How Can the Assessment Process be Made More Manageable?

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Tangible Suggestions

- Develop, maintain, and share an assessment plan so that everyone knows what's coming

- Pick one learning goal per year for assessment and follow-up discussion and action

- Embed assessment into existing courses wherever possible

- Establish "departmental assessment day" to concentrate efforts

- Collect data from a sample of students rather than all of them, *if you have sufficient numbers of majors*

Tangible Suggestions

- Make submission of work into a student portfolio a requirement for students

- Identify opportunities such as internships, field experiences, undergraduate research opportunities, and study abroad that provide opportunities to collect evidence of student learning

- Employ a graduate student to help do the "front line" work of analysis and interpretation (see History example)

(Maki, 2004)

Setting Priorities for Assessment

- Start small
- Start by focusing on important goals
- Start with easier assessments
- Focus on tools and approaches that yield the greatest dividends for the time and resources invested
- Where possible, work with samples rather than whole populations of students.
- Stagger assessment activities.
- Take advantage of existing resources

(Suskie, 2009)

Examples of Assessment Information That May Already Be On Hand

- Scores on published tests (SAT, placement, certification/licensure)

- Ratings of students by internship/practicum/field experience supervisors

- Assessment information assembled to meet disciplinary accreditation requirements

- Scores and scoring criteria for locally-developed tests and assignments

- Retention and graduation rates

- Information on employment and subsequent education

Examples of Assessment Information That May Already Be On Hand

- Surveys of students and alumni

- Information on student course-taking

- Information on student participation in internships/practica/field experiences, study abroad, Immersive Learning, VBC projects, living-learning communities, undergraduate research, etc.

- Information on students use of technology (Blackboard, Library resources)

(Suskie, 2009)

Using Samples of Student Work for Assessment

- Advantages
  - Information is already available
  - No student motivation problems, since students must complete the work for a grade
  - No direct cost
  - Reflects what faculty actually teach, not what's included on standardized tests, so faculty members are more motivated

Using Samples of Student Work for Assessment

- Disadvantages
  - Evidence not comparable across institutions
  - Everyone evaluates differently, so common standards or rubrics and training are needed
  - Information is in multiple parts and multiple formats, so it needs to be collected in portfolios
  - Quite a bit work, especially at the beginning

(Walvoord, 2010)