ACCJC: Partners in Excellence

Boldly Assessing without an Emphasis on Software
Richard Mahon

- Adjunct faculty, DVC, West Valley, Cabrillo Colleges, 1990s
- Tenured lecturer & academic advisor, UC Santa Cruz, 1990-1997
- Full-time faculty member, Riverside City College, 1998-2016
- Dean, Academic Affairs, Allan Hancock, 2016-
- 8 comprehensive visiting teams, 2008-2018, plus…

- ACCJC Commissioner 2012-2018
- WASC Commissioner 2019-

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What do the Standards require?

“The effective institution **ensures academic quality** and **continuous improvement** through ongoing **assessment of learning** and achievement and pursues institutional excellence and improvement through ongoing, integrated planning and evaluation.” (Introduction)

“The institution **uses assessment data** and organizes its institutional processes to support student learning and student achievement.” (I.B.4)

“The institution broadly **communicates the results of all of its assessment** and evaluation activities so that the institution has a shared understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and sets appropriate priorities.” (I.B.8)

“The institution uses **documented assessment of student learning** and evaluation of student achievement to **communicate matters of academic quality** to appropriate constituencies, including current and prospective students and the public. (I.C.3 & ER 19)

“The institution **assesses its educational quality** through methods accepted in higher education, makes the results of its assessments available to the public, and uses the results to improve educational quality and institutional effectiveness.” (II.A Introduction)
What are we actually doing?

Providing a steady funding stream for Software Companies: currIQunet eLumen, TracDat…

“TracDat by itself is not assessment; its sole purpose is to assist us in organizing and managing the process of assessment. Data that you enter into the TracDat database is reviewed by the Office of the Provost, which monitors student learning outcomes (SLOs) outcomes for the whole campus for internal and external reports to the university president, Board of Trustees, and regional accrediting agencies.”
Who has noticed the problem?

It should not be difficult, then, to figure out the cognitive levers that were pulled when someone said to me (with evident annoyance), “When will ACCJC stop cramming student learning outcomes down our throats?!” Here was someone who saw the accrediting agency as the big authority-in-the-sky, making arbitrary commands, and threatening sanctions upon refusal to comply with SLO expectations.

Could I have re-scripted that brief interchange, it might have sounded more like, “Help me understand how framing student learning outcomes helps me better serve my students? How can I use SLOs to verify that my goals as a faculty member are being achieved? Why do the ACCJC members regard SLOs as a mark of good educational practice?”

Richard Winn, “President’s Monthly Message,” April 2019
What are we actually doing?

curriQūnet META

What We Can Do For You

Curriculum Management

Assessment

curriQūnet META is based on your processes, your data, your way - the technology conforms to you. Technology should not drive, control how you manage your curriculum processes.

Are your courses meeting the goals you set out to achieve? curriQūnet META leverages all the curriculum work in place and easily assists you in evaluating a course's effectiveness.

Navigating institutional review or an accreditation process can be challenging. The same is true when measuring learning and achievement. We’re here to simplify the process with our specialized solutions: Nuventive Insight and Nuventive iWebfolio.

Nuventive Insight

Alleviate the strain of compliance documentation with Nuventive Insight. This solution makes it easy for you to present narratives and evidence of achievement and continuous improvement. Users can gather and organize data within pre-built, easy-to-edit templates. Reviewers can access your reports in a variety of formats including flash drive, electronic submission, and more. Nuventive Insight is offered in basic or advanced versions to meet both simple and complex needs.

Learn more
What are we actually doing?

California Community College BI Content Pack

This cloud-based BI solution is an implementation of Microsoft's new Power BI cloud platform for Higher Education using the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) Management Information System (MIS) Data Mart metrics. This content pack makes the MIS files accessible, usable and graphical by packaging them in Microsoft's user-friendly Power BI platform.

"Using the CCC BI Content Pack allows Moreno Valley College to construct and distribute course success information to all disciplines for program review. We are able to provide graphical and tabular data disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, and age at both the course and program level. The information is easily assembled using Power BI and is able to be securely distributed through Nuvientive Impact. What used to take many hours to assemble and distribute is done in a quarter of the time and is more attractively presented. The use of the CCC BI Content Pack also allows delivery of a consistent data set to faculty that is easily accessed and requires little training to use." Sheila Pisa, Ed.D., Professor, Mathematics (former Assessment Co-coordinator)

Dear Richard,

The eLumenation 2019 Early Bird registration rate ends next week. April 30th! We’re very excited about our 2nd annual user conference to be held at the Pasadena Hilton, July 17-18. This is a wonderful opportunity to:

- Collaborate and network with peers and colleagues from eLumen partner institutions
- Engage with industry thought leaders on high-impact topics such as innovation, institutional change, and student success
- Learn and share through thought-provoking sessions, panel discussions, and hands-on workshops
- Enjoy an evening of fun, food and networking during our kick-off reception

If you haven’t registered yet, click here for more details on Early Bird registration, hotel details, program info, and more!

Interested in presenting at eLumenation 2019? Visit our event page for more details on submitting a proposal. Submission deadline is April 30th.

We look forward to seeing you in July!
What are we actually doing?

“Using the CCC BI Content Pack allows Moreno Valley College to construct and distribute course success information to all disciplines for program review. We are able to provide graphical and tabular data disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, and age at both the course and program level. The information is easily assembled using Power BI and is able to be securely distributed through Nuventive Impact. What used to take many hours to assemble and distribute is done in a quarter of the time and is more attractively presented. The use of the CCC BI Content Pack also allows delivery of a consistent data set to faculty that is easily accessed and requires little training to use”. Sheila Pisa, Ed.D., Professor, Mathematics (former Assessment Co-coordinator)”
What are we *actually* doing?

