Happy New Year! The first NILOA newsletter of 2020 is chockfull of useful resources and future directions. We begin by reaffirming our commitment to equity in assessment. The second installment of our equity and assessment occasional paper will be released in late January during the AAC&U Annual Meeting where various NILOA team members will be presenting. It serves as a kick off to releasing equity related case studies throughout the year and additional equity focused resources on assessment. We are pleased to also provide an update by Dr. Tami Eggleston to the 2016 McKendree University case, with a foreword by NILOA Senior Scholar Pat Hutchings, to better understand how assessment practices shift and flow over time.

Aligning with the spirit of a productive 2020, Barbara Walvoord shares a Viewpoint "Getting Faculty on Board: Four Suggestions" focused on helping assessment leaders encourage faculty inspiration and collaboration by taking a sociological stance of considering assessment as a movement. Furthermore, a new Equity Response from Audrey Rorrer and Bruce Richards "Leveraging Learning Management Systems for Culturally Response Assessment Practice" explores how the University of North Carolina at Charlotte piloted a holistic assessment approach by leveraging their university Learning Management System (LMS).

We also encourage you to apply for the 2020 Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designation and join us for a webinar to learn more about the designation and the application process, we highlight the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) as our first Featured Website of 2020, and provide information on relevant News Items and Upcoming Conferences and Programs. Of special interest is the announcement of NILOA as the 2020 ACPA Contribution to Higher Education designee—we are both delighted and honored to receive this award!
NILOA is pleased to continue and deepen the conversation on equity and assessment through 2020 and beyond. In doing so, we are pleased to announce the release of a follow-up paper to our 2017 Occasional Paper “Equity and Assessment: Moving Towards Culturally Responsive Assessment”, which helped launch the national conversation on equity in assessment. We will release the new paper, “A New Decade for Assessment: Embedding Equity into Assessment Praxis” later this month at AAC&U’s 2020 Annual Meeting where Erick Montenegro, Natasha Jankowski, Gianina Baker, and numerous other NILOA team members will present. Please stay tuned for its official release later this month.

In addition, NILOA, the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), and Campus Labs, will continue to conduct, publish, and present on Equity in Assessment Case Studies showcasing the equitable assessment practices carried out across higher education. We will release the cases throughout the year. As always, we enthusiastically welcome your insight regarding practices and experiences with equity-minded assessment at your institution. We will continue to involve the field in dialogue, and encourage you to contact us to share your practices so that we may continue to improve together as we move into phase two of our equity and assessment conversation.

Case Study

Slow and Steady Wins the Race: Continuous Improvement and Assessment 2.1 at McKendree University

Tami Eggleston
McKendree University

As part of an ongoing effort to track and explore developments in student learning outcomes assessment, NILOA has published 20 institutional case studies. We are now revisiting and updating some of those earlier examples in order to understand more concretely how campus assessment practices evolve over time—through lessons learned from local experience but also as a result of changes in institutional priorities, the launch of new initiatives, leadership transitions, and trends in the larger assessment movement. This case study on McKendree University is an update of the original case study from 2016 focused on McKendree’s use of the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP), which was important in helping to define and refine institutional outcomes, especially around “diverse perspectives”. As Emily Teitelbaum and Katie Schultz reported in the 2016 case study, McKendree began an ambitious “Assessment 2.0” initiative in 2010, focusing on one of its seven student learning outcomes each year. This updated case,
written by Tami Eggleston of McKendree University and a NILOA Coach, begins as Assessment 2.0 was winding down in 2017. Following a careful process of stock taking, exploring what had been done and learned, the institution has now moved into Assessment 2.1. As readers will learn, the seven-year cycle of 2.0 is still largely in place—but 2.1 is now deepening and extending the work. The DQP continues to inform the work, the co-curriculum is a more explicit focus of assessment, students are playing new roles, and, like many other campuses, McKendree continues to explore ways to engage faculty and staff in a process of continuous improvement. Read more...

**Viewpoint**

**Getting Faculty on Board: Four Suggestions**

Barbara Walvoord

This month's Viewpoint shares four suggestions that Barbara Walvoord, the 2019 Trudy W. Banta Lifetime Achievement recipient, presented in her keynote address for the faculty development track of the Assessment Institute in Indianapolis. She argues that while assessment leaders may be tasked with “Getting Faculty on Board,” there is a better way to frame it. Faculty members face many constraints and frustrations. They resist “getting on board” with someone else’s agenda. However, there is much to be learned from positioning assessment as a movement. Following in this sentiment, this Viewpoint advances four suggestions for fostering faculty inspiration and collaboration in assessment. In brief, by taking a sociological stance, leveling with faculty about the assessment mandate, working with the movements already on campus, and infusing assessment activities with the qualities of movements, assessment leaders can encourage faculty inspiration and collaboration, using assessment as a tool for student learning. Read more...

**Equity Response**

**Leveraging Learning Management Systems for Culturally Responsive Assessment Practice**

Audrey Rorrer & Bruce Richards

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (Montenegro & Jankowski, 2017), has directed assessment practices to serve as critical components in delivering teaching and learning. This is a call for all higher education institutions to make assessment practices ‘responsive’ to equity and issues around privilege in higher education. For this to occur, assessment systems need to be more comprehensive, and
less disparate. The University of North Carolina at Charlotte piloted a holistic assessment approach by leveraging the university Learning Management System (LMS), laying important foundations to go beyond assessment for the sake of accreditation, diving deeper into discovering, and correcting implicit bias within assessment practices. This equity response argues, that when leveraged holistically, an LMS can also generate data analytics that show student outcomes beyond a course, connecting learning successes and risks across the academic landscape. This response offers one example of how an LMS can catalyze culturally responsive assessment practice by providing more information about the student learning outcomes across courses, programs, and student demographics. Read more...

**Excellence in Assessment (EIA)**

Consider Applying for the Excellence in Assessment Class of 2020

The Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designation is now accepting applications for the 2020 designee class. EIA recognizes institutions for their efforts in intentional integration of institution-level learning outcomes assessment. Building on the foundation of reporting both student learning outcomes assessment results and processes established within VSA Analytics, the EIA designation evaluation process is directly and intentionally built from NILOA’s Transparency Framework. Over the past three years, 27 institutions have been recognized for their Excellence in Assessment and the 2019 designees will be celebrated during a reception at the upcoming AAC&U Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. If your institution is involved in exemplary assessment practice, then please review the application packet and the accompanying rubric that evaluators use to assess the merit of each application. Materials are due by May 1, 2020. To hear more about the EIA application and review process, register for this free NILOA webinar scheduled for January 21, 2020 at 12:00pm CST. Read more...

**Featured Website**

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is NILOA’s first Featured Website of 2020! The mission of OIRA is to “support institutional decision making and the achievement of our vision of becoming the nation’s leading public university” through disseminating timely institutional data and information. In support of this, the OIRA provides assessment resources for academic programs and administrative units; including tips on getting started, relevant...
professional development opportunities, **examples**, and additional assessment **resources**. Additionally, the OIRA website also features various interactive **reports** accompanied by definitions and footnotes, when applicable, so readers can easily understand the data. For these and numerous other reasons, the OIRA web page is our Featured Website in the categories of **Centralized Assessment Repository**, **Communication**, and **Creativity**. The webpage is also an institutional example for the **NILOA Transparency Framework** in the **Evidence of Student Learning** component. Read More...

**News**

**Teaching in Higher Ed Podcast: Top 19 of 2019**
The Teaching in Higher Ed Podcast released its list of the 19 most downloaded episodes of 2019. NILOA is happy to acknowledge that two episodes featuring NILOA team members are included in the list! Episode 256: **Creating Wicked Students** featuring Paul Hanstedt, NILOA Coach, and Episode 259: **Intentional and Transparent Assessment** featuring Natasha Jankowski, NILOA Executive Director were amongst the most popular. We encourage you to listen to these and other episodes.

**Revisions to CAS Standards**
The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) has announced revisions to a number of standards. Please review the revisions made to **Campus Police and Public Safety**, **Counseling Services**, **Leadership Education and Development**, and **Registrar Services**.

**New Issue of Assessment Update**

**How to Make Your Teaching More Engaging**
*The Chronicle* has created a guide to inform pedagogy toward making it a more engaging endeavor for students. Important elements include being receptive to feedback from students and peers, building community, and using a story-telling approach; all which align directly to assessment for improvement and **evidence-based storytelling**.

**Can a Different Approach to Testing Help Students Remember What They Learn?**
A faculty member at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor recently swapped midterm exams with homework and short-answer quizzes in hopes of boosting students’ in-depth, long-term knowledge. While the change did not increase students’ final exam scores, it did increase student satisfaction and decreased their anxiety; which can be good for retention and persistence. Finding different ways to assess student learning may lead to boosts in grades, but can also build better learning environments.
Expanding Access to College-Level Courses
This recently published report from the Community College Research Center (CCRC) and MDRC explores how automatizing the use of multiple measures assessment (MMA) can impact the placement of incoming students. However, with the exception of GPA, most of the measures used were still standardized tests. MMA did place more students in college-level courses compared to the control group. A report on student outcomes is forthcoming.

Minority and First-Gen Students Feel Greater Belonging at 2-Year Colleges
Students of color and first-generation students feel a deeper sense of belonging at two-year colleges compared to four-year institutions; likely due to the increased diversity and focused student resources found at community colleges. Since sense of belonging can be impacted by campus culture and practices—and it has implications for student persistence and retention—four-year institutions have the responsibility to assess what they do well and identify lessons they can learn from their two-year peer institutions.

Liberal Arts Align With Employer Needs
Liberal Arts graduates are equipped with skills desired by employers, but colleges and universities need to do a better job of assessing them as workforce skills, and communicating those skills to students. This requires stronger collaboration between institutions, employers, and students to align language, desired proficiencies, and assessment to ensure students not only have the skills but can also speak about and demonstrate them on job interviews.

Announcements:

2020 ACPA Awards
The American College Personnel Association (ACPA) has announced the recipients of their 2020 Awards to be distributed during the ACPA20 Annual Convention in Nashville, TN on March 2-5. NILOA will be honored with the Contribution to Higher Education Award, and NILOA Senior Scholar Jillian Kinzie will be awarded with the Senior Scholars Diplomate. Thank you to ACPA and to all of our partners in this work. Please join us in congratulating all of this year’s award recipients!

