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Mapping and Assessing Student Learning in Student Affairs

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Contents

NILOA Mission

The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA), established in 2008, is a research and resource-development organization dedicated to documenting, advocating, and facilitating the systematic use of learning outcomes assessment to improve student learning.

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Abstract

This Occasional Paper outlines lessons learned about mapping and assessing learning in student affairs and student employment. Over the last three years, the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) assisted institutions developing Comprehensive Learner Records and scaling high-impact practices. In each of these initiatives, mapping of learning, redesigning assessments, and creating assignments was a staple of practice. Further, assessment practitioners were reminded that before staff jump into implementing assessment and writing the perfect learning outcome statement with just the right verb, time is needed to think about what is being built, why, how, and which students are best served by it all. The discussion centered upon: What is the role of student affairs as part of a larger system of interlocking and supporting learning for students throughout an institution that builds towards common or shared learning outcomes? This resource provides inroads to such discussions, and offers resources to inform practice and for use in institutional professional development.

Mapping and Assessing Student Learning in Student Affairs

Natasha A. Jankowski & Gianina R. Baker

This collection of resources outlines lessons learned about mapping and assessing learning in student affairs and student employment over the last three years while the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) assisted institutions which were developing Comprehensive Learner Records and scaling high-impact practices. In each of these initiatives mapping of learning, redesigning assessments, and creating assignments was a staple of practice. Further, assessment practitioners were reminded that before staff jump into implementing assessment and writing the perfect learning outcome statement with just the right verb, time is needed to think about what is being built, why, how, and which students are best served by it all. The discussion centered upon: What is the role of student affairs as part of a larger system of interlocking and supporting learning for students throughout an institution that builds towards common or shared learning outcomes? This resource provides inroads to such discussions by addressing four areas:

- An Assessment Refresher
- Mapping Learning
- Applications to Student Employment
- Assignment Design

The collection concludes with various additional resources to inform practice and for use in institutional professional development.

Nationally, the practice of assessing student learning has been moving towards greater alignment of learning via authentic embedded measures and approaches that support students in their in- and out-of-class learning, as well as learning in student employment.

An Assessment Refresher

Assessment is most commonly defined as the systematic process of collection, review, and use of information about educational programs, practices, experiences, courses, and the like undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development as well as for judging the effectiveness of programmatic offerings in supporting student attainment of learning outcomes.

Assessment evidence can be qualitative or quantitative and is gathered from throughout an institution via a variety of approaches beyond simply standardized tests or surveys. Nationally, the practice of assessing student learning has been moving towards greater alignment of learning via authentic embedded measures and approaches that support students in their in- and out-of-class learning (Jankowski, Timmer, Kinzie, & Kuh, 2018), as well as learning in student employment (Burnside, Wesley, Wesaw, & Parnell, 2019).

Yet, while the field of student affairs has been assessing student learning for quite some time and provides a broad foundation upon which to build (Schuh & Gansemer-Topf, 2010) as well as outlines assessment within associated professional competencies (ACPA/ NASPA, 2015), survey respondents indicated that student affairs assessment was not well integrated with or supportive of institution-level assessment efforts (Jankowski et al, 2018).

For purposes of intentional design and to help students make sense of their learning, practitioners have been unpacking the interconnected nature of learning through mapping and aligning learning outcomes to different learning experiences across and throughout institutions of higher education (Jankowski & Marshall, 2017). The approach of mapping and alignment serves to make learning and assessment transparent and visible, remove arbitrary organizational silos, all while ensuring multiple opportunities for students to practice and hone desired learning throughout the entirety of an institution as a learning system (Jankowski & Marshall, 2017).

Due to the shared nature of developing learners over time in partnership with academic affairs and learning development spanning more than a single event, it is useful when discussing assessment to ensure that everyone is on the same page with the purpose, value, and worth of assessing student learning in order to avoid talking past one another. An activity that may be useful for refresher discussions with those new to assessment is the assessment philosophy activity (Jankowski, 2020). Various resources also exist for those new to assessment including a glossary, acronym list, resources on writing learning outcomes, and information on foundations of assessment. Guidance on assessing student learning in various functional units can also be found via the resources on the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education website and the recent paper on using the CAS framework as a holistic approach to assessing student learning (Henning, Robbins, & Andes, 2020).

