

NILOA January 2015 Newsletter

In this edition:**January 2015 Newsletter**[Viewpoint](#)[Assessment in Practice](#)[NILOA Updates](#)[News](#)[Conferences
& Programs](#)

This month, NILOA is pleased to present a Viewpoint from Stan Ikenberry and George Kuh about *Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education*, a new [book](#) from NILOA staff and senior scholars.

In addition, we feature an Assessment in Practice by Keri Nunn-Ellison, Lorraine Kapka, Jackie Myers, Heidi McGrew, Janeil Bernheisel, and Jared Cutler about the Curriculum & Assessment (C&A) Track at Sinclair Community College.

Viewpoint

Using Evidence to Make a Difference

Stanley O. Ikenberry and George D. Kuh
National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Gathering performance data is certainly a worthwhile activity, but what ultimately matters most is *using the evidence*. The capacity of American colleges and universities to assess student learning outcomes has expanded significantly over the last two decades. During the same period, however, the actual use of assessment results to improve student success and institutional performance lagged. External demands for accountability stimulated more assessment activity, but they also inadvertently nurtured a culture of compliance. The *process* of assessment became a prime marker of “compliance.” Simply *doing assessment* was seen as sufficient. If assessment is to be consequential to the future of American higher education, assessment practice must be driven by genuine needs and challenges faced by campuses and the students they serve. [Read more...](#)

Assessment in Practice

Practice What You Preach!

Keri Nunn-Ellison, Lorraine Kapka, Jackie Myers, Heidi McGrew, Janeil Bernheisel, and Jared Cutler
Sinclair Community College

The Curriculum & Assessment (C&A) Track at Sinclair Community College is a six-session track collaborative effort between the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the Divisional Assessment Coordinators (DAC) led by the Assistant Provost for Accreditation and Assessment. The DACs, who are faculty representing each college division, provide cross-discipline expertise in best practices in curriculum and assessment. The result was a professional development offering created for faculty, by faculty assessment experts in the college. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



[University of Connecticut](#)

University of Connecticut's Assessment website provides various assessment resources that encourage and support meaningful assessment efforts. Visitors to the site are provided links regarding why assessment is important, what assessments are, and the relationship between assessments and accreditation. The website also provides information about the components of conducting assessments, the steps for conducting assessments, and how to actually do assessments. [Read more...](#)

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

[Quality Collaborative to Assess Quantitative Reasoning: Adapting the LEAP VALUE Rubric and the DQP](#)

Quantitative literacy has been incrementally regarded as a necessary requirement for college graduates, and the DQP and LEAP have included measurements for this, as well. Fitchburg State University (FSU) and Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) worked together to evaluate their rubrics of quantitative reasoning- and three other areas- and compare it with those of the DQP and LEAP. The aim is to develop common rubrics to measure what students know and should do, which in turn should work towards setting common expectations for transfer students.

[To Help Low-Income College Students Graduate, Show Them the Value of What They're Learning](#)

Mildred Garcia, President of California State University at Fullerton, believes that the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) can help narrow the achievement gap. The DQP can serve as a roadmap for students allowing them to clearly see what is expected of them, realize the skills they have acquired, and communicate to employers what they are able to do.

[Interested in Third Year of "Assessment in Action"?](#)

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) is seeking applications for teams from all types of higher education institutions to participate in the third year of the ACRL program "Assessment in Action: Academic Libraries and Student Success" (AiA). The 14-month program examines the impact of the library on student success and contributes to assessment activities on campus.

[What About Learning?](#)

The authors argue that higher education must do a better job at assessing and improving learning, and AAC&U's VALUE approach can be an essential tool. VALUE utilizes rubrics, developed by faculty members, to measure student learning. The VALUE rubrics are regarded as a "high-impact practice" and could reduce the achievement gap in higher education.

[Educating Minds Online](#)

James Lang writes about his interview with Michelle Miller, Co-Director of Northern Arizona University's first-year learning program, and her new book, *Minds Online: Teaching Effectively With Technology*. The various ways that technology can help in pedagogy and learning to increase student motivation and engagement, as well as issues with online programs, are discussed.

[The Role of Assessment Instruments in a Competency-Based System](#)

Fundamental beliefs about assessment must change in order for assessment to be effectively and efficiently conducted. A part of this change has to do with assessment instruments, such as rubrics, which are often misused to measure and communicate superficial aspects of student learning. Instead, instruments must be used to explicitly state what the instructor values and expects students to learn; which in the end will be the basis for a final grade.

[Available Faculty Position in Assessment and Measurement at James Madison University](#)

The full-time position at the Center for Assessment and Research Studies (CARS) and the Department of Graduate Psychology at James Madison University seeks someone to contribute to campus assessment activities and the Assessment and Measurement PhD program. Candidates can apply using the post number 0406394.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

January 16: [Call for Proposals- 2015 AALHE Annual Conference](#)

Lexington, KY. Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education.

January 20-22: [2015 HETL Utah Conference](#)

Orem, UT. International Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association.

January 21-24: [AAC&U 2015 Annual Meeting: 100th Anniversary](#)

Washington, DC. Association of American Colleges and Universities.

***Degree Qualifications Profile and Tuning USA: Partners in Advancing Student Learning, Natasha Jankowski, George Kuh, David Marshall, and Pat Hutchings; 10:30-11:45m.**

January 24: [Global Digital Positioning Systems: E-Portfolios in a Digital Age](#)
Washington, DC. Association of American Colleges and Universities.

January 29: [Webinar: Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education](#)
1:00-2:00pm CST. Jillian Kinzie and Natasha Jankowski from the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.

February 13: [Call for Applications: 2015 AAC&U's Institute on General Education and Assessment](#)
Edmond, OK. University of Central Oklahoma.

February 19-21: [AAC&U 2015 General Education and Assessment Network for Academic Renewal Conference](#)
Kansas City, MO. Association of American Colleges and Universities.

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NILOA February 2015
Newsletter

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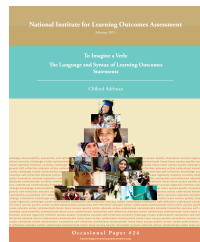
February 2015 Newsletter

This month's newsletter is chock full of new resources. It features an occasional paper from Clifford Adelman, *To Imagine a Verb: The Language and Syntax of Learning Outcomes Statements*. It also includes a viewpoint from Pat Hutchings, Jillian Kinzie, and George Kuh, an assessment in practice from Christie Cruise-Harper about Maryville University, a featured website from Ferris State University, a DQP in Practice from Oregon Institute of Technology, and a DQP case study of the American Public University System by Jillian Kinzie.

In addition, Jillian Kinzie's and Natasha Jankowski's webinar from January 29, *Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education*, is now available [here](#).

Finally, the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) [website](#) welcomes users to provide [feedback](#) on its usability and resources. We'd appreciate it if you would complete the short survey and tell us how to improve the site, any resources you would like or could not find, and other comments.

NILOA Occasional Paper



[To Imagine a Verb: The Language and Syntax of Learning Outcomes Statements](#)

Clifford Adelman
National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

This paper, focused on syntax and semantics, provides language-centered principles, guidelines and tools for writing student learning outcome statements. While placing the verb at the center of all student learning outcomes, it distinguishes between active and operational verbs, voting for the latter on the grounds that they are more likely to lead, naturally and logically, to assignments that allow genuine judgment of student performance, and offers, as more constructive cores of student learning outcomes, 20 sets of operational verbs corresponding to cognitive activities in which students engage and faculty seek to elicit. [Read more...](#)

Viewpoint

Evidence of Student Learning: What Counts and What Matters for Improvement

Pat Hutchings, Jillian Kinzie, and George D. Kuh
National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Colleges and universities today are collecting a broader range of information about student learning, yielding more and more varied kinds of evidence. Of course, evidence does not automatically translate into improvement. Assessment that is truly focused on improving students' educational experiences means putting a premium on evidence. It also means being smart about what constitutes evidence and how to use it effectively. Improving student accomplishment depends less on the amount of information gathered and more on whether it leads to action by those in a position to use it productively. [Read more...](#)

Assessment in Practice

Measuring Student Learning in the Co-curricular: Developing an Assessment Plan for Student Affairs

Christie Cruise-Harper
Maryville University

The Office of Student Life at Maryville University of St. Louis has adopted an assessment plan that meets department directors at their various levels of comfort with assessment while contributing to the university's efforts to create a culture of assessment. In past efforts, the majority of the data that had been collected was program evaluation data, not assessment. Christie Cruise-Harper details the process of developing an assessment plan, findings for the department, and next steps. Included are four modules aimed at walking staff and faculty through the assessment plan. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



Ferris State University

Ferris State University's Student Affairs Assessment webpage provides a host of information regarding its student affairs assessment. Visitors to the webpage can view information regarding the mission of the university's student affairs assessment efforts, links to the institution's yearly assessment highlight reports, their assessment newsletter, and a statement about how these assessment efforts relate to the university's accreditation. [Read more...](#)

DQP Updates

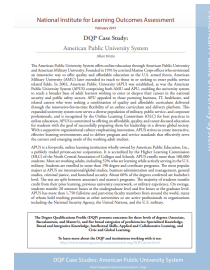
DQP in Practice



Oregon Institute of Technology and the DQP

In 2013, the Oregon Institute of Technology began working with the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) as a guide to review and strengthen Oregon Tech's general education program to better prepare professionals and citizens for the twenty-first-century. The Task Force began by reviewing their own assessment results, which illustrated the need to make educational pathways more clear and concrete for students by revising both their general education program and Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs) to bring them into alignment. The subcommittees now use the results of mapping exercises and the DQP to identify cumulative learning experiences for Oregon Tech's new integrated model of general education. [Read more...](#)

DQP Case Study



DQP Case Study: American Public University System

Jillian Kinzie
National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

American Public University System's (APUS) first phase of DQP work began in 2012 with an initial exploration of the qualifications framework and its relationship to university system interests. APUS aimed to take advantage of the DQP in various ways (e.g. to strengthen the overall university and discipline-level curriculum and ensure that students are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed for success in work, citizenship, global participation, and life). This case study highlights insights from APUS's initial exploration, focusing on four significant themes in that work: the institution-wide commitment to testing and implementation, the thoughtful process for working through the DQP, the development of signature assignments, and the incorporation of the DQP

framework into the university system's program review process. [Read more...](#)

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

[Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education](#)

From scholars at the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA), *Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education* (2015), available from Jossey-Bass, presents a reframed conception and approach to student learning outcomes assessment. The authors explain why it is counterproductive to view collecting and using evidence of student accomplishment as primarily a compliance activity, and offers both a compelling rationale and practical advice for making student learning outcomes assessment more effective and efficient.

[Evidence of Learning: The Case for an Integrated Competency Management System for Students, Higher Education, and Employers](#)

Tyton Partners, formerly known as Education Growth Advisors, has issued a report outlining their "evidence of learning framework". One of the goals of this framework is to help university leaders identify areas of friction and opportunities for student advancement through higher education and into the employment sector.

[Competency-Based Education Network Adds Members](#)

The Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN), which is funded by Lumina Foundation and allows participants to share information on their experiences with competency-based programs, has added 15 new members - 13 institutions and 2 public university systems. Among them are the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, Purdue University at West Lafayette, and the University of Texas system.

