Using the NILOA Transparency Framework: It's All About the Process

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Abstract
When the St. John Fisher College Educational Assessment Leadership Team set out to make assessment information readily accessible, they looked to the NILOA Transparency Framework to serve as a guiding template. Recognizing its use nationally to clearly communicate the six assessment components with hexagons, they saw the NILOA model as the ideal format for the design of the institutional assessment website. Assessment results could be organized with the comprehensive, straightforward NILOA graphic. What they did not expect, however, was that the process of adopting the framework would transform not just how assessment "looked", but how they saw it as well.

Disciplines
Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

Comments
Presented at the IUPUI Assessment Institute in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 26, 2015.
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First-Year Seminars and Experiences
More students now enroll in the curricula than first-year seminars or other programs that bring small groups of students together with faculty in a study group format. The highest-quality first-year experience plans a strong emphasis on critical thinking, frequent writing, information literacy, and other skills that develop students' intellectual and practical competencies. Peer mentoring can also involve students with writing, advising, grades, and faculty members' research.

Common Intellectual Experiences
The AACU's "core" curriculum has evolved into a variety of modern forms, such as a set of required common core or in a vertically organized general education program that includes advisors' integrative studies and open enrollment participation in a learning community (see below). These programs often combine liberal education—such as, philosophy and science, global competence—within a variety of curricula and corequisite options for students.

Learning Communities
The key goal for learning communities is to encourage integration of learning across courses and to involve students with the question that matter beyond the classroom. Students also say more through data about their own learning. Many learning communities explore a common topic today's or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some include both "liberal arts" and "professional courses" others focus service learning.

Writing-Intensive Courses
These courses emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum, including many upper-division, student-centered, and collaborative courses. Undergraduate research Many offices and are now creating a writing-intensive curriculum that helps students explore culture, life experiences, and education different directions. Students work with authors who teach and their students. Many learning communities explore a common topic today's or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some include both "liberal arts" and "professional courses" others focus service learning.

Collaborative Assignments and Projects
Collaborative learning and includes a key goal, writing to work and other projects in the company of others, and deepening our own understanding of. The focus is on the writing experience of students, especially those with different backgrounds and the environment. The focus is on the writing experience of students, especially those with different backgrounds and the environment. This approach helps students pursue a major in writing by course and assignment. Writing-intensive courses are offered by departments in the community and in the state.

Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
In these programs, students are "service learning" with community partners in an immersion setting and off-campus, developed as part of the course. The core is to give students direct experience with the issues they are studying. They are developing and evaluating skills in service learning and data gathering. The community. A key element in those programs is the opportunity for students to use their writing in real-world settings and ethics in connection with their service experiences. These programs could also help students get something back to the community in an important way, and with their work, students can get perspectives on their service experience. These programs could also help students get something back to the community in an important way, and with their work, students can get perspectives on their service experience.

Undergraduate Research
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Divinity/Global Learning
Many offices and are now creating a writing-intensive curriculum that helps students explore culture, life experiences, and education different directions. Students work with authors who teach and their students. Many learning communities explore a common topic today's or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some include both "liberal arts" and "professional courses" others focus service learning.

Alumni/Student Connections
Alumni/Student connections are another immense common form of community and learning. The idea is to provide students with direct experience in a real setting—usually related to their major or minor—and to give them the benefit of experiencing and working with professionals in their field. The idea is to provide students with direct experience in a real setting—usually related to their major or minor—and to give them the benefit of experiencing and working with professionals in their field.

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Senior Courses and Projects
Whether they are called "honors courses" or "capstone courses" these culminating experiences require students, for the most part, of their college year to create a project that is used to determine and apply what they have learned. Projects might be a research project, a performance, a portfolio of "best work," or an exhibit of artwork. Capstone courses are offered both in departments and increasingly in general education as well.
SJFC’s LEAP HighER Impact Practices

Assessment of Academic Goals & Outcomes
Students learn best when they understand the connections between their course work and the academic goals. By aligning specific assignments, exams, and projects with goals and outcomes, students can better understand how the curriculum relates to their overall learning and can support the metacognitive processes that help students become successful.

Undergraduate Research
Many college and universities are now providing research experiences for students in all disciplines. Undergraduate research, however, has been most prominently used in science disciplines. SJFC provides support from the National Science Foundation and the new academic community is engaging these courses to connect key concepts and practices with student’s real and active involvement in scientific investigation and research. The goal is to involve students with actively connected questions, empirical observation, writing edge technology, and the core of scholarship that comes from working to answer important questions.

