytical pathways, in order to highlight the analytical parameters that qualify performance in each segment. Consequently, it becomes possible to propose adjustments, action strategies, targeted interventions, and visual maps that connect intangible aspects to measurable outcomes, in addition to generating analytical material to support resource allocation in institutional counterpart arrangements.

Instruments designed in this manner enable the collection of data and information detached from the situational needs of the evaluated object and assessed according to expectations that are, in general, far removed from plausible reality. However, this does not constitute the conclusion of the evaluation process, as is commonly assumed. Beyond the collection and organization of data, the process still requires moments of discussion and decision-making, as

well as intervention in reality—always with the objective of continuous improvement. When these interventions are properly structured and implemented, they can yield favorable responses and solutions that enhance the institution’s internal and external dynamics in meeting its demands.

It is necessary, however, to safeguard against the risk that institutional complexity leads to overly simplistic decision-making, as though the system’s complex components existed merely to justify such decisions. Some of these challenges are described by Wladimir Kourganoff (1990, pp. 120–189), who analyzes and comments on the “academic underground” of universities. When discussing the available methods for gathering information about the efficiency of a given segment, he highlights the frailties of ongoing evaluation processes, particularly when they attempt to assess the quality of teaching. According to the author, one of the main reasons for this fragility is the absence of consensus and the inherent subjectivity surrounding what is considered quality teaching.

In this context, after presenting his arguments about the fragility of the information typically used to evaluate this segment, he concludes that one of the elements that should be considered is a report written by the segment itself, describing and justifying its work. From this perspective, the difficulties of addressing issues whose theoretical framing lacks consensus become evident; and even if such consensus existed, significant challenges to operationalizing it would remain. It is at this juncture that Integrated Reporting emerges as the frontier of performance evaluation, given its proposal to integrate multiple reporting streams to provide a holistic view of the organization, its performance, and its sustainability. It represents the most contemporary and comprehensive form of organizational assessment.

Institutional and performance evaluations are essential instruments in the management of processes operating within the university’s operational and strategic management dynamics. Through these mechanisms, planning is prevented from becoming superficial, and the university’s evaluative instruments are kept from being reductively transformed into accounting spreadsheets that dictate limits—spreadsheets that, while ostensibly intended to open the institution to the “world,” simultaneously restrict and confine it within the boundaries of such accounting logic. Within this context, how can one understand the role of shared institutional responsibility in the university’s ongoing improvement—from its basic administrative units to central management—encompassing teaching, research, outreach, and management itself, all of which require permanent enhancement?

Flávio Farah (2004), in his work *Ética na Gestão de Pessoas — Uma Visão Prática*, published after an extensive study involving numerous institutions in which he sought to examine the ethical content of performance evaluation standards, reached several conclusions that are, at the very least, noteworthy. The data revealed that, to varying degrees, institutions lack mechanisms capable of ensuring the consistency of evaluations; impose discriminatory criteria

regarding the categories to be assessed; are more stringent in demanding performance than in providing prior information about expected performance; do not examine employees' complaints about the evaluation system; employ factors that assess the employee's personality; and lack channels for appealing unfair evaluations. All of these elements, according to the author, may be considered "ethical failures." Despite this, he argues that it is possible to prevent these ethically inadequate aspects from compromising the quality of programs involving performance evaluation across different institutions. To achieve this, organizations must adopt certain measures, such as implementing evaluation policies and procedures that ensure the engagement, knowledge, and understanding—on the part of all involved, and likewise evaluated—of the underlying principles, procedures, goals, institutional co-responsibility, possible interventions, and available resources in situations of insufficiency. Every individual evaluated must have the right to adequate feedback and the opportunity to present counterarguments if they deem the feedback insufficient.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Institutional evaluation, beyond the mere collection of data, must be understood as a set of collaborative and shared actions among the institution, the evaluator, and the evaluated. Within this framework, institutional evaluation becomes an instrument for constructing the institution's strategic planning, with objectives and goals defined through negotiation and subsequently adjusted on an ongoing basis and systematically monitored.

Finally, it is essential to affirm that evaluation is not a final judgment, but a process of learning and understanding. Current frameworks position evaluation as a virtuous cycle: data collected generate insights, which lead to actions, which in turn produce new data for further evaluation. A permanent program institutionalizes this cycle, creating a culture of continuous improvement, in which errors or inadequacies are viewed as opportunities for the development and regulation of institutional planning.

REFERENCES

- Ardoino, J., & Berger, G. (1986). L'évaluation comme interprétation. *Pour*, 107(junho, julho, agosto), 120–127. [Tradução: Manuela Terrasêca]
- Bergamini, C. W. (1992). *Avaliação de desempenho humano na empresa*. Atlas.
- Bloom, B. S. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives* (Vol. 1). David McKay.
- Bonniol, J.-J., & Vial, M. (2001). *Modelos de avaliação: Textos fundamentais*. Artmed.
- Chiavenato, I. (1994). *Recursos humanos*. Atlas.
- Chiavenato, I. (1998). *Desempenho humano nas empresas: Como desenhar cargos e avaliar desempenhos*. Atlas.
- Coopers & Lybrand (Equipe). (1996). *Remuneração estratégica: A nova vantagem competitiva*. Atlas.
- Farah, F. (2004). *Ética na gestão de pessoas: Uma visão prática*. Edições Inteligentes.
- Galbraith, J. R. (1974). Organization design: An information processing views. *Interfaces*, 4, 28–36. <https://pt.scribd.com/document/442053861/Galbraith-Information-Processing-View-1-pdf>
- Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (2004). *Strategy maps: Converting intangible assets into tangible outcomes*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Kourganoff, W. (1990). *A face oculta da universidade*. Editora da Unesp.
- Lemes, S. de S. (2001). A avaliação educacional e escolar: Possibilidades para uma dimensão formuladora de políticas públicas na educação nacional. *Cadernos de Educação*. Araraquara (SP): Laboratório Editorial FCL, jul.–dez.
- Lefton, R. E. (1977). *Effective motivation through performance appraisal*. Wiley-Interscience Publication.
- Matus, C. (1987). *Planificación y gobierno*. Fundación Altadir. <https://repositorio.cepal.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/b906c9fb-0142-431a-bc82-57ee43411ba8/content>
- McGregor, D. (1960). *The human side of enterprise*. McGraw-Hill Publishing Company Ltd.
- Tyler, R. W. (1974). *Princípios básicos de currículo e ensino*. Globo.

CRediT Author Statement

Acknowledgements: We extend our appreciation to all individuals who, directly or indirectly, contributed to the success of this research.

Funding: This research did not receive any financial support.

Conflicts of interest: We declare that there are no conflicts of interest of any kind.

Ethical approval: Not applicable to this study, as all information used is publicly available.

Data and material availability: All materials used are publicly accessible.

Authors' contributions: Both authors contributed to all phases and stages of the development of this article.

Processing and editing: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação

Proofreading, formatting, standardization and translation

