Interim Report on Assessment to the HLC

Saint Louis University
Dr. Fred Pestello, President

Interim Report on Assessment

Context

In her July 1, 2016, letter to Saint Louis University (SLU) President Dr. Fred Pestello, Higher Learning Commission (HLC) President Barbara Gellman-Danley outlined the HLC's requirement that SLU submit an Interim Report on Assessment of Student Learning, due September 4, 2018.

Per that letter, this Interim Report is to "Post evidence that a) student learning outcomes are published and transparent; b) learning outcomes and assessment plans are available for all colleges/schools and for general education; c) data collection as evidence of student learning; and d) samples of direct and indirect evidence of student learning across the University."

Interim Report Requirement #1

- ƒ provide internal faculty peer feedback
- ƒ expand the number of assessment champions and experts throughout the colleges/schools
- ƒ significantly increase the capacity for assessment review and feedback (beyond the University Assessment Coordinator and Assistant Provost).

Examples of University Assessment Committee feedback to programs about their SLOs can be found in Appendix E.

Because the quality and utility of a learning outcome is best demonstrated by its employment in a well-executed assessment plan, we will address the quality of undergraduate SLOs, University-wide, in the upcoming section on Interim Report Requirement #3.

The public posting of program SLOs on the program websites has been occurring since 2016. While such postings were inconsistent in 2016 when the HLC team reviewed them, today nearly 90% of programs SLOs are posted as part of their respective program assessment plans. Posting of SLOs as part of specific program information was made possible by the implementation of two new technologies.

First, in 2017-2018, SLU implemented a new web content management system that standardized how and where SLO information is published online. Second is the implementation of CourseLeaf (nearly complete as of September 1st), a web-based curriculum and catalog management system that governs how curriculum and learning outcome data is presented and updated on the web. Via CourseLeaf, all program SLOs (and other curriculum information for each academic program) are maintained centrally and published both to the main SLU Academic Catalog online and to all program websites consistently and simultaneously. Updates to SLOs are made in the CourseLeaf system so catalog and program web pages that feature SLOs are automatically updated correctly and consistently.

We anticipate that our CourseLeaf-based SLO and catalog data will be available via the web on Friday, September 28. At that time, HLC reviewers will be able to locate the SLOs of academic programs in the catalog and on all program websites. Appendix F features screenshots of actual program web pages in CourseLeaf to illustrate how SLOs will be publicly available and transparent for students, parents, and other constituents.

Interim Report Requirement #2:

Learning outcomes and assessment plans for undergraduate core curricula (general education) been established for all schools and colleges serving undergraduates within the university.

Saint Louis University's Response:

SLU colleges/schools with undergraduate programs have their own "core" available to the foster a breadth of education across fundamental academic disciplines in the Jesuit educational tradition. SLU must the "core" is the provision of general education through these college/school-specific core curricula.

Although there are many shared purposes and academic requirements among core curricula, there has not been a single, unifying set of articulated student learning outcomes to drive either the design/review of those cores or assessment of student learning within those cores. Additionally, the

University-Wide Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes approved in 2012

6. Piloting of Key Core Components (2021

mapping, assessment methods (emphasizing direct measures of student learning), and intended uses of resulting data. The quality of these plans has continually improved and is a focus of peer review via the University Assessment Committee as well as in the Academic Program Review process. All proposals for new academic programs must also detail their assessment plans, which are reviewed by the UAAC (undergraduate) and GAC (graduate) curriculum committees; in the process of doing so, most units consult directly with the University Assessment Coordinator for guidance.

The HLC team also found in 2016 that the proportion of programs that had documented implementation of their assessment plans was far lower, at approximately 25%. Further, of those existing reports, only about half evidenced good use of assessment data for program improvement. We are proud to report significant improvement has been made in this regard

At the start of the Fall 2018 term, approximately 80% of all SLU programs have submitted updated (within the past academic year) assessment reports U o • } ••] o À] š Z website À } • š [• K (( ] Many of these reports utilize a 2017 update of our University Assessment Report Template (see Appendix P). This template prompts specific program responses regarding which SLOs were assessed, what data/artifacts of student learning were analyzed, what the major findings of the analysis were, and how those findings were used to inform changes to pedagogy, curriculum, or assessment. The template also asks programs to address assessment-informed changes implemented in previous years, and to describe the impact of those changes.

The number of assessment reports that document the use of assessment data for improvement (in either curriculum, pedagogy, or assessment) is also significantly higher than in 2016, and is continually rising

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time faculty member to assist the University Assessment Coordinator and the Assistant Provost (see Appendix W). The first Faculty Fellow for Assessment began work in Summer 2018.

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Interim Report Requirement #4:

University-wide assessment of undergraduate outcomes includes a reasonable sample of direct indirect evidence of learning and the use of such evidence for improvement.

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The 2016 HLC u [•} v Œ v • } µBÀa"Oespí$nse:

Appendices

A. University Assessment Plan Template (revised August 2017)
B. University Assessment Standards
C. University Assessment Committee Charge (February 24, 2017)
D. University Assessment Committee Roster 2018-19
E. Examples of University Assessment Committee (UAC) Reviews
    1. Biology – BS
    2. Biology – PhD
    3. Biostatistics – BS
    4. Computer Information Systems – BS
    5. Healthcare Ethics – PhD
    6. Health Management – BS
    7. Italian Studies – BA
    8. Organizational Studies – BA
    9. Public Health – BS
    10. Spanish – MA
F. Examples of Student Learning Outcomes on Program Websites (Course Selection Screenshots)
    1. Art History – BA
    2. Dentistry, Ba/88 2 0 61c at re W* n BT /F5 11.04 Tf 1 0 0 1 90.024 392.45 Tm 0.184 0.329 0.588