Diversity/Global Learning
Many college and universities now emphasize courses and programs that help students explore cultures, world experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These courses—which utilize U.S. diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore “difficult differences” such as social, ethnic, and gender inequality or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and peace. Specifically, internships are designed by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad.

Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
In these programs, field-based “experiential learning” with community partners in an institutional setting—and often a regulated part of the course. The idea is to gain multidisciplinary experience with real-world applications that involve critical thinking, data analysis and other problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity to make a hands-on impact on the community; it is often realized through an internship in a real-world setting or after a classroom setting in the service experience. Three programs are designed that bring students back to the community in an important college orientation, and the working with community partners is a good preparation for citizenship, work and life.

Internships
Internships are another increasingly common form of experiential learning. The idea is to provide students with these experiences in a work setting—equally related to their career interest—and to gain them the benefits of supervision and counsel from professionals in the field. SJFC’s internship in the academic core results, students complete a project or paper that is approved by a faculty member.

Capstone Courses and Projects
Whether it’s called “senior seminar” or some other name, these culminating experiences requires students nearing the end of their college experience to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they’ve learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of “best work,” or an edit of an article. Capstones are offered both in departmental programs and, increasingly, in general education as well.

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HighER-impact Educational Practices

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Affirm the importance of assessment to high quality student learning experiences
Provide support for resource allocation dedicated to assessment
NILOA Transparency Framework

- Communicates to all stakeholders
- Nationally recognized, research-based
- Brings consistency to campus efforts
### 2012-13 Assessment Cycle: CORE CURRICULUM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Course # of core course taught and assessed</th>
<th>SFC College-Wide Goals</th>
<th>MSCHE Essential Skills</th>
<th>Technological Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1 Fall 2012-13 Sp 2013-14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 Fall 2012-13 Sp 2013-15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 Fall 2012-14 Sp 2013-15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>P4 Fall 2012-15 Sp 2013-15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>P5 Fall 2012-16 Sp 2013-16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQ Fall 2012-17* Sp 2013-18*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC Fall 2012-17* Sp 2013-18*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Fewer courses are offered in the SQ and CC areas because students are required to take only one course in the Foundational Core areas and must take two courses in the Perspective areas.

### Sociocultural Perspectives (P5) Rubric (2012)

**P5 Core Goal #1**
Students will understand and be able to discuss the paradigm, method, and/or theoretical perspective used to study individual behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Not Acceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will be able to identify and describe at least one important paradigm, method, and/or theoretical perspective relevant for the study of individual and/or social behavior.</td>
<td>Description is very clear and detailed. It demonstrates an adequate understanding of the usefulness of the paradigm, method, or theoretical perspective for the study of individual and/or social behavior.</td>
<td>Description is vague and not detailed. It demonstrates an inadequate understanding of the usefulness of the paradigm, method, or theoretical perspective for the study of individual and/or social behavior.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**P5 Core Goal #2**
Students will be able to comprehend the role of data or evidence in getting at conclusions about individual and/or social behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Not Acceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will recognize the conclusions they draw regarding individual and/or social behavior is based on data and evidence.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates a very good understanding of the link between a conclusion about individual and/or social behavior and the data or evidence used to support it.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates an adequate understanding of the link between a conclusion about individual and/or social behavior and the data or evidence used to support it.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates an inadequate understanding of the link between a conclusion about individual and/or social behavior and the data or evidence used to support it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This was my review with the following National Council of Teachers Rubric guidelines:*

- **Exemplary**
  - Students are able to identify and describe at least one important paradigm, method, and/or theoretical perspective relevant for the study of individual and/or social behavior.
  - Students are able to comprehend the role of data or evidence in getting at conclusions about individual and/or social behavior.

- **Acceptable**
  - Students are able to identify and describe at least one important paradigm, method, and/or theoretical perspective relevant for the study of individual and/or social behavior.
  - Students are able to comprehend the role of data or evidence in getting at conclusions about individual and/or social behavior.

- **Not Acceptable**
  - Students are unable to identify and describe at least one important paradigm, method, and/or theoretical perspective relevant for the study of individual and/or social behavior.
  - Students are unable to comprehend the role of data or evidence in getting at conclusions about individual and/or social behavior.
Assessment Conversations Across the Campus

System to track assessment of student learning outcomes - Blackboard Analytics

★ Alignment of program outcomes, college-wide goals, accreditation standards

★ Capable of connecting with the Student Information System

★ Connection with A&S core and RCWSOE outcomes

★ Not just for accreditation purposes, but best practice
Products can be static.

Process is dynamic.

Build in capacity for change.
Thank you

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*National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. (2011).*

*American Association of Colleges and Universities. (2005).*