Assessment News

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Conference Opportunities


HLC 116th Annual Conference, April 8-12, 2011, Hyatt Regency Chicago, Il

Summary of Assessment in Student Affairs
By Corday Goddard
Assistant Dean of Student Development

In the summer of 2004, the Directors’ team in what was then the Division of Student Life met and worked together to develop an initial answer to the question “What skills do we want every St. Norbert graduate to possess that complements their classroom learning, that they might learn outside the classroom?” and “How might we be instrumental and intentional in helping them master those skills?” Over the course of several days, a set of competencies was identified that capitalized on the best of contemporary student development theory; the residential, traditional-aged nature of our student population; and on our mission as liberal arts institution in the Norbertine, Catholic tradition. Over time, that extensive list of skills has been distilled and refined to a set of 9 identified competencies, connected together under three umbrella headings of “Change Yourself,” “Change Your Community,” and “Change Your World.”

Assessment in today’s Division of Student Affairs, then, happens in the context of that model, with the documentation of student learning across those identified competencies serving as our focus. The reporting of various assessment work by different areas and departments within the division is done to allow us to measure our collective progress toward the goal of a uniformly competent student body, as demonstrated by evidence of mastery, growth and change over the course of a comprehensive 4-year student experience.

This issue of Assessment News describes the various approaches used within the division to document learning across all nine competencies (with an assist from our friends in Mission & Heritage) during the 2009-2010 academic year. At this stage in the development of our approach to assessment of the model, we are focused on building assessment competency within the division, and on utilizing as many methods and approaches as we can identify, for the purpose of moving closer and closer to uniformly using (and perhaps establishing) best practices in the assessment of student learning outside the classroom.

Accreditation Self-Study Update

The Self-Study Steering Committee used the Fall semester to critique chapter drafts, meet with HLC liaisons, and produce a revised institutional self-study report. The new draft underwent additional revision during semester break. As a first step in community vetting, Version 4 was distributed to 27 colleagues, representing every college division, who volunteered to be critic/readers. Members of each chapter reading team spent a week independently reviewing their chapter. On January 21, teams met together to fashion recommendations for improving the draft chapters. The teams then met with the corresponding Criterion Chair (i.e. the chapter’s author) to discuss those recommendations. It was obvious that team members had invested considerable time in reviewing the chapters and, as a result, offered numerous helpful suggestions for making each chapter better.

Revision of the draft will continue over the next several months based on feedback from numerous campus constituencies. It will continue to be a work in progress until late March when the document will be handed over to a general editor. For now, the Steering Committee is focused on getting the substance, the examples, and especially the summary “institutional strengths” and “opportunities for improvement” right. The general editor will deal with many of the formatting and style concerns we know need to be addressed before publication. Data will also be updated throughout the semester.

The current draft will be made available for community review beginning February 2, 2011. Accompanied by an electronic feedback tool, the draft report can be accessed on the Accreditation web site under Draft Self-Study Report. By using the electronic feedback tool, every member of the SNC Community will have an opportunity to comment or offer suggestions. In addition, in February and March, the Steering Committee will be inviting feedback during presentations to the academic divisions, hourly association, salaried & administrative association, and the Student Government Association.

For the upcoming site visit (October 31-November 3, 2011), it is important that the SNC Community be familiar with the self study and trust that it presents a fair and accurate appraisal of St. Norbert College’s strengths and challenges. The Steering Committee understands that reviewing a 200 page report is a formidable undertaking. Alternatively, you may want to selectively review those sections that relate to your interests and/or campus responsibilities. In either case, your feedback is important. Our continuing accreditation depends on it.
In addition to the assessment of student learning, we are also committed to the evaluation of each unit within the division, and in this past academic year we began a systematic review of departments within the division. Similar to our approach to assessment of student learning, in these initial years of individual unit reviews we are adopting an approach of “the more the better,” in terms of ideas and approaches to the evaluation of our programs against published CAS (or other nationally-recognized) standards. By summer of 2012 every department and area within the Division of Student Affairs will have systematically evaluated itself against one of these standards, and that evaluation, coupled with what we continue to learn from our documented evidence of student learning, will be used to inform our ongoing strategic planning work.

