

Wright State University, OH

The Wright State University Assessment of Student Learning Plan

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This Results Report reflects the activity of Wright State University in the Assessment Academy Collaboration Network. It is not an official document of the Higher Learning Commission.

Context

Q: Describe your plan for creating shared responsibility for assessing and improving student learning. (100 - 200 words)

A: Wright State University's plan draws all academic units, those with external accreditation and those without external accreditation, into shared responsibility for assessment of student learning. Chaired by the Provost, the WSU Council of Deans oversees the plan and procedures. The WSU Faculty Senate and Faculty President have reviewed and endorsed the plan, and named faculty member as Steering Committee Co-Chair. The Steering Committee consists of one faculty member and one administrator from each academic college and is co-chaired by faculty and administration. The Steering Committee also includes the Registrar, the Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research, the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, and the Director of the Computer and Telecommunications office.

Q: What is the broader impact of your Academy work on the institution, faculty and staff, students, or other stakeholders? How will this work influence the culture of your organization, build institutional capacity, advance teaching and learning...etc.? (100 - 200 words)

A: The goal of our Academy Plan is to create a total "Community of Learning and Teaching" at Wright State University. While continuing to assess program/department/major student learning outcomes, all units will include appropriate university learning outcome assessment in their major curriculum. Rather than relegating "assurance of learning" to General Education, this plan provides depth and breadth in assessing student learning. We believe that such a comprehensive university-wide plan will significantly improve teaching and learning and that Academy participation will allow us to draw on the expertise of other universities both to observe what they are undertaking as well as to get their feedback on how we are progressing.

Q: Optional: What else is important to know about your work on assessing and improving student learning? (100 - 200 words)

A: A number of units at the university have been very successful in using data gathered from assessment to improve student learning. A major part of our plan is to draw on the expertise of these units, using their procedures as examples and their faculty as assessment mentors.

Impact Report

Q: 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.

A: 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:

1. All university academic programs include and assess appropriate university level learning outcomes in the major curriculum.
2. Academic programs gather and analyze data from assessment and adjust pedagogy as appropriate.
3. 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.
4. Wright State University creates and staffs an Office of Assessment with a faculty Director of Assessment.
5. Wright State University appoints and compensates appropriately, Assessment Fellows in each college to champion "The Assurance of Student Learning".
6. 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

Q: 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?

A: 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:

- The 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.

Q: 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?

A: 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 only viewed by a few faculty. 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.

Q: 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?

A: 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 data 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

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.

Core Outcome	Assessment	Analysis	Implementation	Review
4. apply the methods of inquiry of the natural sciences, social sciences, and the arts and humanities	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Fall 2016
5. demonstrate global and multicultural competence	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017
6. demonstrate understanding of contemporary	Spring 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017

social and ethical issues				
7. participate in democratic society as informed and civically engaged citizens	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
1. communicate effectively	Spring 2017	Fall 2017	Spring 2018	Fall 2018
2. demonstrate mathematical literacy	Fall 2017	Spring 2018	Fall 2018	Spring 2019
3. evaluate arguments and evidence critically	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020

Q: What effect has your Academy work had on student learning?

A: 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.

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

A: 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.
- 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.

Q: 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?

- A:** 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.

Response to Impact Report

Q: Please describe your general impression of the institution's progress in the Academy. Include recognition of significant accomplishments, progress, and/or practices.

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

The project chosen by Wright State is enormous in scope as the goal was to establish a sustainable culture of assessment and student learning embraced by all faculty. Given this enormous task, Wright State has made commendable progress in achieving their goals. When the project started the major challenge was faculty resistance to participating in assessment. With sustained effort, resources and appropriate faculty incentives, faculty have largely accepted the value of assessment in improving student learning. This in my opinion is a major achievement of the academy team. Starting modestly by choosing "effective communications" as the initial assessment focus, Wright State gradually extended their assessment process. Wright State should also be commended for including faculty in all stages of the assessment process including the selection of appropriate web based assessment system. Similarly, the Assurance of Learning Committee has a proper balance of faculty and administrative personnel resulting in a smooth operation with regard to needed resources and faculty participation. The list of the ways in which they have made progress is significant.

My overall impression is that Wright State has made important progress towards an assessment and student learning culture. With this achievement Wright State is now including Lake Campus in the assessment process.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Scholar):

The addition of an Assistant Vice President for Educational Effectiveness and Institutional Accreditation position demonstrates an institutional commitment for this effort. This, along with the purchase of Taskstream to manage the data collection efforts, is not insignificant at a time of competing demand for resources.

The team made significant progress once they had the support staff/expertise to help them develop credible processes. They now have a cycle of assessment efforts and are on task to complete one full cycle for all the outcomes with the next year.

Considerable planning has gone into faculty development. The ALC has developed a number of mechanisms to education faculty about the program/institutional assessment process. This is commendable and will be even more important as you begin to provide meaningful feedback on the efforts.

Q: Do you have any particular concerns about the work they have done?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

Engaging faculty on the use of Taskstream is an important step in the process. It will be important to have a plan in place. Given that Wright State is gearing for a reaffirmation

visit in 2016, it is imperative that they actually use Taskstream to collect, analyze student data and develop a report that programs and course instructors can use to make improvements as needed to enhance student learning.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Scholar):

My concern is how the data are collected, analyzed, and evaluated. It is not clear how the data are used to help faculty to understand, in a meaningful way, what the students strengths and weaknesses are related to the outcomes. Using the AAC&U rubrics are fine if they align with the values of the institution. It will be important to avoid the danger of adopting them just because it is the easiest thing to do. The important thing is to understand what they tell you about your students and their learning and do those things align with what faculty believe are important.

It is also important to understand the dangers of collecting artifacts across disparate courses/assignments and using the aggregated results to make a decision about student learning. There are all types of pitfalls with this approach that should be investigated.

Q: If participation in the Academy replaced required interim monitoring, please indicate one of the following:

A: N/A. The institution's activities in the Academy were not related to interim monitoring.

Q: In your judgment, is the institution prepared to sustain its assessment efforts after it leaves the Academy? Do you have any specific recommendations to help it sustain its efforts?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

Wright State has put into place those systems which are indicative of a sustainable culture of assessment and student learning. They have established a formal structure to oversee assessment, provide training to faculty and provide feedback to departments and programs so the focus on student learning remains strong.

In order for faculty to accept assessment as a normal activity, it is important that they don't feel overburdened. Adopting a cyclical process for assessing a subset of learning outcomes and allowing programs to control the process that uses assessment results to enhance student learning will enable Wright State to achieve a sustainable process. The main thrust of assessment is the achievement of learning outcomes (University Learning Outcomes as well as program learning outcomes) and not assessment of every course every term.

Using a three-year cycle (as an example), assessment of student artifacts will reveal trend lines in specific learning outcomes allowing departments and faculty to assess the need for implementing remedial measures.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Scholar):

I concur with Shridhar that all the pieces are in place for Wright State to make significant progress and keep the momentum going. It will be important to have periodic "checks" to be sure that the processes being used and developed are evaluated for quality. Having in-house expertise will help to keep the progress on track and in line with good practice.

My primary advice is to keep your eye on the prize. This is about student learning--not in

some aggregated numerical sense, but in the institution's/programs' ability to identify, specifically, the students' strengths and weaknesses related to performance indicators aligned with your outcomes. Only when this is in place will you be able to improve student learning in a meaningful way.

Q: Please note any other observations or recommendations that you wish to share.

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

I commend Wright State for staying on course and focusing on their primary goal of university wide faculty involvement in assessment and student learning. I wish them well.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

You have a strong leader in your assessment efforts. Take advantage of the expertise and experience that is brought to the ALC.

Project: The Wright State University Assessment of Student Learning Plan

Version 6.0 - Project

Q: Identify and explain any specific changes to your project scope or design since August 2014.

A: The Assessment project was taken over by Dr. Renee Aitken after Joe Law resigned. After reviewing the project and its current status, Dr. Aitken received permission from The Vice President of Curriculum and Instruction to try and build a sustainable process for assessment of the Wright State Core outcomes. A team of faculty assessment coordinators attended the HLC Assessment Workshop in October to develop a process and plan. The plan was approved in early December and work is on the way to:

1. Provide training to faculty on assessment.
2. Identify both Gen Ed and Senior level courses where Wright State Core outcomes can be measured.
3. Develop a sustainable process for collecting data and reporting it to the university via the Assessment Website.
4. Working on communicating the concept of assessment across the university.

