

December 2012

Happy Holidays!

Please take a moment and read our [2012 Year-End Note](#).

Looking ahead to January, 2013, you want to be sure to read a new Occasional Paper by Peter Ewell (NCHEMS) with an afterword by Carol Schneider (AAC&U) entitled: *The Lumina Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP): Implications for Assessment*.

Viewpoints

Why Student Learning Outcomes Assessment is Key to the Future of MOOCs

Wallace Boston, Ed.D.

American Public University System

Jennifer Stephens Helm, Ph.D.

American Public University System

MOOCs are disrupting our educational frameworks, pushing our conventional boundaries, and challenging our traditional ways of thinking about teaching and learning - or so it would seem in much recent conversation about Massively Open Online Courses. As the potential "ultimate provider of educational access to all," well-constructed MOOCs can expose students to a diverse assembly of knowledge and artifacts in a rich, engaging learning environment. Enabling twenty-first century learners to exercise more control over their own learning, in their own space, at a time they specify, is a very attractive proposition. MOOCs affirm the notion of students as lifelong learners, and in important ways they shift the focus away from teachers and processes toward learners and outcomes. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



El Camino College

El Camino College developed a provocative, witty parody about the importance of student learning outcomes and associated faculty hesitations. This video features two faculty members at the water cooler talking about assessing student learning. The video highlights the work faculty members do routinely in their daily practice to document what students know and can do. [Read more...](#)

DQP Updates

DQP Resources

Signature Assignments

Related articles on signature assignments, or the tasks, problems, cases, or projects that are tailored to specific disciplines, majors, or courses are presented [here](#).

DQP Community Forum

The DQP Community Forum is a message board designed to facilitate discussion of the DQP, to share ideas, offer feedback, and help troubleshoot challenges. We hope that the Forum serves as a place for thoughtful conversations regarding successes/challenges in using the DQP. The DQP Community Forum can be accessed [here](#).

DQP in Action

AAC&U

AAC&U initiated the Quality Collaboratives project to illustrate the practices, strategies, and forums through which the intended DQP competencies can be achieved, assessed and reported, both to focus on and demonstrate the attainment of competency across the DQP areas and levels of learning, and to facilitate the transition of students from one educational level to the next and from one institutional context to another. Additional information on the Quality Collaboratives project may be found [here](#).

Call for Submissions

NILOA is accepting submissions of examples of assessment practices related to the DQP. Email Natasha Jankowski at njankow2@illinois.edu.

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:

Assessing Campus MOOCs

Rigorous assessment of student learning in MOOCs may alleviate concerns about educational quality and answer questions about reducing the per-student cost of teaching them.

Grades and Tests May Miss Measuring What Matters Most in Learning

Additional measures of student learning beyond grades are needed in order to document deep learning.

Research & Practice in Assessment

The Winter 2012 issue of Research & Practice in Assessment is now available for download and provides several articles of interest to assessment practitioners and scholars.

Peer Review

Peer Review (Volume 14, Number 3) focuses on how faculty are using high-impact educational practices in individual classrooms across an array of disciplines.

It's Time to Rethink Study Abroad

Author argues that institutions must rethink ways to achieve the desired outcomes of studying abroad for students who do not travel abroad.

Another Push on Prior Learning

Member institutions of the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) are increasingly engaging with assigning students credit for prior learning.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

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

January 4-7: **2013 Presidents Institute**
The Council of Independent Colleges, Innisbrook, FL

January 23-26: **The Annual Meeting of the Association of American Colleges and Universities**
AAC&U, Atlanta, GA

February 7-9: **2013 Academic Affairs Winter Meeting**
American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), Point Clear, AL

February 17-19: **13th Annual Texas A&M Assessment Conference**
NILOA's Stan Ikenberry will serve as a keynote speaker
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

November 2012

NILOA Assessment Institute Presentations

The presentations that were part of the invited NILOA track of sessions at the annual Assessment Institute in Indianapolis were well attended. These **presentations** are now posted on our website. We hope that the ideas and insights shared at the Institute are useful in your own assessment work.

Additional handouts and presentations from the Assessment Institute can be found **here**.

NILOA at AAC&U Annual Meeting

Join us at the **2013 AAC&U Annual Meeting** for our two sessions. Panelists George Kuh, Natasha Jankowski, Peter Ewell, Paul Gaston, and Pat Hutchings will discuss "The Degree Qualifications Profile: What Users Say and What Others Want to Know." And panelists Peter Ewell, Stanley Ikenberry, Sylvia Manning and Barbara Brittingham will discuss "Regional Accreditation and Evidence of Student Learning: What Comes Next?"

Viewpoints

Measuring Success in Internationalization: What are Students Learning?

Madeleine F. Green, PhD

Senior Fellow, NAFSA: The Association of International Educators and Senior Program Consultant, The Teagle Foundation

Over the past 30 years, various blue-ribbon commissions, association reports and studies have highlighted U.S. students' woeful lack of foreign language competency and literacy about world geography, politics, and history. The events of September 11, 2001, gave new urgency to the message, providing a wake-up call about the importance of educating Americans about the rest of the world and our inextricably entwined fates. This is not to say that U.S. higher education has been totally inactive with respect to internationalization. Many institutions have had long-standing international partnerships and study abroad programs, and have hosted impressive numbers of international studies over time. Yet, rarely are institutional

internationalization efforts strategic or coherent, or considered to be central to their academic mission or definition of quality. [Read more...](#)

Demonstrating How Career Services Contribute to Student Learning

Julia Panke Makela, PhD

Research Specialist, Office of Community College Research and Leadership, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Gail S. Rooney, PhD

Director of the Career Center, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Career services are too often thought of as separate from the core learning activities in which students engage in classrooms, laboratories and studios. But dividing what students gain from college into academic learning (what happens in the classroom) and personal development (what happens outside of the classroom) is a byproduct of historical, physical structures in higher education institutions. Thinking about student accomplishment as bifurcated in this way does not serve either students or institutions well, as students grow, develop, and learn in a holistic fashion. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



Northern Virginia Community College

Northern Virginia Community College's (NOVA) Office of Academic Assessment offers faculty, students, and visitors a plethora of resources on assessment. With a focus of "implementing outcome-based evaluation processes for all instructional programs, administrative units, and campuses," NOVA exhibits a dedication to linking assessment with learning to produce a culture of evidence. [Read more...](#)

DQP Resources

Rubrics

Rubrics help colleges/universities and instructors understand student achievement of college-wide learning outcomes or course objectives. Frequently used when grading student assignments, or reviewing samples of student work, rubrics are often uniquely created for each course or tailored for specific outcomes. The benefits of using rubrics in courses can be observed by both the instructor and student. Access resources on rubrics [here](#).

DQP in Action

Oregon

The DQP Project in Oregon is a joint effort of all seven Oregon University System

(OUS) institutions and the state's seventeen independent community colleges to develop the Degree Qualifications Profile for Oregon. The DQP Project in Oregon will provide a descriptive curricular framework for describing institutions' degree outcomes across the state, both in their unique characters and in their shared aspects. Additional information on the DQP Project in Oregon may 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:

[New Momentum for Old Idea](#)

Prior-learning assessment is gaining momentum as more states and public colleges, with help from foundations, examine ways to grant credit for a variety of experiences.

[Teaching Metacognition to Improve Student Learning](#)

Drawing students attention to the learning process can deepen the learning experience.

[The Narrowing of the American Mind](#)

Wage studies that analyze which majors correlate with higher earnings ignore other parts of the job-success equation.

[Consider Student Backgrounds When Comparing Institutional Outcomes](#)

[Inside Higher Ed](#) and [The Chronicle](#) reference a recent report suggesting that comparing institutional outcomes requires consideration of a variety of student background information.

[Study: Little Difference in Learning in Online and In-Class Science Courses](#)

A recent study suggests there is little difference in the learning of students in online or in-person introductory science courses.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

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

December 5-7: [2012 MSCHE Annual Meeting](#)

Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Philadelphia, PA

December 8-11: [Annual SACS Meeting](#)

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Dallas, TX

January 4-7: [2013 Presidents Institute](#)

The Council of Independent Colleges, Innisbrook, FL

January 23-26: [The Annual Meeting of the Association of American Colleges and Universities](#)

AAC&U, Atlanta,

October 2012

The Assessment Institute in Indianapolis is the nation's oldest and largest event focused exclusively on outcomes assessment in higher education. The program provides opportunities for:

- **individuals and campus teams new to outcomes assessment to acquire foundational knowledge about the field**
- **those interested in outcomes assessment at any level to establish networks that serve as sources for support and expertise beyond the dates of the Institute.**

NILOA staff will present some of their recent work including examples of promising assessment practices as part of a NILOA track.

