NILOA’s Provost Survey: What We Know About Institutional Assessment Practice

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Plan for this Session

• A bit about NILOA

• Surveying the landscape – Provost Survey findings

• What are Provosts “worries” and “hopes” for assessment?

• Questions & Comments - What do these results suggest for assessment?
In the News | Archive

NILOA 2013 National Survey of Chief Academic Officers
Fri, Jul 26, 2013 - 08:00 am

The 2013 national survey of Chief Academic Officers and institutional assessment practice is currently out in the field. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey if you have received an invitation. To see a copy of the survey, please click here.

Assessment: It's the Law
Thu, Jul 25, 2013 - 08:00 am
Colleen Flaherty in Inside Higher Ed

Starting this fall, Iowa's three public universities will be required by state law to create formative and summative assessments and submit proposals for using assessment to improve student learning. Faculty members will be given flexibility in defining methods of measurement and learning outcomes that will best contribute to continuous improvement.

Applying the Kolb Experiential Learning Model (ELM) to Distance Learning
Wed, Jul 24, 2013 - 08:00 am
Eric T. Moore in Faculty Focus

Applying the Kolb Experiential Learning Model (ELM) to Distance Learning.
NILOA

NILOA’s mission is to discover and disseminate effective use 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
- Presentations
- Transparency Framework
- Featured Websites
- Accreditation Resources
- Assessment Event Calendar
- Assessment News
- Measuring Quality Inventory
- Policy Analysis
- Environmental Scan
- Degree Qualifications Profile
- Tuning

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NILOA Resources:

Measuring Quality in Higher Education

http://apps.airweb.org/surveys/
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
Download the Full or Abridged Reports!

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.
How many different assessment approaches are used at institutions?

- In 2009, Provosts reported: 3
- In 2013, Provosts reported: 5

More assessment activity!
Assessment Tools Used

- 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: 0 to 100
Change in Tools - 2009 v. 2013

Percentage of Institutions

- National student surveys
- Alumni surveys
- Locally developed surveys
- General knowledge and skills...
- Rubrics
- Employer surveys
- External performance assessments
- Portfolios

2009

2013
Most Valuable Assessment Approaches

The top three...

- Classroom-based assessment
- National Student Surveys
- Rubrics

What approaches to assess student learning are most valued on your campus?
Assignment Work

• Create an interactive, online collection of faculty-generated, peer-reviewed assignments of DQP proficiencies – which can be seen, used, adapted, commented upon, and improve over time.
• Develop resources to do this on your own campus
• Build a community of faculty expert judgment around this work

http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/assignmentlibrary.htm
To Ponder: Implications for Assessment

• What are the implications if the most valuable source of data on student learning is classroom-based assessments?

• What does that mean for reporting, collecting, and connecting this data to various levels within the institution?
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.
Importance of elements to support assessment activities

- Institutional policies/statements related to assess.
- Significant involvement of faculty in assessment
- Assessment committee
- Institutional research office and personnel
- Professional staff dedicated to assessment
- Prof. devel. opportunities for faculty and staff
- Student participation in assessment activities
- Significant involvement of student affairs staff
- Funds targeted for outcomes assessment
- Center for teaching and learning
- Assessment management system or software
- Recognition and/or reward for faculty and staff
- Other
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 are the best roles 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*
Asked Provosts 2013: What Would Be Most Helpful to Assess Undergrad Student Learning?

1. More prof. development faculty/staff
2. Greater assessmt staff capacity
3. More SA involved in assessmt
4. More SA using results
5. Stronger admin support
6. More student particip. in assessmt
7. External funding
8. Info. on best practice
9. Greater sharing cross units
10. More opp to collaborate other instit.
11. More valid & reliable measures
12. More faculty involved in assessmt
13. More faculty using the results
14. Technologies
15. More resources $/staff
What would be most helpful as you assess undergraduate student learning?

- More prof. development faculty/staff
- More faculty using the results
- More Resources financial/staff
- Greater assessment staff capacity
- Technologies
- More faculty involved in assessment
- More valid and reliable measures
- Greater sharing across units
- Info. on best practice
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- More student participation in assessment
- Stronger admin support
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- More opp to collaborate other...
- Other
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 types of ‘engagement’ do we want to see with faculty and assessment?
Provost Worries & Hopes About Assessment

1,100 open-ended responses!
Assessment: Provost Worries

KEY THEMES: Faculty, compliance culture, limited resources & infrastructure, misuse of evidence

• Faculty will grow tired and become even less willing to work on assessment
• Faculty resistance, vocal opposition to external imposition
• Remains a “check box” activity
• Not using results
• Assessment turns into bureaucratic paperwork and its connection with student learning is lost.
Worries about Faculty & Assessment

- Faculty descriptors... rebellion, resistance, 

What word would you use to describe faculty and assessment?

  disinterest, dissenting, recalcitrant, disengaged, resentment, dragging their feet, “senior faculty refuse to comply”

- Assessment is... time/energy/resource consuming for faculty, extra work, strain on faculty, seen as “top-down”, not valued by faculty, lacking compensation for faculty, frustrating, a “postponable” activity
Assessment: Provost *Hopes*

**KEY THEMES: More support, using data, seeing progress**

- Using results to inform decision-making and to make meaningful improvement
- Faculty supportive of improving student learning
- Progress on program assessment plans
- Assessment leaders emerging
- Becoming professional responsibility, expectation of educators
Sources of **Hopefulness**

- Assessment leaders emerging
- Incorporation of assessment in strategic plan
- Shift of faculty concern *from* content delivery *to* student learning
- Faculty sharing best practices
- Having evidence that students are learning what we expect
- Excellent work of assessment committee
- Widespread involvement by campus educators
- Seeing data informed decisions
- Support from leadership
- More “aha moments” when faculty see the benefit to students

How might we create more hope for assessment?

- Widespread involvement by campus educators
- Seeing data informed decisions
- Support from leadership
- More “aha moments” when faculty see the benefit to students
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 & 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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Thank you!
Recap for IR

• IR is a vital element of assessment work!
• More is happening and people want data but are struggling to use it.
• Disconnect between institution, general education, program, and course-level data and mechanisms to collect and report information.
• Transparency is an area where everyone is a bit weak but hoping to improve.
Questions and Discussion

• What do these findings suggest for IR functions related to student learning outcomes assessment?

• What would be most helpful as you assess student learning?

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Thank you!
Question...

What roles do you see for IR in assessing student learning?
IR Role in Assessing Student Learning (Volkwein, 2011)

- IR as decision support and organizational intelligence
- Report/monitor: inputs, processes, outputs, and outcomes
- Balance internal and external role
- Engaged in assessment at a variety of levels which involves a variety of measures

Some activity centralized in IR office – most activity is shared with other offices

GIS Mapping concept
Role of IR in Assessment

- Translator (between levels and people)
- Change management
- Reporting (internally and externally)
- Facilitate meaning-making (74%?)
- Story teller

Requires cultural understanding of the institution and political savvy
Trends and future directions

• Badges and competency-based education
• Course-based assessments (tons of data!)
• Record keeping for every student (transcripts)
• Reporting and sharing results (transparency)
• Enhancing use (beyond making changes)
IR is like cartography

• You can paint a picture with layers
• Historical census data
• Daily monitoring data
• Predictive modeling
• Strategic planning
• Comparative data
• Benchmarking
• Reporting
Thank you!

Website: www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/