Academy Impact Report

1. Describe your Academy project(s) as developed at the first Roundtable. Be as detailed as possible about the issues it was intended to address as well as the content and strategies of the project itself.

At the initial meeting of the Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning, the Wright State University team led by Dr. Joe Law and Dr. Herb Dregalla developed and presented a plan to build a systematic review process around the following set of goals:

- a. All university academic programs include and assess appropriate university level learning outcomes in the major curriculum.
- b. Academic programs gather and analyze data from assessment and adjust pedagogy as appropriate.
- c. The Office of Institutional Research will maintain an archive of assessment data, giving academic departments the ability to conduct an ongoing longitudinal analysis of student learning.
- d. Wright State University creates and staffs an Office of Assessment with a faculty Director of Assessment.
- e. Wright State University appoints and compensates appropriately, Assessment Fellows in each college to champion "The Assurance of Student Learning".
- f. The Office of Assessment works with the administration and faculty senate to build university consensus for the "Scholarship of Teaching and Learning".

Following advice provided by mentors at Academy, the focus of the project moved to the development and implementation of a sustainable process for assessing the six learning outcomes of Wright State's general education program, the Wright State Core. This infrastructure could then serve as a model for assessment of programs across the campus.

The Assurance of Learning Committee (ALC) was formed to provide university-wide leadership and coordination for academic and co-curricular program review and the assessment of student learning outcomes. The following guidelines were set by the committee at its first meeting:

- Oversee the assessment processes for the Wright State Core, Writing Across the Curriculum, and University student learning outcomes
- Develop and evaluate the University’s assessment plans, which include the design of the learning outcomes assessment and program review processes
- Establish and monitor the assessment and program review calendars
- Oversee the review and analysis of results of the learning outcomes assessment and program review
- Verify that the results have been employed for academic or co-curricular program improvement
- Coordinate University assessment processes with the requirements of the Higher Learning Commission and other accreditation agencies
- Provide a forum for assessment activities, share best practices, and professional development in assessment
- Collaborate with the Center for Teaching and Learning to provide a focal point for the dissemination of information on student learning and assessment
- The Assurance of Learning Committee will provide the assessment and review findings to the Faculty Senate’s Undergraduate Curriculum Review, the Graduate Council, the College or sponsoring unit, and the Provost’s Office to ensure University wide participation in the review process.

Membership of the committee includes at least one faculty member and one administrator (Assistant Dean or above) from each college with undergraduate programs. The ALC includes representatives from Student Affairs, the University Library, and the Graduate School. The ALC faculty have been rotated each year since its formation. Faculty members on the committee are designated the Assessment Coordinators for their college.
The initial meetings of the ALC focused on the design of the assessment process. No data collection was done in this initial phase. The ALC, under the advice of the HLC Assessment Academy mentors, decided to assess the outcomes in the Wright State Core courses. Most freshman and sophomore undergraduate students take these courses to meet the Core outcomes at the beginning of their studies. The goal of the assessment process is to measure these outcomes at the freshman and sophomore years and again as students complete their programs. The Wright State Core outcomes are:

Wright State graduates will be able to:

1. communicate effectively
2. demonstrate mathematical literacy
3. evaluate arguments and evidence critically
4. apply the methods of inquiry of the natural sciences, social sciences, and the arts and humanities
5. demonstrate global and multicultural competence
6. demonstrate understanding of contemporary social and ethical issues
7. participate in democratic society as informed and civically engaged citizens

2. Describe any changes that you made to the project(s)—or that had to be made to it—other than personnel changes. What were the reasons for these changes? Did the changes improve the project?

Although the goals were not substantially changed from the six above, the procedures and personnel used to achieve them has changed to ensure that the initiative is sustainable at Wright State. As the Academy project progressed, changes were reported to the Assessment Academy and were approved. The major accomplishments of the project, to this date, include:

- First Wright State Core assessment process based on Academy plans was implemented
- The Assurance of Learning Committee to oversee University Assessment processes was created
- A sustainable cycle to measure the Wright State Core outcomes was developed
- An Assistant Vice President for Educational Effectiveness and Institutional Accreditation position was created and Dr. Renee Aitken was hired
- A process for collecting, analyzing, sharing, and planning change based on results was implemented
- Five of the seven Core outcomes were measured
- Taskstream was purchased to support ongoing general education assessment

The most challenging aspect of the project was to change perceptions in units that expended little energy on assessment of student learning. As described in the application to the academy, faculty in a number of programs at the university believe that assessment has little relevance to their teaching or to their curriculum. To these units, assessment was viewed as bureaucratic process of creating reports of little relevance to their academic mission. The primary goal was to work with these units to demonstrate the value of assessment and its potential impact on student learning. Although our process is not complete, we have made significant strides in creating a sustainable assessment process and awareness of the importance of Assessment at Wright State.

