Communicating Progress: Developing and Documenting Evidence of Student Improvement

Educational Programs

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Workshop Goals

Upon completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Articulate the basic expectation of outcomes assessment
2. Draft quality reports based on detailed information provided on how to improve written outcomes assessment reports
3. Have their questions addressed regarding outcomes assessment.
4. Have their questions addressed regarding how the move to online instruction will impact this year's assessment reports.

Assessment and Online Learning

- Schedule for accreditation is still on track:
  - Off-site review in October.
  - On-site visit March 30 - April 1.

- Due date for submission of reports remains the same:
  - May 15 for department chairs.
  - May 30 for auditors.
  - June 15 for approval by deans.

Preparing Assessment Report

- Data is in from in the fall and will have to form the basis of this year's report.

- Spring data is problematic. Just do the best possible to collect something meaningful.
  - Most reports don't specify whether tests are in class or online.
  - Presentations can be recorded or delivered online.
  - Papers submitted electronically, etc.

- The impact of the shift in content delivery and assessment method should be explained in the results section and also in the action plan section.

SACSCOC Influence

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

8.2 The institution identified expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results in the areas below:

a. Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs

b. Student learning outcomes for collegiate-level general education competencies of its undergraduate degree programs.

c. Academic and student services that support student success.

General Expectations

Components of report:

- Mission
- Outcomes
- Methods
- Results
- Action Plan
- Evident of Improvement

General Expectations

- Each Undergraduate Program
  - Five student learning outcomes
  - Two administrative outcomes: These can be completed now.
- Each Graduate Program
  - Three student learning outcomes
  - Two administrative outcomes: These can be completed now.
- Each Certificate Program
  - Three student learning outcomes
- All outcomes have two methods

Details / Tips - Results

Provide understandable results

- Data are representative of all students
  - Are aggregated data provided for all course sections?
  - Are data disaggregated for various modes of delivery?
  - Are data disaggregated for various locations of delivery?
- Findings are accurately described in sufficient detail
  - Do numbers add up?
  - Does the statistical analysis makes sense?
  - Are findings appropriate based on description of method?
  - **Do findings provide enough information to indicate means for improvement?**

Details / Tips - Results

Provide understandable results *(continued)*

- Illustrate achievement and change in student achievement
  - Have the targets been met?
  - How does aggregate data compare to prior years?
  - How does disaggregated data compare to aggregated data or other disaggregated data?
- Relate findings to student achievement
  - Do findings focus on what students have achieved?
  - Do findings indicate student attainment of the outcome?
  - Do findings provide indicators for improvement?

Example-results

During spring 2018, 50 undergraduate students in GEO 43xx were assessed to measure their knowledge of quantitative methods for geography. The instructors found that 82% of the undergraduate students met or exceeded expectations by demonstrating their knowledge of quantitative methods for geography, which exceeded our 80% target. The instructors found that 82% of the undergraduate students met (n=35 or 58%) or exceeded (n=10 or 26%) expectations by demonstrating their knowledge of quantitative methods for geography, which exceeded our 80% target. Since our target goal of 80% has been met, we plan to continue with current instructional practices and techniques.

Example - results

During spring 2018, 50 undergraduate students in two sections of GEO 43xx were assessed using six embedded test questions to measure their knowledge of quantitative methods for geography. The instructors found that 82% of the undergraduate students met (n=29 or 58%) or exceeded (n=12 or 24%) expectations by demonstrating their knowledge of quantitative methods for geography, which exceeded our 80% target. The 18% of the students who failed to meet expectations had the most difficulty with basic arithmetic and algebra skills. The online section enrolled 20 of the 50 students. Of the online students 85% met (n=11 or 55%) or exceeded (n=6 or 30%) expectations while of the 30 students enrolled in the face-to-face section only 80% met (n=18 or 60%) or exceeded (n=6 or 20%) expectations. Given these findings, students should continue to improve their knowledge of basic arithmetic and algebra skills as prompted by the instructor. Instructors will closely examine the third embedded test question because students seemed to have the most difficulty answering it correctly. A related finding shows that students who failed to meet expectations had significant attendance problems. Overall, it should be noted that the results show an improvement over the spring 2016 findings of 79.2% of GEO 43xx students meeting the expectation and met the target of 80% for the first time in both the distance and face-to-face sections.

Details / Tips - Improvements

Describe improvements in student learning

- Describe where previous plans lead to improvement in student learning
  - Which results showed improvements in student learning?
    - Did results met targets that had not previously been met?
    - Did results improve from prior years even if targets weren't met?
  - Is the improvement verified in the results?
  - Have data been provided to substantiate improvements?
  - How do improvements relate to the implementation of previous action plans?

NOTE: Do not describe results that do not show improvement in this section.

Example – evidence of improvement

Assessment results of this year's six embedded questions for Outcome 3, Method 1 show that 82% of the students met or exceeded expectations, which exceeds our stated goal of 80%.

Example – evidence of improvement

Assessment results of this year's six embedded questions for Outcome 3, Method 1 show that 82% of the students met or exceeded expectations compared to 79.2% of students meeting or exceeding expectations during the previous academic year – a 3.5% improvement, due at least in part, to a review-session activity created by the instructor as described in last year's action plan. Although all students met the target, students in the online section performed better (85% met or exceeded expectations) than those in the face-to-face version of the course (80% met or exceeded expectations).

Details / Tips – Action Plans

Suggest viable action plans

- Describe the outcome and method where learning could be improved
  - Which results show little or no improvement?
  - Which results show improvement but more improvement could be gained?
- Clearly outline plan for improving student achievement
  - What actions are reasonable based on the findings?
  - What will be implemented? (who, how, what, when)
  - Are actions feasible and realistic?
  - How are the planned actions likely to improve student learning?

Example-action Plan

Instructors will focus on methods to improve students aptitude and preparation for exams. All other courses will continue with current methods of instruction as goals have been met.

Example – action plan

Despite the fact that College Algebra is a prerequisite for our quantitative methods course, many students continue to have difficulty with basic arithmetic and algebra. GEO 43XX instructors plan to spend significant time reviewing basic mathematical operations and techniques and plan to continue to do so in the future as required. Instructors also plan to elaborate on a primary spatial problem using a sample data set that requires statistical analysis using either Excel or SPSS. With this added instruction and experience working through a sample problem in both the face-to-face and distance delivered courses, students should more readily apply quantitative methods desired in Outcome 3, Method 1 and consistently meet the 80% target.

Details / Tips - General

Draft clean, readable report

- Consider reader
  - Avoid acronyms
  - Label courses
  - Summarize information
  - Avoid providing too little or too much information
  - Organize information
- Proofread
  - Include complete sentences

Questions ??????