Pre-Institute Workshops: October 28, 2012
 Institute Dates: October 29-October 30, 2012
 Indianapolis Marriott Downtown
 350 West Maryland Street
 Indianapolis, Indiana

Find more information about the Assessment Institute [here](#).

Viewpoints

NILOA's 15th Occasional Paper by Roger Benjamin about the role of standardized testing in assessment prompted two additional discussion threads. First, Roger Benjamin responds to the commentaries on his paper. Then, Richard Hersh and Richard Keeling underscore the need to focus on institutional culture in order to further the assessment agenda.

Comments on the Commentaries about "Seven Red Herrings"

Roger Benjamin

President, Council for Aid to Education (CAE)

I am pleased to accept the invitation to briefly respond to some of the points made by those who commented on my "[Seven Red Herrings](#)" paper which appeared in the September 2012 issue of the NILOA monthly newsletter. In his Foreword, Peter Ewell predicted that the merits and role of standardized testing will almost certainly continue to be debated. With this in mind, I also offer a few thoughts about what to expect in the future. [Read more...](#)

The Culture Change Imperative for Learning Assessment

Richard H. Hersh and Richard P. Keeling

In this viewpoint, Hersh (former President of Trinity College (CT) and Hobart and William Smith Colleges) and Keeling (formerly a senior administrator at the University of Wisconsin and University of Virginia and principal of Keeling & Associates, LLC), respond to some of the arguments presented in NILOA's 15th Occasional Paper, "[The Seven Red Herrings About Standardized Assessments in Higher Education](#)." The points made in that paper about standardized tests of student learning are provocative

and clarifying, but also familiar. Ultimately, how best to assess learning for the purposes of furthering learning and accountability is a question for empirical inquiry that can draw on powerful resources in higher education expertise. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



Rio Salado College

Rio Salado College was recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) for "building an accessible, comprehensive and systemic process for assessment, accreditation and accountability." Rio Salado College is highlighted for effectively communicating its well-crafted Assessment Plans, explaining its assessment work to faculty and others who visit its website, and interpreting evidence of student learning in alignment with its mission. [Read more...](#)

DQP Updates

NILOA Webinar

NILOA conducted its first webinar in a series on assessment and the Degree Qualifications Profile on October 5th, 2012. Listen to it [here](#).

American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) DQP Project

Funded by the Lumina Foundation, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) is testing the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) in ways that align with the priorities and current circumstances faced by three university systems. The participating institutions and systems are: (1) Georgia Perimeter College and Georgia State University of the University System of Georgia; (2) SUNY College at Purchase and Empire State of the State University of New York; and (3) Prairie View, West Texas and Texas A&M San Antonio of the Texas A&M System. AASCU is especially interested in how institutions create metrics and assess outcomes to verify student attainment.

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:

[10 Practices to Deepen Student Learning Outcomes Assessment](#)

Listen to a previously recorded Live Text-sponsored webinar by Mr. Ralph Wolff, President of WASC.

[The Association of College and Research Libraries \(ACRL\) Awarded Second IMLS Grant to Build Profession's Capacity to Demonstrate Value](#)

Librarians who participate in the program, supported by a blended learning environment and peer-to-peer network, will lead their campus teams to develop and implement an action learning project that examines the impact of the library on student success and its contributions to assessment activities on their campus. The projects are intended to produce a variety of collaborative approaches to assessing the library's impact on student learning which will be documented and disseminated for use by academic library and higher education communities.

The Association of College and Research Libraries is currently seeking applications by November 8, 2012 to fill four assessment related positions (one peer-to-peer instructional design expert and three curriculum designers/facilitators).

Assuring Quality

The New Leadership Alliance announces the release of *Assuring Quality*, a tool designed to be part of an institution's formative evaluation process with a focus on continuous improvement.

New Issue of Assessment Update Now Available

The latest issue of *Assessment Update: Progress, Trends and Practice in Higher Education* (September/October 2012) is now available. Articles in this issue include Trudy Banta's "Editors Notes," Nagy Bengiamin and Christina Leimer's "SLO-Based Grading Makes Assessment an Integral Part of Teaching", Shannon Sexton's "Assessment Plans: A Tool for Sanity," and Uche Ohia and Youssouf Diallo's "Lessons from Multiple Institutional Assessment Measures of Specific Student learning Outcomes and Satisfaction." In addition, columns on "Assessment Measures" by Gary Pike and "Community College Strategies" by Dianna Renz are included.

AASCU and APLU Launch Project Degree Completion

The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities have announced their commitment to increase the number of baccalaureate degrees by 2025.

A New Faculty Path

Research indicates that non-tenure track faculty tend to use high-impact practice less often, resulting in adverse effects on student learning.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

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

October 16-17: **Early Workshop on New Criteria and Pathways - First Look at Expectations for Assessment of Student Learning, General Education, and Student Success in the New Accrediting Model**

Higher Learning Commission in St. Charles, IL

October 17-19: **Assessment Workshop: Making a Difference in Student Learning - Assessment as a Core Strategy**

Higher Learning Commission in St. Charles, IL

October 28-30: **Assessment Institute**

IUPUI at Indianapolis Marriott Downtown in Indianapolis, IN

*NILOA will have a track at the Assessment Institute showcasing our work.

November 2: **NEEAN Fall Forum**

The College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA

November 8-10: **Next Generation STEM Learning: Investigate, Innovate, Inspire**

AAC&U's Network for Academic Renewal Conference in Kansas City, MO

November 14-16: **Virginia Assessment Group 2012 Annual Conference**

Crowne Plaza Richmond, VA

September 2012

NILOA Webinar

NILOA is pleased to announce the first webinar in a series on assessment within the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP). Please mark your calendars to join us on October

5th at 1:00 EST as we provide a brief overview of assessment resources and institutional activity as it relates to the DQP. Check the NILOA website for more details!

DQP Updates

NILOA's monthly newsletter now includes a DQP Update section where you can find information on the DQP In Practice and institutions working with the DQP.

NILOA Occasional Paper

A new Occasional Paper, NILOA's fifteenth, is now available:



[The Seven Red Herrings About Standardized Assessments in Higher Education](#)

Roger Benjamin, Peter Ewell, Margaret A. Miller, Terrel L. Rhodes, Trudy W. Banta, Gary R. Pike, and Gordon Davies

Roger Benjamin, president of Council for Aid to Education, outlines seven red herrings associated with administering and utilizing standardized tests of student learning. Including a foreword by Peter Ewell, the occasional paper provides four commentaries by national thought leaders in the field of student learning outcomes assessment about his arguments.

Viewpoint

Ethics and Assessment: When the Test is Life Itself

Edward L. Queen, Ph.D., J.D.

Director of the D. Abbott Turner Program in Ethics and Servant Leadership and Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies at Emory University's Center for Ethics

As the national tragedy that was Watergate unfolded, it became known that John Dean, one of the men at the center of the scandal, had taken, while at Yale, an ethics course from William Sloane Coffin. As one might imagine the fact that one of President Richard Nixon's scandal-ridden inner circle had been an ethics student of one the president's most outspoken critics provided a field day for the press. When, as the story goes, a reporter asked the Reverend Coffin how John Dean had done in his class, Coffin responded, "Evidently, he failed." [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



Zayed University

Zayed University's Learning outcomes (ZULOs) is a one-stop shop for a variety of assessment resources. As an institution, six student learning outcomes are utilized by every department including: (1) Critical Thinking and Quantitative Reasoning; (2) Global Awareness; (3) Information Literacy; (4) Language; (5) Leadership; and (6) Technological Literacy. [Read more...](#)

DQP Updates

Council of Independent Colleges DQP Consortium

The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) has long been a national leader in voluntary efforts to improve the quality of student learning and a strong advocate of institutional autonomy in accountability efforts. The CIC/DQP Consortium is a two-year project, generously funded by the Lumina Foundation, that allows a select group of 25 independent colleges and universities to examine the usefulness of the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) in improving student learning and increasing the successful completion of baccalaureate degrees at independent colleges and universities. Additional information regarding CIC's involvement with the DQP may be found [here](#).

