Understanding and Using Student Learning Assessment Results

March 4, 2014

*This PP is a condensation
of that used during the workshop.
Images were blatantly Googled, cut & pasted.*

Workshop Agenda

1. **Understand your purposes & audiences**
2. **Choose & set benchmarks or standards**
3. **Share assessment results**
4. Use assessment results to improve
5. Consider use of external instruments

Understand Your Purposes & Audiences

Why Are You Assessing?

1. Evaluate and give feedback to individual students.

2. Improve what we're doing.
   - Our curricula
   - Our teaching
   - Our support programs and infrastructure

Why Are You Assessing?

1. Evaluate and give feedback to individual students.

2. Improve what we're doing.

3. Make sure quality isn't slipping.

4. Tell the story of our success to key audiences (accountability).

In addition to why …

- What are you assessing?
- How are you assessing?
- Where to assess?
- When to assess?
- How much to assess?

Understand Your Purposes & Audiences

- Who are your **campus audiences**?
  - Students, faculty within program, faculty from affiliated programs, institutional leaders, administrators & staff in support programs, etc.

- Who are your **public audiences**?
- What **decisions** do they make?

Understand Your Purposes & Audiences

- Who are your **campus audiences**?
- Who are your **public audiences**?
  - Prospective students & families, employers, government officials, accrediting bodies, etc.

- What **decisions** do they make?
  - What do they need to know to make informed decisions related to your program?

Considering Audiences Activity

Choose & Set Benchmarks or Standards

Choosing & Setting Benchmarks or Standards

- Choose the type of benchmark or standard you will be assessing
- Set performance targets
  - How good is good enough?
  - How many students should do well?
  - Are we expecting to see a Bell Curve in our results?

What are we comparing the results of the assessment to?

- Benchmark
- Standard – **Who** are we comparing our results to?
- Target
- Frame of reference
- Criterion

Standards - Local

✓ **Question**: Are our students meeting our standards?

✓ **Challenge**: Establishing sound performance standards, which must be externally informed.

Standards - External

✓ **Question**: Are our students meeting external standards?

✓ **Challenge**: Do the standards match what we think is important?

✓ **Aspiration**: How do our students compare to peers?

Benchmarks - Peers
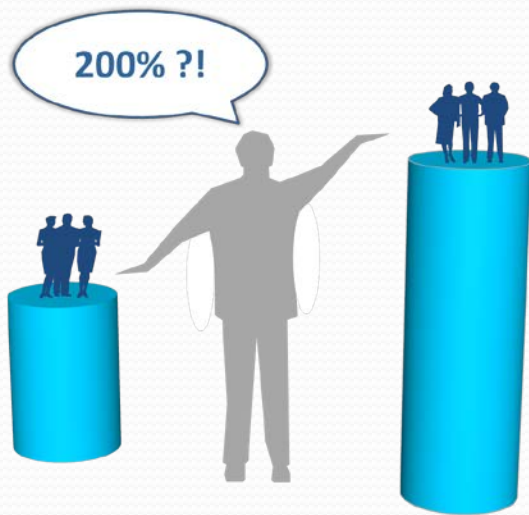
✓ **Question**: How do our students compare to peers?

✓ **Challenge**: Identifying appropriate peers and collecting the information needed.

✓ **Challenge**: Half of all peers will be below average if we follow statistics.

Benchmarks – Value-added

- ✓ **Question**: Are our students improving?

- ✓ **Challenge**: Is growth due to us?
- ✓ **Challenge**: Imprecise assessments mask growth.
- ✓ **Challenge**: Is this question relevant?

Benchmarks – Historical Trends

✓ **Question**: Are our teaching and curricula improving?

✓ **Challenge**: Using the same assessment.

✓ **Challenge**: Changes in student curricula over time.
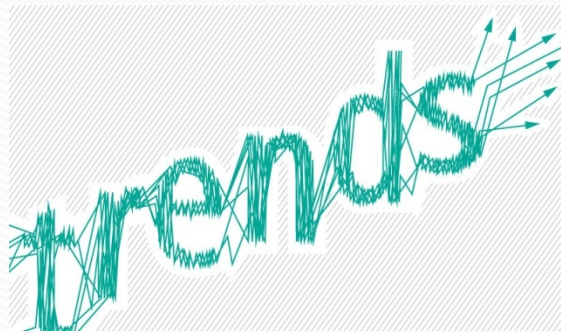
Strengths and Weaknesses of Benchmarks

✓ **Question:** What are our students' relative strengths and areas for improvement?

✓ **Challenge:** Getting the "sub-scores" that are truly comparable.

Setting Benchmarks

- **Have others set standards?**
  - Disciplinary associations
  - Online searches
  - Colleagues in peer programs and colleges

- **Who might you involve in the discussion?**
  - Employers, students, faculty in your program, faculty in more advanced programs (4 yr institutions).

Share Assessment Results

Strategies for Sharing Results

- Keep results short – 25 words or less
- Simple – round numbers, and no jargon
- Tally the results
- Present results from highest to lowest

Present Results Visually

- Rounded numbers
- Bulleted Lists
- Charts
- Graphs
- Powerpoint presentations
- Minimal Text

Results: Focus on Big News

- Present a summary.
- Provide on request:

    - Research approach .
    - Background information/literature review.
    - Detailed results.
    - Reliability and validity measures (if taken).