

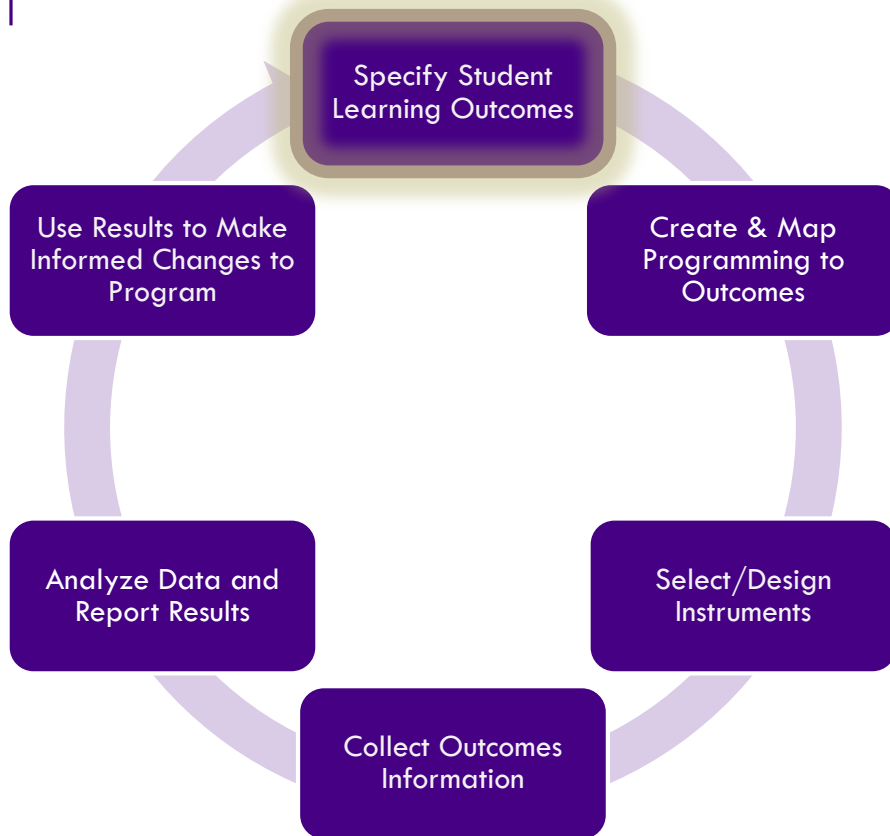
INSPIRATION TO ACTION:

USING PROGRAM THEORY TO ENHANCE LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

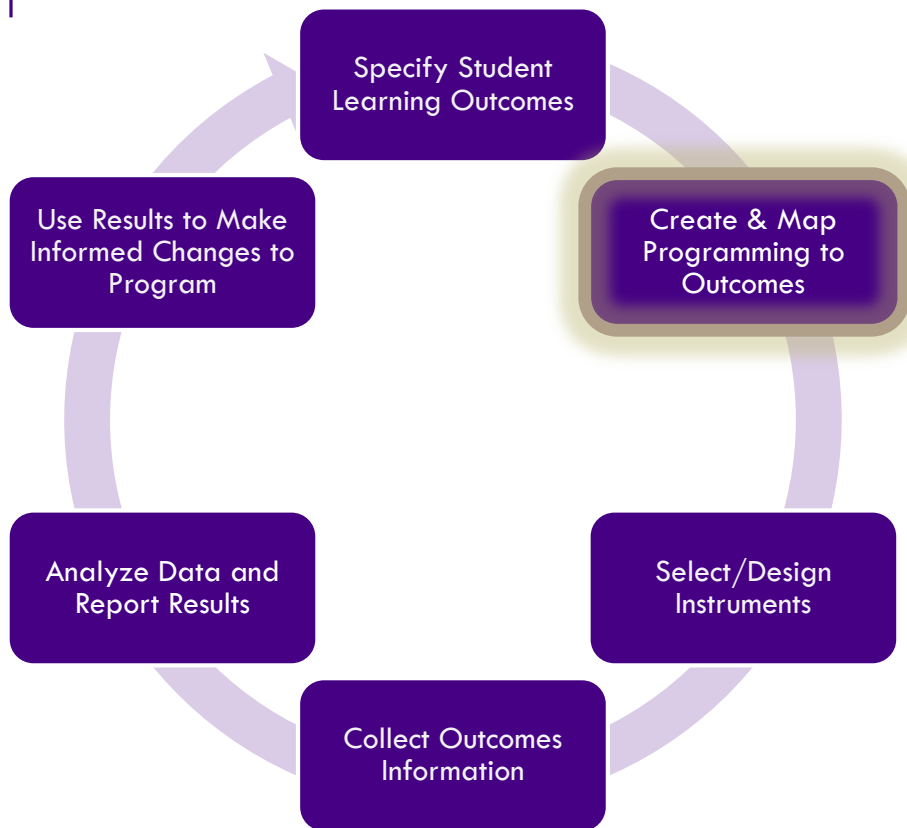
Andrea M. Pope
Samantha Gonzalez
Chris Patterson



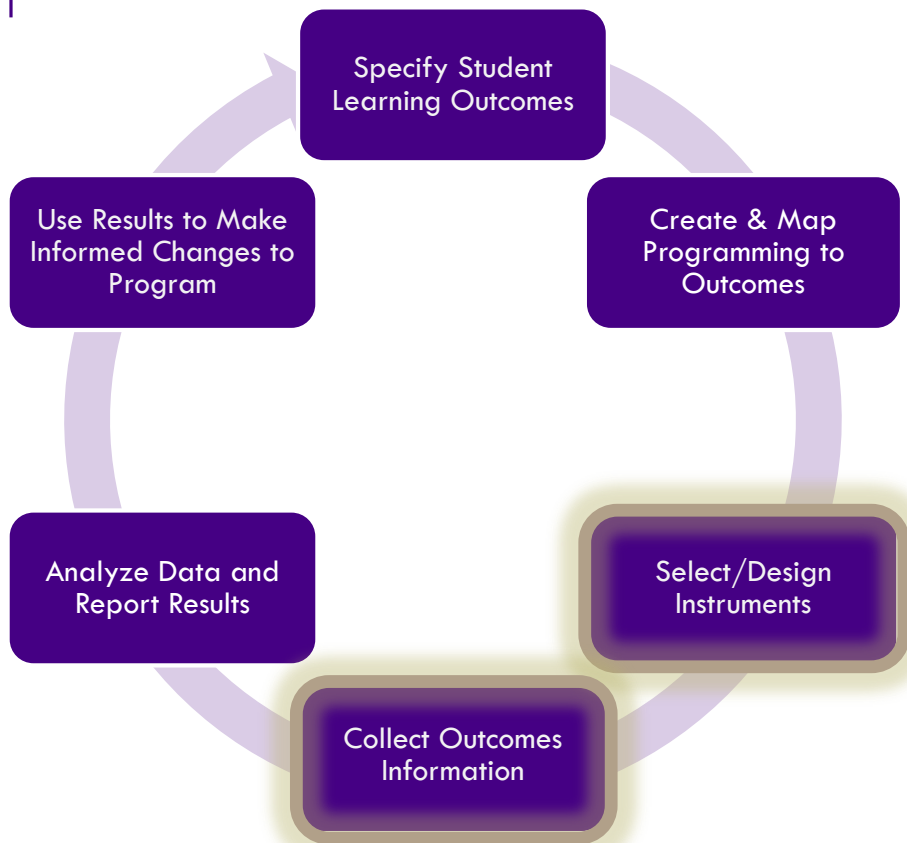
THE ASSESSMENT CYCLE



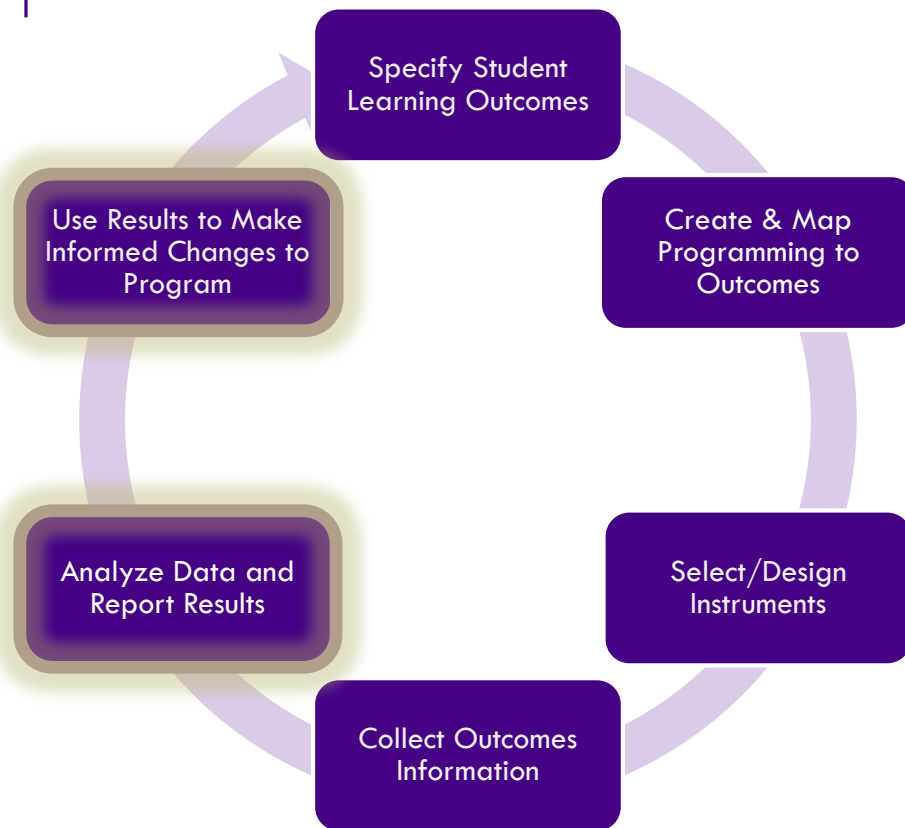
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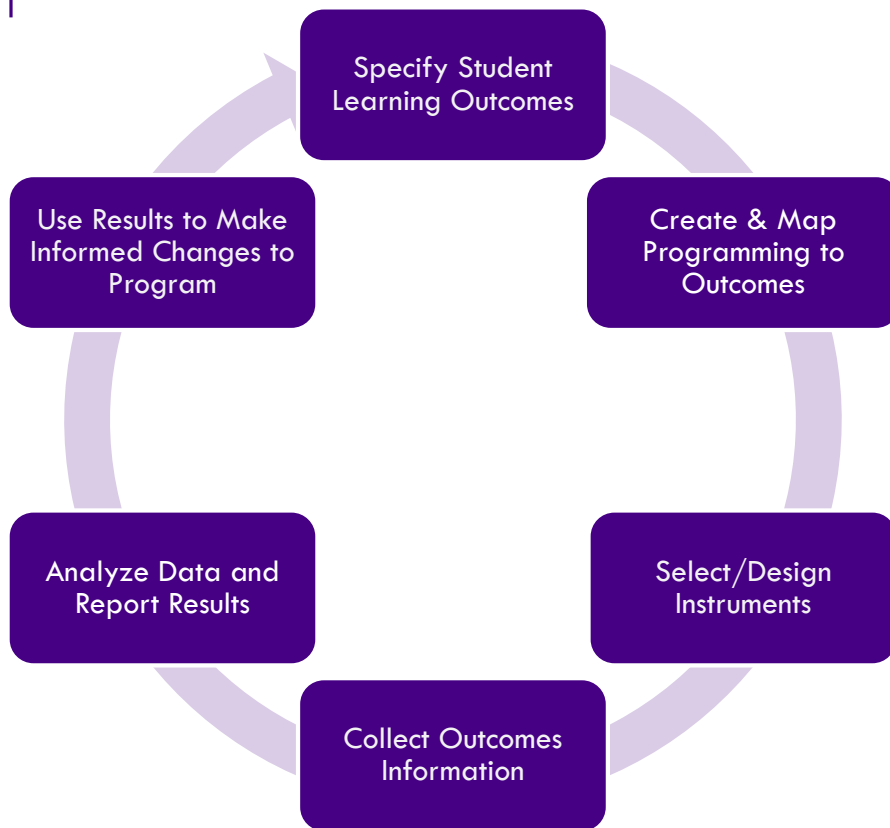
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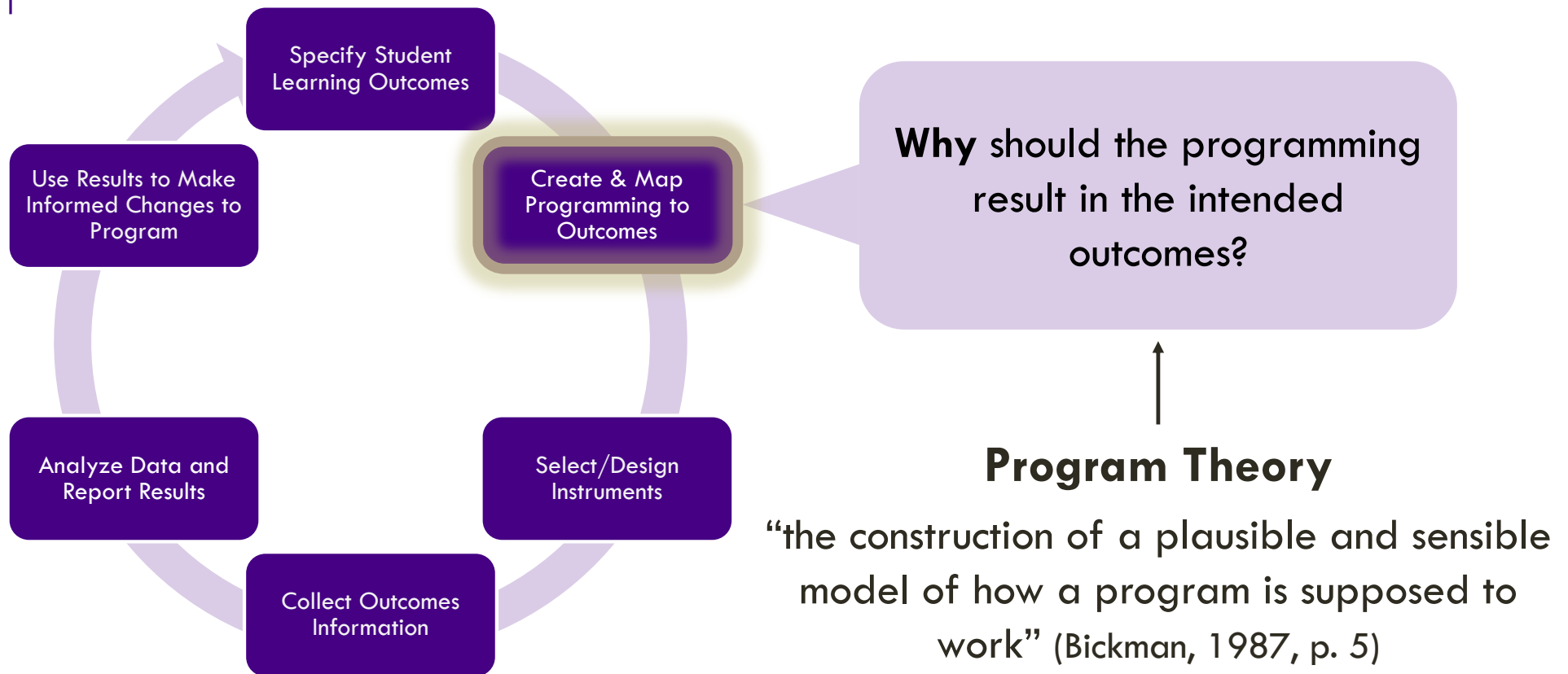


BARRIERS TO ASSESSMENT FOR IMPROVEMENT



- Value for Assessment
- Assessment Knowledge & Skills
- Time & Resources to Engage in Assessment

BARRIERS TO ASSESSMENT FOR IMPROVEMENT



OVERVIEW

1. The Importance of Program Theory

- The link between program theory and assessment

2. The Importance of Theory & Research

- Articulating *strong* program theory

3. Program Theory in Three Steps

- Using simple logic models to describe how programs work

4. Program Theory in Practice

- Three realistic examples of program theory articulation



THE IMPORTANCE OF PROGRAM THEORY

PROGRAM THEORY AND ASSESSMENT

The purpose of program theory is to identify the mechanisms by which we believe an educational intervention should work.

