

## **ENGAGING STUDENTS IN MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT: CONNECTIONS AND COMMUNICATION**

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This session is designed for an audience of faculty/staff who teach, for those who provide faculty development sessions, and for administrators who guide program curriculum and assessment. The session content could easily extend from beginning levels to advanced levels. We have designed the content and pedagogy of this session to the following learning outcomes:

1. Participants will describe the advantages of an active role for students in assessment practices.
2. Participants will audit and analyze assessment practices that help students form connections among assessment, pedagogy, curriculum and co-curriculum.
3. Participants will use the connections that students develop to improve or extend learning experiences for both students and faculty/staff.
4. Participants will analyze varied forms of assessment communication to determine messages that students receive.
5. Participants will revise assessment messages that engage students in an active role in the development and implementation of assessment.

The importance of students' role in the development and implementation of assessment has become increasingly prominent in higher education. The advantages of students' active role in assessment include the following:

1. Promotion of more meaningful assessment,
2. Increased learning for both students and faculty/staff,
3. Decisions and practices that guide students' development of connections between assessment, curriculum and pedagogy, both within courses and programs,
4. Common forms of assessment-related communication that invite student participation in assessment processes and decisions, and
5. Connections and communication that promote student partnerships in assessment and improved learning for both students and faculty/staff.

### **QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS**

- What are other advantages for students' active role in assessment?
- How do students' active roles in assessment impact your courses? Programs? The Institution?

### **FOUNDATIONS FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN CONNECTIONS AND COMMUNICATION IN ASSESSMENT**

1. The research on meaningful assessment (Eodice, Geller, & Lerner, 2017, 2019) - a foundation of thinking and possibilities for initiating student engagement in assessment
2. Rationale for the importance of connections for student learning and success. ("If students don't see how the components of their education fit together or contribute to their general education and to their program learning outcomes, they are likely to view their education as a

process of traveling through silos, some of which may seem irrelevant to them” Maki, 2017, p.68).

3. Faculty collaboration and communication essential for meaningful assessment, for alignment and connections. (PSU Case)

### **CONNECTIONS BETWEEN ASSESSMENT, PEDAGOGY, CURRICULUM AND CO-CURRICULUM: STRATEGIES, EXAMPLES, AND QUOTES**

#### Within courses

- Nelson’s blog
- Letter to previous or future course(s) instructor(s)
- Course webbing (CSUMB)
- Analysis and self-assessment of course outcomes (pre, during, post)
- Student completion of course alignment grids (after completion of course)
- Student definition of course language (Pratt Institute)
- Course contract for students (Nordall, 2021)
- Examples from attendees

#### Within programs

- Program webbing (analysis by faculty, students)
- Letter to new students (Psych IUPUI)
- Student analysis of program data (Philips Grad Institute)
- Student completion of program alignment grids (UCLA)
- Analysis by faculty in related programs/community members (J. Hirashiki)
- Analysis and “sales pitch” by students (CSUMB)
- Examples from attendees

#### Institutional connections

- Institution reading groups – students, staff, faculty
- Curriculum redesigns (outcomes, evidence, data analysis, etc.)
- Student presentations – national conferences, boards, and community
- Data Dives” (Wake Forest U) engaging students, faculty, and administrators
- Public celebration of “meaningful assessment” (University of the Pacific) that feature presentations by students, faculty, and staff
- Examples from attendees

### **COMMUNICATION OF ASSESSMENT FOR AND WITH STUDENTS**

#### Opening Questions

- What assessment information do we communicate to students? What SHOULD we communicate?
- How do we communicate assessment to students? How SHOULD we communicate?

#### Opportunities to include student voices

- Academic senate meetings
- Institutional town halls
- Faculty and staff forums
- Teaching and learning workshops
- College and department meetings
- Assessment committee meetings
- Curriculum committee meetings
- Academic leadership team meetings
- Advisory board meetings

#### Questions for students to inform communications

- What do you want to know about student learning?
- What should we assess?
- How should we assess?
- How should we report assessment results?
- How do you interpret assessment results?
- With whom should we share assessment results?
- How should we use assessment results?

#### Attending to the context of assessment communication

- Campus culture (Salt Lake Community College)
- Understanding our purpose(s), intentions
- Inquiry-based decisions (Pratt Institute)
- Attending to assessment language and processes (use in resumes and interviews)
- Student Feedback on Feedback: Rubrics, Personal Commentary, and Conferences (Wood, 2021)
- Student Analysis and Interpretation of Assessment Results (Lebanon Valley College)
- Student Conduct Assessment (North Carolina AT&T State University; California Poly Pomona, R. Hong)
- Wabash-Provost Scholars Program (North Carolina A&T State University)
- Chemistry Scaffolded Assessment Project (California State University, Monterey Bay)

#### **REFERENCES (Helpful sources to extend the session)**

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