Assessment of the Competencies at a Glance

Change Yourself

Engage in Self-Understanding in Order to Develop Meaningful Personal Goals
- Academic Enrichment
- Academic Tutor Training
- Emerging Leaders
- Student Leadership Conference
- Students Taking Academic Responsibility (STAR)

Explore the Role of Spirituality in One’s Own Life Goals
- TRIPS Assessment Report for Campus Ministry (provided by Mission & Heritage)

Practice Effective Communication
- Faculty Collaboration with Jason Senjem (BUAD 230)
- Honors Housing (Communication)
- Roommate Meditations (Communication)

Engage in Activities that Enhance Physical, Psychological, and Emotional Health
- Alcohol Assessment in Health and Medical Services
- Alcohol Assessment in Health and Wellness Services
- Alcohol Harm Reduction Presentations to High Risk Student Groups (Athletics, Greeks, Social Organizations)-1
- Alcohol Harm Reduction Presentations to High Risk Student Groups (Athletics, Greeks, Social Organizations)-2
- Healthy Knights Program
- Men’s Health Dinner Event
- SNC After Dark
- Step It Up Virtual Walking Program

Change Your Community

Understand and Appreciate Human Differences
- Native American Week Celebration Activities
- Professional Internship Experience Summer 2009-Fall 2010
- Race, Gender, & Hip-Hop
- Race, Gender, & Music Video
- RA Training: Building Inclusive Communities
- Student Staff Training (RA and Campus Safety)
- Winter 2010 Building Inclusive Communities Session
- Zambia Project Travel Experience 2002-2010

Develop Open, Honest and Meaningful Relationships Based on Mutual Respect
- Michels Service-Learning Hall
- Roommate Mediations (Relationships)
- What Men Can Do to Prevent Sexual Assault

Identify and Strengthen Moral Convictions
- Zambia Project Travel Experience 2002-2010

Change Your World

Act with Integrity
- Conduct (Integrity)
- Conduct (Responsibility)

Serve as Responsible Citizens
- AFCS Program “SNC College Days”
- CENS Sign-Up
- M3C Program
- M3C (Midwest Campus Compact Citizen Scholars)
- Michels Service-Learning Hall
- Student Organization Service
- T.R.I.P.S.
- TRIPS
- Zambia Project Travel Experience 2002-2010

Evidence of Learning in Student Affairs 2009-2010

From the departments and programs within the Division of Student Affairs, reports of evidence of student learning occurred in a variety of ways. The goal for our assessment work continues to be the consistent documentation of direct evidence of student achievement, and the impact of that learning on students’ out-of-classroom experience. While we still are not able to uniformly achieve that, the data below does reflect a variety of approaches, methods, and styles, each valuable in their own way.

Change Yourself

Engage in Self-Understanding in Order to Develop Meaningful Personal Goals
- The majority of the Upward Bound students are developing personal goals on a monthly basis
- An average of 90% of the Upward Bound students indicated they received the assistance they needed from the Academic Year Tutors

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Evidence of Learning in Student Affairs
2009-2010 (Continued from Page 2)

- An overwhelming majority of Upward Bound students indicated the program was good or better; 25% indicated it was excellent
- 89% of Emerging Leaders developed meaningful goals for their time at SNC; 84% of Emerging Leaders feel prepared for a leadership position at SNC; 73% of Emerging Leaders identified new strengths
- Most students believed that the Student Leadership Conference helped them learn most of the learning outcomes that we identified (Goals, Relationships, Citizenship)
- The surveys indicate that students in the STAR program transitioned well and have developed important relationships on campus

Explore the Role of Spirituality in One’s Own Life Goal

- The evidence demonstrates students’ participating in the TRIPS program experience spiritual growth in a variety of ways. (Data provided by Division of Mission & Heritage)

Practice Effective Communication

- 94.4% of students in BUAD 230 agreed or strongly agreed that they improved their ability to communicate assertively with civility and respect with teammates and classmates.
- 96.3% of students in BUAD 230 agreed or strongly agreed that they were prepared to listen with understanding to teammates and classmates.
- 96.3% of students in BUAD 230 agreed or strongly agreed that they increased their knowledge of self and how they interacted with others.
- 81.5% of the students living in Honors Housing agreed or strongly agreed that they have further developed their skills or knowledge related to communicating as a result of interactions with members of their community or attendance at programs in their residence hall
- 88.9% of the students living in Honors Housing agreed or strongly agreed that they have discussed with their roommate what they need from each other in order to successfully live together
- 51.8% of the students living in Honors Housing agreed or strongly agreed that they confront individuals who are behaving inappropriately
- 49% of students participating in roommate mediations were rated as competent

Engage in Activities that Enhance Physical, Psychological, and Emotional Health

- 14% of the students surveyed about alcohol consumption and harm reduction strategies indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that this helped them in determining their health
- The reflection essays indicate that students are learning the harm reduction strategies and defining ways in which they will incorporate them into healthy lifestyle choices
- 47% of those surveyed expressed understanding of harm reduction strategies
- 96% of those surveyed indicated they had a greater sense of standards for health
- Based on survey information we believe that we have created an effective means to educate men about cancer-related health practices
- 98% of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I know about the dangers of alcohol and what to expect if I chose to drink.”
- 74% of participants reported that participating in the Healthy Knights Walking Program “increased my activity level”