2020 Assessment Institute Call for Proposals
The Call for Proposals is now live for the 2020 Assessment Institute in Indianapolis! Please consider submitting a proposal on or before the priority deadline of March 20, 2020.

New England Assessment Conference
The Call for Proposals is now live for the 2020 New England Assessment Conference! The theme of this year’s conference is "Assessment and Equity: Methods Matter". Consider submitting a proposal before the March 1, 2020 deadline!

Free Online Course on Assessment
In partnership with National Louis University, the Student Affairs Assessment Leaders (SAAL) are opening the fourth run of their free MOOC, “Applying and Leading Assessment in Student Affairs”. The course has had over 1,200 students in each previous course boasting a 19.83% completion rate last year—which is excellent for a MOOC. 92% of students rated the course’s quality with a 4 out of 5. The 8-week course runs from February
24-April 19. Register today! You can also register for a live webinar with course instructors on February 4 at 4pm EST.

**Upcoming Conferences and Programs**

Baltimore, MD. Watermark.

Manchester, UK. Assessment in Higher Education (AHE).

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm CST. NILOA.
**This webinar will be presented by Dr. Gianina Baker, NILOA Assistant Director, and Dr. Natasha Jankowski, NILOA Executive Director.**

1:00 pm- 2:00 pm CST. Association for Institutional Research (AIR).


**Thursday, January 23, 11:30am-12:30pm. George Kuh, NILOA Founding Director and Senior Scholar, William Hudson, Jr, Farouk Dey, Angela Lindner, & Samyr Qureshi will present “Harnessing the Power of Peers to Foster Student Success”.**

**Thursday, January 23, 2:15-3:15pm. Jillian Kinzie, NILOA Senior Scholar, Mary Deane Sorcinelli, Pat Hutchings, NILOA Senior Scholar, Kathleen Landy, Michael Reder, & Dan Shapiro will present “Integrating Assessment and Faculty Development to Promote Evidence-Informed Teaching and Learning”.**

**Thursday, January 23, 5:15-6:15pm. George Kuh, Natasha Jankowski, NILOA Executive Director, & Gianina Baker, NILOA Assistant Director, will present “Telling Persuasive Evidence-Based Stories About Student Learning: Lessons from the Field”.**

**Friday, January 24, 8:00-9:30am.** Norman Jones, Richard Badenhausen, Cathy Brigham, & David Marshall, NILOA Senior Scholar, will present “When Academic Programs for High-Achieving Students Clash: A Dialogue on the Relationship between AP and Honors Education”. They will be Table 15 in the Marquis Salon 6.

**Friday, January 24, 9:45-10:45am.** Caroline Ketcham, Anthony Weaver, Andrew Pearl, Morgan Gresham, Jillian Kinzie, & Jessie Moore will present “Changing Landscape of Inclusive Capstone Experiences: Influences, Impacts, and Design”.

**Friday, January 24, 11:15m-12:15pm.** Claire Jacobson, Natasha Jankowski, & Erick Montenegro, NILOA Communications Coordinator and Research Analyst, will present “(Re)energize Campus Completion Agendas by (Re)emphasizing Student Learning, (Re)focusing Assessment, and (Re)identifying Definitions”.

**Friday, January 24, 2:00-3:00pm. Natasha Jankowski & Erick...**
**Montenegro** will present “Case in Point: Institutions Engaged in Equitable Assessment Practices”.

**Friday, January 24, 3:15-4:15pm.** Robert Gonyea, Allison BrckaLorenz, Shimon Sarraf, Alexander McCormick, & Jillian Kinzie will present “Student Engagement and the Assessment of Institutional Quality: Current Trends and Future Possibilities”.

**Friday, January 24, 6:00pm.** There will be a closed reception for the 2019 class of Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designees.

January 31. **Proposals Due: Fast Track to Success Conference.**
Austin, TX. Fast Track to Success Project.

January 31. **Proposals Due: 2020 ICCHE Conference.**

February 7-8. **7th Annual SLO Symposium.**
Monterey, CA. Monterey Peninsula College.

February 7. **Proposals Due: 2020 CREA International Conference.**
Chicago, IL. Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation & Assessment (CREA).

February 9. **Proposals Due: AALHE’s Tenth Annual Assessment Conference.**
New Orleans, LA. Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE).

February 11-13. **2020 Assessment for Learning Conference.**
San Diego, CA. Assessment for Learning Project (ALP).

February 11-12. **IMS Digital Credentials Summit.**
Atlanta, GA. IMS Global Learning Consortium.

February 16. **Proposals Due: 42nd Annual EAIR Forum.**

February 16. **Proposals Due: International Higher Education Teaching and Learning Conference.**
Pretoria, South Africa. International Higher Education Teaching and Learning (HETL) and the University of South Africa.

Follow us on social media

Back to top
Welcome to the February 2020 edition of the NILOA Newsletter. It is with great joy that we announce this year’s Trudy W. Banta Lifetime Achievement in Assessment Award will be given to Dr. Pat Hutchings, NILOA Senior Scholar! Please join us in congratulating Pat for this stellar recognition. You can see Pat receive the award and deliver the Keynote for the Faculty Development track at the 2020 Assessment Institute in Indianapolis, October 25-27, 2020.

In partnership with the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), we are delighted to release an Occasional Paper, “Using CAS as a Framework to Assess Holistic Learning” co-authored by Gavin W. Henning, Rich Robbins, and Stacy Andes.

At the end of January, NILOA released “A New Decade for Assessment: Embedding Equity into Assessment Praxis” co-authored by Erick Montenegro and Natasha A. Jankowski. This month, we are pleased to announce a new Equity Response from Serafina Pastore who reflects on “Culturally Responsive Assessment: A Missed Call for Italy?”

In addition, we invite you to explore a new example in the Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit stemming from the work of the Virginia Assessment Group and James Madison University’s Center for Assessment & Research Studies. Furthermore, this newsletter includes a useful Assessment in Practice “Designing & Aligning Learning Outcome Assessments for Academic Programs” authored by Brandon David Moore.

We invite you to consider applying for the 2020 Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designation, and view the recording of an informational webinar to learn more about the EIA application and review process. We then highlight the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville as this month’s Featured Website, and offer information on relevant News Items and Upcoming Conferences and Programs!
Using CAS as a Framework to Assess Holistic Learning

Gavin W. Henning, Rich Robbins, & Stacy Andes

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) provides tools and resources to guide the development of holistic learning and development outcomes that employers and higher education professionals wish to see in college graduates. CAS consists of a consortium of experts from various areas of higher education engaged in developing standards for professional practice as well as resources for self-assessment for functional areas of student support in higher education. Based in holistic learning and incorporating 47 functional areas involved in student learning and development, the CAS Standards serve as a validated, reliable resource in this data-driven, accountability-focused higher education environment. This paper explores how the CAS learning domains and dimensions can be used to identify and achieve various division-level or functional unit goals, to advance self-assessment, and to inform institutional effectiveness. Read more...

Equity in Assessment

A New Decade for Assessment: Embedding Equity into Assessment Praxis

Erick Montenegro & Natasha A. Jankowski

Reflecting upon the conversations over the last three years around culturally responsive assessment and related equity and assessment discussions, this occasional paper highlights questions, insights, and future directions for the decade ahead by exploring what equitable assessment is and is not; the challenges and barriers to equitable assessment work; where the decade ahead may lead; and next steps in the conversation on equity and assessment. Read more...

Culturally Responsive Assessment: A Missed Call for Italy?

Serafina Pastore

This equity response by Dr. Pastore from the University of Bari explores questions regarding “Does assessment really assure diversity, equity, and inclusion? How is it possible to implement a responsive assessment?” Dr.
Pastore discusses the challenges of translating in vivo to an equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive assessment in the context of Italy, which can be "allergic to changes." Moving from Montenegro & Jankowski’s (2017) framework, this Equity Response explores the reasons why the proposal of culturally responsive assessment is far from becoming a reality in Italy. Building on previous studies realized at the University of Bari, the author concludes by highlighting improvement areas to assure a meaningful innovation process within the Italian higher education system. Read more...

Evidence-Based Storytelling

Practice Example from the Virginia Assessment Group and James Madison University

Caroline Prendergast, Andrea Pope, & S. Jeanne Horst

The Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit is designed to help explore the various elements in the creation of a compelling, evidence-based story. It was developed through document and narrative analysis review of accreditation reports, program reviews, and annual assessment reports. To support and broaden the use of the Toolkit, we continually seek examples of practice that can help inform other institutions and organizations. One such example comes from a telepresence conference hosted by the Virginia Assessment Group, entitled “Telling Our Stories: Using Assessment Data for Learning and Improvement.” This addition to the Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit offers valuable lessons learned, sample grant applications, sample recruitment emails and communications materials, assessment surveys and results, presentation slides, and various handouts and facilitator guides for the day’s activities. We hope this addition to the Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit proves useful as you seek ways to tell your institutional assessment story. Read more...

Assessment in Practice

Designing & Aligning Learning Outcome Assessments for Academic Programs: Proficiencies that Students are Expected to Demonstrate — Learning Institutions are Expected to Authenticate

Brandon David Moore
Learning outcomes are used to succinctly communicate the knowledge or abilities a student should possess after having completed a specified curriculum or academic program. Accredited learning institutions are typically required to identify expected learning outcomes for their degree programs as well as provide evidence that the students who complete the program are genuinely achieving those outcomes. The purpose of assessing student learning outcomes is, then, to determine if students are achieving the desired outcomes, and to subsequently use assessment findings and results to improve instruction. Institutions, however, go about this assessment process in a variety of ways, with some common principles to uphold and pitfalls to avoid. This Assessment in Practice focuses on how Liberty University assesses Program Learning Outcomes, with specific attention on the importance of designing properly aligned assessments. Read more...