[Sticking with Credit Hour](#)

Paul Fain discusses the results of the Carnegie **Carnegie Unit**, a report from the Carnegie Foundation for the advancement of teaching, which considers an alternative way to measure student learning. The Carnegie Unit is based on competencies rather than the credit-hour system, and could improve learning in both high school and post-secondary education. An additional viewpoint on the Carnegie Unit can be found [here](#).

[Synthesis of "Assessment in Action" Team Projects](#)

ACRL compiled the findings from the first year of Assessment in Action into a [report](#) noting promising and effective approaches that demonstrate the library's value to students' academic success. Among the findings were outcomes in student retention, persistence, GPA, and engagement.

[Falling Short? College Learning and Career Success](#)

A new study done by Hart Research Associates reveals that new college graduates often over-estimate their preparation for the work-force compared to the views of their employers. In addition, the study reveals key findings on the type of learning/skills acquisition that employers prefer and the areas they prioritize when evaluating new hires. Articles on this report can also be found in the **Chronicle** of Higher Education and **Inside** Higher Ed.

[Researching Students: What Research Says About Effective Instruction in Undergraduate Science and Engineering](#)

"Research about how students learn shows that teaching strategies that motivate and engage students will improve their learning. So how do students best learn science and engineering? Which teaching strategies are most effective in developing their knowledge and skills? And how can practitioners apply these strategies to their own courses or suggest new approaches within their departments or institutions? *Reaching Students* strives to answer these questions."

[To Help Low-Income College Students Graduate, Show Them the Value of What They're Learning](#)

Mildred Garcia, President of California State University at Fullerton, believes that the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) can help narrow the achievement gap. The DQP can serve as a roadmap for students allowing them to clearly see what is expected of them, realize the skills they have acquired, and communicate to employers what they are able to do.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

February 18: [Accepting Applications for ACRL's Third Year of "Assessment in Action"](#)

Due by March 4, 2015. The Association of College and Research Libraries

February 19-21: [AAC&U 2015 General Education and Assessment Network for Academic Renewal Conference](#)

Kansas City, MO. Association of American Colleges and Universities

February 19, 2:00-5:00pm. Mel Wininger, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, and Susan Albertine, AAC&U, will hold a pre-conference workshop *Using the Degree Qualifications Profile and Dynamic Criteria Mapping to Help Build a Community of Practice for Assessment and Learning

February 22-24: [15th Annual Texas A&M Assessment Conference](#)

College Station, TX. Texas A&M University

February 22, 9:30am-12:30pm. David Marshall, California State University, and Paul Gaston, Kent State University, will hold a pre-conference workshop *DQP/Tuning and Assessment: Best of Kin

February 22-24: [Community College Conference on Learning Assessment](#)

Orlando, FL. Valencia College

February 23, 10:30am-11:45am. Erika Hackman, Parkland College, and Natasha Jankowski, NILOA, will present *Reimagining Faculty Engagement with Assessment: An Emergent Framework

February 23, 3:15pm-4:30pm. Natasha Jankowski and Laura Giffin from NILOA will present *Landscape of Assessment in Community Colleges: National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) Survey Results

February 25-28: [2015 EERA Annual Conference](#)

Sarasota, FL. Eastern Educational Research Association

February 26, 4:15-5:15pm. Sharon Valente will partake in a Symposia, *Practical Tools on How to Use the DQP/Tuning Process

March 7-8: [2015 ACPA Annual Convention](#)

Tampa, FL. American College Personnel Association

March 6, 9:30am-10:30am. Jillian Kinzie, University of Indiana Bloomington, will present *Student Engagement and the Updated NSSE: Exploring Leadership, Learning Support, and Persistence

March 7, 3:30-4:30pm. George Kuh and Jillian Kinzie will present a HED type talk, *Degree Qualifications Profile: Impact on Higher Education Assessment

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NILOA March 2015 Newsletter

March 2015 Newsletter**In this edition:**[Viewpoint](#)[Assessment in Practice](#)[NILOA Updates](#)[DQP Updates](#)[News](#)[Conferences
& Programs](#)

Welcome to Spring! As always, we hope you find this edition of the NILOA Newsletter informative. And take a moment to tell us how we are doing and what kinds of resources would help you do assessment work better.

If you are an institution or faculty/staff member involved in DQP and/or Tuning related efforts, please take a few moments to complete an Institutional Activity Report to help us better understand engagement with, and use of, the DQP/Tuning. The activity report can be found [here](#). Please complete the form by March 31.

Also, Natasha Jankowski, NILOA Assistant Director, will be a panelist on a [webinar](#), held on March 30 from 10:00-11:00am CST, *Getting Started: Who's Doing What and Why You Should Care*. It is part of a webinar series sponsored by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO).

Stay tuned for the release next month of a special report co-sponsored by the Penn Center for Minority-Serving Institutions and NILOA, "*Focused on What Matters: Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes at Minority-Serving Institutions.*"

Viewpoint

Addressing Assessment Fatigue by Keeping the Focus on Learning

George Kuh and Pat Hutchings,
National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Initiative fatigue takes the form of a heightened psychological and physiological state in which faculty and staff members feel inundated by and conflicted about the number of improvement efforts introduced on their campus. It is a syndrome that is so widespread that many faculty and staff have become jaded toward new initiatives. As one person described the situation to us, her campus has been plagued by a case of CAVE: Colleagues Against Virtually Everything. Assessment can exacerbate initiative fatigue through becoming an extra set of tasks independent of evaluating class assignments and giving grades. However, there are various ways to deal with initiative fatigue. [Read more...](#)

Assessment in Practice

Growing a Shared Understanding and Collaborative Process using Qualitative Research Methods to Design a Learning Assessment Outcomes Reporting Tool

Laura Blasi
Valencia College

At Valencia College, our website emerged as a partial solution to the call for transparency and accountability that challenge colleges to develop systems for organizing and sharing learning outcomes assessment data. The program and discipline assessment plans uploaded and archived on the site created the foundation for our recently launched Online Organizer, which is an online form linked to our database that has been designed to gather and track program assessment reports and results each year. We are able to outline the

approaches that can be useful when creating and implementing assessment systems for other campuses as we look back and describe the process of developing and designing Online Organizer. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



[University of Wisconsin-Madison](#)

University of Wisconsin-Madison's Student Learning Assessment webpage provides a host of information regarding its institution wide assessment efforts. In particular, the webpage presents information about its "Learning Goal Reporting Tool," an initiative that the institution is using to assess undergraduate, master's and doctoral programs. There is also information regarding its "Learning Goals Workshops" for undergraduate, master's and doctoral program level assessments. The information presented allows visitors to gain a better understanding of its Learning Goal reporting tool.

[Read more...](#)

DQP Updates

DQP in Practice



[Colorado Mesa University](#)

Colorado Mesa University's (CMU) work with the DQP began in 2012. Since then, CMU has continued to use the DQP to improve student learning outcomes at every level within the institution to provide meaningful information upon which to make decisions to curriculum. Institutional learning outcomes have been developed for certificates, and nearly every semester since 2012, faculty development sessions have been held to assist faculty in writing and improving learning outcomes and making assessment more meaningful and manageable. CMU's key successes, challenges, and future plans are discussed. [Read more...](#)

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

News Items:

[Minority-Serving Institutions: A Guide to Research & Publishing](#)

A new report by the Penn GSE Center for MSIs is a resource for researchers hoping to study minority-serving institutions. The report offers various suggestions on research topics, tips on how to formulate a research question, and things to keep in mind when considering research methods and where to publish the findings.

[ACE and Blackboard Release Research on Alternative Pathways to Degree Completion](#)

ACE released two papers at an event co-hosted with Blackboard. The **first** paper focuses on credit for prior learning (CPL) and addresses the barriers and successful strategies for incorporating CPL. The **second** paper focuses on competency-based education (CBE) and highlights the challenges associated with developing a program that moves away from the credit-hour standard.

[More States Consider Multiple Measures for College Readiness](#)

High schools are trying different approaches in how they evaluate students' college readiness. Eighteen states have aligned graduation requirements for high school students to meet college entrance criteria and 40 states now have policies in place to allow credit to be awarded for personal and work experience. In addition, portfolios, writing samples, and other assessment measures are being used to communicate student learning.

[The VALUE Breakthrough: Getting the Assessment of Student Learning in College Right](#)

This report from AAC&U focuses on how VALUE has helped change student learning outcomes assessment. Daniel Sullivan discusses how VALUE contributes to a high-quality liberal education, and responds to the outcomes employers seek and current public policy pressures.

Event Application Calls:

[Assessment in Action Application Extended](#)

The application deadline for the ACRL program "Assessment in Action: Academic Libraries and Student Success" (AiA), has been extended to 5 p.m. Central, Wednesday, March 25, 2015. The third year of AiA gives participants the opportunity to explore how their library contributes to student success during this 14-month program.

[Seeking Institutions Needing Assistance in the Development of Competency-Based Education Programs](#)

Through support from the Lumina Foundation, CAEL is providing training for staff and faculty at 15-20 institutions (5-7 per year) to help them understand competency-based education (CBE) and decide whether to commit to building a program. CAEL is currently looking for 6-7 institutions to participate in the final cohort. They are seeking institutions in the earliest stages of investigating the benefits and challenges associated with CBE. Additional technical assistance will be provided to a subset of the institutions to begin the process of implementing CBE and assessment. The application deadline is March 20.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

March 21-25: [2015 NASPA Annual Conference](#)

New Orleans, LA. Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education.

March 24: [Webinar: A Model for Institutional Effectiveness \(IE\) Assessment](#)

12:00-1:00pm. LiveText 2015 Best Practices Webinar Series.

March 24-25: [Evidence-Based Practices In Higher Education Assessment & Evaluation Conference 2015](#)

Johannesburg, South Africa. Melrose Advanced Professional Training.

***NILOA Associate Director, Natasha Jankowski, will present *Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve: Harnessing Feedback Loops for Improved Outcomes*.**

March 25-27: [2015 SoTL Commons Conference](#)

Savannah, GA. Georgia Southern University.

March 25-28: [ACRL 2015 Conference](#)

Portland, OR. Association of College and Research Libraries.

March 28-31: [Higher Learning Commission 2015 Annual Conference](#)

Chicago, IL. Higher Learning Commission.

***March 29, 1:00-1:45pm. Tami Eggleston, Associate Dean at McKendree University, will present *Ten Engaging Strategies for Assessment and Faculty Development Activities*.**

March 30: [Webinar – Getting Started: Who’s Doing What and Why You Should Care](#)

10:00-11:00am CST. Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

***NILOA Associate Director, Natasha Jankowski, will be a panelist.**

March 30- April 2: [2015 INQAAHE Conference](#)

Chicago, IL. International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education.

April 10: [2015 Colorado Regional Assessment Council Conference](#)

Breckenridge, CO. Colorado Mountain College- Breckenridge Campus.

April 10: [2015 Regional Community College Assessment Conference](#)

Overland Park, KS. Johnson County Community College.

April 10: [Midwest SoTL 2015](#)

South Bend, IN. Indiana University South Bend.

