Michigan Tech Assessment Council
Annual Report 2014-15
October 5, 2015

Assessment Council Members

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COE: Brian Barkdoll, Leonard Bohmann
CSA: John Jaszczak
SBE: Junhong Min
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SFRES: Andrew Storer
Student Affairs: Beth Lunde
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Center for Teaching & Learning: Jean DeClerck (ex-officio)

Background

The Assessment Council is charged with oversight and integration of assessment activities at Michigan Tech, including assessment of University Student Learning Goals (USLGs), degree program learning goals and course goals, as well as learning goals for student affairs. Since many Michigan Tech programs are professionally accredited (ABET, AACSB, SAF, ACS) the Council also works to balance the requirements of professional accreditation with accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

In 2014-15, the Assessment Council continued to work on developing processes and infrastructure for assessment of learning goals. It once again facilitated, reviewed, and gave feedback on annual undergraduate program assessment reports. This report discusses key issues reviewed by the Council and concludes with recommendations.

Assessment Infrastructure

Assessment Council. In 2014-15 the Council was understaffed with the transfer of Karla Kitalong, Director of Composition, to the General Educational Council. The Council decided that the goal committee chairs for the goals that are being assessed or reviewed should be on the Council. In 2015-16 Aurenice Oliveira (Goal 3 chair) and Jean Kampe and Sarah Lucchesi (Goal 6 co-chairs) will join the council. The Senate representative, Brian Barkdoll, will be replaced by Kedmon Hungwe, the chair of the Senate General Education and Assessment Committee.
University Assessment Structure. The Goal 2 Committee for Knowledge of the Physical and Natural World was established as an interdisciplinary committee; John Jaszczak, Associate Dean in the College of Sciences and Arts, chairs the committee. Goal 3 Committee for Global Literacy was reconstituted and Aurenice Oliveira, Associate Professor, School of Technology, was appointed chair. In 2015-16, Karla Kitalong, Professor, Humanities, will chair Goal 5 Committee for Communication.

For membership of all established goal committees, see http://www.mtu.edu/learning-goals/. These committees are charged with oversight for improving student learning for their learning goal, including

- developing Michigan Tech rubrics (which are based on AAC&U VALUE rubrics),
- recommending changes to rubrics based on assessment results,
- planning and implementing training to improve student learning,
- assessing student learning in the General Education program, and
- reviewing assessment results in departmental annual assessment reports.

Assessment Training. Council members, Goal Committee members and faculty engaged in assessment attended conferences and training to stay current on assessment practices and learn more about how assessment is conducted at other universities.

- Drexel 2014 Assessment Conference, September 2014 - Walck
- AAC&U Global Learning in College, October 2014 – Walck, Oliveira, Amador
- AAC&U General Education & Assessment Conference, February 2014 – Walton, Scarlett
- AAC&U Annual Meeting, January 2015 – Walck
- On-campus workshops facilitated by Dr. Ellen Goldey (Wofford College)
  - “Taking the Ass out of Assessment: Using Evidence to Inform, Transform, and Inspire.” March 5, 2015
  - “Crafting a Shared Vision for Broad-based, Ongoing, Undergraduate Program Improvement.” March 6, 2016

Several insights came out of these meetings. First, the Drexel conference was attended primarily by institutions accredited by Middle States, which is more prescriptive than the Higher Learning Commission. Comparing our process with those of the attendees, it was clear that our assessment process/system meets many of the concerns expressed at the conference – we are program oriented, have university-level goals, assess General Education with an integrative approach, have faculty involvement through goal committees, and use AAC&U rubrics. Our weaknesses – course level assessment, involvement of all faculty – are their strengths since their programs are based on course-level assessment by faculty teaching the courses.

Second, the PKAL conference itself did not address rubrics or learning outcomes for STEM, which was interesting. But PULSE (Partnership for Undergraduate Life Science Education;
www.pulsecommunity.org has a wealth of information that can be useful; its leader, Ellen Goldey, was invited to conduct two workshops at Michigan Tech.

Third, everyone is struggling with Global Literacy. Study abroad programs do not guarantee global literacy. Several national initiatives that provide faculty support appear promising.

