

The 2006 Assessment Institute
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Introduction:

This report summarizes the activities attended during the 2006 Assessment Institute. I would like to thank Title V Project for sponsoring my participation in this institute. I have already shared my experience and related documents with the assessment committees of both institutions and will apply the acquired knowledge for the benefit of the project.

Pre-Institute Workshops:

1. Reflection and Matrix Thinking to Enhance Learning:

- a. The concept of reflection and deep learning was discussed and the role of matrix thinking in the development of mature, sophisticated and intellectually compelling reflections. **Appendix I** summarizes some of these concepts.

2. How Do e-Portfolio Actually Assess Learning :

- a. This workshop explored the challenges associated with e-portfolio-based assessment, and ways to generate approaches that could work in different contexts. Additional information is presented in **Appendix II**.

Concurrent Workshops:

1. Web-based Assessment Management Can Make All the Difference in Accreditation:

- a. Virginia Commonwealth University developed **WEAVEonline**, a **web-based assessment system** that helps to manage accreditation, assessment and quality improvement processes for the university. A copy of a demo was distributed and additional information can be obtained through www.weaveonline.com. The program provides a framework for assessment data such as: mission statement, outcome, measures, findings, action plan, and curriculum mapping among other features.

2. Contributing to Student Success through Outcomes Assessment in Student Affairs.

- a. Buffalo State College presented an overview of the student affairs outcomes-based assessment planning process. Assessment efforts must demonstrate the impact of student affairs units on key institutional goals: Student success: retention, graduation, student satisfaction and student learning development. Ongoing assessment activities included: student

satisfaction surveys, National Survey of Student Engagement, Alumni survey, annual reports, admitted student questionnaire.

3. Using a System Approach to Assure Program Assessment Success Robert Armacost -University of Central Florida

- a. This workshop focused on what is required to have an effective system of program assessment and how to assure program assessment success.
- b. Essential Program Assessment System Elements:
 - + Management objectives for program assessment
 - + Process design: content, focus, and mechanisms of the program assessment process
 - + Quality assurance (QA) process
 - + Schedules and timelines for program assessment
 - + Support and documentation

Viewing site: http://iaaweb.ucf/oeas/phase2/view_plans_results.asp

4. The Institutional Portfolio: A Performance Based Model for Assessment of General Education. Jeffrey Seybert - Johnson County Community College

- a. In this workshop an overview of the development and implementation of a model involving performance-based assessment of general education. Components of the model include detailed statements of expected student outcomes and institutional standards. Working in small teams participants evaluated samples of student work using the holistic scoring rubric.
- b. What comprises the Institutional Portfolio:
 - + Collection and review of student work (“artifacts”) produced throughout the curriculum for each of six major outcomes: Mathematics, Speaking, Writing, Culture and Ethics, Modes of Inquiry and Problem Solving.
 - + Review conducted by faculty teams using holistic scoring criteria (rubrics)
 - + Results compiled, analyzed, and reported in the aggregate by the Office of Institutional Research
 - + Results reported to Faculty Assessment Committee which, in turn, reports to the faculty Educational Affairs Committee.
 - + Faculty acts on assessment results

5. Building a Culture of Assessment: The Annual Assessment Report (Cedarville University www.cedarville.edu)

- a. Five Principles of Good Practice.- Key Principles
 - + **Determine the limits of the assessment process** - decide the level and detail for the formal assessment system. (e.g. ask assessment units to identify five objectives to be assessed)
 - + **Keep ownership local** - decentralize the process as much as possible

- ✚ **Begin with the end in mind** - ask yourself what the final report will look like... then design a process that will get you there.
- ✚ **Standardize what is essential and train people in these standards** - then leave room for each unit to create a report within those standards.
- ✚ **Use the power of public display of assessment results** - the best leverage comes when people know their work will be shown in public side-by-side the work of others.

6. Handouts and materials available among others:

a. Assessing student outcomes for civic learning - Dr. Patti Clayton

✚ **DEAL Model for Critical Reflection:**

- **Describe** - experience objectively: What? Where? Who? When? Why?
- **Examine** - experience per reflection prompts by category of learning goal
- **Articulate Learning** - What did I learn?, How did I learn it?, Why is it important?, What will I do because of it?

b. Writing and Measuring Student Learning Outcomes - Dr. Sharon Pate
sharon.pate@ctcd.edu

✚ **What are the characteristics of a good student learning outcomes: SMARC**

- It is **S**pecific
- It is **M**easurable
- It is **A**ctionable
- It is **R**elevant
- It is **C**ommunicated

7. Conference materials are available at the IUPUI site:
www.planning.iupui.edu/438.html

Appendix I

Reflection and Matrix Thinking to Enhance Learning

Reflection – the act of stepping outside of acting and believing to examine out what it means.