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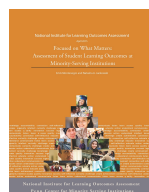
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NILOA April 2015 Newsletter

In this edition:[NILOA Special Report](#)[Viewpoint](#)[Assessment In Practice](#)[NILOA Updates](#)[DQP Updates](#)[News](#)[Conferences
& Programs](#)**April 2015 Newsletter**

In addition to our standard features, we are especially pleased to announce a special report, *Focused on What Matters: Learning Outcomes Assessment at Minority-Serving Institutions*, co-sponsored by NILOA and the Penn Center for Minority Serving Institutions. We also encourage you to read the informative Viewpoint by Paul Gaston that discusses the relationships between several national efforts to improve teaching and learning.

NILOA Report



[Focused on What Matters: Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes at Minority-Serving Institutions](#)

Erick Montenegro & Natasha A. Jankowski
Foreword by Marybeth Gasman & George Kuh

This report features the assessment work being done at Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs). Comparisons are made between assessment activities at MSIs and those underway at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) as well as those at different types of MSIs (Tribal Colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and others). Four main findings are discussed including the internal focus of MSIs, the emphasis on using assessment data for improvement, differences among different types of MSIs in their assessment approaches, and matching assessment approaches to student characteristics and learning needs. Implications are presented for understanding assessment activities in MSIs, and how such understandings can help advance assessment efforts at all postsecondary institutions. [Read more...](#)

Viewpoint

The Tools of Intentional Colleges and Universities: The DQP, ELOs, and Tuning

Paul L. Gaston
Kent State University

Intentionality is a core scholarly virtue far too often neglected in discussions of degree-level outcomes, in departmental curricular considerations, and in the construction of syllabi. Intentional colleges and universities begin by defining their understanding of what degree recipients should know and be able to do. Departments then respond to this understanding by defining how student accomplishment of their specific programmatic outcomes will align with those of the university. Tools such as the Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) published by Lumina Foundation, and Tuning offer an unprecedented resource for an institution that takes seriously the challenge of greater intentionality. [Read more...](#)

Assessment in Practice

Digital Badges as Effective Assessment Tools

Heidi E. Parker
Purdue University

Badges can be designed to measure/demonstrate various types of skills, such as mastering a programming language or critical thinking. Badges provide the opportunity to assess skills that we do not normally assess in more traditional

forms of content-based assessment (e.g. summative exams, reports). In addition, there is an increasing number of institutions that are revising their core curriculum to incorporate learning outcomes, such as creative and critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership, teamwork, and ethical reasoning. The number one concern about digital badges relates to their validity/credibility. In many cases, the viewer has no way of knowing what the person did in order to earn that badge. However, open badges allow viewers to look at the metadata embedded in the badge which includes information about the issuer, the criteria, and the earner's evidence (i.e. videos, documents, online assessments, etc.) [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



[Berkeley City College](#)

Berkeley City College's *Student Learning Outcomes Assessment* webpage provides useful information regarding its learning outcomes assessment efforts. There are links that highlight the college's approach to learning outcome assessments. There are links to the college's definition of learning outcome assessment, how the college outlines its assessment effort, and a list of particular outcomes for each of the courses offered at the college. With this information, visitors can gain a better sense of how to approach and convey their own student learning outcomes assessments. [Read more...](#)

DQP Updates

DQP in Practice



[Copper Mountain College](#)

Copper Mountain College's (CMC) work with the DQP/Tuning has led to significant advances in understanding the role of Student Learning Outcome (SLO) assessment and the need to identify connections between learning outcomes at the course, institutional, and program level. The most notable success is in discussions related to curricular development. CMC staff and faculty knowledgeable on the DQP are embedded in the curricular process at the creation, technical review, Curriculum Committee, and Academic Senate levels. The DQP has helped CMC's efforts to develop an integrated planning process for all areas of the institution from instruction to facilities. [Read more...](#)

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

[Professors Should Define Student Success](#)

Norm Jones and Harrison Kleiner, Utah State University, call for faculty-led reform in assessing students' career readiness. They describe their experience with the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) at Utah State University and the outcomes of their degrees – regardless of major – as producing students who are critical thinking citizens that communicate clearly and are equipped with the skills needed for today's workplace.

[Inside Higher Ed Quick Takes](#)

The American Enterprise Institute's Center on Higher Education Reform has released two reports on Competency-Based Education (CBE) focused on uncovering employers' [perceptions](#) on CBE and [best practices](#) for assessing CBE programs, respectively. In addition, Inside Higher Ed has released [New Debates About Accountability](#), a collection of articles and opinion essays on accountability. There will be a [webinar](#) discussing *New Debates* April 29 at 1:00pm CST.

[College-Attainment Rate Inches Up, but Not Fast Enough for Lumina](#)

Over the past six years, the attainment rate of Americans with a college degree or credential has only increased by 2.1%. This moderate increase poses a challenge for Lumina Foundation and their goal of having at least a 60% college

attainment-rate by the year 2025. In order to help reach their goal, Lumina will increase their focus on underrepresented students, on Americans who have attended college but did not attain a degree, and will include nondegree postsecondary certificates and credentials.

[Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Practitioner's Handbook](#)

A new **handbook** by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) serves as a resource for faculty and administrators to design and assess program-level learning outcomes. The handbook includes tips, examples and case studies, and recommendations on methods for developing program-level learning outcomes and assessment.

[Getting Started: Who's Doing What and Why You Should Care](#)

Natasha Jankowski, associate director of NILOA, was a panelist in a Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) **webinar** *Getting Started: Who's Doing What and Why You Should Care* centered on assessing learning outcomes in higher education. Please follow the link to access the presentation and other related resources.

[Driving Education Accountability: 'I'm Sorry Officer, the Gas Gauge Shows I Wasn't Speeding.'](#)

At Odessa College, the accountability process is tailored so that faculty are in the driver's seat. A couple of the key takeaways from Odessa College include using metrics that help predict what students need to succeed and creating a sense of urgency within the institution.

[ACRL Releases "Not Just Where to Click: Teaching Students How to Think about Information"](#)

A new report, *Not Just Where to Click: Teaching Students How to Think about Information* by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), explores various ways to teach students about the nature of expertise, authority, and credibility, and provides practical ways to help students reflect on their beliefs, biases, and interpretations.

[Redesigning Community Colleges](#)

Ashley A. Smith holds a Q&A with Thomas R. Bailey, Shanna S. Jaggars, and Davis Jenkins from the Community College Research Center at Columbia University's Teachers College and authors of *Redesigning Community Colleges*. Topics discussed include how guided pathways may impact students' ability to broaden their college experiences and how this plan fits within proposed free community college policies.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

April 16-20: [2015 AERA Annual Meeting](#)

Chicago, IL. American Educational Research Association

****April 18, 10:35am-12:05pm. Natasha Jankowski, associate director of NILOA, will lead a roundtable session *Systematic Assessment of Organizational Digital Narratives via Websites: A Case Illustration in Higher Education Settings*.**

****April 18, 2:45-4:15pm. NILOA Senior Scholar Timothy Reese Cain, University of Georgia, will present *Collective Bargaining and College Faculty: Illinois in the 1960s*.**

April 18-21: [2015 AACC Annual Convention](#)

San Antonio, TX. American Association of Community Colleges

April 22-24: [2015 Academic Resource Conference](#)

Oakland, CA. WASC Senior College and University Commission

****April 23, 8:00-9:00am. NILOA Senior Scholar Jillian Kinzie, Indiana University Bloomington, & Laura Massa, Loyola Marymount University will present *Assuring Student Engagement to Promote Student Success: Maximizing NSSE Use*.**

****April 23, 10:45-11:45am. Jillian Kinzie will moderate a session *Using NSSE & CIRP Survey Data involving DQP/Tuning* coach Sharon Valente, Marymount California University, and her presentation on *Developing Action Plans for Student Success: Using CIRP Survey Data*.**

****April 23, 1:45-2:45pm. Sharon Valente, Jillian Kinzie, Nancy Quam-Wickham, and Josh Ashenmiller will present *DQP/Tuning at a WSCUC Institution*.**

April 22-24: [2015 Western Academic Leadership Forum](#)

Boise, ID. Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

****April 23, 9:15-10:15am. George Kuh, NILOA director and co-principal investigator, will present *Promising Approaches to Assuring Quality in Student Accomplishment*.**

April 27-30: [CAEL Spring Workshops](#)

Chicago, IL. Council for Adult and Experiential Learning

April 29-May 1: [2015 ANNY Conference](#)
Dobbs Ferry, NY. Mercy College

April 29-May1: [2015 Assessment, Teaching & Learning Conference](#)
Spokane, WA. Washington State Board for Community & Technical Colleges

May 1: [Call for Proposals- 2015 ASHE Conference](#)
Denver, CO. Association for the Study of Higher Education

May 4-6: [2015 Annual Connections Conference](#)
Blacksburg, VA. The Center for Efficacy in Higher Education

[**learningoutcomesassessment.org**](http://learningoutcomesassessment.org)

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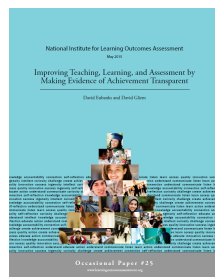
NILOA May 2015 Newsletter

In this edition:**[NILOA Occasional Paper](#)****[Viewpoint](#)****[Assessment In Practice](#)****[NILOA Updates](#)****[News](#)****[Conferences & Programs](#)****May 2015 Newsletter**

The month of May marks the beginning of the commencement season for US colleges and universities and what we sincerely hope has been another successful academic year for you, your colleagues, and your students –those who have completed their studies and those who are continuing. Of course, student learning outcomes assessment is an ongoing activity as is NILOA's work.

This Newsletter includes the release of a new NILOA Occasional Paper by David Eubanks, Associate Dean of Faculty for Institutional Research and Assessment at Eckerd College, and David Gliem, Associate Professor and Chair of the Educational Assessment Committee also at Eckerd College. In addition, we bring to you a Viewpoint from Hamish Coates, Chair of Higher Education at the University of Melbourne, an Assessment in Practice piece from the University of Dayton, and a featured website from the University of California-Irvine.

Finally, NILOA staff and associates will present at the 2015 AIR Forum Conference in Denver, CO, May 26-29. Among the presenters are George Kuh, NILOA director and co-principal investigator, NILOA associate director Natasha Jankowski, and NILOA Senior Scholar Jillian Kinzie.

NILOA Occasional Paper**[Improving Teaching, Learning, and Assessment by Making Evidence of Achievement Transparent](#)**

David Eubanks & David Gliem.

