Preparing a Graduate Program Assessment Report

Workshop I: Getting from Plan to Report

October 2014
Agenda

• Reviewing the Program Assessment Cycle
  – Moving beyond the Assessment Plan
  – Assessment Report due at Commencement, 2015

• Overview of Report Template

• Transferring from Plan Timeline to First Report
  – Outcomes selected
  – Requirements selected
  – Evidence selected
  – Quantifying evidence and expectations

• Engaging colleagues
Today’s Take-Aways

- Tentative plan for sample(s)
- Tentative plan for quantifying evidence
- Tentative timeline for collecting evidence
- Tentative timeline for involving colleagues
Big Picture

• Overarching goal: Learning at multiple levels
  – Promotion of faculty study, reflection, and conversation…that also includes students.
  – Meaningful program improvement.
  – Manageable integration into routine practices.
Assessment Cycle

Planning for assessment

Refine assessment tools and procedures

Collect data

Analyze data

Reflect on results and propose changes

Make the changes

“Closing the loop”
• **Today’s Workshop:**
  – Linking your Plan to the Report Template
  – Planning for collecting and analyzing assessment data

• **One more workshop:**
  – From data to reflection to recommendations

• **Ongoing individual consultation provided**

• **Website:** [www.uri.edu/assessment/g_forms](http://www.uri.edu/assessment/g_forms)
Plan Section III: Assessment Timeline

- Indicates when and how student learning will be assessed based on clear statements of learning outcomes and expectations.
- Refers to the curriculum map.
- Specifies a series of assessment cycles (3 consecutive two-year reporting periods) in which you will assess your program’s student learning outcomes and re-visit outcomes that are implicated by program changes.
# Assessment Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Years</th>
<th>Outcome(s)</th>
<th>Course(s) and Other Program Requirements</th>
<th>Assessment Evidence (direct/indirect)</th>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WHICH outcome(s) will you examine in each period (by number, i.e., 1.1 etc.)?</td>
<td>WHERE will you look for evidence of student learning (i.e., what course(s)/program requirements)? Designate for each outcome.</td>
<td>WHAT student work or other evidence will you examine in order to generate conclusions and recommendations? Designate for each requirement.</td>
<td>HOW will you look at the evidence; what means will you use to quantify the evidence? Designate for each source of evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Period 1</td>
<td>2013-15</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Period 2</td>
<td>2015-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Period 3</td>
<td>2017-19</td>
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Plan Section III: Assessment Timeline

• Look at yours
• That’s where you will start in planning for your Assessment Report due next May
• Is your Plan ready for this, or does it still need some “tweaking”?
• What outcomes are specified in Column 2 for this reporting period? **Do they still need some work?**
• What evidence is specified in Column 4 for this reporting period?
• Are you being **efficient in selection of evidence to keep things manageable?**
## Assessment Report Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome(s) Examined</th>
<th>Data/Evidence</th>
<th>Evaluation Process</th>
<th>Results &amp; Reflection</th>
<th>Recommendations &amp; Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which of the program’s student learning outcomes were assessed during this reporting period?</td>
<td>Other than grades, what data/evidence* were used to determine that students have achieved the stated outcome(s) for the degree? Provide:</td>
<td>What method(s) or process(es) were used to evaluate student work? Provide:</td>
<td>What were the results of the analysis of the assessment data? Provide:</td>
<td>Are there recommendations for change based on the results? If yes: Provide:</td>
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(Add lines as needed.)

* For example: embedded questions in assignments or exams, presentations, thesis proposals, thesis defenses, comprehensive exams, performances, capstone projects, portfolio reviews, research papers, practicum performances
** For example, rubric, juried form, external evaluation
*** For example, course instructor, assessment committee member, major professor, research or practicum supervisor

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**THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND**
### Assessment Report Template

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| Which of the program’s student learning outcomes were assessed during this reporting period? | Other than grades, data/evidence were used to determine that students have achieved the stated outcome(s) for the degree? Provide:  
  • type of artifact*  
  • sample (include the number of students sampled, which semesters, number or type of course(s)/section(s)/program requirements | What method(s) or process(es) were used to evaluate student work? Provide:  
  • evaluation tool/instrument**  
  • expected level of student achievement of the outcome  
  • who applied the tool***  
  • who interpreted the results of the assessment process | What were the results of the analysis of the assessment data? Provide:  
  • quantitative results, including a comparison of expected level of student achievement to actual level of student achievement  
  • analysis of the results, including identification of patterns of weakness or strength  
  • reflection and conclusions | Are there recommendations for change based on the results? If yes:  
  • recommendation(s) for change(s) planned  
  • timeline for program to implement the change(s)  
  • timeline for program to assess the impact of the change(s) |

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* For example: embedded questions in assignments or exams, presentations, thesis proposals, thesis defenses, comprehensive exams, performances, capstone projects, portfolio reviews, research papers, practicum performances  
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If yes: Provide:  
- recommendation(s) for change(s) planned  
- timeline for program to implement the change(s)  
- timeline for program to assess the impact of the change(s) |
| 1.4: Graduates are able to use scholarship to define key terms in the field | Direct evidence: research papers written in seminars, F11, F12; n=30 | Program-approved rubric plus holistic comments (see appendix A)  
15 faculty in the program rated 2 papers each; evidence was combined and interpreted by program director;  
Expected=80% “average” or above | 89.3% scored average or above; This exceeded the expected level of 80%; While students did well overall, more work can be done to assure conversance with key terms, particularly by increasing student engagement with existing scholarship in the field | Formal research paper will now be required in all graduate seminars (to be implemented F14, reassessed AY 14-15, 15-16); Pedagogy: we will explore use of a required annotated bibliography with the research paper; Create an archive of “model” papers (implemented F14, reassessed AY 14-15, 15-16); Assessment: revise the rubric to better reflect expected level (for F13); make rubric available to all students (F13); |
Column 2 in your Report: Assessment Evidence: Direct and Indirect