Excellence in Assessment (EIA)

Consider Applying for the Excellence in Assessment Class of 2020

The Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designation is accepting applications for the 2020 designee class. EIA recognizes institutions for their efforts in intentional integration of institution-level learning outcomes assessment. If your institution is involved in exemplary assessment practice, please review the application packet and the accompanying rubric that evaluators use to assess each application. Materials are due by May 1, 2020. To learn more about the EIA, including the application and review process, please watch this recording of our January 21, 2020 informational webinar. Read more...

Featured Website

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville is this month’s Featured Website! The OIRA helps the institution fulfill its mission by providing “accurate and reliable data to university administrators, departments, and faculty to illuminate and inform their decision-making.” The OIRA website has several useful assessment resources, including tips on course-level assessment, writing clear outcomes, inclusive teaching, syllabus design, and an Assessment Toolbox with tips for formative and summative assessment. Read more...
News

The Standardized Testing Debate for College Admissions
Various news articles this past month focused on the use of standardized tests for college admissions. Some institutions decided to drop the ACT/SAT entrance requirement while others decided to continue it at least for one more academic year. Conversations explored the ability of standardized tests to predict student success compared to high school GPA, other arguments revolve around questions of equity, and some consider the revenue implications for institutions dropping the ACT/SAT.

It’s Time to Get Rid of Distribution Requirements
Instead of implementing a check-box style approach to general education, why not rethink this approach for something more engaging? Paul Handstedt, NILOA Coach, argues for a model that allows students to engage and grapple with concepts at multiple points in an interdisciplinary curriculum that treats students as capable and interested agents in their education.

How 5 Experts Say Colleges Can Create a ‘Holistic’ Student Experience
Higher education thought leaders, such as Amelia Parnell of NASPA and Ashley Finley of AAC&U, participated in a roundtable discussion around holistic student experiences, and the roles colleges need to fill to better retain and support students through completion.

Improved Grading Makes Classrooms More Equitable
Higher education institutions need to provide faculty the space and resources to critically reevaluate and own their grading processes so they feel empowered to implement more equitable approaches. Joe Feldman finds that once faculty are aware of how traditional grading processes have served to perpetuate inequities, they are more motivated to try alternative grading approaches that implement more equitable practices. Other articles opine on the topic of grading by speaking about grade inflation, and giving students more agency through the syllabus and allowing them to choosing their grade.

New Strategies Recommended to Promote Equity in Student Assessment
This article by Pearl Stewart highlights NILOA’s paper, “A New Decade for Assessment: Embedding Equity into Assessment Praxis”, which encourages assessment practitioners to implement more equitable assessment practice.

Who Leads on College Learning?
This article argues that assessment should be led by faculty, contextualized to the needs of the institution, and supported by an administration that encourages collaboration across all units and programs of an institution. It is one of a new series of "Transforming Teaching and Learning" articles.

Hiring in the Modern Talent Marketplace
A new report by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation “demonstrates that employers and hiring managers are preparing for a world where competencies – not degrees – are the most important factors when filling a job.” This places assessment as significant to help students secure employment upon graduation.

Time for a Tune-Up?
Tuning is a process that brings those within a discipline together to define the skills,
methods and topics of interest for the field with the intention of harmonizing, or “tuning”, to core disciplinary goals. Supported by Lumina, the American Historical Association (AHA) used Tuning to centralize good teaching into historians’ practice, work supported by NILOA Coach, Daniel McInerney. NILOA also has several reports on the topic.

Announcements:

**The Summer Institute for Improving Undergraduate Education**
Applications are now being accepted for the [2020 Summer Institute for Improving Undergraduate Education](#). The Institute is designed to help campuses develop the capacity and practical strategies to use evidence for ongoing improvement and work in ways that bring all students to high levels of achievement. Themes related to equity, inclusiveness, and opportunity will be front and center at this year’s event.

**New Issue of RPA**
The Winter 2019 issue of *Research & Practice in Assessment* features several useful articles to inform our assessment practice. For example, included in this issue are “Culturally Responsive Assessment 2.0: Revisiting the Quest for Equity and Quality in Student Learning” from Chiara Logli, and “The Use of Humor in Assessment: A Case Study” co-authored by Julia J. C. Blau & Eric T. Blau.

**RFP: Interoperable Learning Record (ILR) Resource Hub**
The U.S Chamber of Commerce Foundation is seeking proposals for a website developer (individual or firm) to help create an open, public Interoperable Learning Record (IRL) Resource Hub and help manage it post launch.

**New Learning Improvement Community Website**
The Learning Improvement Community is excited to announce the launch of a website dedicated to sharing learning improvement stories. The website offers concise, compelling examples of learning improvement from a range of academic disciplines and contexts. Visitors are encouraged to use these stories in faculty development, sharing practices among assessment professionals, and in communicating the value of assessment. If you have a learning improvement story you would like to share, you are welcome to submit your story.

**AIR Statement of Ethical Principles**
The Association for Institutional Research (AIR) released a statement regarding the use of data to improve decision making; what it means to act with integrity as we use data and evidence to improve higher education.

**CHEA Accreditation Toolkit**
The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) released an Accreditation Toolkit with information on accreditation for students, faculty, presidents, governing boards, and other accrediting organizations.

**New Issue of PLA Inside Out is now available**
The 7th issue of *Prior Learning Assessment Inside Out: An International Journal on Theory, Research and Practice in Prior Learning Assessment* is now available, and features several insightful articles and resources to guide your practice.
New Issue of Change
The latest issue of Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning is now available! It features several insightful articles, including “Implementing Annual Versus Episodic Budget-Driven Program Reviews: Contrasts and Synergy” and “Tribal Colleges and Universities: Building Nations, Revitalizing Identity”.

New Issue of Assessment Update
The latest issue of Assessment Update has a special focus on the Excellence in Assessment (EIA) Designation! A few 2019 EIA Designees are featured including Sam Houston State University, Auburn University, Finger Lakes Community College, University of Northern Iowa, and Bucknell University. There is also a new NILOA Perspectives on “Excellence in Assessment as Evidence-Based Storytelling” authored by Dr. Natasha Jankowski, NILOA Executive Director.

CHEA Announces Winners of 2019 CIQG Quality Award
The CIQG Quality Award was established in 2018 to recognize outstanding performance of higher education providers in meeting the CHEA/CIQG International Quality Principles. This year’s winners are the Technológico de Monterrey (Mexico), Higher Colleges of Technology (United Arab Emirates) and Bakersfield College (United States).

New Book: Critical Skills for Environmental Professionals: Putting Knowledge into Practice
This recently published book co-authored by Jennifer Pontius and Alan McIntosh presents examples that encourage students to apply their skills and knowledge to solve real-world problems. Focusing on skills-based learning outcomes that are common among environmental programs and leveraging a range of assessment case studies, this book can provide insights as to how students can apply their learning and evaluate their understanding.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs
February 18-21. HIPs in the States 2020 Conference.
College Station, TX. Texas A&M University.

February 19-21. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Commons Conference.
Savannah, GA. Georgia Southern University.

February 20. Webinar- Assessment Basics #1: Developing Quality Outcomes & Objectives.
1:00-2:00pm CST. Watermark.

Washington, DC. National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.

February 21. Proposals Due- Fast Track to Success Conference.
Austin, TX. Fast Track to Success Project.

February 24. **MOOC: Applying and Leading Assessment in Student Affairs.**
Student Affairs Assessment Leaders (SAAL).

February 25. **Webinar- National Research Collaborative on CBE/L: Findings from the 2019 National Survey of Postsecondary Competency-Based Education.**
2:00-3:00pm CST. American Institutes for Research (AIR).

February 26. **Webinar-RARE Model: Interpersonal Strategies for Inclusive and Collaborative Assessment Practice.**
2:30-3:30pm CST. Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE).

February 28. **Nominations Due- IMS Global Learning Impact Awards.**
IMS Global Learning Consortium.

March 1. **Proposals Due- New England Assessment Conference.**
Henniker, NH. New England College

March 2-5. **ACPA 2020 Conference.**
Nashville, TN. American College Personnel Association (ACPA).
**NILOA will be honored with the Contribution to Higher Education Award, and NILOA Senior Scholar Jillian Kinzie will be awarded with the Senior Scholars Diplomate.**

March 4-5. **2020 ICCHE Conference.**
Charleston, IL. Eastern Illinois University.

March 6. **Nominations Due-Examples of Excelencia.**
Excelencia in Education.

March 10. **The Assessment Conversation.**
7:30am-4:00pm CST. Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE).

March 10. **Webinar- The Intersection of Assessment and Inclusion: Lessons Learned from the Field.**
2:00-3:00pm CST. Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE).
**Webinar will be presented by Laura Wankel, NILOA Coach, Gianina Baker, NILOA Assistant Director, and Amelia Parnell, NASPA.**

March 12. **University of Florida 4th Annual Assessment Conference.**
Gainesville, FL. University of Florida.

March 19. **AAC&U 2020 Diversity, Equity, and Student Success Conference.**
New Orleans, LA. Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).

March 19. **Webinar- Assessment Basics #2: Curriculum Mapping.**
1:00-2:00pm CST. Watermark.

**Over the course of the next month, NILOA staff and team members will also be at the following venues:**
- **February 28-29.** Natasha Jankowski, NILOA Executive Director, will present and facilitate sessions for the FaCE Grant Award launch at Grinnell College.

- **March 5.** Natasha Jankowski and Nan Travers, NILOA Senior Scholar, will participate in a Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) and Lumina Foundation meeting.

- **March 6.** Erick Montenegro, NILOA Communications Coordinator and Research Analyst, will deliver a Keynote and conduct a workshop for Quinsigamond Community College and AMCOA.

- **March 9.** Natasha Jankowski will present at a Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) Seminar.
Welcome to the March 2020 edition of the NILOA Newsletter. In this time of uncertainty and rapid change, we would like to begin this newsletter with some well-earned congratulations before sharing resources on moving to online educational delivery and information on deadline extensions and conference closings. The NILOA team is very grateful to have received ACPA’s 2020 Contribution to Higher Education Award, and are ecstatic that NILOA’s very own Jillian Kinzie was also awarded the Senior Scholar Diplomate. We would also like to take a moment to congratulate Dr. Joseph D. Levy, NILOA Coach and Executive Director of Assessment and Accreditation for National Louis University, on becoming a newly minted Doctor! Please join us in congratulating Joe for this great accomplishment along with all of the award recipients! May this recognition energize us all to keep up the good work!