Q: What were your goals for the past six months—since August 2014? Did you achieve them? Why or why not?

A: Our four principal goals for the past six months were to (1) create an interdisciplinary faculty team to review the student artifacts gathered at the end of spring semester 2014, (2) gather student artifacts from this fall to examine the ULO of multicultural competence, (3) report the results of the first year's review of ULOs in the Core to faculty and other stakeholders, and (4) complete and launch the assessment website.

The goals have been completed, but as stated above, we have widened the scope to make a sustainable process to support assessment after the completion of the academy. These new initiatives will help us create a culture of assessment. We launched the Assessment Website, but need to refine the information added.

Link 1: [Wright State Outcomes Assessment](http://www.wright.edu/academic-affairs/outcomes-assessment)

<http://http://www.wright.edu/academic-affairs/outcomes-assessment>

Q: How did you incorporate the feedback that you received on your previous posting in August 2014?

A: A core team of faculty/assessment coordinators joined Dr. Aitken at the HLC Assessment Workshop to develop a plan for communication, sustained assessment, and creating a culture of assessment using the comments provided by Dr. Rogers and Dr. Shridhar. Their comments were directly responsible for working towards the broadening the scope of the Assessment Academy plan into a university assessment process, especially for the University Learning Outcomes. As the institution nears its 4th year in the academy, the feedback provided on sustainability, contents of the website, and data validity helped focus the plan so the work can be carried on after the 7 ULO assessments are completed.

Q: What are your plans and goals for the next six months—up until July/August 2015? What challenges do you anticipate?

A: Wright State hopes to have the following in place before the beginning of Fall term 2015:

1. Training workshops for faculty on assessment.
2. Identify both Gen Ed and Senior level courses where Wright State Core outcomes can be measured across time.
3. Assure faculty know how to submit artifacts, review process in place, and begin reviewing ULOs each term.
4. Put an electronic system in place to remove the manual process used for previous ULO reviews.
3. Create a process for collecting data and reporting it to the university via the Assessment Website.
4. Send out information to communicate the purpose of assessment across the university.

The biggest challenge facing the university's assessment process is getting the faculty to "buy into" systemic assessment. We feel training workshops, adding assessment to department agendas, and simplifying the process will help make a difference.

Version 6.0 - Update

Q: Please confirm that this Activity is ready for review.

A: This project is ready for review.

Version 6.0 - Response

Q: Please give your name and contact information (email address and/or phone number).

A: Primary Mentor:

Malayappan Shridhar aka Shridhar

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Q: What are some strengths of this project/Academy work? Why are these strengths?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

The main strengths of this project have already been elaborated in previous responses and these have not changed. It is important to note that Wright State is attempting an institutional change that will allow all constituents to embrace the culture of assessment and its importance to student learning. Wright State has adopted University Learning Outcomes (ULO) and it applies to all their academic programs. Additionally Wright State has periodic program reviews, assessment of student learning outcomes by program and professional accreditation as applicable.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

I concur with Shridhar. In addition, the agility of the team to widen its focus in such a short period of time demonstrates the seriousness of this project to the institution.

Q: What remains unclear or what questions do you still have about this work to assess and improve student learning?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

Wright State team has indicated that they have achieved all the goals that were set in the previous report including a) collection of student artifacts, b) reporting the results of first year's review of ULO and c) launching the assessment website. This is indeed laudable.

However, the team has not described what the reviews indicate and what actions were taken on the basis of the review. While the results of the review were reported to faculty and other stakeholders, there is no indication of how faculty responded to the review. If students were also informed about the review, what was the reaction of the students? What was the reaction of senior administrators?

Faculty acceptance of assessment as an effective tool to improve student learning seems to be an issue that lingers on. Perhaps some new initiatives are needed here.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

Shridhar poses some important questions. Learning more about your findings (both from the calibration process as well as the final results) and how you communicated the results is of particular interest. The link to your outcomes produced an error message so I went to your website and found the following on your "General Education Overview" page:

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

In reviewing your previous posts, it appears that, to date, you have assessed writing (twice), mathematical literacy and critical thinking. How are you integrating these into the majors/programs? How do you assure that the five samples being chosen by faculty in their courses are representative of your students? How do you control for the breadth and depth of the assignments? Know more about your findings and how they are communicated will be helpful to understand your progress.

Q: What are some critical things to which the institution should pay attention as it plans its work for the next six months?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

Wright State has an ambitious set of goals for the next six months and these are on the right track. Training faculty on assessment is a critical step in meeting the goals.

Wright State has admitted that the biggest challenge they face is faculty "buy-in." While this is a common problem in many institutions, it is nevertheless critical to have faculty embracing the culture of assessment. Effective strategies to mitigate the additional work that assessment imposes coupled with meaningful incentives to faculty will overtime solve this issue. Some institutions have tied some portion of merit increase to involvement with assessment. The key is patience and persistence. As evidence of improved student learning (as a result of assessment and closing the loop) accumulates, faculty participation invariably improves.

Replacing the current manual process with an automated electronic system will further simplify the assessment process.

Adopting standard templates for assessing ULO and the Gen Ed outcomes will also reduce the effort involved in submitting assessment reports.

Adoption of sampling and assessment reviews done every two or three years (rather than every term) will help reduce faculty burden.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

I concur with Shridhar that getting faculty engaged in a positive way is critical to developing an effective assessment process. Engaging in Faculty Development is important but be sure you have a clear path in mind for their involvement. Think about incentives for their involvement and be sure that the content of the workshop/meetings is critical. Be sure that you engage people in the planning and delivery of the workshop who can create an interactive and high energy session(s). This would also be a good place to demonstrate how the University outcomes can be (should be) integrated into the program level outcomes.

I would also encourage you to look at your project plan to be sure you are where you need to be as you wind down your time in the Academy. What still needs to be done? How many outcomes are still to be assessed and what is your timeline. You mention posting results of the assessments on your website. I encourage to move to a more active and less passive approach. Having them on the website is fine but don't assume that faculty will go there. Think about more of a celebration/conversation with faculty in ways that engage them in the evaluation/closing the loop process.

Looking for ways that technology can help you manage your processes is a positive move. However, the technology isn't as important as how you are choosing artifacts and using rubrics. If you cannot be assured that your samples are representative of your student population and your haven't calibrated your rubrics, the results may not be very meaningful. This is a good time to review the quality of your processes and how you can capitalize on your curriculum map to streamline your processes.

Q: What are some other possibilities or resources that might contribute to the success of this project? For instance, can you suggest resources such as books, benchmarks, instruments, models, and processes?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

I highly recommend that Wright State team attend the 2015 Annual Meeting and interact with both the mentors as well as other HLC scholars to ensure that their strategies are sound and effective and perhaps learn of simpler strategies to ensure success.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

I will be at the HLC meeting and would welcome an opportunity to talk to you. I would also recommend that you search the Collaboration Portal for other institutions who are/have developed/ing Faculty Development programs. Some of them are very comprehensive and exciting. You might also search under "Faculty Fellows."

Scholar(s): Gloria Rogers

Primary Mentor(s): Malayappan Shridhar

Project: The Wright State University Assessment of Student Learning Plan

Version 5.0 - Project

Q: Identify and explain any specific changes to your project scope or design since January 2014.

A: There have been no changes to the scope or design of the project since the previous report was submitted.

Q: What were your goals for the past six months—since January 2014? Did you achieve them? Why or why not?

A: In the past six months, we had three specific goals: (1) to hire a new Assistant VP for Educational Effectiveness and Institutional Accreditation, (2) to keep moving forward with the assessment of University Learning Outcomes in the Wright State Core, and (3) to prepare to assess the ULOs in the major.

All three goals are being met. We are fortunate to have Renee Aitken join us as the new Assistant VP on August 1. She has been getting acquainted with the university and our assessment efforts and will be assuming leadership of this project as well.

As noted in the previous report, our departmental assessment reports have begun identifying the ULOs that they will assess within the major, and we will be receiving those reports this fall. Once we have the reports, we can begin to work with departments to develop procedures for reviewing student work.

