53rd Annual Meeting
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Assessment and Review of Graduate Programs – Master’s

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Context: Graduate Study at Truman State University

• Public Liberal Arts and Sciences University for Missouri - only public highly selective

• Predominantly undergraduate

  5% graduate students

• Master’s programs:

  – Accountancy
  – Communication Disorders
  – Counseling
  – Education

  – Biology
  – English
  – Leadership
  – Music
Context: Assessment at Truman State University

MATURE ASSESSMENT CULTURE

• 1970’S:
  Nationally-normed senior exam in the major
  VALUE-ADDED: freshman-sophomore tests

• 1980’S:
  Sophomore Writing Experience (SWE)
  G. T. Mitau Award for Innovation and Change-AASCU
  Change in Mission to Statewide LAS
  Senior Portfolio Assessment (SP)

• 1990’S:
  Interview Project for juniors (IP)

Faculty Participation: 40-50 IP, 50-70 SWE, 50 SP
# Components of Truman's Assessment Program

To learn more about an instrument, please view the Assessment Almanac.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Who Takes It?</th>
<th>Developed Internally (I) or Externally (E)?</th>
<th>Type?</th>
<th>Indirect (I) or Direct (D) Outcomes Measure?</th>
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<tr>
<td>National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)</td>
<td>Sample of Freshmen and Seniors</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>Student Interview Project</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)</td>
<td>Seniors</td>
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<td>Nationally Normed Exam</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Tests in the Major</td>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Nationally Normed Exam</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduating Student Questionnaire (GSQ)</td>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capstone Experiences</td>
<td>Seniors</td>
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<td>Performance Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portfolio Project</td>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Performance Assessment</td>
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<td>Alumni Survey</td>
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<td>Employer Survey</td>
<td>Employers of Alumni</td>
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<td>Survey</td>
<td>I</td>
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<tr>
<td>HERI Faculty Survey</td>
<td>Faculty and Administrators</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Survey</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>I</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
... in Graduate Programs?

HLC Accreditation challenge = an OPPORTUNITY!

COMMON FRAMEWORK
Graduate Council
Assessment Specialist
Focus on Learner-centered Assessment
To Be Used with 5-year Program Reviews
Common Framework Parameters

- Provide as much information as possible (actual template)
- Allow for the use of pre-existing materials
- Break it up in steps
- Programs reported on each step sharing best practices
- Flexibility to accommodate variations across programs
Common Framework Template

- Student learning outcomes aligned with institutional and disciplinary objectives
  - Mission: University, Graduate Studies, School, Department
  - Program
    - Objectives
    - Learning Outcomes
    - Assessment for each Outcome
    - Use of Assessment Results
Defining Outcomes

- Focused on students
- Using action verbs

Master of Accountancy

“Graduates will be able to work effectively in teams to achieve common goals by organizing, coordinating and performing tasks and promoting effective communication.”
Defining Outcomes

What is the evidence for this outcome?

... assists in organizing team activities

... completes own share of responsibilities

... contributes to problem solving

... creates collaborative atmosphere by communicating effectively

... assists in conflict resolution
Assessment Techniques

- Meaningful, manageable, preponderance of direct evidence
- Team projects in several courses
- Faculty developed rubrics for Teamwork Skills
- Students evaluate team members using rubric and faculty summarize
- Faculty discuss compiled results
Looking back…

- Faculty owned
  Good leadership in Graduate Council
- Institutional Support
  Assessment Specialist: workshops and training
  Scholarship of Assessment Grants
- Collaborative effort across programs
  Common framework
  Same timeline
  Shared working sessions
Results

Two Scholarship of Assessment Grants:

• Accounting
  Development of Team Skills Assessment Rubric

• Communication Disorders
  Authentic Assessment—an Alternative to the Comprehensive Exam
AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

• Before:
  Thesis Option
  Non-Thesis Option with Comprehensive Exam

• After:
  Thesis and Non-thesis Options
  All do CLINICAL PROCESS COMMENTARIES
  (sequence of case management projects)

Impetus from Assessment Plan and Implementation through Assessment Grant
Communication Disorders

• Comprehensive Exam
  Good preparation for Praxis
  25-30% of students Partial Pass; 3-5% Fail
  No opportunity for remediation
  Limited assessment of skills vs. knowledge
  No information for curricular revision
  Gate keeper

• Clinical Process Commentaries
  Comprehensive Assessment *Program*
  Aligned with ASHA *Knowledge and Skills Acquisition*
  Aligned with the university and the program mission, objectives and outcomes
  Formative and summative evaluation
  Emphasized relationship between academic and clinical curricula
Clinical Process Commentaries

Second semester (CPC1) and third semester (CPC2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPC1</th>
<th>CPC2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Semester</strong></td>
<td><strong>Third Semester</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>15 minute oral presentation</td>
<td>Oral presentation with extensive Q&amp;A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Present to faculty and peers</td>
<td>Present to faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Setting goals for growth as clinician</td>
<td>Self-assessment of progress on CPC1 goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment of presentation and peers self-reflection</td>
<td>Self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Feedback</td>
<td>Faculty evaluation of presentation and final paper</td>
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</table>
Clinical Process Commentaries

Key Course Assignments with self-assessment component for graduate portfolio

Students…

- Doing as well on PRAXIS
- Doing as well in internships
- Same percentage doing thesis option

Positive feedback from ASHA
Assessment in Professional vs. Non-professional Programs

• Professional skills are well-defined
  – Professional expectations are standard
  – Intellectual/cognitive skills manifest in clear behavioral characteristics

• Accreditation
  – Programs are used to its demands
  – Well-defined expectations
  – Program survival depends on it
English

- Collaborative nature of Assessment Plans Development
- Impetus from 5-year Program Review

Direct Measure of SLOs

- Rubric-based assessment of term papers from three courses
  - ENG 516G – Studies in Literary Genres...
  - ENG 622G – British/Commonwealth Studies
  - ENG 655G – Graduate Seminar
English

Rubric Developed by Faculty

- Three categories
  - Displays knowledge of literary or cultural theory
  - Displays knowledge of previous scholarship in the area of study
  - Demonstrates command of academic discourse conventions

- 4-point scale
  - Inadequate
  - Proficient (low and high)
  - Excellent
English

• Proficiency levels less than desired
  → more intentional preparation in each course

• Achievement level uneven across courses
  → examine best practices, identify best types of assignments

• Alignment of Course Outcomes with Student Learning Outcomes in Syllabi

• Continuous direct assessment (between program reviews)
Accounting

- Higher Learning Commission
  - Open Pathways Program
  - Assessment Academy ("Quality Initiative")
    Critical Thinking, Leadership, Wellness

- Missouri Performance Funding
  - Five Performance Indicators
  - One is Institution Specific: Critical Thinking

- University Funding for Pilot Projects
  - Accounting
Leveraging External Forces

- External Accreditation
- Five-year Program Reviews
- University-wide Initiatives
  - Grants/funding
    - Scholarship of Assessment
    - Pathways Project
- Visibility of Graduate Programs