Electronic Access: Assessment Website and Google Drive. The Michigan Tech assessment website www.mtu.edu/assessment/ is continually updated in order to make more information about assessment accessible to all university members. Assessment Council began using Google Drive to store Council information; a Google Site is being considered to replace the outdated Canvas Course for Council data.

Software. The Council has been reviewing software vendors for several years. This year it reviewed LiveText, Seelio and AEFIS. Seelio and LiveText came to campus for two days and met with many potential campus users; AEFIS did a webinar. LiveText was selected for assessment purposes. The Honors College will be working with Seelio for eportfolios; it did not meet Council needs for assessment. In May 2014, Michigan Tech completed a contract with LiveText for assessment software. In 2014-15 LiveText will be implemented for assessment of UN1015 Composition, UN1025 Global Issues, ME-EM, School of Technology, and Annual Assessment Reports. Since LiveText charges per student, the contract will be about half the cost of full implementation. In 2015-16 it will be rolled out to the entire campus and students will have access to its e-portfolio feature. Jean DeClerck, Assessment Specialist in the Jackson Center for Teaching and Learning, will manage the implementation with respect to faculty training and set up, and coordinate with Information Technology on Canvas and Banner integration.

Assessment Processes

Annual Assessment Reports from Degree Programs. The Assessment Council reviewed all degree program annual assessment reports; only one department did not provide a report. Every department was provided with feedback and given an opportunity to improve their report prior to posting reports on a password-protected website at www.mtu.edu/assessment/program/reports/degree-programs/. Results are reported below in “Results.”

Deans and Chairs Meeting on Assessment

After reviewing annual reports and providing feedback to departments, the Council administered a short questionnaire for chairs on assessment to gauge their perception of the assessment process to date. The executive summary of questionnaire responses and the minutes of the meeting to discuss the questionnaire results and annual reports are included as Appendices. There was still confusion about the process and the role of the chair vs. faculty committees, and concern about redundancies with program accreditation and university assessment. The general consensus is that this is a cultural change and progress is being made. Several recommendation that action will be taken on include:
• Reward faculty for assessment activity. Include it on F10 for merit increases and promotion. Outcome: This was done by the Provost in May 2015.
• Use Curriculum Mapping to plan for assessment. Outcome: In Fall 2015 the Council will hold a workshop on Curriculum Mapping.
• Revise Degree Program Feedback rubric regarding faculty involvement. Outcome: This will be done in Fall 2015.

Assessing University Student Learning Goals.

• Goal 5 Communication. Because many departments did not use the Goal 5 Michigan Tech rubric (based on VALUE rubrics) as requested, it was difficult to assess results of communication university-wide. Since Michigan Tech will be reporting on Goals 4 Critical Thinking and 5 Communication for the Voluntary System of Accountability going forward, it is critical that programs use the Michigan Tech rubrics consistently.
• Goal 6 Information Literacy. A Coffee Chat on Goal 6 was held in October for faculty to review the rubric and plan for assessment of Goal 6 in all departments in 2014-15. During the year, committee co-chairs and university instructional librarians met with departments to assist them.
• Goal 3 Global Literacy. The Goal 3 Committee developed its Canvas help course and held a luncheon in April to jump start the assessment of this goal university-wide in 2015-16.
• Assessor groups will review results and provide feedback on the rubrics and assessment processes to the Goal Committees in May 2015. Goal Committee chairs in turn will report results to the Assessment and General Education Councils in Fall 2015. These councils will distribute results to faculty teaching general education courses.

University Senate Committee on General Education and Assessment. In summer 2014, the University Senate leadership created a new committee on General Education and Assessment. It was charged with the following responsibilities:

In all curricular matters related to General Education and Assessment:
  a. Regulations regarding attendance, examinations, grading, scholastic standing, probation, and honors (III-F-1-a-iii).
  b. Teaching quality and the evaluation of teaching (III-F-1-a-iv).
  c. Academic freedom: rights and responsibilities (III-F-1-a-vii).

The committee met with many departments on campus and also with both the Assessment and General Education Councils. It was clear in the conversation with the Senators that there is still a lot of confusion about assessment processes, the difference between assessment for general education and for degree programs, and faculty fear of retribution based on assessment results. It was also clear that chairs are the key to successful implementation and must value and reward faculty who engage in assessment. Meetings between this University Senate committee and the Assessment and General Education Councils helped to clarify some of these issues.
The Associate Provost funded the committee chair, Tim Scarlett, to attend the AAC&U meeting on General Education and Assessment. As of the end of the academic year, no report was forthcoming from the Committee or from the Chair (a report on the AAC&U meeting was requested). The Senate Committee chair was invited to join the Assessment Council in Fall 2015.