Technology can change higher education by empowering students to make an impact on the world as undergraduates. Done systematically, this would allow institutions to close the credibility gap with an increasingly dubious public. Authentic student achievements that are addressed to a real world audience can lead to richly detailed Resume 2.0 portfolios of work that add value to degrees and the granting institutions. A guide is provided for implementation of new high-impact practices, including structured assignment creation. [Read more...](#)

Viewpoint**Moving Beyond Anarchy to Build A New Field**

Hamish Coates
University of Melbourne

As higher education grows in significance it is imperative to ensure that stakeholders have confidence in the educational system. This goes to the need for transparent reporting of core processes and outcomes. While such reporting has evolved considerably in recent decades, the reporting of student learning outcomes continues to lag. What, generally, is required to effectively grow the field? Five areas of focus are worth mentioning: effective academic leadership, new work on learning outcomes must be well positioned, assessment techniques must be sound, projects must demonstrate impact and add value, and learning outcomes work must spur innovation and diversity. [Read more...](#)

Assessment in Practice

**On the “Write” Path to Student Learning:
Library and Writing Center Collaboration**

Hector Escobar and Heidi Gauder
University of Dayton

By deliberately placing the research and writing services into one location and developing a shared vision, this collaborative approach can provide enormous benefits not only to writers and researchers, but also to the staff in both areas. This case study outlines considerations needed for libraries and writing centers to collaborate effectively and describes benefits derived from this arrangement. The genesis for this particular collaboration came from student assessment data, which revealed a demand for library study space. Through existing data practices, we were able to document the need and opportunity for collaboration. The benefits of this collaboration to students are obvious: they have a one-stop service for help with researching and writing, whether brainstorming ideas, locating information, discussing paper organization, or citing sources. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



[University of California-Irvine](#)

The University of California – Irvine's *Student Affairs Learning Outcomes* website shares its on-going co-curricular learning assessment effort. Within the website, visitors can view the participants of the assessment effort, the University's five student-learning domains used to assess student development, and the general timeline of the assessment effort. For each learning domain, there are additional links that elaborate the meaning behind each domain as it relates to student learning. In addition, UCI's website provides resources on how to create student-learning outcomes, which provides four defining elements. Overall, this website effectively communicates the University's co-curricular learning assessment effort. [Read more...](#)

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

[Building Your Assessment Toolkit: Strategies for Gathering Actionable Evidence of Student Learning](#)

Jo Beld, vice president for mission and professor of political science at St. Olaf College, explores the various assessment strategies that institutions, with a special focus on Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), can utilize. She offers various questions for MSIs to ask themselves before beginning their assessment, an analysis of various assessment instruments, and advice on each approach.

[General Education Transformed: How We Can, Why We Must](#)

This publication by Paul L. Gaston calls for a re-envisioning of general education with clear, purposeful pathways for all students, allowing them to actively demonstrate their learning through high-impact practices and teaching strategies that are transferable across disciplines, departments, institutions, and even state systems. It addresses how this general education framework helps to foster essential capacities for career, citizenship, and global engagement for today's diverse and mobile students.

[Teaching for Competencies Using Performance Assessment Workshop](#)

Alverno College invites participants for its 39th Annual workshop held June 8-10, 2015. Attendees will learn about educational principles and practices, innovations, curricular implications, performance assessment, and the development of competencies.

[Data Wise: A Liberal Arts College's Commitment to Outcomes Transparency](#)

David R. Anderson, president of St. Olaf College, offers a glimpse into the culture at his institution which drives St. Olaf College to not only continuously assess their students learning outcomes but to also make use of and publicly share the results.

[New Issue of the International Journal of ePortfolio](#)

The new issue of the *International Journal of ePortfolio (IJeP)* (Volume 5, Number 1) is now available. Included in this issue are articles on the

development and sustainability of ePortfolios in counselor education, the role of faculty in general education and ePortfolios, student perceptions of ePortfolio use, and more.

C2C Resource Guide

Connect2Complete (C2C) is a model that integrates service-learning and peer advocacy into developmental education to better support underprepared students for college. Early implementation of C2C shows promising results, among them increased retention and persistence rates. The resource guide explains the C2C model, offers resources for implementation and evaluation of C2C, and includes samples of materials developed by other colleges using C2C.

New Issue of Peer Review

The new issue of *Peer Review* titled Faculty Leadership for Integrative Liberal Learning is now available. Topics covered in this issue include faculty collaboration and community building, creating a culture beneficial for integrative learning, and a case from Bard College on integrative learning.

The 2015 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence

The Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence recognizes the continuous improvement and strength of community colleges across four domains: completion, labor market, learning, and equity. The 2015 recipient is Santa Fe College which had a student transfer rate to a four-year institution double the national average. The report highlights the outcomes of Santa Fe College and the other finalists, and a description on how these colleges achieve excellence. An article on the Aspen Prize can be found in the [Chronicle](#).

Job Announcement:

JSU is seeking an Assessment & Advisement Specialist

Jacksonville State College (JSU) is looking for an Assessment and Advisement Specialist. This position provides expertise and support to the college for assessment of student learning outcomes, use of results for continuous improvement, and improving academic advisement for students. The position closes June 01, 2015.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

May 26-29: 2015 AIR Forum Conference

Denver, CO. Association for Institutional Research

****May 27, 10:45-11:45pm: George Kuh, Natasha Jankowski, Sandra Fulton, and Annette Tommerdahl will present *Degree Qualifications Profile, Tuning, and IR: Partners in Insuring Academic Quality*, facilitated by Clifford Adelman.**

****May 28, 2:30-3:15pm: Jillian Kinzie and Natasha Jankowski will present *An Open Conversation with IR: Degree Qualifications Profile and Tuning*.**

June 1-3: 2015 AALHE Annual Conference

Lexington, KY. Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education

****June 1, 3:00-4:00pm: Keston Fulcher, Megan Good, and Kristen Smith from James Madison University, will present *A Simple Model for Learning Improvement: Weigh Pig, Feed Pig, Weigh Pig* based on their NILOA Occasional Paper.**

****June 2, 8:30-10:30am: Natasha Jankowski and Pat Hutchings will present *Assignments as Assessment: Catalyzing Assignment Design on Campus*.**

****June 2, 12:00-2:00pm: Jillian Kinzie, NILOA Senior Scholar, associate director of the Center for Postsecondary Research and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) will give a keynote speech.**

June 2-6: 2015 AAC&U's Institute on General Education and Assessment

Edmond, OK. University of Central Oklahoma

June 9-13: 2015 AAC&U's Institute on High-Impact Practices and Student Success

Madison, WI. University of Wisconsin–Madison

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National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Making Learning Outcomes Usable & Transparent

NILOA June 2015 Newsletter

June 2015 Newsletter

In this edition:

[NILOA Updates](#)

[DQP Updates](#)

[Announcements](#)

[News](#)

[Conferences & Programs](#)

This month's newsletter contains a Featured Website from The Ohio State University Center for the Study of Student Life (CSSL). Also, in the DQP Update section is a warm, sincere invitation to submit assignments to the DQP [Assignment Library](#).

In addition, you'll benefit from perusing the items in the News section which contains pertinent assessment information. Of special interest is "Putting Students Into Student Learning Outcomes Assessment" calling for meaningful partnerships with students in the outcomes assessment process.

Finally, in the Conferences and Programs section, please note upcoming NILOA presentations at various conferences, as well as a variety of proposal deadlines.

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



[The Ohio State University](#)

The Ohio State University's Center for the Study of Student Life (CSSL) website presents clear and concise information regarding the university's ability to positively impact student development and outcomes. Visitors to the website can view a database of CSSL Reports pertaining to "Diversity and Inclusion," "Involvement and Engagement," and "Wellness," among other categories. There are also links to Resources, Training Webinars, and Student Life Reporting, all of which provide a host of information towards understanding effective assessment practices of student development. [Read more...](#)

DQP Updates



If you are developing, revising, or reviewing course assignments aligned with learning outcomes over the summer, don't forget to share/submit them to the DQP [Assignment Library](#) to undergo a process of peer review. Also, we will be sending out a survey to institutions utilizing the DQP in the month of July in order to better understand the impact that working with the DQP has had within the field. We look forward to your responses.

Announcements

We are pleased to announce that NILOA associate director, Natasha Jankowski, was appointed chair of AERA's Measurement and Assessment in Higher Education Special Interest Group (SIG). The SIG focuses on student learning outcomes assessment issues in higher education and provides a venue for informed dialogue on a variety of issues related to assessment including using assessment results to improve student learning. Please consider submitting a proposal to the SIG from practitioner research, theoretical conceptualizations of using assessment evidence to improve student learning, and evidence that use of assessment has led to actual improvements in student learning. Proposal submissions for AERA are due July 22. More information can be found [here](#).

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

[Putting Students Into Student Learning Outcomes Assessment](#)

Dr. Natasha Jankowski, associate director of NILOA, at the invitation of TaskStream, wrote about the need for higher education institutions to involve students within assessment practices. She highlighted the need for students to feel a sense of ownership in student learning outcome assessments and argued that while students are learning from colleges and universities, current assessment practices are not reflecting this growth given a lack of transparency to and with students.

[Research and Practice in Assessment](#)

The Summer 2015 Issue of Research and Practice in Assessment is now available. Readers will find articles about assessing student-learning outcomes including student development along with discussions regarding assessment practices and the meaning of student learning outcomes.

[College is not a commodity. Stop treating it like one](#)

Hunter Rawlings argued that the responsibility of student learning outcomes in higher education institutions is on students and their ability to perform in addition to colleges and universities' ability to craft and deliver curricula. In this sense, student-learning outcomes reflect how higher education institutions and students collaborate to produce worthwhile educational environments.

[What Does 'Personalized Learning' Look Like? Video Series Aims to Go Beyond Hype](#)

A new video series on personalized learning funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation aims to look inside high technology classrooms across five colleges to provide an account on how this pedagogical approach is emerging.

[What Does a Degree Mean? It's Hard To Tell](#)

Jamie Merisotis argues that despite the potential for future college graduates to have better job prospects than previous graduates, there is still a lack of understanding among employers about how such degrees translate into relevant skills. For this reason, more needs to be done within higher education institutions to clarify the meaning behind their degrees. Merisotis features the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) as one framework that may aid this process.

[How To Use VFA Data Effectively](#)

The Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) allows community colleges to compile data that are more reflective of the work community colleges do, and to compare performance at similar institutions. The VFA is in use at 25 of the 28 community colleges in Michigan, and results will be used to inform the state on metrics such as retention and credit accumulation. Another article on the VFA can be found [here](#).

[How Can a Degree Qualifications Profile Create a Better Geosciences Workforce?](#)

The Geosciences Department at Salt Lake Community College used the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) for their geography and geospatial technology programs. Among the outcomes were the creation of a new capstone course and the modification of program and course level ePortfolio assignments.

[Student Advisory Group at Indiana University Takes the Lead on High-Impact Practices](#)

A student advisory board at Indiana University Bloomington is recommending the campus implement high impact educational practices (HIPs) more widely. The report calls for the institution to encourage students to engage in HIPs at an earlier time in their education and for the university to collect more and better data on students' participation.

[Accreditors Back Joint Approach to Competency – Based Education](#)

The Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC) created a framework for assessing and approving competency-based education programs. The framework seeks to establish a basic language and set of practices regarding the assessment of student learning outcomes within competency-based education programs.

Job Announcement:

[The University of Alabama Seeks a Director of Student Affairs Assessment and Planning](#)

The Director of Student Affairs Assessment and Planning is responsible for divisional assessment and planning. The Director is expected to lead assessment and planning efforts for the division. This includes assisting divisional leadership with identifying and planning for the attainment of goals for the Division, particularly those related to student learning and the non-academic campus environment.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

June 21-24: [2015 Taskstream Collaboration Exchange Conference](#)

New York City, NY. New York University

June 22, 12:45-1:45pm. Natasha Jankowski, associate director of NILOA, will hold a Luncheon Session *Assessing to Improve: Focusing on Students and Their Learning

June 24-25: [2015 Assessment in Higher Education](#)

Birmingham, UK. The Higher Education Academy

June 24, 11:20am. Natasha Jankowski, associate director of NILOA, will present *Impact on Student Learning: Does Assessment Really Make a Difference?