3. What have you achieved as a result of your work in the Academy? Consider the range of these achievements, from the very specific (development of a rubric) to the more general (outcomes-based curriculum approval processes). To what degree have these achievements been institutionalized?
In Fall 2013, Dr. Joe Law and Dr. Herb Dregalla created an informational assessment PowerPoint with Voice Over on YouTube to enhance faculty and program knowledge of the assessment process. Although sent to all faculty, it was not well received. The ALC considered alternative ideas to stress the importance of assessment and creating a culture of student learning and continued to refine the process for collecting data electronically and creating a sustainable collection process over time.

An initial data collection and assessment process was developed to begin the analysis of the seven Wright State Core learning outcomes. A three year cycle would be used to systematically evaluate the learning outcomes. Rubrics for the evaluation of all outcomes except outcome 7 were constructed from the American Association of Colleges and University value rubrics. The “effective communication” learning outcome was selected as the first outcome to be evaluated. After some discussion with the ALC, the first data collection was scaled down in scope to test the process set up for data collection, review, and analysis.

Dr. Law collected data on Core Learning Outcome 1 by asking faculty to submit student artifacts the faculty felt aligned with the first outcome. The papers were then redacted, copied, and scored using the rubric. The scoring occurred on a Saturday, after a calibration exercise faculty scored the papers using a paper rubric. Faculty were provided lunch and a stipend to do the scoring. Resulting data was shared with faculty in the appropriate departments through the Assurance of Learning Committee. Documentation of changes based on the assessment was not systematically collected and a note was made to ensure collection for the next review. The team noted the intense labor this process needed to collect, redact, print, and evaluate the artifacts.

At the conclusion of this initial evaluation, there was a need for improvement of the processes used for both the collection and analysis of the artifacts. Some of the issues uncovered included:

1. The number of papers the faculty were able to assess in a single Saturday session.
2. The time and effort required to redact and print papers for the assessment process.
3. The lack of interaction with the faculty after the artifacts were analyzed.

In Spring 2014, a search for an Assistant Vice President for Educational Effectiveness and Institutional Accreditation to champion assessment was initiated. Dr. Law collected data on University Learning Outcome 2 using the same process used in Fall 2013. The number of papers scored was increased from 15 to 102 partly because the results were obtained from a test where it was easier to score the rubric and partly because the team added additional faculty to score. The results were sent to the appropriate departments, but changes based on the assessment were recorded. Dr. Renee Aitken was hired as the Assistant Vice President for Educational Effectiveness and Institutional Accreditation to provide leadership to the university assessment initiatives.

In October 2014, a team was sent to the HLC Assessment Workshop to develop the plans for a sustainable assessment process. The steps, which are illustrated in the following poster, included:

1. Incorporating Wright State’s Lake Campus in the assessment process.
2. Working with the faculty and the faculty union to stress the importance of assessment of student learning.
3. Developing a series of online workshops to assist faculty in understanding the elements of assessment and providing a certificate to those who complete the workshop.
4. Identifying a web based assessment system to support data collection and reduce the time commitment.
5. Developing a communication plan.
6. Completing the assessment cycle by requesting plans for continuous improvement from the departments based on their analysis of review feedback.
7. Providing support for programs, department, and faculty in developing program goals, learning outcomes, and creating curriculum maps.

In Spring 2015, oversight of the Wright State Core was assumed by Dr. Carl Brun when Dr. Law retired. Dr. Aitken and Dr. Brun created a curriculum map for the Wright State Core to align courses, outcomes, and elements and isolated courses with the largest student populations to facilitate collection data. An
Intent to Purchase (ITN) was submitted to four of the most viable assessment systems to investigate ways to efficiently support the online collection and analysis of student artifacts. The IT department offered an interim online process for scoring rubrics, thus removing the limitation of in-person Saturday scoring sessions. The student artifacts were still manually collected, redacted, and uploaded. However, the rubrics were built electronically and faculty were assigned papers to review online. The data from these reviews was electronically collected and downloaded into an Excel spreadsheet for analysis. The Excel spreadsheet is somewhat cumbersome to use, but a step in the right direction from the manual tallying of paper rubrics. Unfortunately, the system used cannot keep any of the artifacts, rubrics, or data collected. This review process was not completed until after the completion of the Spring semester, so departments were sent the results at the beginning of Fall 2015. Reports on the analysis and action plans based on the data are due October 1, 2015.