PROGRAM THEORY AND ASSESSMENT

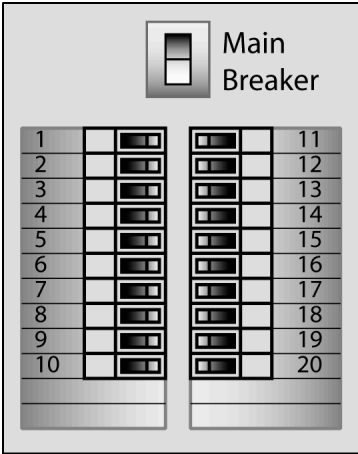
No Program Theory



Some Program Theory



Extensive Program Theory





**THE IMPORTANCE OF THEORY &
RESEARCH** |

STRONG VS. WEAK PROGRAM THEORY



Weak Program Theory

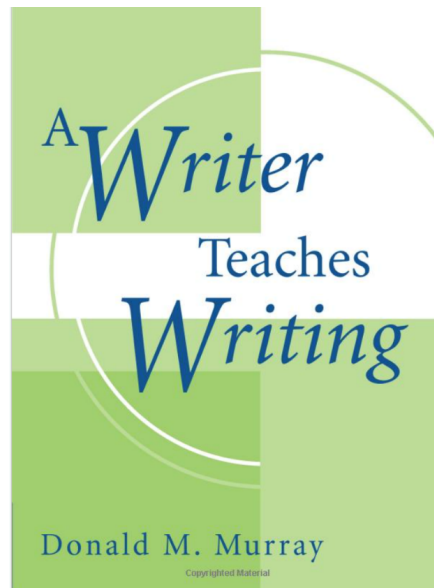
Based on hunches and
untested assumptions.

Strong Program Theory

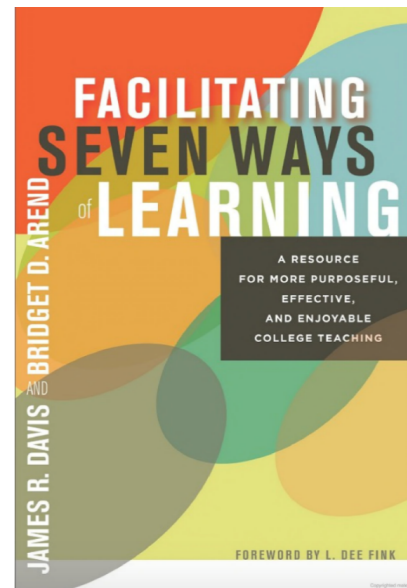
Based on theory and
research.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THEORY & RESEARCH

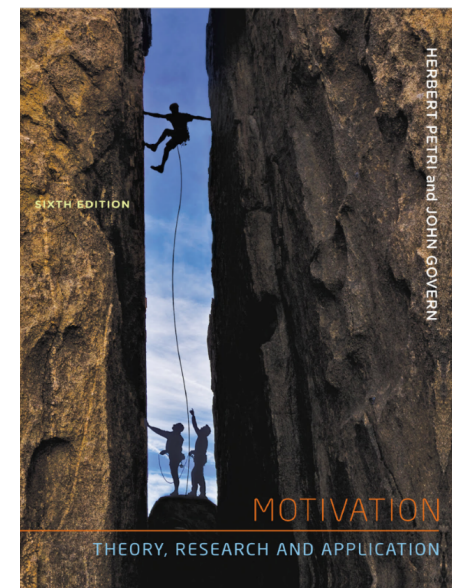
Content-Specific
Theory & Research



Science of
Teaching & Learning



Motivation
Theory & Research



PROGRAM THEORY IN ACTION

A Three-Step Model

1. IDENTIFY AN APPROPRIATE DISTAL OUTCOME

A *distal outcome* articulates **the ultimate goal of your program**. It answers the question: if the program were successful, what would be the mid- to long-term impact(s) on students/the university/other relevant stakeholders?

1. IDENTIFY AN APPROPRIATE DISTAL OUTCOME

A

Increase the % of students who abstain from drinking.

B

Reduce incidences of high-risk drinking.

1. IDENTIFY AN APPROPRIATE DISTAL OUTCOME

A

Increase the % of students who abstain from drinking.

B

Reduce incidences of high-risk drinking.

(e.g., Marlatt, G. A., & Witkiewitz, K. (2002). Harm reduction approaches to alcohol use: Health promotion, prevention, and treatment. *Addictive behaviors*, 27(6), 867-886.)

2. SPECIFY INTERMEDIATE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Intermediate SLOs articulate **how your program will achieve the distal outcome**. They answer the question: what specific knowledge, attitudes, skills, and/or behaviors will the program cultivate to help achieve the distal outcome identified in Step 1?

2. SPECIFY INTERMEDIATE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

*Distal Outcome: Reduce incidences of high-risk drinking.

A

Increase students' knowledge of the physical effects of drinking.

B

Increase students' knowledge of drinking norms on campus.

2. SPECIFY INTERMEDIATE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

*Distal Outcome: Reduce incidences of high-risk drinking.

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Increase students' knowledge of the physical effects of drinking.

B

Increase students' knowledge of drinking norms on campus.

(e.g., Smith, et al. (2019). *Genes, roommates and residence halls: A multidimensional study of the role of peer drinking on college students' alcohol use. Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research.*)

3. DEVELOP SPECIFIC PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Program components are the activities, discussions, presentations, materials, etc. that comprise your program. Each component should be ***intentionally designed to help students achieve the intermediate SLOs*** specified in Step 2.

3. DEVELOP SPECIFIC PROGRAM COMPONENTS

*Intermediate Outcome: Increase students' knowledge of drinking norms on campus.

A

Hang posters with facts about drinking norms around the residence halls.

B

Give students personalized feedback about their levels of consumption vs. their peers.

3. DEVELOP SPECIFIC PROGRAM COMPONENTS

*Intermediate Outcome: Increase students' knowledge of drinking norms on campus.

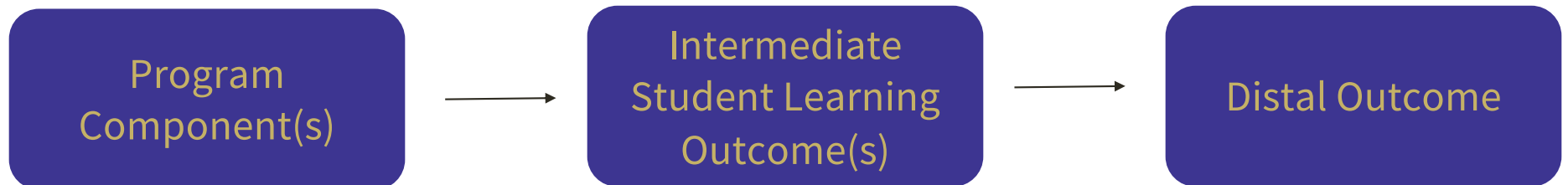
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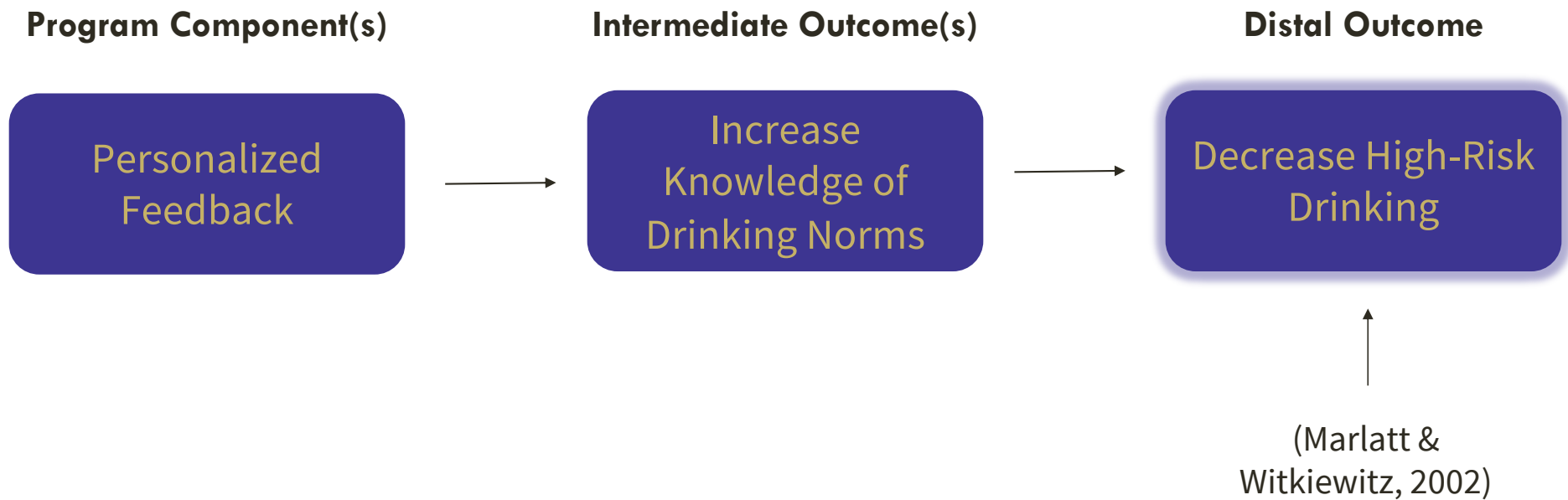
B

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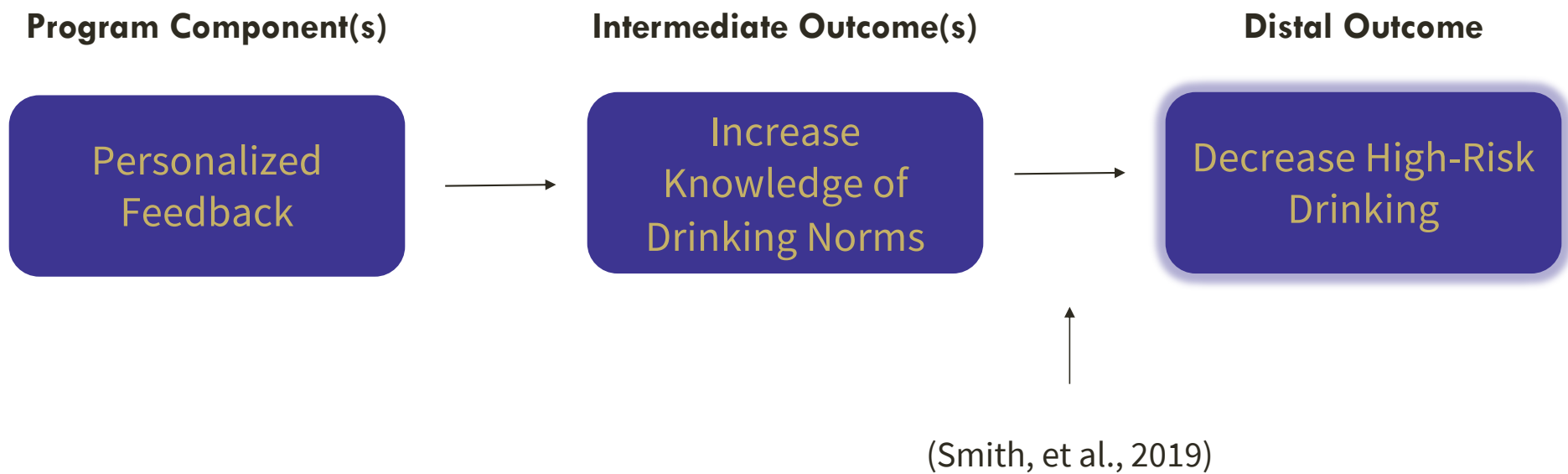
SUMMING IT UP WITH A LOGIC MODEL



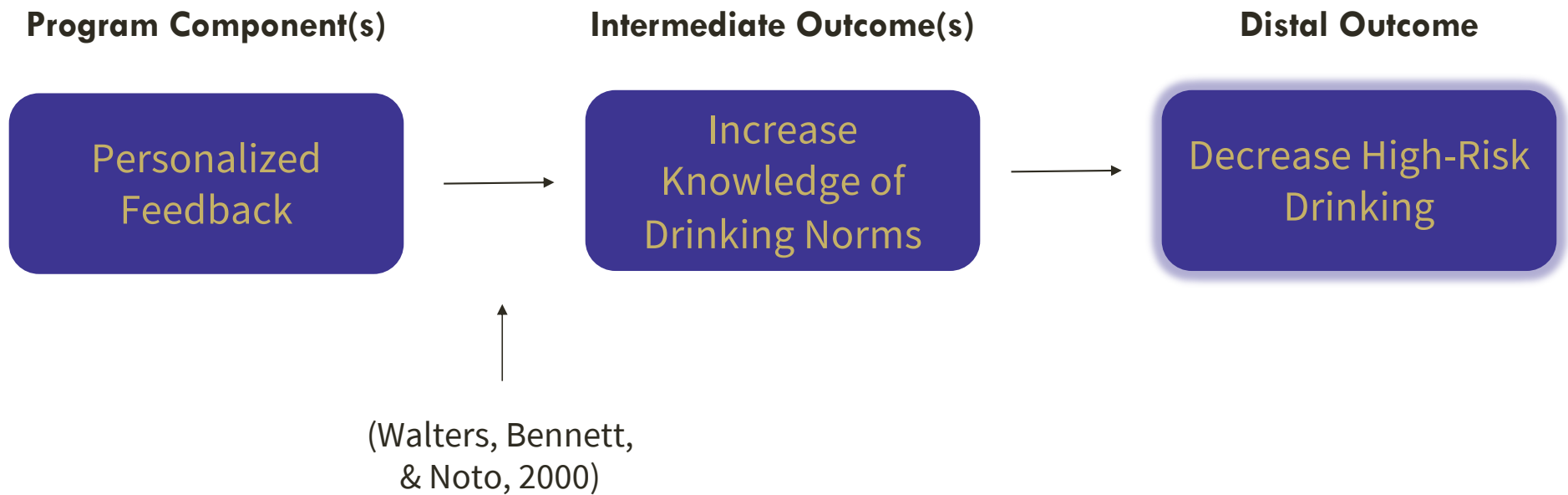
1. IDENTIFY AN APPROPRIATE DISTAL OUTCOME