Shared understandings of the purpose and value of assessment provide space for clearer and more productive discussions on what exactly the desired learning outcomes for students entail. Some institutions develop learning outcomes specific to student affairs (such as the University of California, Irvine domains), some expect student and academic affairs to align to shared institutional learning outcomes, and others adopt or modify existing learning outcomes such as NACE competencies. Regardless, it is useful to offer guidance on how the outcomes were developed and how they have shifted over time for those new to the discussion. University of San Diego's Evolution of Co-curricular Learning Outcomes provides an example of such an approach.

Finally, once the purpose and value as well as learning outcomes are established and widely understood, practitioners can move into developing a unique institutional approach to assessment or a reporting plan for co-curricular assessment approaches such as those presented by Rhode Island College's Co-curricular Assessment Plan or Oregon State University's approach to assessment in student affairs.

Mapping Learning

Mapping is a collaborative process of indicating which activities or experiences align with which learning outcomes throughout an institution of higher education. It is a process of making clear the relationships between different parts of the educational enterprise as well as providing clarity to students on the intended educational design (Jankowski & Marshall, 2017). While mapping is a useful guidepost, it does not preclude diversity or variation in learning, flexibility, or the nature of learning that is emergent and unplanned. What mapping *does* indicate clearly is what faculty and staff have designed a learning experience to achieve for a student in alignment to shared learning goals of the institution. It answers the perennial student question: "But why do I have to do this?"

If we consider from the prior section that assessment is the systematic collection process that examines intentional design, then assessment is actually positioned to help practitioners think deeply about learning design and how the design of learning intersects with beliefs about the purpose of education and the student population served by the institution. More than compliance reporting, assessment is a vehicle to capture learning in the various places within institutions in which it occurs, supporting student success, and providing evidence with which the institution can make the case about overall effectiveness while helping guide students through their learning journey. It is towards these ends that mapping focuses upon transparency, intentionality, and alignment.

Mapping is a collaborative process of indicating which activities or experiences align with which learning outcomes throughout an institution of higher education. It is a process of making clear the relationships between different parts of the educational enterprise as well as providing clarity to students on the intended educational design.

Starting Points

Mapping necessarily requires that there are learning outcomes in place that are collectively understood to which activities, experiences, and the like can be mapped. Student learning outcomes identify, for practitioners and for students, what students will know, think, or be able to do as a result of the intervention, event, experience, or service. It is focused on what students will DO as a result and what they can DEMONSTRATE, meaning there will be artifacts or evidence of learning that emerge.

Mapping can begin with an inventory, but an inventory is a tool that can be employed in mapping, not a map in and of itself. An inventory is a list of all activities or events. A map is a grid of connection points between different levels and layers of learning. It outlines how a particular instance of learning connects to unit or program learning outcomes and to institution-level learning outcomes. The inventory can help institutions get organized by sorting activities by those that are associated with specific learning outcomes, those where learning will be assessed, and those that are simply available for student participation and general growth. The inventory can be shared with students as a catalog of all available offerings or as a means to find different activities that need to be mapped.

A crosswalk may also be a valuable starting tool (Table 1). A crosswalk outlines the translation points between different learning outcomes, such as how the NACE Career Readiness Competencies connect (or not) to the general education or institution-level learning outcomes (or not) and how those connect (or do not) to specific unit-level learning outcomes. It provides a translation table that indicates "when we say this it is the same as when they say that." The crosswalk is a useful tool for preparing for multi-level mapping.