John Dewey: Reflection as Critical Thinking

- + Reflection as “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge”
- + Moving beyond habit, routine, intuition
- + Triggered by uncertainty
- + Stages: defining the problem, forming guiding concepts, elaboration of meaning, testing of ideas in action, feedback.

David Kolb’s Stages:

- + Observation
- + Interpretation/ Analysis
- + Judgment
- + Looking forward

Schön’s Reflective Cycle

- + Professional performance is a cycle of reflection and action, as multiple scales (The Reflective Practitioner)

David Boud’s Examining Feelings

- + Reflection as systematically attending to feelings
- + Integration of affective and cognitive essential to effective learning performance
- + Narrative an analytic tool

Katheleen Yancey’s Dimensions of Reflection (ref. *Reflection in the Writing Classroom*)

- + Reflection-in-action: “reviewing, projecting, revising”
- + Reflection as conversation: with artifacts, with self, with others
- + Constructive reflection: “developing a cumulative, multi-selved, multi-vocal identity”
- + Reflection-in-presentation: “articulating the relationships between and among” creation, creator, and context of creation.

Sharon Hamilton’s Matrix Thinking (IUPUI)

- + Second-order reflection through reframing or re-contextualization
- + (Re)examining experience and artifacts in relationship to an integrative conceptual framework
- + Often accomplished through portfolios

Developmental Approach (Alverno College)

Alverno College's Diagnostic Digital Portfolio:

- ✚ A theory-based electronic tool built on the college's researched practices and learning principles, to support student learning
- ✚ Located on the Web, it primarily consists of key performances designated by the faculty
- ✚ Each artifact includes a description of the performance, the criteria, assessor feedback, and self-assessment, and in some cases, the performance.

Why take a developmental approach:

- To deepen the educational understanding of reflection in practice
- To recognize important differences among individual students
- To guide further practice in using protocols to stimulate reflective practice and learning

Conceptual Perspectives:

- ✚ The *Alverno College Faculty Self-Assessment Framework* (2000)
- ✚ Key principles from the cognitive science of learning, articulated in *How People Learn* (Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000)
- ✚ The Educational Theory of Integrated Learning and Domains of Growth, from Mentkowski and Associates' (2000) *Learning That Lasts*.

Developmental Perspectives on Reflection and Learning (see table)

- ✚ Observations through the *Self-Assessment Framework* :
 - focused on how the student uses evidence in analyzing her own performance and explores the meaning of abilities
- ✚ The *How People Learn* principles:
 - led to observations about cognition and how the students encountered and worked with new and increasingly complex ideas, applying learning strategies.
- ✚ *Learning That Lasts*:
 - this perspective emphasized developing identity as a learner and a performer within a discipline

DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVES ON REFLECTION AND LEARNING
ALVERNO COLLEGE

FRAMEWORKS AND THEMES	BEGINNING - BASIC	INTERMEDIATE - DEVELOPING	ADVANCED - MATURE
<p>Self Assessment Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Observing performance, using evidence, feedback ▪ Finding, analyzing patterns ▪ Making judgments ▪ Planning future performances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simply repeats description, judgment of assessors ▪ Sees performance as same as assignment (e.g. did what was told) ▪ Vague global judgments, asserted w/o evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relates judgments/conclusions to evidence (inference) ▪ Deepens understanding of ability ▪ Uses feedback to expand understanding of ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Makes connections, applications, and uses to move forward ▪ Observes intentional changes as a basis for higher learning ▪ Uses multiple frameworks from disciplines and beyond
<p>How People Learn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concepts and misconceptions ▪ Knowledge construction and transfer of ability ▪ Metacognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sees feedback as external and not subject to control and analysis ▪ Meaning of ability is limited to the terms given in the assignment/assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sees feedback as a means for understanding links between his/her performance and target abilities ▪ Begins to have an understanding of the tools being employed and the metacognitive nature of one's decisions and planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incorporates feedback and past performance in constructing further performance and learning plans ▪ Understands own performance as a learner and transfers learning strategies to multiple contexts
<p>Learning That Lasts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing identity as a learner and a performer ▪ Constructing abilities frameworks across performances ▪ Linking ability to development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Observes personal behavior with concrete relationships to broad criteria ▪ Utilizes criteria and generalized notions of effectiveness/success as the basis for reflection ▪ Global self evaluations minimize attention to connections between performance and the power of reflecting on performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-identifies as a learner, constructing meaning in experience ▪ Employs a concern for a future self and performance ▪ Recognize and analyzes personal change ▪ Uses abilities as a framework for criteria through which to interpret situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elaborates own identity as a professional and individual, including self as learner ▪ Uses multiplicity as a basis for developing identity ▪ Uses self assessment and reflection to transfer ability and capacity to new situations ▪ Integrates personal effectiveness as part of a developing future self

Appendix II

How do ePortfolio actually assess learning?