2. SPECIFY INTERMEDIATE SLOS



3. DEVELOP SPECIFIC PROGRAM COMPONENTS

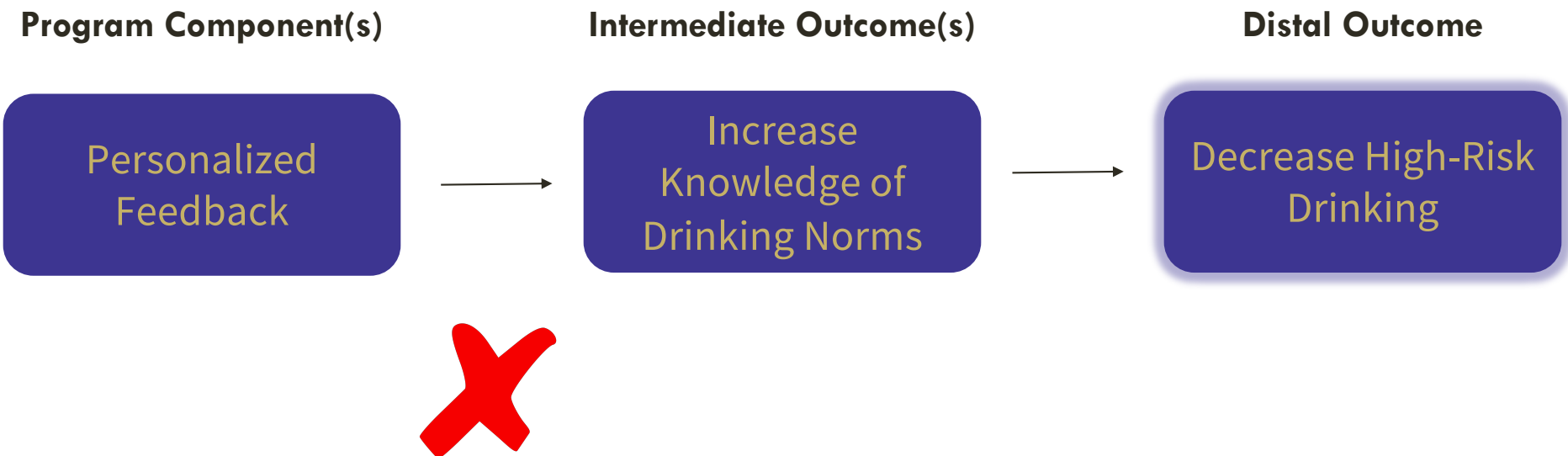


BONUS! STEP 4: EVALUATING PROGRAM

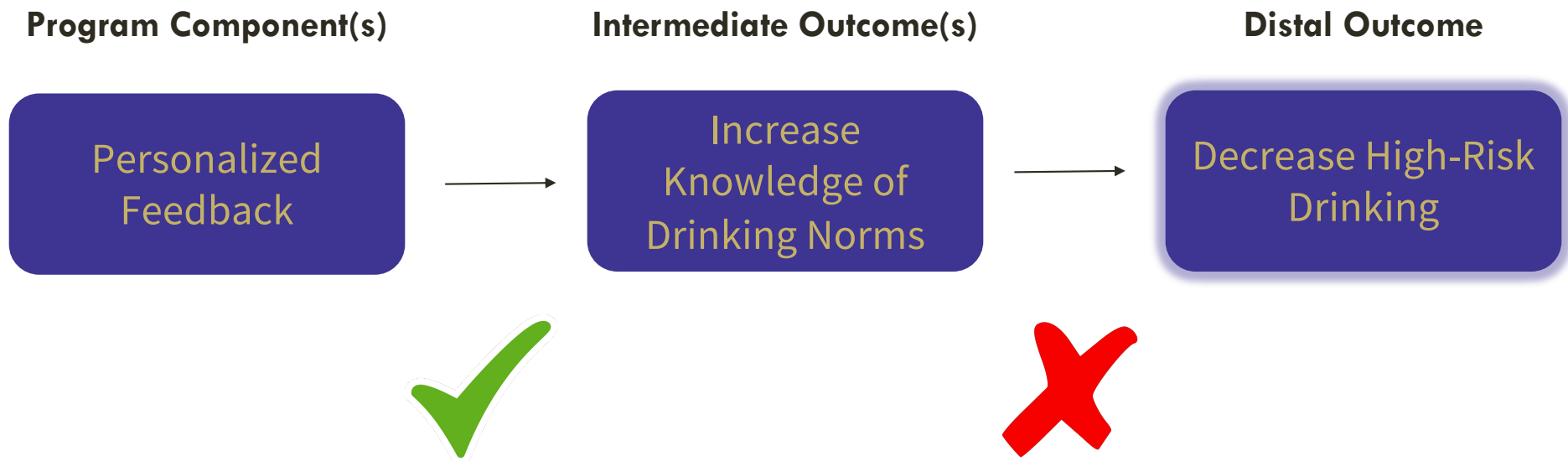
If you've used theory/research in your program development process, it makes assessment easy (well, easier).

- Specify SLOs: Provides a roadmap
- Data Collection: You'll know exactly what to measure
- **Interpretation of Results: If the program doesn't work, you'll have clear hypotheses about what went wrong**

EXAMPLE 1: INEFFECTIVE PROGRAMMING



EXAMPLE 2: PROBLEMATIC SLOS



PROGRAM THEORY IN PRACTICE

An Ethical Reasoning Example

ETHICAL REASONING IN ACTION (ERIA)

Desired SLO: Students will act ethically

Experts in ethical reasoning, philosophy, & assessment engaged in multi-year endeavor to:

- Articulate what students need to know, think, & do to act ethically
- Design programming to impact these outcomes
- Design measures of these outcomes
- Assess SLOs
- Use results for learning improvement

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} Program Theory

ERIA PROGRAM THEORY

Intermediate Outcome(s)

Ability to Engage in a
Deliberate Ethical
Reasoning Process



Distal Outcome

Act Ethically

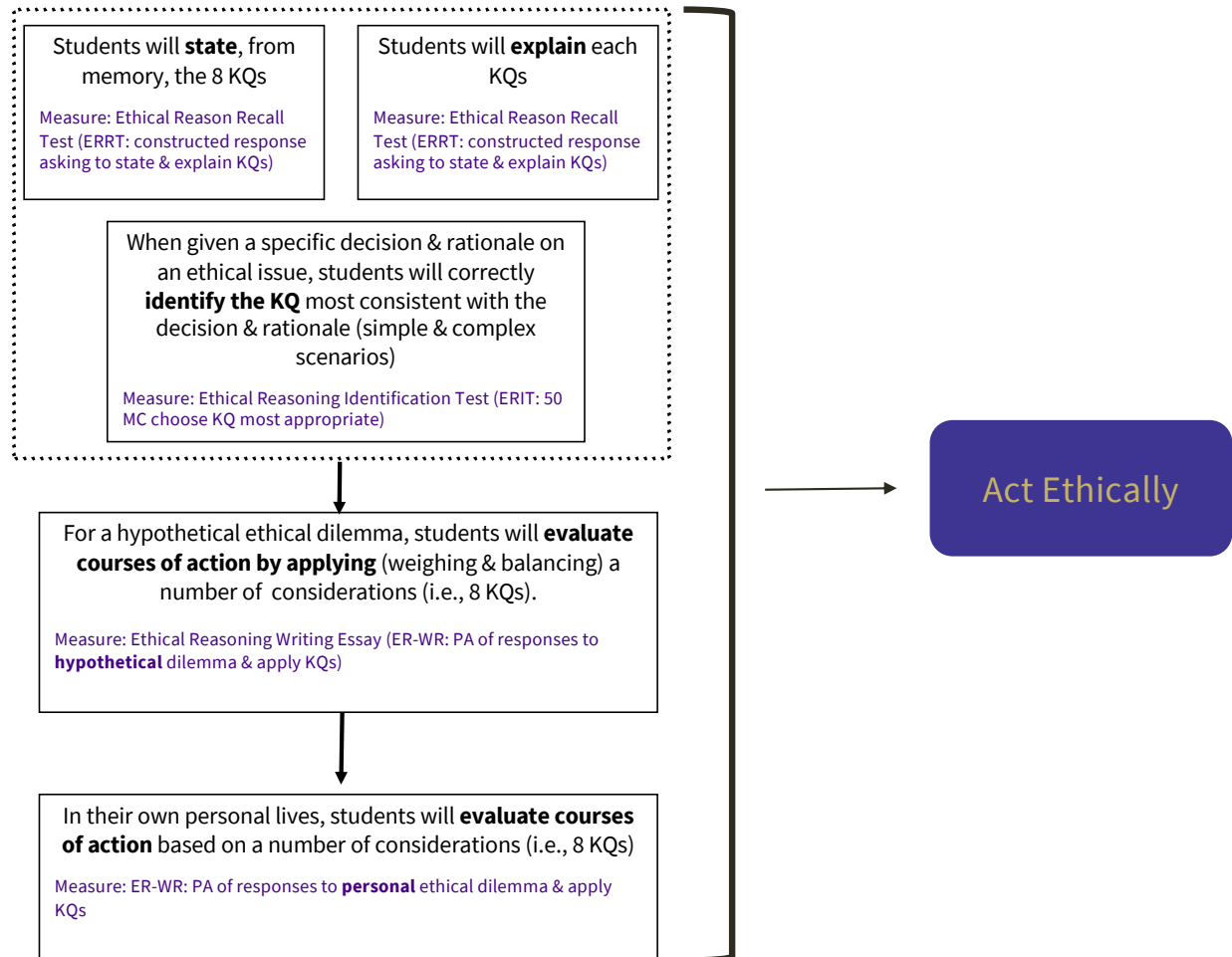
Kahneman, 2011

By engaging in a deliberate ethical reasoning thought process, students' avoid a quick, default, confirmatory decision on how to behave.

Programming

Intermediate Outcome(s)

Distal Outcome



Intermediate Outcome(s)

Distal Outcome

Students will **state**, from memory, the 8 KQs

Measure: Ethical Reason Recall

Students will **explain** each KQs

Measure: Ethical Reason Recall



**The magic of
“doing the right thing”
is found in the quality
of your questions.**

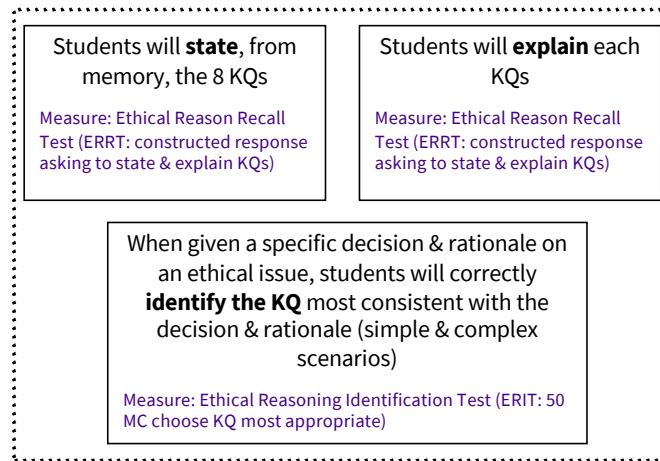
THE EIGHT KEY QUESTIONS

Fairness • Outcomes
Responsibilities • Character • Liberty
Empathy • Authority • Rights

 **Ethical Reasoning
in Action**
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY.

Act Ethically

Intermediate Outcome(s)

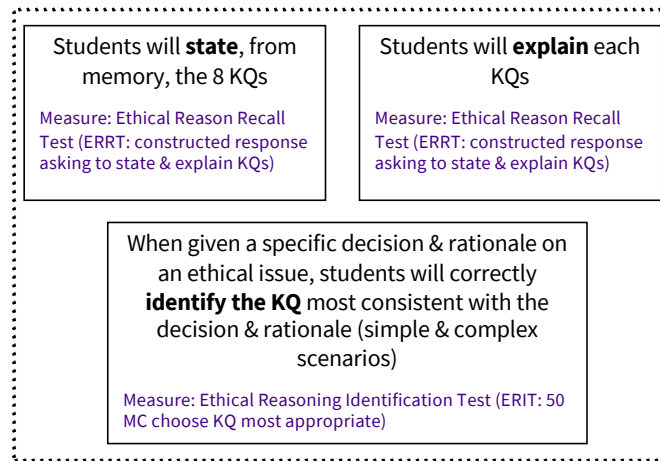


Distal Outcome



Act Ethically

Intermediate Outcome(s)



Distal Outcome

Act Ethically

Applying All Eight Key Questions

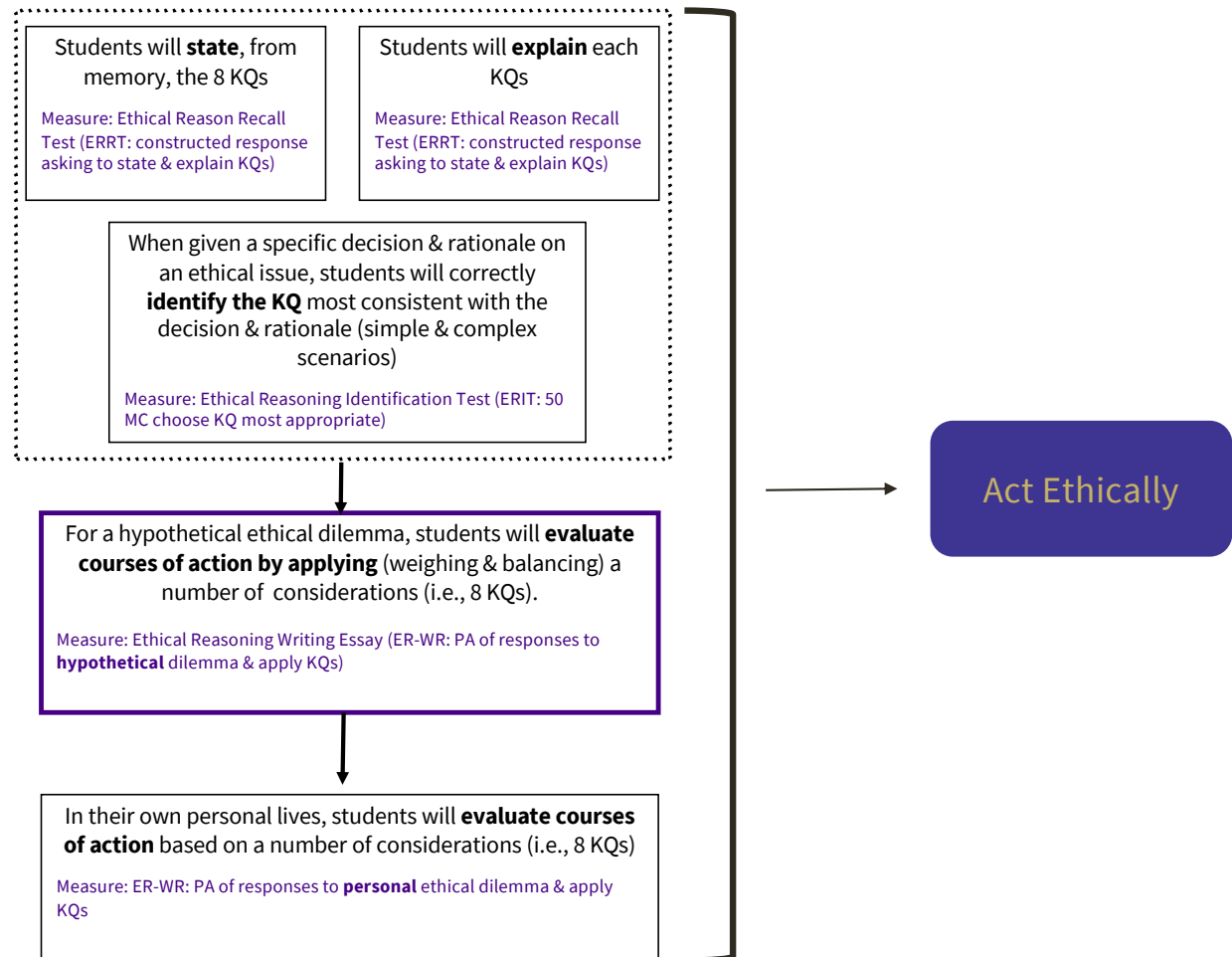
According to Gilligan's Ethics of Care Theory, female students tend to favor fairness and empathy, whereas male students tend to favor authority and rights

We teach them how to evaluate each 8KQ consideration, weigh/balance the 8KQs, and come to a decision.