For purposes of mapping, practitioners need to identify where assessment will occur with which learning experiences from the inventory. This can be completed through conversations exploring the process for examining the learning that comes from students participating in various activities, experiences, and events. Discussions generally focus upon design asking: Why do you think that this learning will come from these events? Focusing on the theory of change behind why institutions ask students to partake in different types of learning experiences helps ensure that there is meaningful alignment between design, expectations, and learning. For assistance in outlining a clear theory of change as it relates to assessment, see Ashley Finley's (2019) paper on assessing high-impact practices or Keston Fulcher and associates (2014) paper on learning improvement.

Student Affairs Learning Outcomes	NACE Career Readiness Competencies	AAC&U LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes	Institutional Learning Outcomes
	Critical Thinking/ Problem Solving	Critical and creative thinking	Critical Thinking Skills
Administrative and Professional Skills	Oral/Written Communications	Written and oral communication	Communication Skills
Civic and Community Engagement	Teamwork/ Collaboration	Teamwork and problem solving	Social Responsibility Skills
	Digital Technology	Information literacy	Communication Skills
Leadership Development	Leadership	Civic knowledge and engagement	Social Responsibility Skills
Administrative and Professional Skills	Professionalism/ Work Ethic	Foundations and skills for lifelong learning	Personal Responsibility Skills
Personal Responsibility	Career Management	Integrative and applied learning	Personal Responsibility Skills
Diversity and Global Consciousness	Global/ Intercultural Fluency	Intercultural knowledge and competence	Social Responsibility Skills

Table 1. Example of a Crosswalk

Map Design

Maps take many forms and for additional resources on mapping see the *Mapping Learning: A Toolkit* (NILOA, 2018; 2020). Ideally, learning maps focus on where learning outcomes will be assessed and the ways in which they may be assessed. It is important to note that within student affairs, a wide variety of assessment artifacts are collected and used including reflection statements that connect learning between various sources, photography, social media, email exchanges, meeting agendas, and public speaking.

Some maps indicate the level of engagement with a specific learning outcome by identifying if the focus is upon exposing students to learning, reinforcing or developing learning, or about attaining and demonstrating learning (as seen in the first row of Table 2). Others identify how learning is being assessed – if it is being assessed in that particular experience, such that the map would not include everything available, only those instances of events where learning is assessed (as seen in the second row of Table 2). And lastly, some indicate the connected nature of the learning experience by indicating where it takes place as either a standalone student affairs experience, undertaken in partnership with a course, or as unfolding in student employment (as seen in the third row of Table 2).

Learning Outcomes	Learning Experience 1	Learning Experience 2	Learning Experience 3	Learning Experience 4
Learning Outcome 1	Exposure/ Participation	Reinforce/ Development	Not Addressed or only aligns to a program-specific outcome	Attainment/ Achievement
Learning Outcome 2	Reflective Assignment	Presentation	Project Development	Meeting Agenda or Email
Learning Outcome 3	Stand alone	Coupled with a course	In Development	Student Employment

Table 2. Examples of Assessed Learning Mapped to Learning Outcomes

The development and design of the map should be in alignment with the intended purpose and uses of the map. This ensures that mapping is not completed to simply go through the exercise of mapping, but to be useful to the purpose, function, and value of assessment as identified by the mapping participants. As such, elements to consider in mapping include:

- To what level of learning outcomes will assessments and activities be aligned? Specific unit learning outcomes? Student affairs division learning outcomes? General education? Institution-wide learning outcomes? Others?

- What are the criteria for inclusion on the map? Is it that the activity or event addresses a specific learning outcome? Or that the learning outcome to which the activity is aligned will be assessed?

- How are student voices and experiences included in the mapping process? Which students have access to different activities and demonstrations of learning?

- What issues of equity need to be addressed or examined in the maps? What assumptions about student behaviors are built into the design of the maps?

Identifying in the maps what learning activity is aligned to which learning outcome is useful to identify where assessment should occur. Further, staff and offices associated with places where assessment is identified as occurring in the maps can be invited to participate in assignment design conversations to create or refine existing assessments in relation to the identified learning outcomes.

In concert with advising conversations with students, maps provide a means to discuss with students the various ways both in and out of classes they can demonstrate their learning of institutional learning outcomes, providing more options for learning demonstrations.