DQP in Practice



Brandman University

Brandman University serves adult learners at 26 campuses in California and Washington, offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs through blended and fully online delivery formats. In 2011, the University adopted five competencies for all baccalaureate students based on the DQP and with consideration of AAC&U's LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes: Applied Learning, Innovation and Creativity, Civic Engagement, Global Cultures, and Integrated Learning. [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:

A New Report, Cracking the Credit Hour

The Chronicle and Inside Higher Ed highlight a new report, which argues that the credit hour is an inadequate measure of student learning.

Pay for Performance

The City Colleges of Chicago American Federation of Teachers chapter voted to accept a contract which bases bonuses on eight metrics on student outcomes.

What Works for Student Learning? Insights from the Teagle Foundations National Convening

Describes discussions from The Teagle Foundation's, "What Works and What Matters in Student Learning" convening. Other reports can be found on The Teagle Foundation's website which include the topics: Presidential and Board Leadership in Student Learning, Teaching and Learning Centers, and Research Universities and Student Learning.

Creditworthy in Keystone State

In responding to a need to serve more adult learners, the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education is expanding their prior learning assessment through a partnership with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning.

Delicious Ambiguity

Mark Salisbury has a new blog entitled, "Delicious Ambiguity" which will explore topics in institutional research and assessment.

Teaching to Fail

This article examines how student failure can be used as a tool to assess student learning.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

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

Events:

October 1-3: **Using Analytics to Create Real Solutions for Real Problems**

SoLAR Flare Practitioner's Conference in West Lafayette, IN

October 12-13: **Using Grading Strategies to Understand and Improve Student Learning**

The Teaching Professor Workshop in Cambridge, MA

October 15-16: **Assessment Works! Strategically Developing Promising Practices**

Student Affairs Assessment Conference in Atlanta, GA

October 16: **West Texas Assessment Conference**

Texas Tech University in Lubbock, TX

October 16-17: **Early Workshop on New Criteria and Pathways - First Look at Expectations for Assessment of Student Learning, General Education, and Student Success in the New Accrediting Model**

Higher Learning Commission in St. Charles, IL

October 17-19: **Assessment Workshop: Making a Difference in Student Learning - Assessment as a Core Strategy**

Higher Learning Commission in St. Charles, IL

October 28-30: **Assessment Institute**

IUPUI at Indianapolis Marriott Downtown in Indianapolis, IN

***NILOA will have a track at the Assessment Institute featuring some of our work.**

August 2012

We've Redesigned Our Website!

Please take a few minutes to browse through our newly revamped website which we hope will help streamline your search processes for assessment-related information. The home page now has five tabs for resources, including access to an online searchable assessment resource library, links to NILOA's reports and occasional papers, and information about our Transparency Framework. Another new addition is the DQP Corner, which contains information about institutions using Degree Qualifications Profile among other notables (see below). Please click on the tabs at the top of our home page to access our resources. To read an overview of our new website, click [here](#).

Viewpoint

Discussing the Data, Making Meaning of the Results

Anne Goodsell Love, Ph.D., Associate Provost for Assessment, Wagner College

In examining the outcomes of teaching and learning, when is enough data analysis enough? How are the results of these inquiries most effectively disseminated to faculty and staff? What forms of dissemination and communication are most likely to stimulate productive discussions about assessment results so as to influence decision making

and invite additional analysis? Where and how do faculty and staff reflect on the whole cycle of assessment, remembering their goals and making meaning of the results in that context? [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA Website Layout

New to our website is an assessment Resource Library which houses a variety of information including articles, presentations, reports, books, and helpful websites regarding assessment in a central, searchable location. Also new to the site is our [Degree Qualifications Profile \(DQP\) Corner](#). As part of NILOA's work with the Lumina Foundation for Education, we have created an online repository of information on the DQP. The DQP Corner contains information and resources for institutions working with the DQP in order to enhance understanding of the utility of the DQP as a framework for assessing and advancing student learning.

In addition to the new pages on our site, we have moved some information around on several of our original pages. Our [Transparency Framework](#) tab is intended to help institutions evaluate the extent to which they are making evidence of student accomplishment readily accessible and potentially useful and meaningful to various audiences. You can access all resources specific to NILOA under [NILOA Resources](#) which includes our reports, occasional papers, examples of good assessment practice, assessment briefs, viewpoints, and newsletters, among other information.

As always, we love feedback. Contact us for any comments or suggestions regarding our website or any aspect of NILOA's work.

NILOA's Featured Website



James Madison University's [Center for Assessment and Research Studies](#) (CARS) is a one stop shop for its assessment resources. The Center provides a variety of services including quality assessment service to the university, applied graduate training in both assessment and measurement, increased use of innovative technology in assessment practice, and quality scholarship in assessment and measurement. For its various engaging communication methods, creativity regarding how assessment is conducted on campus, and centrally located assessment, JMU's CARS is August's Featured Website. [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:

At Medical Schools' Simulation Centers, New Doctors Can Learn Without Fear
Assessment of applied learning in medical schools is the focus of this article.

Web Site Brings Student Portfolios and Companies Together

A brief overview of a new service by Seelio which provides employers a place to view online portfolios of potential graduates.

With Student Learning at Stake, Group Calls for Better Working Conditions for Adjuncts

The effect of the currently large use of contingent faculty, or adjuncts, on student learning is a focus of a report titled "[Report on the Project Working Meeting](#)" by the Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success.

Small Step for Quality Control

In an effort to increase transparency, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) recently announced that they would make its accreditation reports public.

ACT Official Describes Next Generation Tests

ACT's newest assessment system "will assess skills and knowledge associated with success in college and careers, starting with basic reading and mathematical ability, and then progressing to higher-level skills, track students academic progress and professional goals, and include measurements of 'academic behavioral skills,' such as teamwork and motivation."

Liberal Arts Work! A Model for Applied Learning at Eastern Connecticut State University

Eastern Connecticut State University is featured for its work with applied learning in its Liberal Arts program.

Two Tenure-Track Faculty Positions in Assessment and Measurement Open at James Madison University

The Center for Assessment and Research Studies and Department of Graduate Psychology at James Madison University invites applications for two tenure-track faculty positions in Assessment and Measurement. Requirements for the positions include a doctorate in a relevant field, credentials, and a scholarship record commensurate with rank, and effective organizational and communication skills. For more information about this position and how to apply, please click [here](#).

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

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

Proposals Due:

September 10: [Preparing Future Faculty to Assess Student Learning](#)
Council of Graduate Schools

Events:

October 12-13: [Using Grading Strategies to Understand and Improve Student Learning](#)
The Teaching Professor Workshop in Cambridge, MA

October 16-17: [Early Workshop on New Criteria and Pathways - First Look at Expectations for Assessment of Student Learning, General Education, and Student Success in the New Accrediting Mode!](#)
Higher Learning Commission in St. Charles, IL

October 17-19: [Assessment Workshop: Making a Difference in Student Learning - Assessment as a Core Strategy](#)
Higher Learning Commission in St. Charles, IL

October 28-30: [Assessment Institute](#)
IUPUI at Indianapolis Marriott Downtown in Indianapolis, IN
***NILOA will have a track at the Assessment Institute showcasing our work.**

July 2012

What Examples of Good Assessment Practice Have in Common

New this month is our report titled, "*Using Assessment Results: Promising Practices of Institutions That Do It Well.*" The report highlights promising practices for using evidence of student learning for improvement. Included in the report are reflective questions for institutions that can help guide the development of good assessment practices to support improvements to student learning.

Viewpoint

Faculty Concerns About Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

Janet Fontenot, Dean, Business Division, Southwestern Illinois College

Through the years, assessment literature has been filled with information describing the importance of faculty involvement in an institution's assessment efforts. In fact, to some it is considered to be a kind of gold standard (Hutchings, 2010). Faculty, however, are not always willing participants and when faculty are not fully engaged in the process, it is difficult for an institution to have an assessment program that is both meaningful and useful for improving student learning. To involve faculty in assessment processes it is in our best interest to identify potential reasons why engagement might not be occurring. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

New NILOA Report Available



Using Assessment Results: Promising Practices of Institutions That Do It Well

By: Gianina R. Baker, Natasha A. Jankowski, Staci Provezis, Jillian Kinzie

Most institutions are collecting evidence of student learning, but it is not clear how these results are being used to improve student outcomes. To learn more about what colleges and universities are doing to use assessment data effectively to inform and strengthen undergraduate education, NILOA conducted nine case studies. This report synthesizes the insights from these individual studies to discern promising practices in using information about student learning. The report concludes with lessons learned and reflective questions to help institutions advance their own assessment efforts within their specific institutional contexts.