Presentations and Workshops for Assessment. An important assessment process is enabling continual improvement. To that end, the Assessment and General Education Councils have sponsored multiple opportunities for faculty to learn more about assessment and provide feedback on assessment processes:

2. Global Literacy Workshop/Luncheon, April 2014.
4. STEM Assessment Workshop – on campus, 2 days, led by Ellen Goldey, Professor and former Chair of Biology at Wofford College, Science Education for New Civic Engagement and Responsibilities Leadership Fellow. During a follow-up luncheon several action groups were formed to build on the workshop.

Signature assignments were developed to facilitate UN1015 Composition.

Working Group on Assessing Student Work from Team Projects. A working group was convened with the charge to consider how and whether team projects, or some aspects of team projects, can be used for assessment of individual student learning outcomes. Assessment of Student Learning of the USLGs is premised on the assessment of individual student learning outcomes. Team projects do not accurately reflect individual student learning, for a variety of reasons. Yet many degree programs have team-based senior projects that they wish to use for assessment of learning goals such as communication. Since we look to upper division courses to demonstrate that student learning has improved from first year to final year, it is particularly important that we capture an appropriate sample of learning outcomes at the senior level. Andrew Storer chaired the group; its report (see Appendix) will be considered in Fall 2015.

Communicating University Student Learning Goals to Undergraduate Students. Most efforts to date have been to inform faculty about learning goals. To communicate directly with students, University Marketing and Communications developed a poster that was distributed to new students outlining the learning goals during fall 2014 orientation. The poster will be distributed again in Fall 2015.

Communicating University Student Learning Goals to Faculty. Despite multiple efforts to communicate the goals to faculty, there are still many faculty who are not aware of these goals. Several actions have been taken to address this deficiency.
Learning goals and assessment processes were introduced to new faculty during Orientation 2014.

The Provost requested that all departments put their program learning goals/outcomes on their program webpages.

A subgroup is developing a marketing piece for faculty to be distributed in Fall 2015.

Learning goals are now in the new strategic plan which was approved by the Board in May 2015.

Biweekly articles in Tech Today on assessment are planned for 2015-16 with small rewards to highlight successes.

**LEAP Initiative.** The Michigan LEAP initiative is coming closer to fruition. Michigan Tech has endorsed this initiative. See the latest draft in Appendix.

**Voluntary System of Accountability.** Michigan Tech participates in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA), an initiative by public 4-year universities to supply clear, accessible, and comparable information on the undergraduate student experience to important constituencies through a common web report – the College Portrait. See http://www.collegeportraits.org/MI/Michigan-Tech. NSSE results (see below) are reported under “student experiences.” Assessment is reported under “student learning outcomes.” Typically assessment results are reported from testing in years 1 and 4 to determine value added by a college education. Michigan Tech does not conduct this kind of testing. Last year, VSA agreed to allow assessment based on VALUE rubrics for a pilot project. However, they require lower and upper division results annually for Critical Thinking and Communication. It was agreed in spring 2015 that Michigan Tech could report on results for General Education courses at lower and upper levels tagged with Goals 4 and 6.

**NSSE and FSSE.** The National Survey of Student Engagement was conducted in March 2015; the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement was conducted in April 2015. The Council took advantage of new NSSE modules to select the global module for additional information. Results will be available later in 2015. Ellen Goldey’s workshop has generated more interested in data mining the NSSE results, and an action group has been formed to further explore this. Student Affairs manages NSSE/FSSE and we need better communication on timing so that chairs can encourage both students and faculty to complete these surveys for assessment data.