This Newsletter features two new Assessment in Practice pieces on engaging students, faculty, and employers in assessment. Jessica M. Turos guides us towards “Actively Engaging Undergraduate Students in the Assessment Process”, and Patty Zuccarello shares “Is This Thing On, or Am I Wasting My Time?: Using Faculty Development and Employer Engagement in Assessment”. We invite you to apply for the 2020 Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designation by the extended deadline of July 1, 2020, and highlight Bowling Green State University’s Office of Academic Assessment as this month’s Featured Website. Finally, we offer information on relevant News Items (including resources related to the rapid shift to online learning) and Upcoming Conferences and Programs. Of special interest is the newly confirmed announcement that Dr. Natasha Jankowski will serve as a Keynote speaker for the 2020 AALHE Conference happening June 8-11 in New Orleans, LA. We hope to see you all there!

We also want to share that under guidance of our academic leadership, the NILOA team has placed a hold on travel through the rest of March based on on-going developments related to COVID-19 (coronavirus). We will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates to the event calendar. As a mostly virtual organization, access is open for all assessment related materials on our website and we may be offering webinars on the topics we are now
unable to present in person. Please stay tuned for additional information on resource supportive webinars. In these interesting times, please take the necessary precautions as appropriate for you and yours.

**2020 ACPA Awards**

**NILOA Received ACPA's 2020 Contribution to Higher Education Award**

On March 3, NILOA was very honored and humbled to receive the [Contribution to Higher Education](https://www.acpaonline.org/awards/contribution-to-higher-education-award) award from ACPA. We are still overjoyed for this kind gesture and recognition of the work that NILOA has engaged with over the last 11 years. It is encouraging to know that our work continues to have lasting impacts across the field of assessment and higher education writ large. However, we could not embark on this work as efficiently as we have without the many great partnerships we have forged throughout the years, and certainly not without the support from assessment practitioners, faculty, staff, and administrators who are doing great assessment work day in and day out. So, thank you to all of our partners, NILOA collaborators, and Lumina Foundation. We also want to extend a special thank you to Dr. Gavin Henning, Professor of higher education at New England College, for presenting us with the award and being a great partner in this work! Congratulations to all of the fellow award winners, including NILOA Senior Scholar Jillian Kinzie who earned the Senior Scholars Diplomate!

**Assessment in Practice**

**Actively Engaging Undergraduate Students in the Assessment Process**

Jessica M. Turos  
Bowling Green State University

Oftentimes we think of assessment in terms of how are we going to assess student learning. Focusing on developing a culture of assessment, Bowling Green State University (BGSU) wanted to expand this mindset and more intentionally involve students in the assessment process. While graduate students across campus were involved with assessment practices, there was an opportunity for
undergraduate students to participate on a deeper level. For students involved in the assessment process, there is documented evidence of increased engagement and awareness, enhanced understanding of learning, and increased diversity of voices in the teaching and learning process. Intentionally involving students in assessment is beneficial not only for students, but also for institutions who gain insight and a student perspective about learning, development, and engagement. **Read more...**

Is This Thing On, or Am I Wasting My Time?: Using Faculty Development and Employer Engagement in Assessment

Patty Zuccarello
Joliet Junior College

Over time, and without careful tending, Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs can become disconnected from the marketplace they were initially designed to serve. In January 2018, Joliet Junior College (JJC) piloted a Faculty Learning Community (FLC) to give faculty an opportunity to take a deep dive into their programs’ health and design. The FLC was structured via a quasi-course that met weekly and featured assignments aimed to improve faculty’s program design skills using principles of Human Performance Technology (HPT) and Backward Course Design (BCD). Integral to the work of the FLC was to harvest and integrate employer feedback in the development of program-level objectives and to ensure these objectives tied to market demands. **Read more...**

Excellence in Assessment (EIA)

Consider Applying for the Excellence in Assessment Class of 2020

The Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designation is accepting applications for the 2020 designee class. EIA recognizes institutions for their efforts in intentional integration of institution-level learning outcomes assessment. If your institution is involved in exemplary assessment practice, please review the application packet and the
accompanying rubric that evaluators use to assess each application. In light of the current circumstances affecting higher education, we are extending the application deadline. **Materials are now due by July 1, 2020.** To learn more about the EIA, including the application and review process, please watch this recording of our January 21, 2020 informational webinar. **Read more...**

**Featured Website**

This month’s NILOA Featured Website comes from **Bowling Green State University’s Office of Academic Assessment**, part of the Institutional Effectiveness webpage. The Office of Academic Assessment (OAA) provides the university with assessment information and resources, offers professional development for faculty and programs through workshops and consultations across various assessment-related topics, and helps the institution collect and disseminate assessment data. Through the OAA website, visitors can find the University Learning Outcomes detailing the shared fundamental education values expected of students across all majors, general education, and the co-curricular experiences. All departments at BGSU are expected to submit a student achievement report to the Student Achievement Assessment Committee (SAAC) and website visitors can review the sample SAAC Program Assessment Plan & Reporting Cycle Rubric and its accompanying guide. The OAA webpage is a NILOA Featured Website in the Centralized Assessment Repository category aligned with the Transparency Framework’s Current Assessment Activities component. **Read more...**

**News**

**OLC Continuity Planning and Emergency Preparedness**
The Online Learning Consortium (OLC) has made available a collection of resources to inform and support faculty as they move courses to an online format when emergency situations arise. Similarly, the **Chronicle of Higher Education** created a packet that can help faculty with the transition to online.

**Don’t Forget About Us Minority Students: An Open Letter to University Administrators**
Will Walker, an undergraduate student at the University of Richmond, penned an open letter to college and university administrators urging them to consider how the sudden and continuing policy changes impact students of color and students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds. Students and their families are important stakeholders of higher education, and their needs and concerns should be factored into the decision-making process.

**New Interactive Online Modules on High Impact Practices**
The National Association of System Heads (NASH) has recently launched a new and free online resource, **High Impact Practices: An Educator’s Guide**. Over 35 interviews and case
stories are included which share lessons on implementing and scaling equitable HIPs. System staff, and campus faculty and administrators who want to learn about implementing, scaling and assessing equitable HIPs can all benefit from these modules. For those requiring closed captioning, the videos embedded within the modules can also be viewed on YouTube.

**It's Time to Get Serious About Teaching Critical Thinking**
We need to get more intentional and transparent about what we want students to know, and how we assess it. We need to be clear to ourselves and our students about what we mean by critical thinking. How are we helping students understand and attain this outcome? How are we ensuring that assessment appropriately captures it?

**Higher Learning Advocates Policy Brief Suggests Measures to Improve Part-Time Student Success**
Student enrollments in higher education are continuously diversifying across different variables; including race/ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, part-time/full-time enrollment, etc. As a result, higher education needs to consider practices that are better suited to fit the needs of these diverse students. Practices such as competency-based education (CBE) that measure student learning instead of seat time, and prior-learning assessment can be levers that drive student success. To learn more about how credit for prior learning can be assessed, another article explains how data can help with prior learning assessment.

**Developing an Inclusive Outcomes Statement**
Utilizing the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP), the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center revised a learning outcome statement to make it more inclusive and connected with the institutional mission. The article details the process and barriers en route to recognizing the viability of the DQP in helping military education programs refine their outcomes statements.

**Competency Tracking Tools Are Overdue**
Noting student development and success manually via gradebooks or excel spreadsheets is no longer effective nor efficient. There is a push to move toward learning management systems (LMS) that allow for the delivery of real-time feedback, capture actual examples of student progress, and create records of student development among and attainment of different proficiencies. On top of creating more holistic understanding of students’ competencies, better LMS can also help facilitate alignment between school, learner, and workforce needs.

**Moving the Clock Forward on Program Design to Drive New Learning and Enrollment Outcomes**
When implementing changes across higher education for the purpose of better serving certain student populations, attaining new learning outcomes, or revamping academic programs, it may be best to leverage new design models. Using designs that allow for flexibility, embed intentional assessment, and involve input from different stakeholders can help change the status quo and drive success.

**Developing Grad Students’ Scientific Literacy Skills**
Faculty advisors can help increase graduate students’ literacy skills by embedding it throughout their program. Graduate students can be encouraged to write literature review
articles for publication or participate in peer-review processes of articles headed for publication to get experience with the publication and review process, becoming critical readers while getting real-world, practical experience. For further reading on how information literacy can be nurtured outside of the classroom, read Learning Beyond the Classroom.

**Is Students’ Early Career Success Their Professors’ Problem?**
Helping students secure and succeed in a job post-graduation may not be faculty’s responsibility, but ensuring that students know and can explain what it is they are learning and how to apply it in the workforce certainly is. Assessment can help make these connections by explicitly articulating the alignment between course assignments, desired learning outcomes, and the practical value of each.

**A GPS for Learning and Work**
Personalizing the learning experience can better fit the needs of both learners and the workforce. This would involve an emphasis on assessment, credit for prior learning for students’ both formal and informal educational experiences, and a registry that can match learner skills with established outcomes and desired workforce needs.

**Even ‘Valid’ Student Evaluations Are ‘Unfair’**
Instead of using student evaluations of teaching as the main basis for hiring or tenure decisions, it may be best practice to use evaluations to identify cases where deeper evaluations could happen through a mix of student focus groups, independent evaluators, peer-review of instructional material, etc.

**To Keep the Focus on Learning, These Professors Asked Students to Grade Themselves**
Faculty are delving into grading policies that allow students to have more say on the assessment process and the grades they earn. Practices like these that teach students about assessment can help them make better connections between their learning experiences while helping them develop as individuals.

**Announcements:**

**Dr. Natasha Jankowski Will Keynote AALHE’s 2020 Conference**
The Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE) recently announced that Dr. Natasha Jankowski, NILOA Executive Director, will keynote this year’s conference! Over the past 10 years, AALHE has worked to develop and support a community of educators and inform assessment practices in higher education to foster and improve student learning and institutional quality. Please join us in New Orleans, LA, from June 8-11!