To read the NILOA report, click [here](#).

NILOA's Featured Website



Marquette University's Assessment Office provides a wealth of assessment information accessible to both internal and external audiences. Learning outcomes, assessment plans, assessment highlights, and assessment reports for every major covering 2008, 2009 and 2010-11 are available for each academic and co-curricular unit. Additionally, its Division of Student Affairs offers an Assessment page which lists its student learning outcomes, assessment reports, and assessment resources. For its communication regarding assessment activities, creativity within both its academic and co-curricular units, and centralization of its assessment resources, Marquette University is the July's Featured Website. [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:

New AAC&U Publication: Making Progress? What We Know about the Achievement of Liberal Education Outcomes

According to the website, this report "presents comparative data on achievement over time across an array of liberal education outcomes such as critical thinking, writing, civic engagement, global competence, and social responsibility...[and] highlights new approaches to advancing meaningful assessment with effective pathways for learning and student success."

University of Wisconsin and Competency-Based Education

Coverage of the University of Wisconsin's "flexible degree" online program allowing students to test out of units supported through its use of a competency-based model is provided in [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#). In addition, [Inside Higher Ed](#) provides an overview of the University of Wisconsin system's decision to offer this flexible degree program without the assistance of Western Governors University, a leader in competency-based education.

Summer 2012 - Research & Practice in Assessment

The newest issue of Research & Practice in Assessment has now been released. Some of the articles include: "For Tests that are Predictively Powerful and Without Social Prejudice" by Joseph A. Soares; "Growing Up with No Child Left Behind: An Initial Assessment of the Understanding of College Students' Knowledge of Accountability Testing" by Anna Zilberberg, Robin D. Anderson, Peter J. Swerdzewski, Sara J. Finney; and a Note In Brief "Finding the Right Fit: Choosing an Assessment Conference" by Carrie L. Zelna and Stephany B. Dunstan.

Where Competency-Based Degree Programs Work

Competency-based degree programs and student assessments are of focus in the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning's latest report, [Competency-Based Degree Programs in the U.S.: Postsecondary Credentials for Measurable Student Learning and Performance](#).

CIC's Report on the Learning Outcomes of Underrepresented Students at Urban Institutions Now Available

The Council of Independent Colleges' (CIC) latest report, *An Analysis of Learning Outcomes of Underrepresented Students at Urban Institutions*, has just been released. Findings of learning outcomes, as measured by the Collegiate Learning Assessment, of students at 19 urban and non-urban CIC institutions are examined.

New Issue of Assessment Update Now Available

The latest issue of *Assessment Update: Progress, Trends and Practice in Higher Education* for May/June 2012 is now available. Articles in this issue include Trudy

Banta's "Collective Assessment and DQP Follow-Up," Gregory Burton's "A 'Wisdom of Crowds' Approach to Outcomes Assessment," and Marilee Bresciani's "Adding Humor to the Position Descriptions of Assessment Coordinators." In addition, articles involving assessment within community colleges, internship programs, and data management systems are included.

New Publication from NAFSA: Measuring and Assessing Internationalization

A new publication from NAFSA: Association of International Educators titled "*Measuring and Assessing Internationalization*" by Madeleine F. Green which examines the performance of institutions and student learning outcomes through two different frameworks is now available.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

A number of conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment may be found on our online calendar. Those coming up in the next month are listed below:

Events:

August 7-10: **Institute for the Development of Excellence in Assessment Leadership (IDEAL)**
ABET

June 2012

Examples of Good Assessment Practice

This month we are releasing two more *Examples of Good Assessment Practice* - Carnegie Mellon University and LaGuardia Community College. With these, we've conducted nine short case studies that highlight promising practices in using student learning outcomes results for improvement and decision-making. We hope that you find these useful in your assessment practice. Next month, we will release a report that looks at similarities and differences across the nine institutions.

Viewpoint

What to Consider When Selecting an Assessment Management System

R. Stephen RiCharde, Associate Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness, Academic Planning and Review, University of South Florida

A few years ago, the primary reason for using a data management system arose from the need to manage large amounts of dynamic data more efficiently. But in the past few years, there's been a tectonic shift in public policy that catapulted organizing assessment and institutional effectiveness data to mission-critical status. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

Newest Examples of Good Assessment Practice Available

This month we encourage you to read about **Carnegie Mellon University** who was selected because of its institutional commitment to interdisciplinarity, innovative teaching and learning, and advances in program-level student learning outcomes assessment. This case study describes CMU's approach to addressing the challenges of assessment, explores the salient elements of CMU's culture for assessment and improvement, and then focuses on the positioning and role of the Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence in student learning outcomes assessment at CMU.

In addition, **LaGuardia Community College** was selected for inclusion as a case study for its use of general education and ePortfolio as the foundation for its assessment practices. This report features LaGuardia's commitment to assessment, the collaboration across units at the college, and the institution's robust program review system including assessment.

NILOA's Featured Website



American University's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment Learning Outcomes and Assessment

website is designed for both internal and external audiences. Assessment plans are publicly available and include information on indirect/direct measures, group/individual targets, learning outcomes addressed by the assessment, and tentative assessment cycle. Best practices from program/major assessment plans are showcased. For its abundance of information on ongoing assessment activities and mapping best practices within the institution related to assessment, American University's OIRA is June's Featured Website. **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:

'Supersizing' the College Classroom: How One Instructor Teaches 2,670 Students

Virginia Tech Geography Professor John Boyer describes how he uses assessment to demonstrate learning in his large classes.

Teagle Foundation's What Works and What Matters in Student Learning Conference

Highlights of Teagle Foundation's recent conference, "What Works and What Matters in Student Learning?," are provided in both **The Chronicle of Higher Education** and **Inside Higher Ed**.

New Book on Learning Outcomes Assessment in Career Services

This newest monograph, "***Learning Outcomes Assessment Step-by-Step: Enhancing Evidence-Based Practice in Career Services***," by Julia Panke Makela and Gail S. Rooney, examine learning outcomes assessments in career services offices. Examples of practical strategies are offered.

Report from ACE Task Force to Revamp Regional Accreditation Now Available

The latest report of the National Task Force on Institutional Accreditation, "**Assuring Academic Quality in the 21st Century: Self-Regulation in a New Era**," outlines its six recommendations to universities and regional accreditors in order to improve quality and transparency in higher education. Articles in **The Chronicle of Higher Education** and **Inside Higher Ed** provide highlights of the report in addition to quotes from a few of the task force members.

Focusing on the Total Quality Experience

This article discusses the results of the U21 Ranking of National Higher Education System, a benchmarking tool used to assess the quality, impact, and benefit of higher education systems in forty-eight countries in four categories: resources, output, connectivity, and environment.

National Research Council Report on Institutional Quality Released

A report recently released by the National Research Council titled, "**Improving Measurement of Productivity in Higher Education**," discusses various ways to measure institutional quality and college productivity. Articles in both **The Chronicle of Higher Education** and **Inside Higher Ed** provide coverage.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

A number of conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment may be found on our online calendar. Those coming up in the next month are listed below:

Proposals Due:

June 27: **General Education and Assessment: A Sea Change in Student Learning**
AAC&U's Network for Academic Renewal Conference

Events:

June 13-15: **ACPA Student Affairs Assessment Institute**
American College Personnel Association (ACPA) at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA

June 18: **Western New York Assessment Consortium for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management**
Western New York Assessment Consortium for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management at Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, NY

June 19-20: **Early Workshop on New Criteria and Pathways - First Look at Expectations for Assessment of Student Learning, General Education, and Student Success in the New Accrediting Model**
Higher Learning Commission at Q Center in St. Charles, IL

June 19-23: **Institute on High-Impact Practices and Student Success**
Association of American Colleges & Universities at Portland State University

June 20-22: **Assessment Workshop: Making a Difference in Student Learning: Assessment as a Core Strategy**
Higher Learning Commission at Q Center in St. Charles, IL

June 27-30: **2012 Assessment Residency: Measuring Student Learning**
Biology Scholars Program, ASM at Washington, DC

July 11-15: **Institute on Integrative Learning and the Departments**
Association of American Colleges and Universities at the University of Vermont

May 2012

Degree Qualifications Profile

Lumina Foundation for Education has asked NILOA to examine the various ways colleges and universities are using the [Degree Qualifications Profile \(DQP\)](#). The goal of this work is to better understand the utility of the DQP as a framework for assessing and advancing student learning. NILOA's work is intended to inform future refinements and use of the DQP and related efforts to enhance student learning and institutional effectiveness. Stay tuned for the creation of a DQP corner of our website with a message board for those interested in learning more about and working with the DQP. If your institution is working with the DQP but not currently associated with one of the Lumina-funded DQP projects, we would love to hear about it. Please e-mail Natasha Jankowski, NILOA Project Manager, at njankow2@illinois.edu.

