Building Curriculum for Strategic Alignment & Assessment

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Introduction and Overview

Workshop Outcomes

- Understand the benefits of alignment between assignments, course learning outcomes, and program learning outcomes
- Incorporate practical tools for mapping and building curriculum that is aligned with outcomes for meaningful assessment and curriculum improvements
- Understand more about program assessment and curriculum maps and why they are useful
- Understand how assignments and courses build into a logical sequence in the program
- Begin thinking about how you as faculty can contribute to stronger alignment of curricular sequence when planning courses and assignments and discussing findings and curriculum development

Defining Our Terms
Assessment: the ongoing process of

- Establishing clear, measurable expected outcomes of student learning
- Ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to achieve those outcomes
- Systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well student learning matches our expectations
- Using the resulting information to understand and improve student learning (Table 1.1 from "Assessing Student Learning", Suskie (2009), p. 4)
Purpose of Program Level Assessment

Evaluate and ensure the effectiveness and quality of individual student learning and program curriculum as a whole.

Figure 1.1. from “Assessing Student Learning”, Suskie (2009), p. 4

Program vs. Course vs. Assignment

A Case for Streamlined Curriculum Design and Assessment

"Good learning and good assessment does not happen by magic. This only happens by design. Before data, there is design." - Kate McConnell, AAC&U

The best assessments are those that are clearly developed to assess the key learning outcomes of
the material. The best material is the material that is built intentionally and cohesively to move towards a certain aim.
Implementation Fidelity: The validity of the assessment is dependent on the alignment of the assignment with the aim of the assessment.

"If you don't know where you're going, you'll end up someplace else." - Yogi Berra

"Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend
the first four sharpening the axe." - Abraham Lincoln

"In life, most short cuts end up taking longer than taking the longer route." - Suzy Kassem

Academic Freedom & Multiple Learning Pathways

"A plan is not putting you in a box and forcing you to stay there. A plan is a guide to keep you on course, efficient, and safe." - Amber Hurdle

How to Build Curricular Strategic Alignment

Curriculum Mapping
“Curriculum mapping is the process of indexing or diagramming a curriculum to identify and address academic gaps, redundancies, and misalignments for purposes of improving the overall coherence of a course of study and, by extension, its effectiveness” - https://www.edglossary.org/curriculum-mapping
Curriculum Map Template

Where do students get introduced, practice, master, and get assessed?
I = introduce
R = Reinforced and opportunity to practice
M = Mastery at the exit level
A = Assessment evidence collected to examine mastery of the PLO

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### Current Liberty Curriculum Map Template

#### Guiding Questions from UC Berkeley

1. At what point in the curricular sequence do you expect students to be mastering the program-level outcomes?

2. Besides a set of courses, what other learning opportunities does your program (or partnering programs) offer (e.g., cultural events) and how are they tied into the curricular sequence and program outcomes?
Review Questions from UC Berkeley

1. Are the current learning opportunities sufficient to expect that your students (can/will) demonstrate the program-level outcomes?

2. Are there any PLOs that are not addressed in the courses? If so, how do you need to modify in order to reinforce student learning?

3. Are the curriculum components aligned and consistent so students have ample and incremental learning opportunities to build their competency, skills, and dispositions? If not, how do you need to modify the curriculum?

4. Does the outcome have a place where assessment data is collected? If not, determine how and where assessment data should be gathered.

Activity

In this activity, you will be provided with several different curriculum maps and a set of assignment cards. With your group, please choose one PLO from each curriculum map and select which assignments best support the intended learning expectation of the courses supporting that PLO. After you choose, we will come back as a larger
group and discuss which assignments you selected for which course and why.