Using Data to Support Accreditation and Accountability Initiatives

2009 AIHEC AIMS Data Strategies Workshop
Overview

Context

Fundamental Questions
New Questions

Learning, Quality, & Accountability

Accreditation Assurance & Improvement
Who's Here??

Institutional Participants

Guests

HLC Staff

Karen J. Solomon
Vice President for Accreditation Relations
ksolomon@hlcommission.org
Your Context
Your Mission, History, Culture, Vision, Goals, and…
The Future...Your Students
What Difference Do You Want to Make?

What do you most want your students to learn?

Is it the relevant, appropriate, “right” learning?

Are they learning it?

Are you doing for students what you claim you do?
What Matters Most…

…to you about teaching & learning at your institution?

1. Take 1 minute to jot down your own thinking.
2. Share your ideas with persons next to you.
3. Agree on 2 - 3 common themes that emerged.
Our Context
Learning Focus Across Criteria

Multiple Core Components

- Future Preparation
- Core Components
- Acquisition, Discovery, Application of Knowledge
- Core Components
- Mission & Integrity
- Core Components
- Student Learning & Effective Teaching
- Core Components
- Engagement & Service
- Core Components
What & How Well Students Learn are Central to determining Quality
Effective assessment becomes a matter of commitment, not a matter of compliance.
Conceptualize

- Meaningful
- Useful
- Workable
- Reasonable

Puts students, their learning, & your learning CENTRAL to quality.
Change? Affirm? Improve?
Impact on Students & Learning

...over the past two years

1. What new approaches have you tried, re: teaching, assessing, improving learning?

2. What data do you have on student learning (course, program, gen. ed.—qualitative or quantitative) and how are you using it?
Institutions Thriving

Begin Where it Makes Sense

Navigate to What’s Meaningful & Useful

Persevere
Fundamental Questions as Prompts for Conversation
How are your stated student learning outcomes appropriate to your mission, programs, students, and degrees?
Fundamental Question

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 student learning & assessment of student learning?
Fundamental Question

How do you evaluate and improve the effectiveness of your efforts to assess and improve student learning?
Discussion

Data & Information

Action
Changing Contexts
What do you most want your students to learn?
Is it the relevant, appropriate, “right”
learning?
Are they learning it?
Are you doing for students what you claim you do?
Demand for access

Public accountability & higher education

Changing contexts, few boundaries

Reauthorization of Higher Education

International pressure... professional mobility
Emerging Question

In what ways do you inform the public about what students learn and how well?
New Questions

Are you doing as well for our students as the place down the road?

What and how well are your students learning in comparison to peer institutions?
Who Gets to Define Quality?
**Transparency....on What?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What would inform the public?</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Which public needs to know most?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What 1 - 2 key points would you like to be able to tell the public about what students learn?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
New Statement on Accountability Efforts

Several agencies mounting efforts to provide information to the public... The data represent single markers derived from broader, richer evidence of learning, education... Commission sees these as efforts to meet calls for transparency (versus accountability)... Commission encourages (won’t require) participation; will credit toward integrity & communication with public.
Has the entire backdrop changed?
National Goals
Global Context
Calls for…

- Access
- Affordability
- Transparency & Accountability
- Quality
- Innovation
Context...

- Comparability, Consistency
- Clear Performance Standards
- Global Competition, Productivity
- Nation-building, National Goals
- Cost....Affordability
Specifically... for Your institution?
...how will you respond?

How will you ensure others see your distinctiveness, your unique goals for educational excellence? Your students’ learning?
Emerging Accountability Systems...

- Student Success
- Student Engagement
- Student Performance (learning)
Response of Many Institutions
College Navigator

Department Of

Education

IPEDS
TRANSPARENCY by DESIGN
Sample Learning Outcomes Report Template

Institution: Date:

Explanation of Approach
(The text in the following paragraph is an example only. It should be made institution-specific.)