Institutionalizing the ePortfolio: Benefits, challenges, answer, and how to succeed at implementation. Judith Kirkpatrick, Kapi'olani Community College, Hawaii
<http://eportfolio.kcc.hawaii.edu>

Benefits for students:

- ✦ Teach reflection, analysis, and integrate learning across the full educational experience
- ✦ Integrate knowledge and experience
- ✦ Assists with management of educational and professional records
- ✦ Provide a place to maintain a catalog of accomplishments over time
- ✦ Prepare for career selection and the job search
- ✦ Enhance self-esteem and confidence

Benefits for faculty and administrators:

- ✦ Course-level assessment for student learning
- ✦ Program-level assessment for student learning and accreditation
- ✦ Enhanced student-faculty relationships
- ✦ Improved advisement
- ✦ Enhanced professional development
- ✦ Streamlined contract renewal

Benefits of e Portfolios

- ✦ **Folio thinking promotes deep learning through: organization, reflective analysis, evaluation, creative manipulation of information**
- ✦ A window to view learning presentations and products
- ✦ Share more directly in experiences like service learning
- ✦ A resume-enhancing tool that provides employers with critical information about applicant skills and learning
- ✦ A means for colleagues to exchange information and feedback about research, teaching, committee work, and service
- ✦ And, of course, a means to assess programs, learning outcomes, and the enhancement of a transcript

Challenges to e Portfolio use

- ✦ Limited faculty and student time and energy
- ✦ Lack of funding
- ✦ Lack of understanding of the value of e-Portfolios in enhancing student learning
- ✦ The willingness of faculty and administrators to promote the e Portfolio and folio thinking
- ✦ The need for faculty and students to develop the skills to use the e Portfolio
- ✦ Inadequate technological resources and support

- ✦ Fear of technology
- ✦ Resistance to change
- ✦ Educating e Portfolio audiences for viewing

Answers to Challenges

- ✦ **Time and Energy:** Portfolios use the same time to more benefit by empowering users to:
 - Document their own educational and professional progress
 - Get the feedback they want and need
 - Become more self-directed in their learning
- ✦ **Money:** Once implemented, ongoing costs are minimal if you adopt a solution such as Open Source Portfolio
- ✦ **Value of Reflection:** Reflection improves everyone's learning through promoting higher level thinking
- ✦ **Skills:** the software is easy; the habit of documenting and reflecting upon one's learning is more difficult
- ✦ **Fear of technology:** e Portfolio is a user friendly technology
- ✦ **Resistance to change:** Folio thinking necessitates new ways of thinking about learning
- ✦ **Educating e Portfolio audiences:** encouraging opportunities for academic and community interface (interships, service learning) helps train e Portfolio users in soliciting and preparing comments that can guide viewers' feedback.

Campus Implementation:

- ✦ **Assessment of learning:** course and program level; professional certification
- ✦ **Institutional Assessment**
- ✦ **Learning Beyond the Classroom:** co-curricular activities, service or experiential learning, career development

Campus Activities:

- ✦ **Initiate conversations among faculty, administrators, and students about benefits and challenges of e Portfolio**
- ✦ **Provide hands-on learning about e Portfolio**
- ✦ **Provide resources for pilots in various campus units/programs**
- ✦ **Reward faculty for implementing e Portfolio with:** release time, summer institutes, small grants from institutional moneys, assistance in seeking external grants, showcasing effective faculty portfolio use.
- ✦ **Encourage faculty to use their own development to learn and model e Portfolio use**
- ✦ **Demonstrate how e Portfolios can streamline faculty workload by:** decreasing paper flow, minimizing lost assignments, assisting with assignment review and feedback, improving assessment of student learning, enhancing benefits already present in a course management system.

Get Students to use them!

- ✚ **Enhancement of self-esteem by:** becoming aware of how much & how deeply one has learned; being able to demonstrate one's progress to faculty, peers and employers
- ✚ **Improved learning outcomes through**
 - Additional scaffolding and incorporation of standards
 - Enhanced feedback from faculty and peers
 - Increased learning, creativity, and control
 - Integration of learning in and outside of the classroom
 - Recognition of learning relevance to the real world
 - Better positioning for career choice and job search

How to succeed:

- ✚ **Begin small:** with pilot groups; by discipline; by year or semester
- ✚ **Expand as demand builds**

ePortfolio Web sites:

Indiana University e Portfolio - www.eport.iu.edu

Indiana University Institutional Portfolio - www.iport.iupui.edu

Portland State University - <http://portfolio.pdx.edu>

Pace University - www.pace.edu/eportfolio

International Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research -

<http://ncepr.org/ncepr/drupal/blog>

Dr. Helen Barrett's e Portfolio Bibliography -

<http://electronicportfolios.com/portfolios/bibliography.html>

Open Source Portfolio - www.osportfolio.org

An overview of e-Portfolio- www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI3001.pdf

EduTools e-Portfolio Review - <http://eportfolio.edutools.info/>