Change Your Community

Understand and Appreciate Human Differences

- 100% of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that Native American Week’s presentations about drumming and Native American myths helped them “learn about another culture other than their own” and “learn to appreciate the Native American Culture.” 97.7% of students participating in a speaker about Native American mascots agreed or strongly agreed.
- 92% of students strongly or somewhat agreed that they improved their ability to show respect and sensitivity for human differences by participating in the Professional Internship Experience
- 69% of students attending the “Race, Gender, & Hip Hop” program expressed statements of a personal change in their attitudes/behaviors surrounding racism and sexism specific to music/hip-hop.
- 93% of students attending the “Race, Gender, & Music Video” program expressed statements of a personal change in their attitudes/behaviors surrounding racism and sexism specific to music videos.
- For the 2010-2011 RA staff, over 2/3 of the responses were judged to be Competent or Exemplary
- Survey results indicate that those RA and Campus Safety student staff who participated and completed the survey are judged to be 9% rudimentary, 37% developing, 48% competent and 5% exemplary in dealing with others who are different themselves.
- 55% of student RA staff who responded to the prompt “describe an interaction you had with someone who was culturally different from you” were judged to be Competent or Exemplary
- Based on these results, it is clear that for those students that chose to submit a written reflection about their Zambia trip experience, participation in the trip was meaningful – occasionally profoundly so – and they began to understand at a deep level the ways in which “difference” is and is not a meaningful concept.

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Develop Open, Honest and Meaningful Relationships Based on Mutual Respect
(Continued from Page 3)

• 61% of the students participating in the Michels Hall Service Program were judged to be Competent or Exemplary in their response to the prompt “Describe a new collaborative relationship you developed through your participation in the Michels Hall Service Program, whether the relationship flourished or fizzled, and what factors contributed to the outcome.”

• 49% of students who participated in roommate mediations were judged to be Competent in their response to the prompt “Through the mediation process, what have you learned about roommate relationships in order to successfully live with another person?”

• 95% of the men surveyed expressed statements of a personal change specific to at least one of our outlined learning outcomes

Identify and Strengthen Moral Convictions

• It is clear from analysis of this data that participating in the Zambia trip experience does have a tremendous impact on students’ moral sensibilities.

Change Your World

Act with Integrity

• 24% of responses to the post-hearing question “How did your decisions at the time of the incident impact you and the others around you?” were judged to be Competent, there was only one Exemplary response and over half of the responses were Developing or Rudimentary.

• Males were significantly more likely (almost 3 times as likely) to submit Rudimentary responses than females to the post-hearing question “How did your decisions at the time of the incident impact you and the others around you?”

• Females were twice as likely as males not to complete this questionnaire portion of their sanction.

• 37.6% of students observed by their Hall Directors for evidence of taking responsibility for their own actions were judged to be Competent

• Nearly half of students were judged only to be Developing in the area of taking responsibility for their actions

Serve as Responsible Citizens

• 100% of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that by participating in “SNC College Days” they were more able to create effective change

• 74 students (7%) entered additional telephone numbers to their CENS account following the CENS Sign-Up Program. Further, 48 students (10%) signed up to receive emergency messages via text.

• Nearly all M3C first-year participants report an increase civic engagement understanding and competence as a result of their M3C experience. The greatest impact seems to be in understanding social issues and ability to create effective change.

• 96% of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that participating in the Michels Hall Service-Learning experience helped them learn more about the needs, problems and opportunities in our off-campus community.

• 86% of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that participating in the Michels Hall Service-Learning experience made them more able to create effective change

• 100% of students participating in a service trip agreed or strongly agreed that the experience helped them better understand social issues and raise their cultural awareness

• 98.9% of students participating in a service trip agreed or strongly agreed that the experience helped them better “address needs, problems, or opportunities related to their community” and “create effective change.”

• The majority of comments made in the collected reflections of students who have traveled to Zambia fall into the “Competent” or “Exemplary” area of the rubric, with most falling in the “Competent” area.

Assessment Showcase

From a host of outstanding examples, three examples of exceptional assessment within the Division of Student Affairs are shared here because they represent both the breadth of work within the division, touching two or more departments or programs, and the depth of the learning that occurs under the leadership of the professionals in each area. More examples will be shared in future issues of the News.