**The Summer Institute for Improving Undergraduate Education**
Applications are now being accepted for the 2020 Summer Institute for Improving Undergraduate Education. The Institute is designed to help campuses develop the capacity and practical strategies to use evidence for ongoing improvement and work in ways that bring all students to high levels of achievement. Themes related to equity, inclusiveness, and opportunity will be front and center at this year’s event.

**NILOA Staff Involved in New Credentialing Initiative**
Dr. Natasha Jankowski, NILOA Executive Director, and Dr. Gianina Baker, NILOA
Assistant Director, have joined Credential as You Go; a new initiative exploring the feasibility of a nationally recognized, incremental credentialing system in higher education which expands upon existing certificates and degrees at the associate, bachelor’s, and graduate degree levels. Dr. Jankowski serves on the advisory board and Dr. Baker is a researcher on the initiative helping to find examples of practice and providing insights to guide the project’s next steps. This work is made possible by support from Lumina Foundation.

VALUE Institute 2020 Calibration Training
The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) is seeking volunteers to participate in the VALUE Institute 2020 Calibration Training and possibly become scorers for student work. All scorers are compensated for their work, and receive a VALUE Institute certificate. Please contact valueinstitute@aacu.org if you have any questions.

Call for Contributions: PLAIO Issue No. 8
This new issue of PLAIO will focus on the possible interconnections between competency-based learning and prior learning assessment. While some have seen these directions as distinctive, even at odds with each other, many others have noticed their complementarity. Submissions are due July 1, 2020.

Grand Challenges Working Group Applications
The Grand Challenges for Assessment in Higher Education project, a collaborative effort endorsed by nine higher education organizations, aims to create national strategic plans to address pressing challenges facing assessment in higher education. The Grand Challenges Project is currently seeking applications for interested parties to join a working group. The application closes Wednesday, March 18th. Accepted applicants will be notified by April 1.

Upcoming Conferences and Programs

**Please note that some of the following events may be affected due to COVID-19 (coronavirus). Please check with organizers as needed to receive the most up-to-date news on conferences, events, and relevant due dates.**

March 19-21. AAC&U Diversity, Equity, and Student Success Conference. - CANCELLED
New Orleans, LA. Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)

1:00pm-2:00pm CST. Watermark.

March 20. Proposals Due (Priority Deadline)- Assessment Institute in Indianapolis.
Indianapolis, IN. Assessment Institute.

March 23. 2020 Mid-Atlantic Assessment Conference. - CANCELLED
Piscataway, NJ. New Jersey Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (NJACTE).

March 27. NEean: Dialogues in the Disciplines. - RESCHEDULED FOR JUNE 2020
Providence, RI. Johnson & Wales University.
March 27. Proposals Due- AAEEBL Annual Meeting. 
The Association for Authentic, Experiential, & Evidence-Based Learning (AAEEBL).

March 27. Proposals Due- HEDS Annual Conference. 
The Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS).

March 28-April 1. 2020 NASPA Annual Conference. - CANCELLED
Austin, TX. NASPA.

March 29-31. 7th Annual LEAP Texas Conference. - CANCELLED
Houston, TX. LEAP Texas.

March 30. Proposals Due- Student Affairs Assessment Conference. 
Student Affairs at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

April 1. Proposals Due- TxAHEA 3rd Annual Conference. 
Texas Association for Higher Education Assessment (TxAHEA).

April 2-4. 2020 CCSC Annual Conference. - CANCELLED
Tempe, AZ. Council for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC).

April 5-8. 2020 AACRAO Annual Meeting. - CANCELLED
New Orleans, LA. American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO).

April 7. Webinar- Equity Part One: National Perspectives and the Accréditor’s Role.
1:00-2:00pm CST. Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

April 17-21. HLC 2020 Annual Conference. - CANCELLED
Chicago, IL. Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

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learningoutcomesassessment.org

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Dear colleagues,

We are breaking with our traditional "once-a-month" email policy to share a compiled resource list and a webinar series in response to this challenging time for the field of assessment and higher education writ large. We wish you all good health and well-being.

In the spirit of providing a synthesis and go-to-resource for the transition to remote work and learning for faculty, staff, and students, NILOA is maintaining a Google Document with tailored resources to assist in this momentous shift. This living document contains information on assessment, institutional examples and responses, and general advice for instructors, students, administrators, and staff. Also included are crosslinks to other Google docs, generously maintained and compiled by members of the higher education community. Thank you to everyone who has shared their expertise with teaching online, course design, and working remotely so that we can all learn from each other as we adapt.

Read more...
Webinar Series

Stemming from conversations with many of you over the last couple of weeks, we have developed a series of free webinars that will be recorded and shared on the NILOA website. These free webinars will start today and be held every Thursday at 3:00pm Eastern/2:00pm Central/12:00 Pacific through the end of April. We encourage you to register and join us for each webinar.

**Community Check-ins and Updates**

**March 26** and **April 2**

These two Community Check-Ins and Updates provide a space to come together and decompress, share issues and experiences, and hear the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) team offer a brief synthesis of targeted information on responses and resources from COVID-19. Different bite-sized chunks of information will be shared each week, so we recommend attending both webinars.

**Assignment Design:**

**Charrettes to Build Community in a time of Physical Distance**

**April 9**

Ready to get your mind on something else or start planning for a different summer or fall learning and assessment experience? Join NILOA staff as we discuss assignment design (and redesign) and the charrette model as a means to engage with faculty moving to remote instruction while asking the question – how do we know if our students are learning? And what might the role of students be in assignment design in current circumstances? [Register](#).

**Outcomes, Alignment and Mapping, Oh My!:**

**Curriculum Mapping as Educational Design**

**April 16**

In this webinar, attendees will have the opportunity to reconsider resources and institutional examples within the NILOA Mapping Learning Toolkit to assist practitioners working towards intentional educational design or redesign in remote teaching and program review to consider learning outcomes within programs, co-curriculum, general education, and elsewhere learning occurs - especially in a time of distance learning. [Register](#).

**The Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit:**

**Using Assessment Data to Write Your Learning Narrative**

**April 23**

How can we document and talk about the learning that unfolds during this time along with our institutional response? Join NILOA staff to learn about Evidence-Based Storytelling—an approach that allows for communication of institutional narratives of learning and assessment processes and practices. This webinar modifies NILOA’s Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit to provide questions, tools, and resources for consideration in evidence-based narrative development for your local context. [Register](#).
Beyond the Looking Glass: Tenets of Meaningful Transparency

April 30

Join NILOA staff as we discuss updated thinking on transparency of learning, design, processes and practices as institutions work to convey information of student learning in a clear and coherent manner to different audience(s). Register.

We hope to see you and hear from you throughout these webinars as we support one another in our virtual community.
Welcome to the April 2020 edition of the NILOA Newsletter. This month’s newsletter features information on NILOA’s ongoing, free webinar series. We encourage you to register for the remaining three webinars occurring weekly, every Thursday at 3:00pm EST, through April 30. We also invite you to read a new Viewpoint “Ensuring Fairness in Unprecedented Times: Grading Our Nation’s Students” from Drs. Tammie Cumming, M. David Miller, Jennifer Bergeron, and Fredrik deBoer.

We feature three general resources to aid in shifts to remote instruction, including a Google Document of relevant resources curated by NILOA staff entitled “Making the Move to Online Courses: Resources to Inform Teaching and Learning”, our 40th Occasional Paper “Assessing Student Learning in the Online Modality” which is useful to current circumstance, and "Assignment Charrettes in a Time of COVID-19" to help consider virtual assignment design conversations in ways that are appropriate for this pandemic. The newsletter concludes with an invitation to apply for the 2020 Excellence in Assessment (EIA) Designation by the July 1, 2020 deadline, and information on relevant News Items and Upcoming Conferences and Programs.

We also want to alert readers that the U.S. Department of Education has an open comment period (through May 4) on proposed language for regulations affecting online learning. We encourage you to read the document and participate by adding suggestions before the May 4th deadline.

**Webinars**

NILOA is conducting a series of free webinars every Thursday at 3:00pm EST. For those who cannot attend the live sessions, each webinar is recorded and shared on the NILOA website’s homepage and YouTube.
Outcomes, Alignment and Mapping, Oh My!: Curriculum Mapping as Educational Design April 16
Facilitated by Natasha Jankowski of NILOA and NILOA Coaches Dan McInerney, Professor of History from Utah State University and Errin Heyman, Director of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness at the California Institute for Advanced Management, the webinar presents considerations for planning ahead to the summer and fall semester for supporting and advancing learning, especially in light of any learning outcomes that may need to be re-emphasized for returning students within programs. Presenters will discuss alignment, levels of mapping, what is feasible now, and where to place our attention as we plan for the future. Register.

The Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit: Using Assessment Data to Write Your Learning Narrative April 23
How can we document and talk about the learning that unfolds during this time along with our institutional response? Join NILOA staff to learn about Evidence-Based Storytelling—an approach that allows for communication of institutional narratives of learning and assessment processes and practices. This webinar modifies NILOA’s Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit to provide questions, tools, and resources for consideration in evidence-based narrative development for your local context. Register.

Beyond the Looking Glass: Tenets of Meaningful Transparency April 30
Join NILOA staff as we discuss updated thinking on transparency of learning, design, processes and practices as institutions work to convey information of student learning in a clear and coherent manner to different audience(s). Register.

Past Webinars:

Community Check-ins and Updates (View recordings from March 26 and April 2)

Assignment Design: Charrettes to Build Community in a Time of Physical Distance (View Recording from April 9)
Dr. Natasha Jankowski, Dr. Pat Hutchings, NILOA Senior Scholar, Dr. Tami Eggleston, McKendree University, and Dr. Shontell Stanford, Morehouse School of Medicine, discussed designing assignments for online learning, including tips for maintaining equity, quality, and applicability.

Viewpoint

Ensuring Fairness in Unprecedented Times: Grading Our Nation’s Students

Dr. Tammie Cumming, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York
Dr. M. David Miller, University of Florida
Dr. Jennifer Bergeron, Harvard University
Dr. Fredrik deBoer, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York
For students across the country, getting through the end of the school year has gotten very complicated. The spread of the Covid-19 coronavirus, and the widespread closure of public places in response, has turned our education system on its head. Perhaps the most prominent of these changes is the sudden, widespread adoption of digital instruction. As a result, several higher education institutions are considering major shifts in their policies, such as moving from letter grades to a pass/fail system. In this Viewpoint, we discuss some of the issues that should be considered in making these changes, which may have far reaching implications for students and the educational system. Read more...