Viewpoint

AAHE Principles of Good Practice: Aging Nicely

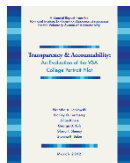
A Letter from Pat Hutchings, Peter Ewell, and Trudy Banta

Twenty years ago, in 1992, the American Association for Higher Education's Assessment Forum released its "Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning," a document developed by twelve prominent scholar-practitioner of the movement. The principles have been widely used, studied, and written about (see for instance Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 1995), and adapted in other documents and statements. Their inclusion on the NILOA website is a welcome addition, for, like good wine, the AAHE Principles have aged quite nicely. [Read more...](#)

NILOA welcomes any feedback or reflections you may have on the AAHE Principles. Take a moment to share your thoughts by filling out this [form](#).

NILOA Updates

Newest NILOA Report Released



Transparency & Accountability: An Evaluation of the VSA College Portrait Pilot

NILOA was invited to evaluate the utility of the student learning outcomes pilot project within the College Portrait of the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA). The findings are presented in this report: *Transparency & Accountability: An Evaluation of the VSA College Portrait Pilot*, and were used by the VSA to develop a framework for

expanding student learning outcomes reporting options for participating institutions. A technical work group of assessment, institutional research, and measurement professionals discussed alternative measures, and the group's recommendations will be considered for adoption by the VSA Oversight Board during their May 18 meeting. A summary of the newly approved measurement and reporting options will be available on the VSA website homepage by the end of May.

To read the NILOA report, click [here](#).

NILOA's Featured Website



The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) at Jacksonville State University is committed to providing "accurate, reliable, and systematic departmental and institutional support in research and assessment" through the use of "cutting-edge technology and a collection of high quality, proven tools and resources that support continuous improvement through meaningful planning, analysis, reporting, and informed decision-making." Examples of how departments are using assessment to improve JSU's campus are captured in OIRA's newsletter, "*Momentum*," available each semester. Assessment reports, which include information on a department/program's operational goals, objectives, strategies, methods of assessment/evaluation, and use of results, are all stored in JSU's password-protected PRISM information management system. Communication about various assessment initiatives, creativity in making live data accessible including through a mobile app, and centralization of assessment resources, Jacksonville State University's OIRA is May's Featured Website. [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:

New Publication from AAC&U

A new report titled, "*Linking Diversity and Civic-Minded Practices with Student Outcomes: New Evidence from National Surveys*," by Sylvia Hurtado and Linda DeAngelo discusses how diverse, civic-minded learning environments can contribute to positive student outcomes.

Clemson Seeks to Diminish the Sophomore Slump

Clemson's new requirement of emphasizing critical thinking skills during a student's sophomore year is the focus of this article.

No College Left Behind: A guest post

Robert J. Sternberg writes a brief commentary in The Washington Post on the use of standardized tests for accountability purposes in higher education.

At a Community College in Arizona, Interns Survey the Local Economy

This article discusses the use of internships to enhance student learning and also benefit the local community.

Prior learning assessment catches on, quietly

Read Inside Higher Ed's articles on the future of prior learning assessment. **Part I** provides background on the current efforts of using prior learning assessment primarily for adult learners. **Part II** explores the efforts in awarding credit for prior learning assessment for "college-level learning" by partnerships between corporate businesses (i.e., Walmart, Starbucks) and for-profit higher education institutions.

Did Anyone Ask the Students?

Split into two parts, this article presents conversations held with six students about what they value in a college education as well as what they see as the future of higher education. **Part I** and **Part II** are included here.

Pennsylvania Community Colleges Adopt National Accountability System

Pennsylvania is the first state to adopt AACC's Voluntary Framework of Accountability which will aid in the collection and reporting of student progress and success measures for its 14 community colleges.

Credit Hour (Still) Rules

This article describes Western Governors University's attempt to link student learning to assessments rather than the standard credit hour.

Stop Telling Students to Study for Exams

In this commentary, the author discusses the need for faculty members to emphasize to students to study for the sake of learning rather than for exams. In addition, the use of formative and summative assessment to assess students' learning is discussed.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

A number of conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment may be found on our online calendar. Those coming up in the next month are listed below:

Proposals Due: June 15 - **AGLS Application for the 2012 Exemplary Program Awards**

Applications for the 2012 Association for General and Liberal Studies Exemplary Program Award are now being accepted through June 15, 2012. The application and evaluation rubric can be found [here](#). The 2012 Award will recognize institutions using assessment to improve general and liberal education learning. The application asks institutions to describe their collaborative efforts to gather results, use the results to develop systematic learning improvement projects, and then verify those improvements. Questions about the Award or the application process should be directed to: Michael Gress, mgress@vinu.edu.

Events:

May 22-24: **2012 CIC Department and Division Chair Workshops - Promoting Institutional Effectiveness Through Collaboration**

The Council of Independent Colleges at The Francis Marion Hotel in Charleston, SC

June 2-6: **2012 Annual Forum**

Association for Institutional Research in New Orleans, LA

***Please consider attending NILOA's presentations.**

June 2-6: **2012 Institute on General Education and Assessment**

Association of American Colleges & Universities at The Hotel at Turf Valley in Ellicott City, MD

June 3-5: **AALHE 2nd Annual Conference - The Well-Rounded Assessment Practitioner: Exploring the Skills, Knowledge, and Art of the Assessment Profession in Higher Education**

Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE) at Hotel Albuquerque in Albuquerque, NM

June 5-7: **2012 CIC Department and Division Chair Workshops - Promoting Institutional Effectiveness Through Collaboration**

The Council of Independent Colleges at The Benson Hotel in Portland, OR

June 7-9: **NASPA Assessment & Persistence Conference**

NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education at Hyatt Regency Tampa in Tampa, FL

June 7-8: **NEEAN Academic Assessment Summer Institute**

New England Educational Assessment Network (NEEAN) at Keene State College, NH

June 11-13: **Connecting Student Learning Outcomes to Teaching, Assessment, Curriculum Workshop** (3-day workshop)

Alverno College at Milwaukee, WI

June 11-15: **Connecting Student Learning Outcomes to Teaching, Assessment, Curriculum Workshop** (weeklong workshop)

Alverno College at Milwaukee, WI

June 13-15: **ACPA Student Affairs Assessment Institute**

American College Personnel Association (ACPA) at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA

June 18: **Western New York Assessment Consortium for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management**

Western New York Assessment Consortium for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management at Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, NY

April 2012

Current State of Learning Outcomes Assessment Viewpoint

NILOA hosted a panel discussion on the current state of assessing student learning outcomes at the January 2012 annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Dr. Eduardo M. Ochoa, Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education, was on the panel, but due to illness was unable to participate. In this month's Viewpoint, Dr. Ochoa graciously shares his thoughts in response to questions posed to each of the panelists.

New Resources on NILOA website

We have recently added new resources to our **Curriculum Mapping**, **Portfolio**, and **Rubrics** pages. If you are aware of other resources that might be useful, please email njankow2@illinois.edu.

Viewpoint

The State of Assessment of Learning Outcomes

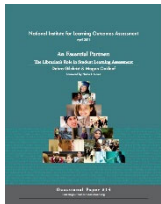
Dr. Eduardo M. Ochoa, Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education

My sense of assessment of learning outcomes in higher education is framed by what I think is its ultimate purpose and ideal end-state. Ideally, we would have a well-articulated, measurable set of desired educational outcomes associated with all our academic programs. Such measures would exhibit some commonalities in terms of capacities associated with different degree levels, as well as unique aspects by discipline and institutional mission. Student progress toward achieving those capacities would be gauged based on how far and how many of the desired outcomes have been attained using well-established metrics, rather than by seat time or actual hours of work. In such an ideal world, we might not even need the credit-hour rule to distribute Federal student aid! [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

Newest Occasional Paper Released

NILOA's fourteenth Occasional Paper is now available:



An Essential Partner: The Librarian's Role in Student Learning Assessment

By Debra Gilchrist and Megan Oakleaf

The authors, two leaders in librarianship and assessment, document ways librarians contribute toward campus efforts of student learning assessment. The paper includes a variety of examples of institutions that have developed student learning assessment processes.

