



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Meaning, Quality, & Integrity of Degrees Workshop

October 19, 2016

Kellogg West Conference Center

Pomona, CA

Resource Binder

MARK YOUR CALENDARS 2016-2017 EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

WASC Senior College and University Commission is pleased to announce a selection of educational programs for 2016-17*. Developed by regional and national experts, they cover topics of vital interest to all higher educational institutions – and particularly to those in the WSCUC region. They are entirely optional, but our hope is that member institutions will find them of service. WSCUC staff will be present at each session to answer any questions related specifically to WSCUC accreditation expectations.

- ★ **Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees: Exploring Approaches, Models, & Tools**
October 19, 2016. Kellogg West, Pomona, CA
- ★ **The Big Five: Addressing The Five Core Competencies (2-day Retreat)**
October 20-21, 2016. Kellogg West, Pomona, CA
- ★ **Assessment 201: Advanced Topics in Assessment**
November 18, 2016. University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA
- ★ **President/Trustee Retreats**
December 8, 2016. Woodbury University, Burbank, CA
December 9, 2016. Mills College, Oakland, CA
- ★ **NEW! Building a Culture of Quality: A Retreat for Institutional Leaders – with Linda Suskie**
January 17, 2017. Kellogg West, Pomona, CA
- ★ **NEW! The Changing Faculty: Exploring & Creating Models for Institutional and Educational Effectiveness – with Adrianna Kezar**
January 18, 2017. Kellogg West, Pomona, CA
- ★ **Assessment 101: The Assessment Cycle, Clear and Simple**
February 2, 2017. Pitzer College, Claremont, CA
- ★ **NEW! Analytics for Academics: Producing Actionable Information about Students and Learning to Improve Effectiveness**
February 3, 2017. Pitzer College, Claremont, CA
- ★ **Assessment 101: The Assessment Cycle, Clear and Simple**
May 18, 2017. Hawai'i Pacific University - Honolulu, Hawai'i
- ★ **Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees: Exploring Approaches, Models, & Tools**
May 19, 2017. Hawai'i Pacific University - Honolulu, Hawai'i

Check the WSCUC website for details!
www.wascsenior.org

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Meaning, Quality, & Integrity of Degrees Workshop

Kellogg West Conference Center, Pomona, CA

Wednesday October 19, 2016

8:30 am – 4:30 pm

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

8:00 – 8:30 am	Arrival, check-in, registration
8:30 – 9:15 am	<p>Welcome / Introductions / Overview of and Preparation for Workshop Melanie Booth, Vice President, WASC Senior College and University Commission</p> <p>The <i>2013 Handbook of Accreditation</i> calls for institutions to address the meaning, quality, and integrity of their degrees as part of the institutional report for reaffirmation. This introductory session will introduce the workshop facilitators; provide an overview of and preparation for the workshop; and share information about WSCUC's requirements.</p>
9:15 – 10:15 am	<p>Plenary 1 - <i>From the Ground Up: LMU's Approach to MQID</i> Laura Massa, Loyola Marymount University</p> <p>At Loyola Marymount University, the process of defining the meaning of a degree involved faculty, staff, and students from across the university in consideration of our values and existing expressions of who we are and what we do. This 'from the ground up' approach deepened our community's commitment to ensuring the quality and integrity of our degrees. In this presentation we'll also look at how AAC&U's LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes and the corresponding VALUE rubrics have been incorporated into our work.</p>
10:15 – 10:30	Break
10:30 – 11:15 am	<p>Workshop Session 1: What do you already have to prepare you for MQID? What do you need?</p> <p>In this interactive workshop, participants will reflect on take-aways from the first plenary session and identify what information and resources their institutions already have in place for working on MQID, and where any gaps may be.</p>
11:15 – 12:15pm	<p>Plenary 2 – <i>Dive in, the Water's Fine! Engaged Faculty Use the DQP as a Springboard to Articulate the Meaning, Quality and Integrity of their Degrees</i> Deborah Panter, formerly with John F. Kennedy University</p> <p>Articulating a unifying vision for the university -- including the meaning, quality, and integrity of its degrees -- was one challenge JFKU faced in the course of its self-study. This session will describe how an initially skeptical faculty became engaged in the process and ultimately drove the response to this challenge, using the DQP as a starting point and framework. This discussion will include lessons learned along the way, some unanticipated benefits, and the long-term impact of the process.</p>
12:15 - 1:15 pm	<p>Networking lunch</p> <p>During this working lunch, participants will sit at designated roundtables so they can network with individuals who serve in the same functional position at other institutions.</p>

1:15pm – 2:30pm

Workshop Session 2: What additional tools, resources, and strategies may be useful?

Participants will explore specific tools, resources, and strategies available to them that may support their MQID work, including community engagement strategies; AAC&U's LEAP outcomes; VALUE rubrics; the DQP; and various disciplinary associations, specialized accrediting bodies, and other resources that may be useful.

2:30 – 2:45 pm

Break

2:45 – 3:45 pm

Plenary 3 - *MQID? Really???* *We're Graduate Programs! Engaging Faculty in Developing and Using Graduate Program Learning Outcomes as the Institution Explores the Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Our Degrees*

Kathleen Roe, San Jose State University

San José State University's recent WSCUC institutional review process stimulated a post-review initiative focusing on three major questions: 1) What are the essential differences between our graduate and undergraduate program outcomes? 2) What is the current relationship between culminating experiences and graduate program outcome assessment? And 3) how do we keep graduate faculty engaged in this important dialogue in the post-review period? This presentation will share the process, lessons learned, insights, and lively possibilities emerging from our WSCUC-inspired MQID 2.0.

3:45 – 4:15

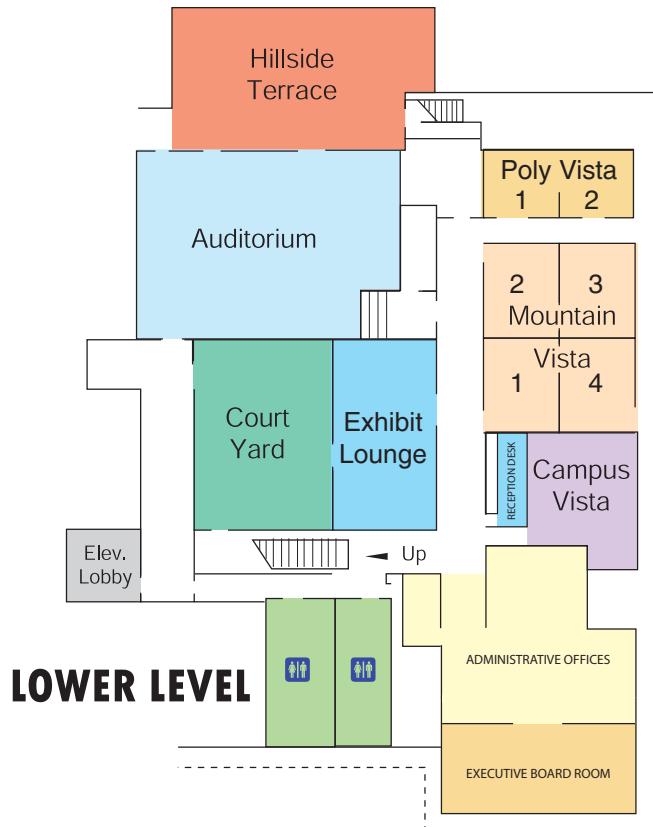
Workshop Session 3: Jumpstarting Your Institution's MQID Plan

Through consultation with the workshop facilitators, participants will begin an MQID Action Plan to help move their institution's work forward, taking into consideration the variety of approaches, resources, and tools that may be relevant or useful given their institutional context. Facilitators will be available to offer individual or team guidance and mentoring around creating an action plan that will work for each institution.

4:15 – 4:30 pm

Workshop Reflections / Conclusion

MEETING/EVENTS ROOM FLOOR PLANS



Facilitator Biographies

The Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees Biographies

Facilitators

Laura Massa

Laura Massa has served as the Director of Assessment at Loyola Marymount University since 2008. In this role she has guided the development and implementation of a university assessment plan, which has included efforts to help the LMU community understand and improve achievement of the WSCUC five core competencies. Through consultations and educational resources, Laura also provides support at LMU for core curriculum assessment, program assessment, academic program review, and program-specific accreditation. She regularly conducts workshops on assessment topics at LMU, as well as at other universities and for WSCUC. LMU was a pilot institution for WSCUC's revised reaffirmation of accreditation process, giving Laura hands-on experience with the meaning, quality and integrity of the degree component for both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Laura holds a doctorate from the University of California, Santa Barbara in Cognitive Psychology with an emphasis in Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences. She has experience as both a researcher and Assistant Professor in Psychology, specializing in assessment and improving student learning outcomes.

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Deborah Panter

Deborah Panter began as the Director of Educational Effectiveness and Assessment at the University of San Francisco in May 2016, overseeing educational innovation and development, academic quality assurance and co-curricular assessment, in support of academic and institutional excellence. She is also one of the leaders in USF's self-study, which the institution is currently undertaking for reaffirmation of accreditation. Previously, in a similar position as Director of Educational and Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation Liaison Officer at John F. Kennedy University, she engaged the JFKU Faculty Senate in addressing the Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees using the Degree Qualifications Profile as a framework. Prior to this work, Deborah served as Associate Professor in the Legal Studies Program at JFKU and was an adjunct professor at Saint Mary's College of California. Before entering higher education, Deborah earned her J.D. from Golden Gate University School of Law and then joined the San Francisco law firm of O'Connor, Cohn, Dillon & Barr where she defended lawsuits involving serious injury (including HIV infection) and wrongful death, with an emphasis on products liability and medical malpractice. Deborah is a graduate of WSCUC's Assessment Leadership Academy.

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The Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees Biographies

Kathleen Roe

Kathleen Roe is Professor of Public Health and former Chair of the Health Science and Recreation Department at San José State University, where she has been since 1988. Kathleen is also the founder and faculty director of the university's Alternative Spring Break in Oaxaca, Mexico. In her teaching, Kathleen is committed to community-based learning, praxis, and leadership for equity and social justice; her courses cover such areas as public health, multicultural communication, community organizing, research methods, community health promotion, and leadership. Kathleen's research interests center around the ways in which ordinary people become deeply engaged in the issues of their time, with the goal of creating the kind of society in which everyone has "the freedom of confident action." She has fostered collaboration with the local Mexican immigrant community; has published in health education, public health, and related journals; was a founding editor of *Health Promotion Practice*, and has received numerous awards. Kathleen served as Faculty Chair of SJSU's previous WSCUC accreditation review and is currently leading a university-wide initiative regarding the meaning, quality, and integrity of the university's graduate degrees. She has also led three successful accreditation reviews of the SJSU MPH program by the Council on Education for Public Health and was Co-Chair for several years of the National Task Force on Quality Assurance in Health Education Professional Preparation. Her degrees are from the University of California at Berkeley.

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WSCUC Representative

Melanie Booth

Melanie Booth, Vice President, joined WSCUC in 2013. Melanie brings her experience serving as Assistant Chair on WSCUC visiting teams. She has also served on teams for the Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities and as a reviewer for ACE's College Credit Recommendation Service. Prior to joining WSCUC, Melanie was the Dean of Learning and Assessment and Director of the Center for Experiential Learning and Assessment at Marylhurst University in Portland, OR. She has also held academic positions at Saint Mary's College of California, San Diego State University, and SCORE! Educational Centers. Melanie is a recognized expert on Prior Learning Assessment / Credit for Prior Learning and has consulted with institutions nationally and internationally about PLA, competency-based education, and the assessment of learning. Her other areas of interest include experiential learning, faculty development, heutagogy, and adult learning and development. Melanie's EdD is in Educational Leadership and Change – Higher Education from Fielding Graduate University; she earned her MA in Rhetoric and Writing from San Diego State University and her BA in English from Humboldt State University. She is a graduate of the second class of WSCUC's Assessment Leadership Academy.

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Attendee Directory

Attendee Directory

Meaning, Quality, Integrity of Degrees

Kellogg West Conference Center - Pomona, CA

October 19, 2016

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Attendee Directory

Meaning, Quality, Integrity of Degrees

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October 19, 2016

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Welcome / Introductions / Overview of and Preparation for Workshop

Melanie Booth

Meaning, Quality, & Integrity of Degrees

Welcome, Introductions, & Overview

Melanie Booth
Vice President, WSCUC
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1

MQID Workshop

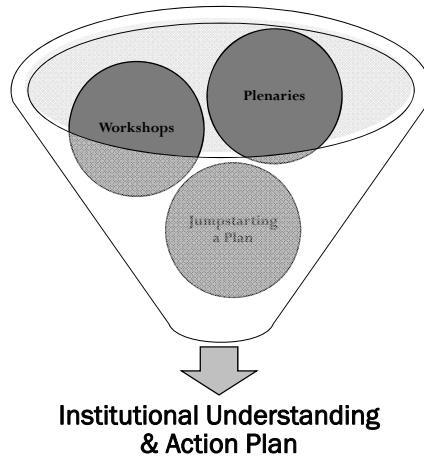
October 2016

Workshop Agenda & Introductions

First – a special note of gratitude to Laurie Dodge from Brandman University and John Hughes from The Master’s College & Seminary for their fabulous work on previous versions of this workshop!

2

Workshop Design



3

Today's Agenda

- **Plenary 1:** *From the Ground Up* - Loyola Marymount University
- **Workshop 1:** Treasure Hunt
- **Plenary 2:** *Dive In! The Water's Fine!* - John F. Kennedy University
- **Networking Lunch:** By Functional Area
- **Workshop 2:** Exploring Tools, Resources, Strategies
- **Plenary 3:** "We're Graduate Programs!" – San Jose State
- **Workshop 3:** Jumpstarting your MQID Plan / Mentoring

4

Your MQID Guides

Laura Massa
Director of Assessment
Loyola Marymount
University



5

Deborah Panter



Director Educational
Effectiveness and
Assessment
University of San Francisco

Your MQID Guides, cont.

Kathleen Roe



Professor of Public
Health, San Jose State
University

6

Meaning Dimension

MEANINGLESS (School) ← Continuum of Significance → MEANINGFUL (Truth)

WHY MQID? WHY NOW?

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A Few Reasons ...

Changing times:

- Higher Education Act Reauthorization
- New majority students; shifting demographics
- Technologically-mediated education
- Emerging providers
- Certificates / nanodegrees / badges

The Changing Ecology of Higher Education

8

More Reasons . . .

Intense public and policy-maker scrutiny of higher education:

- Need to articulate and demonstrate value of a higher education; value of the degree
- Opportunity for institutions to communicate their unique qualities – *academically*

9

The Time Is Now!

- Higher education's opportunity to:
 - Articulate the value institutions provide to students
 - Articulate the value institutions provide to society
 - Articulate the value of our degrees – via their **meaning**, their **quality**, and their **integrity!**



10



SOME NUTS & BOLTS

What Does WSCUC Want???????

11

What Does WSCUC Want?

2013 Core Commitments

Standards & Criteria For Review

Components of the Institutional Report

12

2013 Handbook: Core Commitments

- Student Learning and Success
- Quality and Improvement
- Institutional Integrity, Sustainability, and Accountability

13

Student Learning & Success



“Institutions have clear educational goals and student learning outcomes....Institutions support the success of all students and seek to understand and improve student success.”

14

Quality & Improvement

“Institutions are committed to high standards of quality in all of their educational activities.... Institutions demonstrate the capacity to fulfill their current commitments and future needs and opportunities.”



15

Institutional Integrity, Sustainability, & Accountability



“...Institutions engage in sound business practices, demonstrate institutional integrity, operate in a transparent manner, and **adapt to changing conditions.**”

16

Relevant 2013 Criteria for Review

17

What's the 2013 Handbook Say?

- 1.2 - Educational objectives are widely recognized throughout the institution, are consistent with stated purposes, and are demonstrably achieved. . .

18

What's the 2013 Handbook Say?

- 2.2 - All degrees—undergraduate and graduate—awarded by the institution are clearly defined in terms of entry-level requirements and levels of student achievement necessary for graduation that represent more than simply an accumulation of courses or credits.

19

What's the 2013 Handbook Say?

- 2.3 - The institution's student learning outcomes and standards of performance are clearly stated at the course, program, and, as appropriate, institutional level. . .

20

What's the 2013 Handbook Say?

- 2.4 - The institution's student learning outcomes and standards of performance are developed by faculty and widely shared among faculty, students, staff, and (where appropriate) external stakeholders . . .

21

What's the 2013 Handbook Say?

- 2.6 - The institution demonstrates that its graduates consistently achieve its stated learning outcomes and established standards of performance. . .

22

What's the 2013 Handbook Say?

- 2.7 - All programs offered by the institution are subject to systematic program review.

23

What's the 2013 Handbook Say?

- 4.1 - The institution employs a deliberate set of quality-assurance processes ... including periodic program review, assessment of student learning, and other forms of ongoing evaluation.

24

Handbook – Component 3

Degree Programs: Meaning, Quality, and Integrity

Traditionally:

- Institutions have described their degrees either very generally (i.e., as something of self-evident value) or very concretely (in terms of specific degree requirements and preparation for specific professions).

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Handbook – Component 3 (cont.)

- This component asks for something different:

“...a holistic exploration of the middle ground between those two extremes, expressed in terms of the outcomes for students and the institutional mechanisms that support those outcomes.”

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Prompts - Meaning?

- What does a degree from the institution mean?
- What does it say students are capable of doing?
- What are the distinctive experiences and learning outcomes of an education at the institution?
- What does the degree all add up to?
- Is it more than the sum of its parts?
- What *are* the parts?
- What's the overarching goal?

27

Prompts - Quality?

- How rich are the experiences that the institution offers?
- How challenging? How rigorous?
- What quality assurance processes exist at the institution to guide improvement?

28

Prompts - Integrity?

- To what extent are all the parts of the educational experiences coherent, aligned, and intentional?
- To what extent does the institution deliver what it promises to deliver?
- How well does the institution achieve what it sets out to do?
- How does it know?
- How does it communicate about its degrees to internal and external audiences?

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Handbook – Component 3 (cont.)

- Defining the meaning of higher degrees can provide clarity
 - for institutions
 - for students, and
 - for a public that seeks to understand what unique educational experience will be had at that particular institution and what makes the investment in that experience worthwhile.

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MQID Important Reminders:

1. WSCUC does not require institutions to use the DQP or any other specific framework or resource.
2. Institutions are encouraged to develop their own strategies for articulating the meaning of their degrees in ways that make sense for their mission, values, and student populations.
3. Prompts in Handbook are intended to help facilitate thinking – not necessarily to be answered in the report.

31

WSCUC's Message: Tell Your Story



32

E
DUCAT
ION IS
IMPOR
TANT



If they can't
see this, we're
in big trouble.

Thank You

Plenary 1

From the Ground Up: LMU's Approach to MQID

Laura Massa



**From the Ground Up:
*LMU's Approach to MQID***

Laura Massa, PhD
Director of Assessment
Loyola Marymount University

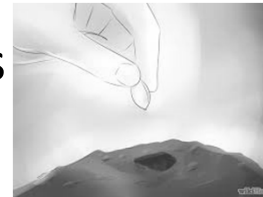
Outline

- A bit about LMU
- Planting the seeds
- Cultivating Meaning
- Tending to Quality & Integrity
- A thriving garden

A bit about LMU



Planting the seeds



- January 2008: Special visit
 - Found LMU needed to strengthen a culture of evidence
- Clear next steps for LMU:
 - Develop Undergraduate Learning Outcomes & assess them
 - Increase program assessment activity
 - Implement revised program review
 - Complete core curriculum redesign around SLOs

Planting the seeds

- July 2008: Director of Assessment
- Vision for assessment:
 - Assessment must be owned by our community
 - Must not be about external demand
 - Goal: culture of evidence, learning centeredness, and continuous improvement
- We had time: next visit was slated for 2013

Planting the seeds

- LMU was a pilot institution for 2013 Handbook
 - *Efforts that grew out of our response to 2008 actions provided the basis of MQID*
 - *The MQID component engaged our community in reflection on what we do and how it tells our story*



Cultivating Meaning

- Meaning started with our mission:

*The encouragement of learning
The education of the whole person
The service of faith and the promotion of justice*



Cultivating Meaning

- Undergraduate Learning Outcomes
 - Began with analyses of:
 - Mission
 - Existing program learning outcomes
 - CFR 2.2a
 - LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes

Plant seeds of happiness, hope, success and love; it will all come back to you in abundance. This is the law of nature.