Q: How did you incorporate the feedback that you received on your previous posting in January 2014?

A: The key question raised in the feedback from the previous posting concerned how the loop was being closed for both faculty and students. The feedback was received in March, not long before the end of the semester, so opportunities to provide information to faculty and students were minimal until the beginning of the fall semester.

We are now developing a website that will make all the information available to the campus community, faculty and students alike. The website is nearly complete and should be launched within the next four to six weeks.

In addition, the request for student work sent out this fall includes an explicit request that faculty share the information and rubric with their students, which we hope will help to reduce the perception of "stealth" assessment.

Q: What are your plans and goals for the next six months—up until January/February 2015?

What challenges do you anticipate?

- A:** Our four principal goals for the next six months are to (1) create an interdisciplinary faculty team to review the student artifacts gathered at the end of spring semester 2014, (2) gather student artifacts from this fall to examine the ULO of multicultural competence, (3) report the results of the first year's review of ULOs in the Core to faculty and other stakeholders, and (4) complete and launch the assessment website.
-

Version 5.0 - Update

Q: Please confirm that this Activity is ready for review.

- A:** This project is ready for review.
-

Version 5.0 - Response

Q: Please give your name and contact information (email address and/or phone number).

A: Primary Mentor:

Malayappan Shridhar

mals@umich.edu

313-550-5177

HLC Senior Scholar:

Gloria Rogers

grogers@hlcommission.org

812-240-9770

Q: What are some strengths of this project/Academy work? Why are these strengths?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

Since the scope of the project has not changed, the strengths of the project remain the same as in the earlier version. I will simply reproduce them here:

Wright State is making steady progress with regard to assessment of University Learning Outcomes (ULO). The main strengths of the project can be summarized as follows:

- Through creation of University Assurance of Learning Committee, Wright State has managed to provide an institutional focus to ULO.
- Continuity has been assured by retaining the key members of the Academy project in the Assurance of Learning committee.

- Progress has been made by focusing on ULO 1 and 2 that address effective writing and mathematical literacy.
 - Centrally chosen rubrics are used for assessment of ULO and this assures consistency and validity of the data collected.
 - Wright State has achieved broad representation by choosing faculty from many programs for the assessment of ULO. This bodes well for the success of the project. Recognition of faculty effort through honorariums is a step in the right direction.
 - Wright State has a schedule for evaluating all the ULO and this will ensure successful completion of the project.
 - Appointment of an Assistant Vice-President for Educational Effectiveness will assure continuity and long term sustainability of ULO assessment.
 - **Additional Observations:**
- *Wright State should be commended for achieving all the three specific goals:*

(1) to hire a new Assistant VP for Educational Effectiveness and Institutional Accreditation, (2) to keep moving forward with the assessment of University Learning Outcomes in the Wright State Core, and (3) to prepare to assess the ULOs in the major. Renee Aitken joined Wright State as the new Assistant VP on August 1.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

The focus of communication with the campus (both faculty and students) will be critical as you move forward.

Q: What remains unclear or what questions do you still have about this work to assess and improve student learning?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

Wright State has stated that departmental assessment reports have begun identifying the ULOs that they will assess within the major, and that they will be receiving those reports this fall. They can then begin to work with departments to develop procedures for reviewing student work.

This is a step in the right direction to achieving the goals of the project. Does Wright State have a time line for completing this important phase of the project? Having such a timeline will help in tracking the progress and address areas that are seeing difficulties or delays.

My primary reason for raising this issue is due to the fact that the intervening summer term since the last report prevented Wright State from developing processes to close the loop. I recommend that the team develop time lines and milestones to enable the team to make adjustments and corrections as problems or delays arise.

On a positive note Wright State has nearly completed the development of a website that will make all the information available to the campus community, faculty and students alike. Another positive step for Wright State is that the request for student work sent out this fall will include an explicit request that faculty share the information and rubric with their students, which we hope will help to reduce the perception of "stealth" assessment.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

What are you doing to communicate the assessment process and results other than “developing a website.” Even if you count “hits” what is your assurance that this is the most effective way to communicate with your faculty and students? Are the results reported to the faculty governance organizations? What about the programs/departments? How do you close the loop on your assessment? How do you monitor what changes are made based on assessment results with the rationale for why the changes were made? How do you monitor to see if the changes make any difference?

How do you assess your assessment processes? “...making a request that faculty share the information and rubric with their students” may reduce the “perception” of stealth assessment, but have you asked the students if they have seen the results/rubrics. What about the student’s own results...do they know how they are doing and what they need to do to improve?

Q: What are some critical things to which the institution should pay attention as it plans its work for the next six months?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

Wright State has an ambitious set of goals for the next six months: (1) create an interdisciplinary faculty team to review the student artifacts gathered at the end of spring semester 2014, (2) gather student artifacts from this fall to examine the ULO of multicultural competence, (3) report the results of the first year's review of ULOs in the Core to faculty and other stakeholders, and (4) complete and launch the assessment website.

One critical issue here is the process to collect student artifacts. Having faculty champions in each area will help in timely collection of student artifacts. It is not uncommon when some faculty simply forget to collect these artifacts resulting in delays. As they proceed with this critical effort, it is important that provide adequate resources to faculty, recognize their contribution through suitable incentives and ensure that the senior leaders provide the necessary help and appreciate the team's effort and the faculty contribution.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

In addition to Shridhar's comments, it is important to review your sampling processes. It is important that you can generalize your findings to the population. It is not clear how you are doing the sampling that maintains the integrity of the process and assures reliability of the findings. It is important that the breadth and depth of the assignments are consistent and that students have the opportunity to demonstrate their performance at a level that is consistent with outcome statements. It would be helpful if you could describe your sampling and scoring process including how you calibrate the rubric scoring process. This will be important moving forward.

Q: What are some other possibilities or resources that might contribute to the success of this project? For instance, can you suggest resources such as books, benchmarks, instruments, models, and processes?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

Wright State is very aware of the many resources that are available through HLC as well as their interactions with other participating institutions.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

As you develop your website, you may want to review the following websites as exemplars.

Link 1: [Cornell University Center for Teaching Excellence](http://www.cte.cornell.edu/teaching-ideas/assessing-student-learning/index.html)

<http://www.cte.cornell.edu/teaching-ideas/assessing-student-learning/index.html>

Link 2: [Rochester Institute of Technology Program-level Outcomes Assessment Plan](#)

Scholar(s): Gloria Rogers

Primary Mentor(s): Malayappan Shridhar

Project: The Wright State University Assessment of Student Learning Plan

Version 4.0 - Project

Q: Identify and explain any specific changes to your project scope or design since July 2013.

- A:** There are no major changes to the scope of the project, though the design for the assessment of University Learning Outcomes (ULOs) has been modified.

One change at the university level has not directly affected the design of the project, but it has had an impact on the way the committee works. Given the great number of changes in personnel at Wright State and the need to consolidate efforts, the university created the University Assurance of Learning Committee that incorporated a number of separate efforts, including the committee that had been working with the Academy project. The key members of the Academy project are part of the new group, and our work continues within this new umbrella group. The new group helped to focus the changes that are described next.

Assessment of ULOs within the Wright State Core is under way, as scheduled. However, we have taken a somewhat different approach to it than originally described. At the beginning of the fall term, we decided to look at ULOs 1 and 2, writing effectively and demonstrating mathematical literacy, respectively. For ULO 1 (writing), we contacted faculty teaching all sections of Regional Studies, Comparative Studies, Great Books Religion, Great Books Philosophy, and Great Books Literature (15 courses in all). We sent the rubric that will be used to review student writing and asked them to provide five samples per section of the course, giving them a randomized selection process. For ULO 2, we did the same with faculty teaching all courses in Element 2 (Mathematics) and a handful of other classes that listed mathematical literacy among their outcomes, a total of 14 in all. All information that would identify students, faculty, or section number is being removed from the artifacts.

For each ULO, we have created a team of six faculty who will meet on a Saturday to review the student artifacts and score them using the rubric. They will be given a modest honorarium (\$250). Faculty were selected to give us representation from across the university. For writing, we asked the English department chair to identify faculty with experience in portfolio assessment to help us with the process. We have two faculty from English, with additional faculty from Nursing, Education, Biology, and our regional campus. For the math assessment, we have two faculty members from Math, and one each from Economics, Physics, Sociology, and Computer Science.