The Transparency by Design (TBD) initiative focuses on specific programs offered by adult-serving institutions. The Learning Outcomes Report, to be shared among participating TBD institutions, is grounded in an assessment plan that incorporates the target program's intended learning outcomes, satisfaction and/or engagement with the academic experience, and post-graduation learner-based outcomes. The learning outcomes encompass the competencies, or knowledge, skills, and values, expected by the profession for which the program prepares the learner. Learning outcomes are demonstrated in multiple ways: through assessment in a capstone course or other culminating program experience; through a series of embedded assessments throughout the program, and/or through 3rd party verification of, for example, mastery of critical thinking and analytical reasoning. The report presents results of learning outcomes demonstration aggregated by graduation cohort, results of learner satisfaction and/or engagement studies, and concludes with data on the learners' perceived value of the program based on their career impact and alumni outcomes.

The Report includes the following parts:
- Institutional demographics and student information
- Program-level learning outcomes demonstration results
- Satisfaction and/or Engagement results
- Value delivered to the learner
- Explanations of methodologies used

Program of Interest
School:
Program:
Specialization:

I. Institutional Context, Demographic and Student Information
The majority of learners are enrolled part-time and transferred from another university
- Gender: % female, % male
- Learners' average age:
U-CAN

Voluntary Systems for Posting Consumer Information, Student Success, and Student Learning
10+ years--comparative productivity ratios, comparison reports

Academic discipline grounded
Teaching loads
Instructional costs
Externally-funded scholarship
Public service
Out-of-classroom activity
- 4 years--comparative performance benchmarks
- Outcome & effectiveness data
- 25 benchmarks
- Best practices report
- Public disclosure of top 20%
Other Efforts

STATE H.E. INITIATIVES

AAC&U VALUE Project
What’s happening in the environment? Trends? New players?

What specifically might impact your quality?

Talk with others about…

- **Any events, situations, aspects in the current environment that might impact your institution’s quality in a big way**
- **Most important competitors to watch**
- **Potential partners, patterns that could create new possibilities**
Accreditor’s Questions

How will we ensure BOTH a focus on our aspirations for student learning AND the external demands for minimum threshold -- baseline accountability?
...given our mission-based focus

What impact (intended & unintended) might national goals... comparative data... have on our institutions?
Assessment & Accountability: Framework for Discussion

Shupe, David
"Toward a Higher Standard: The Changing Organizational Context for Accountability of Educational Results"

On The Horizon (forthcoming volume)
Assessment & Accountability: Framework for Discussion

Focus on Institution and its Programs

Focus on Individual Students

Internal Audience

External Audience

Assess to track & improve learning & progress of a given student.

What information is used inside the institution to progressively document an individual student's educational results?

Individual Student’s Improvement
Assessment & Accountability: Framework for Discussion

**Focus on Institution and its Programs**

- **Internal Audience**: Official record of student's cumulative educational results--to be shared at student’s discretion.

- **External Audience**: *What information does an institution provide to a student on his/her education that meets the needs of external constituencies?*

**Focus on Individual Students**

- **Individual Student’s Accountability**
Assessment & Accountability: Framework for Discussion

Internal Audience
- Organizational Improvement
  - Internal processes to review & act on aggregated learning & other data to improve learning, program, overall educational, & organizational quality.
  - What information on students' collective educational results is used inside the institution to improve these results?

External Audience
- Focus on Institution and its Programs
- Focus on Individual Students
Assessment & Accountability: Framework for Discussion

Focus on Institution and its Programs
- Aggregated results on student & educational performance provided to external constituencies to show how the institution is doing.

Focus on Individual Students
- What information do institutions provide external constituencies about educational results?

Organizational Accountability
Assessment & Accountability: Framework for Discussion

Focus on Institution and its Programs
- Internal Audience
  - Organizational Improvement
- External Audience
  - Organizational Accountability

Focus on Individual Students
- Internal Audience
  - Individual Student’s Improvement
- External Audience
  - Individual Student’s Accountability
Assessment & Accountability: Framework for Discussion

Focus on Institution and its Programs
- Improvement
- Mission-based
- Internally driven

Focus on Individual Students
- Accountability
- Evaluation
- Norms-based
- Comparative
- Externally driven
- Summative
- National Goals
- External Standards

Internal Audience
- Assessment
- Self-referential
- Formative
- Goals/Purposes
- Own Standards

External Audience
Assessment & Accountability: What Data Might Serve Dual Purposes?

