

Video 1 [New, Rerecorded and Attached to Email]: About 5 minutes long

[Note to the reviewers of this script] This video is intended to identify point people for questions related to academic assessment on campus. It can also be taken down and edited, as our duties and roles evolve with time. This video is intended to flesh out what academic assessment actually is and defining expectations.

Assessment and Continuous Improvement

Hello everyone! Thank you so much for joining us on this video about academic assessment.

Academic assessment is essentially collecting data about how students are learning material. When we work on these kinds of projects, we look at student work and decide whether they meet the department's vision for what students are supposed to know after graduation. From there, the faculty make changes to the curriculum. It is essentially the process of asking ourselves "What's working? What's not working?" and having conversations with our other faculty members in the department about how to enhance our curriculum. This process is really about making curricular changes over the years using data about our students' learning.

Assessment Process

Let's take a look at these steps.

- Program Learning Outcomes Review: what do you want students to know when they graduate?
- Curriculum Maps: After you look over your outcomes, we recommend that you either review your curriculum map from last year or create a new one, if you've never had one before. A curriculum map is basically a table that shows where you touch upon certain outcomes in your courses.
- Measure Your Outcomes: This step involves coming up with a project related to how students are learning.
- Results: After gathering student work and evaluating it for achieving a student learning outcome, faculty would sit down together and talk about what the results mean to them. This discussion would involve reflecting on +deciphering the story the data is telling about the academic program.
- "Closing the Loop": Closing the loop refers to creating and taking action to improve the curriculum in areas that could use further improvement.

Assessment Process at the University of Hartford as of 2022

The University of Hartford has several resources to help you in gathering information on how students are learning.

First, there is a software that we use at the University of Hartford for keeping historical records of curriculum changes. This software is called Planning & Self Study. It helps the university have

all records related to data-driven decision making in one spot. So, one of the benefits of this software is that administration won't have to ask faculty to share their projects every few years when we have regional accreditation visits. Another benefit to this software is that this software has data visualization capabilities so that you can have conversations with your peers about how your faculty are doing at faculty retreats, as well as how is the program doing and how are students doing.

Although data on student learning is all being submitted into this software across the university, only the selected faculty leads, the dean, assessment coordinator, and administration overseeing assessment will have access to the project. Your peers should not be seeing your projects and reports in Planning & Self Study, unless given permission.

We also have a few people on campus available to help you if you have any questions related to the process of making program changes, using information on student learning.

So, first, each school and college have an assessment coordinator to help with overseeing the process. They will be there to help answer some of your questions about deadlines, as well as ideas for coming up with a project.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness has an Assistant Director of Assessment to help with inputting academic data into Planning & Self Study. This person can also help you with coming up with a project to measure student learning in a given year.

The Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation provides support in trainings, as they relate to pedagogy and setting goals for yourself in terms of student learning. So, an example of a service that they provide is helping you come up with program learning outcomes.

There is also an assessment team that provides feedback to help faculty, so that faculty know that they are on the right track, when they are submitting and completing their assessments.

Another Way to Think of Assessment

Remember, your project on measuring student learning does not have to be perfect! It is a continuous process. So, think of this type of work like a slinky. This process is a loop that continues with every year and progress forward is being made with each passing cycle. We have other videos that will walk you through the various stages of academic assessment as well. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness with any questions!