–Steve Maraboli

Cultivating Meaning

- Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP)
 - Initiative of Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U)
 - *Essential Learning Outcomes*
 - *VALUE Rubrics*
 - Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education

Cultivating Meaning

LEAP's Essential Learning Outcomes:

- Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world
- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical & creative thinking
- Written & oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information literacy
- Teamwork & problem solving
- Civic knowledge & engagement
- Intercultural knowledge & competence
- Ethical reasoning & action
- Foundations & skills for lifelong learning
- Synthesis & advanced accomplishment across general & specialized studies

WSCUC CFR 2.2a

Undergraduate programs engage students in an integrated course of study of sufficient breadth and depth to prepare them for work, citizenship, and life-long learning. These programs ensure the development of core competencies including, but not limited to, written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and critical thinking. In addition, undergraduate programs actively foster creativity, innovation, an appreciation for diversity, ethical and civic responsibility, civic engagement, and the ability to work with others. Baccalaureate programs also ensure breadth for all students in cultural and aesthetic, social and political, and scientific and technical knowledge expected of educated persons. Baccalaureate degrees include significant in-depth study in a given area of knowledge (typically described in terms of a program or major).

Cultivating Meaning

- Undergraduate Learning Outcomes
 - Reviewed and contributed to by every constituent group (including students)
 - Went through multiple rounds of revision & evolution
 - Finalized with vote by faculty senate
 - 2 ½ year process
 - Total of 4 goals and 22 outcomes



Cultivating Meaning

• Integrative Learning	• Purpose & Use	• Respect for Others
• Creative & Critical Thinking	• Disciplinary Ethics	• Teamwork Skills
• Written & Oral Communication	• Humanity	• Civic Knowledge & Engagement
• Quantitative Literacy	• Self-Awareness	• Ethical Reasoning & Action
• Information Literacy	• Intercultural Knowledge & competence	• Leadership Skills
• Lifelong Learning	• Personal Beliefs & Faith	• Habit of Service
• Subject Matter Knowledge	• Diverse Perspectives	<i>LMU's Undergraduate Learning Outcomes</i>
• Test or Generate Knowledge	• Whole Person	

Cultivating Meaning

– Core revision

- Development took multiple years and full faculty vote
 - *Implemented fall 2013*
- New core was founded in learning outcomes
 - Defined by what students will know, do, value
 - Sequential, integrated, spans across 4-year undergraduate career



Tending to Quality & Integrity

• Academic Planning and Review

– *New or revised programs*

- Process begins with learning outcomes
- Assessment planning required



– *Academic Program Review*

- Assessment is central (but review is much bigger)
 - In-depth self-study, coherent & rigorous curriculum, plans to improve
 - External review is important component
- 4-semester process

Tending to Quality & Integrity

- Assessment at multiple levels
 - Program
 - Program faculty responsible for assessing PLOs
 - Annual survey to understand activity
 - Core
 - Core Curriculum Committee responsible for assessing CLOs
 - Undergraduate Learning Outcomes
 - Assessment office manages process
 - Faculty and staff responsible for utilizing data to guide decision making

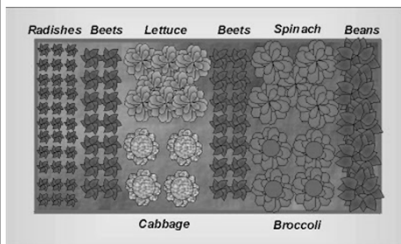
Tending to Quality & Integrity



- Strategic Plan
 - Heavy emphases on academic rigor and transformative education
 - Led to move to 4-unit undergraduate curriculum in one college & in programs within second college
 - More are exploring the possibility

Plotting it out

- Meaning of an undergraduate degree
 - ULOs
 - Core curriculum
- Meaning of a graduate degree
 - Three themes
- Processes to ensure integrity, quality & rigor



- Approval of new or revised programs
- Academic program review
- Program-level assessment
- ULO assessment
- Strategic Plan

A thriving garden

- MQID well supported by campus culture of evidence-based decision making
- Successful reaccreditation
10 years!
- The work of nurturing our garden continues...

Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.

–Robert Louis Stevenson

A thriving garden

- Lessons learned:
 - Don't be afraid of imperfection
 - *It's a place to grow from*
 - Process is best when faculty are deeply engaged
 - Do it for yourself (i.e., be the best you can be)



Questions



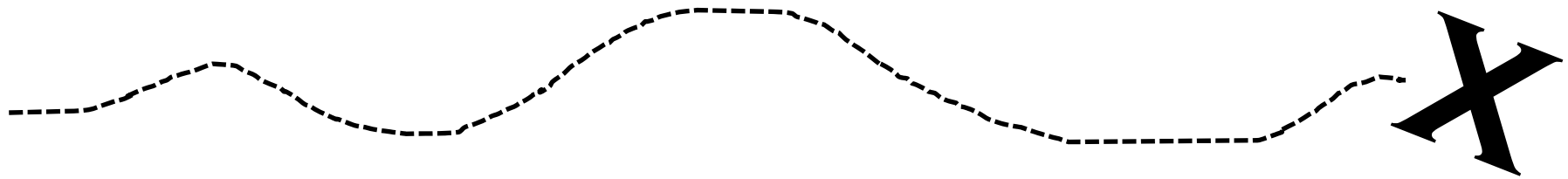
Workshop Session 1

**What do you already
have to prepare you for
MQID? What do you
need?**

MQID TREASURE HUNT

There's treasure hidden on your campus!

1. Note which listed items you have
 - *Not everything is required by WSCUC*
 - *Be sure to add additional important things to the list*
2. Indicate where each item is likely to be found
3. Note themes, issues or ideas that appear



MQID TREASURE HUNT



Your institution has a treasure trove of elements that may be important in defining the meaning of your degrees, as well as ensuring their quality and integrity. Begin your treasure hunt by locating as many of the items as you can from the lists below. The items in the lists can be helpful in developing your MQID statements; however not everything listed below is required by WSCUC. To ‘locate’ an item you might find it on your website, indicate where it’s documented (e.g., academic catalog) or note who you should ask for the item (e.g., person, committee or office) when you return to campus. There is also space to add in additional important items—those things that are unique or special at your institution. Finally, take a few minutes to note any themes, issues or ideas that are jumping out at you as you engage in the hunt for your institution’s treasures.

Meaning

	<i>Items</i>	<i>Do we have this? (Yes/No/Unsure?)</i>	<i>Location (website, document, who to ask for it, etc.)</i>
1.	Mission Statement	Y N ?	
2.	Institution-wide Learning Outcomes	Y N ?	
	a. Undergraduate Students	Y N ?	
	b. Graduate Students	Y N ?	
3.	Core Curriculum/General Education Curriculum	Y N ?	
4.	Core Curriculum/General Education Learning Outcomes	Y N ?	
5.	Program Learning Outcomes	Y N ?	

Meaning (continued)

	<i>Items</i>	<i>Do we have this? (Yes/No/Unsure?)</i>	<i>Location (website, document, who to ask for it, etc.)</i>
6.	Student Affairs Learning Outcomes	Y N ?	
7.	Other:		

Quality & Integrity

	<i>Items</i>	<i>Do we have this? (Yes/No/Unsure?)</i>	<i>Location (website, document, who to ask for it, etc.)</i>
8.	Curriculum Maps for:	Y N ?	
	a. Institution-wide Learning Outcomes	Y N ?	
	b. Core Curriculum/General Education Learning Outcomes	Y N ?	
	c. Program Learning outcomes	Y N ?	

Quality & Integrity (continued)

	<i>Items</i>	<i>Do we have this? (Yes/No/Unsure?)</i>	<i>Location (website, document, who to ask for it, etc.)</i>
9.	Assessment of Institution-wide Learning Outcomes	Y N ?	
	a. Undergraduate Students	Y N ?	
	b. Graduate Students	Y N ?	
10.	Assessment of Core Curriculum/General Education Learning Outcomes	Y N ?	
11.	Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes	Y N ?	
12.	Assessment of Student Affairs Learning Outcomes	Y N ?	
13.	New Program Approval Process	Y N ?	
14.	Academic Program Review	Y N ?	
15.	Co-curricular/Administrative Program Review	Y N ?	
16.	Faculty (e.g., qualifications, diversity, engagement with students, etc.)	Y N ?	

Quality & Integrity (continued)

	Items	Do we have this? (Yes/No/Unsure?)	Location (website, document, who to ask for it, etc.)
17.	Strategic Plan	Y N ?	
18.	External Constituents (e.g., employers, alumni, disciplinary accreditation, advisory boards, community partners, etc.)	Y N ?	
19.	Other:		

Themes: *What themes, issues or ideas jumped out as you worked on your treasure hunt? These could be things like ‘we were surprised at how much great stuff we have in place’ or ‘the number one theme emerging for us is the importance of X’ or even ‘we realized our website does not have much for this exercise.’*



Plenary 2

**Dive in, the Water's Fine!
Engaged Faculty Use the
DQP as a Springboard to
Articulate the Meaning,
Quality and Integrity of
their Degrees**

Deborah Panter

Dive in, the Water's Fine!



Engaged Faculty Use the DQP as a Springboard to Articulate the Meaning, Quality and Integrity of their Degrees

Deborah Panter
Director of Educational Effectiveness & Assessment
University of San Francisco

First, some context



- **Now Director of Educational Effectiveness & Assessment at University of San Francisco**
 - **USF's self-study is just starting**
- **Was in similar position at John F. Kennedy University from January 2014 until May 2016**
- **JFKU did significant work on the Meaning, Quality and Integrity of its Degrees in its self-study**
- **That story follows**

The John F. Kennedy University Story



- In 1964, a small group of educators in the SF Bay area met to discuss the best way to manifest Kennedy's ideals and honor his memory.
- Their mission was to provide opportunities in higher education for working adults who, despite family, work, and civic responsibilities, were determined to earn the benefits of advanced education for their future.
- When opened in Martinez in 1965, with just over 50 students, no comparable opportunities for lifelong learners existed in the California state educational system.

John F. Kennedy University Transforming Lives, Changing the World



- Private university in San Francisco Bay area
- Part of the National University System
- 1200+ students-predominately graduate
- 200 undergraduate students
- 50 full-time core faculty
- 300+ adjuncts
- Practitioner-scholar model
- 17 distinct academic programs



January 2014: And so it begins . . .



Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees

Institutions are expected to define the meaning of the undergraduate and graduate degrees they confer and to ensure their quality and integrity. . .

Defining the meaning of higher degrees can provide clarity for institutions, for students, and for a public that seeks to understand what unique educational experience will be had at that particular institution and what makes the investment in that experience worthwhile.

Choices, so many choices!



- Dip your toe in
- Do some research
- Consider the options
 - Articles
 - Other institutions' approaches
 - ARC Presentations
 - WSCUC FAQ
 - DQP
 - LEAP Outcomes
 - Your ILOs, mission, vision, values, etc.
- Your first choice may not work out

May 2014 – Institutional Learning Outcomes



- Drafted by the Accreditation Steering Committee
- Email to faculty, a little bit of feedback



- Moving to the Meaning, Quality and Integrity of Degrees – time to jump in!

The Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP)



- Developed by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA), the Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC), and the Lumina Foundation
- A learning-centered effort to define in explicit terms what **degrees** should mean, **irrespective of discipline**, in three distinct levels (associate, bachelor's master's) in five areas of learning

What is the DQP?



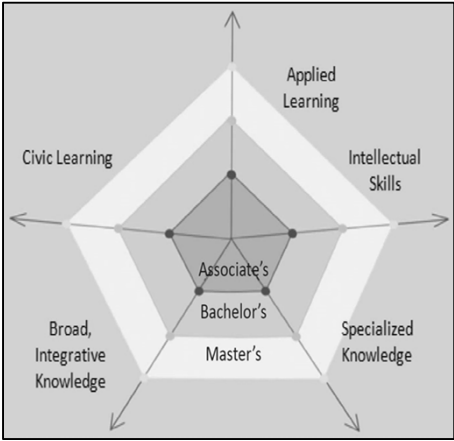
- A framework for what students should be expected to know and do – in all majors
- In 5 areas of proficiency
- At 3 successive degree levels

DQP Five Areas of Learning

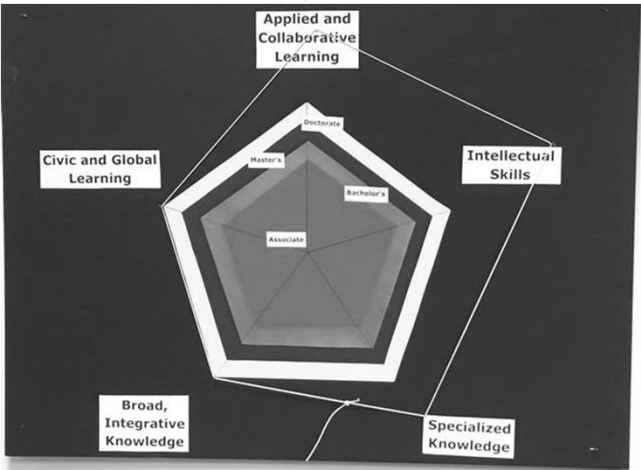


- Specialized Knowledge
- Broad and Integrative Knowledge
- Intellectual Skills
 - Analytic inquiry
 - Use of information resources
 - Engaging diverse perspectives
 - Ethical reasoning
 - Quantitative fluency
 - Communicative fluency
- Applied and Collaborative Learning
- Civic and Global Learning

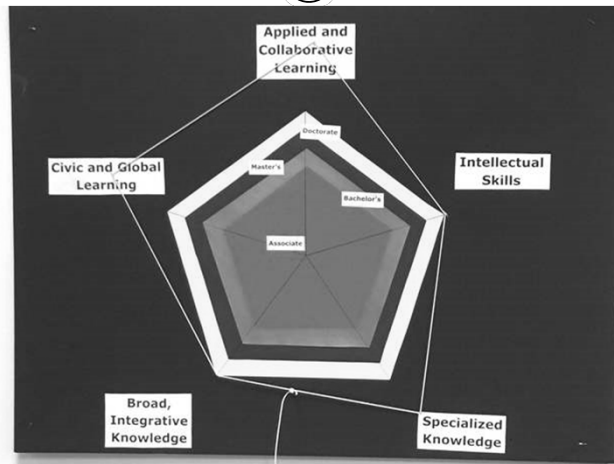
August 2014 – Faculty Senate Retreat



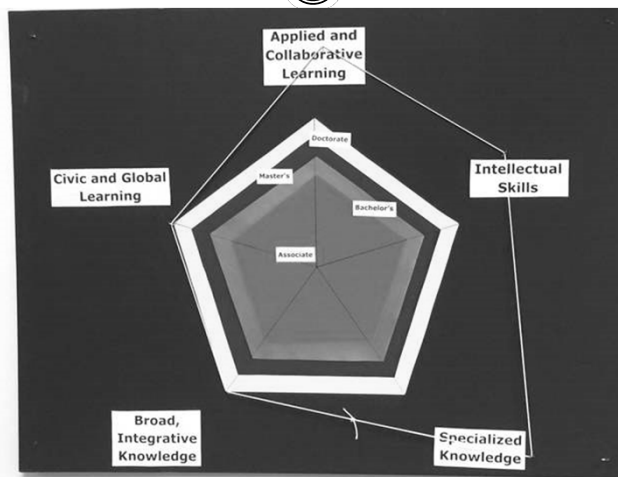
Results by degree level – Bachelor's



Results by degree level – Master's

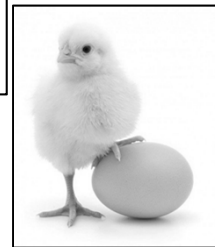


Results by degree level – Doctoral



November 2014 – Requesting Synthesis

- Institutional Learning Outcomes ???
- Meaning of Degrees ???
- Integrity ???
- Quality ????????



Engaging the Faculty vs. Top-down

- Why?
- Benefits of this approach
 - Faculty buy-in
 - Academic Freedom
 - Longevity
 - Common language
- Unintended consequences
- Two years later . . .

December 2014 – January 2015



- Self-appointed Drafting Committee creates new Institutional Learning Outcomes
- ALL faculty review and discuss during Day of Training
- Sent to Senior Leadership for review
- Everyone agrees – Institutional Learning Outcomes



JFKU Institutional Learning Outcomes



Graduates, at a level appropriate to their degree, will be able to:

Intellectual Skills

Demonstrate intellectual skills and abilities appropriate to a particular field of study.

Specialized Knowledge

Apply specialized knowledge in a particular field of study.

Ethical Practice

Apply relevant ethical principles or frameworks to help inform decision making.

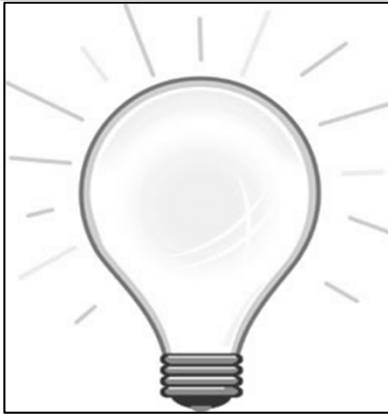
Multicultural Professionalism

Effectively practice with an awareness of a multicultural and diverse community.

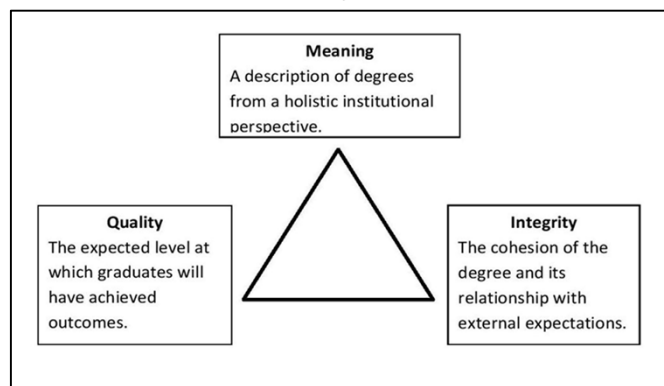
Community Service

Demonstrate commitment to service to the community.

The Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees Workshop



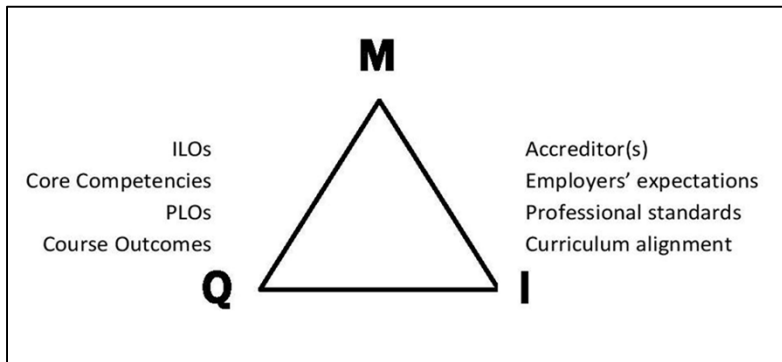
MQID Components *



WASC Workshop on the Meaning, Quality and Integrity of Degrees

* Courtesy of John Hughes at the Master's College and Seminary

MQID Indicators



Meaning of Degrees – Triangle as Arch



Setting our Keystone

Meaning of Degree Taskforce: Renewed Vigor



- **Collects information from**
 - Students
 - Alumni
 - Core and Adjunct Faculty
 - Staff
 - Advisory Boards
- **Using**
 - Voicemail (Google Voice)
 - Email
 - Drop-in Sessions
 - Targeted Interviews

Prompts to Students



- What do you HOPE having a degree will mean when you graduate?
- Why did you choose to attend JFKU?
- When you describe JFKU to those who are unfamiliar with the institution, what do you say?
- What makes this University unique?
- When you tell people you study at JFKU, what do you want them to think?

