Better Together: How Faculty Development and Assessment Leaders Can Collaborate to Achieve Shared Goals for Student Learning

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• Why did you choose this session?
• What do you see as the relationship between faculty development/CTLs and student learning outcomes assessment on your campus?

• Five minutes in pairs
• Sharing in plenary
The Plan

1. Trends in work by CTLs/faculty development (Mary Deane, drawing on a national survey)
2. Trends in student learning outcomes assessment (Jillian, 2018 NILOA national survey)
3. Campus examples of how FD and assessment are working together (Pat, with thanks to campus colleagues)
4. Creating a culture of assessment and faculty engagement (Kathleen)
5. Discussion
6. Looking ahead
Large Scale Studies of FD: 2006 and 2016

Creating the Future of Faculty Development
Learning From the Past, Understanding the Present
Mary Deane Sorcinelli
Ann E. Austin
Pamela L. Eddy
Andrea L. Beach

Faculty Development in the Age of Evidence
Current Practices, Future Imperatives
Andrea L. Beach, Mary Deane Sorcinelli, Ann E. Austin, and Jaclyn K. Rivard
FD leaders view of assessment

Assessment of student learning outcomes plays an increasingly prominent role in priorities of FD and CTLs

• **One of five key issues** FD is addressing through services (2.57 in 2006; 3.21 in 2016)
• **The top issue** FD should address in next five years
• **The top issue** in terms of directions in which faculty developers believe field should move

1 = Not at all; 2 = To a slight extent; 3 = To a moderate extent; 4 = To a great extent

(Beach, Sorcinelli, Austin & Rivard, 2016; Sorcinelli, Austin, Eddy & Beach, 2006)
What faculty developers mean by assessment

Developers think about assessment in multiple ways, primarily to support:

• Faculty members
• Higher education institutions
• Work of teaching and learning centers

(Beach, Sorcinelli, Austin & Rivard, 2016)
Assessment to support faculty members in:

• Reflecting on and improving teaching practice
• Investigating student learning (e.g., design of an assignment, SoTL)
• Engaging in institutional conversations/decisions (e.g., how to document quality of teaching performance)

(Beach, Sorcinelli, Austin & Rivard, 2016)
Assessment to assist *institutions* by:

- Contributing to accreditation reports (e.g., faculty development/renewal opportunities)
- Partnering/leading quality improvement plans (QEPs)
- Supporting course/curriculum reform (e.g., facilitating conversations that prompt curricular enhancement)

(Beach, Sorcinelli, Austin & Rivard, 2016)
Assessment to measure impact of own Center work by

• Assessing needs to guide programming
• Collecting data on FD outcomes (e.g., numbers, usefulness, increase in knowledge, skills)
• Communicating/disseminating evaluation results

(Beach, Sorcinelli, Austin & Rivard, 2016)
Better Together: CFT Collaborations

- Technology Units: 77% (3.2)
- Academic Deans (asst., assoc., college): 64% (2.9)
- Library: 59% (2.7)
- Assessment Unit: 54% (2.5)

% of CTL directors reporting collaborations to a moderate or to a great extent (mean= 2.00 to 4.00) with other campus units (item listed 15 campus units)

(Beach, Sorcinelli, Austin & Rivard, 2016)
Better together when...

• Guided by faculty/departments own learning goals
• Opportunities to discuss goals and findings with others (e.g. FLCs, retreats, consultations)
• Action-oriented--generating evidence useful for faculty/admin. to improve courses, curricula, student learning outcomes

Beach, et al., 2016; CRLT, U Michigan Nov. 2018
Prevailing View of Assessment and Faculty... and by extension, Faculty Development & Centers for Teaching & Learning

• Assessment literature advocates the importance of faculty involvement in an institution’s assessment efforts
• Faculty involvement considered to be a gold standard, key to assessments impact on the ground in classrooms where teachers and students meet (Hutchings, 2010)
Survey of Assessment Practice 2018: 3 Trends Relevant to “Better Together”

• Assessment activities focused closer to the classroom, teaching & learning
• Shift in faculty role
• Greater support from CTLs and faculty-led assessment committees
NILOA Report 2018  Institution Level Assessment Tools

- National Student Surveys
- Rubrics
- Classroom-based Performance Assessments
- Capstone Projects
- Alumni Feedback
- Local Surveys
- Placement Exams
- Local General Knowledge Measures
- Employer Feedback
- Externally-situated Performance Assessments
- General Knowledge Measures
- Portfolios
- Other

Percentage of Institution
NILOA Report 2018 Institution Level Assessment Tools

What’s Changed Over Time?