The results of the review will be communicated to all faculty teaching the courses sampled, to department chairs and program directors, and to other programs involved (particularly the Wright State Core and the Writing Across the Curriculum). The reviews are scheduled for late February (ULO 1) and early March (ULO 2).

For the current semester (Spring 2014), we are again reviewing ULO 1 and ULO 3 (critical thinking). We have chosen to look at writing a second time in part because of its centrality to undergraduate education and in part because we wish to provide additional information

for the WAC program. For this review, we have requested artifacts from a number of Core courses that have the Integrated Writing designation. There are 11 of these courses, all with multiple sections, from four of our six undergraduate colleges. For these we hope to use the same artifacts to examine both ULOs, with a separate faculty team for each ULO (on different days). Again, the results will be communicated to faculty teaching the courses and to other stakeholders university wide.

Q: What were your goals for the past six months—since July 2013? Did you achieve them? Why or why not?

A: In July 2013 we reported that the search for the Associate Provost for Assessment and Accreditation had been tabled short-term. That search was opened in the late fall, with a new title: Assistant Vice President for Educational Effectiveness and Institutional Accreditation. At the present time (last week of January 2014) preliminary phone interviews are being conducted with six potential finalists. We anticipate bringing finalists to campus in February and having a person in place no later than the beginning of the fall term--earlier than that if at all possible. The pool of candidates is strong, and we are optimistic about finding someone for this critical position.

In July we also reported that the electronic system for recording rubric assessment scores was on hold and that we wanted to wait until we knew more about the shape of the information before undertaking a design for it. That remains the case.

One of the key goals was to launch the assessment of ULOs in the Core, and that process has begun, though (as described above) in a somewhat different form than originally described. We believe that the direct examination of student work will make the assessment more meaningful.

Q: How did you incorporate the feedback that you received on your previous posting in July 2013?

A: Much of the feedback on the July 2013 posting called for clarification, which we have tried to provide in other sections of this form, specifically about the search for the new position and some of the details on the ULO pilot and how faculty were selected.

Both Jim Sherohman and Malayappan Shridhar asked about the YouTube PowerPoint. It has not been widely viewed as of yet--only 104 views as of January 29. However, as the project continues to unfold, we can promote its use.

Q: What are your plans and goals for the next six months—up until July/August 2014? What challenges do you anticipate?

A: A key goal is to hire the new Assistant VP for Educational Effectiveness and Institutional Accreditation. As noted earlier, we hope to have someone hired and (ideally) already in place by the July/August date. One of the biggest challenges, post hire, is helping integrate the new person and position into the campus community. Should the search fail, we will have to begin the process again.

A second goal is to keep moving forward with the assessment of ULOs in the Wright State Core. The first round of review has been scheduled but not yet taken place, and it will be critical for this one to go well. That is perhaps the key challenge in this area. It was less difficult to line up faculty for the Saturday activity than anticipated, and we take that as a good sign.

In the next six months, we also need to prepare for the next stage of the project, which is to assess the ULOs in the major. As part of the annual program assessment reports departments have been asked to identify the ULOs that they will assess, and a fair number of reports do not include that information. One of the challenges will be following up, given the number of programs.

Version 4.0 - Update

Q: Please confirm that this Activity is ready for review.

A: This project is ready for review.

Version 4.0 - Response

Q: Please give your name and contact information (email address and/or phone number).

A: Malayappan Shridhar, Primary Mentor

University of Michigan-Dearborn

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Cell: 313-550-5177

Gloria Rogers, HLC Senior Scholar

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812-240-9770

Q: What are some strengths of this project/Academy work? Why are these strengths?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

Wright State is making steady progress with regard to assessment of University Learning Outcomes (ULO). The main strengths of the project can be summarized as follows:

- Through creation of University Assurance of Learning Committee, Wright State has managed to provide an institutional focus to ULO.
- Continuity has been assured by retaining the key members of the Academy project in the Assurance of Learning committee.
- Progress has been made by focusing on ULO 1 and 2 that address effective writing and mathematical literacy.
- Centrally chosen rubrics are used for assessment of ULO and this assures consistency and validity of the data collected.
- Wright State has achieved broad representation by choosing faculty from many programs for the assessment of ULO. This bodes well for the success of the project. Recognition of faculty effort through honorariums is a step in the right direction.
- Wright State has a schedule for evaluating all the ULO and this will ensure successful completion of the project.
- Appointment of an Assistant Vice-President for Educational Effectiveness will assure continuity and long term sustainability of ULO assessment.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

In addition to Malayappan's comments, I would add that the consolidation of responsibilities into one working group makes good sense to avoid duplication of efforts. It also provides a cohesive cross-institutional team which stands to create more buy-in from campus constituents.

The use of multi-disciplinary teams to review student work is also commendable. The more you can get faculty from various disciplines using the scoring rubrics, the more likely it will be that the rubrics will make their way into the disciplines in an authentic manner. Congratulations on this effort!

Q: What remains unclear or what questions do you still have about this work to assess and improve student learning?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

Wright State has started collecting assessment data for several of their ULO. The reviews of the data will be sent to appropriate departments in the coming months.

- It is not clear if the departments associated with the specific ULO will prepare recommendations to enhance the curriculum and/or modify instructional strategies. The closing of the loop is the heart of the assessment process and some clarity is needed here as the report does not speak to remedial actions based on the reviews of the assessment data.
- It is not clear if Wright State is informing students about the assessment activity and including them in many of the deliberations.

Review by Gloria Rogers, HLC Senior Scholar:

I would also like to speak to the second bullet provided by Malayappan. The random collection of artifacts from a number of different courses for the purpose of scoring sends the message that students are not actively engaged in this process. The research on learning is clear that students learn best when the expectations for the performance are clear and they get timely feedback on their performance. Are the faculty in these courses providing students with feedback on their writing--whether or not their work is being used for institutional purposes? Are they using the scoring rubrics for the ULO's? When are students informed of the expectations for their performance related to the ULO's? Are the students provided the rubrics so they know what is expected of them? Do the faculty have access to the rubrics regardless of whether or not they have a writing intensive (or other ULO-related) courses? My concern is that there is a "stealth" assessment system that students are unaware of and only those faculty who are directly involved may have any direct knowledge. Providing the expectations and rubrics to students early and often may, in fact, have a positive impact on the results.

I am also interested in knowing how many total artifacts are being scored (% of population) and how do you ensure that you don't have multiple samples of work for the same student. One of the important things about sampling is that the sample should represent the population. What mechanisms do you have in place to ensure that the selected artifacts are representative?

Q: What are some critical things to which the institution should pay attention as it plans its work for the next six months?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

If Wright State faculty subscribe to assessment and use it to improve student learning as a

regular part of their instructional activity, the project will have a lasting impact. To some extent this is perhaps already happening in their professional schools like engineering, nursing etc.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

It is not clear how you will evaluate the effectiveness of using single artifacts for two different ULOs--especially when they have been taken from diverse courses. Do you have a plan for that evaluation? If not, I would encourage you to begin that discussion. It is absolutely important to make this process as efficient as possible, however, not at the expense of have results that are actionable. I agree with your comments that it is important that these first scoring sessions are successful. It is also important that the ability to use the findings to improve student learning is also demonstrated. I will be anxious to see your progress.

As you have indicated, it will also be critical in the coming months to integrate the new Assistant VP for Educational Effectiveness and Institutional Accreditation into the heart of the work that you are doing. You have already made modifications based on earlier administrative changes and it is important to have some stability in the plans that are moving forward.

Q: What are some other possibilities or resources that might contribute to the success of this project? For instance, can you suggest resources such as books, benchmarks, instruments, models, and processes?

A: Reviewed by Malayappan Shridhar (Primary Mentor):

At this stage in the project, Wright State is quite aware of the many resources that are available.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

I would encourage you to take full advantage of the services provided by HLC. Not only the collaborations with other institutions at the Academy events, but also to search the Collaborative Network for institutions who are engaged similar activities. If you are going to be at the upcoming HLC meeting, please stop by the HLC booth and say hello.