### Assessment Results

**Annual Assessment Reports.** Every degree program assessed two goals: University Student Learning Goal 5 Communication, and a program goal selected by the degree program; in addition programs were asked to follow up on action plans for previous assessments in order to close the loop. Results were generally positive, with programs achieving targets they set for achievement. Feedback to departments included suggestions regarding appropriateness of targets. Several exemplary reports from Mechanical-Engineering-Engineering Mechanics, Social Sciences, and Chemical Engineering were highlighted. In a letter to department chairs (see
Appendix: Feedback for Annual Assessment Reports for Degree Programs), the Council identified several exemplary assessment activities and outcomes as well as overall improvements, most notably:

- Assessment of disciplinary goals (Goal #1) was often exemplary.
- Many reports clearly set targets for achievement.
- Many reports indicated sample size and provenance.
- Many reports clearly identified areas for improvement and actions to take next year.
- Almost all reports assessed communication (required) as well as a goal of choice.

Areas for improvement included:

- Use the report format so the Council can easily find information.
- Set targets for achievement at an appropriate (usually higher) level.
- Be specific about how faculty are involved in the assessment process.
- Don’t over-summarize results. Specifically, evaluate and report on each sub-criteria of the learning goal, instead of combining them into one average for the goal. This will allow you to target specific areas for improvement.
- Take time to review last year’s assessment report. If an action was recommended; reassess to close the loop.

General Education Assessment. In fall 2015, the Council reviewed the reports of the Goal Committees and results of assessment of student work in General Education courses (first-year UN courses, core courses --Goals 4 and 8 - and HASS courses) from 2014-15. The Goal 2 Committee is working toward an assessment plan for STEM courses in the General Education Program.

This is the second year that student work from UN and Core Courses have been assessed. This is the first year that HASS courses have had a designated University Student Learning Goal, and the first year they have been assessed. Our assessment program is thus still a work-in-progress and Goal Committees are challenged to set expectations with rubrics, assess samples against rubrics, and determine how best to help faculty teaching general education courses to help students achieve the learning goals.

Nonetheless, there is some progress. First-year UN courses and Core Courses have an expectation that students will achieve at level 2 on the criteria on the learning goal rubrics. The UN courses, 1015 and 1025, where faculty (and GTAs) are working in a coordinated way with model assignments, results were strongest: results met expectations on many criteria, and were stronger than the prior year. UN1025 in particular had excellent results. Core courses for Goals 4 and 8 are 2000 level courses taught in multiple disciplines on multiple topics. Criterion 1 for both goals approached a level 2 for a majority of students; while results for the remaining criteria generally showed improvement from the previous year, they were still below
expectations. HASS courses are also taught in multiple disciplines on multiple topics. Results on HASS courses, most of which are upper-division courses, yielded somewhat better results than the 2000-level core courses, but did not approach the expected level 3 on the rubric.

The challenge for the coming year is to work with faculty in the Core and HASS courses on methods to improve student learning on the criteria measured by the rubric. Assignment design is crucial to success and educating students about expectations as outlined in the rubrics is also important. Assessors have requested that when faculty submit student work for assessment they also identify which criteria were emphasized in the assignment. Working collaboratively on assignment design and developing faculty learning communities to support student achievement on learning goals are opportunities to improve student learning and thereby assessment results.

**Michigan Tech 2014 Student Satisfaction Survey.** This survey is conducted every two years; results were compared to 2012 results. Students responded to the prompt “do you feel your skills and abilities have increase in the following areas.” Students believed their skills and abilities had significantly increased for Goal 1 Disciplinary Knowledge, Goal 2 Math and Science, and Goal 4 Critical Thinking, but less so for Goals 3 Global Literacy and 8 Social responsibility and Ethical Reasoning. Results for first and fifth year students were trending downward. It was noted that the sample size in 2014 was only half of what it was in 2012. The Council asked that the response data be broken out by student year so we can track whether any improvement is occurring as we introduce assessment of key learning goals university wide.

**Assessment Council Recommendations to Improve Assessment Infrastructure, Processes, and Results**

**Priorities for 2015-16**

1. Engage and reward faculty for improving student learning
   a. Encourage chairs to use fall faculty retreats to engage all faculty, not just a committee, in reviewing 2014-15 assessment results and planning for improvement.
   b. Complete and distribute marketing piece for faculty that clearly identifies USLGs
   c. Distribute results of General Education assessment to faculty in September 2015
   d. Conduct Curriculum Mapping Workshop
   e. Educate faculty about opportunity on F10 to document participation in assessment
   f. Highlight assessment biweekly in Tech Today with small reward program
   g. Promote the scholarship of teaching and learning
   h. Add FAQs to assessment website
2. Implement LiveText assessment technology to facilitate assessment process and turnaround of results