- Rubrics
- Classroom Based Assessments
- Alumni Feedback

General Knowledge Measures
Assessment Activity Trend

• Colleges & Universities turning to more authentic measures of student learning
  • Capstones
  • Classroom assignments
  • Rubrics

• Most valuable for IMPROVING student learning and success: classroom-based work
Shift in Faculty Role

What is needed to support and advance assessment of student learning at your Institution?

51% more faculty using assessment results

46% more professional development for faculty and staff

UP from 2009 and 2013
From Faculty Involvement to Faculty Support

• Instead of striving to increase faculty participation in assessment, effort is shifting to support faculty in making sense of and using the results.
Supports for Assessment Efforts

Uptick in extent to which assessment activities are supported by professional development for assessment and in particular, faculty-led assessment committees and Centers for Teaching and Learning.
Assessment Trends Relevant to “Better Together”

- Reliance on Embedded Assessment – assignments, rubrics, classroom-based work
- Need for Faculty Support for Data Use
- Recognition of assessment support from Centers for Teaching & Learning
Seeks to engage faculty

Improving student learning and success

Seeks to advance shared goals
University of Kansas

- Assessment located in the Center for Teaching Excellence
- Leadership from the CTE’s “Documenting Learning Specialist”
- Working with programs to shape assessment plans, processes (via dir of undergraduate studies, chair, interested faculty leader)
- Working with individual faculty to document student learning in general education courses
- CTE’s ongoing programs and activities support faculty in developing classroom approaches and assignments that support student learning and success.
- Documenting Learning Specialist also serves on accredit writing group.

Thanks to Josh Potter, Documenting Learning Specialist, CTE
Gonzaga University

- Assessment director worked with Center for Teaching and Advising to co-sponsor a FLC on the scholarship of teaching learning
- Faculty applied, worked together for a year, posing and investigating questions about their students’ learning
- SoTL projects featured at annual Assessment Day
- Sign off by chairs

See Boose and Hutchings, 2015 (in refs at end of PP)
North Central College

• Center for the Advancement of Faculty Excellence (CAFÉ) sponsoring voluntary “Assessment Design Groups”

• 4-6 faculty per group; meeting 4 times during 10-week term

• Each participant targets a course or type of assessment to focus on

• Support for:
  • Creating outcomes for target course
  • Building good assignments
  • Using rubrics to assess student performance

• Focus in on individual faculty practice but develops leadership and capacity for program-level assessment

• Faculty assessment committee chaired by asst provost/director of institutional effectiveness and planning

Thanks to Jon Mueller, Prof of Psychology
University of Delaware

• Center for Teaching Effectiveness + Office of Educational Assessment = Center for Teaching and Assessment of Learning (CTAL)

• Assessment results/data used to shape faculty development offerings

• And to invite specific faculty to participate

• Special focus on newer faculty, faculty teaching large courses with high DFW rates, faculty teaching multicultural courses, capstone courses

• Also collaborating with IR—new access to institutional data

Thanks to Kevin Robert Guidry, Associate Director, CTAL
Themes and Observations

• “Assessment is central to teaching and the two should not be separated.”
• But they can also be in tension or perceived to be.
• Work in faculty development can “make us more sensitive to how assessment can (and cannot) be effectively done so its useful for faculty.”
• Work in assessment can shape faculty development—support expanding focus from individual to program-level improvement.
• Figuring out connections with related processes/offices: institutional research, planning, accreditation...
Improving student learning and success

Seeks to engage faculty

Seeks to advance shared goals
A Center’s Role in Contributing to a Culture of Assessment

Means of Influencing Culture

• Modeling
• Programming
• Learning *(from assessment data)*
A Center’s Role in Contributing to a Culture of Assessment

**Modeling**

Through modeling, CTLs can

- demystify assessment
- introduce common language and structures
- promote the use of relevant questions
- demonstrate that any data = good data
- foster closer alignment to SLOs through backward design
A Center’s Role in Contributing to a Culture of Assessment

Programming

Through strategic **programming**, CTLs can

- scaffold the assessment process
- disseminate programmatic/institutional assessment data
- empower faculty to connect programmatic assessment findings to their own instructional practice
A Center’s Role in Contributing to a Culture of Assessment

Learning *from* assessment data

Through collaboration with Offices of Assessment, CTLs can

• design and deliver customized programming for individual courses/programs/departments
• support faculty-driven assessment efforts
• orient new faculty to institutional expectations & protocols
• engage in meaningful meta-assessment and program refinement
How can faculty development and assessment leaders collaborate to achieve shared goals for student learning?

Share ideas at tables

Comments in plenary
Looking Ahead…

• Keep an eye on forces pushing assessment toward CTLs/Faculty Development (and vice versa) and what may keep them separate
• How might the equity agenda for student learning & success influence a tighter connection between assessment and teaching and learning?
• Is this an issue for POD or Assessment conferences?
Resources


