UMASS DARTMOUTH LEARNING ASSESSMENT INVENTORY | 2014

A *Learning Assessment Inventory* is a primary means to support and organize evidence for accreditation from across UMass Dartmouth Colleges, and more importantly, a measurable way for instructors and students alike to know where they are headed and how they get there. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment will gather information from Colleges to document current practices measuring student learning in each program of study. When subsequent Program Reviews for accreditation or AQAD occur, the *Learning Assessment Inventory* will provide information to respond to self-study requirements. As evidence from learning assessment accumulates, each college will possess more and more information about student success within each program of study and actionable information to use in improving program outcomes.

These *Inventory* questions are useful to demonstrate how faculty members in a program-of-study examine student learning, and how they use what is found to hone student-learning experiences. Officially, responses to these questions are also required to report to our institutional accreditor, NEASC, and can be use for other professional accreditors, but the responses are most useful for faculty members in degree programs.

There are six questions in the Inventory, and below questions 2-5 are explained

1) What is the name of your degree program?
2) What are the learning objectives for the program of study, and is there a web link?
3) Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)
4) Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)
5) What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence?
6) Date of most recent Program Review (for University Studies and each degree program)

2) Program Learning Objectives

Where are the current learning objectives published? It is ideal for programs to identify very specific objectives that describe the desired learning outcomes for students who complete the program. Such outcomes must be defined in terms of what students know and can do at the time they graduate, and/or what they will be able to do in the future vis-à-vis their career, graduate study, etc. Program objectives are most valuable when very specific, stated in terms that lend themselves to careful measurement, made highly visible and are regularly updated as needed.

3) Evidence Used to Assess Outcomes

To determine whether learning outcomes are achieved, what student work was used this year as direct evidence? Complement student work with indirect evidence such as GPAs and graduation rates. Successful completion of capstone requirements (e.g., thesis, comprehensive exam), portfolio assessments, success on licensure exams, career success, and so on represent possible measures. Moreover, the assessment of student learning is treated as something different from student or faculty satisfaction.

4) Process

Who interpreted the evidence this year and how? This question drives toward faculty involvement with the goal of having as many faculty member as possible actively involved in an open process. The process incorporates some form of outside review (administrative, peers from other institutions, accrediting body, prospective employers, etc.)

5) Changes as a result of evidence analysis

What changes in teaching-learning practice took place? Achievement of program objectives is influenced by the design of learning activities, courses or curriculum, or even policies in the program of study. Identify and document change in any of these practices.

Director of Learning Assessment
Ed Morgan, Ext. 8485 or ed.morgan@umassd.edu