Student Learning, Assessment, and Accreditation

Leadership Commitment
Demand for access

Public accountability & higher education

Changing contexts, few boundaries

Reauthorization of Higher Education

International pressure... professional mobility
Student Learning is Central to determining Educational Quality

What is your role?
Assessment is central to improving Student Learning
As a Strategy of Inquiry...

**ASSESSMENT of STUDENT LEARNING**

is a participative, iterative process that:

- Provides information you need on your students’ learning,
- Engages your employees in analyzing & using this information to confirm & improve teaching & learning,
As a Strategy of Inquiry...

ASSESSMENT of STUDENT LEARNING is a participative, iterative process that:

- Produces evidence that students are learning the outcomes intended (mission, integrity), and
- Guides and engages the institution in making broader educational and organizational improvements.
Assessment is central to improving Student Learning.

Assessment is a strategy for organizational accountability, distinctiveness, accreditation, and effectiveness. MORE IMPORTANTLY, assessment is a strategy for understanding and improving student learning and educational quality.
Because...

Evidence that confirms students have learned what you intended for them to learn is more fundamental than ever for demonstrating institutional effectiveness & distinction, for public accountability, & for the accrediting relationship.
Accountability & Disclosure

R. Zemsky, University of Pennsylvania
Co-author of *Remaking the American University*
Accountability
Reform
Symbols
Public Purpose
Return on Investment

R. Zemsky, University of Pennsylvania
Bridging conversations

R. Zemsky, University of Pennsylvania
1) How are your stated student learning outcomes appropriate to your mission, programs, and degrees?

2) What evidence do you have that students achieve your stated learning outcomes?
In what ways do you analyze and use evidence of student learning?

How do you ensure shared responsibility for assessment of student learning?
Five Fundamental Questions as Prompts to Conversation

5) How do you evaluate and improve the effectiveness of your efforts to assess and improve student learning?
Your INTERNAL Role

What is your role in creating a learning-focused institution?
How much progress has been made in colleges to assess and improve student learning?
Colleges are still struggling to:

- make assessment useful & meaningful,
- implement effective processes,
- figure out work load and responsibility,
- gather and use data on learning,
Colleges Today

- Colleges are still struggling to:
  - integrate results into planning and budgeting, etc.
  - .....in other words, to implement good practice that fits their distinct mission, context, and constituents
What is your role in supporting the conversations that get at student learning?
What data are you using to explain that you know what your students learn...when you talk to your constituents?
Data You May Have

- Grade Distribution Rates, Graduation Rates, Course/Program/Certificate Completion Rates
- Attrition, Retention, Enrollment, Recruitment
- Licensure Passage Rates, Placement Rates
- Satisfaction/Engagement Stats (employer, community, student)
- Benchmark, Dashboard, Economic Impact Data

...any data about actual learning?
What matters most?

- What are students learning?
- Is it the right learning? (effective for what and for whom)

Consumers & Funders Want to Know
What matters most?

- What difference are you making in their lives? What difference will that make to society? Their profession?

- What evidence do you have that you’re worth our investment?

Consumers & Funders Want to Know
Your OUTSIDE Role

What data do you want on student learning and achievement to talk to your external constituents?

What data is already available?
...a thousand words
A Second Look

How might the five fundamental questions be seen externally?
Commitment to Student Learning

- Purposeful
- Accessible
- Transparent

...and assessable
Leadership Commitment

What is your role in assuring the public that quality learning is taking place?