Benefits of Meaning Statement



- **To the public**
 - Employers
 - Professional community
- **To the institution**
 - A common understanding
 - Academic proposals for new programs
 - Program review
- **To the students**
 - A common language
 - Expectations

Lessons Learned



- Faculty involvement
- Creating space for conversation, and disagreement
- Getting input from other institutions, then doing what was right for the institution
- A focus on the bigger picture
- A sense of urgency – a reason to be “done”
- Keep swimming!

Happy Endings



- **June 2016 - Accreditation reaffirmed for 8 years!**
- **Commendations in Team Report for:**
 - “A high level of faculty and staff engagement and widespread commitment to student success and to the values and mission of the institution.”
 - “The leadership of its faculty for developing and widely disseminating [ILOs] and the Statement of the Meaning of the Degrees.”
- **The Commission joined with the team in the same commendations**

Still, the work continues . . .



- **Mapping all PLOs to the ILOs**
- **Assessing ILOs**
- **Defining ILOs by degree level**
- **Continuous improvement as an institution**

Contact Information



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Workshop Session 2

**What additional tools,
resources, and strategies
may be useful?**

MQID Workshop 2

There are four concurrent mini-workshops offered as part of workshop 2; each mini-workshop will be offered twice, once in Session 1 and once in Session 2. Each participant may select one mini-workshop for Session 1 to attend and a different mini-workshop for Session 2 to attend. There will be sufficient time in between to move from Session 1 to Session 2.

Approximate Schedule:

1:15 – 1:45ish – Session 1 (participants choose one mini-workshop from the list below)

1:45 – 1:55ish – Move to Session 2

1:55 – 2:30 – Session 2 (participants choose a different mini-workshop from the list below)

Mini-workshop A (Auditorium)

Piecing the Quilt: MQID and Disciplinary Accreditation (Kathleen Roe)

If your institution has programs that are already engaged with specialized or disciplinary accreditation, these can be invaluable assets to institutional-level MQID efforts. This mini-workshop will explore ways to use that unit-level momentum to jumpstart or advance, rather than confound, our WSCUC-inspired work. Challenges and opportunities presented by simultaneous yet different accreditation processes will be discussed, and you'll leave with ideas for how to weave those separate processes into a coherent whole.

Mini-workshop B (Mountain Vista 1)

DQP - Starting the Conversation (Deborah Panter)

Institutions have many choices as to frameworks to use in their MQID work, and the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) is one of them. In this session, you will work through one approach as to how an institution could use the DQP. You can build on this discussion with the handout in the binder and then continue the conversation back at your institution.

Mini-workshop C (Mountain Vista 2)

Engaging Key Constituents with MQID (Laura Massa)

To best articulate what a degree from your institution means, and to truly understand all that is done to assure its quality and integrity, you need to engage key constituents at your institution. This mini-workshop will share a few tips for how to make those conversations effective, and get you thinking through the who, what, when and where of engaging your institution in the process of developing your MQID component. Ideas for utilizing the LEAP project Essential Learning Outcomes and VALUE Rubrics will be shared.

Mini-workshop D (Campus Vista)

Demystifying Component 3 (Melanie Booth)

This mini-workshop will provide an in-depth exploration into Component 3 of an institution's reaffirmation report for WSCUC accreditation. If you're still confused about "what WSCUC wants," come to this session to gain more clarity.

Workshop Session 2

Piecing the Quilt: MQID and Disciplinary Accreditation

Kathleen Roe

Program Accreditations – A Beginning List

In addition to WSCUC institutional accreditation, many institutions have professional or disciplinary accreditations for specific programs. The people, processes, and data involved in program accreditation at your own institution can be key to your MQID journey. This roster can get you started – but it's just a sample, drawn from the institutions that have attended recent MQID workshops!

Please note: We left room at the end for you to add in any other program accreditations from your own institution!

Accrediting Body		Yes!	No	Maybe
ABET	Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, Inc			
ACGME	Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education			
ACOTE	Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education			
ACAOM	Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine			
ARC-PA	Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant			
AAA	Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools			
ACEJMC	Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications			
ACOTE	Accrediting Council for Occupational Therapy Education of American Occupational Therapy Association			
ABA	American Bar Association			
ACS-CPT	American Chemical Society, Committee on Professional Training			
ALA	American Library Association			
APA	American Psychological Association			
ACSP	Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Inc.			
ATMAE	Association of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering			
AACSB	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International			
CTCC	California Commission on Teacher Credentialing			
CADE	Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education			
CAAHEP	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Professions			
CAATE	Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education			
ATS	Commission on Accrediting, Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada			
CCIE	Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education			

Accrediting Body		Yes!	No	Maybe
CCNE	Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education			
CODA	Commission on Dental Accreditation, American Dental Association			
CAA	Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology			
COAPRT	Council on Accreditation of Park, Recreation, and Tourism Related Professions, Council for Higher Education			
CAEP	Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation			
CHEA	Council for Higher Education Accreditation			
CIDA	Council for Interior Design Accreditation			
CEPH	Council on Education for Public Health			
CSWE	Council on Social Work Education			
FIDM	Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising			
IFT	Institute of Food Technologists			
IACS	International Association of Counseling Services			
LCME	Liaison Committee on Medical Education			
MACTE	Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education			
NAAB	National Architectural Accrediting Board			
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children			
NAIT	National Association of Industrial Technology			
NASAD	National Association of Schools of Art and Design			
NASD	National Association of Schools of Dance			
NASM	National Association of Schools of Music			
NASPAA	National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration			
NAST	National Association of Schools of Theatre			
NCATE	National Council on the Accreditation of Teacher Education			
PAB	Planning Accreditation Board, National Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning			
CALBAR	State Bar of California			
	[State] Board of Registered Nursing			

Meaning, Quality, & Integrity of Degrees - Workshop 2
Working with Resources from Disciplinary Associations and Specialized Accreditation
(Kathleen Roe)

1. Identifying the accredited programs, accrediting organizations, and key players on your campus

- Which disciplinary associations or specialized accreditors do programs and faculty in your institution work with?
- Which programs were accredited within the past 5 years?
- Which programs are in self- study?
- Which programs will be having site visits or accreditation decisions during the period of your WSCUC institutional review?
- Who are/were the key players in those self-studies and review processes?

Bottom line: You're looking for people with experience, enthusiasm, and confidence in the process, both to serve as "early adopters" for the WSCUC review as well as fill key roles in your institutional review.

2. Identifying stars, pace cars, and professional/disciplinary leadership among your accredited programs and their accrediting organizations

- What are accredited programs being asked to do regarding program-specific mission and vision, goals, program learning outcomes, and mapping to broader institutional missions, values, and goals for all students?
- Which programs have done that really well?
- Which programs are in the process of doing that now?
- Have any programs struggled or come up short on this dimension of their self-study?

Bottom line: You're looking for "money in the bank" – programs that have already done this really well and are proud of what they did. They will be excellent spokespeople for the WSCUC MQID process. You're also looking for programs and people who are struggling or going through this now. They will appreciate the broader institutional help you can provide so that all boats rise!

3. What practical tips (processes, data, tools, charts and maps) can the professionally accredited programs share?

- How did they rally or engage faculty? What templates or processes facilitated their exploration, decisions, data collection and analysis?
- What do they know now that they wish they'd known then?

Bottom line: You're looking for ways to connect faculty efforts, peer to peer learning, reinforcing the mutually informing value of various accreditation expectations. You're also looking to show that "we can do this!" and showcase even the small things that programs have done that are moving the institution towards greater clarity and confidence in the meaning, quality, and integrity of your degrees.

Piecing the Quilt: MQID and Disciplinary Accreditation

(Kathleen Roe)

Guidance: Using the *Program Accreditations – Beginning List* chart and what you know of the accredited programs at your institution, begin filling out this chart to help you identify more “hidden treasures” and “seasoned resources” to engage in your MQID work. The SJSU MPH example will give you an idea of how this can work...

Program/Unit	Accrediting Group	Date of Last Review/Decision	Next Self-Study	Aligned with ILOs?	Required PLOs?	PLO Assessment Method?	Contact
<i>MPH</i>	<i>CEPH</i>	<i>September 2014</i>	<i>August 2017 start, due December 2020</i>	<i>Yes but not required</i>	<i>Yes! 8</i>	<i>Essential SLOs and experiences, Comprehensive Exam</i>	<i>Monica Allen, Program Coordinator</i>

Program/Unit	Accrediting Group	Date of Last Review/Decision	Next Self-Study	Aligned with ILOs?	Required PLOs?	PLO Assessment Method?	Contact

Possible Next Steps (or DIY at home!)

This was just a start – there is so much you can do to “piece the quilt” once you are back in your institution. Here are some ideas...

- Review your institution’s catalog or connect with your ALO to identify all of the accredited programs** (approved, in process, and even those that are thinking about it...)
- Complete the chart**, modifying it as needed to best describe your institution and the MQID resources (people and data) available in your programs, especially those not yet engaged in the institutional review!
- Use the chart** to inventory templates or develop promising practices/tested tools that can be shared between programs
- Study the calendar** for synergy – you can engage programs that are between self-studies, support those in the planning stages, and showcase (but stay out of the way of!) programs just finishing up!
- Dig deeper** to find the data that already demonstrate the meaning, quality, and integrity of some of your degrees, and then see how you can use that to rally, encourage, motivate, engage others!
- See how you can showcase the stories of these program accreditations** and all they involve as you piece the quilt that tells the bigger story of how you know the meaning, quality, and integrity of your degrees.

Workshop Session 2

DQP – Starting the Conversation

Deborah Panter

DQP Learning Outcomes Statement Mapping Tool*

Guidance: Looking at your institution’s Institutional Learning Outcomes, program learning outcomes, mission statement, and/or other key defining elements (see your earlier Treasure Hunt), review the DQP framework and identify which (if any) aspects of that framework map to your institution. Mark on the framework and/or place a checkmark or notes in the boxes below as you review. In doing so, identify what specific words or phrases from the DQP framework resonate with your institution’s identity.

Institutional/ Program Learning Outcomes Statements	Specialized Knowledge	Broad and Integrative Knowledge	Intellectual Skills	Applied and Collaborative Learning	Civic and Global Learning	Institution Specific Areas
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						

* Jankowski, N. A., & Marshall, D. W. (2014, October). Roadmap to enhanced student learning: Implementing the DQP and Tuning. Urbana, IL: National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) and Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC).

Institutional/ Program Learning Outcomes Statements	Specialized Knowledge	Broad and Integrative Knowledge	Intellectual Skills	Applied and Collaborative Learning	Civic and Global Learning	Institution Specific Areas
5.						
6.						

3 Ideas for Possible Next Steps (after today):

If you see value to using the DQP as a tool to help you define the Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of your institution’s degrees, you could:

- 1) Take this exercise back to your institution and engage in a similar process with faculty from specific degree programs, faculty or staff from degree-level groups (associates, bachelors, masters), co-curricular departments, or other constituents as appropriate to your institution.
- 2) Reference any language offered in the DQP to help differentiate between different degree levels offered at your institution or to articulate the connections between or among different degrees and/or the institution’s holistic student learning goals.
- 3) Engage a DQP Tuning Coach (free – see the DQP website) to assist your institution with applying the DQP to further develop student learning and assessment approaches, including assignment design, strategies for institutional change, and faculty support and development.

Workshop Session 2

Engaging Key Constituents with MQID

Laura Massa

Engaging Your Campus Constituents with MQID

To best articulate what a degree from your institution means, and to truly understand all that is done to assure its quality and integrity, you need to engage key constituents at your institution. Use this worksheet to identify those constituencies, and begin to sketch out your plan for engaging them.

<i>Constituencies</i>	Where will you find them? (e.g., existing committees, open sessions)	When will you reach out? (e.g., this semester, next, both)	What will you ask them? (i.e., what will this group be invited to contribute?)	Who will reach out? (e.g., MQID committee member)

<i>Constituencies</i>	Where will you find them? (e.g., existing committees, open sessions)	When will you reach out? (e.g., this semester, next, both)	What will you ask them? (i.e., what will this group be invited to contribute?)	Who will reach out? (e.g., MQID committee member)

The Essential Learning Outcomes



Beginning in school, and continuing at successively higher levels across their college studies, students should prepare for twenty-first-century challenges by gaining:

★ Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

- Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts

Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

★ Intellectual and Practical Skills, including

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information literacy
- Teamwork and problem solving

Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

★ Personal and Social Responsibility, including

- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning and action
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

★ Integrative and Applied Learning, including

- Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies

Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

Note: This listing was developed through a multiyear dialogue with hundreds of colleges and universities about needed goals for student learning; analysis of a long series of recommendations and reports from the business community; and analysis of the accreditation requirements for engineering, business, nursing, and teacher education. The findings are documented in previous publications of the Association of American Colleges and Universities: *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* (2002), *Taking Responsibility for the Quality of the Baccalaureate Degree* (2004), and *College Learning for the New Global Century* (2007). For further information, see www.aacu.org/leap.



The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)

AAC&U is a national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career.

VALUE Rubrics

The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Learning Outcomes for the development of VALUE Rubrics:

Intellectual and Practical Skills

- [Inquiry and analysis](#)
- [Critical thinking](#)
- [Creative thinking](#)
- [Written communication](#)
- [Oral communication](#)
- [Reading](#)
- [Quantitative literacy](#)
- [Information literacy](#)
- [Teamwork](#)
- [Problem solving](#)

To view details of the below 5 rubrics, please click on the link below.

<http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/index.cfm>

Personal and Social Responsibility

- [Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global](#)
- [Intercultural knowledge and competence](#)
- [Ethical reasoning](#)
- [Foundations and skills for lifelong learning](#)

Integrative and Applied Learning

- [Integrative and applied learning](#)

TEAMWORK VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact value@aacu.org



The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Definition

Teamwork is behaviors under the control of individual team members (effort they put into team tasks, their manner of interacting with others on team, and the quantity and quality of contributions they make to team discussions.)

Framing Language

Students participate on many different teams, in many different settings. For example, a given student may work on separate teams to complete a lab assignment, give an oral presentation, or complete a community service project. Furthermore, the people the student works with are likely to be different in each of these different teams. As a result, it is assumed that a work sample or collection of work that demonstrates a student's teamwork skills could include a diverse range of inputs. This rubric is designed to function across all of these different settings.

Two characteristics define the ways in which this rubric is to be used. First, the rubric is meant to assess the teamwork of an individual student, not the team as a whole. Therefore, it is possible for a student to receive high ratings, even if the team as a whole is rather flawed. Similarly, a student could receive low ratings, even if the team as a whole works fairly well. Second, this rubric is designed to measure the quality of a **process**, rather than the quality of an **end product**. As a result, work samples or collections of work will need to include some evidence of the individual's interactions within the team. The final product of the team's work (e.g., a written lab report) is insufficient, as it does not provide insight into the functioning of the team.

It is recommended that work samples or collections of work for this outcome come from one (or more) of the following three sources: (1) students' own reflections about their contribution to a team's functioning; (2) evaluation or feedback from fellow team members about students' contribution to the team's functioning; or (3) the evaluation of an outside observer regarding students' contributions to a team's functioning. These three sources differ considerably in the resource demands they place on an institution. It is recommended that institutions using this rubric consider carefully the resources they are able to allocate to the assessment of teamwork and choose a means of compiling work samples or collections of work that best suits their priorities, needs, and abilities.

TEAMWORK VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact value@aacu.org



Definition

Teamwork is behaviors under the control of individual team members (effort they put into team tasks, their manner of interacting with others on team, and the quantity and quality of contributions they make to team discussions.)

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	Capstone 4	Milestones		Benchmark 1
		3	2	
Contributes to Team Meetings	Helps the team move forward by articulating the merits of alternative ideas or proposals.	Offers alternative solutions or courses of action that build on the ideas of others.	Offers new suggestions to advance the work of the group.	Shares ideas but does not advance the work of the group.
Facilitates the Contributions of Team Members	Engages team members in ways that facilitate their contributions to meetings by both constructively building upon or synthesizing the contributions of others as well as noticing when someone is not participating and inviting them to engage.	Engages team members in ways that facilitate their contributions to meetings by constructively building upon or synthesizing the contributions of others.	Engages team members in ways that facilitate their contributions to meetings by restating the views of other team members and/or asking questions for clarification.	Engages team members by taking turns and listening to others without interrupting.
Individual Contributions Outside of Team Meetings	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline; work accomplished is thorough, comprehensive, and advances the project. Proactively helps other team members complete their assigned tasks to a similar level of excellence.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline; work accomplished is thorough, comprehensive, and advances the project.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline; work accomplished advances the project.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline.
Fosters Constructive Team Climate	Supports a constructive team climate by doing all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication. • Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work. • Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it. • Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members. 	Supports a constructive team climate by doing any three of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication. • Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work. • Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it. • Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members. 	Supports a constructive team climate by doing any two of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication. • Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work. • Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it. • Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members. 	Supports a constructive team climate by doing any one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication. • Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work. • Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it. • Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members.
Responds to Conflict	Addresses destructive conflict directly and constructively, helping to manage/resolve it in a way that strengthens overall team cohesiveness and future effectiveness.	Identifies and acknowledges conflict and stays engaged with it.	Redirecting focus toward common ground, toward task at hand (away from conflict).	Passively accepts alternate viewpoints/ideas/opinions.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact value@aacu.org



The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Definition

Civic engagement is "working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes." (Excerpted from *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000, Preface, page vi.) In addition, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community.

Framing Language

Preparing graduates for their public lives as citizens, members of communities, and professionals in society has historically been a responsibility of higher education. Yet the outcome of a civic-minded graduate is a complex concept. Civic learning outcomes are framed by personal identity and commitments, disciplinary frameworks and traditions, pre-professional norms and practice, and the mission and values of colleges and universities. This rubric is designed to make the civic learning outcomes more explicit. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual volunteerism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. For students this could include community-based learning through service-learning classes, community-based research, or service within the community. Multiple types of work samples or collections of work may be utilized to assess this, such as:

- ⑩ The student creates and manages a service program that engages others (such as youth or members of a neighborhood) in learning about and taking action on an issue they care about. In the process, the student also teaches and models processes that engage others in deliberative democracy, in having a voice, participating in democratic processes, and taking specific actions to affect an issue.
- ⑩ The student researches, organizes, and carries out a deliberative democracy forum on a particular issue, one that includes multiple perspectives on that issue and how best to make positive change through various courses of public action. As a result, other students, faculty, and community members are engaged to take action on an issue.
- ⑩ The student works on and takes a leadership role in a complex campaign to bring about tangible changes in the public's awareness or education on a particular issue, or even a change in public policy. Through this process, the student demonstrates multiple types of civic action and skills.
- ⑩ The student integrates their academic work with community engagement, producing a tangible product (piece of legislation or policy, a business, building or civic infrastructure, water quality or scientific assessment, needs survey, research paper, service program, or organization) that has engaged community constituents and responded to community needs and assets through the process.

In addition, the nature of this work lends itself to opening up the review process to include community constituents that may be a part of the work, such as teammates, colleagues, community/agency members, and those served or collaborating in the process.

