What Provosts Say About Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

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AAC&U
January 24, 2014
Overview

- NILOA – who we are and what we do
- 2013 Provost Survey
- Major findings
- Implications
- Faculty engagement
- Organization of assessment
- Questions
Since 2008, NILOA’s mission has been to discover and disseminate effective uses of assessment data to strengthen undergraduate education and support institutions in their assessment efforts.

- Surveys
- Web Scans
- Case Studies
- Focus Groups
- Occasional Papers
- Website
- Resources
- Newsletter
- Listserv
- Presentations
- Transparency Framework
- Featured Websites
- Accreditation Resources
- Assessment Event Calendar
- Assessment News
- Measuring Quality Inventory
- Policy Analysis
- Environmental Scans
- Degree Qualifications Profile

www.learningoutcomesassessment.org
Welcome to NILOA

Our October newsletter featuring NILOA updates, news, and upcoming conferences and programs is now available.

In the News | Archive

New Issue of Assessment Update is Available Now
Fri, Oct 25, 2013 - 08:00 am

The latest issue of Assessment Update: Progress, Trends and Practice in Higher Education for September/October 2013 is now available. Articles in this issue include Eloise Knowlton’s "Through the Rearview Looking Glass: Collaborative Writing and the Accreditation Self-Study," Tiffany Hamlett and Mary Bold’s "Faculty Development for Online Institutions," and Sarah Keeling, Kara Woodlee, and Michelle Maher’s "Assessment Is Not a Spectator Sport: Experiencing Authentic Assessment in the Classroom."

Online Open Forums on Revised Information Literacy Competency Standards
Thu, Oct 24, 2013 - 08:00 am

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) invites attendees to one of their free online open forums to learn more about the work of their task force appointed to oversee substantial revisions to the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. Learn more here.

An Early Report Card on Massive Open Online Courses
Wed, Oct 23, 2013 - 08:00 am

Queensborough Community College

QCC's assessment website is NILOA's Featured Website for its Centralized Assessment Repository.
2013 National Provost Survey

- Sample: All regionally accredited, undergraduate degree-granting institutions (n=2,732)
- Announced via institutional membership organizations, website, newsletter, mailing
- Online and paper
- 43% response rate (n=1,202)
- 725 schools participated in both 2009 and 2013
Knowing What Students Know and Can Do: The Current State of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment in U.S. Colleges and Universities

George D. Kuh, Natasha Jankowski, Stanley O. Ikenberry, & Jillian Kinzie

Abridged Report
www.learningoutcomeassessment.org

http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/knowingwhatstudentsknowandcando.html
Major Findings

1. Stated learning outcomes are now the norm.
2. The prime driver of assessment remains the same: expectations of regional and program or specialized accrediting agencies.
3. Substantially more student learning outcomes assessment is underway now than a few years ago, and the range of tools and measures to assess student learning has expanded.
Assessment Tools

- National Student Surveys
- Rubrics
- Classroom-based
- Alumni surveys
- Placement exams
- Locally developed surveys
- Capstones
- Locally developed tests
- General knowledge/skills
- Employer surveys
- Portfolios
- External
- Other

Percentage of Institutions
Most Valuable Assessment Approaches

The top three...

- Classroom-based assessment
- National Student Surveys
- Rubrics
Major Findings cont.

4. Meeting accreditation expectations heads the list for how assessment evidence is used, but internal use by campuses is growing and is considered far more important than external use.

5. Provosts report substantial support on their campuses for assessment.
71% of Provosts reported that student learning outcomes assessment had substantial ("very much" + "quite a bit") support from their institution’s current organization and governance structures

Support strongest at Associates and For-Profit institutions
Which elements are most important to supporting assessment activities?

1. institutional policy about assessing learning
2. center for teaching & learning
3. significant involvement of student affairs staff in assessment
4. faculty engagement and involvement in assessment
5. assessment committee
6. institutional research office
7. professional staff dedicated to assessment
8. assessment management systems
9. professional development for faculty and staff
10. recognition/rewards for faculty and staff
11. student participation in assessment
12. funds targeted for outcomes assessment
Importance of elements to support assessment activities

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<th>Not at All</th>
<th>Some</th>
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<td>Assessment management system or software</td>
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<td>Recognition and/or reward for faculty and staff</td>
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Variation in What’s Important for Support

- Assessment committees and institutional policies for assessment important across all institutional types
  - **Publics** – faculty/staff professional development activities more supportive elements
  - **Privates** -- teaching and learning centers less supportive of assessment activities

- **Public & For-profits** -- assessment management system and recognition/rewards for faculty/staff involvement more supportive

- **Associates** -- professional development opportunities for faculty/staff and faculty involvement more supportive

- **Doctorals** -- teaching & learning centers, professional staff dedicated to assessment, and significant involvement of student affairs staff were more supportive
Overall priorities for support

- Priorities shifted slightly from 2009,
  - faculty engagement still key, but “better assessment measures” is less important than in 2009
- Most important in 2013:
  - more professional development for faculty (64%)
  - more faculty using the results (63%), and
  - additional financial or staff resources (56%)
To Ponder... Structure & Support

• What is the best role for student affairs, centers for teaching & learning, assessment management systems?

• How integrated are assessment activities and functions? Where are possible partnership?

• Minor differences across the accreditation regions – possible policy/practice influence?
  - HLC campuses found assessment committees most important
  - WASC & SACS policy most supportive
  - SACS support in IR
  - WASC funds for support
Major Findings cont.

6. Institutions more frequently report assessment results internally than to external audiences.

7. In general, institutional selectivity is negatively related to assessment activity.

8. Faculty are the key to moving assessment forward.
Faculty Engagement

• Where have you been successful in engaging faculty in assessment activity?

• What more would you like faculty to do? Why do you think faculty aren’t engaged?

• What types of ‘engagement’ do we want to see with faculty and assessment?
Your Perspective on Assessment...

• What are you most hopeful about in terms of assessing student learning at your institution?

• What are you worried about in terms of assessing student learning at your institution?
Implications

1. More faculty involvement is essential.
2. Sustaining the recent progress in institutional assessment work must be a priority.
3. Colleges and universities must use assessment results more effectively.
4. Governing boards must make student learning a continuing high priority.
5. Colleges and universities must cultivate an institutional culture that values gathering and using student outcomes data as integral to fostering student success and increasing institutional effectiveness – as contrasted with a compliance exercise.
Discussion and comments

- What else do you want to know about institutional assessment practices?
- What is the most positive outcome of your institution level student learning assessment activity?

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