UW – Superior’s Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Assessment Academy Team

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Assessing the UW – Superior Liberal Education Learning Goals

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Development of UW-Superior Liberal Education Learning Goals

• Currently, a national and statewide dialogue is occurring
  – Focusing on the value of institutional learning goals and outcomes (AAC&U LEAP initiative)
Development of UW-Superior Liberal Education Learning Goals

• Fall 2009: Academic Plan Committee drafted the set of common learning goals
  – Used the LEAP initiative as a starting point
  – The LEAP outcomes were modified, based on our general education learning outcomes and liberal arts initiatives
Development of UW-Superior Liberal Education Learning Goals

• Approval Process:
  – Feedback solicited from campus (Fall 2009)
  – Goals were modified, based on feedback (Fall 2009)
  – Approved by Faculty Senate (February 2010)
Assessment of UW-Superior Liberal Education Learning Goals

• Current Step: To develop outcomes and measures for each of the five Liberal Education Learning Goals
  – This will be done in a staged process, addressing one goal in Year 1, two goals in Year 2, and the final two goals in Year 3
Liberal Education Learning Goals

• The ability and inclination to:
  1) Think and make connections across academic disciplines
  2) Express oneself through multiple forms
  3) Analyze and reflect upon multiple perspectives to arrive at a perspective of one’s own
  4) Engage as a global citizen
  5) Engage in evidence-based problem solving
What is the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Assessment Academy?

• The Academy experience is intended to:
  – Develop institutional culture
  – Increase institutional commitment to assessing and improving student learning

• Participation in the Academy is designed to generate evidence for accreditation evaluations and follow-up
What does UW-Superior gain by participating in the HLC Assessment Academy?

• Participation:
  – May serve in place of mandated progress reports, monitoring reports, and focused visits on assessment of student learning
  – Can produce evidence for Criteria and Core Components for accreditation evaluation
Outcomes of the HLC Assessment Academy Process

- Further establish institutional commitment to teaching, to student learning, and to assessing, confirming, and improving student learning

- Improve institutional capacity to assess, confirm, and improve student learning

- Develop institutional leaders and mentors
Outcomes of the HLC Assessment Academy Process (con’t)

• Test and document effective practices in assessing, confirming and improving student learning

• Interact with diverse institutions, building a collaborative network for ongoing comparison of efforts and results

• Establish and build a sustained, ongoing commitment around student learning
Insight from HLC Focused Visit

“The institution [UW-Superior] recognizes the areas that need further attention especially the development of a systematic approach to the assessment of student learning, which is being addressed through the university’s participation in the HLC Assessment Academy.”
UW-Superior Story with Assessment Academy

- Applied for admission in November 2009; reviewed by HLC review team; admitted in February 2010

- Team constituted, with support of Faculty Senate

- Attended 3-day HLC Assessment Academy session (March 2010)
... aims to institute a coherent, integrated and sustainable process of assessment of liberal education learning goals with outcomes, for curricular and co-curricular programs, at UW-Superior.
Develop questions that guide campus processes
Organize and facilitate campus processes to clarify and refine Liberal Arts Education Learning Outcomes
Analyze campus input and create SMART learning outcomes
Develop measures based on campus input
Assessment of student learning outcomes using the measures
Sharing data on student learning outcomes and facilitate continuous improvement across the campus
UW-Superior Story with Assessment Academy

• Summer 2010
  – Spent time in the design process
  – Developed an approved HLC Assessment Academy plan
  – Presented at the June 2010 Campus Leadership Summit
UW-Superior Story with Assessment Academy

- Developed and implemented an awareness survey on assessment knowledge and capacities

- Chose to work on LELG # 2
  - “The ability and inclination to express oneself through multiple forms”
  - Gathered input from all programs and units on their multiple forms of expression
  - Developed categories of forms of expression
Project Time Line

• 2011 - 2012
  – Implement the assessment of LELG #2 (multiple forms of expression)
  – Share data on student learning goals and outcomes
  – Facilitate continuous improvement across the campus
Project Time Line

• The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) and the Office of Assessment will:
  – Provide professional development opportunities for assessment basics
  – Provide more specialized assessment skills training

• Spring 2011 Welcome Week
  – January 18th & January 19th
  – Workshops with national HLC experts on assessment of student learning outcomes
Who are the stakeholders for this project?

EVERYONE!!
Assessment Awareness Survey

• In August, 2010, the HLC Assessment Academy Team conducted an informational assessment survey
  – Thank you to the 70 respondents who completed the survey
  – Represented a wide variety of faculty, instructional staff, non-instructional academic staff, classified staff, and administrators

• We conducted this survey to determine campus’ level of knowledge, use, and interest in assessment of student learning
  – This will better allow us to carefully craft our plan moving forward
Major Findings

- Majority of faculty/staff reported that they use assessment practices (81%)

- Faculty/staff are using assessment on a regular basis
  - 23%: One to two times a month
  - 23%: Three to four times a month
  - 17%: One to two times a week
Major Findings

- Faculty/Staff use assessment for a variety of purposes
  - Determine student learning (73%)
  - To improve a course (67%)
  - To improve an activity (64%)

- Faculty/staff believe assessment fulfills multiple purposes
  - 77%: Provides a greater understanding of what students are learning
  - 60%: Provides a greater understanding of how students are learning
  - 81%: Provides an opportunity to assess my own effectiveness in my role with my students
Major Findings

• 68% of respondents are somewhat or very interested in learning more about assessment of student learning
The next step...

• The next phase of our project is to begin the development of an assessment plan for the Liberal Education Learning Goals

• The team chose to move forward, first, with Goal # 2 (multiple forms of expression)
  – Solicited input from academic and non-academic units on campus about their outcomes for students on this goal
  – Mapped themes from those responses
Categories of Forms of Expression

Liberal Education Learning Goal #2
– The ability and inclination to express oneself in multiple forms
Hopes and Possibilities

• Assessment of student learning (through the five Liberal Education Learning Goals) will:
  – Affirm our best practices for student learning
  – Enhance student learning in all settings
  – Serve as glue that binds us together as a campus
  – Encourage innovation
  – Promote flexibility and creativity
  – Foster interdisciplinary and cross-unit collaboration
Thank you all so much for your participation in this presentation!
Questions?