3. Work with new Provost on strategies for working with deans and chairs to improve student learning
   b. Make progress on assessment in graduate programs

4. Understand affordances of measurement data: Bring people together to understand the statistics (chemistry, astronomy, math/statistics, social sciences, cognitive science, technical communications) and validity of Gen Ed data.
## Appendices

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To: Department Chairs
From: Assessment Council
    Christa Walck, Associate Provost, Chair    John Jaszczyk, Assoc. Dean, Sciences & Arts
    Brian Barkdoll, Civil Engineering          Beth Lunde, Student Affairs
    Leonard Bohmann, Assoc. Dean, Engineering  Ellen Marks, University Librarian
    Jean DeClerck, CTL                        Junhong Min, SBE
    John Irwin, SOT                           Andrew Storer, Associate Dean, SFRES

Subject: Feedback for Annual Assessment Reports for Degree Programs
CC: Max Seel, Provost & VP Academic Affairs
    Academic Deans
Date: December 5, 2014

The Assessment Council has now reviewed annual assessment reports from all degree programs that submitted reports. Feedback on your report is attached to this memo.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, you may use our feedback to revise your report before we upload it to the assessment site. If you wish to make changes, please provide any revisions by January 9 to assessment@mtu.edu.

We received some very good reports – in particular we would like to congratulate

- ME-EM and Social Sciences on the overall high quality of their reports.
- Chemical Engineering for a comprehensive and readable report that “closed the loop” and included appropriately modified rubrics.
- Physics and Chemistry for a process that identified tangible actions to take to “close the loop.”
- Chemistry and Biology for designing systems to track students year by year in their programs.
- Visual and Performing Arts SFSD for the disciplinary rubric developed for Narrative Sound Design

We strongly encourage you to review their reports when they are posted in January. They are excellent exemplars.

Overall, we see improvement in many aspects of the reports, compared to 2013.

- Assessment of disciplinary goals (Goal #1) was often exemplary.
- Many reports clearly set targets for achievement.
- Many reports indicated sample size and provenance.
- If a rubric other than a Michigan Tech rubric was used, it was often included. Several disciplinary rubrics were exemplary and followed the format demonstrated by the Michigan Tech rubrics with clear criteria and comparable levels.
- Many reports clearly identified areas for improvement and actions to take next year.
- Almost all reports assessed communication as well as a goal of choice.
With respect to assessment of *Goal 5 Communication*:

- Many departments used the Michigan Tech Communication rubric as requested.
- A surprising number of departments/programs did not use the Michigan Tech Communication rubric to assess student communication in their program. In order to demonstrate consistency, compare student achievement in both General Education and the disciplines over time, and close the loop at the university level, it is important that departments use a common rubric to assess the university goal. Programs are always able to *add* criteria that are discipline specific, or annotate the rubric to assess a specific assignment, but it is important that a discipline-specific rubric not be substituted for the Michigan Tech rubric. Departments that did not use the Michigan Tech rubric should consider reassessing student work using that rubric. Please contact the Goal #5 Communication Committee Chair, Patricia Sotirin pjsotiri@mtu.edu, if your faculty need assistance such as a training session on the rubric.
- Many departments identified areas for improvement in student learning and identified actions to take – please be sure you complete the actions, assess again next year, and include a “close the loop” column to your Annual Assessment Report
- The Goal #5 Communication Committee will be reviewing the results of the Communication Goal and report to Assessment Council. We will share this report when it is available.

That said, we again identified a few areas for improvement:

- **Use the report format.** In 2014 we improved the format to allow the choice of an excel file or word document. When a program did not use the format provided, it made it difficult for the Council to evaluate the report. Please use the recommended report format in 2015 and be sure to cover all items on the form.
- **Set targets for achievement at an appropriate level.** Targets were frequently set rather low, at 70%, for student achievement. Particularly for upper division classes, level-2 achievement on the communication rubric (or other rubrics you used to assess student work) seems low.
- **Be specific about how faculty are involved in the assessment process.** It is important that faculty be involved in collecting data, evaluating the data, communicating the results, deciding on actions to take for improvement, and taking responsibility for those actions. Assessment Council will be developing a sample/example with guidelines.
- **Don’t over-summarize results.** It is better to have measures of specific criteria for a goal, than an average across all criteria for a goal. This will help you identify where actions need to be taken for improvement. Also, set the target and then indicate the percentage of students that achieved the target.
- **Take time to review last year’s assessment report.** You may have recommended an action be taken to improve, and need to reassess to close the loop.

