

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

-BARTON

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MISSION

The purpose of this committee is to update and ensure the implementation of Barton's Student Learning Assessment Processes. This committee provides the leadership necessary to ensure that the assessment of student learning is providing consistent and useful data to faculty, the instructional divisions, and the institution for the improvement of student learning.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Barton Community College has faculty at multiple locations who truly care about their students. With the financial issues of the nation, state, and county, faculty have been continually asked to do more with less, but that has not deterred them in their commitment to student learning.

In addition to teaching, faculty are asked to serve on committees. The Outcomes Assessment Committee is made up of faculty, staff, and administration. It was originally intended as a working committee, but as the processes and expectations regarding assessment became more complex, the ability of the members to meet these goals came into question. As such, with the necessary skill sets, the Coordinator of Assessment of Student Learning began to absorb an increasing amount of the tasks and duties of the committee. Over time, the committee became more of an advisory group assisting and guiding the Coordinator to meet these ends.

This was not intentional, rather with KBOR requirements, BOT expectations, Title grants/goals, HLC Accreditation Criterion, and the HLC Quality Initiative (Assessment Academy), additional deliverables were expected which required a broader understanding of assessment and how all layers, classroom, course, institutional, co-curricular, and program all intermixed. The Coordinator felt pressure to accomplish these tasks, understanding the consequences to the institution if they were not met. Unlike the current VP, previous VPs came and went satisfied with the end results and thus not questioning the methods.

As for additional members, currently there are no prospects, and no new members on the committee. Those that join this late in the game, soon discover that there is simply too much information to know right from the start. Projects are underway which must be completed on schedule and there is little time to continually rehash old information. As such, new members do not last long as they feel they have little understanding, and thus little to contribute.

As it currently stands, the Coordinator has by far the most knowledge and understanding of what assessment at Barton means, but to identify a second individual is a difficult task. The continuity of data collection and processes may be at stake if something were to happen to the Coordinator. It is time for Barton to start ensuring the future of the committee and student learning assessment information.

VISION STATEMENT

Fall 2022: Assessment is seamlessly woven throughout all facets at Barton. Instructors gather information, compile it and revise their courses to ensure student learning and growth is occurring. When departments meet, assessment is at the forefront of conversations. Deans use the program assessment data to make key decisions about current and future programs. Internal and external stakeholders see the workings of a well-oiled assessment machine. More than ever, student learning is at the forefront of everything we do at Barton.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths/Opportunities

- Dedicated Coordinator of Assessment of Student Learning.
- Knowledgeable base of about half a dozen faculty/staff in the overall assessment picture
- Professional development opportunities exist during professional development days, conferences, etc...
- Large base of faculty who are knowledgeable in classroom assessment techniques
- An increase in Dean presence at the assessment committee meetings will increase awareness and the ability to relay information across all areas of the institution
- Large integrated assessment processes have been established encompassing multiple layers throughout the institution each having been vetted by HLC in one way or another

Weaknesses/Threats

- Sustainability is linked to the assessment leadership
- Small number of faculty members on the assessment committee
- New members to the assessment committee find themselves in the middle of ongoing projects with a large learning curve in front of them-this is known and thus new members are not likely
- Many of the processes require knowledge in areas outside of the norm of a typical faculty member such as MS Excel, Access, Canvas LMS, etc...
- The perception of faculty driven assessment may be hampered with an increase in the number of Deans on the assessment committee
- Multiple assessment projects being spearheaded by a single committee

Strategic Plan

OBJECTIVES

1. Rebrand and re-invigorate membership into the Outcomes Assessment Committee in order to develop and sustain institutional assessment leadership.
 - Provide leadership training for the Coordinator of Assessment of Student Learning.
 - Increase faculty presence on the committee.
 - Foster faculty leadership on the committee to represent the next generation of assessment leaders at Barton.
 - Provide professional development opportunities for committee members to ensure understanding of assessment processes.
 - Split the Outcomes Assessment Committee into multiple working subcommittees.

2. Provide the foundation for developing an institutional climate of assessment communication
 - Structure communication processes for internal and external stakeholders.
 - Promote assessment as a comprehensive process that is ongoing, systematic and sustainable.
 - Champion data informed decision making across the college.