More Examples of Good Assessment Practice Now Available

St. Olaf College and Texas A&M International University

To better understand what “good work” looks like related to assessment, data-informed improvement, and transparency at the institutional level, NILOA offers a web page with ***Examples of Good Assessment Practice*** on our site.

This month we encourage you to read about how St. Olaf College and Texas A&M International University are using assessment data to effect changes in teaching and learning on their campuses.

NILOA's Featured Website



Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) has accumulated a variety of assessment resources on its website. One of the signature initiatives is what is known as [Principles of Undergraduate Learning](#). In addition, IUPUI is active in promoting its work on [ePortfolios](#). For the month of April, IUPUI has been selected as NILOA's Featured Website in the categories of Communication and Creativity. [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:

Testing the Teachers

An opinion piece discussing current measurements of student learning. A response to this article in The Chronicle of Higher Ed can be found [here](#).

Culture Change for Learning

In this essay, the authors list four areas needed in higher education reform in order to strengthen its culture of teaching and learning.

Elite Universities' Online Play

Princeton University, the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor are some of the latest institutions to offer open online courses similar to MITx's OpenCourse Ware Initiative.

For Student Success, Stop Debating and Start Improving

Ideas how to improve student success, while still maintaining quality, are the focus of this article.

Me.edu: Debating the Coming Personalization of Higher Ed

At a recent education innovation conference in Arizona, conveners discussed the idea of using data mining to personalize a student's learning experience.

Testing for Better Writers

The uses and effectiveness of writing skills tests for students at both Old Dominion University and Hampden-Sydney College are discussed.

Can Colleges Manufacture Motivation?

This article discusses a paper presented at the American Educational Research Association's Conference which looks at how academic motivation of students can affect their critical thinking.

Innovations in Higher Education? Hah!

This article from the Chronicle discusses change and higher education including the potential of competency-based credentials to impact student learning.

Performance Pay for College Faculty

Contracts of part-time instructors at the City Colleges of Chicago now link their pay to student outcomes.

A College President Speaks to Admitted Students About Price and Value

A video from President Brian Rosenberg on the value of a Macalester College education.

A Future Full of Badges

This commentary discusses the future of badges in which "students will be able to customize learning goals within the larger curricular framework, integrate continuing peer and faculty feedback about their progress toward achieving those goals, and tailor the way badges and the metadata within them are displayed to the outside world."

Update on the Revamping of Teacher-Training Colleges

Updates to the U.S. Department of Education's work on revamping teacher-training programs plan to require states to use reliable and valid measures of student learning to show the added value of these programs. Reported in [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) and [Inside Higher Ed](#).

CGS Launches Project to Prepare Future Faculty to Assess Undergraduate Learning

The Council of Graduate Schools begins a 3-year project at 5 institutions to help future faculty (current graduate students) with student learning outcomes assessment.

Trying to Find a Measure for How Well Colleges Do

This article discusses assessments currently used in colleges and universities to help measure their value.

Rules to Measure Quality of Teaching-Training Programs Slowly Take Shape

Revamping teacher-training programs to use reliable measures of student learning are of primary importance in the latest discussions about programs sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education.

New Publication from AAC&U

"*Assessing College Student Learning: Evaluating Alternative Models, Using Multiple Methods*," by Robert J. Sternberg, Jeremy Penn, Christie Hawkins, and Sally Reed presents information about assessment plans and models in this publication. Institutional case studies are also provided.

Study-Abroad Officials Are Under More Pressure to Prove Their Programs' Value

A short article about the value-added to a student's education through study abroad programs.

Why Research Universities Must Change

This article discusses how research universities, despite their complexity and culture, change through the years but still need to pay attention to the quality of student learning.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

A number of conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment may be found on our online calendar. Those coming up in the next month are listed below:

May 15-17: [2012 CIC Department and Division Chair Workshops - Promoting Institutional Effectiveness Through Collaboration](#)

The Council of Independent Colleges at the Providence Biltmore in Providence, RI

May 16: [Ninth Annual Student Affairs Research Symposium - Getting to Nine: Moving Toward Data-Informed Decisions](#)

University of Michigan Division of Student Affairs at University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, MI

What is Satisfactory Performance?

Continuing our discussion on rubrics, this month's Viewpoint by Patricia (Pat) DeWitt offers differing purposes for utilizing rubrics and setting levels of satisfactory performance. To read more, look below.

Featured Website Criteria Revision

The criteria for selection of a NILOA Featured Website are updated and include a new category – Centralized Assessment Repository. Good work in this category is represented by websites that store or provide links in a central location to assessment information related to one or more of the NILOA Transparency Framework's six components. Click [here](#) to see the revised criteria.

2012 CHEA Award Winners

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) annually recognizes colleges and universities doing exemplary work in using the results of student learning outcomes assessment. Congratulations to the 2012 CHEA Award Winners - Georgia Institute of Technology, Rio Salado College, and University of California, Merced. To read more about the award and institutions, click [here](#).

American Association of Higher Education's Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

Please take a moment to refresh yourself on the various principles of assessment, including those published by AAHE, by clicking [here](#). An overview of the development of AAHE's Principles and their continuing relevance today by Pat Hutchings will be forthcoming in a future NILOA newsletter.

Viewpoint

What is Satisfactory Performance? Measuring Students and Measuring Programs with Rubrics

Dr. Patricia Dewitt, Assistant Vice President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, Shorter University

Some assessment experts strongly recommend that a desired level of achievement be stated when measuring student performance on stated student learning outcomes. According to Nichols, the criteria should be stated in quantitative terms, as this example illustrates: "Eighty percent of those taking the CPA exam each year...will pass three of four parts of the exam" (Nichols, 1989, p. 178). In the era of rubrics, this can easily be translated to "Eighty percent of students...will score at least 'satisfactory' on three of the four rubric rows." But why eighty percent? [Read more. . .](#)

NILOA Updates

NILOA's Featured Website



Western Washington University does an excellent job publicly reporting its assessment activities on campus. Not only are assessment plans accessible for each department but Program and Course Assessment Handbooks are available to highlight tools and techniques for writing assessment plans for program and course improvement. Home to both the Dialogue and Praxis publications, Western Washington University's Assessment Office provides resources for both internal and external audiences in the area of assessment. Western Washington University is NILOA's Featured Website in the categories of Communication and Creativity. [Read more...](#)

News

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

New Article on Learning Outcomes Published

A recent article titled, "*The Learning Outcomes Race: The Value of Self-Report Gains in Large Research Universities*," written by John Aubrey Douglass, Gregg Thomson, and Chun-Mei Zhao, focuses on the results obtained from the University of California's Undergraduate Experience Survey (Student Experience in the Research University Survey: SERU-S). The authors conclude ". . . designed properly, student surveys offer a valuable and more nuanced alternative in understanding and identifying learning outcomes in the broad tapestry of higher education institutions." The article's full text can be downloaded [here](#).

Recommended for You

This article describes a new aid in increasing course/degree completion - Degree Compass, software designed and used by Austin Peay State University, which is being used to predict future grades of students in courses before they even enroll in this course.

Trying To Assess Learning Gives Colleges Their Own Text Anxiety

This article provides thoughts of those at colleges and universities using the Collegiate Learning Assessment and its effect on the accountability movement.

Assessing Online Learning: Strategies, Challenges and Opportunities

A special report in Faculty Focus on assessing online learning.

Doubling Down on Degrees

As part of Indiana's performance based funding plan through the Indiana Higher Education Commission, Indiana's public colleges and universities are tasked with finding and using assessments to appropriately track their students learning.

Learning Centers Had Little Impact

This brief article discusses the successes and failures of the Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) initiative which ran from 2005 to 2010 and was financed by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

The Connected College: Digital Artifacts and Tools to Support Learning Outcomes

Michael Vieira discusses the "idea of developing digital artifacts and toolkits that support common learning outcomes" in this article.