Mapping which activities, events, or programs align with which learning outcomes positions student affairs divisions to develop comprehensive learner records which transcript learning from both in and out of classes based on assessment evidence (Baker & Jankowski, 2020).

Mapping also provides a means for more equitable assessment opportunities for students. In concert with advising conversations with students, maps provide a means to discuss with students the various ways both in and out of classes they can demonstrate their learning of institutional learning outcomes, providing more options for learning demonstrations (Montenegro & Jankowski, 2020).

Applications to Student Employment

Student employment adds value as a space of learning, helping students reflect upon and apply learning from courses, and transfer learning from one context to another—learning which can be assessed (McClellan, Creager, & Savoca, 2018). Athas, Oaks, and Kennedy-Phillips (2013) in their study of student employee development within student affairs claim that,

> Employment within student affairs divisions offers environments in which students can apply the knowledge they have gained, as well as acquire new competencies, helping them to build solid foundations for their futures (p. 55).

Resources

There are various resources available for those interested in examining the value and importance of student employment as related to student learning including the book, *A Good Job*, which explores campus employment as a high-impact practice (McClellan, Creager, & Savoca, 2018) and the work of NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education who put together *Employing student success: A comprehensive examination of on-campus student employment* (Burnside, Wesley, Wesay, & Parnell, 2019) and an associated self-assessment rubric (NASPA, 2019).

Transference and Reflection

The learning outcomes associated with employment may be assessed, but they can also include exposure to different ways of engaging with associated learning or transference or integration of learning—as seen in the Iowa GROW® or WiGROW Guided Reflections on Work initiative. The Guided Reflections on Work, or GROW, projects focus upon structured discussions between student employees and their supervisors to explore and connect the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom with the work student employees are doing. The four questions employed in Iowa GROW are:

1. How is this job fitting in with your academics?
2. What are you learning here that's helping you in school?
3. What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?
4. Can you give me a couple of examples of things you've learned here that you think you'll use in your chosen profession?

The non-evaluative conversations provide space and time for students to reflect on points of connection, transference, and application of learning to different situations—a process that is very difficult for students who are not used to practicing that skill set or flexing the muscle of connectivity.

Assessment

For assessing learning from student employment though, there are others, such as the Winston-Salem State University Job Description Bank which aligned student employee job descriptions to institutional learning outcomes, essentially mapping learning unfolding within on-campus jobs. Mapping job descriptions and rewriting job descriptions as learning outcome statements positions student employment as a place of advancing learning of institutionally shared learning outcomes and presents an opportunity to gather assessment evidence or artifacts from learning unfolding in student employment. Learning that can then be evaluated and support student attainment of shared institutional learning outcomes. This may include student self-assessment of their learning, such as that of Alaska's Purposeful Engagement Assessing Knowledge (PEAK) rubrics, fusing together mapping, assignment design, and the GROW (Baca, Pierard, & Schultz, 2020) process of being aware of and reflective about learning in different spaces and places.

The charrette process provides a mechanism to revise job descriptions, identify artifacts, and determine assignments—or work assignments—that elicit student demonstration of identified learning outcomes.

Thus, the assessment development process becomes:

1. Review student employee job descriptions for alignment to learning outcomes
2. Rewrite job descriptions to more clearly align where there are points of connection
3. Facilitate conversations with students on the identified connections as well as others they might see
4. Assess student learning on the identified learning outcomes within student employment

To assess student learning on the identified learning outcomes within student employment, the assignment design or charrette process provides a mechanism to revise job descriptions, identify artifacts, and determine assignments—or work assignments—that elicit student demonstration of identified learning outcomes.

Assignment Design

Assignment charrettes, or structured peer review of assignment design, provide an opportunity for faculty and/or staff to come together and discuss the design of assignments in relation to learning outcomes, evaluative criteria, and the means by which students are prepared to complete the assignment (Hutchings, Jankowski, & Ewell, 2014) Figure 1 outlines the different pieces of assignment alignment that are explored in the charrette peer review process.