June 24, 12:00pm. Natasha Jankowski and Erick Montenegro of NILOA, will present *Culturally Responsive Assessment: Modifying Assessment Processes to Meet Diverse Student Needs

June 25-27: [2015 NASPA Assessment and Persistence Conference](#)

Boston, MA. NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

June 25, 4:00-5:00pm. Jillian Kinzie, NILOA Senior Scholar, and Natasha Jankowski, associate director of NILOA, will present *Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education: A View from the Field

June 27, 9:30-10:30am. Erick Montenegro, NILOA Research Analyst, will present *Learning Outcomes Assessment at Minority-Serving Institutions: One Size Does Not Fit All

June 25-27: [Institute on Project Based Learning](#)

Worcester, MA. Worcester Polytechnic Institute

June 26: [Call for Proposals – 2015 NEEAN Fall Forum 2015](#)

Worcester, MA. College of the Holy Cross

June 30: [Call for Proposals - 2015 West Texas Assessment Conference](#)

San Angelo, TX. Angelo State University and Texas Tech University

June 30: [Call for Proposals – 2016 Drexel University Annual Conference on Teaching & Learning Assessment](#)

Philadelphia, PA. Drexel University

July 1: [Call for Proposals: 2015-2016 Paul P. Fidler Research Grant](#)

National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

July 7-10: [2015 SHEEO Annual Meeting](#)

Santa Fe, NM. State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

July 13-15: [2015 LiveText Assessment & Collaboration Conference](#)

Nashville, TN. LiveText

July 13, 3:45-4:45pm, Governors Ballroom D. Natasha Jankowski, associate director of NILOA will present *Navigating Assessment: A Student Perspective

***July 13, 5:00-6:00pm. There will be a panel with Gloria Rogers, Ralph Wolff, Jeff Selingo, Thomas Angelo, and Natasha Jankowski**

July 13-15: [HLC Assessment Workshop](#)

Saint Charles, IL. Higher Learning Commission

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National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Making Learning Outcomes Usable & Transparent

NILOA July 2015 Newsletter

In this edition:

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[NILOA Updates](#)

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[Conferences & Programs](#)

July 2015 Newsletter

This month's NILOA Newsletter includes a Viewpoint, *Learning Oriented Assessment in Practice*, by David Carless at the University of Hong Kong, a featured website from Rochester Institute of Technology, and DQP Updates along with news items and information regarding conferences and programs.

Please note also that NILOA cordially invites applications to participate in the next Assignment Charrette- our fourth- which will be held February 20, 2016 in New Orleans, LA. To learn more about the application process click [here](#).

Viewpoint

Learning Oriented Assessment in Practice

David Carless
The University of Hong Kong

Learning-oriented assessment involves three inter-related components. First, productive assessment task design when students are assessed on meaningful tasks which require higher order learning outcomes. Second, activities which support students in developing understandings of what quality work looks like: going beyond rubrics and lists of criteria to explore quality academic performance. And third, approaches to feedback processes which focus less on telling and more on entering into different forms of dialogue about student work, so that students are primed to engage with and act on feedback messages. These three components serve as a lens to analyze the practices of five teachers from various disciplines and facilitate the portrayal of assessment in context. Key features, issues, and findings are discussed, as well. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



[Rochester Institute of Technology](#)

The Rochester Institute of Technology's Student Learning Outcomes Assessment website presents information regarding institution-level assessment processes taking place at the university. Included within the website are essential outcomes for the University, an Institutional Effectiveness Map (IE MAP), and information about the university's assessment measures. Further, there is information on assessment awards and grants including the Provost's award for excellence in student learning outcomes assessment. [Read more...](#)

DQP Updates

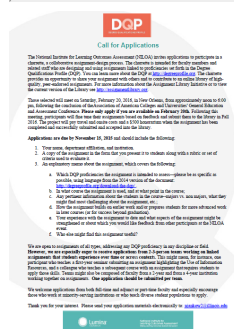


DQP/Tuning Survey

In the next few weeks, NILOA will be sending a survey to colleges and universities engaged in some manner with the DQP/Tuning in order to better understand the impact that working with the DQP/Tuning has had on institutional policies, programs, and practices. We very much appreciate

your participation and look forward to learning from you.

New ACCJC Report on Colleges Using the DQP
During the 2013-2014 academic year, sixteen ACCJC member institutions participated in projects using the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) to examine student learning outcomes practice as it pertained to one or more associate degree programs, general education component, or to institutional learning outcomes. The report on this project is now available and it summarizes the sixteen DQP projects, offers contact information for faculty/staff involved in each institution's project, and the key takeaways. [Read more...](#)



Assignment Design Charrette: Call for Applications
The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) invites applications to participate in its fourth assignment design charrette. A collaborative assignment-design process, the charrette is intended for faculty members and others who are designing and using assignments linked to proficiencies set forth in the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP). Participants will meet on Saturday, February 20, 2016, in New Orleans, from approximately noon to 6:00 pm, following the conclusion of AAC&U's General Education and Assessment Conference. Applications are due by November 15, 2015. [Read more...](#)

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

[The Language of Learning Outcomes: Definitions and Assessments](#)

The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario released a report on the language of learning outcomes. The report argues that the diversity in language used to talk about learning outcomes is a potential challenge in understanding learning outcome statements.

[Expanding the Conversation About Learning to Improve](#)

Anthony Bryk wrote about the need for establishing quality outcomes towards improving student learning. The Six Improvement Principles, developed from conversations with organizations, can serve as a starting point for conversations about quality student learning outcomes.

[In Assigning Group Work to Students, Composing the Group Comes First](#)

Meg Bernhard wrote about the potential benefit of connecting student learning outcome goals with the design of student group work. This includes understanding the social dynamics involved within group work and how it may affect student learning. Having clear expectations about group work activities may alleviate potential problems students' experience.

[Civic Prompts: Making Civic Learning Routine across the Disciplines](#)

Caryn Musil wrote an AAC&U report about student learning outcomes regarding civic learning among undergraduate students. The report includes discipline specific information about what it means to engage in civic learning and provides information that may help improve teacher's teaching and assessment practices around civic learning.

[The Effectiveness of Tutorials in Large Classes: Do They Matter?](#)

The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario reported on a study that found students who participated in tutorials early and throughout a class session had higher academic performance than students who did not participate in tutorials. Students from various social and economic backgrounds participated in the tutorials. This study suggests that incorporating more formative assessments, such as tutorials, may be beneficial for teachers' overall assessment practices.

[New Book: "Foundation for Critical Thinking"](#)

Trudy Bers, Marc Chun, William Daly, Christine Harrington Barbara Tobolowsky and Associates wrote a book about critical thinking and skill development. The book uses case studies to encourage educators to think about how to promote students' critical thinking abilities. This resource may help those interested in assessing students' critical thinking ability by promoting a rich discussion.

What 'Learning How to Think' Really Means

Barry Schwartz wrote about the need for colleges and universities to ponder what it means to teach students "how to think." Especially for Liberal Arts colleges, there is a need to define clear learning outcomes about what they expect and what outcomes means for their students; that is, the ability to think well. Schwartz provided a list of virtues that may aid this discussion, such as the love of truth and wisdom.

"Service Learning" Brings the Classroom to the Community

Michael Rouleau wrote about Eastern Connecticut State University's student learning initiative that connects students with community organizations. This form of learning allows students to connect classroom knowledge with real-world experiences, which helps make the university experience more relevant for addressing community needs. At the end of the service learning experiences, professors assess student learning by evaluating students' poster presentations and articles about their service learning experience.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

July 22: Call for Proposals- 2015 National Conference on Students in Transition

Baltimore, MD. National Resource Center

July 22: Call for Proposals- 2016 AERA Annual Meeting

Washington, DC. American Educational Research Association

July 27: Call for Proposals- AAC&U's 2016 Conference on General Education and Assessment

New Orleans, LA. The Association of American Colleges and Universities

July 27-30: 2015 AAEEBL Annual Conference

Boston, MA. The Association for Authentic, Experiential and Evidence-Based Learning

July 31: Call for Proposals- 2016 HLC Conference

Chicago, IL. Higher Learning Commission

August 4-6: 2015 SHEEO Higher Education Policy Conference

Newport Beach, CA. State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

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National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Making Learning Outcomes Usable & Transparent

NILOA August 2015 Newsletter

In this edition:

[Viewpoint](#)

August 2015 Newsletter

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This month's NILOA newsletter features a Viewpoint from Michael Bassis, *The Transformation of Higher Education in Americas: Understanding the Changing Landscape*, which introduces a compendium of resources for those interested in pursuing the topic further that is available on our [website](#). It is an annotated collection of material that describes and analyzes the changing landscape of American higher education.

We also highlight the Texas A&M University Student Life Studies website, along with news items, and information on upcoming conferences and programs.

Viewpoint

The Transformation of Higher Education in Americas: Understanding the Changing Landscape

Michael Bassis

Senior Fellow, Association of American Colleges and Universities

There is no shortage of efforts to address the challenges facing American colleges and universities. Institutions of every stripe, from small private colleges to massive state university systems are developing new policies, programs and services designed to make college more affordable, to improve the quality of student learning and to close access and attainment gaps. As a result, the amount of published material on the topic grows larger each year. I assembled a fairly comprehensive annotated collection of material that describe and analyze the changing landscape of American higher education from multiple points of view. The collection, [A Primer on The Transformation of Higher Education in America](#), covers a variety of topics: changing paradigms, early calls for change, prominent analyses and prescriptions, critical concepts, processes and tools, prominent transformation efforts in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors, barriers to change, critiques of "transformation", influential websites, supportive foundations and other material of note. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



Texas A&M University

Texas A&M University's Student Life Studies website includes highlights from its various assessment initiatives, such as its participation in the Student Experience in the Research University Survey, in the Assessment Educational Series for 2014, and the use of campus surveys. The Student Leader Learning Outcomes Project provides information for staff to utilize with student leaders when assessing learning in relation to student leadership experiences. In addition, given that these assessment initiatives are in a student affairs context, visitors can gain a better understanding of assessment practices and the purpose, outline, and implementation of surveys within student affairs programs. [Read more...](#)

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

[Does Assessment Make Colleges Better? Who Knows?](#)

Erik Gilbert argues that it is necessary for accreditors who drive assessment to provide evidence of how learning outcomes assessment has improved institutions and/or their students. Having a record of the efficacy and direct effects of assessment could increase faculty participation and support, as well as justify the resources spent on assessment efforts.

[Defining College](#)

Carol Geary Schneider, president of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), discusses the ways higher education is changing and how AAC&U is working to meet those changes. She describes AAC&U's multi-year LEAP initiative and the importance of aligning student learning to the goals of the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) to insure that degree holders acquire a high quality general education along with their specific subject area knowledge.

[Narrative in the Classroom](#)

Storytelling can be a meaningful mode of teaching that complements ways of thinking that are more scientific. Elaborating on this point, David Gooblar outlined various ways teachers could incorporate storytelling into their classroom discussions towards improving students' learning. By using both narrative and scientific ways of thinking, classroom discussions may become more meaningful to students.

