

Closing the Loop

Cultivating Support for Assessment as a Change Agent

HLC Annual Conference
Chicago, Illinois April 2013

Introductions

- Murphy Waggoner
Math Professor, Director of Academic Assessment
Past chair of EPCC, member EPCC and APRC
- CoryAnne Harrigan
English Professor, Director of Writing Across the Curriculum
Past Gen Ed director and APRC member, member EPCC
- Steve Griffith, Senior VP and Dean of Academic Affairs

the positive impact of
a criteria-based general
education curriculum
on the culture of
academic assessment

The Evolution of a Culture of Assessment

- Compliance
 - 1995 and 2005 college-wide assessment plans
 - Post HLC visit
- Cultural Shift
 - Writing criteria for Gen Ed
 - Evaluating proposals for criteria
- Closer to Commitment
 - Common vocabulary
 - Learning from doing

Simpson College

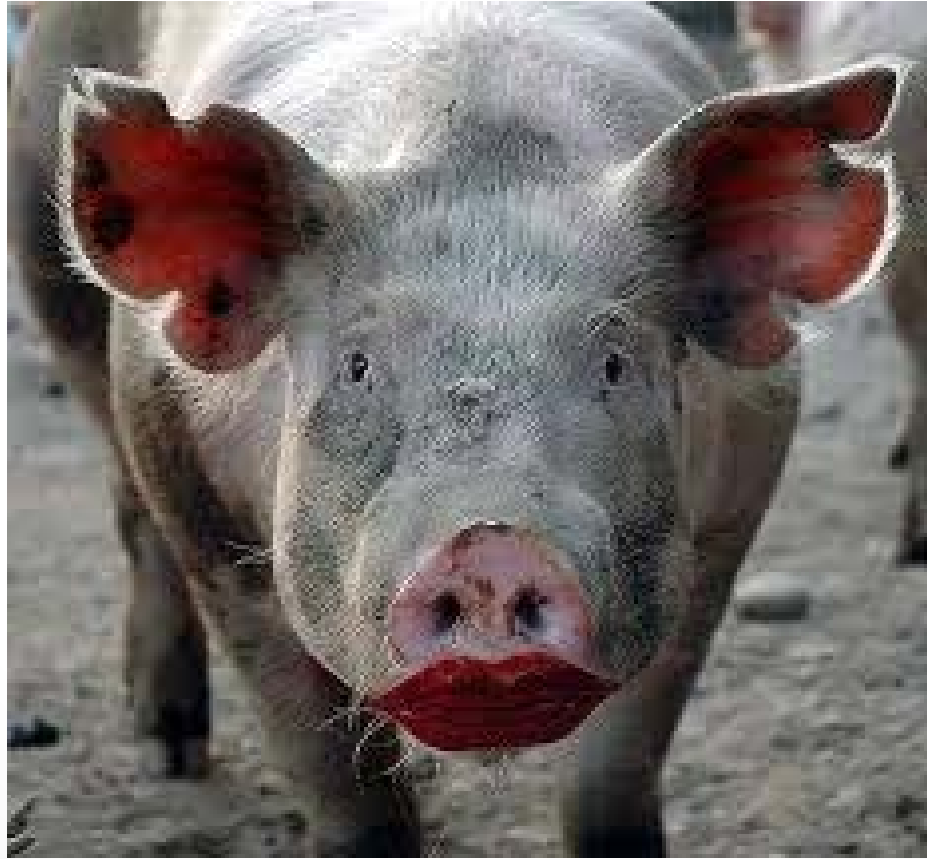
- Des Moines area
- Comprehensive Liberal Arts
- 1500 traditional, 500 non-traditional students
- Methodist affiliated

Assessment Culture Before the ECC

- Our majors get good jobs so we must be doing fine.
- We don't need assessment; the administration is just interfering with our academic freedom.
- Negative assessment results will cause us to lose funding, resources, staffing.



Assessment Culture Before the ECC



Engaged Citizenship Curriculum

- Learning Programs Working Group
- Criteria working groups
- Review panels
- Departmental designation proposals



Method

- Interviewed faculty
- Varied
 - Terms of service
 - Experience with ECC and assessment
 - Administrative responsibilities

Where did you learn about assessment?

- My first exposure to assessment as a new faculty member was on the review panel.
- Everything I know about assessment came from the ECC.
- I was involved with assessment for ages but I didn't understand it until we began working on assessment of the ECC.



What did you learn?

- Working with the ECC helped us understand what to look for when assessing our majors.
- We modeled the biology SLOs on the Scientific Reasoning SLOs.
- We were only assessing anecdotally, but now data support our intuition and we can measure impact.



How did you learn it?

- By working in a group to write ECC learning objectives
- By writing proposals for ECC courses
- By incorporating embedded skills into our courses
- By revising the ECC criteria

Evidence of Cultural Change

- Vocabulary of assessment permeates the faculty
- Common question: "...but is it assessable?"
- Moving from "I" to "we"
- Demystification of assessment – changed from a possible weapon to a useful tool

Future of the ECC

- Revise ECC course-level learning objectives based on our experiences so far
- Develop program-level learning objectives for ECC
- Build and apply rubrics to student artifacts
- Continue to train through doing

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Indianola, Iowa