Programming

Intermediate Outcome(s)

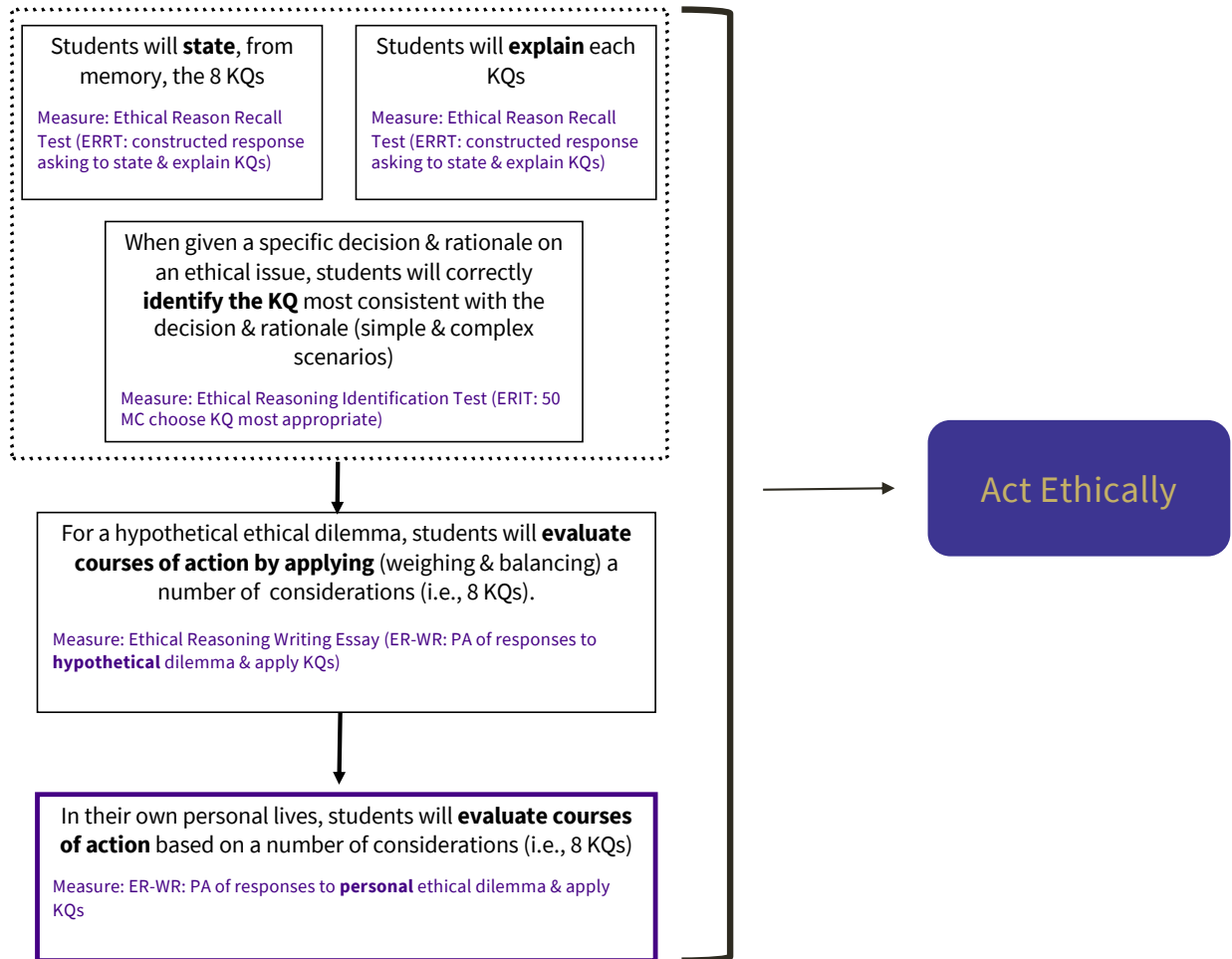
Distal Outcome



Programming

Intermediate Outcome(s)

Distal Outcome



ERIA PROGRAM THEORY

Program Component(s)

Orientation, Peer
Workshops, Course
Interventions

Intermediate Outcome(s)

Ability to Engage in a
Deliberate Ethical
Reasoning Process

Distal Outcome

Act Ethically



Programming

Orientation Intervention

- All incoming students
- “The One Book”: 8 KQs are introduced
- “Its Complicated”: Faculty & staff facilitate discussions of ethical scenario with 30 students

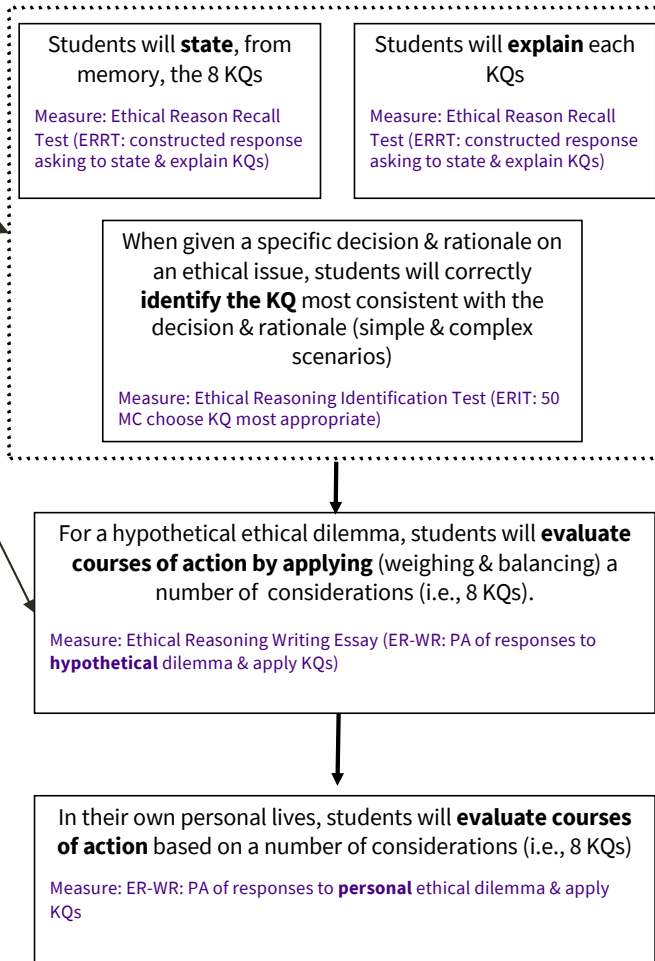
Peer Workshops

- At request of faculty
- Re-enforce knowledge of 8KQs through recall exercises
- Discuss why certain KQs remembered over others

Course Interventions

General education and program faculty use the 8KQ framework to help students reason through realistic ethical scenarios.

Intermediate Outcome(s)



Distal Outcome

Act Ethically

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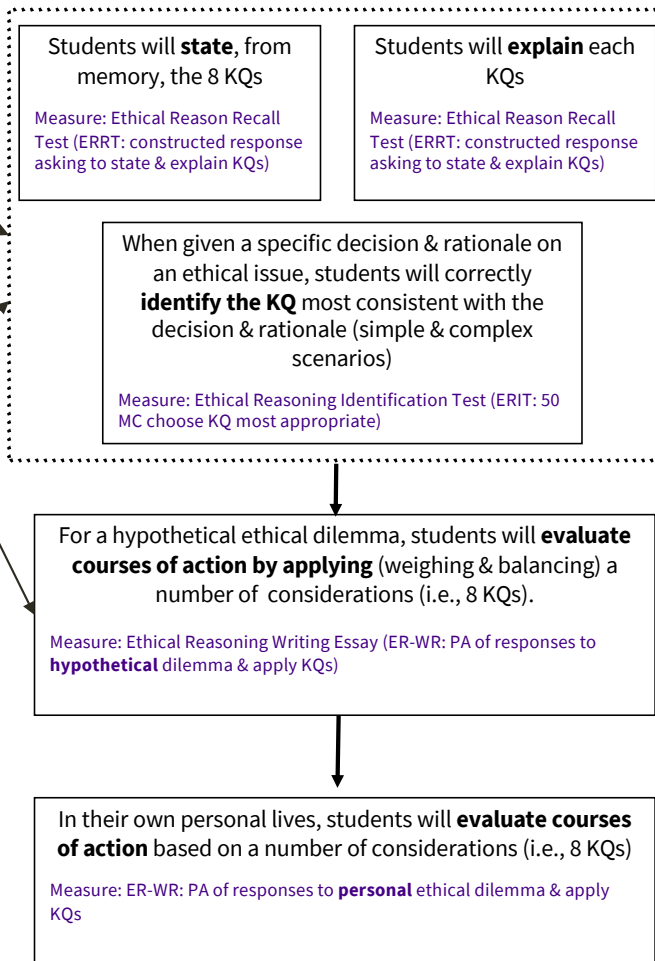
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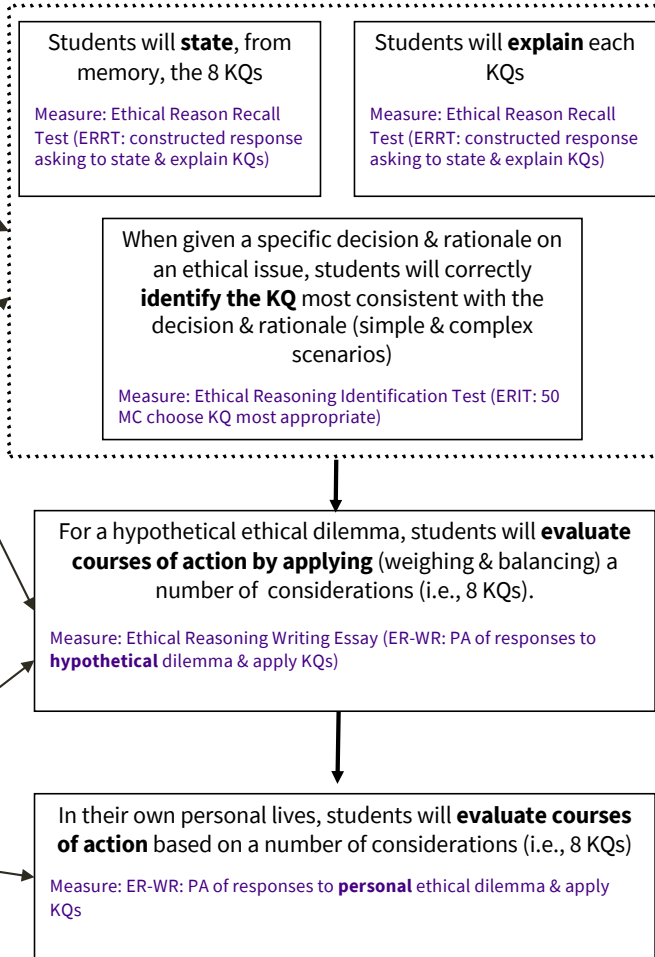
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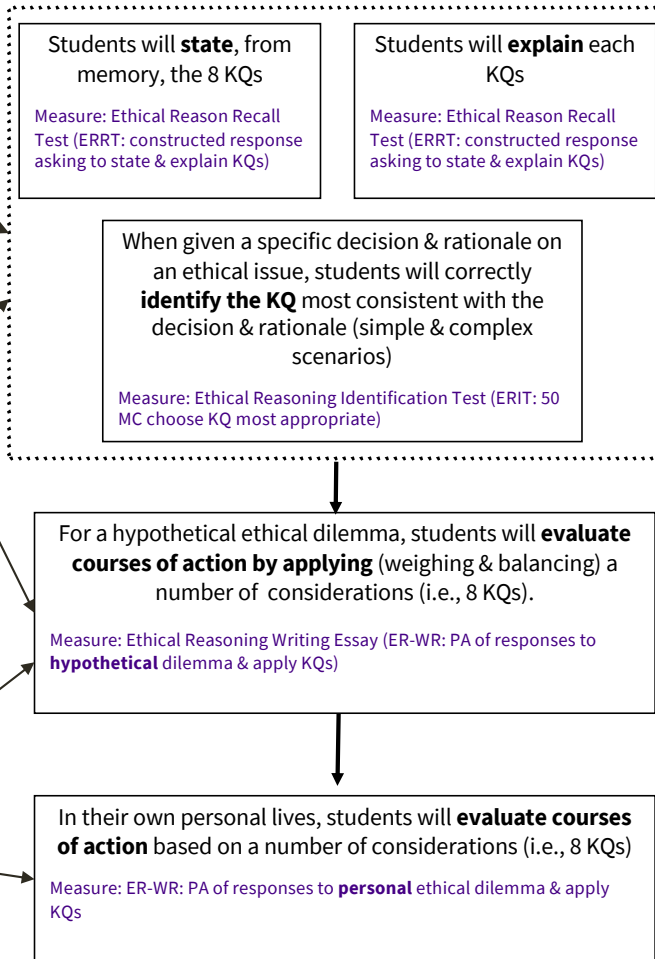
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Intermediate Outcome(s)



Distal Outcome

Perry's Scheme of Cognitive Development

Kahneman

Act Ethically

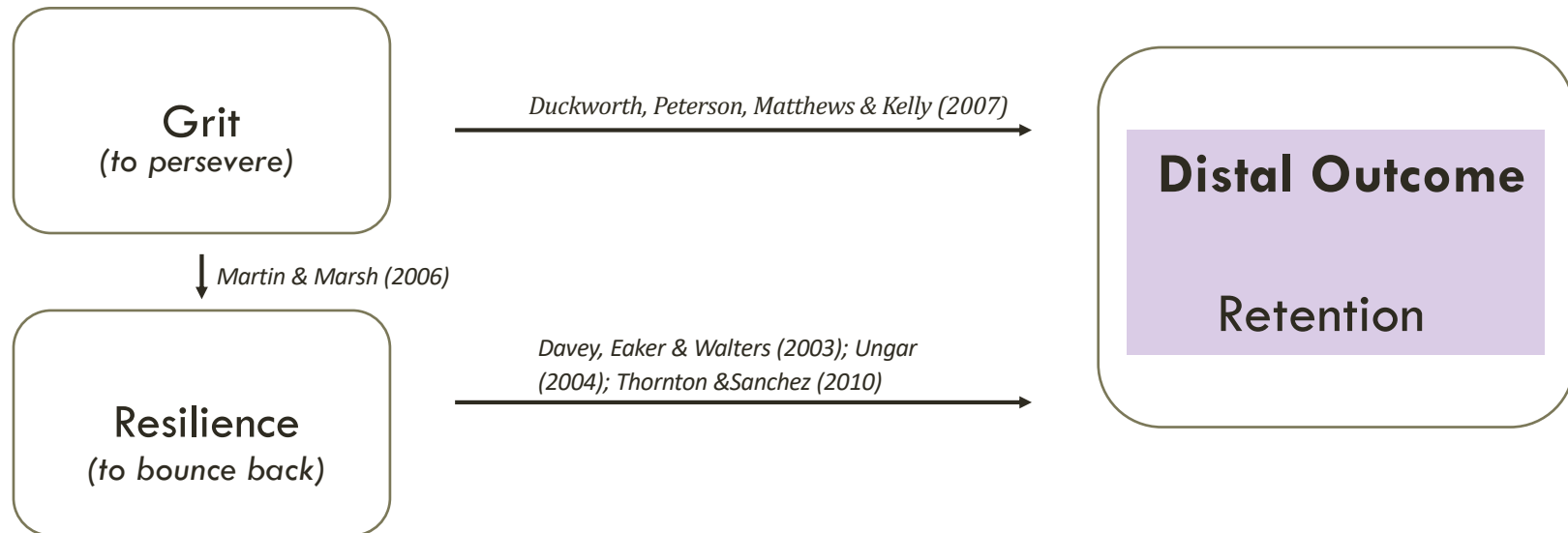
Gilligan's Ethics of Care Theory

Rebound: Rising Stronger from Setbacks

PROGRAM THEORY IN PRACTICE

A Resiliency Example

Long Term Outcomes



Intermediate Outcomes

Growth Mindset
(belief that our abilities
are malleable)

Self-Efficacy
(confidence in accomplishing
a behavior or action)

Duckworth (2016)