[Final Exams or Epic Finales](#)

In rethinking the purposes and structure of end of the semester exams, Anthony Cider shared information about creative ways to conduct final exams. Rather than give students a traditional exam that contains lots of questions and not enough time for discussion, Cider wrote about final exams that challenged students to think, discuss, and argue in ways that engaged students' competency with desired skills.

[How Might a Teaching Excellence Framework be Built](#)

In hopes of improving teaching within United Kingdom's higher education institutions, public officials and universities continue to consider what a "teaching excellence framework" would entail. By incorporating a research approach to determining teaching effectiveness, a task such frameworks seek to do, assessments of student learning may be more efficient and meaningful.

[Modules for Mastery](#)

Davidson Next, an innovation from Davidson College, provides online test preparation modules for students through massive open online courses. The courses are open to any interested students, particularly underrepresented students. The modules are being tested in hopes of learning more about their effectiveness.

[Improvement Discipline in Practice](#)

Have you heard of the improvement science methodology, which is a way for teachers to consider whether their improvements within classrooms make a difference in students' learning? The methodology consists of three steps prior to implementing a new practice—identifying a problem, explaining the intention of some intervention, and determining what evidence would indicate that an intervention worked or did not work.

[The Writing Assignment that Changes Lives](#)

Anya Kamenetz reported on Dr. Jordan Peterson, a psychology faculty member at the University of Toronto, who argues that goal setting can improve students' performances, particularly for students from historically underrepresented groups. Goal setting exercises help students engage a mode of planning that may reduce stress and performance anxiety.

[What Believing in the Possibilities Can Do For Learning and Teaching](#)

Thom Markham reported on how instilling positive beliefs within students may help increase their classroom performance. In relation to the benefits of placebo effects, helping students believe they can do some activity better may help increase positive student learning outcomes.

Job Announcement:

[City Colleges of Chicago: District Director – Research and Analytics](#)

The City Colleges of Chicago has a job opening for a District Director in Research and Analytics. The responsibility of the District Director is to conduct research that analyzes and evaluates the needs of the City Colleges of Chicago towards improving institutional planning and decision-making, among other essential duties. Follow the link to learn more.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

August 19: [Call for Proposals- AAC&U's 2016 Conference on Diversity, Learning, and Student Success: Shifting Paradigms and Challenging Mindsets](#)

Philadelphia, PA. American Association of Colleges & Universities

August 25: [Webinar- Designing Quality Rubrics](#)

12:00pm. LiveText 2015 Best Practices Webinar Series

August 25: [Webinar: Connecting Credentials](#)

1:00-2:00pm. American Council on Education

August 30 - September 2: [2015 EAIR Forum](#)

Krems, Austria. Danube University Krems – The University for Continuing Education

****August 31, 2:00-3:00pm. Natasha Jankowski, associate director of NILOA, will present *Transparency, Accountability and Assessment of Student Learning: The Three-Legged Stool*.**

September 8: [Call for Proposals - 2015 Institute for Student Learning Assessment](#)

Manhattan, KS. Kansas State University

September 9-11: [Drexel University Annual Conference on Teaching & Learning Assessment](#)

Philadelphia, PA. Drexel University

****September 9, 3:30-4:30pm. Natasha Jankowski, associate director of NILOA, will present *Evidence-based Storytelling: Sharing our Narratives*.**

September 11: [2015 Oregon Assessment Conference](#)

Corvallis, OR. Oregon State University

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National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Making Learning Outcomes Usable & Transparent

NILOA September 2015
Newsletter

September 2015 Newsletter

In this edition:

[Assessment in Practice](#)

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This month's newsletter includes an Assessment in Practice from Anke C. Buttner from the University of Birmingham, *Finding the Way in the Assessment Landscape: Developing an Effective Assessment Map*, a featured website from the University of North Carolina Wilmington, a DQP Update on DQP/Tuning Coaches, and information on news and upcoming events and programs.

In addition, a recording of NILOA's associate director Natasha Jankowski's CollabEx presentation, *Assessing to Improve: Focusing on Students and Their Learning*, is available [here](#).

Finally, please note the following important deadlines. Applications to participate in NILOA's Assignment Charrette are due November 15, 2015. To learn more about the application process click [here](#). If your institution is engaged in some manner with the DQP/Tuning, please help us learn more about your experience so we can include it in NILOA's DQP/Tuning Impact Study. NILOA will conduct a survey this month to better understand in what ways and toward what ends using the DQP/Tuning has influenced institutional policies, programs, and practices. We very much appreciate your timely participation and look forward to learning from you.

Assessment in Practice

Finding the Way in the Assessment Landscape: Developing an Effective Assessment Map

Anke C. Buttner
University of Birmingham

For various reasons there is a lack of satisfaction with assessment practices in higher education. To help address this and show interconnections between assessments across the program, the University of Birmingham decided to compile an interactive assessment map to illustrate the relationships between assignments and to collate assessment information into a single user-friendly context. Individual student interviews were conducted as a part of the study to identify students' understanding of assessment and identify their assessment mapping needs. Findings indicate that students are more interested in basic information on assessment, but alternative means to help students 'see' connections between assessments throughout their time at the institution are presented and explored. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website

University of North Carolina Wilmington
The University of North Carolina Wilmington's Assessment website highlights the university's commitment to evaluating and assessing student learning. Within the website, visitors can appreciate



the university's learning goals, which includes categories such as critical thinking, thoughtful expression, and diversity. Equally useful is the General Education Assessment section where information about the university's assessment process can be found. From the university's philosophy and rationale to program improvement, visitors can review how the university conducts and maintains its assessment practices. [Read more...](#)

DQP Updates



To advance and accelerate campus initiatives to enhance student learning, NILOA and Lumina Foundation are again pleased to offer a practical, useful resource to improve student learning at your institution - [DQP/Tuning Coaches](#). The Coaches are experienced faculty, administrators and staff who know first-hand about the utility and value of the DQP and Tuning. Coaches are available for a one-day campus visit at *no cost* to the host institution. Institutions that express interest by October 15, 2015 will receive *priority* consideration for a Coach visit during the 2015-2016 academic year. You can request a visit from a coach [here](#).

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

News Items:

[NEXT: The Credentials Craze](#)

The Chronicle of Higher Education has released a special report highlighting the credentialing movement. Articles such as [When a Degree is Just the Beginning](#) and [Stack Those Credentials](#) discuss what credentials are and the advantages they provide to students in the job market. Other articles talk about why credentials should be [supported](#), how [master degrees](#) are affected, and the role of [accreditors](#) in the movement.

[No Love, But No Alternatives](#)

Do we still need accreditors? Doug Lederman addresses this question, providing an informative and frank discussion about the history and role of accreditation within higher education. He covers both past and current frustrations about accreditation while highlighting alternative ways of thinking about accreditation and its role.

[Does Assessment Make Colleges Better? Let Me Count the Ways](#)

Determining the value of assessment is a challenge that many faculty members and higher education administrators have to address. In response to an [earlier article](#) that questioned the value of assessments, Joan Hawthorne comments upon this challenge by summarizing some of the benefits of assessing student learning and using the results to improve. This included considering how assessment initiatives have helped teachers reflect on their teaching practices, such as how classroom learning can become more meaningful for students.

[EduData – Universities Should Teach Logical and Analytical Thinking, Say Students](#)

The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario reported on findings from a survey conducted by the Canadian University Survey Consortium. The survey included asking 18,000 graduates from 36 universities about what they have learned. The survey particularly focused on if students felt they learned the skills that universities and employers hope students acquire as college graduates.

[ACRL releases 'Classroom Assessment Techniques for Librarians'](#)

Crafting and evaluating information literacy learning outcomes may be challenging. Luckily, Cassandra Kvenild and Melissa Bowles-Terry wrote a book titled "Classroom Assessment Techniques for Librarians," which addresses some of the challenges and steps in assessment practices, which may help librarians and others interested.

[High-Impact, Integrative General Education at Northern Illinois University](#)

Northern Illinois University revamped its general education program to make it more meaningful for students' lives. This was possible through an initiative called Progressive Learning in Undergraduate Studies (PLUS). By refocusing its general education mission and learning outcomes, the university has shaped its

general education programs towards meeting the needs of students more so than students meeting the needs of disciplines.

[World's University 'Oligopoly' Accused of Blocking OECD Bid to Judge Learning Quality](#)

There is criticism that much opposition for the OECD AHELO project comes from elite and well-established western institutions hesitant or refusing to participate in the project. A central concern is whether such established institutions are fearful to compare students' learning outcomes based on value added assessments rather than prestige. However, critics of AHELO argue that comparing students' learning outcomes internationally is too difficult given that factors such as culture would lead to misguided and inaccurate research.

[Measures to Support Improving Student Learning Mindsets](#)

What are the best assessment practices for assessing students' non-cognitive characteristics? Towards exploring this question, the Carnegie Foundation is researching practical measurements that may help higher education institutions identify, target, and intervene with struggling students. By exploring student characteristics it may be possible to improve overall student development within higher education institutions.

[Carnegie Commons Blog: A Place to Come Together to Exchange Ideas About Teaching and Learning](#)

The Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching has a blog that addresses various education topics related to teaching and learning. A variety of topics can be found on the blog, including topics such as student motivation, discipline, and technology.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

September 18: **[Call for Proposals – CREA 2016 Conference](#)**

Chicago, IL. Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment.

September 22-24: **[2015 HETL-PsTL Conference](#)**

Minneapolis, MN. The International Higher Education Teaching & Learning Association.

September 22: **[Webinar- Advising for Success: Credit for Prior Learning Pathways to Completion](#)**

1:00-2:30 pm. American Council on Education.

October 5: **[Call for Proposals- 2016 AIR Forum](#)**

New Orleans, LA. Association for Institutional Research.

October 7-9: **[2015 Strengthening Student Success Conference](#)**

Oakland, CA. The Research and Planning Group.

October 8-10: **[AAC&U Network for Academic Renewal Conference](#)**

Fort Lauderdale, FL. Association of American Colleges and Universities.

October 13-15: **[The 2015 Close It Summit](#)**

Washington, DC. Close It.

October 13: **[Panel Discussion: The Problematic Future of Higher Education](#)**

New York City, NY. The New School for Social Research, Center for Public Scholarship.

October 15: **[Call for Proposals- Academic Resource Conference](#)**

Anaheim, CA. WASC Senior College and University Commission.

October 25-27: **[2015 Assessment Institute](#)**

Indianapolis, IN. Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

****NILOA will have a track at the Assessment Institute. Stay tuned for details.**

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National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Making Learning Outcomes Usable & Transparent

NILOA October 2015 Newsletter

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October 2015 Newsletter

The 2015 Assessment Institute is later this month, and we at NILOA could not be more excited. Below, please read about NILOA's Track at the Assessment Institute and the various featured sections of this month's newsletter. We have a Viewpoint from Susan Platt and Sharlene Sayegh from California State University at Long Beach, an Assessment in Practice piece from Sharra Hynes, Myron Pope, Patricia Loughlin, and Sonya Watkins at the University of Central Oklahoma, and a Featured Website from the University of Montana. Plus, as is our custom, we have information on pertinent news and upcoming conferences and events.