Glossary

The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

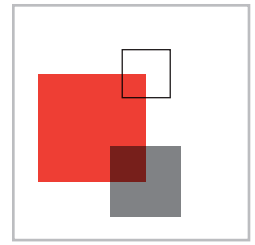
- Civic identity: When one sees her or himself as an active participant in society with a strong commitment and responsibility to work with others towards public purposes.
- Service-learning class: A course-based educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity and reflect on the experience in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility.
- Communication skills: Listening, deliberation, negotiation, consensus building, and productive use of conflict.
- Civic life: The public life of the citizen concerned with the affairs of the community and nation as contrasted with private or personal life, which is devoted to the pursuit of private and personal interests.
- Politics: A process by which a group of people, whose opinions or interests might be divergent, reach collective decisions that are generally regarded as binding on the group and enforced as common policy. Political life enables people to accomplish goals they could not realize as individuals. Politics necessarily arises whenever groups of people live together, since they must always reach collective decisions of one kind or another.
- Government: "The formal institutions of a society with the authority to make and implement binding decisions about such matters as the distribution of resources, allocation of benefits and burdens, and the management of conflicts." (Retrieved from the Center for Civic Engagement Web site, May 5, 2009.)
- Civic/community contexts: Organizations, movements, campaigns, a place or locus where people and/or living creatures inhabit, which may be defined by a locality (school, national park, non-profit organization, town, state, nation) or defined by shared identity (i.e., African-Americans, North Carolinians, Americans, the Republican or Democratic Party, refugees, etc.). In addition, contexts for civic engagement may be defined by a variety of approaches intended to benefit a person, group, or community, including community service or volunteer work, academic work.

Workshop Session 2

Demystifying WSCUC's Component 3

Melanie Booth

The Institutional Review Process



This section is designed to assist institutions as they address WSCUC's 2013 Standards of Accreditation for reaffirmation of accreditation. It provides a description of the steps involved in an institution's reaffirmation process, the components that need to be included in the institutional report, interactions with the evaluation team, and other details.

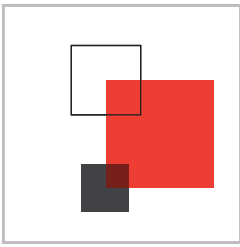
The Institutional Review Process (IRP) described below applies to institutions that are seeking reaffirmation of accreditation. Other models apply for institutions seeking Eligibility, Candidacy, or Initial Accreditation. At the Commission's discretion, institutions may be directed to follow a process that differs from the one described in the pages that follow, and those institutions will be guided by other documents describing those reviews.

All institutions need to demonstrate that they are in substantial compliance with the 2013 Standards of Accreditation and with those federal regulations that the Commission is required to oversee the implementation of. Within this con-

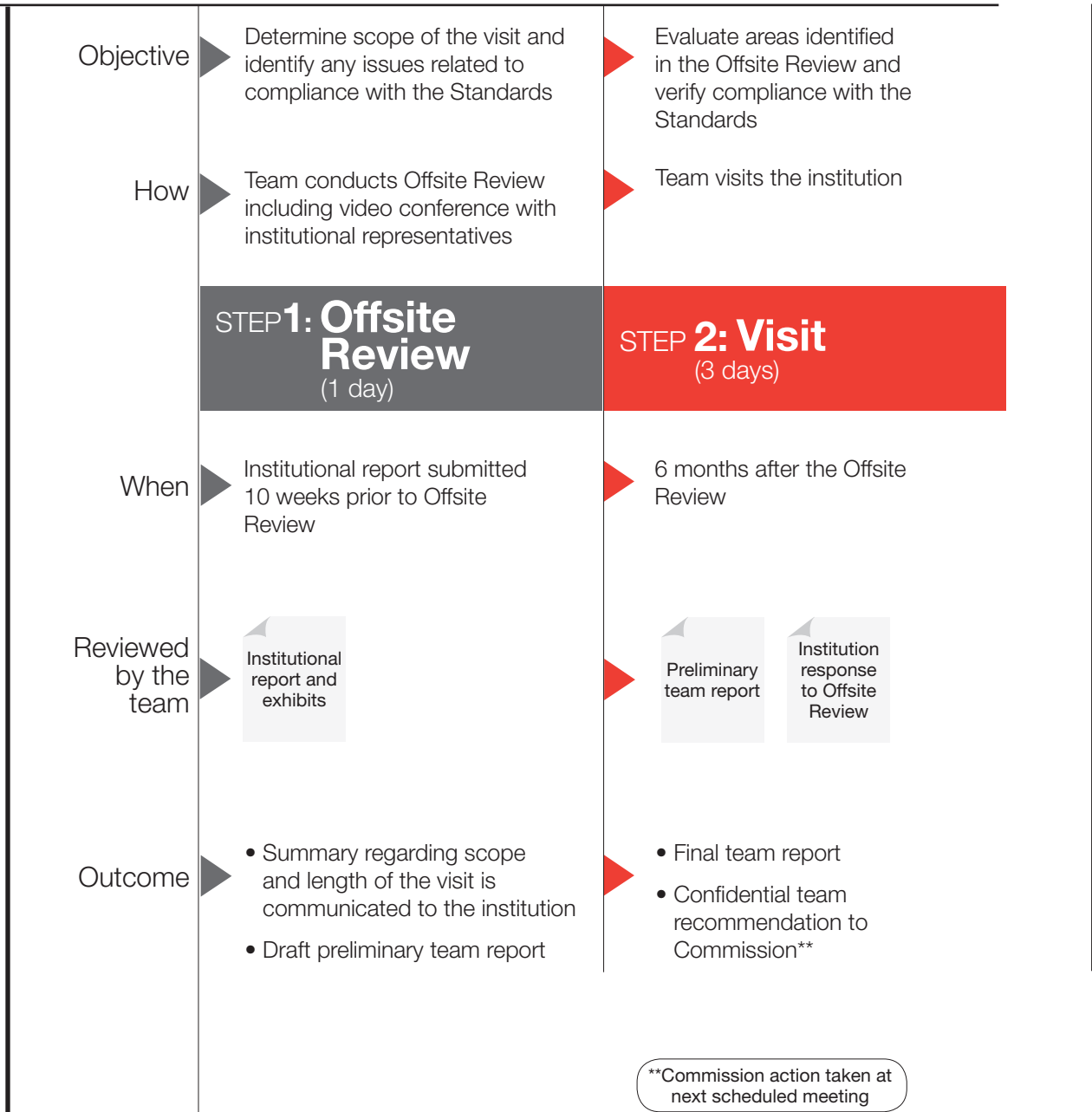
text, the goal of the process is the improvement of student learning, student success, and institutional effectiveness.

Institutions can typically expect to spend two to three years pursuing reaffirmation of WSCUC accreditation. Briefly stated, the IRP involves an Offsite Review by the evaluation team; and an Accreditation Visit to the institution by the same evaluation team. These steps are followed by a Commission decision on an institution's reaffirmation of accreditation. A description of the review process follows.

Student success includes not only strong retention and degree completion rates, but also high-quality learning. It means that students are prepared for success in their personal, civic, and professional lives, and that they embody the values and behaviors that make their institution distinctive.



Overview of the Institutional Review Process



Self-Study and Preparation for the Institutional Review Process

Opportunities for Guidance: WSCUC is committed to supporting institutions as they prepare for the Institutional Review Process. There will be multiple opportunities for institutions to receive information and guidance in order to prepare for the Offsite Review and Visit.

- **Academic Resource Conference:** Every year, WSCUC sponsors the Academic Resource Conference (ARC), which includes workshops and panels on the revised process that institutions will find helpful.
- **Institutional consultations:** Institutions should arrange on-campus consultations, at their cost, with their WSCUC staff liaison. Objectives for this consultation include a review of the institution's responses to previous Commission recommendations and identification of the goals for the self-study, including strengths and areas of challenge. In addition, the WSCUC liaison is available to meet on-site with groups and individuals involved in the self-study process. Together, the team and staff liaison will clarify subsequent steps and strategies for the review. These may include, for example, how the institution will organize for the review, how various constituencies will be involved, and what resources will be required.

The Self-Study: The self-study is the institution's process of gathering data and reflecting on its current functioning and effectiveness under the Standards. At the beginning of the IRP, the self-study provides the necessary preparation for later steps, but self-study continues throughout the two to three years of review for reaffirmation. A candid self-study, with broad engagement of the institutional community, provides the foundation for a high quality institutional report.

In preparation for the self-study, institutions are expected to review their accreditation history. This includes the most recent team report and all Commission action letters received since the last reaccreditation; documents submitted to WSCUC since the last review for reaffirmation of accreditation; and WSCUC responses where applicable (e.g., recommendations related to substantive changes or an interim report).

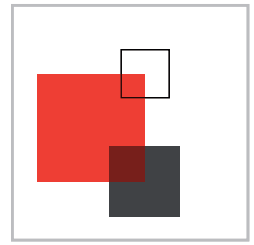
Early in the self-study, the institution undertakes the Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements. This worksheet offers a guide to the four Standards of Accreditation, the Criteria for Review under each Standard, and Guidelines. The questions it poses are designed to prompt conversation on institutional capacity and infrastructure, strengths, weaknesses, priorities, and plans for ensuring

compliance with the Standards and institutional improvement.

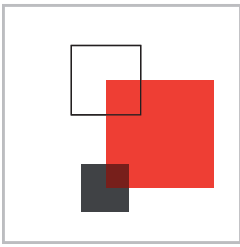
This worksheet calls only for information that has not been submitted with the institution's annual report and that demonstrates compliance with several federal requirements accreditors are expected to monitor. The institution should complete this worksheet for verification by the team during the review process.

The institution also completes the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators, which provides a comprehensive overview of the institution's assessment processes and will be updated for the Mid-Cycle Review.

The completed Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements and the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators, with links to supporting documentation, are submitted as exhibits with the Institutional Report. Their more important function, however, is to provide concrete prompts that help the institution to think collectively about its current status, its vision for the future, and what it may need to do to build on areas of strength, ensure improvement in areas of weakness, demonstrate compliance with federal regulations and WSCUC requirements, and accomplish a successful reaffirmation of accreditation.



The self-study is the institution's process of gathering data and reflecting on its current functioning and effectiveness under the Standards.



Instead of beginning with the Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements and with the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators, some institutions may prefer to frame their self-study around their own priorities and planning (e.g., strategic, financial, and/or academic). The accreditation review may then be adapted to support those goals. Some institutions administer surveys or conduct focus groups to identify top campus priorities. Such approaches have the advantage of putting the emphasis on the institution's goals and then integrating them with WSCUC expectations; thus they may inspire broader campus engagement, stronger commitment to the process, and greater returns on the effort and resources invested. However the institution chooses to begin, explicit attention to the Standards and CFRs, as well as documented compliance with federal laws and regulations, is required.

After these initial steps, the focus of the self-study shifts to the specific components that form the institutional report. These components are described in detail below, along with prompts that can stimulate inquiry and reflection.

Another essential element at the outset of the

self-study is practical planning for how the institution will launch and conduct the accreditation review. Such planning addresses the financial and human resources that will be needed, the structures that will support progress, the timeline and milestones that must be met, and metrics that are available or must be generated. To the extent possible, institutions are encouraged to make use of existing resources, e.g., standing committees, an assessment office, program review, and institutional research, before introducing new processes.

The self-study is the institution's process of gathering data and reflecting on its current functioning and effectiveness under the Standards. A candid self-study, with broad engagement of the institutional community, provides the foundation for a high quality institutional report.

The Institutional Report

Overview: The institutional report is based on the findings of the institution's self-study and, with the exception of an institution-specific theme, must include the components described below. However, the institution may structure its report in the way it finds best suited to tell its story, reordering and perhaps combining these components as needed. A suggested order for the components follows:

- Introduction: Institutional Context; Response to Previous Commission Actions
- Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators
- Degree Programs: Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees
- Educational Quality: Student Learning, Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation
- Student Success: Student Learning, Retention, and Graduation
- Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program Review; Assessment; Use of Data and Evidence
- Sustainability: Financial Viability; Preparing for the Changing Higher Education Environment
- Institution-specific Themes(s) (optional)
- Conclusion: Reflection and Plans for Improvement

The required and optional components of the institutional report are described below. Numbering is provided for ease of reference; it does not indicate relative value or a required order of presentation. In general, each component should include a discus-

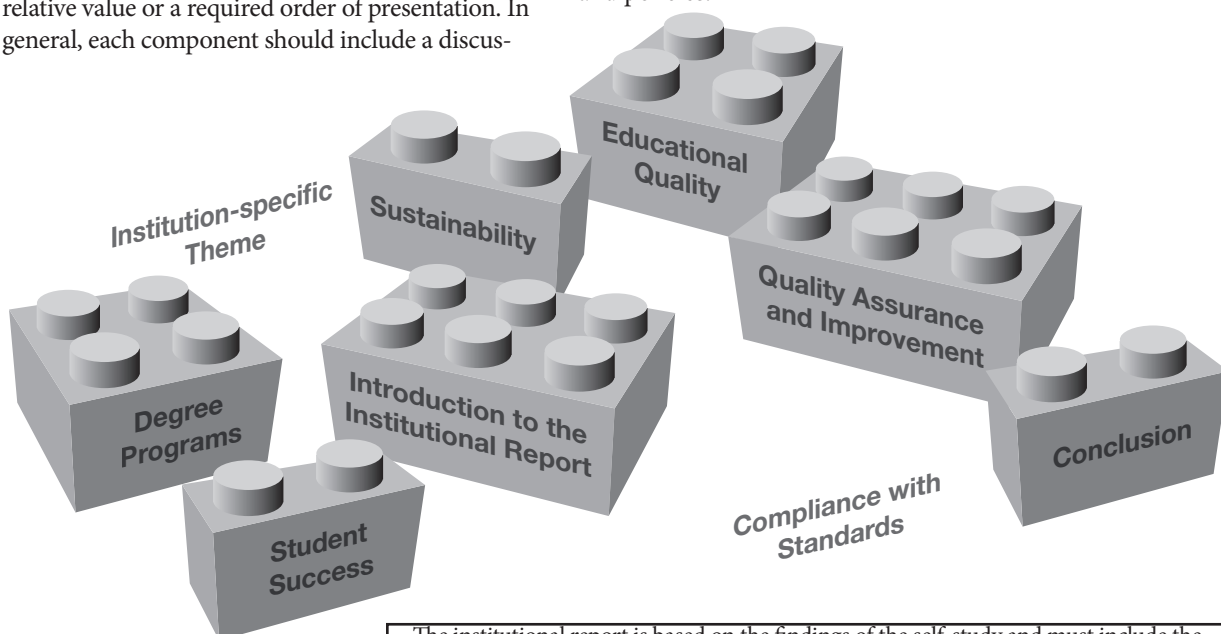
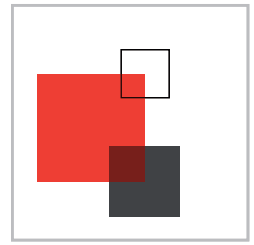
sion of the topic within the context of the institution; analyses undertaken; a self-assessment and reflection; areas of strength or significant progress and areas of challenge; and next steps, as appropriate. When plans are described, targets, metrics, and timelines should be included, as appropriate.

Length of the Report and Citation of Standards:

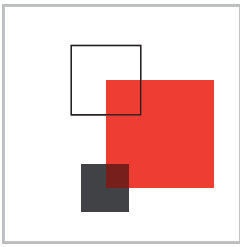
The institutional report narrative is typically 12,000 to 18,000 words (approximately 50-75 pages, double-spaced ; see the Style Guide for Writing WSCUC Reports) in length. In the body of the report, it is helpful to hyperlink to relevant documents in the exhibits in order to support each assertion and to provide easy navigation for evaluators.

References to the Standards of Accreditation and citations of specific CFRs are included, as appropriate, in the body of the report. It is not necessary to cite all the CFRs because these will have been addressed in the Review under the WSCUC Standards. Instead, the institutional report can cite only those CFRs of direct relevance to the topic under discussion (i.e., meaning of degrees, student learning and achievement, student success, quality assurance, planning for the future, and possibly an additional theme). Institutions may cite others, as relevant to their narratives.

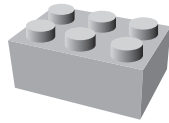
When the institutional report is submitted, it should include a letter, signed by the president/chancellor, affirming the accuracy of the information presented and the institution's intention to comply fully with WSCUC Standards and policies.



The institutional report is based on the findings of the self-study and must include the listed components. However, the institution may structure its report in the way it finds best suited to tell its story, reordering and perhaps combining these components as needed.



Components of the Institutional Report



1: Introduction to the Institutional Report: Institutional Context; Response to Previous Commission Actions

(CFR 1.1, 1.8)

This component offers a succinct history of the institution and an overview of the institution's capacity, infrastructure, and operations. Activities such as distance education, hybrid courses, and off-campus instructional locations are integrated into this discussion. Special attention is given to significant changes since the last accreditation review, e.g., in mission, student demographics, structure, instructional modalities, finances, and other institution-level matters. This is also the place to provide a description of institutional values, the qualities of the educational experience that make graduates of this institution unique, how the institution is addressing diversity, and how it is contributing to the public good. If a theme(s) is included, it is introduced here with an explanation of how it was selected and where in the report the theme appears.

As part of this component, the institution also reviews the most recent team report and action letter and responds to Commission recommendations. As relevant, substantive change reviews, annual and interim reports, and trends or patterns of complaints against the institution, if any, may be discussed. This overview of its accreditation history, operations, strengths, and challenges can help the institution identify issues and anticipate questions that evaluation team members may pose as the institutional review proceeds.

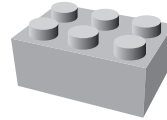
Prompts: The following prompts may be helpful in getting started, but the institution is not required to follow these prompts or respond to them directly.

- What does the institution perceive as its strengths and challenges based, for example, on internal planning and evaluation?
- How has the institution responded to earlier WSCUC recommendations?
- How does the institution demonstrate its contribution to the public good?
- What are the institution's current priorities and plans?
- How did the institution prepare for this review? Who was involved? What was the process? How did this work connect with existing priorities and projects?

- What theme(s), if any, will be discussed and where in the report do they appear?
- Has the institution provided any additional guidance that will help readers follow the organization of the report?

2: Compliance with Standards: Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements; Inventory of Educational

Effectiveness Indicators



Federal law requires every institution coming under review for reaffirmation of accreditation to demonstrate that it is in compli-

ance with the Standards and CFRs of the accrediting association. In addition, the Commission requires that the institution have in place policies and procedures considered essential for sound academic practice.

WSCUC provides two documents— Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements; and Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators—to assist institutions in reflecting and reporting on their compliance with these expectations. In addition, these documents will assist institutions in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. Institutions need to complete both forms and include them among the exhibits that accompany the institutional report when it is submitted. An analysis and discussion of the institution's self-assessment and any plans emerging from these two exercises are discussed in the narrative for this component of the institutional report.

The Review under the WSCUC Standards systematically walks the institution through each of WSCUC's Standards, CFRs, and Guidelines. It prompts the institution to consider where it stands in relation to capacity and educational effectiveness. The required federal checklists provide the opportunity to show how it is meeting federal requirements. As part of the self-study, the Self-Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements can stimulate useful conversations about the institution's strengths, weaknesses, and future efforts.

Similarly, the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators provides assurance that every degree program has in place a system for assessing, tracking, and improving the learning of its students. This worksheet can assist institutions in determining the extent to which they have

effective assessment systems in place, and what additional components or processes they need to develop for continuous improvement. The Inventory will also be used as part of the Mid-Cycle Review, as institutions are requested to update the information for that review.

Prompts: The following prompts may be helpful in getting started, but the institution is not required to follow these prompts or respond to them directly.

- Who participated in the Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements? What perspectives did different constituencies contribute?
- What was learned from completing this worksheet? What are the institution's strengths and challenges? What issues and areas of improvement emerged?
- Who participated in the completion of the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators? What perspectives did different constituencies contribute?
- What was learned from the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators? What are the institution's strengths and challenges? What issues and areas of improvement emerged?
- What plans are in place to address areas needing improvement? What resources, fiscal or otherwise, may be required?