Scholar(s): Gloria Rogers

Primary Mentor(s): Malayappan Shridhar

Project: The Wright State University Assessment of Student Learning Plan

Version 3.0 - Project

Q: Identify and explain any specific changes to your project scope or design since February 2013.

A: There were no major changes to the project. There were some refinements:

1) Rather than roll out full ULO assessment in WSU Core Classes (WSU Core=General Education) in fall, 2013; ULO assessment will be piloted with key courses/faculty in fall, 2013. The results will be analyzed and used to make any needed modifications to systems and processes with full (or at least more) ULO assessment in spring 2014.

2) As the Academy plan has been moving ahead, the HLC Academy Steering Committee will take over a more policy oriented role at Wright State University. In fall, 2013 the HLC Academy Steering Committee will review the current procedures for learning outcome assessment of University Learning Outcomes and Program Level Learning Outcomes, and also the current procedures for Program Review.

This flows directly from our "First Imperative"; Maintain and Strengthen a Culture of Learning and Teaching at Wright State University.

Q: What were your goals for the past six months? Did you achieve them? Why or why not?

A: Goal: Create Rubrics for ULO assessment.

Result: Rubrics were selected from the AACU Value Rubrics. These were modified/adapted to the WSU Core (General Education) by the WSU Undergraduate General Education Committee (UGEC). Rubrics will be distributed to pilot faculty in summer, 2013 and used in the fall, 2013 ULO assessment in the pilot classes. Results will be studied and modifications made as appropriate.

JULY-AUGUST UPDATE: The pilot faculty have been identified and will be asked to meet at the beginning of the fall term.

Goal: Begin search for Associate Provost for Assessment and Accreditation to lead an Office of Assessment and Accreditation.

Result: This project has been tabled short-term. A new Provost was appointed in mid-March, 2013, and has not had time to consider this position and office. It remains on the table and will be considered at some point in the near future.

JULY-AUGUST UPDATE: The search for an Associate Provost for Assessment and Accreditation is still on hold, though fortunately it remains on the table.

Goal: Design an electronic system to record rubric assessment scores.

Result: The Technology Sub-committee has met and made a recommendation to the WSU Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). The CTL feels the recommended process is workable. Dr. Joe Law, HLC Academy co-chair, will work with CTL and pilot faculty to design electronic system in summer so that it is ready for use in fall, 2013. The system will be tested in the fall, results analyzed and modifications made as appropriate.

JULY-AUGUST UPDATE: Given the relatively small size of the group of pilot faculty, we will not yet started working on the electronic system. It seems better to wait until we know more about the shape that the information will take before designing the means of recording and reporting it.

Goal: Disseminate HLC Academy project to the University.

Result: A "voice-over" PowerPoint presentation has been made and posted as a YouTube video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCp1Dr84bEA>

This process did not happen soon enough to demo to all university committees and constituents. This will continue into fall, 2013.

Goal: Continue Process/procedure discussions.

Flow-charts showing a University Data Collection Process, and a unit-specific data collection/analysis/change implementation were designed and discussed.

We feel we are on track to keep the Academy Plan moving ahead as planned.

Q: How did you incorporate the feedback that you received on your previous posting?

A: Many of the comments dealt with clarity of process. We have considered such clarity and incorporated it in our PowerPoint tool noted above.

As a further example, Jim cited the comments on external accreditation agencies. Our intent is not to duplicate process. Our intent here is relative to "Program Review". While Program Review is not a focus of the Academy Plan, our Steering Committee, as noted above has been evolving into a policy/procedures/conceptual committee, once again, flowing from Imperative 1. Specifically related to Jim's comment, WSU has a 7-year cycle for program review. We intend to place those units with external accreditation in this cycle at the point where they would be undergoing program review for the external agency. In this way the report made for the external agency will count as the Program Review for those units.

Looking at the suggestion made has helped us with this clarity.

Shridhar noted the serious challenge of faculty/unit participation. We have noted that most of our process to date has been "top down". Dr. David Bright, co-chair of the Steering Committee, has started the discussion on building a "bottom up" movement to engage faculty in the importance of the assessment processes.

JULY-AUGUST UPDATE: Jim Sherohman asked about the current organizational structure and responsibility for learning assurance and the coordination with learning assurance technology. We hope that eventually the proposed Office of Learning Assurance would bring these elements together, but in the meantime, we have representation from the Center for Teaching and Learning and from Computing and Telecommunications, as well as representatives of colleges and other academic units.

JULY-AUGUST UPDATE: Jim Sherohman also asked about the process for developing rubrics for assessment of University Learning Outcomes. Those were developed in the University General Education Committee, which is a faculty committee. This fall they will be piloted in a number of sections of courses with the Core, and those faculty will be asked for their feedback. We plan to enlarge the pilot group in the spring term and continue to gather feedback and gradually increase the use of the rubrics in coming years.

Q: What are your plans and goals for the next six months? What challenges to you anticipate?

A: Summer, 2013: design electronic data collection system with pilot faculty and CTL.

Fall, 2013: Assess ULOs in pilot classes of the WSU Core (General Education)

Assess result and modify procedure as appropriate

Make plans for full WSU Core Rollout in Spring, 2014.

Continue to disseminate information about the HLC Academy Plan.

Final Note: Dr. Herbert Dregalla will be moving to a new position at Wright State University, beginning on May 1, 2013. (Associate Dean for Students and Curriculum in the College of Liberal Arts). Because of this he will be stepping down as co-chair of the HLC Academy Steering Committee.

The HLC Academy Steering Committee will continue to be led by the other two co-chairs: Dr. David Bright and Dr. Joe Law.

Version 3.0 - Update

Q: Please confirm that this Activity is ready for review.

A: This project is ready for review.

Version 3.0 - Response

Q: Please give your name and contact information (email address and/or phone number).

A: Jim Sherohman

jlsherohman@stcloudstate.edu

(612) 259-8545

Malayappan Shridhar

mals@umich.edu

Cell: 313-550-5177

Q: What are some strengths of this project/Academy work? Why are these strengths?

A: Shridhar notes these strengths:

1. Wright State has adopted a flexible strategy to achieve their overall goals with regard to assessment of student learning. Based on their activity detail, the idea of a pilot study with key courses makes sense.
2. Review of current procedures for learning outcome assessment both for ULO and Program Level Learning Outcomes will reveal both strengths and weaknesses. This is useful in developing strategies that are more or less effective from the get go.
3. Wright State has recognized the value of readily available resources like AACU Value rubrics. They have also correctly adapted these rubrics to their specific needs.
4. Progress is also seen in the selection of pilot faculty to participate in the pilot study

Jim agrees with Shridhar's description. Like Shridhar, he sees the pilot study as a definite strength of the project, but he also has a few questions about it, which are included below.

Q: What remains unclear or what questions do you still have about this work to assess and improve student learning?

A: Shridhar offers these comments and questions:

1. It is not clear if the new provost has subscribed to the overall activity to improve the culture of assessment. There is hope here as the new position of Associate Provost for Assessment and Accreditation is still on the table. It is not clear if this delay in the appointment of associate provost will affect the overall progress.
2. There is still work in progress with regard to developing an electronic system to record assessment scores. Hopefully this will be completed on time for the pilot study.
3. A voice-over Power Point presentation has been posted on You Tube. However, there is no information on the number of faculty and academic administrators that have accessed this presentation.
4. WSU is confident that they are on track and I accept their overall optimism.

Jim has these questions, which partially overlap those of Shridhar:

You plan to enlarge the pilot group in the Spring 2014 term. How did you select the pilot faculty members? Are all ULOs being assessed in the pilots, or only some of them? Will the rubrics be used by all of the faculty members in the pilots? Do you have a timeline for full implementation of ULO assessment, including the electronic system? What is the rationale behind how you are phasing this in?

To what extent will ULO assessment be based upon course-embedded assessment using the VALUE rubrics that you have adapted for use at WSU? What other data sources are you considering? Will use of the rubrics be optional or mandatory when the assessment plan is fully implemented? Have you or do you plan to establish criteria for the types of student work that should be assessed using the rubrics?

Q: What are some critical things to which the institution should pay attention as it plans its work for the next six months?

