

Assessment of Student Learning Action Project  
September 22, 2003  
AQIP Action Project Update

1. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

Eighty-two percent (50/61) of the departments and programs in the Academic and Student Affairs Division developed assessment of student learning plans. Departments and programs are at different stages in the implementation process (e.g., revising plans, collecting data, evaluating and interpreting data, using the data to make decisions). The Assessment Committee knew that departments and programs would identify additional information and resource needs after considering implementation opportunities and challenges over the past year. Fifty-nine percent of departments and programs reported on their progress in a mid-year report submitted in December 2002. Fifty-six percent of departments and programs submitted an annual report over the summer that outlined their progress on assessment plan implementation. Annual reports are currently under review by a subcommittee of the Assessment Committee. The annual reports confirm that departments and programs are at different stages in their understanding and implementation of assessment plans. An analysis of department and program annual reports will guide the Assessment Committee's decisions about 2003-2004 professional development and coaching opportunities.

The Assessment Committee revised the position description for the Assessment Director position and requested additional budget resources to support the assessment of student learning. An internal search to identify a current faculty member to assume the role of Assessment Director was unsuccessful. Additional financial resources were made available in the 2004 budget to support the assessment of student learning. The Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and the Assessment Committee will continue to oversee the assessment process. The Committee will identify faculty members from each division who can serve as assessment mentors to departments and programs. A grant from the Bush Foundation will support the development of an assessment plan for general education. The grant's assessment coordinator, the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Director of General Education, and the Assessment Committee will oversee the development and implementation of the general education assessment plan.

The Assessment Committee developed assessment of student learning surveys that were tailored to address the perspectives of three subgroups: Faculty/Staff, Students, and College Council/Academic and Student Affairs Associate Deans/Board of Regents. The Institutional Review Board approved the survey instruments. The surveys were completed in April/May 2003. The surveys were based on the Higher

Learning Commission's statement of levels of implementation in the assessment of student academic achievement. Survey questions reflected Augsburg as an institution and captured the following characteristics of assessment implementation outlined by the Higher Learning Commission: Institutional Culture, Shared Responsibility, Institutional Support, and Efficacy of Assessment. Analysis of results is underway; benchmarks will be established. The survey will be repeated each year over the next 2-3 years. The survey results will be used to monitor progress on the implementation of assessment plans, identify institutional resources that are needed to enhance plan implementation, and examine the vitality of the culture of assessment on campus.

2. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

The Assessment Committee includes nine faculty and staff from the Academic and Student Affairs Division. Members are available to meet with department and program representatives to discuss assessment questions. A subcommittee of the Assessment Committee reviews annual reports and makes recommendations to the larger committee about next steps. Sixty-one departments in the Academic and Students Affairs Division were asked to submit a plan for the assessment of student learning. Annual reports were received from 34 departments (56%). These reports document the progress that departments and programs are making on the implementation of assessment plans.

A total of 189 people responded to the assessment of student learning surveys (92 faculty and staff, 87 students, and 10 representatives from College Council, Board of Regents, and Associate Deans).

E-mail communication with each assessment plan contact was the primary form of communication about assessment plan implementation. A broadcast e-mail to each subgroup completing an assessment of student learning survey provided an opportunity to highlight assessment work on campus and request participation in the survey. The Assessment Committee is very conscious of the need to maintain a high profile for the assessment of student learning. The Committee is in the process of determining the best communication strategies for the upcoming academic year. A plan to reach those departments that have not yet submitted an assessment plan will also be formulated.

3. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.
  - a. Complete analysis of results from the assessment of student learning surveys and respond to calls for resources/assistance. Evaluate the utility of the survey instruments.
  - b. Initiate follow-up with departments and programs about the annual assessment reports (Assessment Subcommittee will make recommendations to the Assessment Committee about feedback content and delivery).
  - c. Organize brown bag lunches to discuss best practices at Augsburg (e.g., examples of how departments and programs are using assessment data to support decision making).
  - d. Pair departments/programs to establish mentoring relationships that will advance the implementation of assessment plans.
  - e. Seek involvement of division chairs and associate deans to advance the work of plan implementation and assist departments and programs that have not yet submitted an assessment of student learning plan.
  - f. Work with the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning to identify professional development options that will support departments and programs at different stages of assessment plan implementation.
  - g. Seek external professional development opportunities for Assessment Committee members.
  - h. Examine assessment of student learning practices as part of the development of the AQIP Systems Portfolio – Criterion One.
  - i. Work with the Director of General Education, Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, and the Augsburg Core Curriculum Assessment Coordinator to develop and monitor the general education assessment plan.
  
4. Describe any “effective practice(s)” that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

One effective practice is that Augsburg’s approach to the assessment of student learning involves departments in both student and academic affairs. This organizational structure provides opportunities for conversations about assessment across curricular and co-curricular programs and creates a critical mass of assessment activity across campus.

5. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?
  - a. To maintain Division-wide momentum for the assessment of student learning.
  - b. To provide adequate resources to support the implementation of assessment plans.
  - c. To meet the educational needs of departments and programs at different stages of implementation.

- d. To promote the use of assessment data in department/program decision-making.
- e. To identify the most effective campus-wide communication strategies with regard to the assessment of student learning.
- f. To use assessment survey results to advance the assessment of student learning on campus.
- g. To coordinate data collection and integration of measurement tools across departments and programs.

Augsburg's "planned next steps" are designed to address these challenges.

- 6. If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this action project, explain your need(s) here and tell us who to contact and when.

We do not need additional help at this time.

- 7. Who can see this?

Anyone