Session Focus

• Foundation and tools for making assessment more valuable on our campuses
• Contribution of learning organization literature to foster an integration of assessment with curricular and instructional planning
  • Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning (AAHE, 1992)
  • Five Conditions that contribute to learning organizations, in “A Case for Participatory Evaluation: Theory, Research, Practice” (Cousins, J.B. and Earl, L.M. 1992)
  • Learning Organization Literature (Goh, Cousins, and Elliot (2006); Garvin (1993), Garvin, Edmondson, and Gino (2008); Haviland (2014)

Intentional Integration of Curriculum and Instructional Planning with Assessment: Building on Learning Organization Scholarship

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Session Organization

• Discuss the synthesis of guiding practices and the evolution of approaches we used for deepening the value of assessment for student learning for multiple stakeholders
• Using our experience as a springboard, attendees will select potential strategies to intentionally integrate curricular and instructional planning and improvement with assessment.
Early and Continued Challenges

- Time consuming and not rewarded
- Seen as an added responsibility
- Viewed as interfering with more important work
- Sometimes seen strictly as a reporting mechanism
- Not clearly seen within framework of curriculum and instructional design and enhanced learning

Challenge to Assessment

“...over time, the entire field of assessment has bifurcated...into ‘improvement’ vs. ‘accountability’...The accountability piece has truly gotten in the way of assessing for learning.”

“What we often end up debating isn’t really the ‘assessment.’ We end up debating the documentation of the assessment work.”

-C. Wehlburg 10/8/2017

Focus on Enabling the Integration of Curricular and Instructional Planning with the Assessment Process

What specific institutional challenges have you experienced at your institution that hinder a full integration of assessment, curriculum, and instructional planning processes?
Evolution of Our Planning Processes and Our Current Context

- “Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning” (AAHE)
- “The Case for Participatory Evaluation: Theory, Research, Practice”
  - Both published in 1992
  - Both worthy of consideration today
  - Are complementary
- “Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Book II, Affective Domain”
- Learning Organizations: “skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insight”

Initially Guided by AAHE’s “Nine Principles of Good Assessment Practice”

1. Reflects values of the institution – assessment is a vehicle for educational improvement
2. Assessment needs to accurately reflect the complexity of the learning
3. Goals and outcomes need to be explicitly stated
4. Assessment reflects outcomes and strategies and approaches to foster these outcomes
5. Assessment is an ongoing process
6. Assessment is more effective when it’s an institutional effort with all stakeholders involved

“Nine Principles of Good Assessment Practice” Continued

7. “Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change. It is a process that starts with the questions of decision-makers, that involves them in the gathering and interpreting of data, and that informs and helps guide continuous improvement.”

8. It works best in institutions in which “the quality of teaching and learning is visibly valued and worked at”

9. Helps demonstrate the serious, reflective nature of the institution and transparency
Principles of Good Practice
Continued Relevance

Principle 6
“involvement...naming faculty, student affairs educators, librarians, administrative affairs, and students”
“students have arguably been least involved”

Principle 7
“problem of use has become increasingly clear”
“think in advance how the information will be used and by whom”


Activity

• Identify one or more Principles you hope to address at your institution that might impact a broader understanding of the integration of assessment and curriculum and instructional planning and improvement processes.

• Share at your tables.

Connection of Participatory Evaluation with Assessment and Conditions to Foster Successful Assessment

1) Placement of value on assessment
   a) Understanding its capacity – integral part of the curriculum and instructional processes, ultimately to maximize learning
   b) To faculty members, chairs, deans and the Provost

2) Provision of resources and time to engage in the assessment process
   a) Time should not be costly to faculty members – demonstrates value of assessment

Cousins, J. B., & Earl, L. M. (1992)
Conditions to Foster Successful Assessment

3) Commitment to organizational learning
   a) the institution has the mechanisms and attitude to explore difficult questions
   b) need “organizational memory” – documentation of processes and procedures used and some continuity of leadership throughout the institution
   c) leadership focuses on learning, gathering the evidence necessary to answer questions, solve problems, and improve

Cousins, J. B., & Earl, L. M. (1992)

