A Portrait of Assessment that Supports Student Success

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NILOA's mission is to discover and disseminate effective use of assessment data to strengthen undergraduate education and support institutions in their assessment efforts.

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www.learningoutcomesassessment.org
We are pleased to announce the release of a new NILOA book, Degrees that Matter: Moving Higher Education to a Learning System Paradigm. The book is available now.

**In the News**

**Competency-based Education Could Benefit Veterans by Recognizing Their Military Skills**
Mon, Dec 11, 2017 - 08:00 am
John Strauss for Lumina Foundation
This piece by Lumina Foundation provides resources on how competency-based education (CBE) could assist veterans in earning course credit by transferring their skills and experience while in the military into the college setting.

**Creating College Credit Policies That Validate Adult Learners**
Mon, Dec 11, 2017 - 08:00 am
Iris Palmer for Education Commission of the States
Adult learners come to college equipped with various skills and experiences that could be leveraged for course credit. Initiatives such as prior learning assessment (PLA) and competency-based education (CBE) attempt to provide college credit for learning acquired outside of academia.

**Statewide and Online Only in California**
Mon, Dec 11, 2017 - 08:00 am
Ashley A. Smith for Inside Higher Ed
California has proposed the creation of a new state-wide online-only college focused on work-force credentials and non-degree certifications aimed at enrolling the approximately 2.5 million Californians with some college experience but no degree.
Take a moment to reflect

On my campus student success means...
Are you lonely?
Tired of working on your own?
Do you hate making decisions?
START A COMMITTEE!

You can—
• See people
• Show charts
• Feel important
• Point with a stick
• Eat donuts
• Impress your colleagues

COMMITTEES
THE PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVE TO WORK

NOT IMPRESSED
Emerging Trends
Institutional or Program Improvement
Learning Improvement
UNPACKING RELATIONSHIPS

INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT OUTCOMES

Natasha A. Jankowski
Director, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment
Assessment for Student Success

Relevant Findings from NILOA’s Survey of Provosts 2017
2017 NILOA Provost Survey

• Sample: All regionally accredited, undergraduate degree-granting institutions (n=2,781)

• Announced via institutional membership organizations, website, newsletter, mailing

• Online and paper

• 29% response rate (n=811)
What Does Assessment Practice Look Like with Student Success in Mind?
Assessment for student success begins with specific, actionable learning outcomes statements. Concrete, clear proficiencies students are to achieve -- reference points for student performance common to all undergraduates across all majors. 82% of campuses have SLO statements.
Learning Outcomes are Increasingly Aligned

At 50% of campuses: all programs have PLOs and align those PLOs with ILOs
Assessment for Student Success is driven by...

- Accreditation (Regional & Program)
- Desire to improve student learning
- Growing emphasis on Equity
  - Disaggregation of evidence of learning by various groupings of students
Assessment for Student Success is based on authentic measures of student learning.

Classroom-based assessment

1. Rubrics

2. National Student Surveys

3.
Assessment for Student Success Emphasizes Approaches of Greatest Value for Improving Student Learning

Embedded approaches
Changes in policies, programs or practice informed by assessment results

Changes in a variety of areas:
- course and assignment design
- program-level curricular revisions
- creation of new practices and opportunities in co-curricular or student affairs areas
- institutional policy

“We completely revised an entire course based on evidence that the students were not learning the material we said they would be learning.”

“Our changes occur mostly at the departmental or program level... programs may change course requirements or practices in specific courses”

Changes most prominent at the course or program level
Assessment for Student Success communicates a complex picture of student learning that couples evidence of learning outcomes with student success data (persistence & grad rates)
Assessment for Student Success Challenges

Communicating effectively about student learning remains a challenge.

Use of assessment results is increasing, but documenting improvements in student learning and the quality of teaching falls short.

Equity is an important consideration in assessment work, but underemphasized in data use.

Opportunities exist to integrate professional development with assessment efforts.
Promising Developments

Involved in initiatives that support integration and student learning

Campuses turning to more authentic measures of student learning
  ◦ Capstones
  ◦ Classroom assignments
  ◦ Rubrics

Most valuable for IMPROVING student learning and success: classroom-based work

How do these trends align with developments on your campus?
Harvesting Campus Assessment Practices

Emerged from tracking and mapping the DQP and faculty questions
Clarifying and aligning outcomes
Curriculum mapping
Facilitating transfer
Rethinking assessment

Working on assignments
NILOA’s Response

Inviting faculty applications (with draft assignment)

Bringing the group together for a day-long meeting

Working in 5-6 person, facilitated “charrettes” to review one another’s assignments and give feedback.
At the end of the day...

“The assignment design focus is so obviously needed...but that need doesn’t become visible and obvious until brought to conscious attention in the charrette.”
“We all have these things that we’re subconsciously looking for when we grade assignments...that we’re regularly disappointed with. And then you get to poking around in your assignments and realize that nowhere in there did you ever really ask them to demonstrate those things.”
The Assignment Library

www.assignmentlibrary.org

80-some assignments
Contributed by faculty from a wide range of fields and institutional types
Online, indexed, and searchable
With a scholarly citation and CC license

Stimulating assignment work on campuses
Lessons

1. Assignments are intellectual work worth sharing.
2. Classroom work yields high-quality, actionable evidence.
3. Alignment as the challenge and the payoff.
4. Assignments to promote equity goals for student success.
1. Assignments are intellectual work worth sharing

Drawing on knowledge about my field, my students, how learning happens.

Faculty are thoughtful about one another’s work—and eager to have their own efforts acknowledged, made visible, improved.

The result is not just better assignments (and evidence for assessment) but a larger, more robust “pedagogical trading zone.”
2. Classroom work yields high-quality, actionable evidence

Faculty care about student performance on the papers, projects, exams, & presentations they require = buy in.

Students are motivated to do well.

Assignments can capture the complex learning we really care about.
3. Alignment as the challenge and the payoff

High level institutional outcomes need to be translated into action on the ground.

59% of NILOA charretteers: “I’m more aware of aligning my assignments with desired institutional outcomes.”

Addressing course-o-centricism (Graff).

Work in teams—first year course/capstone
4. Assignments to promote equity goals for student success

Transparency in Learning and Teaching

https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning

Being explicit with students about
- Purpose
- Task
- Criteria

Improved student success, especially for unrepresented students.

Eighty percent of NILOA respondents found that the experience of sharing assignments “helped me more clearly see my assignment through my students’ eyes.”
Resources

The Assignment-Design Toolkit:

[Degreeprofile.org/assignment-design-work](Degreeprofile.org/assignment-design-work)

- charrette protocol, invitations, facilitation guides
- feedback forms
- questions for discussion
- campus/disciplinary models and materials, incl TILT

Reports and occasional papers
- Ewell, 2013
- Hutchings, Jankowski, and Ewell, 2014

*Degrees that Matter*, Jankowski and Marshall, 2017

AAC&U’s VALUE Institute
A moment to pause...

What does all of this mean for how you organize work on your campus?

With whom do you need to partner?
The Learning Systems Paradigm
Resources

Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Catalyzing Assignment Design Activity on Your Campus: Lessons from NILOA's Assignment Library Initiative

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment
November 2014
Reflections and Feedback

What questions remain?
What space for conversations can you leverage on your campus?
What are you next steps when you get back?
What resources do you need?
Questions and discussion

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http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org
www.assignmentlibrary.org
www.degreeprofile.org