



Build a Bridge between Assessment Results and Action

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Push for using evidence for betterment

US colleges are under pressure from multiple stakeholders to move towards a culture of using **evidence to ensure and advance quality and effectiveness.**

- Policymakers - federal, MSCHE
- Foundations
- Institutions
- Employers
- Students and families

Suskie (2014)

“If evidence is not recorded, it cannot be shared; if it is not shared, it cannot be discussed and used. If records of evidence and decisions flowing from them are not maintained, progress cannot be tracked and memory is lost.” (p. 202)

Ways of using evidence for betterment

- Use evidence to improve/refine course and program goals
- Use evidence to deploy resources
- Use evidence to refine goals and targets

Example #1 of using evidence to improve/refine course and program goals

CAS - Medieval, Renaissance, Reformation Studies BA

Results: “Why change rubrics?...found that students responded to paper #1 by focusing upon writing instead of content accuracy. Some tried to write the paper **without reading any of the texts**. So Krahmer reverted to a rubric which **focused much more upon the need to know the material** as well as write a good paper.

Action: Using two distinct rubrics at the course level - to evaluate students' historical understanding and accuracy data, and, writing skills. This will **re-set the focus on the need to master the material**.

Example #2 of using evidence to improve/refine course and program goals

HSB - Business Intelligence and Analytics MS

Assessment Results: Majority of the students were international. Student's interest seemed to be **correlated with their work experience**. Those students who were previously employed or are currently working in the analytic field, seemed to be more interested in the course as they asked more questions.

Action Plan: Encourage participation and provide more examples - by including participation as a component of students' grade and by including more examples from **different industries** to help students grasp main ideas.

Example #1 of using evidence to deploy resources

CAS - Sociology BA

Assessment Results: The large class size, however, presented problems for conducting a second direct or an indirect measure of assessment. SOC 312 is a core course required for all sociology and criminal justice majors. The end paper in this course serves as the beginning of the students' undergraduate thesis. Students would benefit from more individualized attention as they design their own research project. The large class size (47 students) did not allow for more one-on-one meetings. The objective could be better met with a smaller class size. Ideally this course would cap at 25 students. This would require offering two sections each fall.

Action Plan: reduce class size from 47 to a cap of 25 students -- this would allow course faculty to provide the needed individualized attention as students design their own research project.

Example #2 of using evidence to deploy resources

CAS - Ancient Studies BA

Assessment Results: admittedly a good number of students lacked previous exposure to classical art or art in general.

Action Plan: Meet and discuss assessment results. Decided to make a tutor available through Learning Resources -- to help struggling students who have no previous exposure to classical art.

Examples of using evidence to refine goals and targets

HSB - Managing Human Capital BS BBA Minor

Develop a more detailed set of rubrics for each of the goals -- At this initial round, assessment was generally qualitative based on the views of the instructor, but as more data emerge, clearer examples of what is “excellent” vs. “proficient” and so on will lead to a more rigorous system.

Examples from other institutions

Establish achievement targets - Data from the past year will be used as a baseline for determining achievement targets for 2016-2017

Small Group Activity

1. Discuss how evidence is currently recorded, shared, discussed, and used for the betterment of your department/program.
2. Discuss one or two ways you can improve how evidence is used to ensure and advance quality and effectiveness of your department/program.

Benefits of using evidence for betterment

- Close the assessment loop
- Document and maintain evidence on department/program needs, decisions, and progress even as leadership change
- Improve communication at the course, program, department, and school levels
- Create a collaborative culture for betterment at the course, program, department, and school levels

Resources for Assessment

1. Assessment Commons – Most comprehensive site about higher education resources

Main page: <http://assessmentcommons.org/>

2. Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) – Access to their VALUE rubrics is very helpful to many practitioners

Main page: <https://www.aacu.org/>

Link to VALUE rubric page: <https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics>

3. National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA)

– Well organized site that provides reports, occasional papers, blogs, etc. from national assessment leaders. In addition NILOA features some of the best institutional assessment sites.

Main page: <http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/>

Link to useful institutional websites:

<http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/FeaturedWebsiteCurrent.html>

Resources for Assessment – cont.

Suskie, L. (2014). *Five dimensions of quality: A common sense guide to accreditation and accountability*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Kuh, G. D., Ikenberry, S. O., Jankowski, N. A., Reese Cain, T., Ewell, P. T, Hutchings, P., & Kinzie, J. (2015). *Using evidence of student learning to improve higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

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