A: From Shridhar:

1. It is good to know that WSU Academy team has carefully considered the reviews from Jim and myself and has responded to the suggestions made with proper action items. This clearly speaks to the commitment of WSU and points to eventual success.
2. Instead of creating another Office of Learning Assurance, may I suggest that they embed this requirement in the Provost's office with responsibility assigned to the newly created position of Associate Provost for Assessment and Accreditation. They could add appropriate staff to manage the increased responsibility. I am recommending this approach as in my opinion this will lead to better coordination and not create new silos.
3. It is also good to know that the HLC Academy Steering Committee will continue to be led by the two co-chairs Dr. Bright and Dr. Law.
4. Overall, progress is being made and I hope that WSU will not lose the momentum generated so far.

Jim adds these comments:

1. I do not feel I have a good enough understanding of WSU's organizational structure to endorse Shridhar's point #2 above about the Office of Learning Assurance. However, I encourage you to give serious consideration to his suggestion.
2. The You Tube voice-over PowerPoint presentation provides very good information for those who choose to view it. As Shridhar's question in the preceding section suggests, however, it won't have much impact unless people actually view it. Do you have a plan for disseminating it? A potential unintended consequence of this presentation is that it may reinforce the perception that some have on campus that assessment is a top-down process. Building a true culture of learning and teaching, of course, requires broad participation. The presentation explains what the project is and why it is being undertaken, but it doesn't convey the message that broad participation from the WSU community is welcome and is vital to the project's success. This isn't a reason to edit the PowerPoint necessarily; it contains very good information. However, it does suggest that you may need additional ways to encourage participation.
3. Discussion has started on how to build a "bottom up" process to engage the faculty in assessment. I would like to know more about how you plan to do this. Revision of the rubrics may provide one opportunity for broadening the base of participation. You appear to have an organizational structure that could be used to foster a "bottom up" process. The assessment web page identifies academic coordinators at the college/school and program levels. The college/school coordinators appear to be members of the institutional assessment committee. Are there also functioning college/school-level assessment committees made up of the program coordinators and chaired by the college/school coordinators? Such a structure would be well-suited for communication between institutional and program levels in both directions.

Q: What are some other possibilities or resources that might contribute to the success of this project? For instance, can you suggest resources such as books, benchmarks, instruments, models, and processes?

A: In case you are not already aware of this, Jim notes that the ASSESS listserv has an active thread (as of September 30) on using course-embedded assessment for general education. Shridhar has no additional suggestions.

Scholar(s): Jim Sherohman

Primary Mentor(s): Malayappan Shridhar

Project: The Wright State University Assessment of Student Learning Plan

Version 2.0 - Project

Q: Identify and explain any specific changes to your project scope or design since August 2012.

A: No significant changes since August 2012, only minor edits. Additional time was spent in Fall, 2012 in setting the groundwork for upcoming activities and communication.

Q: What were your goals for the past six months? Did you achieve them? Why or why not?

A: Goals for the past six months:

- Set structure for the Steering Committee
- Identify priorities for overall university assessment plan
- Position the HLC Academy plan into the overall assessment plan
- Begin process for communication.

Results from Fall, 2012

The first meetings in the fall, 2012 focused on team building and organizational structure. Central to this discussion was the creation of a "Culture of Learning and Teaching" at Wright State University, including an analysis of our current strengths and some benchmarks as we move into the future.

The major result of this discussion was the development of Three Imperatives for our assessment project:

1. *Create a "Culture of Learning and Teaching" at Wright State University.*

2. *Maintain, create, improve as appropriate all of the undergraduate and graduate discipline/area-centered assessment that is done by all academic units at Wright State University.*

3. *Embed the University Learning Outcomes, created and approved for the WSU Core as part of the Semester Conversion, into the major coursework for each undergraduate Program of Study **over and above** any course in the WSU Core that might be required in the Program of Study.*

Imperative #3 is the core concept of Wright State University's HLC Academy Plan.

As a result of this discussion several organizational tasks were formulated and sub-committees organized to work on these tasks:

Task/Sub-Committee #1

Subcommittee for the Formation of an Office of Learning Assurance

Questions/Issues

- What best practices can we glean from other universities that have a similar organization on campus?
- What should be the mission of the office/department?
- Where should it be positioned in the university?
- What resources will be needed to ensure its success?
- What services should this office/department provide?
- How should it be titled?
- Who are its collaborators (departments, key personnel, etc.)?
- How should it coordinate with each college? What does this coordination look like in practice? How can our efforts now help us to set up the office for success when it is officially formed?
- Who should head the office?
- What steps will be needed to stand-up/form the office/department? What should be the timeline for accomplishing this effort?
- How can we tap into students for input? What is the role of students? Should we have a student advisory board?
- What faculty structure, board, or committee should be associated with this office, if any? How should this group be constituted?

Task/Subcommittee #2

Subcommittee for Learning Assurance Coordination

This sub-committee will address the cultural and process-related issues that will need to be addressed as we establish an assurance of learning strategy. Ultimately, this committee will focus on specific efforts to shape a culture of learning and teaching across the university.

Expedient Questions/Issues

- What learning outcomes should be assessed? Are these sufficiently defined in current university documentation?
- How do classes and programs map with these outcomes?
- What instruments will need to be developed, if any? Can we use existing instruments? Do we need common rubrics?
- What are the process compatibilities between existing assurance of learning efforts in each college? (Data compatibility should be handled by the subcommittee for Learning Assurance Technology)
- What resources need to be provided to faculty to develop assessment instruments? Do we need to provide any training or professional development? If so, who will provide it?
- How will we work within and shape the cultural differences between colleges?
- What is the plan for coordinating the process of data collection across the university?
- What will be done/should be done with the data?

Longer-term Questions/Issues

- What can be appropriately done through this committee to encourage that will support a true culture of learning and teaching, balanced with the other priorities of the university environment?

Task/Subcommittee #3

Subcommittee for Learning Assurance Technology

Focus

This committee will address the infrastructure needed to support an assurance of learning data collection and reporting system across the university.

Questions/Issues

- What technologies are used in each college? What does each college absolutely need?
- How compatible are the systems in use?
- Do we have the proper technologies in the classroom to support innovative teaching?
- What innovations, if any, might be considered for a redesign of classroom spaces for optimal learning?

The Sub-committees met throughout the remainder of the semester and reported results in December, 2012. These results included:

- Approval of the three imperatives
- Position description of the Director of Assessment and Accreditation

- Formulation of a cycle of assessment at Wright State University
- Creation of an assessment flow chart
- Creation of a PowerPoint presentation to disseminate our work to the university

Q: How did you incorporate the feedback that you received on your previous posting?

A: Feedback from reviewers was positive and served as confirmation that actions and plans were appropriate and moving ahead.

Q: What are your plans and goals for the next six months? What challenges to you anticipate?

A: Activities for Spring, 2013

Note: Some of the processes listed below (PowerPoint, Flowchart, etc.) are in a draft-revision stage. Final versions will be posted to the HLC Academy Site at the end of Spring, 2013

1) Refine and reform PowerPoint into a "Voice-Over" PowerPoint to provide a clear, consistent message to all university constituents. Begin process of plan communication to the University.

2) Refine and revise, as appropriate, the WSU Assessment Cycle and the Assessment Flow Chart

3) Develop Rubrics for the assessment of University Learning Outcomes through the WSU Core, disseminate these rubrics to faculty teaching WSU Core classes in fall, 2013

4) Develop, purchase a system for a) recording rubric scores for WSU Core classes, b) analyzing and archiving data collected, c) funneling this data back to faculty for consideration and potential/appropriate modification of teaching strategies.

Challenges:

The major challenge for Spring 2013 and into the future is clear, consistent communication with the entire university relative to the HLC Academy Plan, its relationship to the upcoming re-accreditation in 2015-16, and its relationship to the overall university

assessment plan.

- 1) The ongoing challenge is to keep various units on campus in dialogue with each other. Some units are very proficient with assessment of student learning and reluctant to change processes.

- 2) The process of the HLC Academy Plan, and the overarching university assessment plan must be to allow for overlapping processes. Units with external accreditation must not be forced to use a campus process that duplicates effort.

- 3) A easy-to-use system must be designed for the collection of data. A subcommittee is working on this process.

- 4) Rubrics designed for the assessment of ULOs, must, whenever possible, incorporate national benchmarks. The University Undergraduate General Education Committee is working on this project.