Focus on Institution and its Programs

Focus on Individual Students

Internal Audience

Organizational Improvement

Individual Student’s Improvement
Assessment & Accountability: What Data Might Serve Dual Purposes?

Focus on Individual Students

Internal Audience

Individual Improvement

External Audience

Individual Accountability

Focus on Individual Students
Assessment & Accountability: What Data Might Serve Dual Purposes?

Focus on Institution and its Programs

Focus on Individual Students

External Audience

Organizational Accountability

Individual Student’s Accountability
Assessment & Accountability: How will we meet this expectation?

- Focus on Institution and its Programs
- Focus on Individual Students

Internal Audience:
- Organizational Accountability
- Organizational Improvement

External Audience:
- Organizational Accountability
Accountability: Possible that student learning data serves multiple purposes?

Focus on Institution and its Programs

Focus on Individual Students

Internal Audience

External Audience

Organizational Improvement

Organizational Accountability

Individual Student’s Improvement

Individual Student’s Accountability
Improved Learning: Can accountability data inform or not?

- **Internal Audience**
  - Focus on Institution and its Programs
  - Organizational Improvement
  - Individual Student’s Improvement
  - Individual Student’s Accountability

- **External Audience**
  - Focus on Institution and its Programs
  - Organizational Accountability
Underlying Assumptions

- Commitment to both internal (improvement) and external (accountability) is important.
- Responsiveness to external constituencies is part of our role.
- Assessment & accountability are not synonymous.
- They reflect different purposes, different definitions, different audiences…
- …Different motivations.
Underlying Assumptions

- Current efforts will test possible approaches, uncover unintended consequences
- Don’t have to duel--but one might trump the other, intentionally or unintentionally
- Potentially complementary, dual agendas, efforts…even both-and
- One may not satisfy the other; accountability a public piece of full improvement agenda
Some Concerns

- Unintended consequences (ranking)
- Comparisons without context
- A “slice view” of the institution versus the whole perspective
- Ramifications on assessment
- Forced approach on accreditation
- High stakes environment... transparency may stifle experimentation and risk
- Resource drain
Caveat on the Framework

- Focus on Institution and its Programs
- Focus on Individual Students

- Data on Individual Student Learning
- Aggregated Data, Program & Institutional Improvement

- Internal Improvement
- Integrity
Caveat on the Framework

Focus on Internal Audience

Accountability

Transparency

Organizational Accountability

Focus on Institution and its Programs

External Accountability

Aggregated Data, Organizational Accountability

Focus on Individual Students

Accountability Data for Individual Student

Individual Student's Improvement
Caveat on the Framework

External Accountability
Transparency

Accountability Data for Individual Students

Data on Individual Student Learning

Aggregated Data for Program Institutional Improvement

Organizational Accountability

Internal Improvement & Integrity

Focus on Institution and its Programs

Focus on Individual Students
How can data help to support your students?
...a matter of institutional integrity.
Commitment to Student Learning

- Extended
- Deepened
- More Fundamental

...and assessing to improve learning
Changing Pathways

Demonstrate ability to meet Criteria for Accreditation
Degree Programs

General Education

Program of Study
Evidence of Learning

General Education

Program of Study
Assurance & Improvement

- Evidence of Ability to Meet Criteria
- Commitment to Institutional Improvement
Accreditation Pathways

Evidence of Ability to Meet Criteria

Commitment to Institutional Improvement
Commitment to Accreditation

Assure Learning

Meet Accountability Expectations

Provide Transparency

…and continue to improve your institution
www.ncahlc.org

Update, Information, Upcoming Events