Resources to Aid in the Transition to Online Learning

Making the Move to Online Courses: Resources to Inform Teaching and Learning

In the spirit of providing a go-to-resource for the transition to remote work and learning for faculty, staff, and students, NILOA is curating a Google Document with tailored resources. This living document contains information on assessment, institutional examples and responses, and general advice for instructors, students, administrators, and staff. Also included are crosslinks to other Google docs, generously maintained and compiled by members of the higher education community. Thank you to everyone who has shared their expertise. Read more...

Assessing Student Learning in the Online Modality

A useful resource to review in the move to remote instruction for the forseeable future is NILOA’s Occasional Paper 40. The first part of this paper provides an in-depth discussion of the Open SUNY Course Quality Review Rubric (OSCQR)—an online course design rubric and process that is openly licensed for anyone to use and adapt. The aim of the OSCQR Rubric and Process is to assist online instructional designers and online faculty to improve the quality and accessibility of their online courses. OSCQR also provides a system-wide approach to collect data that informs faculty development and supports large scale online course design review and refresh efforts in a systematic and consistent way. Read more...
Assignment Charrettes in a Time of COVID-19

Assignment charrettes, or a structured peer-review process of assignment design, provide an opportunity for faculty members to come together and discuss the design of their assignments in relation to learning outcomes, evaluative criteria, and the means by which students are prepared to complete the assignment. In the current global pandemic of coronavirus, faculty have taken courses online for the remainder of the Spring semester or term, and are planning now to continue online for the summer and possibly fall. Thus, conversations on modifying assignments are now timelier than ever. In this resource, we offer a few considerations for modifying an assignment design conversation for the near term. Read more...

Excellence in Assessment (EIA)

Applications for the Excellence in Assessment Class of 2020 due July 1

The Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designation is accepting applications for the 2020 designee class. EIA recognizes institutions for their efforts in intentional integration of institution-level learning outcomes assessment. If your institution is involved in exemplary assessment practice, please review the application packet and the accompanying rubric that evaluators use to assess each application. Materials are now due by July 1, 2020. To learn more about the EIA, including the application and review process, please watch this recording of our January 21, 2020 informational webinar. Read more...

News

Assessing Online Learning

As colleges and universities shift toward online learning with the possibility of continuing distance education through the fall semester, questions have been raised as to whether this will help or hinder online learning, as well as who has access to learning. The truth is that this is not the time to assess online learning. Our focus should be on giving instructors and students the flexibility they need during these uncertain times. The online learning happening now can be more closely characterized as emergency remote teaching, which needs to be evaluated differently and has consequences for fall enrollment. Similarly, administrators need to reconsider faculty review and reappointment during these times.
Helping Students Learn in Uncharted Waters

We need to maintain focus on helping our students navigate these uncharted waters and help them cope with the challenges they now face. Many students need help learning through the current situation, and we should take the time to listen to what students need and want colleges to know about COVID-19 shutdowns. Further, higher education has an opportunity to rethink structural elements in order to address issues of systemic inequities.

Grading and Pass/Fail

There are various discussions around grading students during this global pandemic crisis. Pass/fail has gotten a lot of prominence including calls for remembering the original purpose of pass/fail, and igniting conversations around grading reform. In addition, there are discussions surrounding the impacts pass/fail can have on prospective grad students, med students and community college transfers. Guidance has been offered on the acceptance of transfer credits by several organizations.

Course Design and Delivery

The Chronicle shared one professor’s guidelines for an interrupted semester. Since it is not always easy to change course content delivery to online, here are examples on how to handle apprenticeships, science lab classes, fine arts, and other hands-on career and tech programs while implementing distance learning. Other considerations include how faculty can adapt to ensure student success, changes to the syllabus, the implications for instruction at community colleges, and using the lessons of this time to tighten leaky educational ideas.

Resources

To those who register before June 30, the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) is offering free resources to aid in the development, implementation, and assessment of quality programs and services. Also, the National Inclusive Excellence Leadership Academy set forth recommendations to drive inclusive excellence as institutions shift to meet the challenges brought on by COVID-19.

It’s What You Learn, Not How Long It Takes

New podcast episode from Lumina Foundation discusses Competency-Based Education! Education in the United States uses time as a measurement for learning. Dr. Charla Long of the Competency-Based Education Network, Natalie Schwartz of Education Dive, and Dr. Zainab Okolo of Lumina, Foundation talk about changing this paradigm to value knowledge, skills, and abilities over how long it takes to learn.

Testing

A recent poll revealed that most university students want exams to continue online, but institutions are struggling with the decision, both domestically and abroad. This has led to increased attention to exam design that infuses flexibility, trust, and considerations for proctoring. These testing conversation also involve entrance exams as some American institutions are going test optional while some Asian universities are reaffirming their use of entrance exams as well as exam restrictions.

Inching Together: Making Significant and Sustained Growth through Cooperation

Glenn A. Phillips and Rebecca D. Graham explore how assessment professionals can connect, engage in dialogue, and collaborate with each other both within and across
institutions. This cooperation can lead to improved outcomes and a better work environment.

**A Few Suggestions on Working from Home**
Many of us are getting used to the new normal of working from home. To help with this transition, Linda Suskie has put together a few suggestions to help make our work from home more efficient and effective.

**Technology Considerations**
As higher education flocks toward virtual meetings, there have been concerns about the best use of technology to help with teaching and learning effectiveness. Some articles discuss videoconferencing alternatives and low-tech approaches to help the teaching experience. Another article introduces AI proctoring in online courses and related considerations.

**College Credit for Learning Outside Formal Education**
The American Council on Education has partnered with Credly to launch a new digital transcript that will focus on translating workplace learning into college credit. There is increased need for the recognition of prior learning to help workers return to college for advanced credentials while simultaneously helping to develop the workforce to meet future needs.

**Announcements**
**Leading Self-Assessment and Program Review in the time of Remote and Online Only Programs and Services**
The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) is interested in how those of you who lead CAS focused self-assessment and program review processes are adjusting during this time. Knowing how people are adjusting will help them plan for the future and best serve users. If you are currently implementing self-assessment and program review using CAS, please take five minutes to complete their short survey.

**New Edition of Assessment Update**
The latest edition of Assessment Update is now available! It has a special focus on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) as we celebrate its 20th anniversary!

**Upcoming Conferences and Programs**
April 16. Webinar: Outcomes, Alignment and Mapping, Oh My!: Curriculum Mapping as Educational Design. 2:00-3:00pm CST. NILOA. **The webinar will be presented by Dr. Natasha Jankowski, NILOA Executive Director, Dr. Dan McInerney, NILOA Coach, and Errin Heyman, NILOA Coach.**

April 16. Webinar: AAEEBL April 2020 Meetup. 3:00-4:00pm CST. Association of Authentic, Experiential and Evidence-Based Learning (AAEEBL).

April 17. **Webinar: Designing High-Impact Practices for Equity and Impact in New Contexts.**  
1:00-2:00pm CST. Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).

April 17. **Webinar: Built for Stickiness: How to Increase Student Engagement and Retention.**  
2:00-3:00pm CST. Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN).

April 20-22. **Assessment Network of New York’s 8th Annual Conference — Cancelled**  

April 21. **Webinar: Introduction to High-Impact Practices.**  
12:00-1:00pm CST. Student Opportunity Center.  
**Join Student Opportunity Center co-founder Chris Freire and Dr. George Kuh, NILOA Founding Director and Senior Scholar, for this virtual webinar.**

April 23. **Webinar: Assessment Basics #3: Direct and Indirect Measures.**  
1:00-2:00pm CST. Watermark.

April 23. **Webinar: The Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit: Using Assessment Data to Write Your Learning Narrative.**  
2:00-3:00pm CST. NILOA.

April 23. **Webinar: Tracking the Field: Recent Updates from the National Survey of Postsecondary CBE.**  
2:00-3:00pm CST. Institute for Competency-Based Education (ICBE).

April 28. **Webinar: Addressing Racial Bias and Microaggressions in Online Environments.**  
12:00-1:00pm CST. Center for Organizational Responsibility and Advancement (CORA).

April 30. **Webinar: Beyond the Looking Glass: Tenets of Meaningful Transparency.**  
2:00-3:00pm CST. NILOA.

May 5. **Webinar: Equity Part Two: Regional Perspectives and Approaches to Disaggregating Data. - Postponed**  
1:00-2:00pm CST. Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

May 11. **4th Annual (Virtual) Higher Education Assessment Conference.**  
11:00am-3:45pm CST. New England College.  
**Dr. Jillian Kinzie, NILOA Senior Scholar, will be the keynote speaker.**

Follow us on social media
Welcome to the May 2020 edition of the NILOA Newsletter. This month’s newsletter features the release of an Assessment in Practice, "Bringing the Student Voice to Transparency: One Model and Three Tools" by Joanna Boeing Bratton, Ruth C. Slotnick, and Christina Ouellette. In addition, we encourage you to complete the brief 5-minute survey on transparency based off the work shared in the Assessment in Practice. We are also pleased to release a Viewpoint, "Direct Instruction in Learning Outcomes for More Meaningful Assessment of Students of the Environment" on a new text on assessment of learning in environmental programs.

In response to the transition to remote work and instruction, NILOA held a six-part series of webinars. We are pleased to announce that the recordings from the NILOA webinar series are available, along with the slides and related resources. As part of the webinar series, NILOA released several COVID-19 specific resources including "Assignment Charrettes in a Time of COVID-19" and "Program Planning in a time of COVID-19". In addition, to help document, communicate, and report on the decisions made related to assessment at this time, NILOA released "Planning for Effective Communication of Assessment: A Toolkit for Practice" along with an activity "What is Your Philosophy of Assessment". We hope you find the resources useful.

We invite you to consider applying for the 2020 Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designation by July 1, and highlight the Student Learning Outcomes webpage from the College of San Mateo as this month’s Featured Website! Please also browse the information on relevant News Items, Announcements, and Upcoming Conferences and Programs.