College Completion Special Report

This special report contains articles discussing college completion data and how their use affects higher education institutions.

New Issue of Assessment Update Now Available

The latest issue of *Assessment Update: Progress, Trends and Practice in Higher Education* for January/February 2012 is now available. Two feature articles of special interest are "Getting SMART with Assessment: ACTION Steps to Institutional Effectiveness," written by Eric Daffron & Sandra Jordan and "Expectations for Assessment Reports: A Descriptive Analysis," written by Keston Fulcher, Matthew Swain, and Chris Orem. In addition, Trudy Banta and Gary Pike offer thoughts on assessment in the field.

Do College Completion Rates Really Measure Quality?

Seven scholars in higher education discuss the relationship between "quality" and college completion rates.

Badge-Based Learning Competition Names Winners

Winners of the first Badges for Lifelong Learning Competition, judged on the "effectiveness of their assessment process and the likelihood that their badges will be accepted by institutions and employers", were announced.

Assessments of Prior Learning for Community Colleges Now Under Scrutiny

Articles in both **The Chronicle** and **Inside Higher Ed** discuss new research on how assessments of prior learning, in this case ACCUPLACER and COMPASS, are not as reliable a predictor of future academic success as previously thought for community college students.

New Accreditation System Will Require Medical Residents to Show Skills and Traits

Changes to the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education include the creation of program specific learning outcomes and the regular assessment of medical residents on the designated desired skills and behaviors.

Panel on Research Universities Sees Need for Fundamental Changes

New techniques for teaching, which include "flipping" and making classes more "interactive", in the hopes of improving student learning, was one of many discussions at the recent National Academies conference at Rice University.

Don't Lecture Me: Rethinking How College Students Learn

This article urges professors to consider teaching techniques to improve student learning, such as peer instruction.

Raising the Bar

This article discusses changes in Teacher Education Programs through a commission formed by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. Of particular focus is the **Teacher Performance Assessment**, "a subject area-specific, performance-based assessment for pre-service teacher candidates, centered on student learning."

What's On the Horizon in Higher Education

The increasing role of technology to improve student learning in higher education institutions is the focus of this article.

Searching for the Holy Grail of Learning Outcomes

This blog provides an in-depth commentary about the strengths and challenges of the CLA as well as the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) program in trying to find the "holy grail" for assessing learning outcomes globally.

Re-Engineering Engineering Education to Retain Students

Recommendations for improving the pedagogy of engineering professors, which may result in the retention of students, are offered.

Taking Some of the Guesswork Out of the Value-of-College Question

This article provides an overview of Virginia's public database, to be launched in April 2012, which will contain data about median earnings over a six-year period for college graduates in the state of Virginia.

Position Announcement:

Research Analyst Position Open at the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium at Wabash College

The Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS) at Wabash College invites applications for the position of Research Analyst. The Research Analyst will work with the HEDS Director to develop and implement the consortium's data collection, analysis, and reporting strategy. Candidates should have a Master's degree in an applicable discipline with a doctorate preferred, excellent data analytic, written communication, and oral communication skills and an interest in working flexibly as a member of a team that is reinventing itself to improve its support of the institutional effectiveness of consortium members. Strong quantitative and research skills, including appropriate experience with statistical software and Microsoft Excel are required to qualify. For more information about this position and how to apply, please visit the Wabash College web site at www.wabash.edu/employment.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

A number of conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment may be found on our online calendar. Those coming up in the next month are listed below:

March 30: **NEEAN Dialogues on Business, Math and Sciences**

New England Educational Assessment Network (NEEAN) at UMass-Amherst

March 30: Innovative Educators Webinar - Staying Smart: Strategies For Moving Forward With Assessment

http://www.innovativeeducators.org/product_p/388.htm

March 30-April 3: **NCA Higher Learning Commission Annual Conference: Quality in Higher Education**

Higher Learning Commission at Hyatt Regency in Chicago, IL

April 1-3: **RosEvaluation Conference 2012: Assessment for Program and Institutional Accreditation**

On the campus of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute, IN

***NILOA's Staci Provezis is the keynote speaker.**

April 12: **A Day at Alverno College Seminar**
Alverno College in Milwaukee, WI

April 12-14: **2012 CIC Department and Division Chair Workshops - Promoting Institutional Effectiveness Through Collaboration**
The Council of Independent Colleges in Indianapolis, IN

April 18-20: **WASC Academic Resource Conference - What's Next? Scenarios for Higher Education**
Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities at Hilton Orange County in Costa Mesa, CA

April 19-21: **2012 ABET Symposium**
ABET in St. Louis, MO

February 2012

Happy February!

Rubrics are being used more often as institutions attempt to assess the essential learning outcomes promulgated by the AAC&U Liberal Education and America's Promise and Lumina's Degree Qualifications Profile. This month's Viewpoint by Thomas P. Judd, Charles Secolsky and Clayton Allen considers the issues of criteria and inter- and intra-rater reliability when using rubrics to assess student learning.

This month's new Example of Good Assessment Practice features North Carolina A&T State University. Read below to find out how this institution is creating a culture of inquiry around student learning outcomes assessment.

NILOA is among the 27 higher education organizations endorsing the New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability's "*Committing to Quality: Guidelines for Assessment and Accountability*." The guidelines challenge colleges and universities to use appropriate assessment approaches to demonstrate whether students are learning what their institution claims. It asks colleges to take responsibility for assessing and improving student learning - to set clear goals for student achievement, regularly gather and use evidence that measures performance against those goals, report evidence of student learning, and continuously work to improve results. It was released at the Council for Higher Education Accreditation's Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. in January 2012. Articles in both **The Chronicle of Higher Education** and **Inside Higher Ed** highlight this publication. For a viewable copy of "*Committing to Quality*," click **here**.

Viewpoint

Being Confident about Results from Rubrics

Thomas P. Judd, Charles Secolsky & Clayton Allen

Using rubrics to assess student learning is more and more common, and their use is almost certainly going to increase, as the AAC&U essential learning outcomes become better known and the Lumina Degree Qualifications Profile gains traction. Both outcomes frameworks require something more than what available standardized instruments measure. This is one reason the AAC&U VALUE rubrics are receiving attention. But here's the dilemma. [Read more...](#)

NILOA Updates

Another Example of Good Assessment Practice Now Available



North Carolina A&T State University: A Culture of Inquiry

By Gianina R. Baker

To better understand what “good work” looks like related to assessment, data-informed improvement, and transparency at the institutional level, NILOA offers a web page with [Examples of Good Assessment Practice](#) on our site.

This month we encourage you to read about how North Carolina A&T State University is using assessment data to effect changes in teaching and learning.

NILOA's Featured Website



Oregon State University

The Office of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Accreditation (APAA) website provides a wealth of assessment information for those internal and external to Oregon State University. Learning outcomes have been developed for all academic and co-curricular departments in addition to seven learning goals established for graduates. A crosswalk of colleges and programs that are utilizing high-impact practices is provided as well as information by college and program on specific assessment activities underway. Oregon State is NILOA's February Featured Website in the category of Communication. [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:

New Issue of Peer Review Now Available

The use of AAC&U's VALUE Rubrics to assess student learning at colleges and universities around the nation is the central focus of this issue.

MITx Opens Enrollment for First Interactive Online Course

MITx's first OpenCourseWare course, *6.002x: Circuits and Electronics*, opened today. Students, in hopes of earning credentials, will have their assignments and activities evaluated by machines. Articles in both [The Chronicle of Higher Ed](#) and [Inside Higher Ed](#) briefly discuss this initiative.

Tuning and Lumina's Degree Qualifications Profile

The American Historical Association is teaming up with Lumina to help define learning outcomes for history graduates at the associate, bachelor, and graduate degree levels.

Coverage of this effort can be found in both [The Chronicle of Higher Ed](#) and [Inside Higher Education](#).

'We're Losing Our Minds'

Read Lederman's interview with Richard P. Keeling and Richard H. Hersh, authors of *We're Losing Our Minds*, about a term they call "higher learning."

MITs New Free Courses May Threaten (and Improve) the Traditional Model, Programs Leader Says

This article provides an overview of an interview with L. Rafael Reif, MIT's provost, and Anant Agarwal, director of MIT's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, about the MITx OpenCourseWare Initiative.

New Issue of Liberal Education Explores What's Wrong with the Completion Agenda

Program-level assessment and developing liberal education outcomes are discussed in the latest issue of AAC&U's, *Liberal Education*.

