

**HLC Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning
(HLC Assessment Academy)
Lisle, IL – Nov. 18-20, 2009
Roundtable Retreat**

**SUMMARY REPORT & PROPOSAL FOR ACTION
Submitted to Provost, January 12, 2010**

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Background: In the spring of 2008 the University Outcomes Assessment Council (UOAC) drafted a plan committing NMSU-Las Cruces to the revitalization of assessment on our campus. The plan was presented to the HLC re-accreditation site-visit team with the understanding that the University would begin implementing aspects of the plan immediately. Several initiatives have been launched in alignment with commitments made by the institution to the HLC in that plan. However, the integration of efforts and the existence of a coordinating presence have yet to be established.

The charge of the HLC Assessment Academy (HLC AA) Team was to: 1) Create an action plan to support and ensure continued success of existing initiatives; 2) Promote the value of and ensure sustained, intentional institutional focus on the assessment of student learning through action research; 3) Integrate assessment throughout the institution in a way that engages and informs all components of the campus community – from the Board of Regents and the President to students and co-curricular experiences; and 4) Create a unified vision of student success that incorporates and aligns the complete baccalaureate experience including co-curricular, general education, academic program, and baccalaureate outcomes with the mission and vision of the institution.

To advance these initiatives in a proactive manner, the HLC AA Team elected to participate in the Assessment Academy and engage in activities that would contribute to 1) the integrity of NMSU in upholding the commitments it made to the HLC in the spring of 2008, 2) NMSU's success in navigating changes in HLC reaccreditation processes (Pathways) that will be fully initiated by the HLC in 2013, and 3) the firm belief that engagement in continuous assessment of student learning serves the best interest of students, the institution at large and our constituents, and is coincident with our land-grant mission.

Goal: To communicate a vision that conveys the centrality of student learning to the success of the institution.

Plan: To actualize an integrative plan and institutional structure that directs institutional focus and value on evidence of student learning as the catalyst for realizing institutional excellence.

Evaluation of Current Situation: Recent consistency in the transition of upper administrative leadership highlights the need for grass-roots identification and embracement of institutional values that transcend leadership changes. While strides to advance the quality and appreciation of student learning outcomes assessment have been taken, an institutional culture that places genuine value on understanding student learning will best facilitate ownership of and ensure consistency in continuous efforts to assess and improve student learning.

As such, the solidification of an effective institutional structure that ensures continuity in assessment is necessary to sustain gains and to convey to the campus community that even in changing climates, the place of assessment within the institution stands firm. Normalization and consistency of

assessment as a natural part of campus life in all areas of the collegiate experience is critical, as is the perception by the campus community that assessment is useful and contributes to the success of students and programs.

Envisioned Results: A shared vision of student success acknowledges contributions from all walks of campus life: It communicates value and appreciation for the complexity and variety of experiences that contribute to the success of students and programs; it creates shared responsibility for student success and fosters collaborative efforts in creating optimal learning experiences for students; it connects success in learning with articulated institutional goals, such as “Living the Vision”; and it communicates transparent pathways and alignment of learning that empowers students to intentionally engage in diverse learning experiences. By articulating a shared vision of student success, all parties can identify their contribution to and ownership of that vision. By focusing on student learning, an inherent value of the student is communicated and fostered by the continuous effort to enhance student success. Such aspirations can only be consistently realized through an institutional structure that provides vision, direction and coordination of campus- and system-wide efforts.

Designed Approach: Action is indicated as follows.

1) Unified Vision

- Create and communicate the purpose and value of a unified vision of student success.

Needs: Baccalaureate outcomes, “successful student” rubric, signature diploma, mapping of baccalaureate outcomes to “Living the Vision”(LTV)

- Administration
 - Provost, President, Regents
 - Academic Deans Council
 - Associate Deans Academic Council
- Existing institutional bodies
 - UOAC, OAC1, OAC2, Faculty Senate, Advancing Leaders, ChAMPIONS
- Marketing
 - Develop logo
 - Create “Spotlight on Action Research” format for Newsletter
 - Develop long-term dissemination plan

2) Institutional Structure

- Define an institutional structure that reflects an institutional commitment to student learning as a core value.
- Define and propose a sustainable budget for the continuous assessment of student learning. See attached **Budget Request**
- Define a role for coordinating and facilitating institutional assessment. See attached chart, **Implementing Sustainable Assessment at NMSU**

3) General Education

Needs: Mapping of baccalaureate outcomes to general education outcomes & State Common Core outcomes with general education outcomes, and proposal for consolidation of NMSU general education outcomes

- Define approach to State Common Core assessment: by course, by designated area (I – V), or broad general education-level assessment of NMSU general education outcomes.
- Consolidate NMSU general education outcomes – reduce from 9 to approximately 5.
- Create discussion forums for general education faculty.
 - Facilitate flexible approaches to GE and SCC assessment

- 4) Community College Participation
 - Add Community College representation to the HLC AA Team.
 - Meet with CC assessment coordinators in an open forum.
 - Organize general education assessment forum for LC and CC Summit in April.
 - Continue organized general education assessment forums at each Roundup and Summit.

