

Herding the Cats: Making Assessment Work on a Decentralized Campus

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Overview

- ▶ Develop a needs assessment to identify assessment gaps campus-wide
- ▶ Identify relevant stakeholders including faculty, assessment champions, and senior administrators
- ▶ Create an assessment committee with representatives from academics and administration
- ▶ Build targeted relationships that will advance assessment practices
- ▶ Identify training needs among internal and external constituents

Current Status

- ▶ Enrollment decline - In early 2020, higher education lost over 1,000,000 students nation-wide due to COVID
- ▶ As of December 2021, 750,000 students still had not returned to college/university campuses
- ▶ Leaving a substantial impact on budgets, staffing, and other resources
- ▶ Pandemic negatively impacted ongoing assessment efforts

A Changing Landscape

- ▶ Limited assessment activities and only essential personnel
- ▶ Different divisions began to adopt their own assessment practices
- ▶ No consistent documentation
- ▶ Very little interdepartmental communication

Where Does that Leave Us?



Where Do We Begin?

- ▶ Current Status of Assessment on Your Campus
 - ▶ Practices
 - ▶ Personnel
 - ▶ Progress
- ▶ Surveying the Land
 - ▶ How do you define assessment?
 - ▶ Who are your assessment partners?
 - ▶ What practices are effective/not effective?
 - ▶ Is it sustainable?
 - ▶ Resources: What do you have? What do you need?
 - ▶ Are there knowledge gaps that need to be addressed by you or your staff?

Building and Rebuilding Trust

Five Dysfunctions of a Team



Get Back to the Basics

- ▶ Review current processes (what works and what doesn't work?)
 - ▶ Don't mess with what works
- ▶ Revise relevant documents (include explanations for any changes)
- ▶ Revive processes that were working that were disrupted by the pandemic
- ▶ Retrain assessment personnel on best practices
- ▶ Reinvigorate the campus community through training and fellowship

Building Campus Relationships

- ▶ Identify all relevant assessment personnel across the campus
- ▶ Build or rebuild Assessment Committees
- ▶ Streamline the vision - what do you want to accomplish? Make it manageable by breaking it down into smaller chunks
- ▶ Don't be afraid to challenge the conventional - it may be time for a change
- ▶ Create a culture of assessment - show the benefits

What is a Culture of Assessment?

- ▶ Assessment activities that result in continuous improvement (program, service, outcome, etc.)
- ▶ Assessment and accreditation are tools (not the end) to create the culture
- ▶ Key constituents touting the benefits of assessment
- ▶ Ongoing, sustainable, transparent assessment processes that are ingrained in throughout the institution

Listening

- ▶ Campus assessment stakeholders
- ▶ Assessment champions
- ▶ Leadership - what messages are they conveying and connect yours
- ▶ Those that are discontent with the process - sort out the good from the bad criticism
- ▶ Training needs

Training

- ▶ Accreditors
 - ▶ Reaffirmation or Fifth-Year Coming Soon?
 - ▶ Substantive Change?
- ▶ Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board or State Agency
 - ▶ Graduate Program Review Requirements
 - ▶ Core Objective Review Requirements
- ▶ Assessment Webinars or Podcasts
 - ▶ Weave Online
 - ▶ NILOA - National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment
 - ▶ Listservs
 - ▶ AAC&U - Value Rubrics

Building An Assessment Committee

- ▶ Review the organizational chart
- ▶ Identify assessment personnel to represent each division and college
- ▶ Survey for assessment needs including training, data collection systems, survey development, and talent on the team
- ▶ Establish committee vision, consistent time and day, and committee roles

Assessment Professional Development Summer Series

- ▶ Six sessions - options for online and in-person
- ▶ Working with Marketing to create campus invitation and approval for invitation to be sent campus-wide
- ▶ Participants from committee presented on a host of different topics - something for everybody - capitalized on internal talent
- ▶ Over 100 participants - minimal cost to the university

Recap

- ▶ Challenges of the pandemic
- ▶ Surveying the land
- ▶ Finding new opportunities
- ▶ Building trust
- ▶ Listening
- ▶ Training

Q&A

Thank you for Coming!



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