4. What effect has your time in the Academy had on institutional commitment to the assessment of learning on campus? How broad is that commitment? How has institutional capacity for assessing student learning changed?

New directions for assessment:

1. Including Lake Campus in the assessment process

The Lake Campus assessment coordinator has been included on all processes and discussions including the HLC Workshop. His analysis of the assessment processes at Lake Campus indicated the need to start at the program goal level for assessment and work toward the measurement of student learning outcomes. Dr. Aitken will be presenting a special workshop for Lake Campus faculty on September 9, 2015 to provide information and assist in the development of program goals for each program. These goals will be assessed in the upcoming program review process. Following the program goal workshop, faculty will be asked to move forward during the 2015-2016 school year with developing learning outcomes to align with program outcomes. If needed, Dr. Aitken will provide more working sessions to complete this work.

2. Working with the faculty to stress the importance of assessment of student learning.

Dr. Aitken and Dr. Brun presented to the first Faculty Senate meeting in September 2015 to highlight the work done and the next steps in creating a culture of assessment. The first meeting provided a springboard for highlighting the online workshops and the availability of both Dr. Aitken and Dr. Brun for consultation in implementing effective assessment processes. The goal is to have the assessment more faculty driven.

3. Developing a series of online workshops to assist faculty in understanding the elements of assessment and providing a certificate to those who complete them.

The workshops have been completed and are available to all faculty. They are self-contained and self-paced and only require faculty to notify Dr. Aitken that they are ready to take the workshops. All the workshops are formatted similarly with a video, the PowerPoint presentation used in the video, external reading, a discussion posting, and an assignment. The workshops are available on the Wright State learning management system to provide easy access to the faculty. Dr. Aitken will respond to the discussion postings and provide feedback on the assignments.

4. Identifying a web based assessment system to support data collection and reduce the time commitment.

In Spring 2015, a search for an assessment system to support the Core assessment process was initiated. Because Wright State is a public institution, the requirements for purchasing such a product have to be stringently followed. In the process, faculty, students, staff, and administrators were invited to attend the presentations and provide feedback. A survey was conducted at the end of the presentations to provide additional input. The input was analyzed and provided in the final recommendations. The initial, and perhaps, only use of the system will be for
sustained Wright State Core assessment, however, there are other programs and colleges interested in the system, including Education, Nursing, and Social Work. The faculty seemed to be happy to be included in the decision making process and provided robust feedback. These presentations also helped to highlight the ongoing importance of student learning assessment. Based on the date collected, Wright State will be purchasing Taskstream for the Fall 2015 Core assessment.

5. Developing a communication plan.

Communication on assessment has been accomplished by providing information on the Wright State website, responding to questions, inquiries, and reporting all actions to the ALC at the monthly meetings. To enhance awareness of assessment activities on campus, beginning in Fall 2015 an Assessment Newsletter will be published for campus wide distribution on a quarterly basis – Oct, Dec, February, and April. Dr. Aitken and Dr. Brun will report on the progress of this initiative to the curriculum and policies committees of the Faculty Senate and work with faculty, deans, and administrators in one on one sessions to continue the progress of the assessment of student learning.

In October 2015 a celebration of student and faculty assessment achievements will include lunch and certificates. Faculty will be recognized for their work in assessment.

The website information has been updated to include results, reports, and other outcomes assessment data. The information is reviewed monthly by Dr. Aitken and Dr. Brun to assure its currency.

6. Completing the cycle by providing feedback and requesting analysis and plans from the departments based on the feedback.

In the Spring 2015 report of the Wright State Core assessment, Dr. Brun has included a timeline for each department to provide analysis and possible plans for improvement. Dr. Brun will follow up with the departments and final reports will be posted on the website. A revised schedule for the Wright State Core assessment process, approved by the Faculty Senate’s Undergraduate Curriculum Review Committee, will be presented to Faculty Senate in Fall 2015.

Getting an online assessment system will also provide data reports to help increase the process of getting information to the departments as departments can access their data at any time.

The first faculty to receive the report have contacted Dr. Brun for information on the results from Spring have been extremely positive with faculty asking if we can check again after they make changes to the course to improve student results. Change is often slow in a large institution, so this is extremely encouraging news.

7. Providing support for programs, department, and faculty in developing program goals, learning outcomes, and creating curriculum maps.