Vuong, Brown-Wetly & Tracz (2010)



Nussbaum & Dweck (2004)

Martin & Marsh (2006)



Long Term Outcomes

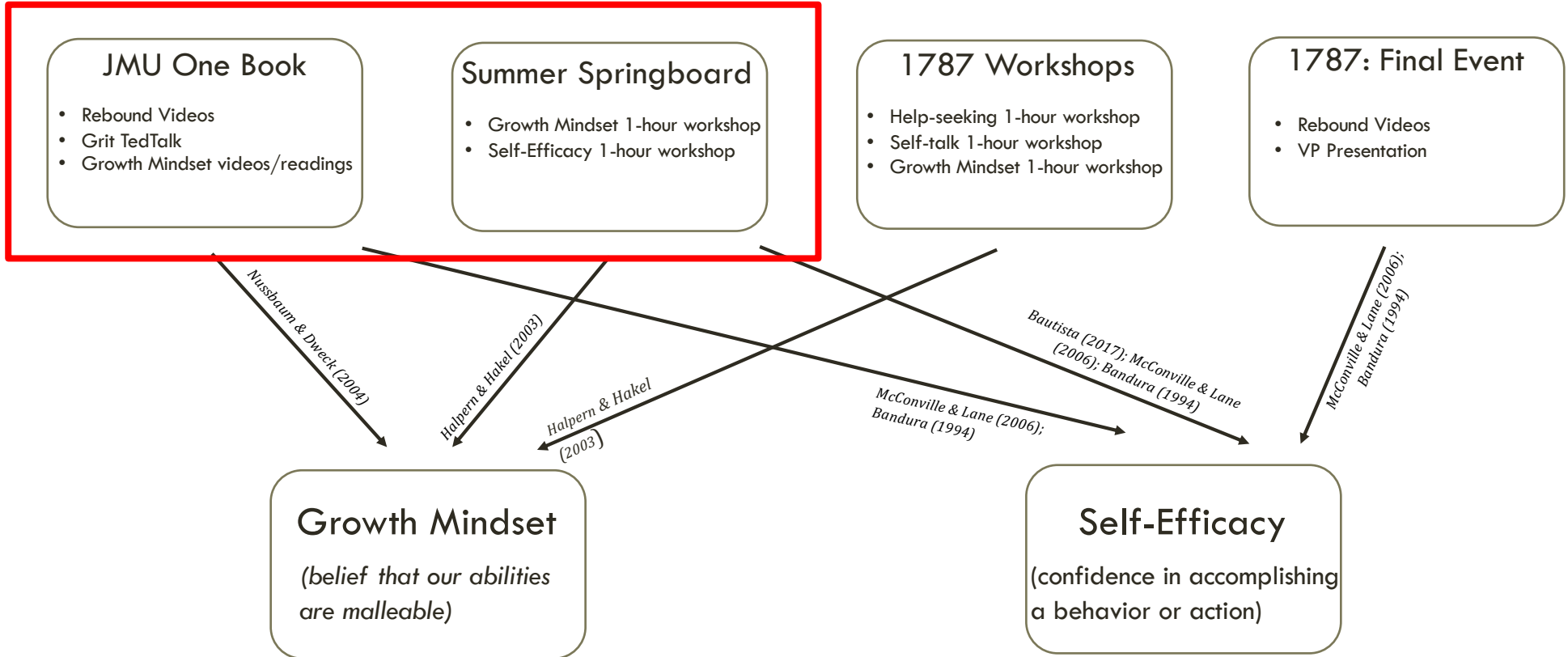
Grit
(to persevere)

Martin & Marsh (2006)

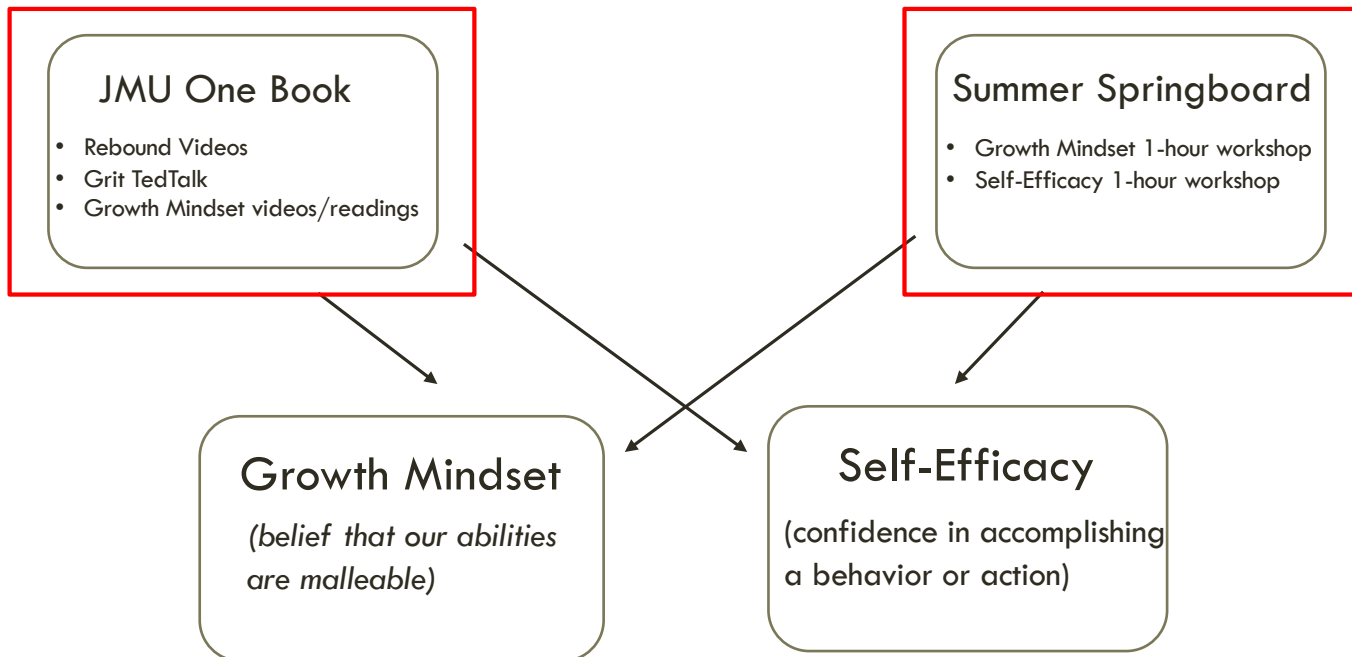


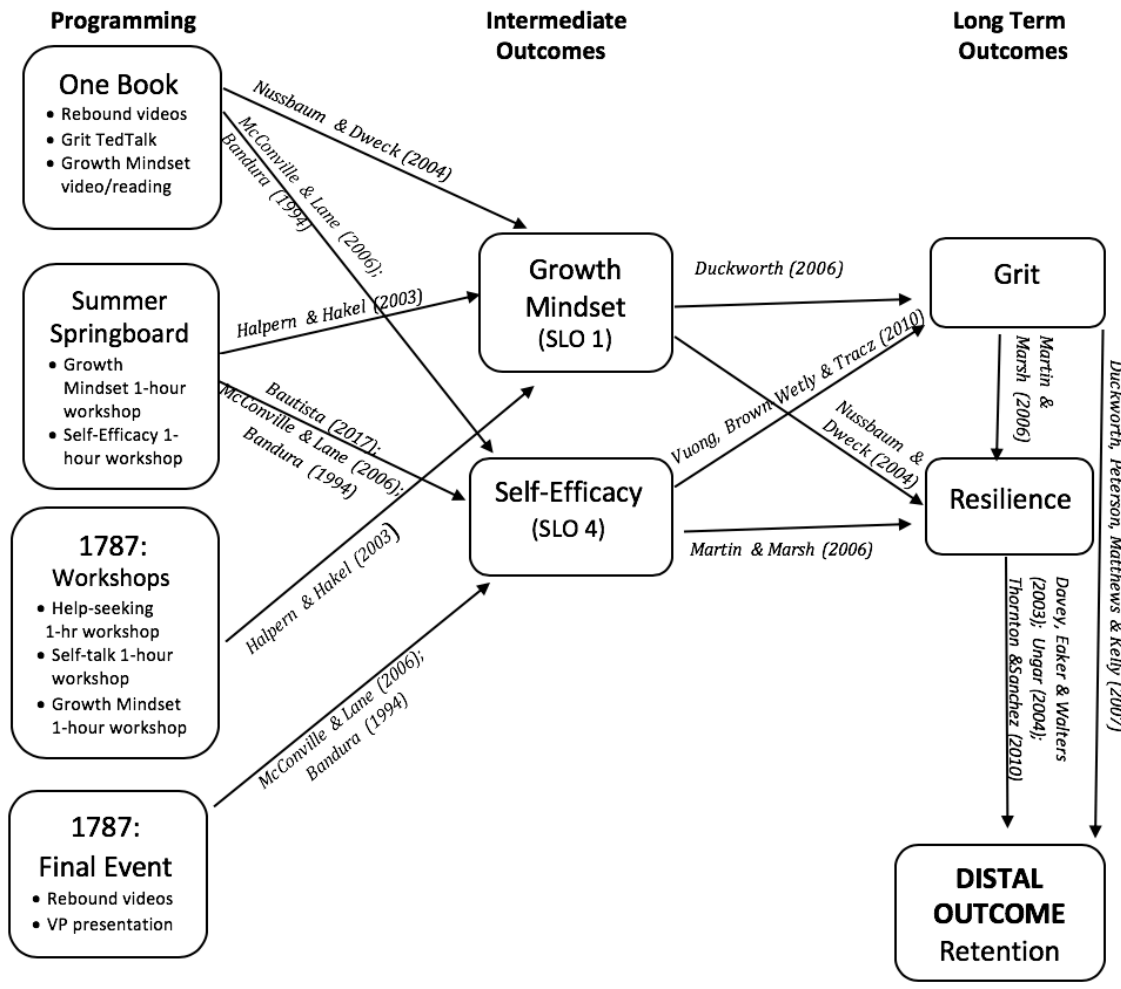
Resilience
(to bounce back)

Programming



A CLOSER LOOK





PROGRAM THEORY IN PRACTICE

An STI Prevention Example

WHAT DO STUDENTS LIKE TO DO?

HAVE SEX

Distal Outcome

Students will
engage in sexually-
safer behaviors

Short-Term Outcomes

Differentiate between viral and bacterial STIs

Differentiate between low- and high- risk sexual behaviors

Recall proper sequence of putting on a condom

Identify campus resources for sexual health care

Differentiate between high- and low- risk attitudes toward STI transmission

Identify methods to communicate sexual boundaries

Know STI Risks

Know when to get tested

Access to Safer Sex Supplies

Distal Outcome

Students will engage in sexually-safer behaviors

Short-Term Outcomes

K5. Compare high- and low- risk sexual behaviors

S1. Put on a condom

K6. List 2+ campus resources for sexual health

S2. Confidently communicate sexual boundaries with partners

K3. Describe the short-and long-term effects of STIs

K7. Name where to go on campus for safe sex supplies

K1. State the rates of certain STIs at JMU

K4. Describe the benefits of using a condom

K2. Name places on the body where one can contract an STI

Intermediate Outcomes

P1. Students will increase their perception of their susceptibility to contracting an STI

P2. Students will increase their perception of the severity of STIs

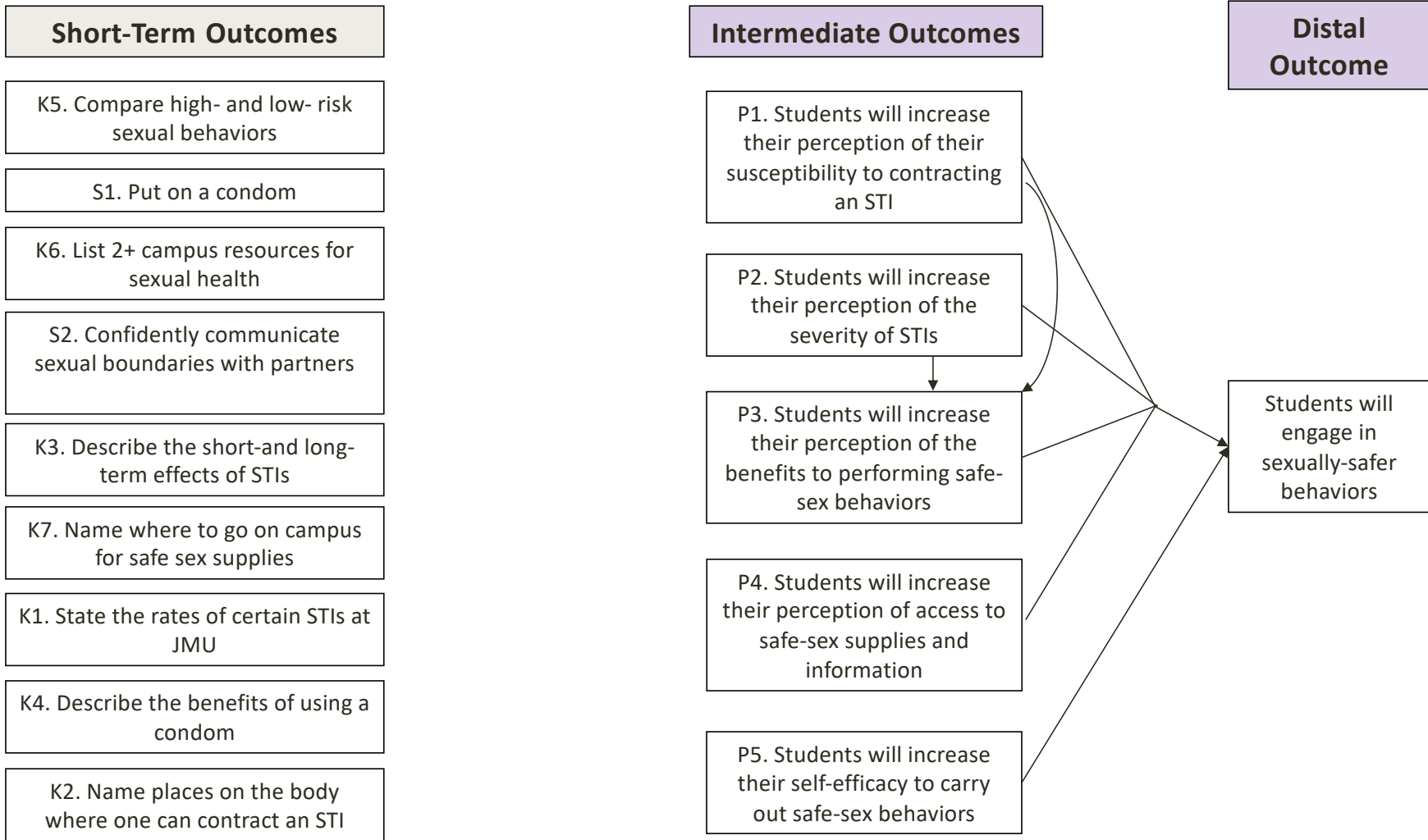
P3. Students will increase their perception of the benefits to performing safe-sex behaviors

P4. Students will increase their perception of access to safe-sex supplies and information