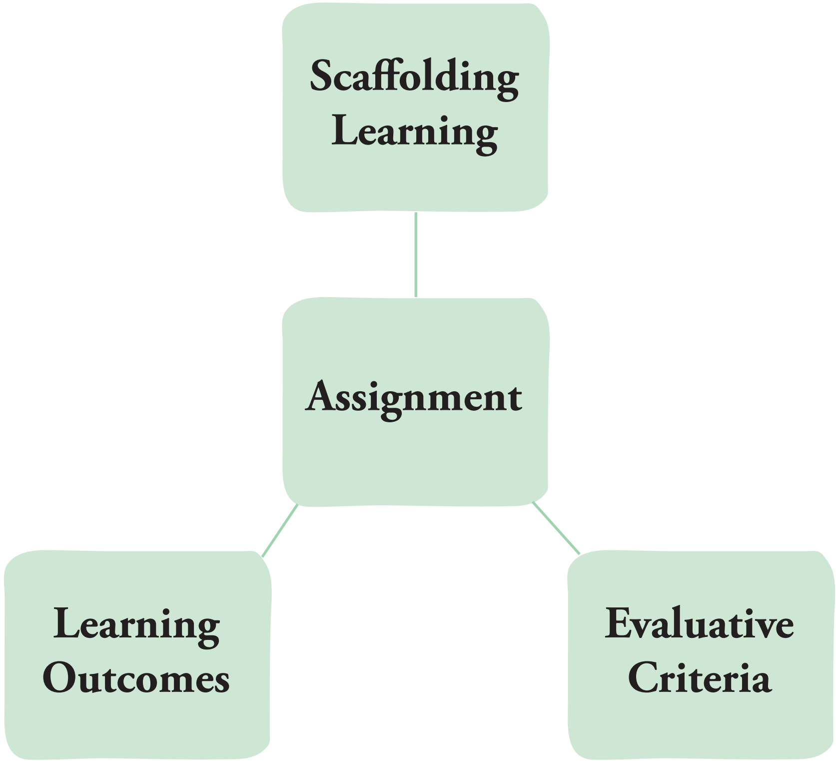

Figure 1. Elements of an Assignment Design Conversation

The charrette process is an opportunity for staff to sit together and create, co-create, or review and revise assignments and possible artifacts of student learning that can be gathered from various co-curricular experiences. Focused on intentionality of design, clarity to students, transference of learning from one setting to another, and developmental in nature, assignments form the basis for evidence of student learning from throughout an institution.

Considerations for hosting an assignment charrette include:

- Participants: Should the charrette focus on one unit with staff working together, or many units with staff sharing ideas across functional areas? Will students be invited to participate? If yes, what is the student role (co-creator or commentator)? Will faculty be invited to participate? If yes, in what ways and when?

- Location: Will the discussion be virtual or in-person? In light of social distancing and health concerns, virtual options are preferred. Considerations for planning a virtual charrette can be found here. If in person, is there adequate space and rooms for small group conversations and everyone to be heard?

- Materials: If the focus is upon reviewing an existing assessment or assignment, copies of the assignment should be provided in advance along with evaluative criteria if applicable and used. If the focus is upon designing an assignment or student employment, the existing learning outcomes and job description should be shared in advance.

For additional planning considerations and materials on assignment charrettes see the toolkit (NILOA, 2018).