• Assessing course student learning outcomes…
• *Inferring* program outcomes from course outcomes…
• Inferring institutional outcomes from course outcomes
• Program outcomes can sometimes be corroborated from licensure data in some CTE fields
• Do most faculty think useful data leading to improvement is gained from current assessment practices?
How do teams behave?

• Teams are drawn overwhelmingly from CCCs.
• Teams come from colleges where assessment is endured more than embraced.
• Team members try to anticipate what the Commission or their own college will expect and may be more demanding in expectation than the Commission would require.
The Rubrics:

• Assessment drives…
• Program Review drives…
• Integrated Planning.
What do we expect to be “assessed”?

• Every course? how often?
• Every section?
• Every term?
• Day/Evening/Online?
• Full-time faculty? Part time faculty?
Part Time Faculty in the Standards

“Faculty, including full time, part time, and adjunct faculty, ensure that the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. Faculty and others responsible act to continuously improve instructional courses, programs and directly related services through systematic evaluation to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and promote student success” (II.A.2)

“An institution with part time and adjunct faculty has employment policies and practices which provide for their orientation, oversight, evaluation, and professional development. The institution provides opportunities for integration of part time and adjunct faculty into the life of the institution” (III.A.8)
Part Time Faculty & Assessment

• If the point of assessment activities is to inform program review (and program review should inform planning & budget), what happens if part-time faculty are largely missing from the conversation?

• Can any college claim that real and meaningful assessment is taking place if 50% of the faculty are left entirely out of the conversation?
Is the data any good?

“In general, the data sets from our classes are too small to be conclusive. I believe it would be a disservice to include such incomplete data sets in this report. My main concern is thinking someone might try to draw conclusions from data sets which currently are not statistically significant in any way. When tasked with taking data for one SLO per course per semester, we anticipate it may take up to 20 years to acquire substantial data sets with any merit. Please remember, most of our courses are taught with one section once per year … Other courses are offered with 1 section twice a year …”
It’s not just faculty...

Subject: Re: SSM Data Questions College of the Canyons  
Date: Thursday, February 21, 2019 at 2:11:07 PM Pacific Standard Time  
From: CCC Research and Planning Group on behalf of Michael Carley  
To: RP@LISTSERV.CCCNEXT.NET  
Attachments: image001.jpg

I’ll just give my impression of suppression in general.

We suppress for two reasons: for student privacy and meaningfulness of the data. With numbers under 10, there are real FERPA concerns at stake. I worried about this a few years ago when the Scorecard was publishing numbers based on groups as small as two.

But, statistically speaking, anything under around 30 is pretty much meaningless. I don’t want to be making equity decisions based on groups of seven or fifteen students. The variation from one year to the next is too great and the success rates we see may not reflect reality.
## INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

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<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>Full Time Equivalent Students</td>
<td>1,126,709.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit Sections</td>
<td>351,679</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Credit Sections</td>
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<td>Median Credit Section Size</td>
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<td>Percentage of Full-Time Faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of First-Generation Students</td>
<td>43.0%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Counseling Ratio (FALL 2016)</td>
<td>611:1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Is the data any good?

“I know I personally self-evaluate **every single lesson, every year with an eye towards helping students achieve their academic & career goals.** I continuously solicit and incorporate student feedback on teaching examples, techniques, and technology. I personally have written **THOUSANDS** of pages of documents and am continuously using a feedback loop to improve the quality of those materials to improve student success, retention and, most importantly, understanding. I am constantly sharing & listening to lessons learned (both success and failures) with other faculty both within and across discipline.”
The Conversation at WASC

“Provocative Questions, Courageous Answers”

• 105 Concurrent Sessions

• Several strands, including one focused on assessment

• 22 sessions with “assessment in the title.”
The Conversation at WASC

Keynote Panel: “Provocative Questions and Courageous Answers about Teaching, Learning, and Assessment—Is Higher Education accomplishing what it Said it Would”
The Conversation at WASC...

• “A hot mess”
• “A spectacular fail”
• “A creeping menace”
• “An unproductive path”
• “Wasting faculty members’ time.”
• “Detrimental to the curriculum”

And, almost no focus on software and no fixation on course-based assessment.

“But at its core, the discussion revolved largely around whether the way most colleges currently have gone about trying to judge whether their students are learning (by defining student learning outcomes and finding some way to gauge whether they have achieved those goals) helps institutions (and helps higher education collectively) prove they are doing a good job.

“The answers were pretty uniformly no…”

Inside Higher Ed, April 17, 2019
The Conversation at WASC
“A hot mess…”

NILOA Staff

Natasha Jankowski, Director and Research Assistant Professor with the Department of Education Policy, Organization and Leadership at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, has presented at numerous national conferences and institutional events, and written various reports for NILOA. Her main research interests include assessment and evaluation, organizational evidence use, and evidence-based storytelling. She holds a PhD in Higher Education from the University of Illinois, an M.A. in Higher Education Administration from Kent State University, and a B.A. in philosophy from Illinois State University. She previously worked for GEAR UP Learning Centers at Western Michigan University and worked with the Office of Community College Research and Leadership studying community colleges and public policy.
Fiddling while Rome burns...
How might we assess what we have done with assessment... and improve?

- Abandon focus on *course*-based assessment where the *n* is too small to yield meaningful results.
- Shift emphasis to program and institutional outcomes.
- Embrace and address factors outside of class; Guided Pathways might be very helpful here.
- Meaningfully involve *all* faculty, but especially part-time faculty and conversations between instructional and service faculty.
- Identify a group of college presidents willing to collaborate with each other and with the Commission to pilot alternatives.