In addition, we encourage you to read Stan Ikenberry's article in *The Presidency* from the American Council on Education (ACE), [Three Things Presidents Need to Know About Student Learning Outcomes Assessment](#). In this article, he discusses three fundamental points that a president must know about collecting and using evidence of student learning.

Finally, please join the NILOA team in congratulating our own George Kuh on receiving the [2015 Howard R. Bowen Distinguished Career Award](#) from the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE). This award is presented to individuals who have devoted themselves to the study of higher education and whose scholarship and leadership have significantly advanced the field of higher education.

2015 Assessment Institute

Highlights about NILOA's Track

The 2015 Assessment Institute provides opportunities for (1) individuals and campus teams new to outcomes assessment to acquire fundamental knowledge about the field, (2) individuals who have worked as leaders in outcomes assessment to share and extend their knowledge and skills, and (3) those interested in outcomes assessment at any level to establish networks that serve as sources of support and expertise beyond the dates of the Institute. George Kuh, NILOA co-principal investigator, Peter Ewell, NILOA senior scholar, and colleagues will participate in the opening Plenary Panel (Monday, October 26 at 8:45-10:00am). Then, Clifford Adelman, senior associate with the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), will keynote the NILOA Track. His talk, *To Imagine a Verb: Assignments and Learning Outcomes*, is Monday, October 26 at 10:15-11:15am.

Click [here](#) for more information about the presentations in the NILOA Track at the 2015 Assessment Institute.

Viewpoint

Student Learning Outcomes Alignment through Academic and Student Affairs Partnerships

Susan Platt & Sharlene Sayegh
California State University, Long Beach

A significant challenge facing university campuses is how to develop the "whole student" whose entire curricular and co-curricular experience aligns with the achievement of the campus mission and learning outcomes. But what are we actually doing as institutions to embrace these concepts? Are we merely saying the word "partnership" but still operating in silos? What are the bridges that can

link Academic and Student Affairs and result in strategic partnerships? It is imperative to create a strategic plan to strengthen collaborations across divisions and provide students with impactful, powerful learning experiences to meet institutional learning outcomes (ILOs). Building bridges between Academic and Student Affairs takes time, but has the great benefit of engaging students in rich and diverse learning opportunities to achieve ILOs. [Read more...](#)

Assessment in Practice

The Student Transformative Learning Record at the University of Central Oklahoma: A Commitment to Improving Student Learning

Sharra Hynes, Myron Pope, Patricia Loughlin, & Sonya Watkins
University of Central Oklahoma

In recent years, many have questioned the value of a college degree. The University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) orchestrated a plan to overcome this challenge by developing the the Student Transformative Learning Record (STLR): a unique tool and process designed to capture, assess and document student transformative learning. Students are then able to collect, reflect and present their strengths in important employability, communication, and citizenship skills. Transformative learning experiences are exemplified in a set of six developing practices, all of which promote student success through high levels of student engagement. These six practices became known as UCO's Central Six Tenets of Transformative Learning: 1) Discipline Knowledge; 2) Leadership; 3) Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities; 4) Service Learning and Civic Engagement; 5) Global and Cultural Competencies; and 6) Health and Wellness. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



[University of Montana](#)

The University of Montana's Planning Assessment Continuum website provides a collection of information regarding the university's assessment practices in conservation with institutional and policy concerns. Visitors to the website can browse four areas of focus, which includes planning, implementation, and analysis. In addition, within each area is content related to conducting assessments such as the university's planning, implementation, and assessment environment, all of which are couched in larger policy concerns related to the university. [Read more...](#)

DQP Updates



[DQP Resources](#)

Adaptive Learning is a process of using computer-aided software to meet the strengths and weaknesses of each individual student. The underlying principal is that coursework should be adapted to meet the individual needs of each student. Resources and information on Adaptive Learning can be found [here](#).

[DQP Impact Study](#)

NILOA is launching a DQP Impact Study [survey](#) this week. The aim of the study is to better understand in what ways and toward what ends using the DQP/Tuning has influenced institutional policies, programs, and practices. We very much appreciate your timely participation and look forward to learning from you.

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

[Caution on Competency](#)

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Inspector General has rising concerns over Competency-Based Education (CBE) programs and the amount of interaction, or lack-there-of, between instructors and students; an aspect of CBE courses that may liken them more to correspondence courses. However, an argument is raised that perhaps we need better safeguards to guarantee the quality of CBE programs, appropriate expectations for outcomes, and continued support for the already 600 plus institutions working to develop these programs.

[The Unwritten Rules of College](#)

Crafting classroom assignments can be difficult. Mary-Ann Winkelmes developed a protocol to help teachers improve their assignments by focusing on the task, purpose, and criteria of assignments. Such improved assignments may help improve the learning of students who come from different backgrounds too.

[The Quality of a College Degree: Toward New Frameworks, Evidence, and Interventions](#)

This report, which builds upon AAC&U's Quality Collaboratives project, focuses on the assessment of key student learning outcomes. The authors provide a framework for better assessing the quality of learning to inform policy, and offer various recommendations regarding transfer from two-year to four-year institutions based on learning outcomes outlined in the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP).

[My Long Journey to Student-Centered Learning](#)

Learning can be frustrating. Yet, it is necessary. This is the perspective that John Warner articulates when explaining student-center learning. Rather than view student-centered learning as an easy, straightforward progression, Warner highlights the struggles involved when learning new information and practices.

[Bridging the Library / Faculty Gap](#)

Gale and Library Journal conducted a survey that looked at the relationship between faculty members and librarians within the United States. The survey focused on whether both faculty members and librarians understood the purpose of academic libraries the same way. Results from the survey indicate that they do not.

[Social Learning for Social Impact](#)

McGill University is offering a free online course, hosted by edX, titled "Social Learning for Social Impact." The course will cover various topics about social impact, from globalization to social initiatives. The course will also not have tests, but will instead focus on in-depth conversations and interviews, a notion they refer to as social learning.

[Steps Toward A Big Idea Syllabus](#)

Creating thoughtful, meaningful syllabi is difficult. Luckily, teachers can find useful advice within this blog including insightful steps and pointers that may help teachers reflect on how they approach creating syllabi. Visitors to the blog can also see images and a video that compliments the information.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

October 21: [2015 West Texas Assessment Conference](#)

San Angelo, TX. Angelo State University and Texas Tech University.

October 23: [Assessment 101 Workshop: The Assessment Cycle, Clear & Simple](#)

Oakland, CA. WASC Senior College and University Commission.

October 23-25: [Teagle Assessment Scholar Workshop](#)

Crawfordsville, IN. Center of Inquiry at Wabash College.

October 23: [2015 Assessment Network of New York](#)

Hyde Park, NY. Culinary Institute of America.

October 25-27: [2015 Assessment Institute](#)

Indianapolis, IN. Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

**** NILOA will have a track at the 2015 Assessment Institute**

October 27-30: [2015 ISSOTL Conference](#)

Melbourne, Australia. RMIT University.

October 29: [Webinar: Assessing the Student Experience: Student Affairs Learning Outcomes](#)

10:00-11:00am. Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

November 4-7: **2015 ASHE Conference**

Denver, CO. Association for the Study of Higher Education.

November 4-8: **40th Annual POD Conference**

San Francisco, CA. The Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education.

November 12-14: **2015 AAC&U STEM Conference**

Seattle, WA. Association of American Colleges & Universities.

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NILOA November 2015
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This month's newsletter includes an Assessment in Practice from Hazel L. Marzetti from the University of Edinburgh, *Leading Enhancement in Assessment and Feedback at the University of Edinburgh*, a Featured Website from Wayne State University, a NILOA Update inviting you to peruse our 25 Occasional Papers, and information on news and upcoming events and programs.

Also, as promised, the presentations from this year's NILOA Track at the 2015 Assessment Institute are now available on the NILOA website. You can find them [here](#).

Assessment in Practice

Leading Enhancement in Assessment and Feedback at the University of Edinburgh: Using TESTA Methodology to Gain Programmatic Oversight of Assessment and Feedback Practices

Hazel L. Marzetti
University of Edinburgh

For the last two years, the University of Edinburgh has been working on the Leading Enhancement in Assessment and Feedback (LEAF) project and using Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment (TESTA) methodology to help improve oversight of the assessment and feedback activities provided on our degree programmes, with a view to enhancing our practices. This Assessment in Practice will reflect on our experiences of using the TESTA methodology, the amendments we have made to tailor the methodology to our institution, and the benefits we have found of using TESTA. We mapped assessment and feedback practices on the most popular courses and pathways taken by students enrolled in a given degree programme, and used the information to construct a popular pathway through the programme. Students were surveyed to determine if there was any assessment and feedback practice that students had found particularly helpful, and if there was anything that they would like to change. Once completed, the data are compiled into a single report. The methods and benefits of this assessment are detailed in the paper. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



[Wayne State University](#)

Wayne State University's program assessment webpage presents a detailed overview of how the university assesses student learning at the program level. The webpage includes a framework that outlines each of the university's assessment steps, including identifying programs goals, specifying intended outcomes, improving programs based on results, and measuring whether students meet outcomes. These steps are complemented by a clear assessment mission statement, which helps viewers frame how the university conducts student learning assessments. The website also provides assessment resources such as curriculum maps, video tutorials that address the various steps in assessing student

learning, and a link for additional resources that provides information about relevant organizations, people and publications about student learning assessment. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Occasional Papers



NILOA Occasional Papers

NILOA commissions Occasional Papers from leading scholars in the field of student learning outcomes assessment to examine contemporary issues and to inform the postsecondary community about the current state-of-the-art of assessing learning outcomes in U.S. higher education. The papers are written for a general audience and provide comprehensive, accurate information about how institutions and organizations can become more meaningfully engaged with assessing and reporting student learning outcomes. To date, 25 Occasional Papers have appeared. We commend these resources to inform your work. The complete list can be found [here](#).

DQP Updates



DQP Resources

Applied & Integrative Learning is an approach which emphasizes the relevance of course material to situations and conditions external to the classroom or “real world.” It shifts the focus to application of knowledge and skills through solving a problem or implementing a project. Resources and information on Applied & Integrative Learning can be found [here](#).

DQP Impact Study

NILOA has launched the DQP Impact Study by sending a [survey](#) to institutions to better understand in what ways and toward what ends using the DQP/Tuning has influenced institutional policies, programs, and practices. We very much appreciate your timely participation and look forward to learning from you.

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

News Items:

Higher Ed Groups Unveil New National Designation for Colleges & Universities Excelling at Self-Assessment to Drive Student Success

The Excellence in Assessment (EIA) Designation program – the first national initiative of its kind – will recognize institutions that successfully integrate assessment practices across campus, provide evidence of student learning outcomes, and use assessment results to guide institutional decision-making and improve student performance. The EIA Designations are built directly from NILOA’s Transparency Framework. The Designations were the joint conception of APLU, AAC&U, AAC&U, and NILOA. An article in Inside Higher Ed can be found [here](#).

Yes, Colleges Do Teach Critical-Thinking Skills, Study Finds

A [study](#) conducted by Christopher R. Huber and Nathan R. Kuncel, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, finds that college students are improving their critical-thinking skills even though the gains are smaller than in previous decades. In addition, pedagogy strictly focused on teaching critical thinking did not result in significantly larger improvements compared to students in other programs.

