The Pilot Study Sampling Feedback Survey
Summary of Findings

n = 47
Response Rate: 69%

Sampling Team
87% of responding institutions put in place a sampling team with approximately 60% operating with a 2 – 3 person team. 72% of the teams included the institution’s assessment director or equivalent and 57% included a representative from the Institutional Research department. Across the 47 institution respondents, other noted team members included faculty (47%), academic administrators (34%), support staff (13%), and graduate and undergraduate students (11%).

Sampling Support
During the sampling implementation process, 38% of responding institutions sought assistance with most questions directed to the State Lead (93%) or the Sampling Subgroup (50%). Institutions sought assistance with: understanding the assignment parameters, their sampling design, meeting their minimum sample size, generating a representative sample given the constraints of their sampling frame, and some general questions about uploading student work and project confidentiality. By in-large, institutions found the individuals contacted to be responsive.

The main suggestions for improving the support provided by the MSC to assist institutions in implementing their sampling plans include:

- dissemination of upfront, clear deadlines,
- more timely distribution of finalized documents,
- provision of a variety of model sampling plans,
- distribution of a template for the CSV file, the MSC Handbook, and the upload instructions prior to the sampling stage,
- a means by which institutions can share strategies for engaging faculty in the project
- a means by which to facilitate faculty-to-faculty conversations

Costs of Implementation
Time spent on the sampling process was 10 hours or less for 45% of the respondents. Another 25% of institutions allocated 11 – 15 hours. 30% of the institutions exceeded 15 hours with approximately 8% in the 16-20 hour range, 5% in the 21-25 hour range, and 18% allocating over 25 hours to the sampling process.
In addition to the time costs of the sampling process, noted additional costs included:

- Office supplies including stationary, envelopes, and labels,
- Printing, copying and scanning costs,
- Incentives for faculty to submit artifacts and assignment instructions for the Quantitative Literacy outcome,
- Food for faculty learning communities to develop assignments and complete the sampling, and
- The cost of collecting the samples, de-identifying them, and converting hard copy samples into an electronic format.

**Sampling Frame**

Most institutions - 45% of respondents - began with eligible students in constructing their sampling plan, while 25% began with courses where eligible students were likely to be enrolled and 30% of the institutions began with faculty.
80% of institution respondents had no difficulty obtaining a list of eligible students. On the other hand, faculty willingness to submit assignments and corresponding student work did prove difficult.

75% of respondents indicated that their institution team was able to follow their sampling plan closely with little to no deviation.

68% of respondents indicated that they generated a back-up sample.

**Number of Courses**

56% of responding institutions drew their written communication artifacts from 7-10 courses, and 20% of responding institutions drew from 18 or more courses (Figure 6). 54% of responding institutions drew quantitative literacy sample from 4-10 courses (Figure 7). 36% of responding institutions drew their critical thinking sample from 4-10 courses (Figure 8).
Figure 6: Number of Courses from which the Written Communication Sample was drawn.

Figure 7: Number of Courses from which the Quantitative Literacy Sample was drawn.
Figure 8: Number of Courses from which the Critical Thinking Sample was drawn.

Number of Majors

38% of responding institutions drew their written communication sample from 4-10 majors, 23% drew from 11-17 majors, 18% drew from 18 or more majors, and 8% drew from less than 3 majors (Figure 9). 43% of responding institutions drew their quantitative literacy sample from 4-10 majors, 20% drew from 18 or more majors, 12% drew from 11-17 majors, and 8% drew from 3 majors or fewer (Figure 10). 20% of responding institutions drew their critical thinking sample from 11-17 majors, 18% drew from 4-10 majors, 17% drew from 18 or more majors, and 9% drew from 3 majors or fewer (Figure 11).
Figure 9: Number of Majors from which the Written Communication Sample was drawn.

Figure 10: Number of Majors from which the Quantitative Literacy Sample was drawn.
Number of Faculty

43% of responding institutions drew their written communication sample from 4-10 faculty members, 32% drew from 11-17 faculty members, 18% drew from 18 or more faculty members, and 8% drew from 3 or fewer faculty members (Figure 12). 62% of responding institutions drew their quantitative literacy sample from 4-10 faculty members, 11% drew from 11-17 faculty members, 13% drew from 18 or more faculty members, and 13% drew from 3 or fewer faculty members (Figure 13). 33% of responding institutions drew their critical thinking sample from 4-10 faculty members, 14% drew from 11-13 faculty members, 14% drew from 18 or more faculty members, and 14% drew from 3 or fewer faculty members (Figure 14).
Figure 12: Number of Faculty from which the Written Communication Sample was drawn.

Figure 13: Number of Faculty from which the Quantitative Literacy Sample was drawn.
Figure 14: Number of Faculty from which the Critical Thinking Sample was drawn.

