A Three-Pronged Model for Assessment Planning in Higher Education

Angela R. Albert
Héctor López-Román
Uday K. Nair

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A Need for Innovativeness

“A number of factors are examined to account for the persistence of traditional methods of assessment and the absence of widespread innovation. ...Even in subject areas which lack a long tradition, innovation does not predominate…”

A Need for An Innovative Approach

- Higher Education is rapidly changing
  - Increased changes in mode of Delivery
    - Increased opportunities for distance delivery methods
    - Increased fragmentation of long course programs through the semester system and use of modules
  - Accountability extend beyond the institution
    - Increased focus on Continuous Quality Improvement
Planned Approach to Innovation

- Thoughtful strategy in implementation of change in current assessment process
- If assessment is truly one of the most powerful levers faculty has to influence the way students learn
  - Change should be strategic in nature
  - Change should be intentional not accidental
  - The impact of the change should be considered carefully
Identifying Goals and Learning Outcomes to Measure

- Would it be a good idea to know what the stakeholders (students, employers, faculty, accrediting agencies, parents, etc.) expects?
- Would it be valuable to prioritize learning outcomes?
- Would it be valuable to tie a particular learning outcome to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?
- Would it be helpful to know where to focus as you consider available assessment resources?
- Would it be valuable to identify the performance indicators within your assessment plan?
A Three-Pronged Model for Assessment Planning in Higher Education

- **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis**
  - To establish sound strategies and goals based on the internal and external environments

- **Quality Function Deployment (QFD)**
  - To specify customer requirements; prioritize them and try and get the most out of the “limited” resources

- **The Balanced Scorecard (BSC)**
  - To develop performance indicators given the strategies and objectives resulting from the SWOT and QFD analyses
SWOT Analysis

- Identify and evaluate internally and externally the following:
  - Economic, social, political and technological aspects
    - Internal
      - Strengths
      - Weaknesses
    - External
      - Opportunities
      - Threats
## SWOT Analysis – Example
(Accounting, B.A.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Internal    | • High pass rate (CPA)  
• High quality students | Lack of practical experience |
| External    | **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
|             | High industry presence in the local area | Depressed local economy |
Benefits of the SWOT Analysis to Assessment Planning in Higher Education

- Enhances analysis of internal and external environment
- Assists in assessing the relevance of program’s mission statement
- Enhances the ability to develop meaningful goals, student learning outcomes and measurement approaches
Quality Function Deployment (QFD): Structural Framework

- Anticipates, identifies, prioritizes and focuses on key stakeholders' expectations, which leads to higher customer satisfaction and an increased competitive advantage.
- Considers present needs and future expectations of all stakeholders, which answers the question “What.”
- Hones strengths and opportunities of the organization, which addresses the question of “How.”
- Identifies system bottlenecks and enhances future implementation of proposed changes.
QFD - House of Quality

Inter-relationship

Resources

Stakeholder Expectations
Priorities
Relationship Matrix
Targets
Benchmarking
House of Quality – Example in (Accounting, BA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of students employed within 6 months after graduation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>80%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase % of students accepted in a graduate program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase pass rate of students taking CPA exam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Industry partnerships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase by 20% every semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Funding Sources:

- Faculty: 80%
- Local Industry: 10%
- Curriculum: 15%
- Increase by 20% every semester
Benefits of QFD to Assessment Planning in Higher Education

- The focus remains on stakeholder needs
- Enhances the probability of defining meaningful goals to achieve stakeholder (students, faculty, staff, parents, employers, accrediting bodies, legislators, etc.) expectations
- The institution’s commitment to stakeholders’ satisfaction is enhanced as they realize that their input is valued in the goal and target-setting process
- QFD generates awareness and appreciation of the academic program among all of the stakeholders
Balanced Scorecard (BSC): Structural Framework

- Considers organization’s strategies and goals
- Considers final outcome and other perspectives
- Considers leading indicators as the drivers of the final outcome
- Promotes a cause-and-effect relationships between measures
Four Perspectives in the Balanced Scorecard (BSC*) (Accounting, B.A.)

**Outcomes Measures**
- Percentage of Students employed within six months of graduation

**Student Satisfaction**
- * Satisfaction with Career Advising Services

**Internal Processes**
- Participation rate in:
  - Employment fairs
  - Career Exploration workshops

**Learning & Growth**
- * Rate of Increase in Industry Partnerships
- * Alumni giving rate

* Adapted from Kaplan and Norton, 1992
Benefits of BSC to Assessment Planning in Higher Education

- Develops performance measures (leading performance indicators) in three other perspectives affecting the student learning outcomes

- Promotes achievement of student learning outcomes
The UCF Assessment Process Timeline

- **February 2001**: Submit plan for 2001-2002
- **May 2001**: Submit results for 2000-2001
- **October 2001**: Conduct Assessment 2001-2002
- **February 2002**: Submit plan for 2002-2003
- **May 2002**: Submit results for 2001-2002
- **October 2002**: Conduct Assessment 2002-2003
- **February 2003**: Submit plan for 2003-2004
- **May 2003**: Submit results for 2002-2003
- **October 2003**: Conduct Assessment 2003-2004
How Does the Three-Pronged Model Work?

Quality Function Deployment (QFD)

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

The Balanced Scorecard (BSC)

Get involved

Plan

Develop learning outcomes

Select data collection approach

Examine, share, act on findings

Re-examine the process

An Assessment Process Model (Adapted from Palomba and Banta, 1999)

Resources information

Stakeholders expectations and priorities

Establish student-learning outcomes (planning)

Identify key stakeholders’ expectations and the type of relationship between them; prioritize expectations

Analyzes academic program's current environments in key impact areas and available resources.

Develop leading performance indicators to monitor the process (action)
Summary of the Benefits of the Three-Pronged Assessment Model

- The QFD model enhances the assessment planning process by leading to answers to the questions on “what” stakeholders expect and prioritizes the fulfillment of those expectations while considering limited resources and capabilities. It also aids in monitoring the process for improvement.

- Conducting the SWOT analysis regularly ensures that all critical forces are considered, both internally and externally, during the development of goals, learning outcomes and the implementation of improvements.
Summary of the Benefits of the Three-Pronged Assessment Model (Cont.)

- The BSC model enhances the assessment action phase of the assessment process by establishing a set of performance indicators to promote and monitor achievement of stakeholder satisfaction.
- The implementation of this proposed model enhances the viability of the assessment process, thus increasing the potential for identifying weaknesses and subsequently making needed improvements.
- Each of the models can be used separately, however, the use of all three provides an integrated approach to ensure assessment success.
References

Questions

OEAS Website: http://www.oeas.ucf.edu/
Assessment Website: http://www.oeas.ucf.edu/default.html