3: Degree Programs: Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees

(CFRs 1.2, 2.2-4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3)

Institutions are expected to define the meaning of the undergraduate and graduate degrees they confer and to ensure their quality and integrity. “Quality” and “integrity” have many definitions; in this context WSCUC understands them to mean a rich, coherent, and challenging educational experience, together with assurance that students consistently meet the standards of performance that the institution has set for that educational experience.

Traditionally, institutions have described their degrees either very generally (i.e., as something of self-evident value) or very concretely (in terms of specific degree requirements and preparation for specific professions). This component of the institutional report asks for something different: a holistic exploration of the middle ground between those two extremes, expressed in terms of the outcomes for students and the institutional mechanisms that support those outcomes. Defining the meaning of higher degrees can provide clarity for institutions, for students, and for a public that seeks to understand what unique educational experience will be had at that particular institution and what makes

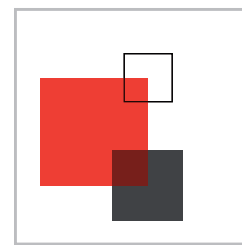
the investment in that experience worthwhile.

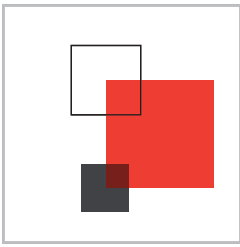
CFR 2.2 indicates that the degree as a whole should be more than the sum of its traditional parts: courses, credits, and grades. Exploring the meaning of a degree thus involves addressing questions about what the institution expects its students—undergraduates and graduates alike—to know and be able to do upon graduation, and how graduates embody the distinct values and traditions of the institution through their dispositions and future plans. It leads to analysis of how effectively courses, curricula, the co-curriculum, and other experiences are structured, sequenced, and delivered so that students achieve learning outcomes at the expected levels of performance in core competencies, in their majors or fields of specialization, in general education, and in areas distinctive to the institution. It means ensuring alignment among all these elements, and maintaining an assessment infrastructure that enables the institution to diagnose problems and make improvements when needed. Not least of all, it means developing the language to communicate clearly about the degree—what it demands and what it offers—to internal and external audiences.

Institutions may wish to draw on existing resources that can be used to understand and articulate the meaning of degrees. These include, for example, AAC&U's LEAP outcomes, the VALUE rubrics (which align with the LEAP outcomes), high-impact practices (or HIPS), and findings from NSSE, UCUES, CIRP, or the CSEQ (see Glossary for information on these resources). As appropriate, institution-level learning outcomes (ILOs) may also play a useful role in defining the meaning of undergraduate and graduate degrees. Identifying common outcomes at the division or school level rather than the institution level may make sense for some institutions.

Another resource is the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP). This framework describes the meaning of three postsecondary degrees: associate, baccalaureate, and master's and defines increasingly sophisticated levels of performance in five broad areas of learning appropriate to postsecondary education. The DQP offers institutions—and the public—a point of reference and a common framework for talking about the meaning of degrees, but without prescriptions or standardization.

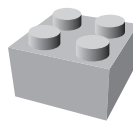
WSCUC does not require institutions to use any specific framework or resource in the articulation of the meaning, quality, and integrity of their degrees. Rather, institutions are encouraged to develop their own strategies for articulating the meaning of their degrees in ways that make sense for their mission, values, and student populations.





Prompts: The following prompts may be helpful in getting started, but the institution is not required to follow these prompts or respond to them directly.

- What does it mean for a graduate to hold a degree from the institution, i.e., what are the distinctive experiences and learning outcomes? For each degree level offered, what level of proficiency is expected? What is the overall student experience? How do these outcomes flow from the mission? (CFRs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2) [Note: The discussion may focus on institutional learning outcomes that apply to all degree levels, or on the meaning of the degree at each level offered, i.e., associate, baccalaureate, master's, doctoral.]
- What are the processes used at the institution to ensure the quality and rigor of the degrees offered? How are these degrees evaluated to assure that the degrees awarded meet institutional standards of quality and consistency? (CFRs 2.6, 2.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6)
- What was identified in the process of considering the meaning, quality, and integrity of the degrees that may require deeper reflection, changes, restructuring, etc.? What will be done as a result? What resources will be required?
- What role does program review play in assessing the quality, meaning, and integrity of the institution's degree programs? (CFRs 2.7, 4.1)



4: Educational Quality: Student Learning, Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation (CFRs 2.2, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3)

Institutions of higher education have a responsibility to document that students acquire knowledge and develop higher-order intellectual skills appropriate to the level of the degree earned. This documentation is a matter of validating institutional quality and providing accountability as well as setting the conditions for improvement of learning.

CFR 2.2a states that undergraduate programs must: “ensure the development of core competencies including, but not limited to, written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and critical thinking.”

The institutional review process calls upon institutions to describe how the curriculum addresses each of the five core competencies, explain their learning outcomes in relation to those core competencies, and demonstrate, through evidence of student performance, the extent to which those outcomes are achieved. If they wish, institutions may create their own limited list of essential higher-

order competencies beyond the five listed. They may also report student performance in majors or professional fields and in terms of institution-level learning outcomes that make the institution's graduates distinctive. The institution analyzes the evidence according to its own judgment, reports on student achievement of its learning outcomes in a way that makes sense for the institution (e.g., as a single score, or within ranges or qualitative categories), contextualizes the findings according to the mission and priorities of the institution, and formulates its own plans for improvement, if needed.

For example, for each core competency, the institution may set a specific level of performance expected at graduation and gather evidence of the achievement of that level of performance (which can be based on sampling) using the assessment methods of its choice.

The five core competencies listed in the *Handbook* are relevant in virtually any field of study, though different fields may define these outcomes in different ways and may also include other outcomes. At many institutions, it is the assessment of learning in the major or professional field that engages faculty and produces the most useful findings. Thus institutions may wish to embed assessment of core competencies in assessment of the major or professional field. Capstones, portfolios, research projects, signature assignments, internships, and comprehensive examinations provide rich evidence that can be analyzed for multiple outcomes, both specialized and common to all programs, at a point close to graduation as determined by the institution. Whatever the expectations and findings, they need to be contextualized and discussed in this component of the institutional report.

It is the institution's responsibility to set expectations for learning outcomes that are appropriate to the institution's mission, programs offered, student characteristics, and other criteria. The Commission is not seeking a minimum standard of performance that students would already meet upon entry or upon completion of lower-division general education courses. Nor does it seek outcomes common to all institutions irrespective of mission. Rather, the Commission seeks learning outcomes and standards of performance that are appropriately ambitious, that faculty and students can take pride in, and that can be explained and demonstrated to external audiences. If a given competency is not a priority for the institution or a particular field of study, expectations may legitimately be lower. Within the context of the institution's mission, the evaluation team then weighs the appropriateness of outcomes, standards, and evidence of attainment.

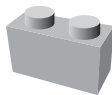
Standards of performance are best set through internal discussion among faculty and other campus educators. Although it is not required, institutions may benefit from external perspectives and collaboration with other institutions, e.g., through benchmarking or use of comparative data. For example, an institution may join a consortium that shares assessment findings and calibrates desired levels of performance.

Graduate programs and graduate-only institutions are expected to define and assess the generic intellectual competencies that are foundational in their field. CFR 2.2b, which refers to graduate programs, calls for expectations that are “clearly . . . differentiated from and more advanced than undergraduate programs in terms of . . . standards of performance and student learning outcomes.” Graduate programs also set standards of performance, choose assessment methods, interpret the results, and act on findings in ways that make sense for the program and institution.

Prompts: The following prompts may be helpful in getting started, but the institution is not required to follow these prompts or respond to them directly.

- What knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes should students possess when they graduate with a degree from the institution? What are the key learning outcomes for each level of degree?
 - For undergraduate programs, how do the institution’s key learning outcomes align with the core competencies set forth in CFR 2.2a? (CFRs 2.3, 2.4.)
 - For graduate programs, how are graduate level outcomes developed? How do these outcomes align with CFR 2.2b? (CFRs 2.3, 2.4)
- What are the standards of performance for students? How are these standards set, communicated, and validated? (CFR 2.6)
- What methods are used to assess student learning and achievement of these standards? When is learning assessed in these areas (e.g., close to graduation or at some other milestone)? (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 4.3)
- What evidence is there that key learning outcomes are being met? (CFR 2.6)
- What steps are taken when achievement gaps are identified? How are teaching and learning improved as a result of assessment findings? (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 4.3, 4.4)

- What role does program review play in assessing and improving the quality of learning? (CFRs 2.7, 4.1)
- How deeply embedded is learning-centeredness across the institution? What is the evidence? (CFRs 4.1-4.3)



5: Student Success: Student Learning, Retention, and Graduation

(CFRs 1.2, 2.7, 2.13)

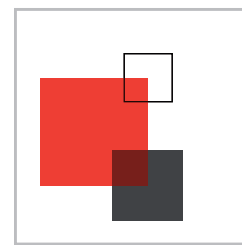
Student success includes not only strong retention and degree completion rates, but also high-quality learning. It means that students are prepared for success in their personal, civic, and professional lives, and that they embody the values and behaviors that make their institution distinctive. Institutions’ definitions of success will differ, given their unique missions, traditions, programs, and the characteristics of the students served.

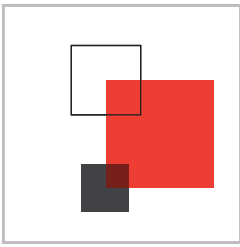
One metric for this component is WSCUC’s Graduation Rate Dashboard (GRD), which uses six data points to estimate the institution’s absolute graduation rate over time and accounts for all graduates regardless of how students matriculate (first-time or transfer, lower or upper division) or enroll (part-time, full-time, swirling), or what programs they pursue.

The GRD does not track specific cohorts of students. Institutions should also calculate direct measures of retention and graduation.

This component needs to address, explicitly, the learning and personal development dimensions of student success. Since aggregate data can mask disparities among student subpopulations, institutions are advised to disaggregate their data, going beyond demographic characteristics. For example, analysis using several variables (such as students’ choice of major, participation in research, study abroad, leadership roles, admission to honor societies, pass rates on licensure examinations, and admission to graduate programs) may yield useful information.

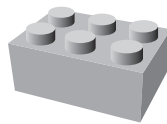
While student success is the responsibility of the entire institution, student affairs and academic support can play a particularly critical role. Here, too, a well-developed assessment infrastructure can provide the data to document and improve student success.





Prompts: The following prompts may be helpful in getting started, but the institution is not required to follow these prompts or respond to them directly.

- How is student success defined (accounting for both completion and learning), given the distinctive mission, values, and programs offered, and the characteristics of the students being served? (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.10, 2.13)
- How is student success promoted, including both completion and learning? What has been learned about different student subpopulations as a result of disaggregating data? (CFRs 2.3, 2.10-2.14)
- What role does program review play in assessing and improving student success? (CFRs 2.7, 4.1)
- Which programs are particularly effective in retaining and graduating their majors? What can be learned from them? What is the students' experience like? (CFRs 2.6, 2.10, 2.13)
- How well do students meet the institution's definition of student success? In what ways does the institution need to improve so that more students are successful? What is the timeline for improvement? How will these goals be achieved? (CFRs 2.6, 4.1-4.4)



6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program Review; Assessment; Use of Data and Evidence

(CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 4.1-4.7)

Successful quality improvement efforts are broadly participatory, iterative, and evidence-based. This component of the institutional report includes a discussion of three basic tools of quality improvement—program review, assessment of student learning, and data collection and analysis—and presents the ways these tools inform the institution's decision making. In addition, institutions are welcome to discuss other quality improvement approaches that have made a difference, if they wish.

Program review remains a priority for WSCUC. It is a natural nexus and point of integration for the collection of data and findings about the meaning of the degree, the quality of learning, core competencies, standards of student performance, retention, graduation, and overall student success. Because of the commitment of students to their degree programs and the loyalty of faculty to their disciplines, program review has great power to influence the quality of the educational experience. Program review can also provide insight into desirable future directions for the program and the institution.

In addition to implementing systematic program review, institutions are expected to periodically assess the effectiveness of their program review process. They can do so, for example, by reviewing the quality and consistency of follow-up after program reviews; determining the effectiveness with which the program review addresses achievement of program learning outcomes; and tracing how recommendations are integrated into institutional planning and budgeting.

Assessment, along with program review, is an essential tool that supports the goals and values of the accreditation process. "Assessing the assessment" should not crowd out the work of understanding student learning and using evidence to improve it. However, good practice suggests that it is wise to step back periodically, ask evaluative questions about each stage of the assessment cycle, and seek ways to make assessment more effective, efficient, and economical.

Data provide the foundation for effective program review, assessment of student learning, and other quality improvement strategies. However, to have an impact, data need to be turned into evidence and communicated in useful formats. The discussion of data collection, analysis, and use can include, for example, information about resources provided by the institutional research office (if one exists), software used to generate reports, access to data, processes for making meaning out of data (see the WSCUC Evidence Guide for more information), and mechanisms for communicating data and findings.

Prompts: The following prompts may be helpful in getting started, but the institution is not required to follow these prompts or respond to them directly.

- How have the results of program review been used to inform decision making and improve instruction and student learning outcomes? (CFRs 2.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)
- What was identified in the process of examining the institution's program review process that may require deeper reflection, changes, restructuring? What will be done as a result? What resources will be required? (CFRs 2.7, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6)
- What has the program or institution learned as it carried out assessments of students' learning? How have assessment protocols, faculty development, choices of instruments, or other aspects of assessment changed as a result? (CFR 4.1)
- How adequate is the institutional research function? How effectively does it support and inform institutional decision-making, planning, and improvement? How well does it support assessment of student learning? (CFRs 4.2-4.7)

7: Sustainability: Financial Viability; Preparing for the Changing Higher Education Environment

(CFRs 3.4, 3.7, 4.1, 4.3-4.7)

To survive and thrive, institutions must not only cope with the present, but also plan for the future. In this component, WSCUC asks each institution first to describe its current status as a viable, sustainable organization; and second, to evaluate how it is poised to address fundamental changes facing higher education in the decade to come. In other words, what is the institution's vision of a 21st century education, and what role will the institution play?

At its most basic, “sustainability” means the ability to support and maintain, to keep something intact and functioning properly. Institutional sustainability has at least two dimensions. Fiscal sustainability—that is, adequacy of financial resources and the appropriate alignment of those resources—is fundamental and has always been critical in any institutional review. Indeed, financial exigency has historically been regional accreditors' single most frequent cause for sanctions. In a highly volatile financial environment, assurance of financial sustainability becomes even more critical.

In this component, the institution presents its current financial position. If the Financial Review Committee has raised any issues or made recommendations, then the institution presents its response in this section of the report. Plans should include targets, metrics, and timelines.

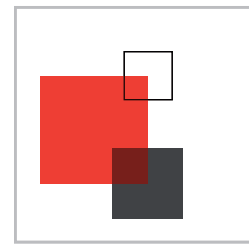
A second facet of financial sustainability is alignment. It is essential that resources be allocated in alignment with the institution's priorities. For an educational institution, clearly, a top priority is student learning and success; thus resource allocation needs to support educational effectiveness, along with other activities that advance knowledge, develop human capital, and allow the institution to learn, adapt, and thrive.

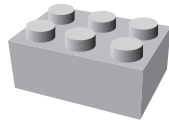
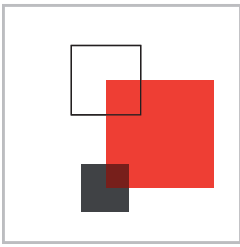
A third dimension of sustainability is the institution's ability to read the evolving higher education landscape and anticipate ways in which the institution itself may need to change. New technologies, economic pressures, public concern about the quality of learning, demographic shifts, student preparation for college, new skills and knowledge needed for success, and alternatives to traditional degrees—all these shifts and many others are rapidly transforming the social, economic, and political environment in which higher education functions.

The task here is for institutions to develop a vision of their role in 21st century higher education. The choices institutions make in the face of these bracing conditions will influence their long-term success.

Prompts: The following prompts may be helpful in getting started, but the institution is not required to follow these prompts or respond to them directly.

- Under Standard 3, institutions are expected to “develop and apply resources and organizational structures to ensure sustainability.” How can the institution demonstrate that its operations will remain financially sustainable over the next 6 to 10 years? (CFRs 3.4 and 4.6)
- How well do financial allocations align with institutional priorities, particularly those related to the meaning, quality, and integrity of degrees offered; student learning and success; and processes for quality assurance, accountability, and improvement? (CFRs 3.4, 4.3)
- Under Standard 2, how does the institution identify and enhance the competencies that students will need to succeed in the future? (CFRs 1.2, 2.2)
- What role does program review play in developing a vision of 21st century education for individual programs and for the institution as a whole? (CFR 4.7)
- In what ways can the institution ensure that educational effectiveness will continue during the period from the present to the next reaffirmation of accreditation? What systems and processes are in place? How deeply embedded are these initiatives in institutional systems and culture? How is educational effectiveness prioritized in the institution's formal plans? (CFRs 3.1-3.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.6)
- How does the institution demonstrate that it is a learning organization? What evidence can be put forward? (CFRs 4.3-4.7)
- What resources have been committed to assessment of learning and improvement of student performance? How are decisions about levels of support made? How is support maintained even in times of constrained resources? (CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 4.3, 4.4)
- Of the changes taking place globally, nationally, locally, and in higher education, which ones will affect the institution most strongly in the next seven to 10 years? What is the institution's vision of education for the coming decade? For the more distant future? How is the institution anticipating, planning for, and adapting to such changes? (CFRs 4.6, 4.7)
- What specific skills does the institution possess or need to develop in order to engage with developments impacting its future, including those occurring globally? (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 4.6, 4.7)





8: Institution-specific Theme(s) (optional) (CFRs as appropriate)

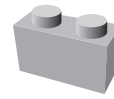
The accreditation review is an opportunity for institutions to align their own priorities with WSCUC's quality improvement process. In the *2001 Handbook*, the theme-based approach to self-study offered institutions the clearest opportunity for this kind of campus-wide engagement and improvement, and the vast majority of institutions took advantage of it. Thus the *2013 Handbook* continues to offer this option. In addition to addressing the components described above, institutions may identify and study one or two themes that are specific to the institution and of critical importance. The theme may emerge from institutional planning or other processes; in any case, it should connect to the Standards.

If the institutional report includes a theme, the component on institutional context is the place to introduce the theme and orient the reader to the part(s) of the institutional report where the theme will be developed. Origins of the theme, analysis, recommendations for action, and related steps can be included as a separate component of the institutional report, or the theme can be woven into one of the other components, as appropriate. Whatever the institution decides, it is helpful to inform the WSCUC staff liaison of the theme early on, so that an individual with relevant background can be included on the evaluation team.

Prompts: The following prompts may be helpful in getting started, but the institution is not required to follow these prompts or respond to them directly.

- What one or two themes would advance institutional priorities and add value to the accreditation review?

- What are the institution's goals or outcomes in pursuing this theme? What is the timeline, what evidence and metrics will show progress, and what resources (financial, human, other) will be required?



9: Conclusion: Reflection and Plans for Improvement

In this concluding component, the institution assesses the impact of the self-study, reflects on what it has learned in the course of the self-study, and discusses what it plans to do next. This is also the place to highlight what the institution has learned about key areas of exemplary institutional performance.

Exhibits

Exhibits are attached to the institutional report and support the narrative. By being selective about what to include, an institution can avoid excessive documentation, which can be challenging for institutions to collect and for evaluation team members and the Commission to read.

The exhibits include the following items:

- Completed Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements.
- Completed Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators.
- Institution-selected exhibits that support the institutional report's narrative.

Program review remains a priority for WSCUC. It is a natural nexus and point of integration for the collection of data and findings about the meaning of the degree, the quality of learning, core competencies, standards of student performance, retention, graduation, and overall student success.



Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees FAQs

Overview & Purpose

In the *2013 Handbook of Accreditation*, institutions are asked to address the Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees in component 3 of the institutional report. The purpose of these FAQs is to provide additional information to institutions regarding how to think about and address this component.

