Symposium on Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Practical Guide
Delta Chelsea Hotel, Toronto

April 12 – 13, 2012

Thursday, April 12, 2012

Registration and Breakfast

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.   Churchill Court

Welcome and Introductions

8:30 – 9:45 a.m.   Churchill Ballroom

- Maureen Mancuso, Provost and VP Academic, University of Guelph, and Chair, Ontario Council of Academic-Vice Presidents Task Force on Teaching and Learning
- Harvey Weingarten, President and CEO, Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario

Plenary: Quality Assurance in Ontario's Post-Secondary Education

Chair: Ron Bond, Chair of the Campus Alberta Quality Council

Assessment and the Quality Assurance Framework

- Donna Woolcott, Executive Director Quality Assurance, Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance

  The recently adopted Quality Assurance Framework (QAF, 2010) for Ontario's publicly assisted universities has put significant focus on learning outcomes and reinforced the importance of developing and reviewing programs consistent with OCAV's Degree Level Expectations. Very specific evaluation criteria are applied by external arm's-length reviewers and by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council) to assess the appropriateness of learning outcomes for all new programs proposed at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Similar evaluation occurs at the cyclical program review phase undertaken by each university at least every eight years for all programs. We are early in the implementation phase for the new QAF but the first submissions to the Quality Council indicate that most universities are well underway in articulating learning outcomes at least for new programs. Donna's presentation will explore some of the ways in which this is being done, as well as provide some context for quality assurance processes for Ontario's universities.

Assessment in the College Sector

- Andre Diez de Aux, Quality Assurance Associate, Ontario College Quality Assurance Service

  Assessment has long been a focus of accrediting bodies for professional programs and for college programs. Hundreds of faculty members, professional staff in teaching support units, and institutional research offices, have collected data and measures at the course,

program, and institutional level. Yet most of this work is not apparent to decision-makers, students and their families.

With increasing calls for accountability and transparency we need to do a better job providing the evidence in support of answering the basic question of how do we know our students are learning what we say they are.

To what degree are our Quality Assurance processes part of the solution?

Concurrent Workshops

Workshop A: Program Outcomes – The dawning of a new era for higher education

9:45 – 10:45 a.m.   Churchill Ballroom

- Peter Wolf, Director, Centre for Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph
- Warren Stiver, Professor & NSERC Chair in Design Engineering, School of Engineering, University of Guelph

Program Outcomes (University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations, competencies, graduate attributes, etc.) require a transformation in educational orientation from an inputs- to an outcomes-based approach. At their core, they systemically explore actual and intended student learning at the program-level. This transformation offers disciplines amazing opportunities for innovation while also posing real transition challenges. Currently, engineering schools across Canada are engaged in this endeavour. Warren and Peter will share experiences at the University of Guelph in developing a learning outcomes culture among students, staff and faculty with the School of Engineering. We will discuss necessary ingredients, curriculum development processes, outcomes mapping approaches and assessment approaches including portfolios.

Workshop B: Learning Outcomes and Effective Teaching

9:45 – 10:45 a.m.   Rosetti Room

- Richard S. Ascough, Associate Professor, School of Religion, Queen's University

Writing clear learning outcomes has a number of benefits for course design that go beyond program assessment. A brief presentation will help clarify some key terminology by distinguishing "outcomes," "outputs," and "objectives." We will then explore how course design is an integrated whole, and how using the learning outcomes conveys to students the links among the parts of the course, including the assessment they receive on their assignments. Undertaking this process not only meets institutional assessment demands, it also improves overall teaching effectiveness.

COUNCIL OF
ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES

CONSEIL DES
UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

Higher Education
Quality Council
of Ontario

Conseil ontarien
de la qualité de
l'enseignement supérieur

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service
Service de l'assurance de la qualité des
collèges de l'Ontario

ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES
COUNCIL ON QUALITY ASSURANCE

Symposium on Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Practical Guide
Delta Chelsea Hotel, Toronto

April 12 – 13, 2012

Workshop C: Curriculum is Messy: A Practical Approach to Creating and Maintaining Outcomes-Based Assessment and Evaluation for New and Existing Programs

9:45 – 10:45 a.m.   Wren Room

- Sandy Ordowski, Durham College
- Jacqueline Trowell, Durham College

    Workshop description to follow.

Coffee Break

10:45 – 11:00 a.m.   Churchill Court

Plenary

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.   Churchill Ballroom

- George Kuh, Director, National Institute Learning Outcomes Assessment

    Quality assurance and transparency are prominent on the agendas of government agencies and higher education policy makers in North America as well as in many other corners of the world. In the last decade, organizations focused on learning outcome assessment have emerged, the volume of assessment literature has expanded, and the number and impact of transparency initiatives have grown. For the past three years, the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment has been monitoring and documenting these activities and trends. In this session, I will summarize the current state of the art of assessment in the US, drawing on key findings from NILOA's national surveys, interviews with thought leaders, policy makers, faculty and staff, web scans, and an array of commissioned papers by experts to describe the state of the art and discern what must happen next to advance the assessment agenda in meaningful, actionable manner. Three questions frame these reflections:
    1. What are the bright spots in the assessment movement that should give us hope and on which we can build?
    2. What are the challenges that collectively we must address?
    3. What has to happen to move the learning outcomes agenda forward?

Lunch

12:00– 1:00 p.m.   Churchill Court

Lunch will be provided and there will be the opportunity for table discussion with colleagues on topics of interest.

