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The State of Assessment at WMU

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The State Of Assessment at WMU

March 23, 2012

Presenters: Dave Reinhold, Associate Provost for Assessment
and Undergraduate Studies
Attendees

Historical Perspective

- Assessment was going strong in the late 1980s and early 1990s.
- Conscious decision was made to abandon assessment efforts in mid-1990s.
- Higher Learning Commission visit in 2001 highlighted lack of assessment among other issues.
- University put many assessment processes in place so that we appeased the HLC in 2005.
- Assessment issues were again mentioned in our 2010 HLC accreditation visit, but no focus visit on this was required.

Assessment – A continual, systematic process that measures student learning and uses that information for improvement.

**What units at WMU should
be assessing student
learning?**

- Degree granting units
- Non-degree units
- General Education

Degree Granting Units

- All departments had to have had an assessment plan by 2005.
- All departments needed to have their plan in TracDat by 2007.
- Dean's reports on assessment activity began in 2007.
- Annual report on assessment and curriculum changes began in 2008.

Question 10 on curriculum form: Describe how this curriculum change is a response to assessment outcomes that are part of a departmental or college assessment plan or informal assessment activities.

- The change will allow easier matriculate through the program for students.
- The learning outcomes of the course/program are consistent with the established learning outcomes of the program/department.
- Students were surveyed and they wanted more coverage of the topic addressed by this course.

Indirect versus Direct Assessment

- Indirect – surveys, focus groups
- Direct – pretest/post-test, embedded test questions, rubrics, portfolios

General Education Assessment

- Rubrics were developed and used in 2004 and 2005 to assess the 8 distribution areas. The data was placed in the archives.
- Rubrics were revised in the spring of 2011 and are currently being used in general education classes. Some faculty commented that they didn't cover the learning outcomes in the rubric.
- The AAC&U VALUE rubrics were used in baccalaureate writing courses during the 2010 – 2011 academic year. Data is being distributed.

Issues

- How do you know what to improve if there are no benchmarks? Are benchmarks realistic?
- Who is responsible for data analysis and making improvements?
- Turned out the process for general education course approval and the learning outcomes did not match.

What do Non-degree Granting Units Assess?

- Student learning outcomes?
- Performance metrics?

**What are Major
Roadblocks to Assessment
here at WMU?**

- Time is precious.
- A significant reward system is lacking
- People don't see the benefits of assessment, therefore, it is a waste of time.

**Additional Comments or
Questions?**