Version 2.0 - Update

Q: Please confirm that this Activity is ready for review.

A: This project is ready for review.

Version 2.0 - Response

Q: Please give your name and contact information (email address and/or phone number).

A: Malayappan Shridhar, Associate Provost, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Michigan-Dearborn, Dearborn, MI 48128. **Email:** mals@umich.edu, **Phone:** 313-593-5030

Jim Sherohman

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612-259-8545

Q: What are some strengths of this project/Academy work? Why are these strengths?

A: Shridhar Malayappan says that the strengths he saw in the earlier version of the project are

still strengths:

- The WSU Academy team has correctly identified the major challenge in promoting a culture of assessment.
- It has developed a comprehensive plan to rally all segments of the university in their goal of creating a community of learning and teaching.
- The proposed plan for the first year is realistic and largely involves engaging the university community and establishing the infrastructure for the eventual creation of Community of Learning. This is an important first step that involves all segments of the university including the student government.
- By involving faculty who are experienced and committed to assessment, the Academy team is establishing a pipeline to faculty in the various schools and colleges.
- Also using the expertise of units that are accredited by external agencies will accelerate the creation of community of learning and teaching.
- The Academy team has a close connection with the Faculty Senate and this is clearly an astute strategy.
- The university wide learning goals should enable all programs to relate to these goals by mapping program goals to the university goals.
- If the project creates a viable and effective Office of Assessment, this will effectively create the infrastructure to sustain assessment as an integral part of student learning.

Shridhar adds these comments:

- The progress made by WSU is solid and it shows that they are on track to achieve their stated goals.
- WSU has established a sub-committee to look into the establishment of an Office of Learning Assurance. This is a step in the right direction. A second sub-committee will address the logistics of assessment and assurance of learning. A third sub-committee will address the infrastructure to support assurance of learning. The three committees have completed their deliberations and produced reports that included recommendations and action plans. It appears that the recommendations have been accepted and some actions have already commenced. This is solid progress and I commend WSU for their achievements so far.
- The proposed plan for Spring 2013 is realistic and if successful will address both near term and long term goals.

Jim Sherohman thinks that Shridhar's list is an excellent summary of project strengths.

Q: What remains unclear or what questions do you still have about this work to assess and improve student learning?

A: Shridhar asks for clarification regarding University Learning Outcomes:

It is great to start by creating University Learning Outcomes. Once these outcomes are created, then programs can begin to define program specific learning goals that can be mapped to University Learning Outcomes. In version 1 WSU had the following plans

- A group of seven University Learning Outcomes (ULOs) were identified as part of the Semester Conversion of general education (The Wright State Core). All students will be assessed on these outcomes within the Wright State Core. Is the Wright State Core, a set of required courses?
- In addition, all Programs of Studies will be asked to choose one of the ULOs appropriate to their area and to assess this outcome in a required course in the Program of Study. Departments may use existing rubrics or other learning measurement tools to assess this outcome, or they may design tools more appropriate to their discipline. To assist units, examples of rubrics and other assessment tools will be provided.

It appears that ULOs are related to the normally accepted goals of General Education. From the WSU website, the ULOs are defined as

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

The process of achieving ULOs usually involves mapping program learning goals to the ULOs. However, if the ULOs are the WSU definition of Gen Ed goals, then one would specify those courses that specifically address ULOs. These courses are generally not discipline specific (for the most part), and they aim to broaden the experience of the students by exposing them to other desirable attributes of an educated student.

Professional programs like engineering (or business) have to meet ABET (or AACSB) prescribed set of learning outcomes and these are mapped to ULOs. It is also common for many institutions to specify learning goals for the institution and also specify learning goals for general education. There is usually some overlap between these two sets of goals. It is not clear if it is implied that all students at WSU would achieve the ULOs by simply taking courses from the WSU Core. Some clarification by the WSU team will help in resolving my confusion.

Jim adds these questions:

Who within the current organizational structure at Wright State would have responsibility for learning assurance and coordination and learning assurance technology? Are these individuals or offices represented on the subcommittees that are addressing these areas? Is there a void in the current organizational structure that the new Office of Learning Assurance would fill? To what extent is there consensus within the institution regarding the need for this new office?

You say, “Units with external accreditation must not be forced to use a campus process that duplicates effort.” Does this mean that you will not require accredited programs to use the campus process, or that these programs will use the campus process but you will find a way to remove duplication of effort?

Q: What are some critical things to which the institution should pay attention as it plans its work for the next six months?

A: From Shridhar:

WSU has identified as its most serious challenge the lack of participation in assessment activity by some units. Participation in assessment is not an option and is a necessary part of faculty involvement in teaching and learning. By including appropriate incentives and linking participation in assessment to merit increases, WSU will be able to persuade reluctant units to get involved. As WSU has recognized correctly, if faculty in such units recognize the impact of assessment on student learning, conversion will begin rather spontaneously. A faculty champion in each program can serve as a motivator to reluctant faculty.

This is by far the biggest challenge for WSU. Also if the Office of Assessment can alleviate the tediousness of assessment by providing proper tools and other services, assessment will be accepted as vital to enhanced learning.

From Jim:

What process are you using to develop the rubrics for assessment of the University Learning Outcomes? To what extent have the faculty members teaching Core classes been involved in these discussions? What opportunities will they have to provide feedback when the rubrics are disseminated? Will you propose that use of the rubrics be voluntary or mandatory? How will you structure implementation of the rubrics to foster a culture of

learning and teaching?

Q: What are some other possibilities or resources that might contribute to the success of this project? For instance, can you suggest resources such as books, benchmarks, instruments, models, and processes?

A: Shridhar notes:

I had a chance to meet with one member of the WSU Academy in Nov 2012 at an Academy session. We discussed a proposal to hold a regional HLC Academy workshop, exchange, or event at one of the institutions. This might work, if there is a meaningful number of participants. Perhaps other HLC reviewers may want to comment on this. WSU may also consider inviting HLC scholars to the campus to offer workshops and seminars on assessment and strategies to involve faculty in assessment.

Jim agrees that this may be worth pursuing, particularly if the event would directly benefit the Academy project of one or more institutions. If this is something that interests you, you may want to contact Amber Holloway to find out what criteria or guidelines the Academy may have for providing support for this kind of event.

Scholar(s): Jim Sherohman

Primary Mentor(s): Malayappan Shridhar

Project: The Wright State University Assessment of Student Learning Plan

Version 1.0 - Project

Q: Describe the project you developed at the Roundtable. Focus particularly on the general strategies you developed. (500 words)

A: Wright State University Assessment of Student Learning Plan

The goal of the Wright State University Assessment of Student Learning Plan is to create a community of teaching and learning across the entire university. Assessment of student learning and the recording and use of the data obtained to improve student learning are seen as a university-wide imperative, not simply relegated to General Education or those units that have external accreditation. The continuously gathered and regularly analyzed data will be used to improve student learning.

1. At present, University Outcomes Assessment is already in place. As per the University Outcomes Assessment web page (<http://www.wright.edu/assessment/>), “individual assessment plans for each academic major guide outcomes assessment activity in all academic departments. Each plan begins with objectives and learning outcomes toward which academic programs strive, identifies measures that will assess whether students are successfully achieving the intended outcomes, and commits to a process whereby assessment findings lead to improvements.” All units in the university will continue to assess programs in this manner.
2. A group of seven University Learning Outcomes (ULOs) were identified as part of the Semester Conversion of general education (The Wright State Core). All students will be assessed on these outcomes within the Wright State Core.
3. In addition, all Programs of Studies will be asked to choose one of the ULOs appropriate to their area and to assess this outcome in a required course in the Program of Study. Departments may use existing rubrics or other learning measurement tools to assess this outcome, or they may design tools more appropriate to their discipline. To assist units, examples of rubrics and other assessment tools will be provided.
4. Over time additional WSU University Learning Outcomes will be included in the outcomes assessed in individual Programs of Study.
5. Units on campus that are accredited by external agencies can use the WSU University Learning Outcomes, assessments, and data collected as appropriate for the accreditation reports/reviews made to those agencies.
6. At least one tenured faculty member will be appointed as an Assessment Fellow from each college to champion and mentor Departments and faculty within that college. This individual will be given some type of compensation (stipend, teaching course release, scholarship/research responsibility release) to allow time for these responsibilities.
7. The timeline developed in the action plan will be modified so the first year in the Academy will be devoted to communication to the campus. This is especially important

given the additional demands created by the semester conversion. Note: see "timeline."