Assessment in Practice

Bringing the Student Voice to Transparency: One Model and Three Tools
While working in the Bridgewater State University (BSU) Office of Assessment, a graduate assistant realized that one of the learning outcomes in her master’s program was not applicable for her area of concentration within her program of study. This realization helped her discover the importance and urgency of program learning outcomes transparency in empowering the student to take charge of their own learning and success. During her time as a graduate assistant in the BSU Office of Assessment, she has leveraged her voice as a student with deans, the Academic Affairs Assessment Council, on-campus presentations, and poster presentations at regional conferences to share the importance and value of program learning outcomes for students. She has been integral in developing the BSU Transparency Project model from which three tools are shared for other campuses to use and adapt. The BSU Transparency Project started in 2017 with the purpose of promoting and enhancing transparency of program learning outcomes for current and prospective students, faculty, staff, and administrators. We encourage you to also participate in BSU’s short survey on the perceptions of the visibility and understandability of learning outcomes on higher education campuses and organizations. Read more...

Direct Instruction in Learning Outcomes for More Meaningful Assessment of Students of the Environment

Alan McIntosh & Jennifer Pontius

Assessment best practices suggest that the most effective way to engage and include students in mastering learning outcomes is to directly teach frameworks for applying learning outcomes and then practice these skills with clear guidelines about what differentiates competency from novice to mastery levels. A new text published by Springer provides such a tool for direct instruction and assessment of common learning outcomes for environmental programs. Critical Skills for Environmental Professionals: Putting Knowledge into Practice is designed to provide direct instruction and assessment tools for environmental majors. Selection of content for this book was based on a review of...
learning outcomes published by leading environmental programs across the United States. Several common themes emerged that were focused on training students to apply their disciplinary knowledge base, with an emphasis on environmental problem solving. Read more...

**Resources for Assessment During COVID-19**

Making the Move to Online: Resources to Inform Assessment and Learning

NILOA developed numerous resources to help in the transition to remote learning during COVID-19. First, the recordings and slide decks for NILOA's six-part webinar series addressing topics of interest to inform assessment practice during and beyond the pandemic are freely available on our website homepage and YouTube channel. Several resources were also developed for these webinars, including:

- Assignment Charrettes in a Time of COVID-19
- Program Planning in a Time of COVID-19
- Planning for Effective Communication of Assessment: A Toolkit for Practice
- Activity: What is Your Philosophy of Assessment?

Furthermore, NILOA continues to curate a Google Document with information on assessment, institutional examples and responses, and general advice for instructors, students, administrators, and staff.

**Excellence in Assessment (EIA)**

Applications for the Excellence in Assessment Class of 2020 due July 1

The Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designation is accepting applications for the 2020 designee class. EIA recognizes institutions for their efforts in intentional integration of institution-level learning outcomes assessment. If your institution is involved in exemplary assessment practice, please review the application packet and the accompanying rubric that evaluators use to assess each application. Materials are now due by July 1, 2020. To learn more about the EIA, including the application and review process, please watch this recording of our January 21, 2020 informational webinar. Read more...
**Featured Website**

**College of San Mateo**

The [Student Learning Outcomes webpage](https://www.csmdal.org) from the College of San Mateo (CSM) is NILOA’s May 2020 Featured Website in the category of Centralized Assessment Repository aligning with the Transparency Framework’s component of Assessment Resources and Assessment Plans. CSM provides an overview page discussing responsibilities for assessing, where assessment happens, and frequently asked questions about assessment. The college’s 6 institution-wide learning outcomes are listed, along with detailed information defining each learning outcome and expected knowledge. Website visitors can explore the learning outcomes statements and assessment measures for student services departments, including the Assessment Services/Welcome Center, Career Services, and the Disability Resource Center. The Assessment Toolkit walks users through the development of learning outcomes, assessing outcomes, and documenting/reporting. Read more...

**News**

**Higher Education in a Pandemic**
Nan Travers, NILOA Senior Scholar, penned a three part article for the Evollution discussing higher education in a pre-pandemic society, during the pandemic, and in a post-pandemic society highlighting the importance of equity, creating proper pathways for students, and flexibility.

**Accreditation and the Future of Quality**
Judith Eaton, President of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), discusses how quality can be maintained during and after the current pandemic. She specifically touches upon the centrality of effective assessment processes that support student learning outcomes, and the importance of institutional autonomy in decision-making and advancing their missions.

**Standardized Testing During COVID**
As students begin to take AP tests from home, there have been numerous issues plaguing the service, including students not being able to submit answers. For some students who have been preparing for these exams, the unreliability of technology and access to internet have become additional barriers. Frustrations with standardized testing could boil over, and some are asserting it could be another mark against tests like the SAT/ACT as some college presidents are calling to suspend these entrance requirements.

**Online Exams & Proctoring**
In the distance learning environment, many faculty and administrators have focused on mitigating cheating in online courses. However, focusing on proctoring labels as students as cheaters, disinterested in learning, and approaches assessment from a deficit mindset.
Some students have questioned the use of proctoring software given *issues of consent and privacy*. Instead, we should instill tenets of *authentic assessment in online education*, and take lessons from online exams to *inform future instruction*. Further, higher education should work to *ensure online testing is equitable* to all students and design, administer, and score final assessments *equitably*.

**Pedagogical Lessons from Teaching in a Pandemic**
There are *various lessons faculty and instructors* can take from the sprint to remote instruction to inform future practice including instilling a *values-centered approach* to instructional planning, and working towards *designing educational practices* society and students need now and will need in the immediate future.

**Grading Considerations**
Conversations on grading abound including: How *lenient or strict* should instructors be with students during the pandemic? How much homework and assignments should be given to *ensure rigor* in courses shifted to online? How should students be graded? These are complex questions, the answers to which carry *implications for equity* especially considering the high levels of *anxiety students are coping with* right now.

**Remote Teaching and Learning**
It is important to make the *distinction between online learning and remote learning*; the latter of which is more appropriate for higher education's response to COVID-19. This distinction can also help colleges and universities *better plan for the Fall*, Viewing the current landscape as remote teaching and learning can help *better evaluate which tools can be helpful* even after the pandemic.

**Colleges Could Lose 20% of Students**
A recent survey of over 2,000 prospective college students indicates that four-year institutions could face a significant loss in enrollment as students consider alternative plans including deferment or enrolling in community colleges. Especially troubling is that fifty-one percent of students of color stated they likely will not enroll in college at all next academic year, compared to 24% for white students.

**Announcements:**

**Bridgewater State University (BSU) Transparency Survey**
BSU's Office of Assessment is seeking your input pertaining to perceptions of the visibility and understandability of learning outcomes on higher education campuses and organizations. The data from this quick 5 minute *survey* will be used to refine a Transparency Framework model for BSU and other higher education institutions.

**Webinar Recording Now Available**
The recording of the Watermark and NILOA “COVID Conversations: Adapting Assessment & Focusing on Outcomes During a Crisis” webinar is now available. The webinar panelists, moderated by NILOA’s Natasha Jankowski, discussed their plans for assessing learning, promoting continuous improvement at their institutions, and reinforcing the purpose of assessment during the pandemic.

**New CAS Functional Area Resource Paper for Fraternity and Sorority Advising Programs**
The Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (AFA) and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) have partnered to release the Functional Area Resource Paper for Fraternity and Sorority Advising Programs (FSAP). This resource—which will be freely available during the COVID-19 pandemic with code CAScovid-resources20—includes an introduction, brief overview of the FSAP functional area, and examples of how institutions have used the standards.

**New RPA Article**
*Research and Practice in Assessment (RPA)* has switched its publication model towards releasing articles as they are ready, with the first article-level publication: “The Assessment Skills Framework: A Taxonomy of Assessment Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes” from S. Jeanne Horst and Caroline O. Prendergast. The Assessment Skills Framework “can be used to evaluate current professional development offerings and plan new, intentionally designed programs in accordance with backward-design principles.”

**TPM Resource Guide: A Compendium for High-Quality CTE**
This new resource guide from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation informs how Talent Pipeline Management can serve as a framework to build stronger career and technical education (CTE) partnerships between colleges and industry.

**AAC&U Releases New Guiding Vision of Liberal Education**
The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) released “What liberal Education Looks Like: What It Is, Who It’s For, and Where It Happens” to set forth its vision for how undergraduate education can help address some of the issues affecting democracy and our global community.

**Call for Book Chapters**

**Standardized Components for a Competency-Based Educational Record**
The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) released a new guiding document informing registrars and admissions officers currently using micro-credentials and digital certificates to use IMS Global’s Learning Consortium Digital Standards for Learners Records because the standards are interoperable with other networks allowing for clearer communication.

**The Summer Institute for Improving Undergraduate Education is Going Virtual**
The Summer Institute for Improving Undergraduate Education slated for July 13-16, 2020, will now take place online! Campuses are invited to assemble a team and participate in the Summer Institute to receive support in making sense of data, implement equity-minded improvements, and create an evidence-based action plan to strengthen the learning of all students. Apply today!

**Upcoming Conferences and Programs**
11:00 am – 12:00 pm. PLAIO SUNY Empire State College.

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm. ACPA.

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm. ACPA.

May 27. *Webinar: Time, Place, Manner (New approach for developing supervision skills).*
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm. ACPA.

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm. Watermark.

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm. Institute for Competency-Based Education (ICBE).

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm. ACPA.

May 29-31. **The Teaching Professor VIRTUAL Conference.**
Magna Publications.

June 1. **Proposals due: 7th Annual Drexel University Assessment Conference.**
Philadelphia, PA. Drexel University.

June 2-5. **Remote Learning Experience – AAC&U 2020 Institute on General Education and Assessment.**
Association of American Colleges and Universities.

June 3-4. **Washington and Jefferson College Summer Workshop – Administrative Assessment.**
Washington and Jefferson College.

June 4. **Webinar: Using Arts Activities to Increase Self-Awareness, Emotional Health, and Cultural Sensitivity During COVID-19 and Beyond.**
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm. ACPA.

June 8-10. **2020 Fast Track to Success Virtual Conference.**
Fast Track to Success Project.