P5. Students will increase their self-efficacy to carry out safe-sex behaviors

Distal Outcome

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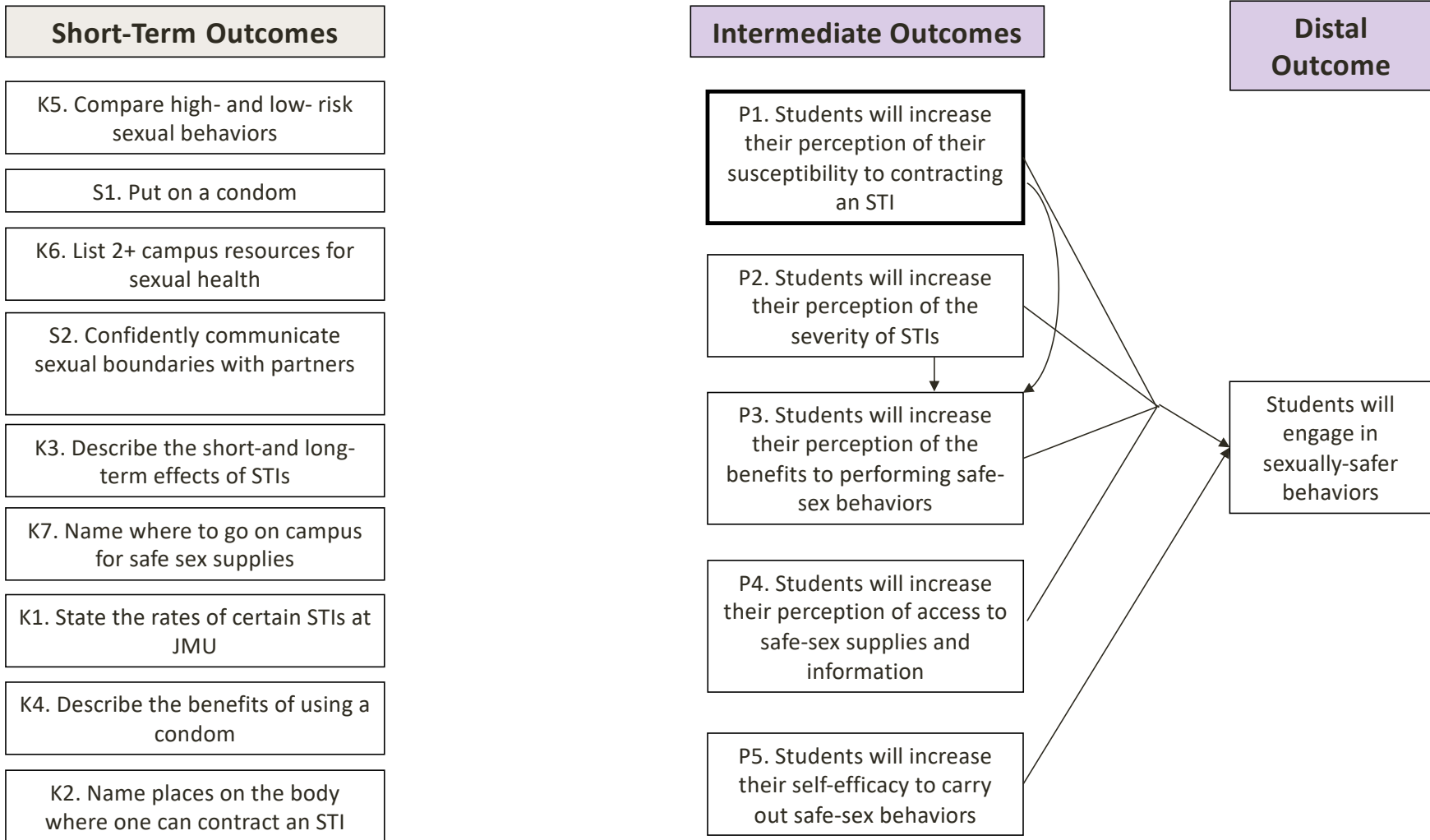
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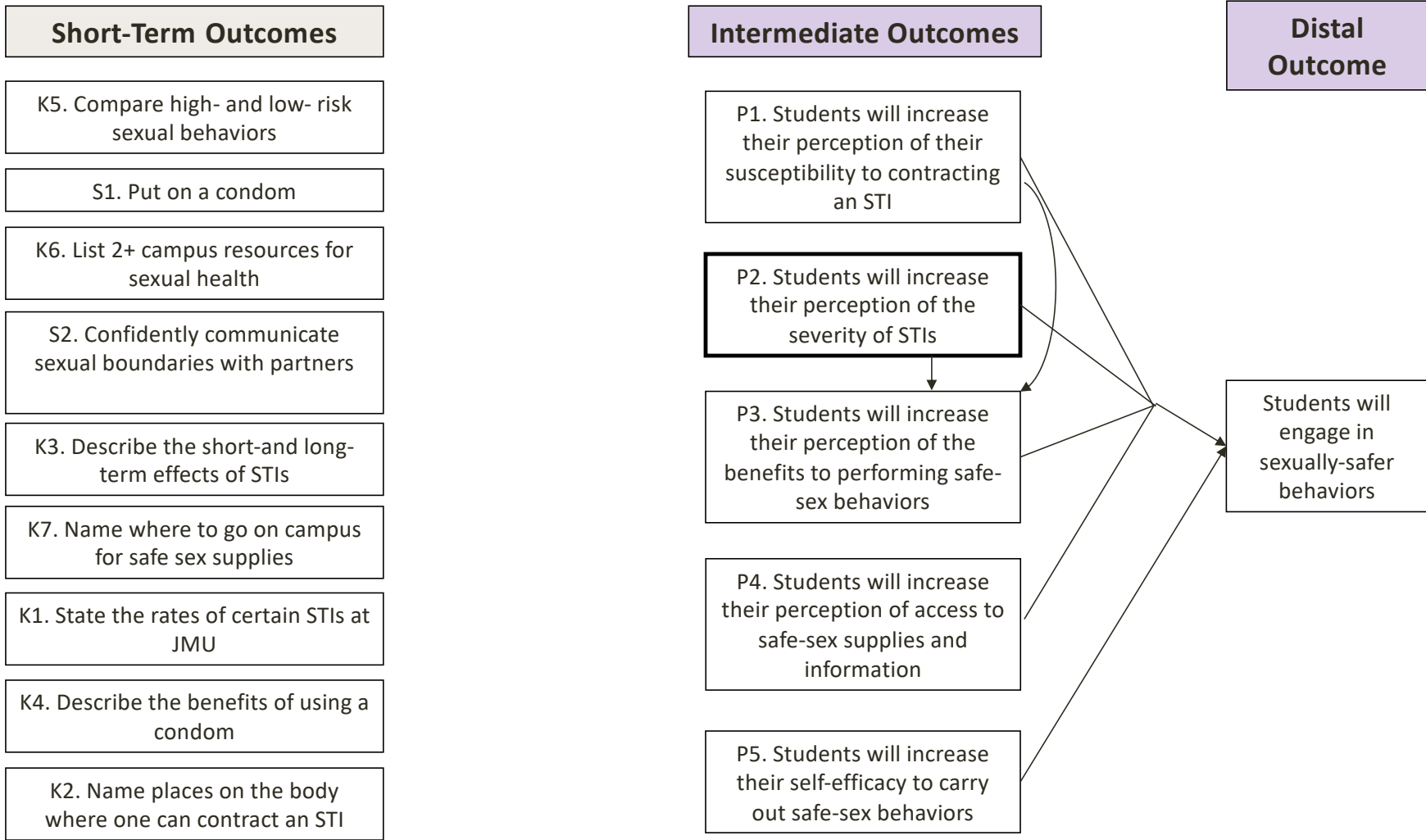
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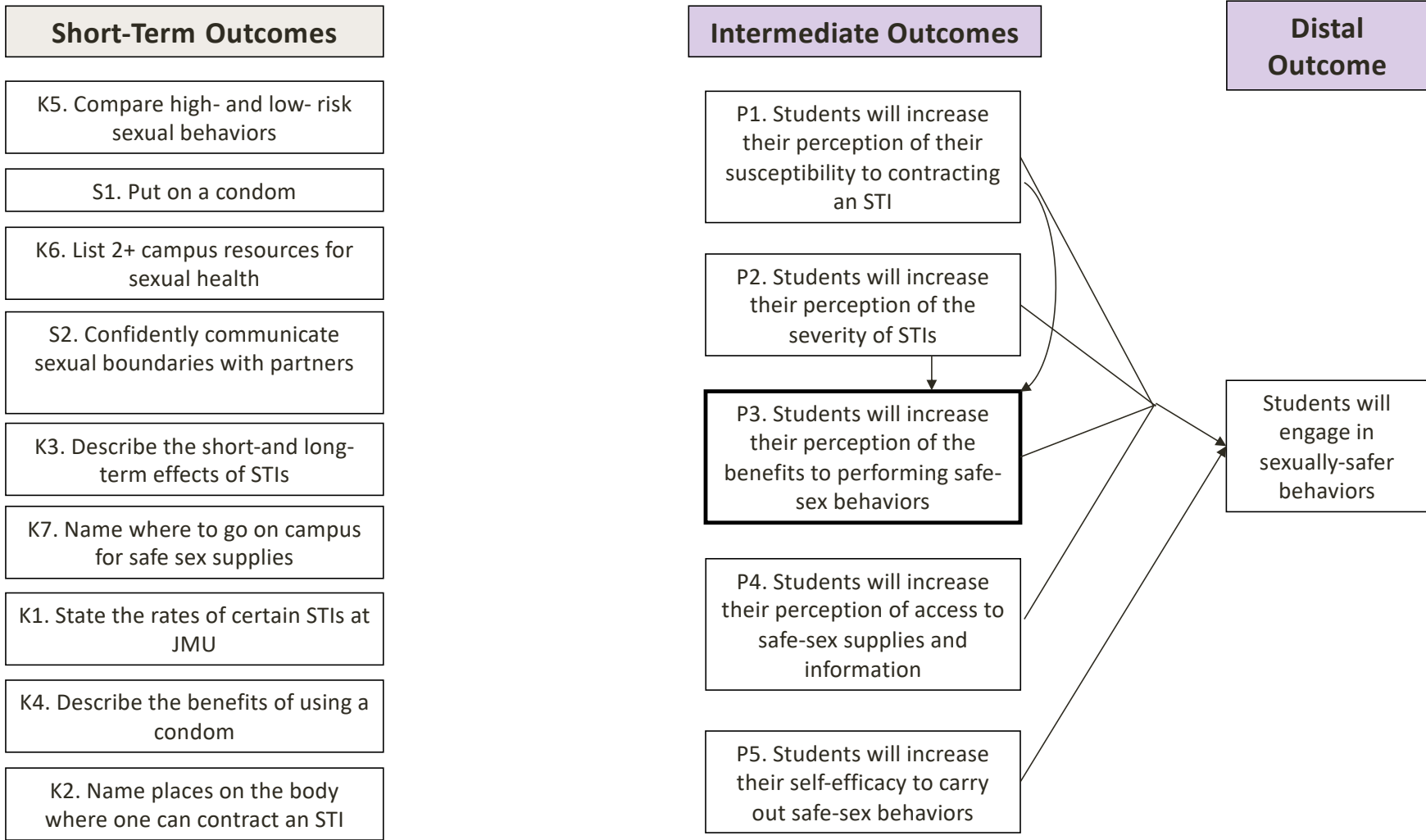
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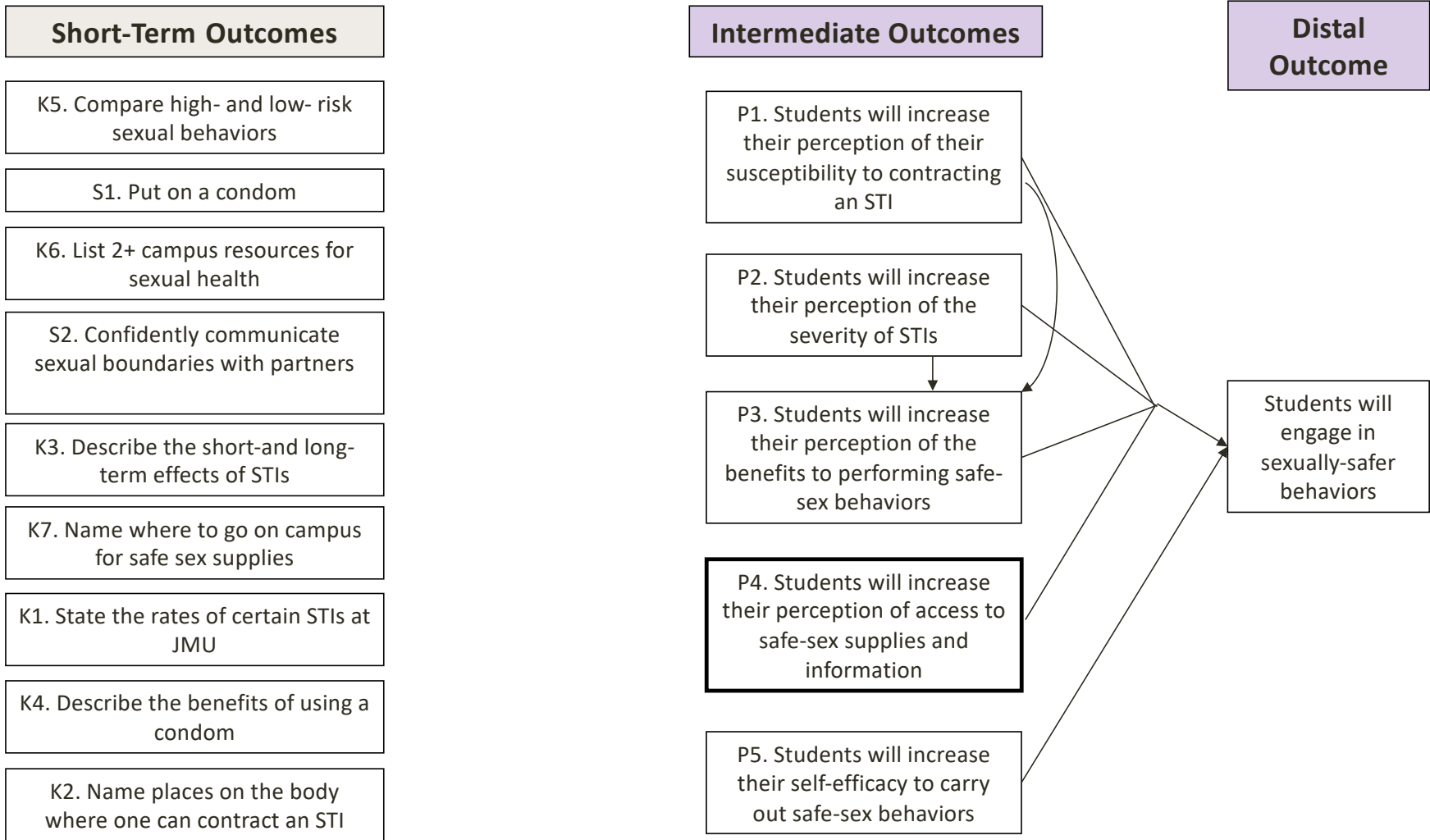