The assignment discussion should open with time spent on ensuring there is a shared understanding of the purpose and value of assessment for the institution and unit as well as a shared understanding of the learning outcomes to which the efforts will align. Next, the groups should establish some rules of engagement on how to be supportive of colleagues in the assignment discussions which may include active listening, focusing on being helpful rather than critical, and mutual respect. The appendices to this resource provide information on the process and questions that are employed during a charrette. Of note, it is important to mind the time and keep everyone moving forward at the same pace. The charrette is designed to start the conversation and provide enough time to get juices flowing and ideas shared, but not enough time to complete the task. This is because the conversations should continue, in other venues, and at a later time in the future after reflecting on the feedback and the dialogue. Trying to finalize everything in one day is unlikely to be successful and can be overly taxing for group participants as opposed to energizing. To keep time, either appoint a facilitator or a time-keeper within each group that keeps everyone on task and focused on contributing and benefiting from the discussion. Finally, the time together for each participant concludes with time for written feedback. While the NILOA form is very simple, it can be modified to align with more local goals or focus on one specific learning outcome at a time (for instance, an assignment charrette on effective communication assignments within student employment). At the conclusion of the event, provide time for participants to reflect on the process: what was learned, themes that emerged, how it felt, what they want to do next, and any insights about assignments.

For staff and faculty, working together on the design of assignments has turned out to be a powerful professional development experience while also elevating the intellectual rigor of assignment design.

The charrette process can be used to develop and design an assignment, or review and better align an assignment. Thoughtfully designed assignments can support learning-centered co-curricular and pedagogical reform and create clearer, more powerful learning pathways for students. For staff and faculty, working together on the design of assignments has turned out to be a powerful professional development experience while also elevating the intellectual rigor of assignment design. Further, assignment design conversations have helped to elevate the importance of reflection in meaningful assignment design, an approach that student affairs assessment may be uniquely positioned to support (Hutchings, 2018).

Of particular note is to uphold the expertise of student affairs practitioners in the assignment charrette process. When faculty assess student learning or assign grades, the process is built on an assumption of expertise—that faculty are the content experts in a particular area and that being a content expert serves as the basis upon which we accept their judgement of student learning. The same level of trust in expertise should exist for student affairs professionals who conduct and review assessment—that they are experts in their areas and based on the assumption of expertise, require no further review from other units within the institution which also operate on processes of trust.

Included at the end of this resource are three sets of appendices. The first, **Appendix A**, provides process instructions and feedback questions for an assignment charrette event focused upon developing assignments or assessments from scratch. **Appendix B** provides process instructions and feedback questions for an assignment charrette event focused upon revising an existing assignment or assessment through a peer review process. **Appendix C** provides process instructions and feedback questions for an assignment charrette focused on student employment as an assessment mechanism, including rewriting job descriptions to align with learning outcomes and determining artifacts from employment that are applicable to institutional assessment.

Should you engage with and modify these tools, please contact NILOA and share your efforts as we are always looking to share different institutional examples: niloa@education.illinos.edu.

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Appendix A:

Assignment Development Charrette Process

In groups of no more than 5, each person/team will have an opportunity to present their learning outcome(s) and receive suggestions and feedback on developing an assignment from the group. In order for everyone to have an opportunity to give and receive feedback, a timed carousel process is used. Each round is designed to provide feedback and support to one person at a time. This means that in a group of 3 people, there would be 3 rounds and in a group of 5, there would be 5 rounds of design support. You will be a "presenter" for one round and a "participant" for the other rounds.

Each round is 25 minutes.

Introduce learning outcomes (5 min):

The presenter introduces the learning outcomes for which an assignment or assessment is to be designed and provides contextual information to the listeners to assist in the design process. Contextual information may include information on student recruitment and attendance, the focus of the program/event/activity, other related events or programs to which it might connect, the timing during the academic year when it occurs, any partnerships or connections with other organizations/groups/academic programs, and (if applicable) any relevant information or data on past assessments or evaluations.

Listeners: jot down thoughts and questions but please do not interrupt the presenter, let them have their full time. You may ask clarifying questions at the end.

Discussion (15 min):

Listeners will respond to what they have heard, taking turns asking questions, sharing thoughts, feedback, and thinking creatively about possible assignments that address the learning outcome(s) of interest. The purpose of the discussion is to help your colleague design a well-aligned assignment so please be constructive and collegial. Also, please mind the time and allow each participant the opportunity to contribute to the discussion. Discussions should address the questions on the feedback sheet.