Connecting the dots: helping students develop ‘transferable’ skills

Queens’s University in Kingston has developed a number of initiatives aimed at helping their students identify and communicate transferable skills. These initiatives include “major maps” that help student track how particular majors relate to skill development, a “co-curricular directory” that allows students to

search for extracurricular opportunities by learning outcomes, and a skills workshop that helps students identify and practice talking about their skills.

The Unwritten Rules of College

Improving one's teaching and striving towards increased student learning is no easy task. Mary-Ann Winkelmes designed an approach that may help, which includes focusing on making classroom assignments transparent, reflective, and explicit.

What the Results of a Survey of Coursera Students Mean for Online Learning

A report of survey data from 52,000 students who participated in at least one Coursera course includes information about students' education and career results and motivation for taking the course in addition to other learning outcomes.

Assessment That Works: A National Call, A Twenty-First-Century Response

In contextualizing the use of ACC&U's VALUE project, a report offers concerned constituents, such as faculty members and administrators, insights about the usefulness of the VALUE project in assessing student learning in undergraduate education in addition to analyzing case studies.

The Secret of Good Humanities Teaching

What does good humanities teaching look like? Julius Taranto and Kevin Dettmar write about good humanities teaching as making complex ideas simple for the purposes of understanding, and then making those same ideas complex again – a process with implications for classroom assignments.

Student Success and the VFA

Rebecca Weber reported on Jackson College's use of the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) to assess student learning. The VFA criteria allowed for Jackson College to successfully display student learning in a different light compared to criteria often used by research institutions.

Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning

The current issue of *Change* magazine features several articles relevant to student learning assessment. The topics addressed are the relationship between assessment and compliance, career success, and the value of degrees. NILOA's own senior staff contributed with a piece titled **Beyond Compliance: Making Assessment Matter**.

How a 40-Year-Old Idea Became Higher Education's Next Big Thing

Can credit hours be replaced by competency-based education? This question continues to provoke discussions about the future of higher education institutions and the assessment of student learning. Particularly when it comes to issues of access, cost, and educational quality, competency-based education may change how colleges and universities assess student learning.

Feedback is Teaching

Alverno College faculty wrote and released a book about the role of feedback in assessing student learning. Within the book readers can find information about how feedback can improve students' learning environments and increase their chances of attaining intended outcomes.

Job Announcement:

Director of Assessment Position

The University of Illinois at Chicago is seeking a Director of Assessment position with the college's Office of Academic Affairs. Responsibilities of the position include conducting and coordinating college-level assessment of programs and their curricular. Submit application by November 16, 2015 for fullest consideration. Follow the link to learn more.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

November 18-20: **2015 CAEL International Conference**

Baltimore, MD. The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning.

November 18-20: **2015 Virginia Assessment Group Annual Conference**

Richmond, VA. Virginia Assessment Group.

November 18: **Assessment 201 Workshop: Advanced Topics in Assessment**

Pomona, CA. WASC Senior College and University Commission.

November 19-22: **NCA 2016 Annual Convention**

Las Vegas, NV. National Communication Association.

****November 20, 12:30-1:45pm. Dr. Natasha Jankowski, associate director of NILOA, will participate in a workshop, *Learning Outcomes in Communication Project: Assignment Workshop*.**

****November 19, 2:00-4:30pm, November 20, 8:00-10:30am, and November 21, 12:30-3:00pm. Natasha Jankowski, associate director of NILOA, will lead three *LOC Coaching Workshops* that offer guidance and strategies for**

LOC faculty leaders as they work to engage their campus in the LOC project. Please RSVP for one of the three available times to Meg Tucker, mtucker@natcom.org, by November 17.

November 19: **[Webinar- College/Employer Partnerships—Collaboration through Credit for Prior Learning](#)**

1:00 pm-2:30 pm. American Council on Education.

November 26: **[Webinar: The challenges of assessing critical thinking](#)**

10:00-11:00 am. Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

December 1-3: **[The Second International Conference for Assessment and Evaluation](#)**

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. National Center for Assessment in Higher Education.

****December 2, 10:15-11:45am. Jillian Kinzie, NILOA senior scholar, will present *Taking Action on Evidence to Enhance Teaching and Learning*.**

****December 3, 9:00-10:00am. George Kuh, NILOA director and co-principal investigator, will deliver a keynote, *Evidence-Based Improvement in the U.S.: Current Practice and Lessons Learned*.**

****December 3, 1:30-3:00pm. Natasha Jankowski, NILOA associate director, will present *Making the Implicit Explicit: Transparency and Assessment Design*.**

December 2-4: **[2015 MSCHE Conference](#)**

Washington, DC. Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

December 4: **[Call for Proposals- 2016 AAEEBL Western Regional Conference](#)**

Fort Worth, TX. Texas Christian University.

December 5-8: **[2015 PESA Conference](#)**

Melbourne, Australia. Australian Catholic University.

December 5-8: **[2015 SACS/COC Annual Meeting](#)**

Houston, TX. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

December 11: **[Webinar- Easy Predictors: Quickly Explore Your Data to Find Trends, Relationships, and Predictors](#)**

9:00-10:00 am, IN. Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education.

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National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Making Learning Outcomes Usable & Transparent

NILOA December 2015
Newsletter

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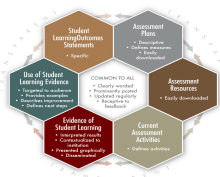
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December 2015 Newsletter

Please take a moment and read our [2015 Year-End Note](#) offering a brief overview of NILOA activities the past 12 months.

This month's newsletter features information on NILOA's Transparency Framework, a featured website from Dixie State University, information on Capstones as we continue to highlight various DQP Resources, a reminder to schedule a visit from one of our DQP/Tuning Coaches, and our customary news items and list of upcoming conferences and programs.

NILOA's Transparency Framework



The Transparency Framework

If you have not done so recently, have another look at the NILOA Transparency Framework page where you can find detailed information about the framework's six **components**. You can also see updated examples of institutions that are working with the Transparency Framework and how it has informed their work on projects at each college and university. If your institution is currently working with the Transparency Framework, please let us know. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



Dixie State University

Visitors to Dixie State University's Office of Academic Assessment webpages can appreciate the details of the university's assessment mission statement. In the spirit of providing the campus community evidence to promote "skills and resources to assess student learning," visitors can read about the university's assessment cycle and process. This information includes access to the university assessment forms that address program learning outcomes, curricula mapping, and annual assessment report. In addition, there are also links to resources that address how to develop program learning outcomes, create and use rubrics, and the difference between direct and indirect evidence of student learning. [Read more...](#)

DQP Updates



DQP Resources

Capstones, which may include cumulative courses, papers, projects, or student teaching, are an effective way for students to showcase what they have learned. Resources and information on Capstones can be found [here](#).

DQP/Tuning Coaches

NILOA DQP/Tuning Coaches are eager to help colleges and universities with their improvement efforts. Our Coaches are experienced faculty,

administrators and staff who know first-hand about the utility and value of the DQP and Tuning, and can assist with local-level implementation opportunities and challenges. Coaches are available for a one-day campus visit at no cost to the host institution. For more information and to find out how to request a coaching visit, click [here](#).

News

We collect news items from a variety of sources related to learning outcomes assessment for our website. Listed below are some from the past month:

[Request for Proposals: The Right Signals Initiative](#)

Supported by a grant from Lumina Foundation, the Right Signals Initiative aims to develop a new credentialing model that accurately communicates to employers, students, and colleges the meaning of credentials. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) will work over an 18 month period with approximately 20 community colleges that have experience with expanding and integrating credentialing at their institution. The initiative will focus on clarifying the meaning and role of such credentials as degrees, certificates, industry certifications, apprenticeships and badges. Proposals are due by January 29, 2016.

[How They Change: Students Tell Us How History Transforms Them](#)

Mary Jo Festle, Professor of History at Elon University, shared her experience with having her students respond to open-ended prompts regarding their development within their history program. She discusses the type of learning students experienced and how such information worked as evidence regarding the educational impact of the history program.

[Measuring Competency](#)

Southern New Hampshire University's College of America released a report about the learning outcomes of students in its competency-based education (CBE) program. This information is of interest as these data are from one of the first competency-based education programs approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

[Op-ed: Success Stories Show How Salt Lake Community College Makes A Difference](#)

Deneece Huftalin, president of Salt Lake Community College, shared stories about students who have positively been affected by the community college experience.

[When A Degree is Just the Beginning](#)

More higher education institutions and education providers are using alternative forms of credentialing compared to traditional college degrees in demonstrating student learning, such as using digital portfolios and badges.

[These Videos Could Change How You Think About Teaching](#)

Michael Wesch, an associate professor of cultural anthropology at Kansas State University, developed a series of videos about how to teach students in creative and engaging ways by connecting with students at a level that stimulates their interest.

[Faculty Members See Promise in Unified Way to Measure Student Learning](#)

The release of the Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment study has promoted renewed discussions about tracking student learning other than using standardized tests.

[Step Outside the Major Please](#)

Amidst discussions about preparing college graduates for employment, one solution may be to rethink career pathways by appreciating the importance of learning across disciplines. More needs to be discovered and reported about the importance of learning across disciplines in preparing students for employment.

[Are They Learning?](#)

The Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment is aimed at determining if professors can accurately and reliably measure general education outcomes using rubrics. One of the major findings of the study is that the students from four-year institutions scored low on the critical thinking skill rubric.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

Here are conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment coming up in the next month:

January 7-10: [2015 American Historical Association Annual Meeting](#)
Atlanta, GA. American Historical Association.

January 8: [Call for Proposals: 2016 Stevenson University's 8th Annual Assessment Expo](#)
Owings Mills, MD. Stevenson University.

January 15: [Call for Proposals: 2016 AALHE Assessment Conference](#)
Milwaukee, WI. Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education.

January 15: [Call for Proposals: 2016 Regional Community College Assessment Conference](#)
Overland Park, KS. Johnson County Community College.

January 20-23: [AAC&U 2016 Annual Meeting](#)
Washington, DC. Association of American Colleges and Universities.

****January 21, 2:45 - 4:00 pm, Pat Hutchings, Natasha Jankowski, Brad Mello, and Laura Gambino present *Assignment Design as a Hot Spot for Faculty and Institutional Collaboration: Lessons from NILOA's work with the DQP and Tuning***

****January 21, 2:45 - 4:00 pm, Teri Hinds and Natasha Jankowski will discuss *Recognizing Excellence in Campus Assessment: The VSA EIA Designation Program***

****January 22, 10:30 - 11:45 am, Paul Gaston, Peter Ewell, Holiday Hart McKiernan, and Debra Humphreys will present *Inclusive Excellence: It's All About Outcomes***

****January 22, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, George Kuh, Natasha Jankowski, Jillian Kinzie, and Daniel McInerney will present *Using the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) to Enhance and Insure Educational Quality***

****January 22, 2:45 - 4:00 pm, Paul Lingenfelter, Anthony Bryk, Mildred Garcia, and George Kuh will present *Building Public Confidence and Support through Better Use of Better Data***

January 29: [Request for Proposals: The Right Signals Initiative](#)
Lumina Foundation and the American Association of Community Colleges.

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