

5-0290

Herzing College 0750-1
2008/09 (Indianapolis Oct 08?)

The Whole Shebang

Assessing General Education as a complete effort

The big picture problem

- Find a way to assess all of the different aspects of General Education
- Challenge:
 - General Education, except in rare cases, is not an area of study
 - These skills are key to succeeding in other areas
 - GenEd skills are transferable (instrumental), but rarely used by themselves
 - Students who do well in GenEd classes may not apply those skills to other classes

Goal

- Find a way to measure the degree to which students retain and apply skills acquired in their GenEd classes.
- We want to measure not what we taught, but what students learn

Herzing College
2007/08 (Interim 08/08)

Advantages

- Using this approach we hope to be able to
 - Give an accurate description of what students learn
 - Identify areas of progress
 - Identify areas we can improve
 - Make changes in our classes and programs early enough to help our current students

Who are we

- Herzing college is a professional college with approximately 40 different degree variations from Accounting to
 - NCA Accredited
 - Approximately (?) students
 - 8 campuses spread across the US, with schools in Canada (not currently part of our assessment effort)
 - Not all programs are taught at all campuses
 - Not all campuses have the same faculty skill sets
 - We have a large online campus

About our GenEd program

- We are a separate department in the college, and a member college curriculum committee
- General Education is approximately 40% of our degree
 - We required a significant writing exercise in all of our classes
 - We require a significant presentation exercise in all of our classes
 - We integrate specific GenEd skills into major area courses
 - Very tedious...an ongoing project

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How we started

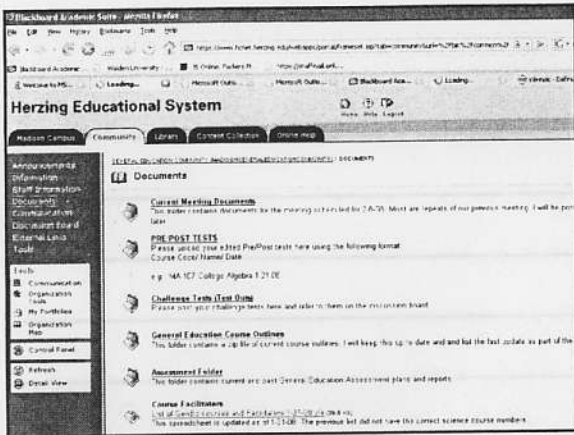
- We did not grow into our position...we were set up this way
 - We formed in response to our regional accreditation efforts
 - Effective assessment was part of our original goals in forming our department
 - We identified the strengths and weaknesses of our curriculum as part of the process
 - We developed specific courses that addressed weaknesses
 - We did a complete review of all classes taught as part of GenEd
 - (give specific examples) (anecdote about targeted visit)

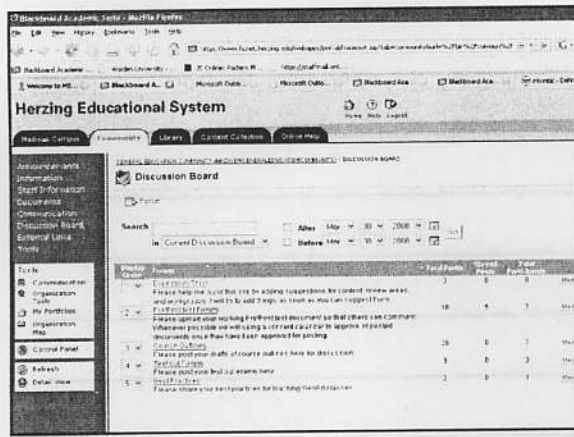
Where we are

- A comprehensive, though not expansive GenEd program represented on all campuses
 - Course offerings are identical on all campuses
 - Assessment is done college wide through our GenEd committee, under the supervision of the college assessment effort
 - Changes, measurement tools, standardized tests (e.g. pre and post tests) best practices are all implemented across the college at the same time

Our Organizational Structure

- We hold college wide meetings every other week
 - Each campus is represented on the committee
 - We have minutes and agendas posted on a campus community web site (see next two slides)
 - We have qualified faculty members in charge of each course
 - We try to replicate that structure on each campus by appointing a lead instructor
 - We review courses year round
 - We develop rubrics for all faculty to use for evaluating specific skills and instruments(not just GenEd)





What do we have to share?

- Basic structure of our program
- Specific assessment practices
- A 'whole process' point of view and methodology
- Successes...and failures

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Assessment Process

• **Note: we just changed our calendar!**

- We used to have an academic assessment year (September to July)
- This worked well for academic departments, but not so much for non-academic departments
 - This led to a lot of confusion on timing, data inclusion, plan dates, etc.
- We now have a January to December assessment calendar
 - Since Herzog goes year round, it does not affect our academic departments, but it greatly helps our non-academic departments (e.g. financial aid)

• **The Plan**

- The plan is developed prior to the assessment year, but
- The antecedents are developed long before that
- **Inputs to the plan**
 - Mission statement: Who are we, who do we serve, and what do we hope to achieve by teaching GenEd?
 - Identification of specific *measurable* skills
 - We know students get benefits we cannot measure...but we can't measure them

• **The method**

- We developed a grid of tools to measure specific skills
 - As we learn to do more, the grid grows
- We rotate through the grid in subsequent yearly plans
 - A particular tool or learning objective can be measured more than once, or more than one way
 - We try to cover all of the learning objectives multiple times in a 5-year cycle.
 - We formally review the entire program for the college every 5 years.