As a reminder, this year degree programs are assessing Goal 6 *Information Literacy* and a second goal of their choice. We are fortunate to have the support not only of the [Goal 6 Committee](https://mtu.instructure.com/courses/837596/pages/goal-6-information-literacy) but the Van Pelt and Opie Library instructional librarians to assist you in assessing and continuously improving student learning on information literacy. Faculty have had two opportunities to learn about Goal 6 and practice using the rubric – the spring 2014 Lunch and Learn and the fall 2014 Coffee Chat. Information from these sessions and much more, including the Michigan Tech rubric, is available at [https://mtu.instructure.com/courses/837596/pages/goal-6-information-literacy](https://mtu.instructure.com/courses/837596/pages/goal-6-information-literacy). If you or your faculty
have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the co-chairs, Sarah Lucchesi slucches@mtu.edu and Jean Kampe kampej@mtu.edu.

We will upload all reports to the Michigan Tech assessment website at http://www.mtu.edu/assessment/program/reports/ so that the Michigan Tech community can see how departments are approaching assessment. All reports will be password protected for access only by the Michigan Tech community.

We hope you will find our feedback helpful and invite you to meet with your representative on the Assessment Council for further clarification – John Jaszczak for College of Sciences & Arts, Leonard Bohmann for College of Engineering, John Irwin for School of Technology, Jun Min for School of Business & Economics, and Andrew Storer for School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science.

Thank you for your participation in the assessment process.
Executive Summary

1. As chair or dean, what do you see as the purpose of conducting assessment of student learning in your programs?

Most saw the purpose as identifying what students are learning so that program curricula could be continuously improved. A few comments identified teaching effectiveness as the purpose, or fulfilling accreditation requirements.

2. What is the process for conducting assessment of student learning in your department/school?

a. Who is primarily responsible?

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0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Other
Department/School Curriculum Committee
Department/School Assessment Committee
Faculty assessment representative
Associate Chair or Associate Dean
Chair or School Dean
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b. How do you monitor the assessment process and results?

Most monitor by meeting periodically with the department committee or chair that is responsible. Some committees report out to faculty. Some chairs review reports.

c. How do you give feedback to faculty?

The chair generally does not give feedback – the departmental committee gives feedback at a faculty meetings or faculty retreat. There is a question about what the role of the chair is in the assessment process.
3. How committed do you sense your faculty are to assessment of student learning on a scale from 1-5 with 1=uncommitted to 5=all committed?

![Bar chart showing responses to assessment commitment question]

4. What do you recommend can be done to increase faculty commitment?

Responses varied widely, but fell into a few categories:

- Less – paperwork, duplication of university accreditation with professional accreditation, emphasis on “requirement”
- More – support (summer salary, course release), time, flexibility in setting goals/outcomes, mechanisms for assessment

5. Overall, how would you rate progress of your department/school in assessing its program goals?

![Bar chart showing responses to program assessment progress question]
6. What have you experienced as the benefits of assessment of student learning?

From “none” or “not yet” to improving curriculum and focus on outcomes instead of inputs. Responses vary by length of time program assessment has been done in the department.

7. What have you experienced as barriers to assessment of student learning?

Wide range – faculty time required (limited or competing interests), imposed from outside in rigid format, lack of interest, faculty forget or lack interest

8. What can we do to reduce barriers to assessment?

Mostly repeats answer to #4.
1. **Introduction:** Max recognized departments that submitted exemplary degree program reports. Christa reviewed the assessment structure, assessment diagram, feedback report for degree program annual reports and department chair questionnaire.

2. **Comments about Degree Program Annual Reports**
   - Make sure you document the extent of faculty participation in assessment and implementation of action plans.
   - Set more rigorous targets.
   - When assessing Goal 5 this past year, some programs created and used their own rubric and didn’t use the university Goal 5 rubrics. In their close-the-loop reports next year, they can use their own rubric but for future reporting of university-wide student learning goals should use university rubrics.