Written Communication
55% of the institutions responded that they encountered obstacles in recruiting faculty to submit appropriate assignments to be used for assessment of written communication (see Figure 3 below). Noted obstacles included the prevalence of group work in courses containing eligible students and the lack of assignments designed to meet the 3 page minimum requirement. By far, the largest obstacle noted by respondents was faculty willingness to participate in the project. The noted reasons faculty were reluctant to participate included the following: inherent suspicious of the objectives of the project, concern that the project was a backdoor into faculty evaluation, general wariness about assessment projects, perceptions that participation was an additional burden or task they were being asked to take on that they are not ‘required’ to do, the external nature of the project, and the dearth of appropriate assignments – assignments that aligned with the Written Communication VALUE rubric.

55% of institutions indicated it was either very difficult or moderately difficult to generate an appropriate sample of student work with respect to the number of faculty, courses and disciplinary areas for assessment of written communication (See Figure 4 below). The other 45% of institutions reported it was not very difficult or not difficult at all to generate an appropriate sample. Similarly, 70% of institutions indicated it was very difficult or moderately difficult to meet the targeted minimum sample size of 75 – 100 artifacts per institution or per consortium (see Figure 5 below).

Quantitative Literacy
70% of the MSC institutions indicated they encountered obstacles in recruiting faculty to submit appropriate assignments to be used for assessment of quantitative literacy (see Figure 3). The availability of appropriate assignments, based upon institution responses, proved to be the most significant barrier to the collection of student work for quantitative literacy. Faculty willing to submit student work for quantitative literacy found they did not have assignments that met more
than one or two of the QL rubric dimensions, submitted work that was not appropriate for QL assessment using the QL VALUE rubric, or did not have assignments in general that had a quantitative component outside of mathematics courses. The second noted barrier was the lack of faculty willingness to participate for the reasons already noted above.

87.5% of MSC institutions indicated it was either very difficult or moderately difficult to generate an appropriate sample of student work with respect to the number faculty, courses and disciplinary areas for assessment of quantitative literacy (see Figure 4). The other 12.5% of institutions reported it was not very difficult or not difficult at all to generate an appropriate sample. Correspondingly, 90% of institutions indicated it was very difficult or moderately difficult to meet the targeted minimum sample size of 75 – 100 artifacts per institution or per consortium (see Figure 5).

**Critical Thinking**

75% of responding institutions collected assignments for critical thinking, which was optional. Of these institutions, 57% reported having difficulty in recruiting faculty to submit appropriate assignments to be used for the assessment of critical thinking (see Figure 3). Group work was again noted as an obstacle – much of the work completed by students nearing graduation involves completing assignments as part of a team. Additionally, only being allowed to submit written work was a binding constraint. In addition to difficulty in locating faculty with appropriate assignments, a general lack of faculty willingness to participate was the other noted barrier.

Approximately 62% of the institutions that collected assignments for critical thinking indicated it was either very difficult or moderately difficult to generate an appropriate sample of student work with respect to the number faculty, courses and disciplinary areas for assessment of critical thinking (see Figure 4). 38% of institutions reported it was not very difficult or not difficult at all to generate an appropriate sample. 69% of MSC institutions indicated it was very difficult or moderately difficult to meet the targeted minimum sample size of 75 – 100 artifacts per institution or per consortium (see Figure 5).
Figure 3: The below graph depicts the percentage of responding institutions that encountered obstacles in recruiting faculty to submit appropriate assignments for each outcome.*

*Not all MSC institutions collected artifacts for Critical Thinking. Table reflects percentage of institutions that collected critical thinking artifacts and encountered obstacles when doing so.

Figure 4: The below graph depicts the percentage of responding institutions that found it very or moderately difficult to generate an appropriate sample of student work with respect to the number of faculty, courses and disciplinary areas for assessment of each outcome.*
Not all MSC institutions collected artifacts for Critical Thinking. Table reflects percentage of institutions that collected critical thinking artifacts and had difficulty generating an appropriate sample.

Figure 5: The following graph depicts the percentage of responding institutions that found it very or moderately difficult to reach the targeted minimum sample size for each outcome.*

*Not all MSC institutions collected artifacts for Critical Thinking. Table reflects percentage of institutions that collected critical thinking artifacts and had difficulty reaching the target minimum sample size.

**Faculty Engagement**

Institutions were asked what strategies they might put in place in the future for engaging faculty in this work. Responses were varied but focused primarily on providing professional development opportunities for faculty including assignment design workshops, local scoring sessions, scaffolded assessment workshops, general educational and informational sessions about the MSC project and the importance of assessment for teaching and learning, and the opportunity to participate in small cross-disciplinary learning communities or communities of practice. Other suggested methods for engaging faculty included minimizing the work faculty must undertake in participating in assessment initiatives, and targeted communications. The importance of soliciting the support of the Academic Affairs Office is noteworthy. The Academic Affairs office may provide support by sending out targeted emails, emphasizing the importance of assessment-related activities in the tenure and promotion process, and formally recognizing faculty participation in assessment initiatives. Lastly, leveraging accreditation requirements as a means to engage faculty was noted.