Symposium on Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Practical Guide
Delta Chelsea Hotel, Toronto

April 12 – 13, 2012

Workshop: Using NSSE Data for Assessment

1:00 – 2:00 p.m.   Churchill Ballroom

- Jillian Kinzie, Associate Director, NSSE Institute

Nearly 30 postsecondary institutions in Ontario have NSSE results revealing students' exposure to and participation in a range of educationally purposeful activities. Results provide educators a valuable tool to assess the quality of undergraduate education, and to do so in a way that focuses attention on opportunities for improvement. NSSE provides participating institutions with diagnostic, actionable information that can catalyze vital, sometimes challenging conversations about the quality of undergraduate education on a given campus. How closely does the experience of our students align with our assumptions, assertions, and aspirations? What standard of performance should we strive for, and how will we know when we achieve it? Who are our least engaged students, and how can we improve their experience? What can administrative offices, academic units, and student affairs departments do to promote effective educational practices and a climate that supports student success? This session will highlight NSSE use for improving the conditions for learning and encourage educators' consideration of data about deep approaches to learning and other high-impact practice results that make significant differences for student learning and success.

Workshop: The Collegiate Learning Assessment: Aligning Teaching, Learning and Assessment

2:00 – 3:00 p.m.   Churchill Ballroom

- Chris Jackson, Director of Business Development, Council for Aid to Education
- Dr. Julie Patterson, Measurement Scientist, Council for Aid to Education

Chris Jackson and Dr. Julie Patterson from the CLA will discuss the importance of effectively and authentically aligning teaching, learning, and assessment using a problem based approach. In so doing, they will speak directly to the construction of the CLA (including the metrics it provides), as well as discuss supportive faculty development tools.

Coffee Break

3:00 – 3:15 p.m.   Churchill Court

Symposium on Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Practical Guide
Delta Chelsea Hotel, Toronto

April 12 – 13, 2012

Workshop: Tuning: Identifying and Measuring Sector-Based Learning Outcomes in Ontario

3: 15 – 4:45 p.m.   Churchill Ballroom

- Mary Catharine Lennon, Senior Research Analyst, Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario
- Rhonda Lenton, Vice-Provost Academic, York University
- Brian Frank, Director (Program Development), Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, Queen's University
- Joy Warkentin, Chair, Management Board, Ontario College Quality Assurance Service

The Ontario Tuning project has brought members from various disciplines together into sector groups of Social Sciences, Physical Sciences and Life and Health Sciences to identify learning outcomes across diploma, degree and master's levels. These panels, made up of Ontario college and university faculty members, students and employers, have been working to establish learning outcomes and create implementation and evaluation plans. This presentation will provide an overview of the Tuning process, discuss the three Tuning panels' activities and work to date, and share next steps.

Reception

4:45 – 6:00   Churchill Court

Friday, 13 April, 2012

Registration and Breakfast

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.   Churchill Court

Plenary: Measuring student learning for policy and planning

8:30 – 10:00 a.m.   Churchill Ballroom

- Hamish Coates, Foundation Director of Higher Education Research at the Australian Council for Higher Education Research (ACER), Program Director with LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Management, University of Melbourne

  This plenary session will focus on issues of learning outcomes and assessment and measurement internationally and specifically in the Australian PSE system, including relationships between stakeholders (i.e. institutions, governments, and NGO's) and specific assessment techniques currently being utilized

Concurrent Workshops

Workshop A

10:10 – 11:10 a.m.   Churchill Ballroom

- Pauline Smiley, Sir Sanford College

  Upon completion of this applied workshop, participants will be able to create learning outcomes that focus on the student's application and integration of knowledge, abilities and attitudes. Join Pauline Smiley for this one hour practical workshop about learning outcomes.

Workshop B: Measuring Outcomes with Co-op Job Performance Evaluations

10:10 – 11:10 a.m.   Rosetti Room

- Wayne Parker, Associate Dean, Faculty of Engineering, University of Waterloo

  The Faculty of Engineering at the University of Waterloo is preparing to employ outcomes-based assessments to inform program improvement as required by the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB) and the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV). Engineering at Waterloo requires all students to complete five 4-month work terms to graduate; a model of Co-operative education that involves a sequence of alternating work and academic terms. Upon completion of each work term employers complete a Student Performance Evaluation (SPE) that provides students with

feedback on their work term and is employed to assign a grade to the student for the term. This presentation will describe an innovative use of SPE information for outcomes-assessment to inform program enhancement.

Workshop C: Are you assessing what you think you are?

10:10 – 11:10 a.m.   Wren Room

- Beverly Davies, Faculty Consultant, Niagara College

Let's examine the what, why, and how of the evaluation process, with a focus on aligning evaluation with course outcomes and teaching/learning activities. Clearly written course outcomes articulate the levels of performance expected by a student. Effective evaluation tools measure student performance at the same level. Learn how program mapping can track the development of student performance throughout a program. Explore evaluation design resources that can be used to create a variety of evaluation methods applicable for "low-tech" and "high-tech" pedagogies.

Coffee Break

11:15 – 11:30 a.m.   Churchill Court

Closing Plenary: Placing Student Work at the Center of Learning

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.   Churchill Ballroom

- Terrel Rhodes, Vice-President for Quality, Curriculum and Assessment, American Association of Colleges and Universities

The work students do in our curriculum and co-curriculum is the best indicator of what students learn. We now have ways to both capture their learning through multiple modes and to assess it in ways that provide faculty with useful information for teaching and programs and institutions data for accountability reporting. The Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) rubrics and e-portfolios will be featured.

Lunch

12:40 – 1:40 p.m.   Churchill Court

Box lunches will be available.

COUNCIL OF
ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES

CONSEIL DES
UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

Higher Education
Quality Council
of Ontario

Conseil ontarien
de la qualité de
l'enseignement supérieur

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service
Service de l'assurance de la qualité des
collèges de l'Ontario

ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES
COUNCIL ON QUALITY ASSURANCE