ACTIONS

1. Establish Barton's Assessment Institute to train Assessment Ambassadors in the overall picture regarding all layers of the assessment processes at Barton

How: Develop curriculum, identify participants

Who: Initially the Coordinator of Assessment of Student Learning, then the Assessment Ambassadors themselves would lead future Academies (the Coordinator would provide support)

When: August 2018

Resources Needed: Finances for Ambassador Pins, and other incentives for successful completion, and textbooks, handouts, and other curriculum materials (estimate: \$1000)

2. Provide training and instruction for the Coordinator of Student Learning

How: Identify professional development opportunities

Who: VP

When: Spring 2018

Resources Needed: Finances for professional development (estimate: \$1000)

3. Establish subcommittees for the various layers of assessment

How: Develop charters, goals, deliverables, identify participants

Who: Current Assessment Committees

When: Spring 2018

Resources Needed: Time

ASSESSMENT SUBCOMMITTEES

1. Classroom Assessment Sub-Committee

Ends: Provide Professional Development, manage collection of CATs, produce Annual Assessment Report for internal and external stakeholders

Timeline: Spring 2018

Rationale: Currently Barton has a large pool of faculty (at least 70%) who have foundational knowledge of assessment in this area, classroom assessment. Compared to other layers of assessment, the processes are already well defined (data collection and documentation processes), handbook made, timelines established, etc... and thus this would be a good stepping stone for faculty to begin to get a foothold in the assessment committee structure.

2. Co-Curricular Assessment Sub-Committee

Ends: Identify and assist in the development of assessment processes for co-curricular areas, manage collection of co-curricular assessment data and documented improvements, produce Annual Co-Curricular Assessment Report for internal and external stakeholders

Timeline: Spring 2018

Rationale: Barton has a list of identified Co-Curricular Areas, a template has been developed, a handful have already been approached with regards to assessment (so examples exist) and a Co-Curricular Assessment Report has been established. Members would start working through the list talking with the co-curricular areas to establish each unique assessment process. With this being more of a standalone process (not connected to classroom or course assessment), training would be minimal. This would be a good stepping stone for a faculty member to work beyond classroom assessment.

3. Course/Institutional Sub-Assessment Committee

Ends: Identify and assist in the development of outcomes assessment, manage collection of outcomes assessment data and documented improvements, produce Annual Outcomes Assessment Report for internal and external stakeholders

Timeline: Fall 2019

Rationale: Approximately 39% of courses at Barton have an established outcomes assessment instrument. Many of these still need converted to the new Canvas LMS Outcomes Reporting Feature to be tied to MS Access to allow for documented improvements to also be recorded in MS Access similar to how they are currently collected for CATs. At this point, until the conclusion of the HLC Quality Initiative, our HLC Mentors have stated that the goal for increasing the number of included courses should be placed on hold. That is, we do not want to train faculty on an old method, only to introduce them to a new method. That being said, processes have been established and there is already a pool of faculty who are knowledgeable in this area who would be more than capable of assisting others and speaking to this topic as Ambassadors.

4. Program Assessment Sub-Committee

Ends: Identify and assist in the development of program assessment, manage collection of program level outcomes assessment data and documented improvements, produce Annual Program Assessment Report for internal and external stakeholders, and Data Sheet for Program Review

Timeline: Spring 2018

Rationale: This is a new concept at Barton, and will naturally be Dean heavy. That being said, the existence of the other faculty and staff committees mentioned earlier should ensure that assessment is still faculty driven. However, as this data is used for Program Review which is overseen by the Deans, it only makes sense that they would be a majority of those involved with this process

5. Assessment Institute

Ends: Develop Assessment Ambassadors at Barton knowledgeable in the overall picture, the assessment layers, and what assessment means at Barton, and who are passionate to share and train others

Timeline: Fall 2018

Rationale: To overcome the learning curve and to ease faculty into what assessment means at Barton, we need to take it slow and do it right. Asking faculty to sit on an Assessment Committee with projects already in place and expect them to catch up on years' worth of information is an unreasonable request and lends itself to disinterest, lack of participation within the committee, and a high dropout rate. By training the next generation of assessment leaders, we establish sustainability for the years ahead by ensuring that all layers of assessment remain on the path of continual improvement.

ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