AAC&U's Bringing Theory to Practice February 2012 Newsletter Available

Read AAC&U's latest edition of Bringing Theory to Practice which highlights SUNY Cortland's assessment process.

White House Unveils Draft College Scorecard

A brief article describing President Obama's new "College Scorecard" which will hopefully help higher education institutions be more accountable and transparent about their costs (see more information about the Scorecard [here](#)).

Adventures in Wonderland: Massive Online Courses Not a Game Changing Innovation

An update to MITx's OpenCourse Ware Initiative.

Harvard Conference Seeks to Jolt University Teaching

This article describes how without the experience of teaching in a college classroom, many graduate students, or future faculty members, will not have the opportunity to understand how students learn.

Stanford Remakes Curriculum, Following Trend to Focus on Critical Thinking vs. Disciplinary Content

This brief article highlights Stanford's revisions to its undergraduate curriculum which focuses on the critical thinking skills of its students.

'Adrift' in Adulthood: Students Who Struggled in College Find Life Harsher After Graduation

"Documenting Uncertain Times: Postgraduate Transitions of the Academically Adrift Cohort" a report written by Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa as a follow-up to Academically Adrift was released at AAC&U's meeting this week.

An Academic Expletive

This article provides an overview of one of the discussions at AAC&U's Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., at which deans and administrators voiced their views about assessment, or the measurement of student learning, on their campuses.

Beware: Alternative Certification Is Coming

This article discusses the collaboration between StraighterLine, the Education Testing Service (ETS) and the Council on Aid to Education's (CAE) efforts in trying to measure learning of credentialing courses.

MIT Mints a Valuable New Form of Academic Currency

Questions arise in this article as to how learning will be assessed in MIT's Open Learning Initiative.

Online Course Provider, StraighterLine, to Offer Critical-Thinking Tests to Students

This article discusses one response that a company, StraighterLine, plans to use to possibly validate 'badges' (see an earlier article about badges [here](#)).

Metacognition and Student Learning

Using formative assessment to help understand students' metacognition in the classroom is the main feature of this commentary.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

A number of conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment are listed on our online calendar, and we have selected the most recent to list below:

Call for Proposals:

February 15: Application deadline for [Assessment Leadership Academy](#) (runs from March 2012 through January 2013)
Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

February 29: Call for Proposals due for [AALHE 2nd Annual Conference - The Well-Rounded Assessment Practitioner: Exploring the Skills, Knowledge, and Art of the Assessment Profession in Higher Education](#)
Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE) at Hotel Albuquerque in Albuquerque, NM

March 1: [Association for General and Liberal Studies](#) Application Materials Available

March 23: Call for Programs deadline for [NASPA Assessment & Persistence Conference](#)
NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education at Hyatt Regency Tampa in Tampa, FL

Events:

February 19-21: [12th Annual Texas A&M Assessment Conference](#)
Texas A&M University in College Station, TX
***NILOA's George Kuh will keynote this meeting.**

February 23-25: [General Education and Assessment: New Contexts, New Cultures](#)
Association for American Colleges & Universities in New Orleans, LA

February 27-29: [Using Assessment to Improve and Account for Student Learning](#)
Academic Impressions in Newport Beach, CA

February 29: [LEAP Day 2012](#)
Association of American Colleges & Universities and University of Wisconsin-Whitewater at UW-Whitewater

March 10-13: [ACE 94th Annual Meeting: Ahead of the Curve](#)
American Council on Education in Los Angeles, CA

March 12-14: [Connections 2012 - Making Meaning of Assessment through Collaboration](#)
Virginia Tech and WEAVE, at the Inn at Virginia Tech and Skelton Conference Center in Blacksburg, VA

January 2012

Happy New Year!

We hope that you will find NILOA useful to your student learning outcomes assessment work in 2012. This month NILOA is releasing its latest occasional paper titled, "From

Denial to Acceptance: The Stages of Assessment,” by Dr. Margaret A. Miller, editor of *Change* magazine.

We also encourage you to read this month’s Viewpoint titled “What Assessment Personnel Need to Know About IRBs,” by Dr. Curtis Naser. Look below to read more.

Be sure to check out our newest addition to the NILOA website – **Institutional Assessment Models**. This page features examples of institutional approaches to communicating assessment activities on websites. We will continue to add more institutions, so if you believe yours should be included on one of our pages (e.g., Framework in the Field, Effective Communication Strategies, Institutional Assessment Models, Innovative Accreditation Practices), contact Natasha Jankowski at njankow2@illinois.edu.

Hope you find the January newsletter informative!

Viewpoint

What Assessment Personnel Need to Know about IRBs

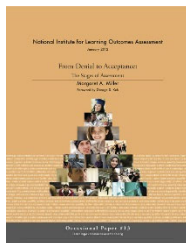
Curtis R. Naser, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Philosophy and Bioethics/Facilitator for Academic Assessment,
Fairfield University
Chief Product Officer and Founding Partner, Axiom Education

Because assessment projects across all disciplines are now employing systematic research methods that include access to students’ confidential data and artifacts, faculty need to be cognizant of our obligation to protect human subjects in our research. Beyond simple compliance, we want to be respectful of students and to be sure we are acting ethically. By the same token, it is easy to misunderstand the policies and procedures of Institutional Review Boards (IRBs). What is the proper role of IRBs in student learning assessment? **Read more...**

NILOA Updates

Thirteenth Occasional Paper Released

NILOA’s thirteenth occasional paper is now available:



From Denial to Acceptance: The Stages of Assessment

By Margaret A. Miller

Dr. Miller, editor of *Change* magazine and a national thought leader in the field of student learning outcomes assessment, provides an overview of how the assessment discussion has evolved in the past 30 years.

NILOA's Featured Website



Truman State University, which has been involved in assessment since 1972, has done an excellent job in building a comprehensive general assessment process. A major undertaking showcasing its assessment results has been its [Assessment Almanac](#), an annual, three-volume online publication. One of Truman State's most well-developed assessment programs is the [Truman Portfolio](#), also featured on the Assessment home page. Included on this page are a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) list for faculty, students and staff, a link to its current [strategic plan](#), and a [Glossary of Assessment Terms](#). For the month of January, Truman State University has been selected as NILOA's featured website in the category of Communication. [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:

NILOA Book Chapter in Recently Published Book

Check out Charles Secolsky & D. Brian Denison's (2011) edited book, *Handbook on Measurement, Assessment, and Evaluation in Higher Education*, which features a chapter written by NILOA's Staci Provezis and Natasha Jankowski titled, "Presenting Learning Outcomes Assessment Results to Foster Use."

'Badges' Earned Online Pose Challenge to Traditional College Diplomas

This article discusses how badges through online learning courses are being used to help build resumes and thereby threatening traditional college programs and degrees.

Technology Is at Least 3 Years Away From Improving Student Success

In this brief commentary from the recent Higher Ed Tech Summit, technology executives share their thoughts about how program data that could improve graduation rates and learnign would not be available for at least three years.

Assessment Update Now Available

The latest issue of *Assessment Update: Progress, Trends and Practice in Higher Education* for November/December 2011 is now available. A couple of featured articles include, "My Own Worst Enemy: Five Ways My Best Intentions Impair Assessment." written by Jeremy D. Penn and "Repairing a Broken Assessment System," written by Christie Hill Magoulas. In addition, Gary Pike takes a look at The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Surveys.

Let's Improve Learning. OK, but How?

Read Robert Connor's commentary regarding current discussions on improving student learning.

Overhaul of Accreditation Not Likely

An update about the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) recommendations.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

A number of conferences and workshops on learning outcomes assessment are listed on our online calendar, and we have selected the most recent to list below:

January 25-28: **AAC&U 2012 Annual Meeting**

Association of American Colleges and Universities in Washington, D.C.

***Please consider attending NILOA's panel presentations.**

February 2-4: **MSI Student Learning Outcomes Institute**

Southern Education Foundation at the Grand Hyatt, Atlanta, GA

***NILOA's Gianina Baker will moderate a session.**

February 8: Proposals due for **Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education Conference**

February 10-11: **Accreditation Institute**

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges in Anaheim, CA

February 15: Application deadline for **Assessment Leadership Academy** (runs from March 2012 through January 2013)

Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

February 19-21: **12th Annual Texas A&M Assessment Conference**

Texas A&M University in College Station, TX

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