

Carl Albert State College
HLC Assessment Academy Roundtable Event Responses
Submitted November 2017

1. How did your discussions with other teams at the Roundtable help as you began to plan and develop your project?

Visiting with the other teams in our cohort provided insight into the overall assessment struggle. It was helpful to realize the common ground we all shared and to learn more about each institution's specific goals. The most helpful discussions involved the graduating teams. During the poster fair, we gravitated toward the graduating teams who conquered similar problem areas and who could provide specific steps and tools that facilitated the progress. The "Conversations with Midpoint and Graduating Schools" gave awareness of possible barriers at the various stages. One beneficial tip focused on group solidarity and confidence in our project.

2. Describe the project you developed at the Roundtable. Focus particularly on the general strategies you developed.

Our project focus is to move from course level assessment to the program and co-curricular levels. The initial phase consists of several objectives in relation to program assessment. Our first task is to strengthen the program assessment components beginning with the program outcomes. We are focusing on the "less is more" principle by limiting those to concise, measurable outcomes in terms of what graduates will be able to do. Once those are established, we will focus on improving the student learning outcomes and the related measures. The intent is to start the 2018-2019 assessment cycle with the revised program level assessment components that will afford better data. The academic division chairs will construct a program outcome matrix using the current assessment components in order to assess the 2017-2018 cycle of data that is already underway. Our plan includes educating faculty on every facet of program assessment and being transparent with the entire institution concerning our progress in the academy.

3. What are the desired outcomes of this project? How will you know that you have achieved these outcomes?

Our overall desired outcome is to develop a comprehensive and systematic method of institutional assessment that produces meaningful and useful data to improve student learning and student success. Our first step to achieve this goal is to master program level assessment. As a team, we realize that refining those assessment components is imperative to establishing a solid foundation that is conducive to effective processes and data. Once that is established, we can utilize what we have learned to strengthen our general education outcome assessment while moving on to the co-curricular level. This initial phase begins the journey of our assessment evolution. We will have to redefine and realign our current methodology and state of mind. Therefore, the proper education of faculty and staff and the degree of our success at the program level will be indicative of reaching institutional effectiveness.

4. How will your project contribute to making assessment an activity that leads to the improvement of student learning?

Our project is a building block to linking assessment to curricular improvement, institutional planning, budgeting, and funding, which all impact student learning and student success. It will be the catalyst to unite academic and co-curricular efforts into an instrumental force for the overall improvement of student learning and to redefine assessment as a positive pursuit of growth. The current departmental diversity of our team members and the acceptance of our project plan by our academic division chairs demonstrate our level of commitment to positive change.

5. Describe the specific steps you will be taking in Year 1 to develop and implement the early stages of your project.

First Year Outcomes

- Create a method and process for program level assessment
- Refine and strengthen program assessment components (program outcomes, student learning outcomes, and related measures)
- Progress toward a systematic reporting cycle
- Transition into a new assessment software system that better meets our needs
- Begin education of faculty, staff, and students about assessment

First Year Tasks

- Create a program outcome matrix linking 2017-2018 program outcomes to student learning outcomes (fall 2017)
- Refine program outcomes for 2018-2019 (fall 2017)
- Post through campus media outlets the academy's plan and advancement (fall 2017)
- Begin the process of educating faculty on the assessment project (spring 2018 in-service)
- Refine program course assessment components (student learning outcomes and measures) for summer and fall courses in 2018-2019 cycle (spring 2018)
- Transition into new software for 2018-2019 for improvement of assessment component associations and reporting (spring 2018)
- Begin to establish a systematic reporting cycle (spring 2018)
- Select method and create process for 2017-2018 program outcome assessment (spring 2018)
- Refine program course assessment components for spring courses in 2018-2019 cycle (fall 2018)
- Assess academy progress and realign agenda/timeline (fall 2018)

6. What serious challenges do you expect to encounter? How will you deal with them?

Since CASC has an HLC assessment focus visit in early March, it has the potential to heighten the stress on our team, division chairs, and faculty. We have made great progress in such a short amount of time, and we do not want that diminished by the pressure of a visit. However, our

determination to improve assessment and our confidence in our ability to excel will solidify our resolve to demonstrate our growth and potential. Another challenge is adequately educating faculty about our new direction for assessment. There have been many false starts in the past, so transparency and accountability are crucial during this first year.