Assessment Academy Project-Version 1

1. Describe the project you developed at the Roundtable. Focus particularly on the general strategies you developed. (500 words)

Within a short period of time, the current survey tool used to collect student-teacher evaluations will no longer be supported and be discontinued. It is imperative Barton selects a new tool for this crucial piece of information. Several vendors will be contacted, demonstrations arranged, and pilots conducted. Once the field has been narrowed, pilots evaluated and a final recommendation made and approved, a full implementation can be facilitated. Training for faculty and staff needs to be completed with administrative personal trained on the collection of the respective data.

Automation of the collection and data analysis of assessment data is a need, a must, for Barton with the short turnaround time between many classes. Sometimes one class ends on Sunday and the next starts on Monday. Barton's current assessment model has a large manual component needing addressed. Not only does this hinder the availability of timely, accurate data, it also hampers the ability of faculty to make data driven decisions in their classrooms based on the assessment data collected. As such, Barton needs to look at the data we currently collect, determine what data is needed to make decisions to improve student learning, and address the gap between the two. By focusing the automation efforts on the most valuable data, Barton faculty and the students can get the most benefit out of the project.

Additionally, while degree level outcomes have been well established and developed by faculty, program level outcomes in many of the non-degree seeking areas are unknown. A gap analysis needs to be conducted to determine which, if any, program level outcomes exist, and where others need to be written. Consequently, to bring focus to additional assessment efforts, these need to be developed by their respective faculty and assessed as well.

Clearly there is a need to communicate these adjustments and changes. Unfortunately, there are issues with regards to communication with not only the faculty as a whole, but associate faculty in particular. It has been several years since an all-faculty meeting. As such, it can be difficult for robust, healthy conversations dealing with assessment to happen between campuses. Regarding associate faculty, many of them have other full-time jobs which interfere scheduling-wise and email addresses that are either out-of-date, non-existent, or neglected. This is often due to the large number of "all-user" emails that go out. They begin to receive such an overabundance of emails that the important ones get lost in the noise. An effective communication network is needed regarding assessment news and information so all faculty remain informed and can collaborate sharing best practices and developing outcomes. Again, it has been quite a while since Barton has gotten together, and it is time an all-faculty meeting is held once again.

2. How will your project contribute to making assessment an activity that leads to the improvement of student learning?

As all our data collections process, analyses and outcomes change over the next few years, we envision the outcome to shift to a more automated data collection and analysis process providing faculty more time to apply the data in their classroom to make informed decisions and improve

student learning. Additionally, the utility of an assessment communication network can enable collaboration between faculty and sharing of best practices.

3. What are the desired outcomes of this project? How will you know that you have achieved each of these outcomes?

Outcomes:

- Survey tool chosen and implemented
    - UPDATE: Survey tool has been chosen and will be piloted, however, we will go a different direction regarding the collection of CAT data.
- Barton is using data to improve student learning in a timely manner with automation in place.
    - UPDATE: Met with IT with regards to automating part of the assessment processes. MS Access shows promise (suggested by Primary mentor).
- All-faculty meetings are held with healthy and robust assessment conversations
    - UPDATE: VP is working on forming a committee to address this. Vic Martin, Faculty Council Chair, is also working on this in coordination with the VP.
- Program level and Co-Curricular outcomes are developed and tied to assessment processes
    - UPDATE: Met with SSS to develop outcomes relating to the tutoring center as well as tied to a grant dealing with Co-Curricular Review. Meeting with nursing department to look at standards/outcomes already in place.

Evidence:

- Survey results from faculty and staff on pilot survey software
- Survey results from faculty meeting (baseline vs after meeting) regarding assessment knowledge
- Survey results from PACE/Strategic Plan regarding communication network
- Program level outcomes developed and published, instructors/departments work on course outcomes that tie/feed into the program level outcomes

4. What serious challenges do you expect to encounter? How will you deal with them?

- The survey tool may be expensive but this can be addressed by strategic planning.
    - UPDATE: MS Access will work for this purpose regarding CATS instead
- Automation may not be feasible/possible, but other tools, software may exist.
    - UPDATE: Xitracs being looked at in addition to MS Access
- The reluctance of faculty regarding assessment and continuous improvement, which will inevitably arise, can be head-off by timely yet relevant and collaborative communication.
    - UPDATE: Software, Constant Contact, being looked at to address this.
- Barton may be changing Learning Management Systems and the assessment tools of a new LMS may give us a new way of looking at data that we have not thought about before.
    - UPDATE: Canvas has been chosen and there are possibilities here to look at regarding the vast amount of information that can be pulled directly from the system.
- Barton is in the process of implementing a new Strategic Planning Model but this is a prime opportunity to tie assessment to the mission and budget.
- The position for the Director of Institutional Effectiveness was recently developed and not filled and will be looked at again in coordination with strategic planning.
    - Update: Position filled, but reworked

- The position of Coordinator of Assessment of Student Learning was recently developed and temporarily filled (1-2yr commitment), however support personnel are in place to assist in this role.
- Recently Barton's VP resigned, and a new VP may have a viewpoint that we have not considered before and experiences that we can benefit from.
    - UPDATE: Dr. Garret selected as new VP. She has experience with Program level assessment, something Barton lack

5. Describe the specific steps you will be taking in Year 1 to develop and implement the early stages of your project.

- Pilot survey tools
- Determine assessment data needs, inventory available data, and gap analysis of the two
- Inventory current program level outcomes and start to develop as needed
- Determine and address gaps in the communication processes for/with associate faculty