Presenters: listen carefully and respond to the inquiries. Think about alignment between the learning outcomes, the assignment, and future considerations for evaluative criteria.

Feedback (5 min):

Everyone: Use the feedback form to give the presenter written feedback and suggestions. The presenter can use this time to write down notes about the learning outcome(s), assignment, and/or other thoughts and reflections from the conversation, along with outlining next steps for development.

Assignment Development Charrette Form

Assignment Alignment with Learning Outcomes

1. What learning outcomes will students demonstrate with this assignment?

2. In what ways will students demonstrate the learning outcome(s)? What tasks will they be asked to complete?

Assignment Prompt

3. What learning artifact or evidence of learning will a student have after completion of the assignment? (Sample ideas include an email exchange, an agenda, a reflection, a presentation, a student recruitment strategy for student organization, etc.).

4. What information will students receive about assignment expectations and completions? What is the prompt? (For additional resources on assignment prompts see Transparency in Learning and Teaching project.)

Assignment Alignment with Evaluative Criteria

5. How will student work be evaluated for attainment of learning outcome(s)? What are the evaluative criteria (such as a rubric, checklist, or grading form)? Is the assignment prompt and learning outcome in alignment with how student learning will be evaluated?

6. Other questions, comments or suggestions.

Appendix B:

Assignment Charrette Process

In groups of no more than 5, each person/team with an assignment to review will have an opportunity to share their assignment and receive suggestions and feedback from the group through a collaborative, peer review process. In order for everyone to have an opportunity to give and receive feedback, a timed carousel process is used. Each round is designed to provide feedback to one person at a time. This means that in a group of 3 people, there would be 3 rounds and in a group of 5, there would be 5 rounds of review and feedback and/or design support. You will be a "presenter" for one round and a "participant" for the other rounds.

Each round is 25-30 minutes.

Introduce learning outcomes and assignment (5-10 min):

The presenter introduces the learning outcomes to which the activity or program aligns, provides an overview of the assignment itself, and then provides background information for the listeners including: information on student recruitment and attendance, the focus of the program/event/activity, other related events or programs to which it might connect, the timing during the academic year when it occurs, any partnerships or connections with other organizations/groups/academic programs, and (if applicable) any relevant information or data on past assessments or evaluations. Contextual information on the assignment include an overview of the assignment itself including what exactly students are asked to do, what learning outcomes the assignment is designed to elicit, and how students are evaluated.

Listeners: jot down thoughts and questions but please do not interrupt the presenter, let them have their full time. You may ask clarifying questions at the end.

Note: Additional time may be needed for peers to read the assignment itself if not shared in advance.

Discussion (15 min):

Listeners will respond to what they have heard, taking turns asking questions, sharing thoughts, feedback, and thinking creatively about possible solutions to challenges the presenter identified. The purpose of the discussion is to help your colleague strengthen their assignment so please be constructive and collegial. Also, please mind the time and allow each participant the opportunity to contribute to the discussion. Discussions should address the questions on the feedback sheet.

Presenters: listen carefully and respond to the inquiries. Think about alignment between the learning outcomes, the assignment, and evaluative criteria.

Feedback (5 min):

Everyone: Use the feedback form to give the presenter written feedback and suggestions. The presenter can use this time to write down notes about the learning outcome(s), assignment, and/or other thoughts and reflections from the conversation, along with outlining next steps for revision or additional feedback.

Assignment Charrette Feedback Form

Assignment Alignment with Learning Outcomes

1. What learning outcomes will students demonstrate with this assignment? How will students demonstrate the learning outcome(s)?

2. In what ways does the assignment need to be modified to better align with the desired learning outcome(s)?

Assignment Prompt

3. What exactly will a student be asked to do and what learning artifact or evidence of learning will a student have after completion of the assignment? Does the artifact align with the learning outcome of interest? (Sample ideas include an email exchange, an agenda, a reflection, a presentation, a student recruitment strategy for student organization, etc.).