1. What is meant by the “meaning,” “quality,” and “integrity” of degrees and how can an institution demonstrate it is meeting this requirement?

CFR 2.2 indicates that the degree as a whole should be more than the sum of its traditional parts: courses, credits, and grades. Demonstrating the meaning of degrees thus involves addressing questions about what the institution expects its students – undergraduates and graduates alike – to know and be able to do upon graduation, and how graduates embody the distinct values and traditions of the institution through their dispositions and future plans. A degree that is of high quality and integrity is one in which appropriately relevant and challenging learning goals are met by students who are offered a rich and coherent educational experience that is designed, delivered, and assessed by appropriately qualified faculty and supported by other institutional personnel as needed to ensure student success in achieving those goals. An institution may want to address all of these elements in providing evidence of the meaning, quality, and integrity of its degrees.

2. Why are institutions in the region being asked to define and document the meaning, quality, and integrity of our degrees?

The value of higher education in the U.S. is being questioned today more forcefully than at any time in recent memory. Institutions and accreditors are challenged to demonstrate that it is worth the time, effort, and money necessary for students to engage in and complete postsecondary study leading to a degree. Traditionally, institutions have described their degrees either very generally (i.e., as something of self-evident value) or very concretely (in terms of specific degree requirements and preparation for specific professions). This component of the institutional report asks for something different: a holistic exploration of the middle ground between those two extremes, expressed in terms of the outcomes for students and the institutional mechanisms that support those outcomes. Defining the meaning of higher degrees can provide clarity for institutions, for students, and for a public that seeks to understand what unique educational experience will be had at that particular institution and what makes the investment in that experience worthwhile.

3. What's the relationship between the meaning, quality, and integrity of degrees (component 3 of the institutional report) and educational quality, specifically the core competencies (component 4)?

Component 3 takes a broad, holistic view of the entire educational experience leading to a degree; component 4 is concerned with five specific higher-order intellectual skills that provide a foundation for current and future learning. For Component 3, institutions are encouraged to develop their own strategies for articulating the meaning of their degrees in ways that make sense for their mission, values, and student populations.

The response in Component 4 should convey the institution's expectations for its graduates' performance in these specific areas and how the institution determines whether graduates are reliably achieving those expectations. It is the institution's responsibility to set expectations for learning outcomes that are appropriate to the institution's mission, programs offered, student characteristics, and other criteria. The institution analyzes the evidence according to its own judgment, reports on student achievement of its learning outcomes in a way that makes sense for the institution (e.g., as a single score, or within ranges or qualitative categories), contextualizes the findings according to the mission and priorities of the institution, and formulates its own plans for improvement, if needed.

An institution's response in component 3 provides a broad background for understanding how these specific competencies are related to the meaning of the institution's degrees. Some institutions might find it useful to frame their response to component 3 in a way that anticipates its response to component 4. The *2013 Handbook* notes that institutions may structure their reports in the way that they find best suited to telling their stories and are free to depart from the suggested order by combining or reordering the components. However, reviewers should be able to identify the parts of the report that are intended as the response to the various components.

4. Do institutions have to use the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP)? Does it improve their chances of a positive review if they do?

No and No. WSCUC does not require institutions to use the DQP or any other specific framework or resource. Rather, institutions are encouraged to develop their own strategies for articulating the meaning of their degrees in ways that make sense for their mission, values, and student populations.

5. Are institutions being asked to document that every student is meeting every expectation?

No. For good assessment practices to be sustainable, sampling is appropriate in most cases. Institutions are free to develop practices that best meet their needs.

Adopted by the Commission in June 2014



Core Competency FAQs

Overview & Purpose

In the *2013 Handbook of Accreditation*, Criteria for Review 2.2a states:

Baccalaureate programs engage students in an integrated course of study of sufficient breadth and depth to prepare them for work, citizenship, and life-long learning. These programs ensure the development of core competencies including, but not limited to, **written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and critical thinking.**

Component 4 (Educational Quality) of the Institutional Review Process asks for institutions “to describe how the curriculum addresses each of the five core competencies, explain their learning outcomes in relation to those core competencies, and demonstrate, through evidence of student performance, the extent to which those outcomes are achieved.”

The purpose of these FAQs is to provide additional information to institutions regarding the five core competencies.

1. How did WSCUC come up with these five competencies? Why were writing (W), oral communication (OC), quantitative reasoning (QR), information literacy (IL), and critical thinking (CT) singled out for such focused treatment in the institutional report?

These competencies have been part of Standard 2 for undergraduate degrees (criterion for review 2.2a) since 2001. The language of CFR 2.2 states that “all degrees . . . awarded by the institution are clearly defined in terms of . . . levels of student achievement necessary for graduation that represent more than simply an accumulation of courses or credits.” Now, at a time when there is widespread concern about the quality of graduates’ learning, and when assessment practices have emerged that are able to address these outcomes in nuanced ways, the Commission is asking for documentation of actual achievement.

While CFR 2.2a mentions additional outcomes beyond the five core competencies – e.g., creativity, appreciation for diversity, and civic engagement – the five that are the focus of component 4 were deemed generic, fundamental to students’ future success, and assessable. The focus on these five does not in any way limit institutions that wish to address additional competencies.

2. What are the definitions of these five core competencies? Who gets to define them?

Institutions are free to define each core competency in a way that makes sense for the institution, its mission, its values, and the needs of its student body. The assumption, however, is that these are generic competencies – that is, applicable across multiple programs – that will be approached in an interdisciplinary, integrative way. Institutions have a lot of latitude in deciding how they will do that.

3. Are these core competencies supposed to be institutional learning outcomes (ILOs)?

That's one way to approach them. For many institutions, there's a lot of overlap between their ILOs and the five core competencies. For very large, complex institutions, it may be more appropriate – and manageable – to approach them at the college, division, or department level.

4. Can institutions assess the core competencies in the major?

Because most students take major courses right to the end of their studies, there are advantages in embedding core competencies into the assessment of the major or professional field. Many majors use capstones, senior projects, e-portfolios, or other methods of collecting student work for assessment, and these can provide evidence of students' mastery of the competencies. Assessing core competencies at the degree level allows expectations and types of evidence to be adapted to the degree. For example, depending on the field, oral communication skills might be demonstrated through debating, interviewing, negotiating, counseling, or presenting ideas.

In some cases, assessing students' level of achievement in a particular competency through the major assessment might not seem appropriate (e.g., quantitative reasoning in an English or dance major) or feasible, where faculty are reluctant to integrate them into their assessment of the major. In that case, the institution can look at other options such as upper-division GE; signature assignments across a range of upper-division courses that students may be taking as electives; or a core competency portfolio that students assemble with artifacts that illustrate each of the core competencies. The benefit of this last approach is that it can also include items from the co-curriculum or internships.

So the answer to the question about "having" to assess core competencies in the major is no. The major is probably the easiest place to do it, but not the only place, and it's definitely not required.

5. Do institutions need to assess and support transfer students' development of the CCs?

Yes. The diploma that students receive, whether they're native students or transfers, will look the same. It's the institution's responsibility – as well as in the student's interest – to ensure that the degree represents high-quality learning for every graduate.

6. Academic programs are all so different. Does this mean there are different definitions of the core competencies and different assessment processes for each program?

Program-level learning and assessment results are very important; they're a key part of program review, which also has a place in the 2013 institutional review process, or IRP (see Component #6: Quality Assurance and Improvement). But with the core competencies, the goal is a higher level of aggregation: the institution level, or at very large and complex universities, the school or college or division level. Institutions should develop processes that allow for differences while at the same time focusing on commonalities across disciplines.

7. Is it necessary to document how much students learned and developed from entry to exit? Should there be pre- and post-testing?

No. While it can be useful to know the trajectory of students' learning over time, so faculty can see where they improved or plateaued or even became less proficient, the focus is on their level of

proficiency at graduation. Think of assessment that measures growth as a tool for enhancing the final result. Pre- and post-testing is one approach to assessment, and it may be useful. But it can also be costly, it is methodologically challenging, and the results can be difficult to interpret. In some contexts, it can be inauthentic and self-serving.

8. What about institutions that award A.A. or A.S. degrees? Should core competencies be assessed for students as they leave with an associate's degree? What if they transfer to a baccalaureate program?

Yes, the Commission cares about students' mastery of competencies in all degree programs, from associate to graduate levels. Institutions that award A.A. or A.S. degrees should also set standards, report results, and document plans for improvement when necessary at those levels.

9. Does this core competency requirement mean that institutions have to show 100% of students meeting the standard? Or that a student who doesn't meet the standard gets a failing grade – for example on their capstone – or doesn't graduate?

No. What is important—to the institution as well as the Commission—is the distribution: what proportion of your students is meeting the standard or even exceeding it? What proportion is below the standard, and how far below? And what do you plan to do to raise overall performance and shift the distribution upward, if you are dissatisfied with the results?

10. How can such extensive and complex findings be documented for the institutional review process, particularly at large institutions with hundreds of programs, multiple divisions, and several degree levels?

As an element of their institutional reports, institutions are asked to describe and provide evidence of how they assess students' achievement of core competencies. Institutions are free to decide how best to organize the setting of proficiency standards, assessment, documentation, and reporting of results, but it must be clear that this work is documented as it occurs throughout the institution. For large, complex institutions a narrative summary might be provided to include where responsibility for this work lies; general information on the definition of these proficiencies and how they were developed; general information on cycles and timelines for reviews across the institution; systems or processes for reviewing data/information obtained through reviews; and locus of authority for taking action based on results. A matrix providing specifics could be created to demonstrate the pervasiveness and effectiveness of this work throughout the institution. Depending on the size and structure of the institution, this might be done through a selection of examples that represent all of the institution's programs, divisions, and degree levels.

Adopted by the Commission in June 2014

Plenary 3

MQID? Really???

**We're Graduate Programs!
Engaging Faculty in Developing
and Using Graduate Program
Learning Outcomes as the
Institution Explores the
Meaning, Quality, and Integrity
of Our Degrees**

Kathleen Roe

SJSU SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

***MQID???* Really??
We're Graduate Programs!**

Engaging Faculty in Developing and Using Graduate Program Outcomes as the Institution Explores the Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of our Degrees



Kathleen Roe, DrPH. MPH
Professor of Public Health

**WSCUC Workshop on Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of the Degree
October 19, 2016
Cal Poly Pomona**

SJSU SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

The View from SJSU: Approaches, Models, Tools

- **SJSU and WSCUC**
.....
- **2 models** for engaging graduate faculty in developing and using PLOs – ***SJSU and Cal State Bakersfield***
- **4 MQID Tools** that have worked well with our graduate faculty
- **“These things I know”**

 **San José State University** 

Founded in 1857... from orchards to Silicon Valley... majority minority 25+ years

8 colleges.....31,000 students.....on campus and online.....1,191 FTE faculty

141 degrees.....comprehensive metropolitan university




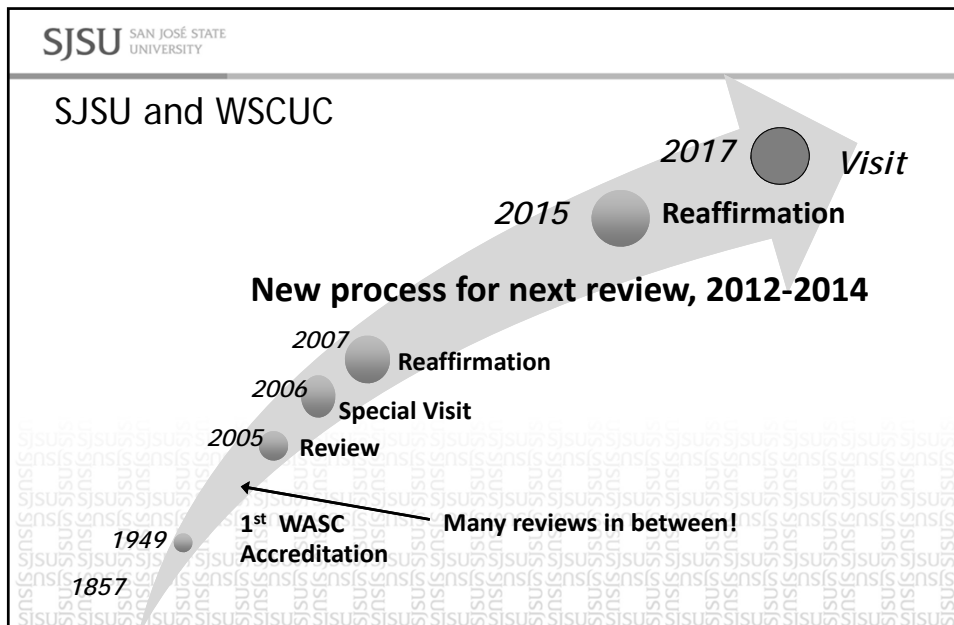
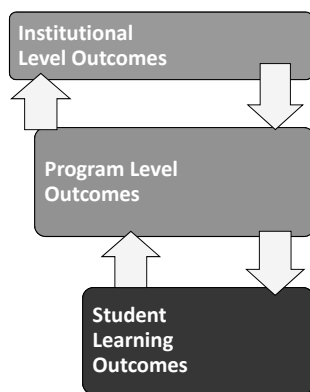
  

Photo credits: www.portfolium.com, www.reddit.com



Our progress was noted...



✓ We have University Learning Goals

✓ We have PLOs

✓ We have course embedded SLOs

... at undergraduate level

And we all agreed that we weren't there yet with our graduate programs.

It's clear in the Guidance we had worked from...

(at that point: 11/3/11 WASC resolution)

Building on the first paragraph of CFR 2.2 and CFR 1.2, which requires that institutions define the outcomes of degrees beyond the accumulation of courses and credits...

*The Commission expects that all institutions will articulate, as part of the institutional review process, the learning outcomes of the degree as a whole **and demonstrate that there are processes in place to assure the meaning, quality and rigor of [all of]the degrees offered.** The institution is responsible for defining how it will address these issues.*

How to engage graduate faculty?



Two models: Cal State Bakersfield and San José State

Model A: Cal State Bakersfield

Southern San Joaquin Valley *Founded in 1965*

4 schools *8,720 students* *344 FTE faculty* *62 degrees*



According to Carl Kemnitz, then AVP for Academic Programs (now Deputy Provost at SJSU)

-
- Preponderance of attention to undergraduate education
 - all undergraduate programs had PLOs
 - most graduate programs had differentiated PLOs
 - “University Learning Outcomes” (ULOs) were really undergraduate learning outcomes
 - WSCUC spotlight coincided with 2011 national DQP roll-out

The Bakersfield Model

Year-long process (2011-12)

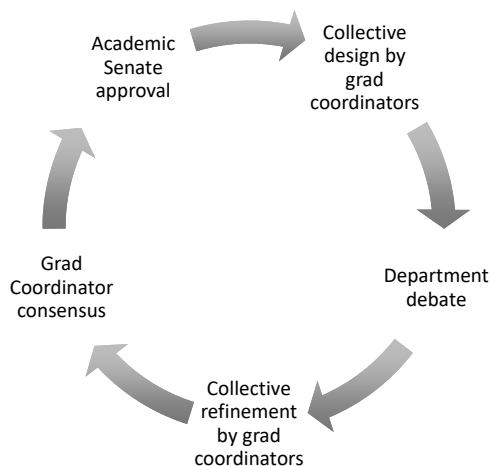
- DQP as starting point
- Campus-wide initiative, inclusive, public, consensus

Goals:

- Align graduate PLOs to ULOs
- Develop realistic PLO assessment plans
- Annual assessment reporting system



What they did



End Result



Ultimately, graduate assessment status
surpassed undergraduate assessment

What made this model work?

Right-sized for the campus

Universal expectations

Leveraged an exciting and useful new tool

Cultivated pride/interest in being leading edge

Led by trusted (AVP) peer

Resources (Title V-b grant), including workshops, financial incentives for
departments

Cajoling, coaching, support, visibility

Size might matter...



Cal State Bakersfield

- 700 graduate students
- 22 graduate degrees
- 20 non-resident and international graduate students
- 16+ graduate coordinators/advisors

San José State



- 6,000 graduate students
- 67 graduate degrees
- 2,266 non-resident and international graduate students
- 65+ graduate coordinators/advisors


Model B: San José State



Blogs.sjsu.edu

MQID????

Isn't it obvious????



We require a thesis!!!

We know the quality of our students' work!

Faculty want to do their research, not work on this stuff!!!!

Photo credit: www.artsblog.dallasnews.com

We had the same goals as Bakersfield

Goals:

- Align graduate PLOs to ULOs
- Develop realistic PLO assessment plans
- SJSU: Use culminating experiences to assess PLOs

But a top-down, unified, one year process was not going to work for us!

Emerging, Multi-Year Process

1.0 (AY 2013-14)

- Do we have PLOs for all graduate programs?
- Do the program PLOs align with the new University Learning Goals?

2.0 (AY 2014-15) – WSCUC Visit

- Do all graduate PLOs establish advanced-level expectations?
- Where in the curriculum are PLOs introduced, reinforced, mastered?
- Do the PLOs reflect what is central to the program?

3.0 (AY 2015-16)

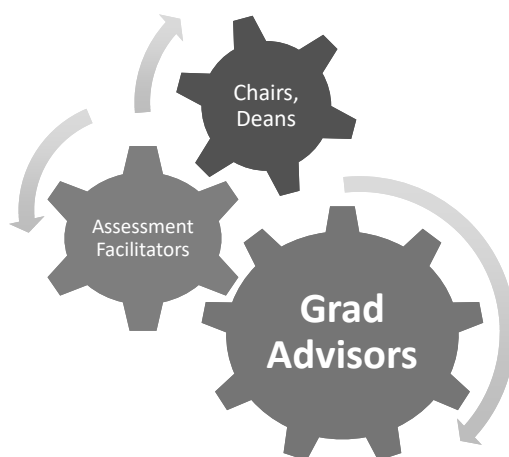
- Culminating Experience 1: Comprehensive Exam Exploration

4.0 (This year!)

- PLOs and the Comprehensive Exams



What we did



Part of WSCUC Initiatives

Consistent messaging

Led by AVP for Grad Studies

.20 Friendly Faculty Peer

.20 Student Assistant

Meetings each semester

Just moving cheese, not mountains

Celebrating progress

Biggest Result to Date



Cleared up comp faculty resource allocation barrier
Facilitating structural changes to support comp administration
Working on consensus around SJSU Comp Characteristics
Silo busting and peer exchange – all about MQID!

What made this model work?