Q: What are the desired outcomes of this project? How will you know that you have achieved each of these outcomes?

A: The major goal of the project is the creation of a "Community of Learning and Teaching" at Wright State University. We will know that we have achieved this goal, by meeting expectations and objectives below:

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".

Q: What serious challenges do you expect to encounter? How will you deal with them?

A: The most serious challenge will be to change perceptions in the university units that currently expend little energy on assessment. As described in the application to the academy, a number of units at the university look at assessment as having little relevance to their teaching or to their student's learning. To these units, assessment represents reports to be submitted and filed which will never be reviewed. It is our goal to work with these units to demonstrate the value of assessment and its impact on student learning.

Q: Describe the specific steps you will be taking in Year 1 to develop and implement the early stages of your project.

A: WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING PLAN
(The Plan)

TIMELINE

Summer 2012

1) Present The Plan at the next Provost Staff Meeting, including discussion of:

a) Establishing a university wide community of teaching and learning.

b) Considering an Office of Learning Assessment

c) Hiring a Director of Learning Assessment

d) Appointing Assessment Fellows in each college

2) Visit other universities with established assessment offices. Use information gathered to create description of Director of Learning Assessment and Office of Learning Assessment.

3) Create a job description for the Assessment Fellows after examining similar descriptions

being used at other colleges (e.g., University of Northern Colorado)

4) Send The Plan to the Assessment Steering Committee

5) Get a representative from supporting offices on campus (IR, CaTS, CTL, Registrar) to join the Assessment Steering Committee. Meet with these representatives to review The Plan, and how their unit will impact assessment.

6) Present The Plan to the Council of Deans

7) Have members of the Assessment Steering Committee begin to identify faculty in their college who have successful, effective assessment experience.

8) Ask the new Chair of UGEC to confirm University Learning Outcomes with WSU Core classes and communicate with faculty teaching WSU Core classes about including appropriate assessment

9) Convene a subset of the Steering Committee to prepare for the Steering Committee meetings in fall, 2012. Dr. David Bright will facilitate these meetings.

Fall, 2012

Convene two three-hour meetings of the Assessment Steering Committee, facilitated by Dr. David Bright (one meeting early in the semester, the other in the 4th or 5th week). These meetings will be used to plan the organizational structure of the Assessment Steering Committee, and others on campus involved with The Plan. (Dr. Bright will provide the specific agenda). Based on the discussions at these meetings the Steering Committee will propose and adopt specific goals and objectives for The Plan, and potentially for long-term assessment following the university's membership in the HLC Academy. The refinement of the Timeline will also be considered as appropriate.

- Develop and distribute meeting schedule for the Assessment Steering Committee.
- Send University Learning Outcomes to the WSU Faculty Senate for official approval and endorsement.
- Present The Plan to Student Government.
- In late fall, and flowing from the organizational structure determined in early fall, begin to engage the general university.

***Note #1:** in fall, 2012, the new Wright State Core (General Education) will be launched. Faculty teaching WSU Core classes will be asked to assess those University Learning Outcomes associated with their classes.*

***Note #2:** The Assessment Steering Committee will continue to meet on a regular basis throughout the 4-year HLC Academy Membership. At the end of each Spring Semester the Assessment Steering Committee will review activities accomplished during the year and plan/review /revise/amend the plan for the following year. This yearly review will be presented to the WSU Provost, the WSU Faculty Senate, and to the Higher Learning Commission Academy.*

Spring, 2013

- Continue to engage the university
- Design and develop appropriate measuring tools for assessment of the WSU Core
- Research and investigate various systems for data collection and analysis.
- Purchase or design the system, train appropriate faculty on its use.

Version 1.0 - Update

Q: Please confirm that this Activity is ready for review.

A: This project is ready for review.

Version 1.0 - Response

Q: Please give your name and contact information (email address and/or phone number).

A: Jim Sherohman

(612) 259-8545

jsherohman@stcloudstate.edu

Q: What are some strengths of this project/Academy work? Why are these strengths?

A: Malayappan Shridhar observes that the Academy team has correctly identified the major challenge in promoting a culture of assessment. It has developed a comprehensive plan to rally all segments of the university in their goal of creating a community of learning and teaching. The proposed plan for the first year is realistic and largely involves engaging the university community and establishing the infrastructure for the eventual creation of Community of Learning. This is an important first step that involves all segments of the university including the student government. By involving faculty who are experienced and committed to assessment, the Academy team is establishing a pipeline to faculty in the various schools and colleges. Also using the expertise of units that are accredited by external agencies will accelerate the creation of community of learning and teaching. The university wide learning goals should enable all programs to relate to these goals by mapping program goals to the university goals. If the project creates a viable and effective Office of Assessment, this will effectively create the infrastructure to sustain assessment as an integral part of student learning.

Jim Sherohman agrees with the very comprehensive list of strengths identified by Shridhar. To these he adds that the Academy team has a close connection with the Faculty Senate. This is a very ambitious project that, if implemented as planned, will have a major impact on the institution.

Q: What remains unclear or what questions do you still have about this work to assess and improve student learning?

A: From Shridhar: What will be the role of the Director of Learning Assessment? What human and financial resources will be needed to support the Office of Learning Assessment? To justify the added bureaucracy and expense, it is important to know what this change will enable you to do, over and above what can be accomplished with your current structure of an Assessment Steering Committee plus faculty fellows.

From Jim: All programs will assess one of the ULOs in a required course using measurement tools appropriate to the discipline. This approach is likely to create data that are usable at the program level, but it's not clear that will be the case at the institutional level. Will you attempt to aggregate program-specific measures to assess ULOs on an institutional level? Do you anticipate that, over time, you will move toward standardized measures/rubrics for the ULOs? Will student affairs units also assess ULOs? Who coordinates assessment of the ULOs?

Q: What are some critical things to which the institution should pay attention as it plans its work for the next six months?

A: Shridhar notes that an effective communication plan is essential to the success of this project. Participation from faculty, academic officers, student services personnel and senior leaders will provide the momentum to steer the project through. Program goals and learning outcomes for each program should be reviewed to ensure that they are feasible from an assessment perspective. Faculty in some units may get frustrated by the difficulty of assessing goals that incorporate multiple outcomes in one goal.

Jim agrees with Shridhar on the importance of these steps. He also notes that the timeline for this ambitious project may be optimistic, considering that assessment is not yet well established in some programs. There also are potential roadblocks that could slow your progress—such as uncertain funding, recalcitrant faculty, additional workload without resources to fund this, need for Faculty Senate approval of some items, and so forth. As you devote your first year in the Academy to communication to the campus, you also may want to anticipate potential problems that could arise later and work to prevent these.

Q: What are some other possibilities or resources that might contribute to the success of this project? For instance, can you suggest resources such as books, benchmarks, instruments, models, and processes?

A: Shridhar offers these suggestions:

1. Faculty buy-in is key to success of this project. Selecting faculty champions from each college to act as Assessment Fellows is a good strategy. Utilizing existing expertise in units accredited by external agencies is also an effective strategy. Small gifts and luncheon meetings also encourage faculty to participate.
2. The AAC&U offers many useful publications at very nominal cost. A link to its site is provided.
3. Consider inviting assessment experts to the campus to talk to the faculty, moderate workshops and also meet with key academic officers of the university.

Jim agrees that these are useful suggestions, and he offers this one in addition: In Fall 2012 faculty teaching WSU Core classes will be asked to assess those University Learning Outcomes associated with their classes. To whom will the results be provided? Will the Faculty Fellows, Assessment Steering Committee, or General Education Committee have access to the measures used and the findings? If so, will they provide feedback? Will the feedback go to the instructor or the department? In general, have you examined what kind of feedback process and content will be most effective in improving student learning and helping you achieve your long-term goals?

Link 1: [AAC&U Publications](#)

<https://secure.aacu.org/source/Orders/index.cfm>

Scholar(s): Jim Sherohman

Primary Mentor(s): Malayappan Shridhar