Learning Assessment of RA Training:
Building Inclusive Communities

Learning Outcome(s):

As a result of this session, RAs will:

1. Be aware of their own and others’ cultures and human differences.

Measure 1: Cultural Awareness

Assessment Strategy: Following the session, student hall staff completed an assessment (see next page). Responses to question 2 were assessed using a rubric (see next page).

Question 1: What are the three elements to building cultural competence?


Question 2: Describe an interaction you had with someone who was culturally different from you. Give details of the interaction and what if anything was the outcome of the interaction.

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Question 3: Students were asked to rate their comfort level in the 3 components of the cultural competency model (awareness, knowledge, skills). They were provided the statements below to gauge what a 1 would sound like versus a 10 on the continuum.

**Awareness**
1 - Don’t know much about my culture and am not comfortable talking about it.
10 - I am always thinking about my culture and worldview in my interactions.

**Knowledge**
1 - I have not spent much time interacting with people from different cultures or oppressed groups.
10 - I feel pretty knowledgeable in this area. I am aware of different cultures and communication styles.

**Skills**
1 - I am not too sure of myself in cross cultural communication.
10 - I have the skills and practice them a lot in interactions.

**Results**

**Question 1 Results**
75% of respondents answered correctly with Knowledge, Awareness and Skills
25% of respondents did not answer correctly
1 person did not respond

**Question 2 Results**
Exemplary - 1 or 2.5%
Competent - 25 or 70%
Developing - 9 or 25%
Rudimentary - 1 or 2.5%
Blank – 1

The results below are from the assessment used with the 2009-2010 Hall Staff following fall training (that was the first cultural competency measure we had of the 09-10 student group):

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For the 2010-2011 RA staff, over 2/3 of the responses we received on question 2 were competent or exemplary which is a huge improvement from our fall measure of the 09-10 RA staff which had just over half of the responses at competent or exemplary.

**Competency Level Fall 2009 Training:**
- Exemplary - 2 or 5.71%
- Competent - 17 or 48.57%
- Developing - 13 or 37.14%
- Rudimentary - 3 or 8.57%
- Blank - 2

**Question 3 Results**
Resident Assistants self rated their awareness, knowledge and skills as related to cultural competency. Following are the results:

**Awareness (7.92 average response)**
(1 - Don’t know much about my culture and am not comfortable talking about it, 10 - I am always thinking about my culture and worldview in my interactions)

#10 response on continuum = 5 people
#9 response on continuum = 5 people
#8 response on continuum = 16 people
#7 response on continuum = 4 people
#6 response on continuum = 4 people
#5 response on continuum = 2 people
Improvement Actions

This is the first measure of cultural competence for the 2010-2011 academic year RA’s. We should continue to measure cultural competence throughout the year to ensure that their comfort with Knowledge and Skills continues to improve as well as overall cultural competence. In addition, with recruitment we should continue to look for ways to achieve a broader pool of RA candidates. This year we offered invites to Student Affairs staff to distribute, for our next selection process we should broaden this to other staff and faculty.

Learning Assessment of RA Training: Building Inclusive Communities (Continued from Page 5)

Knowledge (7.00 average response)

(1 – I have not spent much time interacting with people from different cultures or oppressed groups, 10 – I feel pretty knowledgeable in this area. I am aware of different cultures and communication styles.)

#10 response on continuum = 4 people
#9 response on continuum = 1 person
#8 response on continuum = 9 people
#7 response on continuum = 12 people
#6 response on continuum = 0 people
#5 response on continuum = 8 people
#4 response on continuum = 1 person
#3 response on continuum = 1 person

Skills (7.25 average response)

(1 – I am not too sure of myself in cross cultural communication, 10 – I have the skills and practice them a lot in interactions.)

#10 response on continuum = 5 people
#9 response on continuum = 5 people
#8 response on continuum = 7 people
#7 response on continuum = 6 people
#6 response on continuum = 7 people
#5 response on continuum = 3 people
#4 response on continuum = 2 people
#3 response on continuum = 1 person

Analysis

The results to question one are pleasing with 75% of respondents answering the question correctly regarding the components of cultural competency. This may be attributed to doing this during spring training which is an RA’s first training after being hired. The group is always very engaged at this training session.

For the 2010-11 RA staff, over 2/3 of the responses we received on question 2 were competent or exemplary which is a huge improvement from our fall measure of the 09-10 RA staff which had just over half of the responses at competent or exemplary. This is a marked change. In terms of recruitment for this group of RA’s, one change was providing invitations to Student Affairs staff who then presented them to students to encourage them to apply for the position. This may have given us a broader pool of applicants. We will continue this practice.