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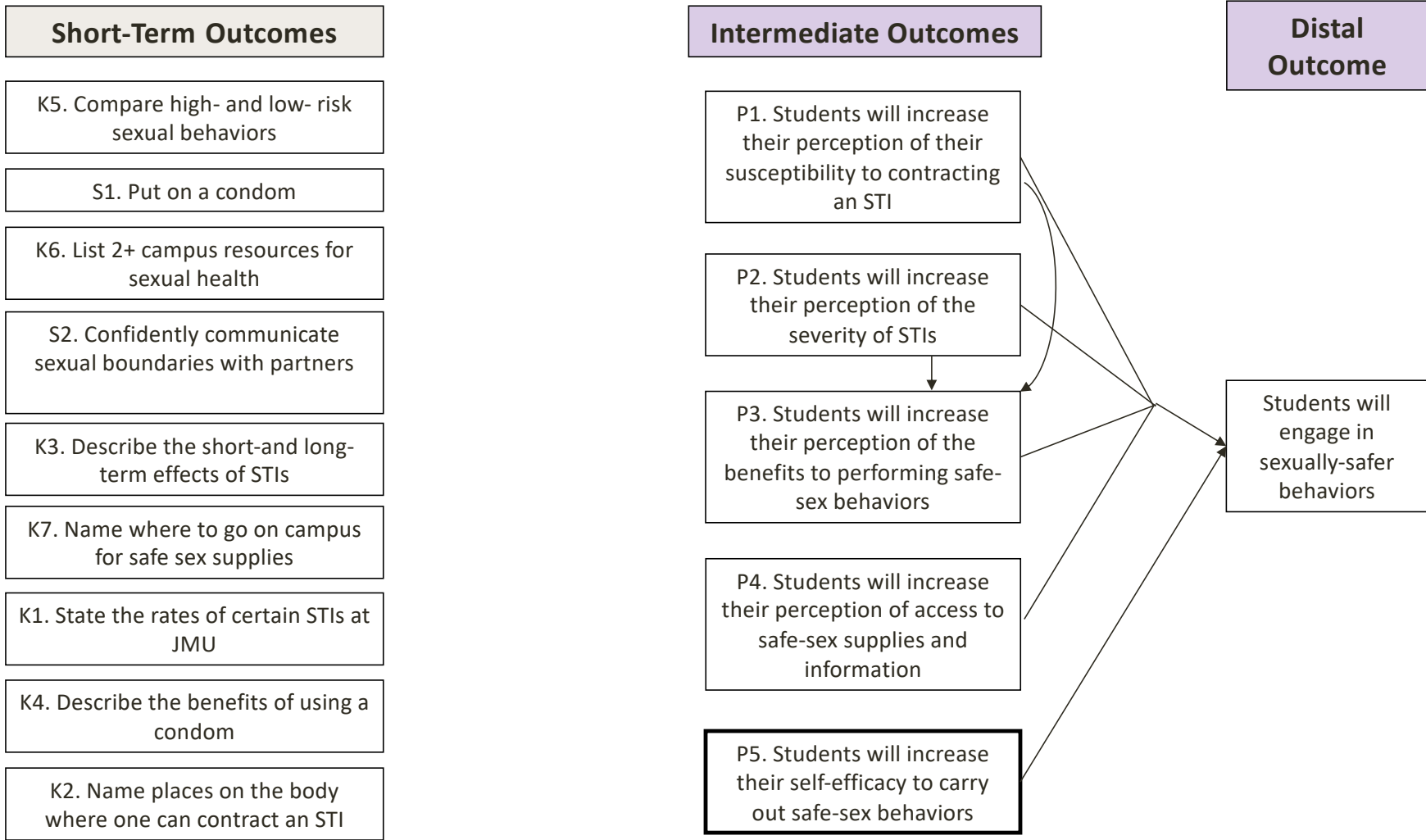
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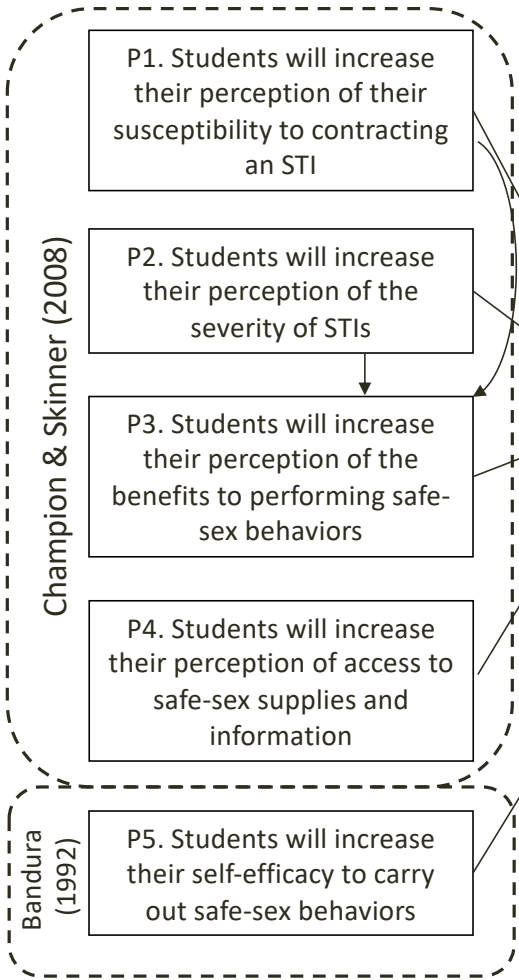
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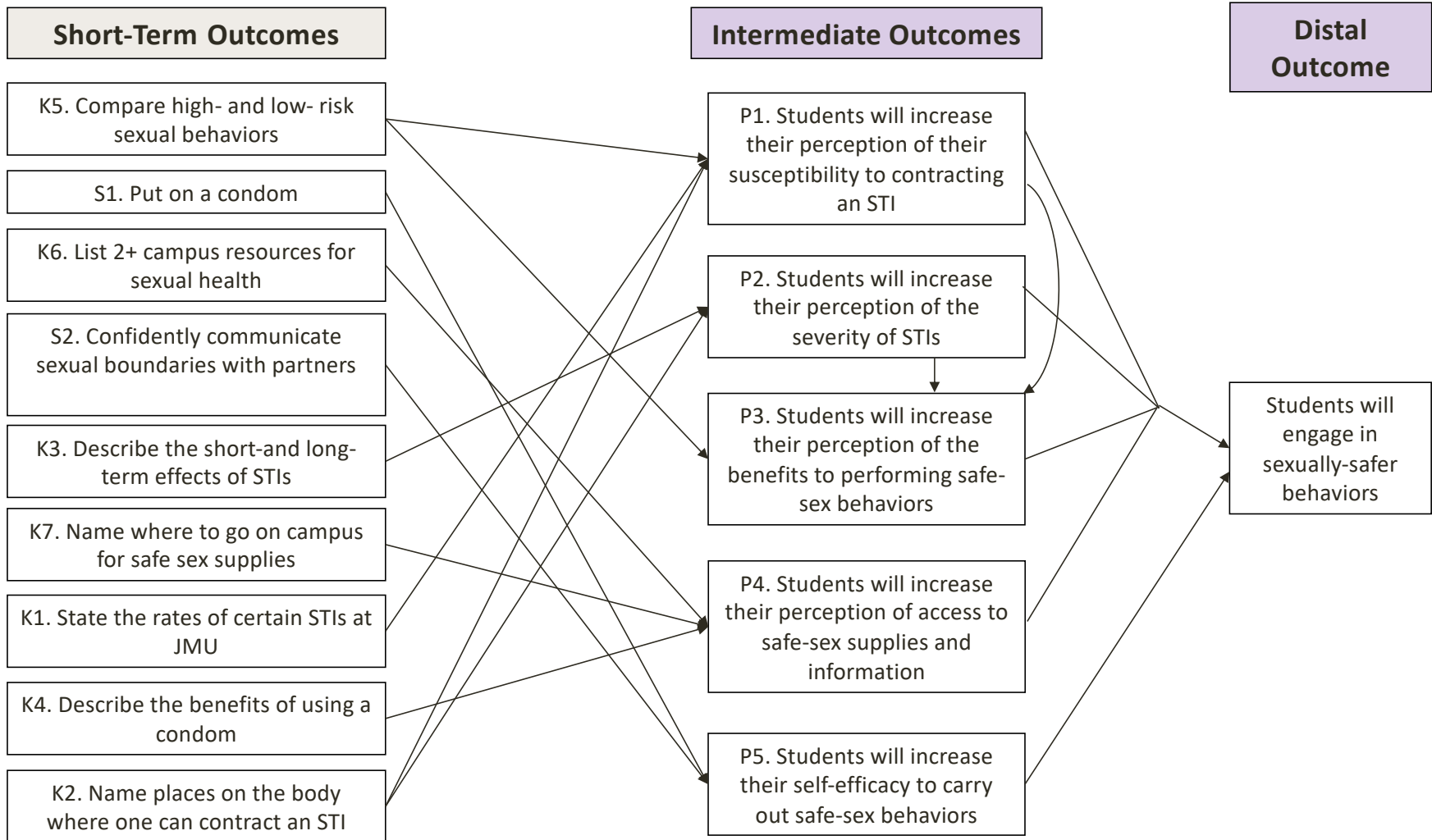
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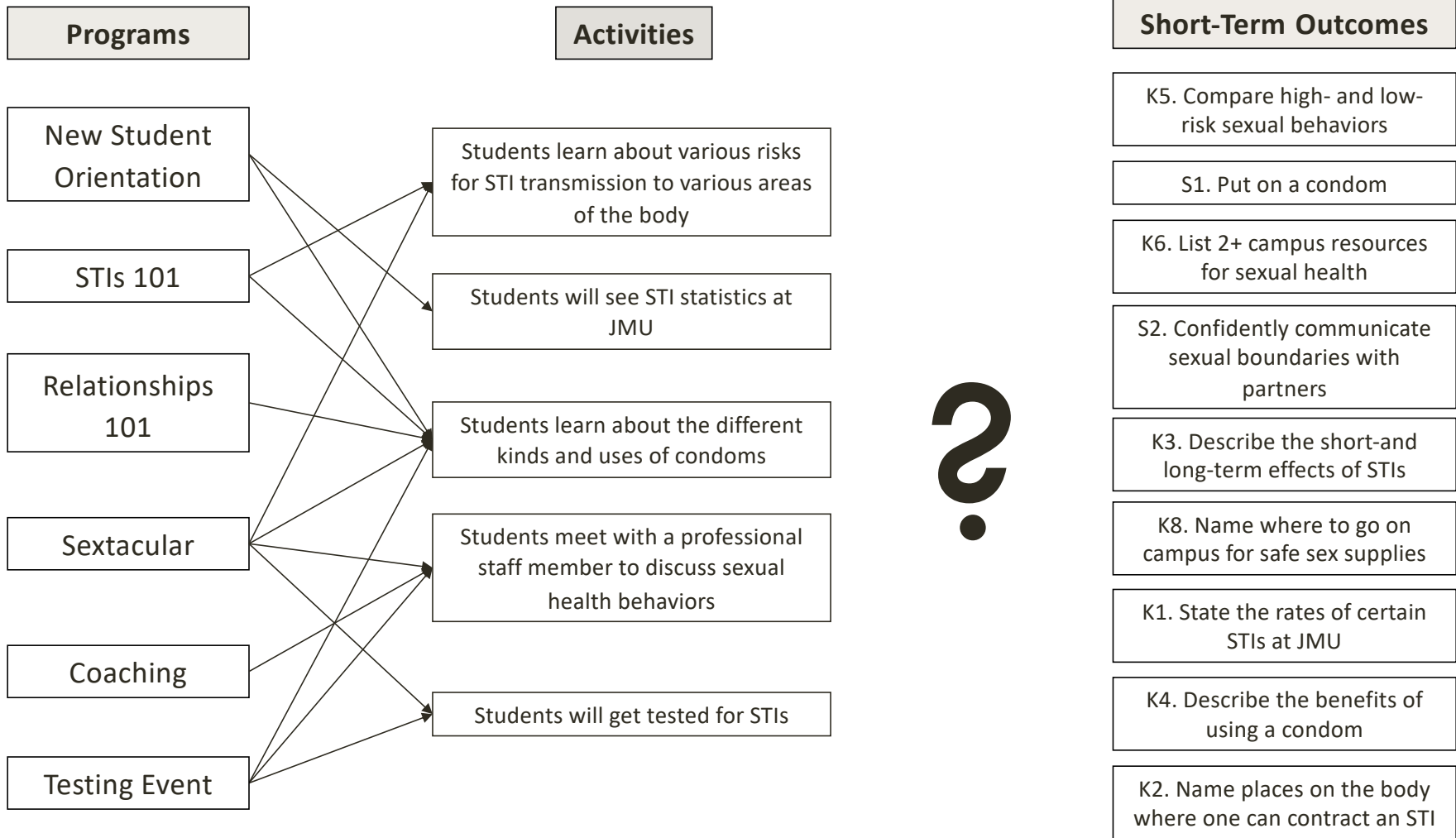
Intermediate Outcomes