Universal expectations broken into manageable steps over time
Respected the image of “a fleet of small boats”
Responded to pride /commitment of graduate faculty
Led by team: trusted AVP & experienced peer
Made it easy for faculty to participate
No initial resources – but took resource barriers seriously!
Consultation, coaching, support, peer exchange & leadership

4 Tools From Our Toolbox...

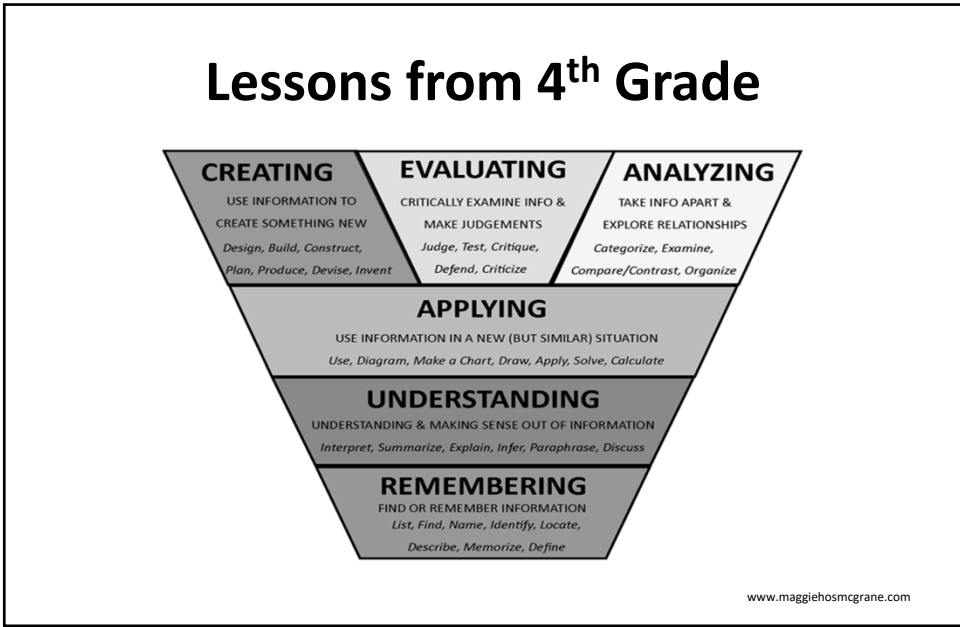
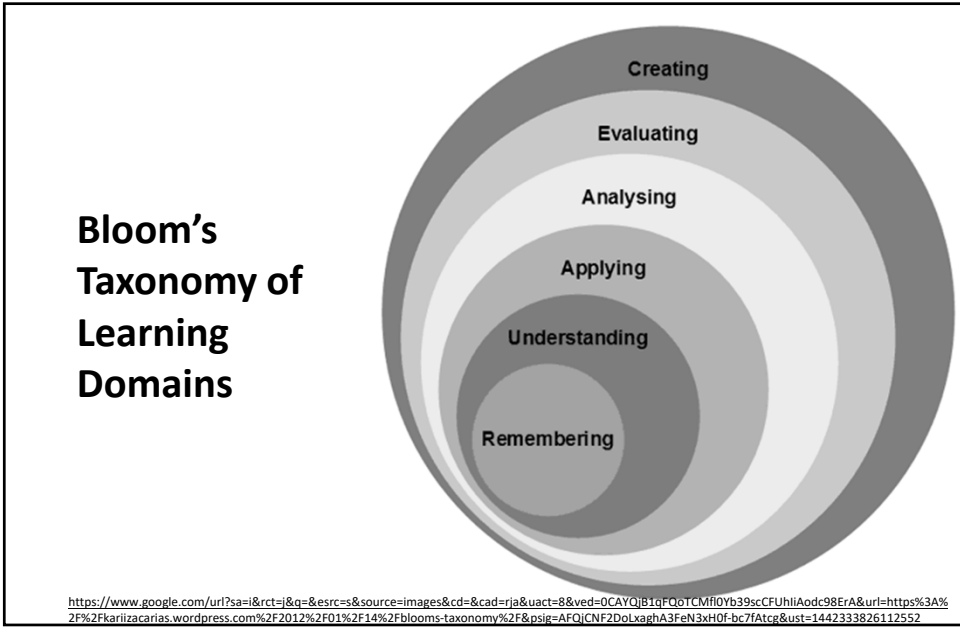
Tool #1: Project Commitments

Our Commitments

- Written document expressing our commitments and approach
- Shared with Graduate Advisors
- Touchstone for making this about SJSU and about graduate faculty and their programs



Tool #2: Bloom's Taxonomy



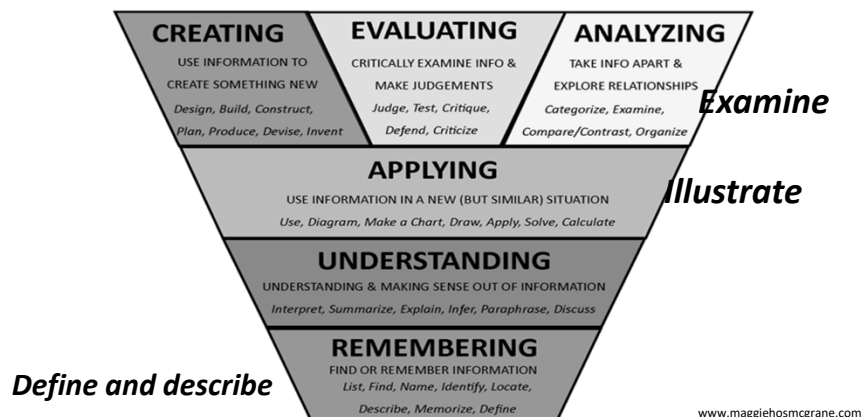
An example from the MA in Economics

PLO 2. MACROECONOMICS THEORY

Students should be able to **define, describe and illustrate** a wide array of macroeconomic concepts, using verbal, written, graphical and mathematical expression, and also be able to **examine, assess and criticize** policies, projects and other current events, using core macroeconomic theory at the advanced level.

The Econ MA PLO in Bloom!

Assess and criticize



And look what they added to each PLO...

PLO 2. MACROECONOMICS THEORY

Students should be able to ***define, describe and illustrate*** a wide array of macroeconomic concepts, using verbal, written, graphical and mathematical expression, and also be able to ***examine, assess and criticize*** policies, projects and other current events, using core macroeconomic theory at the advanced level.

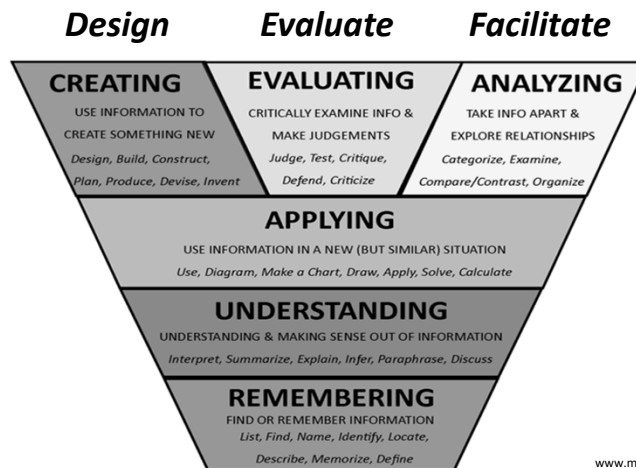
Assessment: Analyze results from comprehensive exam, section II (202)

Another example – MA Communications Studies

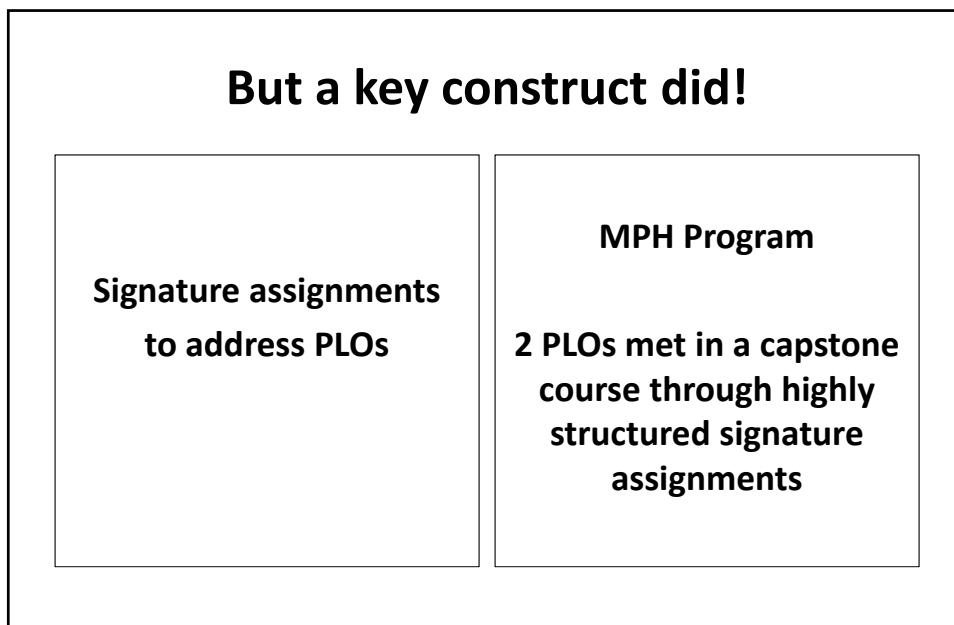
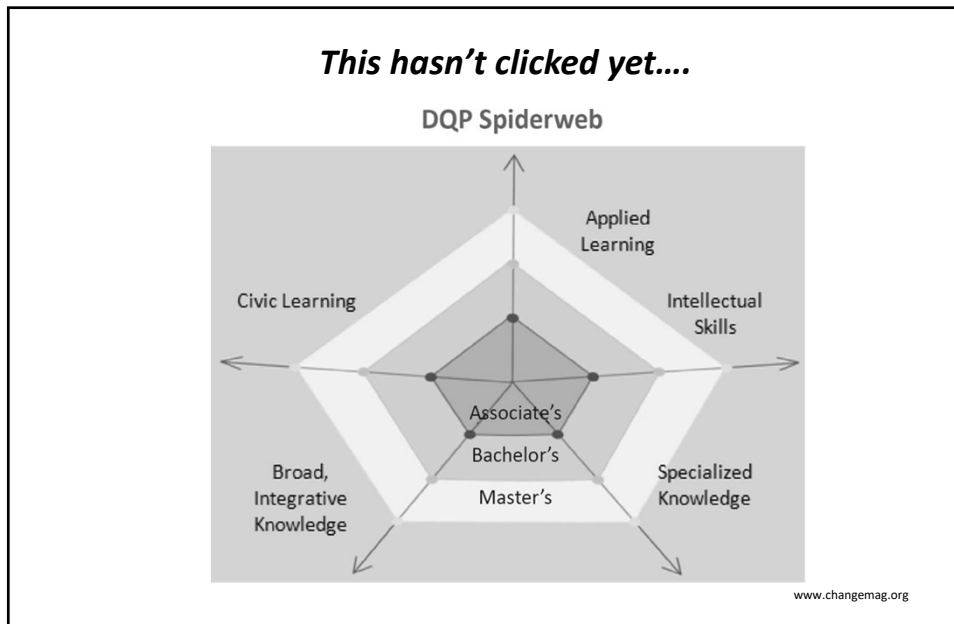
**PLO 3.b. PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE:
THEORY AND RESEARCH APPLICATIONS**

Students will be able to ***design, facilitate, and evaluate*** applied communication activities (i.e. presentations, workshops, forums, trainings, group discussions, etc.) in professional contexts utilizing conceptual foundations and research methods.

The Comm Studies MA PLO in Bloom!



Tool #3: DQP



Tool #4:
The Culminating Experience Lens

It started slow....

What we tried:



What worked:

*“Tell me about
your comp...”*

Methods of The Comp Project

Precursor to the “Project Project” and the Thesis Project!

- Preliminary document review – we did our homework!
- Individual interviews – we came to them, we listened
- Inventory of all SJSU comprehensive exams – we put it all together
- Matrix of common elements & “best practices” – we showcased strengths
- Honest discussion of barriers and facilitators to quality exams, appropriate rigor, link to PLOs – we linked it back to MQID and how they can show the strength of their programs



**So what did we learn about
engaging faculty in the MQID
process?**

Insights from Bakersfield and San José

“These things I know”

1. Graduate programs are different!
2. The heart of a graduate program is the faculty and their passion for their field
3. Graduate faculty may not have kept up with the trends in higher education overall – and identify far more strongly with excellence in their disciplines
4. Graduate faculty are wary of coming demands and the “constraints and distractions” ahead
5. Whether granular or universal, a strengths-based approach breaks the ice and opens the door (resources help, too!)
1. When framed properly and culturally relevant, graduate faculty are eager to talk about what their graduates must know, how they know it, and why it matters!

...what their graduates must know, how they know it, and why it matters?

That is MQID!!!



SJSU SAN JOSÉ STATE
UNIVERSITY

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Bloom's Taxonomy

Table 1. The cognitive processes dimension — categories, cognitive processes (and alternative names)

lower order thinking skills → higher order thinking skills

remember	understand	apply	analyze	evaluate	create
recognizing (identifying)	interpreting (clarifying, paraphrasing, representing, translating)	executing (carrying out)	differentiating (discriminating, distinguishing, focusing, selecting)	checking (coordinating, detecting, monitoring, testing)	generating (hypothesizing)
recalling (retrieving)	exemplifying (illustrating, instantiating)	implementing (using)	organizing (finding coherence, integrating, outlining, parsing, structuring)	critiquing (judging)	planning (designing)
	classifying (categorizing, subsuming)		attributing (deconstructing)		producing (construct)
	summarizing (abstracting, generalizing)				
	inferring (concluding, extrapolating, interpolating, predicting)				
	comparing (contrasting, mapping, matching)				
	explaining (constructing models)				

(Retrieved from University of Iowa Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

<http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching-resources/effective-practice/reviced-blooms-taxonomy/>

(Table adapted from Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001, pp. 67–68.)

Workshop Session 3

Jumpstarting Your Institution's MQID Plan

**Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees:
Jumpstarting Your MQID Action Plan
Workshop Session 3**

GUIDANCE

Given what you discovered in your Treasure Hunt (Workshop #1), what you learned from the presenters about their institutions' processes (Plenaries 1, 2 and 3), and the various tools, resources, and strategies you considered (Workshop #2), use this guide to jumpstart an action plan and capture your next steps for MQID at your institution.

PART I: REFLECTIONS ON TOOLS, RESOURCES, & STRATEGIES

Identify 3-4 specific tools, resources, or strategies that you learned about today that might be particularly effective in furthering your institution's MQID work.

Tool / Resource / Strategy	How can we apply this to our MQID work?
1)	

Tool / Resource / Strategy	How can we apply this to our MQID work?
2)	
3)	
4)	

PART II: IDENTIFY KEY PERSONNEL / OFFICES / INTERNAL & EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS THAT SHOULD BE INVOLVED

Who should be part of this process? What unique perspectives will each of these constituents provide?

Is the “whole” institution represented? Who is missing?

Who should lead the charge? Why?

How large should the committee be to enhance efficiency and ensure institution-wide engagement?

PART III: IDENTIFY YOUR INSTITUTION'S VETTING / APPROVAL PROCESSES

Sketch out the approval process for your institution.

List of Key Personnel/Offices	Part of Working Committee(s)?	If not part of committee, strategy for vetting

PART IV: STRUCTURES & RESOURCES

What structures and resources are in place to support this work (e.g., committees)?

What systems are in place at your institution that can assist with this process (e.g., new framework, revised mission, etc.)?

What barriers do you foresee for working on MQID at your institution? What strategies might help address the barriers?

PART V: DEVELOP AN INITIAL WORK PLAN

Desired Accomplishment	Lead Person / People Responsible	Deliverables	Vetting and Approval Processes	Due Dates

PART VI: NEXT STEPS

What are your next steps for this work when you return to your institution?

Additional Resources

THE EMERGING LEARNING SYSTEM

Report on the recent convening and new directions for action

June 2016

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Artwork by Up Your Creative Genius

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FOREWORD

In February, Lumina Foundation hosted more than 40 national experts in a discussion central to Goal 2025. With nine years remaining to reach Goal 2025 and growing concern about the learning that stands behind postsecondary credentials in the U.S., we're pleased to share the discussions from the convening and proposed next steps to advance what is coming to be known as *learning systems reform*.

Lumina is committed to Goal 2025 – *increasing the proportion of Americans with degrees, certificates and other high-quality postsecondary credentials to 60 percent by 2025*. Lumina defines high-quality credentials as those with *transparent learning outcomes leading to further education and employment*. Since adopting Goal 2025, we have hosted a number of conversations related to learning – most recently, the convening that is described in this report. We've also supported a series of conversations which are part of an evolving national dialogue on credentialing summarized in *Connecting Credentials: Lessons from the National Summit on Credentialing and Next Steps in the National Dialogue* (see www.ConnectingCredentials.org for further background).

What is increasingly apparent from these conversations is that they are converging around learning as central to the national effort to increase postsecondary attainment. Many higher education institutions are using the *Degree Qualifications Profile* (DQP) to guide efforts to strengthen the quality of their associate, bachelor's and master's degrees. There are other learning and skills frameworks that apply to other credentials (e.g., certificates, industry certifications, badges, apprenticeships, micro-credentials) to help clarify the learning/skills outcomes behind them. These include the beta Credentials Framework, employability skills frameworks, and a number of industry sector frameworks.

The National Summit on Credentialing held in October 2015 led to the appointment of work groups that have been meeting since February to address five focus areas to advance the credentialing effort. The work groups' goal is to create an action plan for a coherent, connected and clear credentialing system that works for *all* students. The groups comprise roughly 100 national experts in the credentialing area, some of whom are also part of the learning systems group described in this report. The five focus areas dovetail in many ways with the directions for action emerging from the Learning Systems convening.

The table on Page 3 outlines excerpts of important areas of commonality between the recommendations in this report and those offered in an earlier report: *Connecting Credentials: Lessons from the National Summit on Credentialing and Next Steps in the National Dialogue*.

We are heartened to see these important conversations about learning and credentialing converge. Educators, employers, learners, policymakers and researchers are increasingly asking the same questions: *Do our degrees, certificates and other credentials stand for high quality? What is the learning – the skills – that our credentials signify? How do we know learning has occurred and that skills have been acquired? Which credentials have the most value?*

There is growing recognition that credentials must stand for high-quality learning and skill development; that several key steps are needed to advance the creation of a more transparent, connected credentialing system in the U.S.; and that we must not advance these actions in silos. Rather, progress requires partnerships and collective action. That's the only way to achieve our shared vision and leverage resources for the long journey ahead.

We have many groups to thank for their leadership in the conversation about learning systems reform. Key among them are the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) and the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA). These organizations ably assisted us in identifying resources to inform the convening discussions on learning systems and the national experts who are leading major efforts to strengthen learning outcomes.

Finally, our sincere appreciation goes to the more than 40 national experts who joined Lumina Foundation and our colleagues from the Teagle Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation at the February convening. These individuals informed the growing community of individuals and organizations committed to learning systems work and urged us all to consider thoughtfully the type of collaboration necessary to advance this work. The insights from these experts have strengthened Lumina's own commitment to connect high-quality credentials to learning – and we invite others to join us in the critical work ahead.

Dewayne Matthews, Ph.D.
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CONVERGING PERSPECTIVES FROM TWO GROUPS

CONNECTING CREDENTIALS

- Develop a common language so that we have a common way of explaining credentials in terms of the competencies – the knowledge and skills – that each represents.
- Use technology and real-time data to empower credential users including learners, employers and advisers to make informed decisions about credential options, pathways to them, and their value in the labor market.
- Create nimble quality-assurance processes to ensure the credentials people earn are of high quality so that workers enter the workforce prepared to thrive, and all stakeholders trust the validity of the credentials being used.
- Develop scalable ways of engaging employers to ensure credentials are relevant in the workforce, in the creation and use of those credentials.
- Build credentialing pathways to increase equity so that quality credentials are linked to career pathways and the pathways are increasing attainment among first-generation and minority students. This will lead to greater social equity and better outcomes for those who have not been well served by our higher education system.

EMERGING LEARNING SYSTEM

- We need a shared language to talk more widely about the reforms needed in our learning systems. A specific next step is to create a shared glossary of terms. A shared glossary will help us avoid disagreements about what some terms mean and make the case for changes needed.
- Every professional is important – advisers, course designers, registrars, faculty, staff, and employers – and each uses technology in helping students learn what they need to succeed in the 21st century economy and society.
- Curriculum is redesigned to ensure students' educational experiences create personalized learning pathways toward the learning outcomes associated with the high-quality credential they seek.
- Research informs us that integrated, interdisciplinary learning requires faculty to move beyond a discipline-based orientation to work with educators across the institution and practitioners in the employer world.
- Shift the public policy narrative from 'postsecondary education is a private good' to the equity-minded view that 'postsecondary education is a public good.' Jobs providing a living wage will require post-secondary credentials. This underscores the urgency that Americans from every background pursue a high quality postsecondary credential.

INTRODUCTION

WHY A ‘LEARNING OUTCOMES’ CONVENING?