3. **Discussions about obstacles to engagement in assessment:**
   - **Confusion over degree program goal reporting** – Expectation to report on two goals (one the university-wide goal). Encouraged chairs to invite Assessment Council to explain to faculty.
   - **Lack of ownership of university student learning goals** - Explain where goals came from. Invite member of Assessment Council to answer questions at faculty meeting.
   - **Unclear role of the chair**
     - Chair should provide convincing support and clear directive.
     - In most departments, the chair should distribute responsibility of leading assessment activity to faculty.
     - Chair should reinforce process.
     - Chair should make sure that assessment results are presented at departmental (or other meetings) to determine action and/or review recommended changes.
     - Chair should facilitate faculty awareness of and support for their department’s assessment efforts.
   - **Inconsistent understanding of degree of faculty involvement expected**
     - Expect all faculty to be aware of university goals and assessment processes in the context of their courses and curriculum.
     - Make assessment a regular part of faculty work and responsibility.
     - Expect faculty to support student achievement of university and disciplinary goals in their teaching using available measurements (including university rubrics).
     - Expect faculty to be aware of assessment results and action planned for improvement.
     - Where applicable, faculty members carry out assessment processes and action plans for improvement.
   - **Redundancies in implementing both degree accreditation and assessment** - Consider moving from previously used assessment process to accommodate university process. General Education assessment results will be useful for degree accreditation reporting.
   - **Programs new to learning goals and assessment** - Use curriculum mapping to help you plan assessment. Request assistance from Assessment Council and Jeannie.

4. **Rewards for faculty involvement:**
• Reinforce that assessment is a measurement of the curriculum (not teaching). Faculty are responsible for the curriculum.
• Make sure that faculty engagement/involvement in assessment is considered as part of teaching when merit increases and promotion.
  o "Is this person engaged in an appropriate way in their teaching life to support improvement of student learning outcomes?"
• Since assessment is a part of teaching, additional reward may not be needed.

5. Other suggestions:
• Create and implement a faculty survey to determine faculty awareness and engagement in assessment.
• Revise degree program feedback rubric as follows:
  o Faculty involvement criteria for Assessment Methods/Criteria - revise text for levels 1-4 to include engagement in designing courses to support learning goals as well as involvement in participating in the assessment of student work.
  o Faculty involvement criteria for Action Planned - revise text for levels 1-4 to include engagement in discussion about assessment results as well as involvement in developing and implementing action plans.
• On Department Chair Questionnaire, revise the question about chair involvement was unclear.
• Consider use of multiple-choice questions for General Education assessment (Psychology class).

6. Overall observation from attendees: Adoption of the university structure to support learning goal achievement requires a change in culture. This takes time but progress is being made across campus. No comments on improving the process.
The members of the Michigan Liberal Education for America’s Promise (LEAP) Initiative acknowledge that the goals of a liberal education are:

- knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world
- intellectual and practical skills such as critical thinking and quantitative literacy
- personal and social responsibility
- integrative learning

These basic skills and knowledge are fundamental to all baccalaureate degrees granted by our institutions. We will work together to continually improve our educational programs and make them meaningful for all students through collaboration and effective learning outcomes assessment. We also respect the individual nature of our institutions and recognize that the goals we aspire to can be achieved in many different ways.

The current Presidents Council: State Universities of Michigan will coordinate the Michigan LEAP effort. This council currently brings top administrators of the 15 public 4-year universities in the state together to discuss issues of mutual interest and is the advocacy arm of these institutions within the state. Thus, the LEAP effort will take advantage of the current organizational structure within the state to help organize meetings of the steering committee.

The LEAP State effort currently has support from all 15 public institutions and most have officially sanctioned the process through the president, faculty senate and other official channels on their campus. The Michigan Focus on Essential Learning Outcomes (MIFELO) steering committee will provide oversight for this initiative. This group will be composed of administrators responsible for general education and/or learning outcomes assessment at the member institutions and will be responsible for engaging faculty, parents, legislators and business leaders in dialogues on critical issues facing students at our institutions. This steering committee will meet quarterly, elect a chair, vice-chair and recording secretary to facilitate the meetings.