Distal Outcome

Students will engage in sexually-safer behaviors





Programs

Activities

Short-Term Outcomes

New Student Orientation

STIs 101

Relationships 101

Sextacular

Coaching

Testing Event

Students learn about various risks for STI transmission to various areas of the body

Students will see STI statistics at JMU

Students learn about the different kinds and uses of condoms

Students meet with a professional staff member to discuss sexual health behaviors

Students will get tested for STIs



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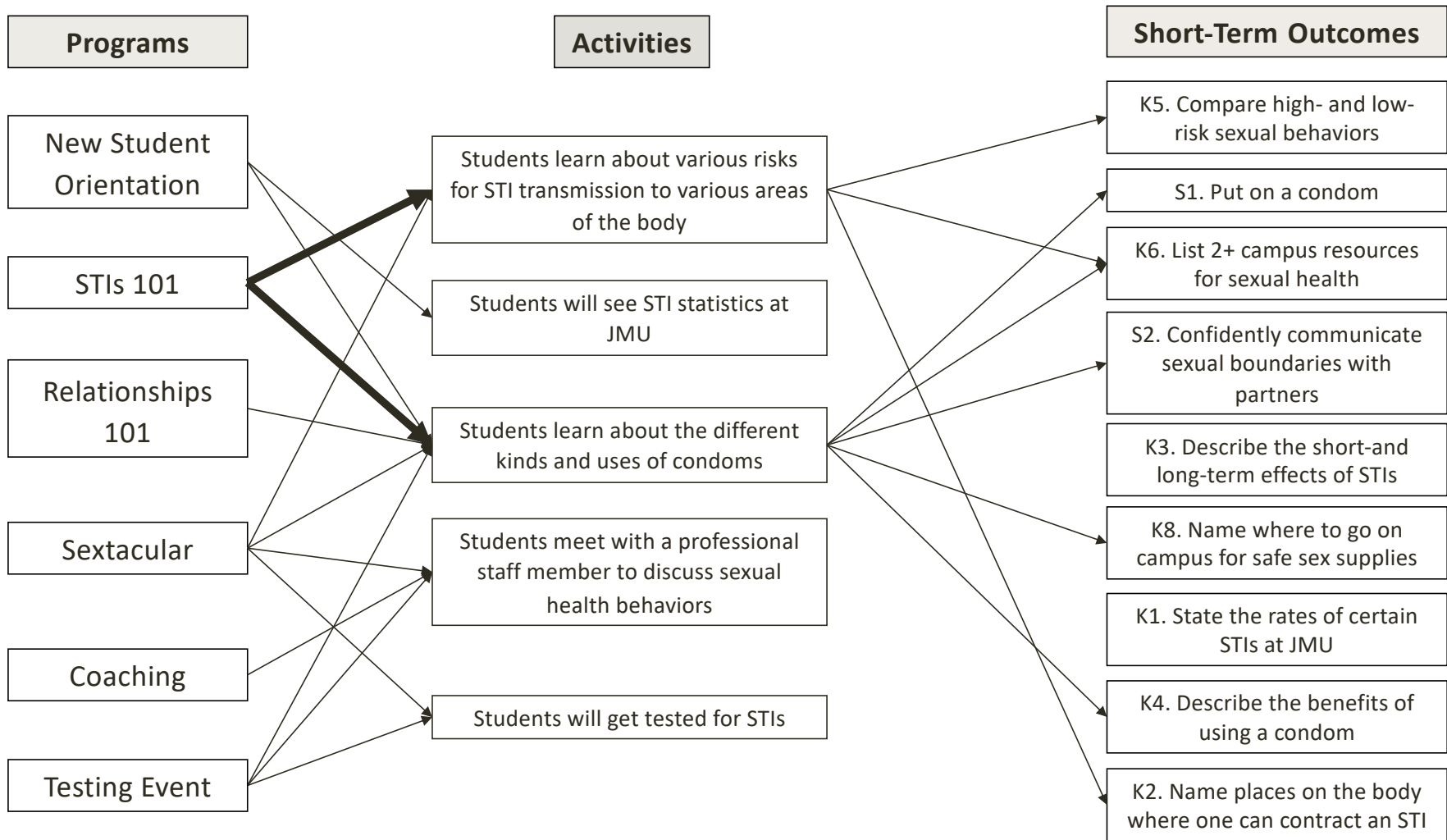
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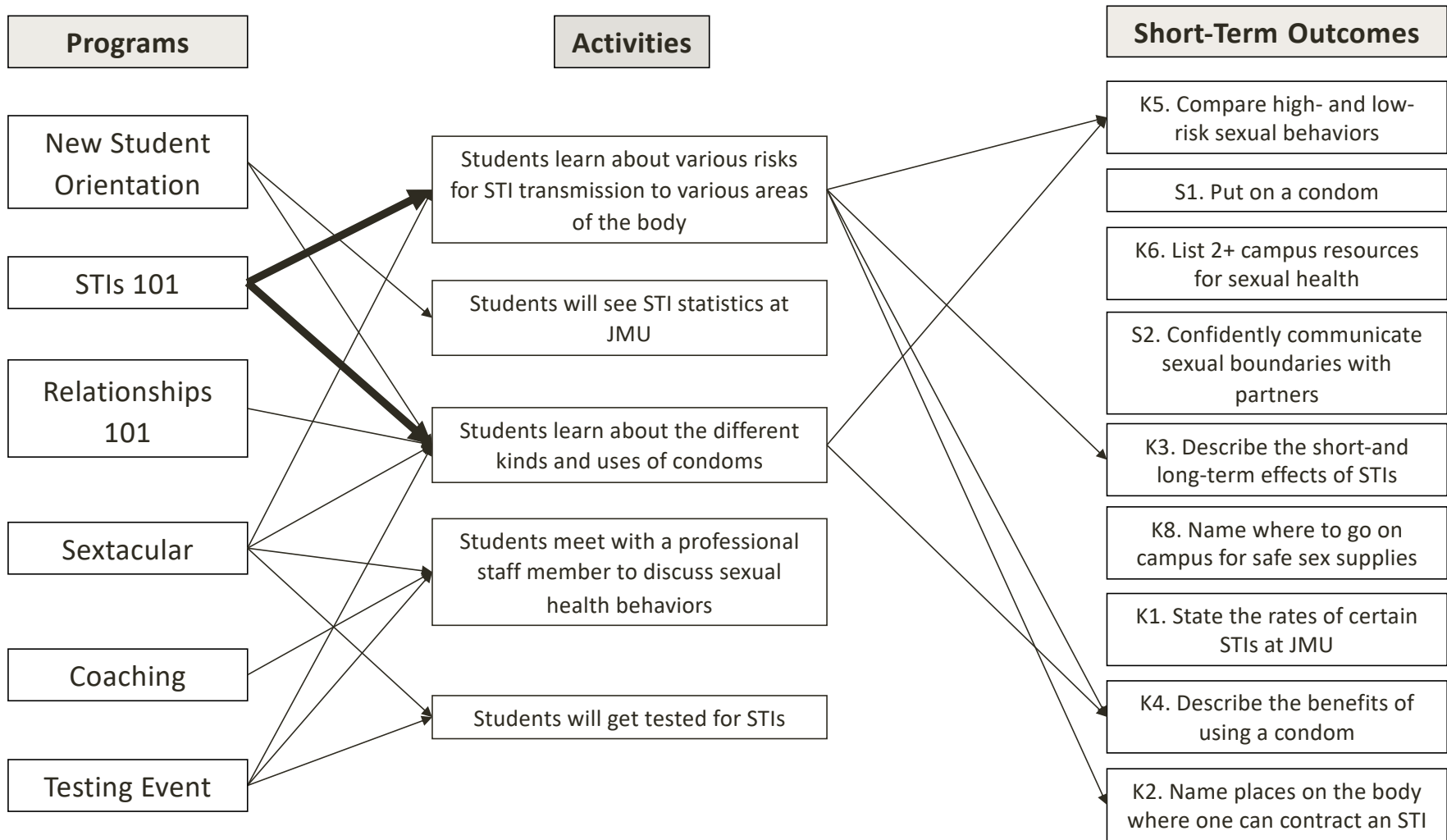
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Intermediate Outcomes

Distal Outcome

P1. Students will increase their perception of their susceptibility to contracting an STI

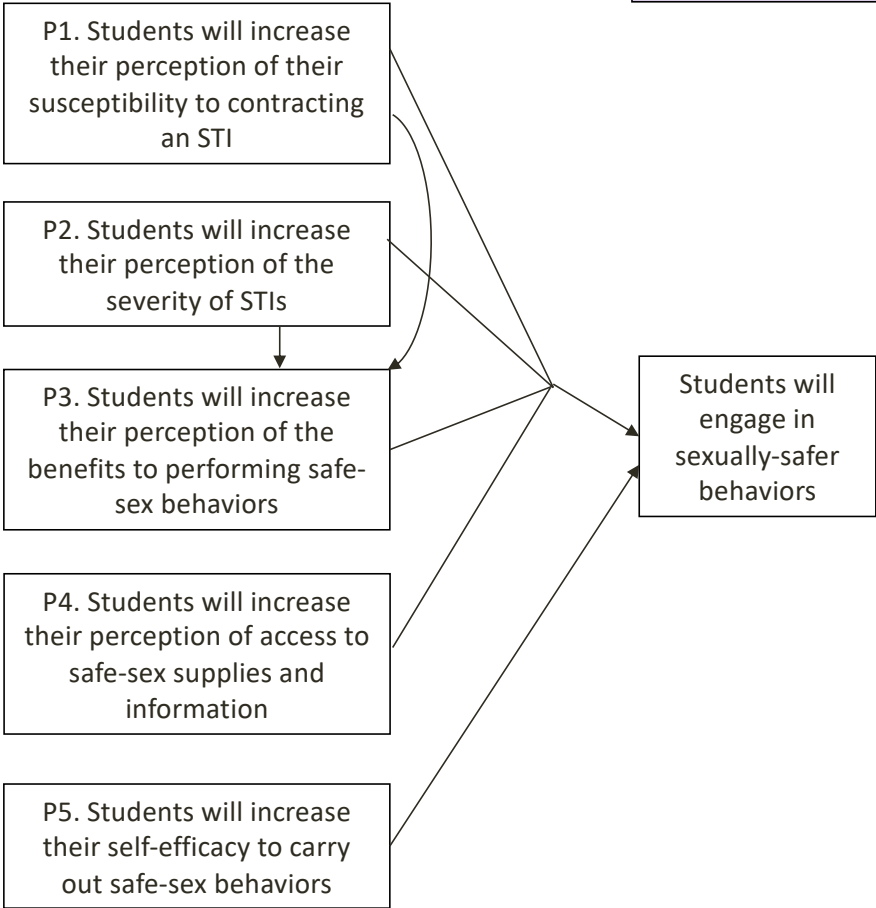
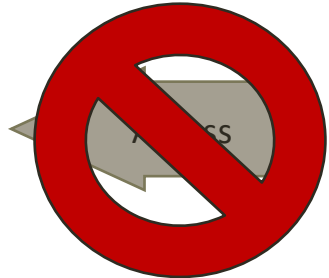
P2. Students will increase their perception of the severity of STIs

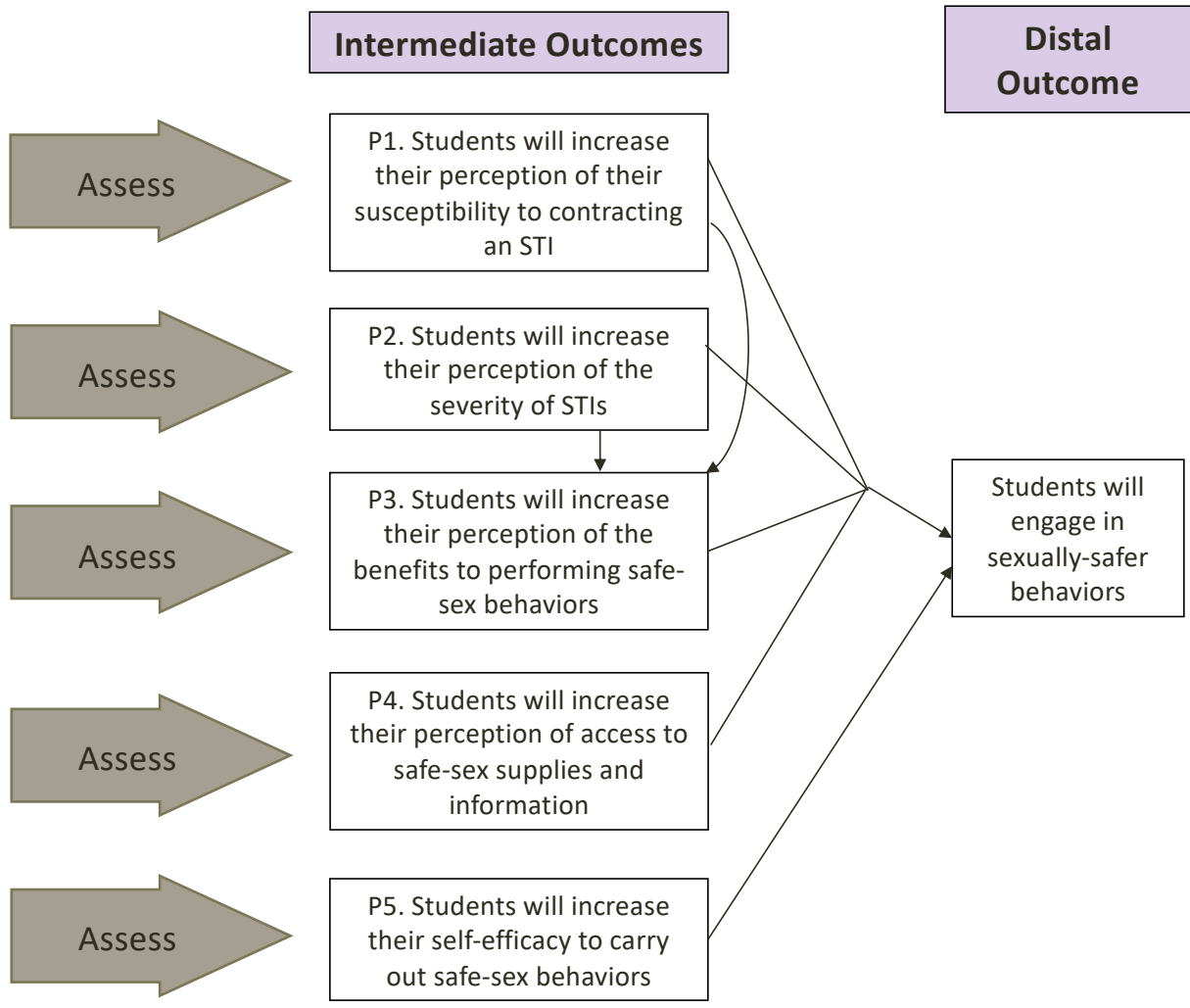
P3. Students will increase their perception of the benefits to performing safe-sex behaviors

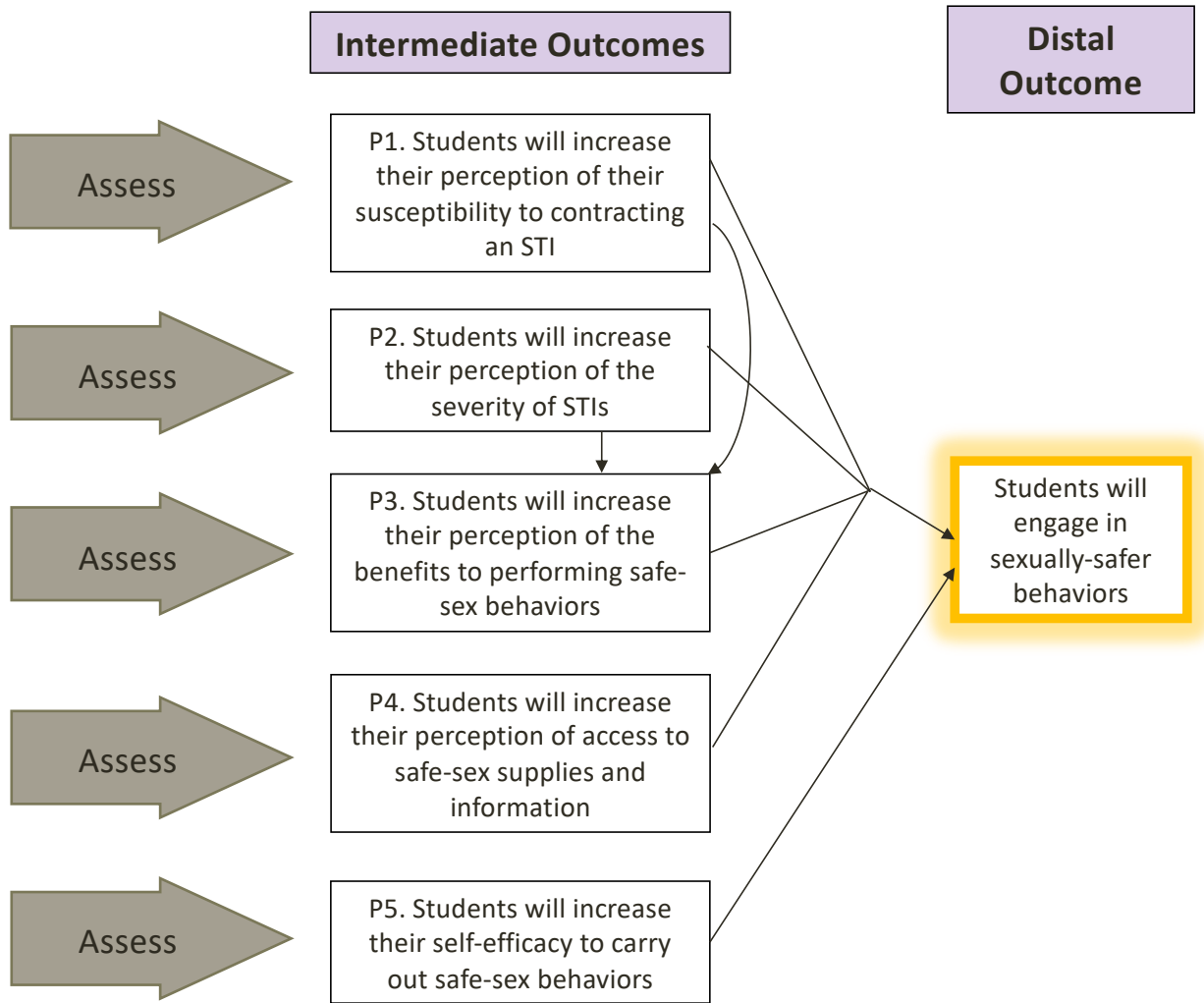
P4. Students will increase their perception of access to safe-sex supplies and information

P5. Students will increase their self-efficacy to carry out safe-sex behaviors

Students will engage in sexually-safer behaviors







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designed to achieve the stated outcomes?)

- A thoughtful discussion of reasons why students might not be achieving the stated outcomes despite the current programming
- Initial thoughts about potential program modifications or new evidence-based interventions

Before beginning your application, we encourage you to review the examples of completed applications below. These mock applications should help clarify what kind of information we are looking for in each section. If you still have questions about the application, or if you would like to receive feedback on your application prior to submission, please [schedule an appointment](#) to meet with a SASS consultant or email SASS Faculty Lead, Sara Finney (finney@jmu.edu).

CLICK THE LINKS BELOW!

Learning Improvement Initiative Application Exemplars

- Academic Probation
- Alcohol Use (BASICS Program)
- Alcohol Use (PRIME for Life Program)
- Civic Engagement
- Community Service Learning
- Diversity Leadership
- Global Citizenship
- Rebound
- STI Reduction
- Sustainability

THANK YOU!

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