



Evidence Of Student Learning: What It Is, Where To Find It & How To Use It

With Emphasis on How to Use it
for Improvement!



DETC Requirements

- ***Outside independent assessments***
 - *Licensure pass rates*
- ***Professed student satisfaction***
 - *Three Questions*
- ***Completion rates***
- ***Outcomes Assessment Plan***
 - describe the different areas assessed
 - the methods of assessment and when they are used
 - how it interprets and uses the results.



Good First Steps, But It May Be Time to Do More

- Many programs don't have outside independent assessments
- Satisfaction is subjective and not a reflection of what a student may or may not have learned
- Completion rates are important, but can't be considered as evidence of student learning



Assessment

- A systematic process of looking at student achievement within and across courses by gathering, interpreting and using information about student learning for educational improvement



Characteristics of Good Assessment

- Comprehensive, ongoing and evolutionary
- Involves Faculty
- Clear educational goals and objectives
- Uses a variety of assessment and evaluation methodologies
- Collects meaningful and accurate data
- Primary emphasis is on IMPROVEMENT of Teaching and Learning



How is Assessment Done?

- Identify Degree/program/course to be assessed
- Identify the student learning goals
- Identify the education criteria and experiences for each goal
- Select one or two goals to assess
- Collect, analyze and interpret the data
- Specify program improvements based on the data
- Review your assessment plan
- Repeat



5 Minute University

- [5 Minute University](#)
- Two Fundamental Questions
 - What evidence do you have that students achieve your stated learning outcomes?
 - In what ways do you analyze and use evidence of student learning?



Defining Evidence

- Information that tells you something directly or indirectly about the topic of interest
- Evidence is neutral – neither good nor bad
 - Requires context to be meaningful
- Two types of assessment evidence
 - Direct and Indirect
- DETC Policy C.14 Policy on Student Achievement and Satisfaction



Direct Evidence (Clear and Compelling)

- Scores and pass rates on licensure/certification exams e.g. Praxis, NLN or other published tests
- Written work scored using a rubric
- Capstone or research projects
- Portfolios
- Employer ratings of employer skills



Indirect Evidence

- Course Grades
- Surveys
 - Alumni perception of career responsibilities and satisfaction
 - End of course surveys about the course, rather than the instructor
- Interviews
 - Student and alumni satisfaction
- Reflective essays
 - Answer the question “what did you learn?”



Why Aren't Grades Enough?

- Non-standard grading practices
- Grades are not systematic
- Grades reflect more than just student learning (e.g. participation)
- Objectives differ (how are individual student grades used to improve the program?)
- Good assessment requires multiple ways of measuring achievement of goal – grades are just one piece



Gather the Evidence

- Look at what you already have
 - Institutional research data
 - Exit surveys
 - Alumni surveys
 - Capstone Projects
 - Pass rates on national exams
- Ask your faculty
 - Good source of information about what is and isn't working



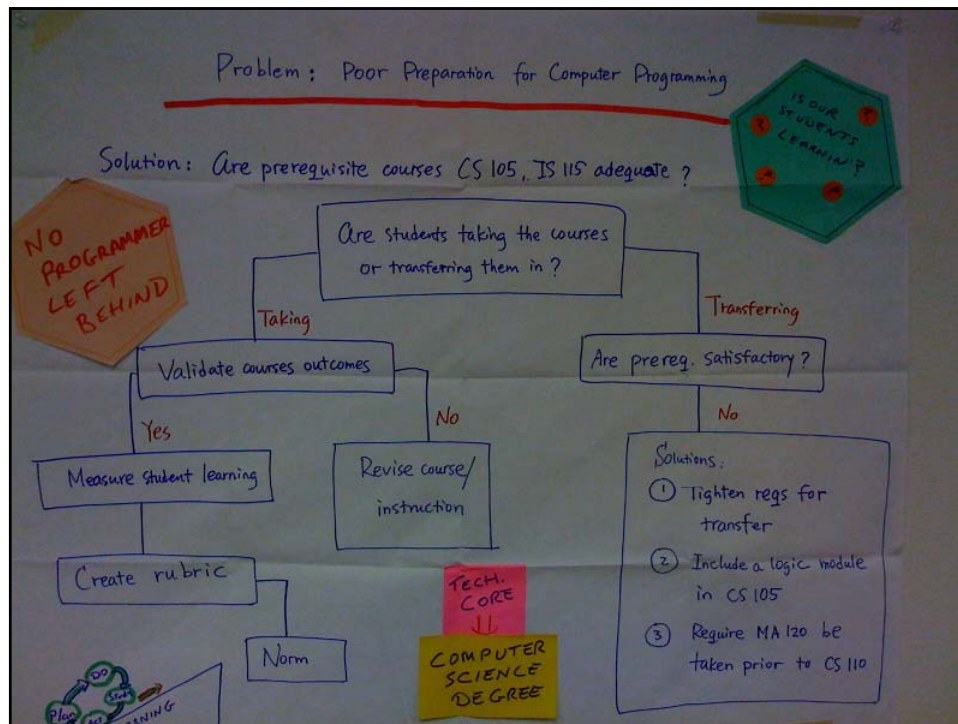
Now What?

