

Academic Outcomes Assessment Best Practices

-or-

“Things HLC Will Really Like!”

1. Plan an annual “Assessment Retreat” where ALL faculty meet off-campus for assessment workshops and discussion.
2. Develop a college-wide strategy to insure that core curriculum is covered in EVERY class. *South Suburban College requires each faculty member to grade one assignment per semester with one of five OA-designed rubrics. The choices for assignments/rubrics are oral presentation, written narrative, research methodology, use of technology, and critical thinking. Results are then tallied and analyzed to assess general education. Contact Beth Beno for electronic versions of the rubrics.*
3. Students should be knowledgeable about the core curriculum.
4. Create a quarterly or monthly online assessment newsletter.
5. Make sure that your data is collected and analyzed with specific goals in mind.
6. Closing the loop! This may have been the most often mentioned piece of advice.
7. Assessment instruments should have a single purpose, but implemented with multiple measures. Accompany data-driven tools with indirect measures such as surveys or interviews.
8. Include your adjunct faculty in the assessment process. Failing to do this neglects nearly half of your courses, in some cases.
9. Include academic outcomes assessment questions when interviewing for new faculty and when approving new programs and courses.
10. Invest in WEAVEonline.
<http://www.weaveonline.com> is a web-based tool that helps manage accreditation, assessment, planning, and quality improvement processes for colleges and universities, detailing institutional effectiveness. There are currently more than 125 member institutions, including Parkland, Waubonsee, and Shawnee Community Colleges in IL. The WEAVE cycle closely resembles HLC guidelines regarding assessment:
Write expected outcomes/objectives.
Establish criteria for success.
Assess performance against criteria.
View assessment results.
Effect improvements through actions.

If your school has something to contribute to this list, please contact the Assessment Committee.