- 5) Sharing & Dissemination of Information
 - Develop Institutional Website for Student Learning and Assessment.
 - Present at the NMHEAR Convention in Albuquerque, NM, Feb. 2010.

- 6) Assessment of Student Learning
 - See attached chart, **Implementing Sustainable Assessment at NMSU.**

- 7) Student Engagement & Professional Development
 - Create internships for students to partner in developing assessment strategies and techniques while gaining professional experience.

Implementing Sustainable Assessment at NMSU

BACCALAUREATE ASSESSMENT	09-10 Yr 1	10-11 Yr2	11-12 Yr 3	12-13 Yr 4	13-14 Yr 5	14-15 Yr 6
Critical Thinking	Define Rubric Pilot	Implementation (thru APA) OAC Reviews	Discuss Action Plan	Implement Changes for Improvement	Plan to Reassess	Reassess
Communication	Define Rubric	Pilot	Implementation (thru APA) OAC Reviews	Discuss Action Plan	Implement Changes for Improvement	Plan to Reassess
Identify Institutional Outcomes	Finalize & Adopt Baccalaureate Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publish ▪ Create Long Term Assessment Plan & Cycle 	Implement Plan	Continue Cycle	Continue Cycle	Reassess Plan
Align w/ Living the Vision (LTV)	Draft w/ Current Outcomes & Present	Final Alignment	Publish & Publicize			
Align w/ General Education (GE)	Condense GE Draft w/ current BACC	Final Alignment	Publish & Publicize			
Align w/ Academic Program Assessment (APA)	Create Form for Alignment	Programs Articulate Alignment				
Academic Program Assessment (APA)	Continue Current Path	Begin Developing Long Term Assessment Plans 10-20 Depts.	Add Long Term Plans to 70%	Add Long Term Plans to 100%		
Align w/ Student Services	Develop Form for Alignment	Programs Articulate Alignment				
State Common Core (SCC)	Faculty Determine Approach Align w/ GE	Faculty Body for Review Final Alignment w/ GE & Bacc.	Revised Long Term Plan for Assessment			
Creating & Communicating the Vision	MAPS: LTV/ BACC/GE/SCC Successful Student Signature Diploma Newsletter	Student Handbook Catalogue Web Page Other				
Web Page Development	Institutional Statement, Model Examples, Links, Calendar	Explore Database Systems Best Practices "spotlight"	APA Long Term Plans	GE & SCC Integration Baccalaureate Outcomes		
Community Colleges	Forum w/ CC assessment coordinators GE Assessment Forum at April Summit	Continued Discussion of GE & SCC Outcomes & Assess	Regular Discipline/Area Meetings on Student Learning and Success			
Student Internships	Create 2 Intern positions to "Assess the Assessment"	Continued & Increased Internships as Best Serves Students & Assessment Office	Continued & Increased Internships as Best Serves Students & Assessment Office			

Budget Request

	Description	2010-11 and ongoing
Director of Assessment, or like-position	To stabilize and ensure development and sustainability of assessment. See chart, <i>Implementing Sustainable Assessment at NMSU</i>	\$100,000
Professional Development	Travel to NMHEAR, HLC Annual Meeting, Relevant National Conferences & Conventions	\$10,000
Providing Professional Development for Faculty & Staff	Rotating Team Participation in NMHEAA, Team Travel to NMHEAR, Bringing Guest Speakers/Presenters to Campus, Providing Training & Workshops	\$20,000
Incentives, Awards & Training Materials	Stipends, Assessment Mini-Grants, Awards, Training Materials	\$15,000
Printing & Duplicating	Handbook, Flyers, Newsletter, Calendar of Events	\$6,000
Hospitality	New Hires Orientation, New Department Head Training, Open Forums (Campus & CC), Norming & Scoring Sessions, Special Events	\$5,000
	TOTAL	\$156,000