For more than two decades, higher education leaders and associations, employers and policymakers have been asking tough questions about how well our nation’s colleges and universities prepare graduates to contribute successfully to a changing global workforce and society. Business leaders often express frustration that college graduates are not achieving the broad, cross-cutting learning outcomes they need at high enough levels to fuel a technology-rich, innovation-driven economy. They also complain that – whatever levels of learning graduates might be achieving – transcripts, resumes, and other current forms of documentation do not provide information that enables anyone outside the academy to understand clearly what students actually learned in college. They often don’t know what a specific degree or credential signifies in terms of *learning* – what students know and can do.

“We have no idea what our nation is getting substantively in exchange for an enormous public investment in higher education and constantly rising private tuition.” - *The Hill*

Given how important a highly educated citizenry has become to our nation’s economic vitality, it is not surprising that policymakers at both the state and federal levels also have been asking tougher questions about how well our colleges and universities are performing. While policymakers have until very recently been primarily focused on access, affordability, attainment rates, and average salaries of graduates, business leaders have been more concerned – and vocal – about actual learning outcomes. A recent op-ed in *The Hill* (Barry 2015) noted that “for all the rhetoric and angst about increasing college prices, the dirty little secret of higher education is that a college degree doesn’t actually represent any particular set of knowledge or skills. We have no idea what our nation is getting – substantively –

in exchange for an enormous public investment in higher education and constantly rising private tuition. Do students leave with just a piece of paper or do they leave intellectually with something appreciably greater?”

Higher education leaders have not ignored these critiques. Many educators also have been concerned – especially in the face of changing demographics and changing patterns of college attendance – about the intentionality of curricular pathways and the actual levels of learning of students. In the past, students relied on one institution for their degree program and institutions hoped to deliver a logically sequenced education. While coherence may have been illusory even then, newer attendance patterns place greater responsibility on students themselves to create meaningful learning from a supermarket of choices (AAC&U 2002). This trend toward “student swirl” has only increased. It emphasizes the need for institutions and systems of higher education to collaborate on clarifying expected learning outcomes and demonstrating students’ achievement as they progress.

These pressures and concerns all drive a steady increase in attention to learning outcomes – how we define them and measure how well students are actually achieving them in and across all kinds of institutions and educational experiences. Dozens of projects and many reports have been issued in the last decade addressing the need for greater clarity about learning outcomes and the need to assess them more effectively.

Lumina Foundation’s Goal 2025 seeks to *increase the proportion of Americans with degrees, certificates and other high-quality credentials to 60 percent by 2025*, defined as those that are based on transparent learning outcomes **and** that lead to further education and employment.

With Goal 2025 in mind, and aware of growing concern about student learning outcomes, Lumina Foundation invited more than 40 practitioners and leaders working in the learning outcomes space to a convening in early February 2016. The goal of the convening, called “It’s All About the Learning,” was to strengthen collaboration among a variety of efforts advancing quality learning, equity, and completion; the use of credential/learning outcomes frameworks; the creation of transparent,

flexible and guided learning pathways; and recognition of credentials based on competencies. The objectives of the convening were to:

- Create a shared understanding of initiatives focused on enhancing high-quality learning, equity and completion, including what is working or not working.
- Identify opportunities for collaboration in advancing initiatives focused on learning, equity and completion, as well as expanding cross-initiative support.
- Develop plans for how to move forward on opportunities of shared interest and discuss the potential for a more organized community of policy and practice to support this work.

The accompanying table outlines six likely categories of the emerging concept of a learning system. The categories were identified following an analysis of nearly 200 resources (e.g., reports, books, tools, bibliographies) that inform higher education institutions, systems and state leaders about how to engage in learning systems work. A key criterion for including an item in the resource list was that it had been published within the past five years. The first supplemental document appended to this report (*It is About the Learning*) contains more information about the key categories of a learning system and resources reviewed, by categories.

SIX COMPONENTS OF AN EMERGING LEARNING SYSTEM

Quality Learning Frameworks

- Common Core and higher education alignment
- Degree Qualifications Profile and Tuning
- Essential Learning Outcomes

- Beta Credentials Framework
- Employer engagement in quality
- Additional learning frameworks

Pathways

- Competency-based education
- General education and major program redesign
- Remediation/developmental education

- High-impact practices
- Guided pathways
- Transfer

Assessment

- State of assessment
- Approaches to assessment
- Prior learning assessment
- Assignments as assessment

- Rubrics
- Co-curricular assessment
- General education assessment

Recognition of Credentials

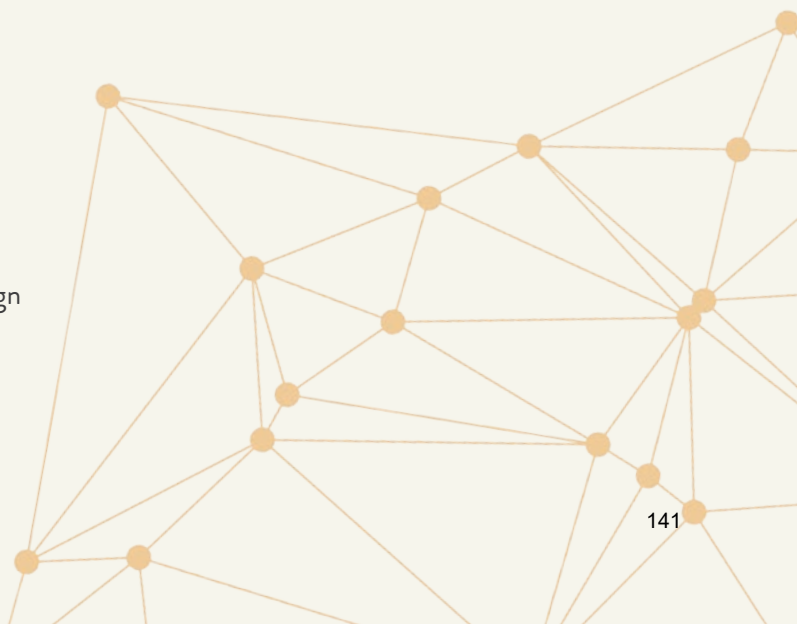
- Transcripts and badges
- Credential registry
- Comprehensive student records

Equity

- Inclusive excellence
- Equity-minded practice
- Culturally relevant curriculum design

Leadership and Change

- Senior leaders
- Change initiatives
- Faculty



IDENTIFYING THE PARTICIPANTS

In planning for the convening, Lumina worked closely with two leading organizations in learning outcomes work – the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA). These organizations suggested resources to inform the discussions and also helped identify national experts who lead major projects on learning outcomes, approaches to teaching and learning, frameworks, pathways, equity, assessment, and documentation of learning.

The attendees represented research centers, higher education systems and institutions (community colleges and universities), assessment offices, regional accrediting bodies, and intermediary organizations with expertise in policy and technical assistance. Experts represented six categories that constitute the emerging learning system (see accompanying chart and Appendix A).

Because this was an initial gathering, the participant list was not exhaustive. For example, employers and policymakers – groups that clearly have essential roles

to play in the learning outcomes reform movement – were not included. The intent was not to exclude them but to first gain clarity from educators about how to move forward before bringing them more directly into the evolving national dialogue.

The great deal of work already underway in many locations (e.g., within individual colleges/universities and among interinstitutional and regional compacts, national online collaboratives and national disciplinary associations) was reflected in the pre-conference reading materials. Much of this work focuses on the use of learning outcome frameworks and credential frameworks, the creation of guided learning pathways, and the recognition of credentials based on competencies and other learning outcomes. It was also evident that these efforts are often disconnected. A key purpose of the convening, therefore, was to encourage attendees to look for ways to combine and/or expand their efforts in order to scale these changes to a larger group of learners.



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Lumina Foundation is an independent, private foundation committed to increasing the proportion of Americans with degrees, certificates and other high-quality credentials to 60 percent by 2025. Lumina's outcomes-based approach focuses on helping to design and build an accessible, responsive and accountable higher education system while fostering a national sense of urgency for action to achieve Goal 2025.

As a private foundation, Lumina Foundation does not support or oppose any legislation. Lumina provides educational information, nonpartisan research and analysis to advance Goal 2025.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR MEANING, QUALITY, & INTEGRITY OF DEGREES

These additional WSCUC resources may be helpful to institutions preparing to work on the Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees component of the self-study and Institutional Report for reaffirmation.

WSCUC Rubrics:

All are available to download from WSCUC's website:

<http://www.wascsenior.org/document-list>

- General Education Rubric
- Capstone Rubric
- Portfolios Rubric
- Program Learning Outcomes Rubric
- Program Review Rubric
- Educational Effectiveness Framework

WSCUC Changing Ecology Concept Papers

WSCUC commissioned several concept papers to inform the Accreditation Redesign leading up to the *2013 Handbook of Accreditation*. All are available to download here:

<http://www.wascsenior.org/redesign/conceptpapers>

- *The New 'Ecology' of Higher Education: Challenges to Accreditation by Peter Ewell*
- *New Ecosystems in Higher Education and What They Mean for Accreditation and Assessment by Richard DeMillo*
- *From Educational Institutions to Learning Flows by the Institute for the Future*
- *Thinking About Accreditation in a Rapidly Changing World by Paul LeBlanc*
- *Changing Ecology: Towards Accreditation for Institutions Offering Courses, not Degrees by Sebastian Thrun*
- *AASCU's Red Balloon Project by George Mehaffy*
- *The New Ecology of Higher Education: The Changing Faculty by Adrianna Kezar*
- *The Nexus of For-Profit, International, and Accreditation by Denise DeZolt*

What does a degree mean? It's hard to tell

June 01, 2015, 03:00 pm

By Jamie Merisotis

The millions of college students walking across graduation stages this month will face brighter job prospects than others in recent years, with employers reporting a 10 percent increase in hires over 2014. But even with this positive momentum, most organizations still lack confidence in graduates' readiness for those jobs. One reason: Despite a century of experience with higher education, our system tells us far too little about what a college degree or other postsecondary credential means.

In the vast majority of our nation's colleges and universities, a bachelor's degree is really just an accumulation of credits, usually 120, plus the specific major and graduation requirements of the school. So the degrees students earn represent an accumulation of classes successfully completed and the amount of time they've spent in the classroom. It's hard to discern, though, what students know and are able to do as a result of those classes and time.

Today, it's critical for every postsecondary education credential to demonstrate that it offers students two types of competencies: general knowledge and skills that help them succeed in *any* career and in their daily lives as citizens or family members; and content-area knowledge relevant for a *specific* job or field. In other words, students need to be equipped with competencies that will help them problem-solve, communicate, work well in teams, and think critically. But they also should know something and be able to apply that knowledge in whatever field they choose—chemistry, graphic design, accounting, or whatever the case may be.

Throughout college, students ought to be able to clearly see their pathway towards gaining both. And when students graduate, employers should be able to determine what sets of skills and knowledge they bring to the workplace. Achieving both of these will help address the looming confidence gap and build the pipeline of talent necessary for our students and nation to thrive.

Today employers spend roughly half a trillion dollars annually on training, most of which goes towards upgrading the skills of existing employees. That will only increase as the number of jobs demanding workers with postsecondary education is projected to grow. By 2020, 65 percent of all jobs will require some form of education beyond high school, and unless we rapidly accelerate the pace of attainment, the gap between the number of jobs and the number of workers to fill them will reach five million by the same year.

Making degrees' meaning clear is especially important in the liberal arts, whose viability as a pathway is under great scrutiny, even though many liberal arts majors fare well over the long term. Median salaries for liberal arts degree-holders right out of college earn about \$29,000, according to a recent study by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. But a study by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (based on

2011 data) showed that figure increases to more than \$66,000 per year by the time graduates are in their late 50s. And unemployment rates among liberal arts graduates are comparable to graduates with degrees in other areas.

It may be that liberal arts graduates gain a solid set of general knowledge and skills, and go on to get more specialized knowledge and skills in graduate and professional schools. It's hard to know for sure, though, because there's a lack of transparency about what degrees mean in terms of learning.

A few recent efforts have attempted to show what learning outcomes those who hold degrees have achieved. One is the Degree Qualifications Profile, authored by four higher education experts and supported by Lumina Foundation. It provides a framework that colleges and universities can use to help define the proficiencies students should gain from associate, bachelor's and master's degrees. More than 400 colleges and universities have used the tool since it was first launched five years ago to help colleges and universities strengthen their curricula and improve learning outcomes. Another is the Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative, launched by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, which outlines key benchmarks for college learning and principles to help students meet those goals.

These steps are a good start, but more must be done. All colleges and universities must recognize the importance of explaining what a college degree means – and embrace these and other tools as ways to achieve that. We also must go a step further to explain the meaning of other important postsecondary credentials, such as the certificates earned through skills-based training programs and certifications earned through industry programs, which also are vital currency to earning a 21st century job.

It's not enough for graduates to get a job. They must know they're ready to excel in it. That requires a bold reorientation of how we think about postsecondary credentials, not just in terms of classes completed, but also competencies gained. And it demands a new way of explaining what degrees and other credentials mean – for the benefit of students, employers, communities and our future.

Merisotis is president and CEO of Lumina Foundation, a national foundation dedicated to increasing Americans' college attainment.

Published in The Hill

<http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/education/243490-what-does-a-degree-mean-its-hard-to-tell>

RESOURCES FOR THE DQP

Degree Qualifications Profile

DQP Website:

<http://degreeprofile.org/>



A learning-centered framework for what college graduates should know and be able to do to earn the associate, bachelor's or master's degree

DQP Resources, including Assignment Library - accessible from DQP website:

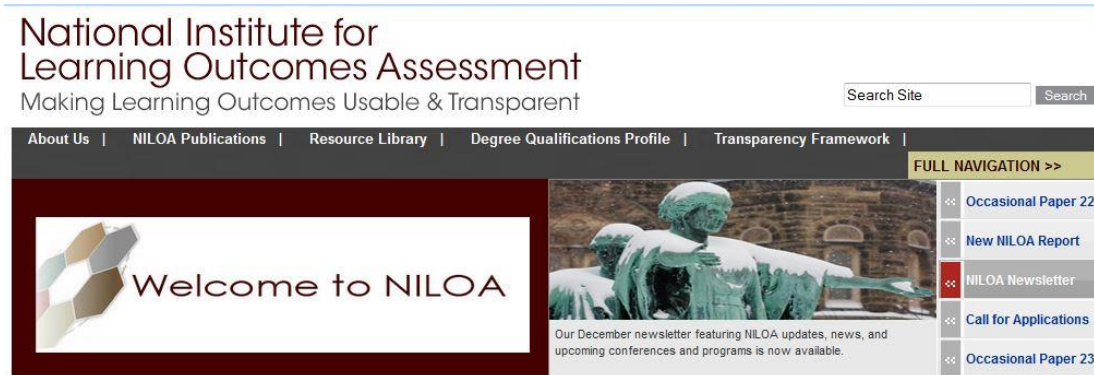


DQP Tuning Information – accessible from DQP website:



NILOA (National Institute on Learning Outcomes Assessment)

<http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/>



National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

<http://nsse.iub.edu/>



A Brief Annotated Bibliography of Resources Related to The Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees

"The Essential Learning Outcomes." *Association of American Colleges and Universities*.

Can be accessed electronically through:

http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/EssentialOutcomes_Chart.pdf

This is a list of five overarching learning outcomes that should characterize all post-secondary educational programs. It was developed as a part of the Learning

Hampson, Keith, "*Dr. Mike Offerman, Capella University: Quality, Access and Transparency in Higher Education.*"

Interview published in *Higher Education Management*, Nov. 11, 2009

<http://highereducationmanagement.wordpress.com/2009/11/18/dr-mike-offerman-capella-university-quality-access-and-transparency-in-higher-education/>

Integrity in the College Curriculum. Washington: Association of American Colleges, 1985

Lumina Foundation. *The Degree Qualification Profile*. Lumina Foundation for Education, Inc., Indianapolis, 2011

Can be accessed electronically through:

http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/The_Degree_Qualifications_Profile.pdf

Miller, Margaret, "The Meaning of the Baccalaureate." *About Campus*. September-October 2003

<http://www.collegelevellearning.org/meaning.pdf>

This is the link to the electronic copy of Margaret Miller's original paper that was published by The American College Personnel Association (ACPA) in their bimonthly ABOUT CAMPUS magazine.

Miller, Margaret & Ewell, Peter, "*Measuring Up on College-Level Learning.*" The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, October, 2005

May be accessed at: http://www.highereducation.org/reports/mu_learning/index.shtml

"The Quality and Integrity of Undergraduate Degrees." *Southern Association of Schools & Colleges, Commission on Colleges*. December, 2011.

<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Quality%20and%20Integrity%20of%20Undergraduate%20Degrees.pdf>.

In response to the rapid increase in the number of non-traditional courses and programs available through accredited colleges and universities, the Southern Association of Schools & Colleges has issued this policy that requires institutions to explicitly indicate whether specific courses and programs are "intended for transfer."

Taking Responsibility for the Quality of the Baccalaureate Degree. Washington: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2004

Schneider, Carol Geary, "The Baccalaureate Degree: Meaning, Integrity, and Quality ." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Association of Colleges & Universities, Dec. 7 2009

http://www.aacu.org/About/schneider/documents/2009_SACS_handouts.pdf

This is a handout for a presentation given by Dr. Carol Geary It contains a number of tables with a variety of information relating in one way or another to the issue of degree meaning and quality.

An Opportunity for Your Institution to Develop Assessment Expertise and Leadership

March 2017 - January 2018

Applications will be accepted November 15, 2016 - February 15, 2017

Purpose of the Academy

The WSCUC Assessment Leadership Academy (ALA) prepares postsecondary professionals to provide leadership in a wide range of activities related to the assessment of student learning, from facilitating workshops and supporting the scholarship of assessment to assisting administrative leadership in planning, budgeting, and decision-making related to educational effectiveness. ALA graduates have also provided consultation to the WSCUC region and served on WSCUC committees and evaluation teams; some have moved on to new positions with greater responsibilities. The Academy curriculum includes both structured and institutionally-tailored learning activities that address the full spectrum of assessment issues, and places those issues in the national context of higher education policy on educational quality, accreditation, and accountability.

Who Should Participate in the Academy?

Higher education faculty, staff, and administrators who are committed to:

- Developing assessment expertise;
- Serving in an on-going assessment leadership role at their institution;
- Devoting significant time to complete ALA reading and homework assignments.

Assessment Leadership Academy Faculty

ALA participants will interact with and learn from nationally-recognized higher education leaders. Faculty lead interactive class sessions and are available to participants for one-on-one consultations.

Faculty Facilitators of the ALA:

- **Amy Driscoll**, Former Director of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, CSU Monterey Bay
- **Carole Huston**, Associate Provost, University of San Diego

Guest Faculty Include:

- **Peter Ewell**, President Emeritus, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems
- **Adrianna Kezar**, Associate Professor for Higher Education, University of Southern California
- **Jillian Kinzie**, Associate Director, Center for Postsecondary Research & NSSE Institute
- **Kathleen Yancey**, Kellogg W. Hunt Professor of English, Florida State University
- **Laurie Dodge**, Vice Chancellor of Institutional Assessment and Planning, Brandman University (ALA Alum)
- **Kevin Grant**, Assistant Dean of Student Development, Biola University (ALA Alum)
- **Susan Platt**, Executive Director of Assessment, CSU Long Beach (ALA Alum)
- **And others!**

Learning Goals

Participants who complete Academy requirements will acquire foundational knowledge of the history, theory, and concepts of assessment; they will also develop expertise in training and consultation, institutional leadership for assessment, and the scholarship of assessment.

Application Deadline and More Information

Applications for the 2017-18 cohort will be accepted from November 15, 2016 until February 15, 2017.

For more information and application materials, please see **Assessment Leadership Academy** on the WSCUC website <http://www.wascsenior.org/ala/overview>

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Ensuring the Future



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ARC 2017

ACADEMIC RESOURCE CONFERENCE

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