The third question provided interesting results in that it could assist us with planning RA Training for the fall. Although the average for responses on Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills is fairly similar, 7.92, 7, and 7.25 respectively, the areas of Knowledge and Skills have more responses in the lower categories of comfort, suggesting that we should focus training on building those areas of cultural competence.

Learning Assessment of Collaboration w/ Jason Senjem, BUAD 230

Program: Faculty Collaboration with Jason Senjem, BUAD 230, Foundations of Management.

Collaboration included class time scheduled for the following activities: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) interpretation, resume presentation, interviewing skills presentation, mock interviews with employers, employer panel and unpacking the Knight Owl experience (translate their experience from the Knight Owl to the world of work).

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of participating in the Career Services/BUAD 230 collaboration in the Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 semester, students will:

1. Practice effective communication.
2. Develop open, honest and meaningful relationships based on mutual respect.

“... they help me realize that the knowledge I have gained through this course can actually be applied to the real world and are relevant to the things I will need to know in the future”

Measure: Effective Communication

Assessment strategy: Survey completed on Survey Monkey, post-collaboration

Number of students assessed: Fall ’09: 54; Spring ’10: 54

Results:

As a result of participating in the Career Services/BUAD 230 collaboration in the Spring 2010 semester:

94.4% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they improved their ability to communicate assertively with civility and respect with teammates and classmates.

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and interactive activities to more strongly connect and retain the information, more class time was devoted to practicing interview questions with peers to decrease interview anxiety prior to mock interviews, and more class time was devoted to helping the students understand the connection between Foundations of Management and its application to the job search and the world of work. As a result of changes made, responses for strongly agree increased for every category in the spring semester, responses for neutral and disagree decreased in every category.

**Improvement Actions:**
Based on the positive feedback, no further program changes are being implemented at this time.

### Alcohol Assessment in Health and Medical Services

**Learning Outcome 1:**
Learn how to determine physical and emotional health

1. **Alcohol consumption and level of risk.**

   **Measure:** Determine physical and emotional health

   **Competency addressed:** Change Yourself: Enhance physical and emotional health.

   **Assessment Strategy:** Health and Wellness Survey Question 6g “…students review their alcohol consumption and learn strategies for responsible drinking.”

   Number of students assessed: 233

   ... the students who participated said they did not see the incredible drinking at house parties that were portrayed in the movie.
Alcohol Assessment in Health and Medical Services (Continued from Page 7)

As a routine component of the clinical visits in Health and medical, (excluding emergency and triage visits) health providers and therapists address students’ alcohol intake relative to number of drinks per sitting and number of days per week. Students are given an alcohol intake score of AB= abstinence, AS-1= (M < than 14 per week, F < than 7/week) AS-2= (M >than 14/week and F > than 7/week). This score provides students with reflective information about their alcohol intake and provides skill based strategies to assist students in reducing alcohol and the potential harmful effects. Students with an AS-2 are given information about “binge drinking” and offered the opportunity to have a formal alcohol assessment.

Results

14% (n=33) of the students surveyed about alcohol consumption and harm reduction strategies indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that this helped them in determining their health; Surprisingly, 71% (n=171) students felt this question was not applicable to them.

Analysis

Although only 14% of the students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that reviewing their alcohol intake and applying harm reduction strategies was helpful, we feel this program must be categorized as a success because it actually provided 33 individuals with positive strategies in determining their health.

The actual number of individuals in Health and Medical Services whose alcohol consumption was formally assessed is provided in (Figure 1). The comparison between 2008-09 and 2009 -10 shows a very similar pattern with most students indicating they drink in the AS-1 category, and the fewest in the AS-2 category. Those who drink > 7drinks/wk for females and > 14 drinks/wk for males have the fewest students recorded.

These correlates seem to provide a window into what the SNC student might look like: moderate alcohol consumers with relatively few heavy drinkers. During a program titled Sex, Lies and Alcohol, the discussion related to the movie seemed to bear this out. In assessing a behavior as prevalent as alcohol consumption, it may be that students underestimate the amount of alcohol they actually consume. Additionally, it appears with the high number of students responding as Not Applicable, it would seem that students may not view alcohol consumption as influencing their health.

Improvement Actions

The percent of students who indicated this strategy helped them to determine their alcohol consumption affected their health is relatively low at 14%, however, it still represents 33 individuals who may not have negative consequences related to their alcohol use because of this program. Speculatively, if this number remained the same each year, over the course of a 4-year academic career, this could be 132 individuals. This strategy may help to prevent serious alcohol consequences for any one of these individuals, and this in itself would be sufficient reason to continue the program. Changes will be made in the delivery of the information to assure students this assessment is to assist them in making healthy choices and it will not affect the health care options available to them.