

Checking the Temperature

Where We are Now and Where We Need to Be
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Where We Were

- **November, 2013**
 - Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) placed the University on warning status regarding Standard 14 (Assessment of Student Learning)

Where We Were

- **January, 2014**
 - Intercession Assessment Institute Pilot
- **July, 2014**
 - Office of Educational Assessment (OEA) Established
- **August, 2014**
 - Assessment Advisory Committee (AAC) membership finalized by Faculty Senate

Where We Were

- **September 1, 2014**
 - Monitoring Report submitted to MSCHE
- **September 14 & 15, 2014**
 - MSCHE Site Visit

Where We Are Now

**November 21,
2014**

Notification of
MSCHE
decision to
remove warning



Where We Need to Be

Next Monitoring Report due April 1, 2016

- Must document “further implementation of an organized and sustained assessment process for all programs including general education, with evidence that results are used to improve teaching and learning” (MSCHE, November 21, 2014).

Where We Need to Be

- In PCPS, KSOM, and externally accredited programs in CAS, provide more evidence that results are being used to improve teaching and learning.
- In remaining CAS programs, develop assessment processes and formalize evidence that assessment results are being used to improve teaching and learning.
 - Adoption of an assessment cycle in Fall 2014
 - Intersession mapping of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) to Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs).

Where We Need to Be

- Win approval for and implement plan for GE assessment in spring
- Present institutional plan for assessment (in development) at first AAC meeting in spring

- All of this has to happen by end of Fall 2015!!

Program Assessment

What it Is and What it is Not



What is a Program?

- Program: A developed body of courses that receives transcript recognition (The University of Scranton Faculty Handbook, 2014)
- Program: A systematic grouping of courses that forms most or all of the requirements for a degree or other academic credential (MSCHE, 2009)

Who is Responsible for Program Assessment?

- Chairs or Program Directors
- All Full Time Faculty
 - Involvement in the development and improvement of the academic program and curriculum of the department
(Responsibilities of Full Time Faculty in The University of Scranton Faculty Handbook, 2014)

Program Assessment Is

- A means for faculty to answer the following questions about their programs:
 1. What are you trying to do?
 2. How well are you doing it?
 3. How can you improve?

Office of Academic Planning & Assessment University of Massachusetts at Amhurst (2001). Program-based review and assessment: Tools and techniques for program improvement. Retrieved from http://www.umass.edu/oapa/oapa/publications/online_handbooks/program_based.pdf

Program Assessment Is

- Faculty agreement on a set of PLOs that capture what we want students to know, do, or value at the completion of a program
- Identification of metrics or other sources of information that will indicate whether or not students are meeting the PLOs by program completion
- Collection and analysis of data or other sources of information
- Communication by faculty about and use of the results for improvement if necessary

Program Assessment Is

- A means to avoid externally imposed standards on higher education through legislative oversight by ensuring mission driven efforts to monitor and improve (if necessary) our activities around teaching and learning (Gold, Rhoades, Smith, & Kuh, 2011; Suskie, 2009).
- Internal Peer Review

Program Assessment Is Not

- **Faculty Evaluation**
 - Program Assessment is about student learning, which encompasses many dimensions of the student experience, including some that are out of faculty control.
 - Program Assessment is based on aggregated and de-identified (ideally) information.

Program Assessment Is Not

- **Student Grades**

- The goal of grading is to evaluate learning and performance of individual students (grades often incorporate criteria that are not direct measures of learning, such as attendance, participation, and effort).
- The goal of program assessment is to examine patterns of student learning and to use this information to improve educational practices, including but not limited to teaching.

Eberly Center, Carnegie Mellon University (n.d.). What is the difference between assessment and grading? Retrieved from <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/basics/grading-assessment.html>

Program Assessment Is Not

- **Research**

- The goal of research is to generate or test theory with results that can be generalized to the larger population.
- The goal of assessment is to generate context-specific information for use within that particular context.
 - Because assessment is systematic, it uses many of the approaches and methodologies of research in order to generate valid and reliable information.

Upcraft, M. L., & Schuh, J. H. (2002). Assessment vs. research: Why should we care about the difference. *About Campus*, 17 (1), 16-20.

Program Assessment Is Not

- **A threat to individual academic freedom**
 - “Faculty are responsible for establishing goals for student learning, for designing and implementing programs of general education and specialized study that intentionally cultivate the intended learning, and for assessing students’ achievement. In these matters, faculty must work collaboratively with their colleagues in their departments, schools, and institutions as well as with relevant administrators”.

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The OEA Needs You!

Questions?

Comments?