- **Direct**
  - Measured using a product or performance evaluated with a standardized method or rubric

- **Indirect**
  - Students’ attitudes, perceptions, experiences
  - Used to complement direct methods, not substitute for them
Data/Evidence: Some Examples

• Direct
  – Thesis/Dissertation proposal
  – Oral defense of Thesis/Dissertation
  – IRB/IUCAC approval of research
  – Poster or paper presentations at conferences
  – Submitted journal articles
  – Portfolios
  – Exam essay questions
  – Embedded assignments
  – Standardized tests (e.g. licensure exams)

• Indirect
  – Student surveys
  – Alumni surveys
  – Focus groups
  – One-on-one interviews
  – Job placement
  – Supervisor evaluations
  – Employer evaluations
Focusing Your Data/Evidence

• What evidence sources have you selected?
  – From the Assessment Plan, column 4

• Share with your group
Enhancing the Data/Evidence for the Report

• Composition of the sample? For example:
  – Selected courses including number(s), semester(s)
  – Specified chapter(s) of thesis/dissertation
  – Specified comprehensive examination question(s)

• For whatever you plan to use:
  – Total number of student artifacts you have collected for each analysis
Evaluation Process: Column 5 in your Plan; Column 3 in your Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course(s)/Program Requirements</th>
<th>Assessment Evidence (direct/indirect)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHERE will you look for evidence of student learning (i.e., what course(s)/program requirements)?</td>
<td>WHAT student work or other evidence will you examine in order to generate conclusions and recommendations?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Our written comprehensive exams cover all of these first outcomes | 1.1 – written sit-down  
1.2 – written sit-down  
1.3 – written sit-down  
1.4 – written sit-down  
3.1 – written “submittable article”  
3.2 – written “submittable article”  
3.4 – written sit-down |
| Dissertation proposals and dissertation chapters cover these four outcomes | 2.2 – diss proposal and diss methods chapter  
2.3 – diss proposal and diss chap 1  
3.3 – diss chap 1 |
| All students in our doctoral program do teach, whether at URI or elsewhere. WRT 999 and our brownbag seminars cover these outcomes. To assess, we will look at the teaching portfolios produced by our students on the job market. | 4.1 – teaching portfolio  
4.2 – teaching portfolio  
4.3 – teaching portfolio |

- How will you think about using the evidence for program assessment?
- How will you evaluate the evidence?
- A common method is to use a rubric
- **How many are familiar with this term?**
Assessing Evidence? Use a Rubric!

• Program-level and Course-level Rubrics
  – One rubric can accomplish assessing both a program-level outcome and a course-level outcome through shared definitions

• Rubrics are a common method of assessment used to identify the criteria that:
  – You will consider in assessing student performance on an assignment or task – based on your program’s outcomes.
  – Describe different levels of performance on those criteria.
## Creating Rubrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion #1</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifies problem or question</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion #2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develops own perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion #3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presents supporting evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion #4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifies and assesses conclusions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Marginal</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mastery of methods of inquiry</td>
<td>Design inappropriate to questions</td>
<td>Design reasonable for questions</td>
<td>Design, analysis plan excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confused or ineffective plan for analysis</td>
<td>Plan for analysis reasonable, acknowledges some limitations</td>
<td>Plan for analysis goes beyond the obvious, acknowledges limitations and critically considers alternatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lacks regulatory compliance</td>
<td>Considers regulatory compliance</td>
<td>Demonstrates regulatory compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of writing</td>
<td>Writing is weak</td>
<td>Writing is adequate</td>
<td>Writing is publication quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Numerous grammatical and spelling errors apparent</td>
<td>Some grammatical and spelling errors apparent</td>
<td>No grammatical or spelling errors apparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization is poor</td>
<td>Organization is logical</td>
<td>Organization is excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Style is not appropriate to discipline</td>
<td>Style is appropriate to discipline</td>
<td>Style is exemplary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where are you with Evaluation Process?

- What methods have you picked?
- How far along are you in preparing those tools/instruments?
- We can help – seek individualized follow-up consultation
Expected Level of Student Achievement

Before you collect and analyze your data, what are you aiming for? For example:

- 100% of the student papers will be scored at least “competent” on the rubric
- 70% of the students will demonstrate at least “proficiency” on the practicum rating instrument
How will you determine acceptable levels of achievement, “Expected Level”?

- Standards you already use?
- Review of past student work?
- Tip: This is a standard for the program, so not every student is necessarily expected to be successful
- Tip: Don’t expect perfection! Be realistic
- Definitely calls for collegial discussion
Engaging Colleagues: An Essential Part of Making Things Meaningful and Manageable

• First – what are you already doing for this?
• What seems to be working for you?
• Here are some things others have done:
  – Assessment committee
  – Grad student engagement
  – Sakai project site
  – Lunch – food is good
  – Meetings and retreats
Engaging Colleagues: Think About a Timeline

• Use the handout to start considering the timing for meetings with colleagues to get to the Report by May
  – Designating the artifacts and designing the tool
  – Choosing the sample
  – Collecting the artifacts
  – Applying the tool (rating instrument, rubric)
  – Scoring and aggregating
  – Reviewing and reflecting
  – Recommending and planning
Thank You!

Next Workshop:
Getting from Data to Report Conclusions and Recommendations

February