February 2015

Institutional Response to v5.0 Reviewer Comments, submitted at the time of the v6.0 report

What are some strengths of this project/Academy work? Why are these strengths?	

Reviewed by Sandra Harris (Primary Mentor):
 	
The current project submission indicates that the college is has sustained its goal of developing a culture of assessment. The following areas are noted as major strengths:
 	
      Formalizing an assessment committee. The first step to creating and promoting a culture of assessment is establishing a specific governance body which fulfills the specific functions of assessment. Having a formalized committee should also contribute to the stability of the members of the group and thereby provide more continuity and consistency to the work that will be accomplished by the group.
      The Institutional Assessment Website provides transparency regarding the university's assessment goals and activities.
      The university continues to work toward achieving its communicated project goals. Although not all goals have been achieved, the university is tracking the progress it is making toward achieving those goals.
      Developed report format for communicating assessment results. This report provides tangible results to stakeholders regarding the assessment activities at the university, as well as information about how students are performing relative to the stated learning outcomes.
Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):
 	
I concur with Sandra's comments. In addition, I would like to note the strong support from the senior administration for this effort. To sustain this effort will require resources and support beyond the scope of the Assessment Committee. It is also important to note that this has been designed to be an organic process. This will enable the process to grow from the course level to the institutional level. Although this is a strength in terms of faculty involvement and buy-in, there is a danger that the committee will have to continue to monitor the activity and guide it with best practice in mind.
	LSSU Response:
	The committee appreciates the recognition of progress made to date and the strong suggestions for future action.

What remains unclear or what questions do you still have about this work to assess and improve student learning?

Reviewed by Sandra Harris (Primary Mentor):

It is not clear what the university plans to do to facilitate achievement the goals that were not met. What assistance is being given, or offered, to the programs which have not met the goals? Do the programs have established and communicated deadlines for compliance? Should there be imposed deadlines for compliance? How can the assessment committee assist, guide, consult with those programs to help the programs move forward?

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

I concur with Sandra's comments. A review of your web-based materials shows a comprehensive process and documentation. The program review rubric is thorough and should provide valuable information for the committee. You continue to be providing those who are participating with quality feedback. Your reports demonstrate a good sense of what needs to be done. Have you considered a system of assessment mentors to work with programs who are not participating? Has there been an attempt to find out why there is so much "foot dragging" with so many courses/programs? There might be something going on that you are unaware of. The organic process will only be very effective if everyone (well, as "everyone" as a college campus can get) participates.

LSSU Response:

The Assessment Committee clearly recognizes the need for progress and participation from all areas of the university community in institutional assessment. Our efforts to provide regular and detailed feedback has been focused on providing units the information they need to move forward. The Committee is supportive of imposed deadlines for compliance and will continue to make this recommendation.

What are some critical things to which the institution should pay attention as it plans its work for the next six months?

Reviewed by Sandra Harris (Primary Mentor):

I encourage the assessment committee to consider the HLC Academic Program Review requirements for assessment outlined in Section 5 and consider how the information could be used to guide the formulation of a comprehensive assessment plan. Academic program reviews (APR) are valuable tools for assessing the overall quality of academic programs. While the APR is not directly related to the assessment of student learning, Section 5 of the evaluation criteria does focus on assessment. Consequently, data collected for the assessment of student learning outcomes does/can become part of the APR. When reviewing the document consider the following questions:

        How does the section relate to university efforts as related to assessment?
        Whether or not current assessment efforts fulfill the APR requirements for assessment?
        Does the APR process reveal any gaps in the currently proposed assessment process?
        How could the requirements be used go

LSSU Response:

Providing feedback was mentioned both in this section and above, and the committee took that charge seriously in the previous cycle, and again in this cycle. The committee wrote detailed critical reports for each school chair, which were delivered directly to each school chair, and the deans. This did trigger invitations to visit two schools. The memos are posted to the Academy Project webpage and detailed below: http://www.lssu.edu/assessment/academy_project_home.php

- Feedback memos by school
  - **BIOL**, School of Biological Sciences
  - **BUSN**, Lukenda School of Business
  - **CJFS**, School of Criminal Justice, Fire Science and Emergency Services
  - **ECLS**, School of English, Communication

guide/structure/streamline assessment efforts?

Also, I encourage the assessment committee to begin looking at the HLC self-study requirements in preparation for the upcoming HLC review in 2016. There are also specific criteria as related to the assessment of study learning in the criteria. An examination of those requires might also identify strengths and opportunities for improvement in the university assessment plan.

Review by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

Sandra makes some good suggestions. With the HLC visit looming, it may be the leverage you need to get some of the programs and faculty to participate. I generally would not suggest using the HLC "hammer" but you are at a point when you cannot afford to be caught without significant progress on your program assessment processes. The program review process only tells you WHERE a program is. It is a tool that can be used to provide feedback but it is not a process that will help them to move forward without support to get them where they need to be (mentors?). The should think about becoming more aggressive in what is expected. You may consider more faculty/program development activities.

and Language Studies
- o EDUC, School of Education
- o ENGR, School of Engineering and Technology
- o General Education,
- o HASS, School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences
- o LIBS, School of Liberal Studies
- o MACS, School of Mathematics and Computer Science
- o NURS, School of Nursing and Health Sciences
- o PHYS, School of Physical Sciences
- o PROV, Independent Courses
- o RECEX, School of Recreation Studies and Exercise Science

What are some other possibilities or resources that might contribute to the success of this project? For instance, can you suggest resources such as books, benchmarks, instruments, models, and processes?

Reviewed by Sandra Harris (Primary Mentor):

Continue to utilize the HLC Assessment Academy Resources.

Reviewed by Gloria Rogers (HLC Senior Scholar):

Below are two assessment websites that might be of some assistance while you are refining your processes.

LSSU Response:

Thank you.