Conditions to Foster Successful Assessment

4) Motivation of “primary program users” to participate in assessment
   a) Faculty, academic administrators and students
   b) Valuable to participants

5) Willingness and ability of primary users to receive the necessary training
   a) openness and motivation to participate in assessment and instructional development opportunities

Cousins, J. B., & Earl, L. M. (1992)

Activity

Which of the Cousins and Earl “Conditions” would you characterize as strong?
Consider how you might build on this strength to address one of the weaker Principles
Discuss at your tables
Affective Domain and Assessment

- **Receiving Phenomena**: willingness to hear (will listen respectfully about the topic of assessment)
- **Responding to Phenomena**: active participation (will write report, contribute to assessment process by providing data, developing an action plan)
- **Valuing**: demonstration of importance of phenomena (will engage in assessment because information gained is used to guide strategies for maximizing learning and effectiveness)
- **Organizing Values**: places into priorities by contrasting different values, resolving conflicts (will compare and resolve previous conflicting values about assessment, sees the value beyond a cursory linkage with curriculum and instruction, recognizing its connection with SoTL)
- **Internalizing Values**: places into value system, evidence by consistent behavior (will look forward to, engage in, and promote the integration of curriculum, instruction and assessment processes), seeks leadership

Krauthoff, Bloom, and Masia (1973)
http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html

Learning Organization

“A learning organization is an organization made up of employees skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights.”

“Learning organizations think **holistically and systematically**, enabling them to adapt to unpredictability”


Three Building Blocks of Learning Organizations

1. Supportive learning environment
   a) Psychological safety
   b) Appreciation of differences
   c) Openness to new ideas
   d) Time for reflection

Three Building Blocks of Learning Organizations

2. Concrete organizational learning processes and practices
   a) Experimentation
   b) Information collection
   c) Analysis
   d) Education and training
   e) Information transfer


Three Building Blocks of Learning Organizations

3. Leadership that reinforces organizational learning
   a) Actively questioning and listening
   b) Encouraging multiple points of view
   c) Providing time, resources, and venues for identifying problems and organizational challenges
   d) Providing time, resources, and venues for reflecting and improving on past performance

Familiar?

• “All....have been effective at creating or acquiring new knowledge but notably less successful in applying that knowledge to their own activities.” (2000)

• “...knowledge of principles and methods does not necessarily lead to their application”
Leadership is Key

“...successful implementation cannot be achieved without access to positions of power and influence”

“Leaders must be in a position of power within the organization or must gain the full and complete support from those in positions of power”

“An institution cannot learn and change creatively if its management or other stakeholders cannot or will not let it.”

What if?

Johnson, 2002; Sternberg, 2015

University Initiative Enabled Application of Building Blocks

1. Supportive Learning Environment – Self-reflection and Time
2. Concrete organizational learning processes and practices – aligns with Assessment
3. Leadership that reinforces organizational learning – our changes and the dilemma

Components and Qualities of Think in Ink Related to OL Building Blocks

- Time and Space to support and reflect organizational learning (Building Blocks 1-3)
  - Summer Retreats – All Building Blocks
  - Kickoff Meetings – prior to start of each term – All Building Blocks
  - College Think in Ink Meetings – monthly - All of 1 + 2, 3 c+d
  - Faculty development – 2 d+e, 1 components, less directly
    - Evolved – partnered with Center for Teaching Excellence and as a program
  - Student Writing Fellows 2d, 3 c+d
Components and Qualities Related to Learning Organizations

- Flexible – Colleges and Programs adapted to reflect disciplines – certain commonalities 1 a+c, 2 a-c, 3b
- Commonalities – Institutional - level Outcome and Rubric Programs adapted to reflect discipline or developed from outcome - All of 1 and 2, 3 c+d
- Course Reflections 1 a+d, 2 all, 3 c+d
- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning 2 all, 3 d

Impacts of Using Building Blocks

- Better understanding of the integration of curriculum and instructional planning and assessment
- Viewing the Program in terms of instructional and student development
- Intentional attention to components of learning outcomes

Activity

- Apply Problem Solving Process Template
- Use Organizational Learning Building Blocks in the process
- Discuss at your tables and larger group
References & Additional Reading