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Current	Project	Term	Oral	Lab	Employer	Academic	Student	Faculty	Alumni
Objectives	Tests	Paper	Presentation	Reports	Survey	Profile	Survey	Survey	Survey
1		X		X	X	X			X
2		X							
3			X		X				X
4		X	X	X		X			
5							X		X
6	X	X	X	X		X			
7	X	X	X		X				
8		X	X		X	X			X
9	X				X	X		X	X

Planning Process

- Review of previous year's report
 - This is not a separate step because one flows into the other
 - Review what we measured and what we had scheduled to measure the upcoming year
 - In particular we want to answer these questions
 - What went well
 - What were we not able to finish
 - Bad data, no data
 - Bad results (results were not what we hoped)

Annual Planning Process

- Planning sessions prior to picking measurable objectives
- Selection of items to be measured
- Assigning tasks
- Periodic review of progress
- Interim progress reports
- Final report
- Restart

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Selecting Measurable Objectives

- Review core learning objectives and select which ones to measure for the upcoming year
 - What was left undone?
 - What can we retest?
 - Retesting usually is lagged by a year or more
 - Any changes we make would not be measurable immediately
 - What special projects do members have?
 - What makes a logical next set of measurements?

Assigning tasks

- Each assessment effort typically requires new tools to be developed
 - Identification of expression of skill
 - Writing skill, cognitive skill, presentation skill, etc.
 - Measurement rubrics
 - Both for internal use, and for other departments
 - Development of surveys
 - Our cultural diversity initiative has been in development for 2 years
 - Working with other departments

Working with other departments

- A note on how we measure:
 - We try not to measure GenEd skills in GenEd classes
 - First of all, they always do well in their classes—data is not useful
 - Our goal is to provide instrumental skills, and we want to know how we are doing
 - Often we get feedback from non-GenEd faculty that aid our analysis
 - We often tailor our tools to the environment in which they will be measured
 - We often develop rubrics for those faculty to use

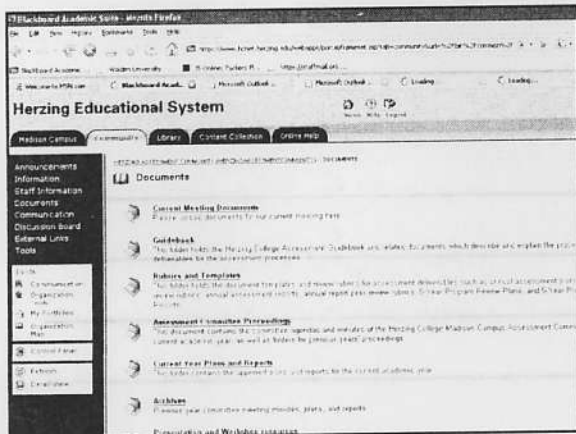
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Periodic review of progress

- Once the measurements begin, we track progress
 - Regular agenda item in our bi-monthly meetings
 - Data is collected and collated when ready
 - Additional data is rolled in as possible
 - Assistance (encouragement, nagging) is provided to members as needed

Interim progress reports

- We integrate with the college assessment effort
 - Formal reports were* required at midpoints and just prior to filing the final report
 - Our calendar just changed. Our new year is just beginning when the mid-year report was due
 - We report to the Assessment committee what we have accomplished, what we plan to still accomplish, and what we may not finish



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What can we apply?

- We do assessment for two reasons
 - We have to
 - We want to
- Of the two, the second is the most important
 - We want to know where we can improve
 - We want to know if our efforts are having an effect, and what kind of effect
 - We want to know if we are addressing the concerns of our constituents

Who We Serve

- Students
 - Are they getting the skills they need?
- Faculty
 - Can students perform in their class when they arrive?
- College as a whole
 - Are we fulfilling our mission?
- Our accreditors
 - Have we produced the information they need to accurately evaluate us as an institution?

Examples of Outcomes

- Creation of new classes
 - Information literacy course
 - New math courses
- Modification of existing courses
 - Changing credit amounts in classes
 - Changing course content
- Creation of campus initiatives
 - Madison curriculum committee
 - Online discussion rubric

Planning ahead

- Beginning the next cycle
 - All measurements have one of two outcomes
 - They worked as intended or they did not
 - If they worked as intended, were the results good or bad?
 - If good, maybe we are done measuring this for now
 - If bad, does this tell us something we can use to improve the program
 - If they did not work as intended,
 - Can we modify the tool and use it again?
 - Can we measure the outcome a different way?
 - Do we need to rethink the measurability of the outcome?
 - Something else?

And then next year

- Thank everyone involved, and praise them for their commitment to the process
- Go back to reviewing objectives
- Repeat the cycle.