In addition to the workshops developed for faculty, continued presence of assessment discussions in the committees, Faculty Senate, and other gatherings, Dr. Aitken and Dr. Brun will attend program and department meetings to present information on assessment. This process will be ongoing as the university moves to a mature and fully functioning process.

The following plan has been presented to the faculty and is on the website to help establish a continuous assessment process for the Core outcomes.

**Term 1 – Assessment** Data collected and assessment report sent to department

**Term 2 – Analysis** Department analyzes data and makes recommendations

**Term 3- Implementation** Course changes implemented based on recommendation

**Term 4– Review** Report based on changes due

**Future Schedule of the Core Assessment**
5. What effect has your Academy work had on student learning?
The goal of the Assessment Academy was to make assessment part of the learning culture at Wright State University. We have engaged faculty, staff, and administrators in making this process a success. We have had faculty report back on the effects of receiving the results. The faculty are more aware of the assessment process, more generally accepting of it, and more importantly using the data to help determine how they can improve their teaching to support student learning.

The overall impact of the project will not be totally realized until we begin the second round for each question, but the process is now accepted and embedded in the Gen Ed Core. Faculty are asking more questions and Dr. Brun and Dr. Aitken are invited to more department, senate, and other meetings to share the success of the Academy project.

6. What concrete evidence do you have to demonstrate the effects you described in questions 3-5?

Wright State went from struggling to get papers for the Fall 2014 review to having faculty volunteer to support the assessment of Gen Ed in Fall 2015. With guidance from the Assessment Academy, Dr. Aitken and Dr. Brun have noticed the following as evidence:

- The Assurance of Learning Committee meetings are well attended.
- The faculty are asking for advice and support for their outcomes assessment.
- Faculty are participating in assessment workshops and requesting special workshops for their areas.
- Dr. Aitken and Dr. Brun have been invited to sit on various committees to provide the assessment viewpoint in departmental work.
- The number of papers submitted from the Gen Ed programs in Spring 2015 were 10 times greater than those submitted for Fall 2014.
- When the data was sent to the various departments involved in the Spring 2015 reviews, faculty began asking for guidance to help improve their courses.

**Note:** Core outcomes 1, 2, and 3 were measured in Fall 2013, Spring 2013, and Fall 2014 respectively. This schedule shows these outcomes being measured for the second time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Review</th>
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<td>4. apply the methods of inquiry of the natural sciences, social sciences, and the arts and humanities</td>
<td>Spring 2015</td>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
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<td>5. demonstrate global and multicultural competence</td>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
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<td>6. demonstrate understanding of contemporary social and ethical issues</td>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
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<td>7. participate in democratic society as informed and civicly engaged citizens</td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. communicate effectively</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
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<td>2. demonstrate mathematical literacy</td>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
<td>Spring 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. evaluate arguments and evidence critically</td>
<td>Spring 2019</td>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>Spring 2020</td>
<td>Fall 2020</td>
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There was little difficulty finding faculty to review the assessment management system over the summer months as faculty were interested in how it would work in their classrooms. Although these may appear to be baby steps in terms of assessment, we are changing the culture and that is a significant step towards the infusion of assessment into teaching and learning.

7. What do you see as the next logical steps for continuing the work you have begun in the Academy? In particular, what new student learning initiatives do you see developing from your Academy work, and how will you sustain the energy and momentum of your Academy work?

The Assurance of Learning Committee will continue to provide the leadership and oversight of the assessment of student learning to create a culture of assessment and educational effectiveness. Those involved in this process recognize the need to build upon the foundations created by membership in the Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning.

Dr. Aitken and Dr. Brun will continue to work with the Provost on installing and implementing the assessment system to aid in data collection and ease of reporting.

Dr. Aitken will continue to monitor the workshop attendance and, along with Dr. Brun, attend as many program, department, and committee meetings as possible and continue to provide individual consultations as needed.

As soon as the assessment system is in place, we will begin identifying the Wright State Core outcomes in the graduating class (2016-2017) who have been involved in the first cycle of the Wright State Core assessment to assure we have collected data in a full circle. The planning for this assessment has already begun with an informal discussion about collecting the artifacts from capstone projects.

Because the process has been vetted through two years, the team feels it is important to now move forward with the sustained process. The number of artifacts collected has increased and the organization of the review process is in place. We look forward to continuing the progress that has been made in the past three years guided by advice from the HLC Academy mentors and our experiences in the implementation of the Wright State Core assessment process.