Thanks to the efforts of Oakland University, the state has held a student success conference for three years in a row. This conference has been extremely well attended with nationally recognized guest speakers. The MIFELO steering committee will take advantage of this established process to bring the institutions in the state together and use this model to create other meetings relevant to topics of importance for the LEAP Michigan Initiative.

The original plan is to begin with the four-year public institutions in the state. There has been interest from some of the community colleges, and this may be an area of growth for the LEAP Michigan Initiative in the future. There may also be interest from the private 4-year institutions within Michigan, but that possibility has not yet been investigated.

This initiative has several advantages for higher education across the State of Michigan. These include:
allowing a mechanism to increase the reach and impact of our limited individual resources through shared efforts. The MIFELO steering committee will work collaboratively to provide programs that are now largely provided by individual institutions or not at all. These programs might involve such things as workshops on assessment, retention, faculty development or other interests of the member institutions and could be modeled after the existing student success conference.

developing a stronger sense of community among faculty at member institutions to leverage their expertise in addressing issues that affect every institution. The Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters already brings faculty from various disciplines and institutions together for a conference each year. One possibility is to expand this by bring faculty of specific disciplines together to discuss issues of liberal education, the common desired outcomes of the particular discipline, and how those outcomes can be effectively taught.

instilling an environment of collaboration that will serve as a united front and work with the Presidents Council in communicating, with a common language, the critical role the LEAP essential learning goals listed above play in higher education to external constituents. This includes conveying the basic premise that a greater command of the LEAP essential learning goals is critical to all students, regardless of the major.

providing a framework for advancing quality learning initiatives in order to prepare students with the abilities to create new and innovative solutions to challenging problems across the state. Sharing ideas/best practices, as well as experiences with respect to common goals such as effective learning outcomes assessment and transfer of credit from community colleges, will help students at all institutions.

developing a partnership with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) that will allow Michigan universities to work with institutions around the country on creative solutions to issues in higher education. Examples of past and current efforts by LEAP states includes the Compass Project carried out by institutions in Wisconsin, California and Oregon and the Interstate Passport Initiative involving institutions from many states.

The MIFELO steering committee recommends the following projects as a starting point for this Michigan LEAP State Initiative. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of potential areas for action, but a beginning for this initiative.

Continue statewide discussions about best practices at member institutions with regards to assessment of general education (closing the loop), the use of high impact practices and rubrics, and attempts at integrative learning.

Develop a communication plan to explain the value of the knowledge, attitudes and skills developed through an integrated general education program to students, parents, legislators and employers.

Share data and make recommendations on how all member institutions can increase the success of underrepresented groups. This is vital to our success as a state and a nation.
ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

USLG: All graduates achieve “level 3” learning outcomes on all goals

www.mtu.edu/learning-goals

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Goal Level</th>
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<td>Assessment</td>
<td>*Goal Committees and faculty teaching Gen Ed Random sample of student work Use MTU Rubrics Reviewed by GE/A Councils</td>
<td>Departmental Faculty determine methodology</td>
<td>Use MTU Rubrics for #2-6, 8 Reviewed by *Goal Committee</td>
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<td>Results to</td>
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**ASSESSMENT COUNCIL**

- Associate Provost (Chair)
  - 5 Associate Deans
  - 3 Faculty
  - CTL Director
  - Library Director
  - Student Affairs Rep

- RESPONSIBILITY: Design/Review/Manage University Assessment Program
  - 8 USLGs
  - Annual Assessment for Degree Programs
  - Professional Accreditation Assessment
  - Student Affairs Goals
  - Other Indicators, e.g. NSSE

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**GENERAL EDUCATION COUNCIL**

- Associate Provost (Chair)
  - 2 Goal Committee Chairs
  - Faculty from Departments delivering Gen Ed
  - Dean of Students
  - Department Chair

- RESPONSIBILITY: Design/Review/Manage General Education Program and assessment

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**GOAL COMMITTEES**

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<td>Goal 5 Communication</td>
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<td>Goal 6 Information Literacy</td>
<td>Review program assessment of annual USLG</td>
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<td>Goal 8 Social Responsibility and Ethical Reasoning</td>
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</table>

- Membership:
  - 5-7 Faculty
  - Timeline
  - Collect evidence and conduct Gen Ed assessment annually
  - Review program assessment of annual USLG