



Spring 3-2013

WMU Assessment in Action Day Conference 2013: Session Descriptions

Office of Assessment and Undergraduate Studies

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Western Michigan University Assessment in Action Days Conference

March 20-22, 2013

Description of Sessions and Other Events

Assessment in the Classroom (For All Interested)

Wednesday, March 20, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Fetzer Center Ballroom

- Goal: to establish a strong base of effective grading and assessment in classrooms. To build classroom assessment practices that can improve classroom teaching and also provide data for department and general-education assessment.
- Issues addressed: How to establish standards and criteria for grading. What kinds of comments are most effective? How to address grammar and punctuation. How to build healthy motivation around grades. How are grades related to assessment?

Assessment for Student Support Units (For All Interested)

Wednesday, March 20, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Fetzer Center Ballroom

- Goal: Integrate assessment of learning with other assessments in order to improve the unit's contribution to student learning
- Issues Addressed: How to state goals for student learning. What kinds of measures make sense? How can the information be effectively used for the benefit of students and the institution?

Assessment for Departments and Programs (For Chairs and Teams)

Thursday, March 21, 9:00 a.m. to 11:50 a.m., Bernhard Center, Room 157-159

- Goal: participants will be able to affirm, change, or construct their departmental assessment systems to make them sensible, feasible, useful for the department's own goals, and consonant with the relevant accrediting agency's guidelines.
- Issues addressed: What is the role of grades in department/program assessment? How to establish learning goals, select measures, and use the information. What is the most basic, no-frills assessment plan? How can ineffable goals (e.g. "originality") be assessed? How can we assess graduate programs? What are possible outcomes of assessment for the

department? The dangers of assessment. What assessment can do for the department? What is the role of assessment in program review? How is assessment tied to resources?

Assessment for Administrators (For WMU Deans and Associate Deans only)

Thursday, March 21, 12:00 p.m. to 1:50 p.m., Bernhard Center, Room 205

- Goal: To move the institution forward on assessment.
- Issues addressed: What are strengths and weaknesses of your present assessment system? What will we have we accomplished and learned through this visit? What are models of best practice that make sense for you? What are next steps? How to recognize the assessment work done by administrators at every level? How should assessment be tied to resource allocation?

Assessment for General-Education Leaders (For All Interested)

Thursday, March 21, 2:00 p.m. to 4 p.m., Bernhard Center, Room 157-159

- Goal: analyze where you are and where you need to go in constructing a realistic, useful plan for assessment in general-education
- Issues addressed: What is your current system of general-education assessment? What are its strengths and weaknesses? What is best practice in other institutions? How can assessment information best be used for improvement in general-education? What are next steps for your general-education assessment?

Keynote Address: "Assessment: Useful, Sensible, and Acceptable to Accreditors"

(For All Interested)

Friday, March 22, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., Sangren Hall, Room 1920

- What are dangers and benefits of the assessment movement nationally and for you?
- How can you conduct assessment that is simple, sustainable, useful to your students' learning, and consonant with accreditation requirements?
- Common concerns: Academic freedom? Student privacy? Standardized tests? No Child Left Behind? Measurable Objectives? Wasted time? Assessment being used as a punishment? McDonaldization of higher education? Loss of appropriate faculty control over curriculum and testing?
- What is a "culture of assessment"? Do we want one? If so, how do we get there?

Concurrent Symposium Sessions Highlighting the Assessment Work of Degree Granting and Student Support Units at Western Michigan University (For All)

Friday, March 22, 10:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m., Sangren Hall, Rooms 1710 and 1920

- Learn about the assessment process for the History Department at the undergraduate and graduate level as well as the changes which flowed from the data that they collected. (Room 1710 Sangren Hall)
- The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) published new educational standards in 2008 that required schools and departments of social work to revise their curricula. This meant moving from a strictly knowledge-based curriculum to a competency and practice behavior-based curriculum. The presentation will describe the activities of this unit as they implement the new educational policy and accreditation standards (EPAS). (Room 1710 Sangren Hall)
- Learn how Career and Student Employment and Health Promotion and Education are using student learning outcomes assessment to improve student learning in a student support unit environment. (Room 1920 Sangren Hall)

Poster Session (For All Interested)

Friday, March 22, 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., Sangren Hall, Hallway in front of Room 1920

- Join us for a poster session to learn about the projects of the current Western Michigan University Assessment Fellows for the 2012-2013 academic year. We will also be inviting graduate students as well as some previous assessment fellows to present their assessment projects. This will be a casual event where you can mingle with colleagues and ask questions of the poster presenters. Light refreshments will also be served.