- What inferences and conclusions can be drawn from the evidence you've gathered?
- Do they validate current practice?
- Do they suggest revisions in curriculum or pedagogy?
- Do they suggest revisions in institutional operations, structures, or mission?



Some Examples from American Sentinel

- Poor Preparation for Computer Science courses
- Course Completion Rates
- New Student Orientation



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Poor Preparation for Computer Science Courses

- Examine correlations between prerequisites of a key course and its completion rates
 - Classify students who have earned credit for prerequisites: Took the course from ASU or received transfer credit
 - Analyze course completion rates for both categories



Poor Preparation for Computer Science Courses

- If no strong correlation between prerequisites and course completion rate
 - Validate course learning outcomes
 - Measure student learning
- If the problem is ineffectiveness of prerequisites at ASU
 - Re-evaluate prerequisites
 - Add more prerequisites
 - Enhance current prerequisites



Poor Preparation for Computer Science Courses

- If the problem is inadequacy of prerequisites transferred in from other institutions
 - Tight transfer requirements
 - Require more detailed course descriptions or syllabus
 - Consider minimum grade of B to transfer
 - Consider sending institution – if there is a concentration of students from one school who are doing poorly, decline to accept transfer credit for prerequisite courses



Course Completion Rates

- Review list of courses and identify
 - Courses with low completion rates (less than 70%) and/or high non-submission rate (20% or greater)
 - Courses with high non-start rate
 - Courses with high non-submission rate (students start but fail to submit assignments)



Course Completion Rates

- 19 courses identified
- Actions taken include
 - Mapping content to objectives resulting in increased course focus, reduction in number of assessments
 - Course Revisions
 - Rich media added to course
 - Revised first assignment
 - Changed the instructor



New Student Orientation

- Instructors commented that new students were not sufficiently prepared for online learning
- Increase in the number of questions sent to student services about policies and procedures



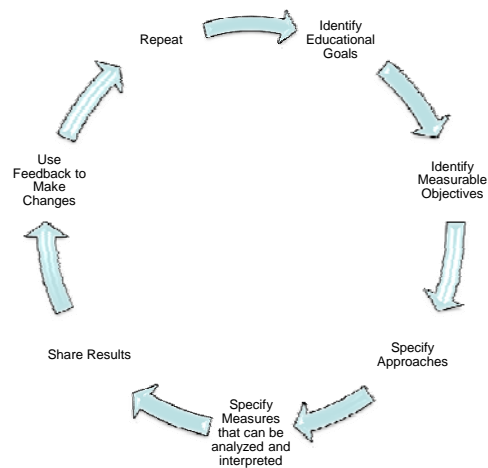
New Student Orientation

- Revised the orientation
 - Made it mandatory to complete
 - Added a new student discussion forum
 - Learning the System (5 modules)
 - How to navigate
 - Policies
 - Procedures

New Student Orientation

- Tools for Success (9 modules)
 - Attaining Your Academic Goals
 - Critical Thinking
 - Time Management
 - Research and the Writing Process
 - Reading Skills
 - Memory Skills
 - Taking Tests
 - Decision Making Skills
 - Career Planning

What Next?





Resources

- Policy C.14
<http://www.detc.org/downloads/accredhandbook/2008/C.14.StudentAchievement08.pdf>
- American Public University Learning Outcomes Assessment Center
<http://www.apus.edu/Learning-Outcomes-Assessment/index.htm>
- NC State Internet Resources for Higher Education Outcomes Assessment
http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm#course_assmt



Questions

What are You Doing at Your Institution?