4. Are the instructions clear to students on what they are being asked to demonstrate and why? Thinking about the assignment from the point of view of students, what questions or suggestions do you have? (For additional resources on assignment prompts see Transparency in Learning and Teaching project.)

Assignment Alignment with Evaluative Criteria

5. How will student work be evaluated for attainment of the learning outcome(s)? What is the evaluative criteria (such as a rubric, checklist, or grading form)? Is the assignment prompt and learning outcome in alignment with how student learning will be evaluated?

6. Other questions, comments or suggestions.

Appendix C:

Student Employment Assignment Charrette Process

In groups of no more than 5, each person/team will have an opportunity to either review their job description in alignment with learning outcomes and brainstorm possible assessment artifacts, or review job tasks for revision as an assignment with the group. In order for everyone to have an opportunity to give and receive feedback, a timed carousel process is used. Each round is designed to provide feedback and support to one person at a time. This means that in a group of 3 people, there would be 3 rounds and in a group of 5, there would be 5 rounds of review and feedback and/or design support. You will be a "presenter" for one round and a "participant" for the other rounds.

Each round is 25 minutes.

Examine Job Description and Learning Outcomes (5 min):

Presenters will introduce the job description and unit-level and/or institution-level learning outcomes to which the job description will be aligned. Job task information will be shared such as length of employment, roles and responsibilities of students, and possible connections to learning outcomes of interest. Examples of typical work assignments will be presented to the group for consideration.

Listeners: jot down thoughts and questions but please do not interrupt the presenter, let them have their full time. You may ask clarifying questions at the end.

Discussion (15 min):

Listeners will respond to what they have heard, taking turns asking questions, sharing thoughts, feedback, and thinking creatively about how to revise the job description to better align with the learning outcomes of interest or to make clearer connections between the job description and institutional learning outcomes. The purpose of the discussion is to help your colleague strengthen their learning outcome(s) alignment and determine assessment tasks in student employment, so please be constructive and collegial. Also, please mind the time and allow each participant the opportunity to contribute to the discussion. Discussions should address the questions on the feedback sheet.

Presenters: listen carefully and respond to the inquiries. Think about alignment between the learning outcomes, the assignment, and evaluative criteria.

Feedback (5 min):

Everyone: Use the feedback form to give the presenter written feedback and suggestions. The presenter can use this time to write down notes about the learning outcome(s), assignment, and/or other thoughts and reflections from the conversation, along with outlining next steps for revision or additional feedback.

Student Employment Assignment Charrette Feedback Form

Job Description Alignment with Learning Outcomes

1. What learning outcomes will students demonstrate through the course of student employment?

2. What associated job tasks lend themselves towards artifacts of student learning in relation to learning outcomes of interest? (Sample artifact ideas include an email exchange, an agenda, a reflection, a presentation, a student recruitment strategy for student organization, etc.).

3. What learning artifact or evidence of learning will a student have after completion of the assignment?

4. Thinking about the job description from the point of view of students, what questions or suggestions do you have about alignment with learning outcomes? How do students interpret the requirements or are they aware? (For additional resources on assignment prompts see Transparency in Learning and Teaching project.)

5. Is the task part of the job description and/or roles and responsibilities of the student employee? If out of alignment, does the job description need to be modified or does the learning outcome need to change to better reflect learning in student employment?

6. How will student work be evaluated for attainment of learning outcome(s)? What is the evaluative criteria (such as a rubric, checklist, or grading form)? Is the assignment prompt and learning outcome in alignment with how student learning will be evaluated?

7. Other questions, comments or suggestions.

About NILOA

- The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) was established in December 2008.
- NILOA is co-located at the University of Illinois and Indiana University.
- The NILOA website contains free assessment resources and can be found at http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org.
- The NILOA research team has scanned institutional websites, surveyed chief academic officers, and commissioned a series of occasional papers.
- NILOA's Founding Director, George Kuh, founded the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE).
- The other co-principal investigator for NILOA, Stanley Ikenberry, was president of the University of Illinois from 1979 to 1995 and of the American Council of Education from 1996 to 2001.

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