June 8-11. **AALHE VIRTUAL Tenth Annual Assessment Conference.**

**The NILOA team will be participating in multiple sessions and delivering a**
keynote at AALHE’s virtual conference, so please keep an eye out for us in the conference program!

June 11. T3 Network Midyear Webinar Information.  
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm. T3 Network.

Johnson County Community College.

Follow us on social media

learningoutcomesassessment.org

Subscribe  Unsubscribe
Welcome to the June 2020 edition of the NILOA Newsletter! We begin today by announcing that NILOA recently became a member of Today's Student Coalition in support of the organization's mission of "advocat[ing] for postsecondary policies that support the success of today’s students." We look forward to future collaborations and supporting and assisting the work.

Today also marks the official release of the Equity in Assessment Case Study series, undertaken in partnership with the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) and Campus Labs. The first three cases highlight examples of equitable assessment practice at Cornell University, Portland State University, and Capella University, offering ideas and perspectives that can inform implementation decisions for Fall 2020.

Then, we premiere NILOA’s Assessment Perspectives podcast! Our first episode features Christina Ouellette, a graduate student at Bridgewater State University (BSU) leading their Transparency Project.

We invite you to provide brief vignettes showcasing equitable assessment practice to be featured in an upcoming book, to participate in a NILOA survey seeking to understand the impacts COVID-19 had on assessment, and to apply for the 2020 Excellence in Assessment (EIA) Designation.

Finally, we highlight Western University’s Thrive Online webpage as our Featured Website, and provide useful information on relevant News Items and Upcoming Conferences and Programs.
Equity Case Studies

Cornell University: Ripple Effect Mapping

Leslie Meyerhoff

At Cornell University, many believe that equity-minded assessment practices should invoke participatory practices aimed at validating diverse stakeholder experiences. Equity-minded assessment practices explicitly name issues of power and actively work against systems of oppression; they should be easy to understand and easily accessible to all stakeholders; and the student or participant should remain at the center of the assessment. Ripple Effect Mapping (REM) is used as an alternative means to examine practice by not only learning about equity-minded assessment but also elevating the student voice and experience. REM is an iterative and inclusive assessment process that engages program and community stakeholders to map a program’s impacts. It also holds that we can only identify these impacts by including stories of diverse stakeholders and giving them equal validity in the analysis process. Read more...

Portland State University: General Education and Equitable Assessment

Rowanna Carpenter, Vicki Reitenauer, & Aimee Shattuck

For Portland State University (PSU), equitable assessment practice includes space for all students and faculty to participate in ways that are meaningful to them, grounded in an appreciation of their strengths and in the understanding that it is assessment’s job to find ways to support them in improvement. Equitable assessment practice means that students have the opportunity to show their learning in multiple ways, not just through high stakes standardized tests. At its best, equitable assessment processes consider multiple pieces of evidence of student learning, ideally curated by the student so that their understanding of their learning is part of the assessment process. In the general education program, PSU has made an intentional effort to pair assessment and faculty
support efforts so that faculty are willing to engage in critical reflection about their own practice and in conversation about who our students are and how we can best serve them. 

**Capella University: Equity and Transparency**

Nancy Ackerman

At Capella University, assessments are designed to ensure that learners have opportunities to learn and practice career-relevant competencies. In order to deliver on the quality and fairness of these assessments, Capella ensures transparency for all learners in each course for each assessment, beginning with how the assessment criteria are aligned to the course competencies. Learners are provided with a rubric that has discreet and descriptive performance levels to guide them to understand how their performance on the assessments will be evaluated – there are no surprises. Instructors also provide learners with additional feedback on ways to improve, as well as specific information about why his or her performance was assessed in the way it was. Learners have both a text and visual view of their progress on competency achievement through a Competency Map, which is a course-based dashboard that visually indicates each student’s status relative to specific assessed competencies. 

**Podcast**

**Assessment Perspectives: Bringing Voices to the Table**

Ep 1. Christina Ouellette, Graduate Student, Bridgewater State University

The Assessment Perspectives podcast highlights useful practices, innovations, personal experiences of those doing assessment work, and examines career trajectories of leaders that have impacted the field of assessment. The first episode features Christina Ouellette, a graduate student who leads Bridgewater State University’s Transparency Project. The BSU Transparency Project started in 2017 with the purpose of promoting and enhancing transparency of program learning outcomes for current and prospective students, faculty, staff, and administrators. We thank you for listening, and
encourage you to also participate in BSU’s short survey on your perceptions of the visibility and understandability of learning outcomes in higher education campuses and organizations. Listen...

Call for Equity Vignettes

Call for Examples:
Vignettes of Equitable Assessment Practice

An upcoming book from Stylus Publishing aims to assist higher education faculty and staff in implementing equitable assessment at different levels throughout higher education. One central element of the book is providing examples of practice, showcasing how assessment for equity is carried out within classrooms, academic programs, student affairs units, co-curricular activities, and across an institution. We invite you to share examples of equitable assessment practice for inclusion in the book by completing the form by August 1, 2020. Provide Examples...

Survey: Impacts from COVID

COVID-19 Survey of Assessment-Related Changes Made in Spring 2020

As a result of COVID-19, the higher education landscape drastically shifted, including assessment related processes, practices, reporting mechanisms, and assessment of student learning itself. This NILOA survey is designed to capture a snapshot of assessment-related changes made during Spring 2020 in response to the sudden shift to remote instruction and to inform future professional development needs. We invite you to participate in this brief 3-5 minute survey and share your experiences so that we can learn and use it in future planning. NILOA will release a report based on the survey findings. The survey closes June 25, 2020. Take the Survey...

Excellence in Assessment (EIA)

Applications for the Excellence in Assessment Class of 2020 due July 1

The Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designation is accepting applications for the 2020 designee class. EIA recognizes institutions for their efforts in intentional integration of institution-level learning outcomes assessment. If your institution is involved in exemplary assessment practice, please review the application packet and the accompanying rubric that evaluators use to assess each application. Materials are due by July 1, 2020. Read more...
HBCU-CEEQA will hold its 3rd Annual Convening virtually June 26, 2020. During this convening, members will engage a panel of HBCU presidents in a series of conversations around the linkages between a culture of assessment and accreditation, and the success of HBCUs. Attendees will also discuss the role of senior leaders in supporting assessment and institutional effectiveness professionals, all in the advancement of the mission of HBCUs, and for the purpose of controlling the narrative regarding the impact of these great institutions. HBCU-CEEQA membership reflects 35% of the population of HBCUs in the U.S., 5 national organizations, and approximately 77 individual members. NILOA is proud to work in partnership with HBCU-CEEQA and to share joy in all the accomplishments of the members. For more information on how to get involved, please contact Dr. Verna Orr, NILOA Post-Doctoral Researcher, at vorr2@illinois.edu.

**Featured Website**

**Western University**

Western University’s Thrive Online webpage is this month’s NILOA Featured Website as an example for how evidence of student learning can be shared in different ways; in this case, by letting students tell their learning stories. Thrive Online is a space for Western University students to share their learning stories and life experiences so that peers can celebrate, engage, and educate each other even while not physically together on campus. The website stresses the values of joy, courage, curiosity, equity, decolonization, empathy, hope, humility, and integrity across the platform. Students who contribute to Thrive Online can have their pieces published in the Scholars’ Life print magazine, which can then go into their resume/CV. Students are also encouraged to submit course blog assignments, or share observations and insights from coursework. Students can post on various topics, including academics, culture and community, student experiences, wellness, and more. [Read more...](#)

**News**

**Reopening HBCU Campuses - It’s Bigger than Football**
Dr. Roslyn Clark Artis, President of Benedict College, urges HBCU presidents who are considering whether to reopen campuses this Fall for in-person instruction to heavily weigh the implications of the decision by considering “the uniqueness of individual campus contexts, cultures, capacity, demographics”, social realities, and student needs; not just finances. HBCUs are often a haven for their students, and the decision to reopen or continue distance education is complex.

**My Turn: Being Black in America, Part 1**
Nine African American community leaders from the Champaign-Urbana area shared their stories about what it is like to be Black in America. As we see history repeating itself due to the lack of progress on social issues, Dr. Gianina Baker, NILOA Assistant Director, shares her thoughts on radical self-care through participation and support for the needed protests for Black Lives Matter, and how hope is carrying her through these times.

**New Issue of Assessment Update**
The latest issue of Assessment Update is now available! We encourage you to read the NILOA Perspectives article “Faculty Development in the Context of Assessment”, and to peruse the rest of the issue. Featured articles include “Engaging Faculty in Assessment of Institutional Learning Outcomes” and “Defining What Matters to Faculty: Aligning Programming by Assessing Needs”.

**How College Students Viewed This Spring's Remote Learning**
Eric D. Loepp, assistant professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater, surveyed his students to understand their experience with the shift to remote teaching last Spring. The results showed that his students valued continuous and clear communication from professors while also being able to express themselves.

**Your Strategy for Assessment During COVID: Keep Calm & Collect On**
A panel moderated by Dr. Natasha Jankowski stressed that while the Spring semester is an irregularity, we should still continue to assess for the purpose of understanding equity, discovering what worked well and what didn’t, and maintaining stability in our assessment strategies.

**Will the Pandemic Revolutionize College Admissions?**
As more institutions drop ACT/SAT requirements, higher education is at a cross-roads for what this means for college admissions. Some are giving thought to how we could replace standardized test requirements, and what a new admissions process could look like keeping in mind issues such as reading scores and gender gaps in college enrollment. Meanwhile, the College Board is asking colleges to be flexible with score cutoff dates and requirements this Fall; especially after they dropped plans to proceed with at-home testing due to internet access inequities.

**What Do We Know About This Spring's Remote Learning?**
Featuring insights from NILOA’s own Dr. Natasha Jankowski and Dr. Jillian Kinzie, this Inside Higher Ed article offers a few caveats to consider when attempting to evaluate the sudden shift to emergency-remote learning that happened last Spring as a result of COVID-19.
Qualified! Robust Assessment of Prior Learning
The University of Maryland’s Global Campus has developed the Qualified! program, where students will be able to maximize their prior learning to earn college credits and shorten their time-to-degree.

Announcements:

Complimentary Registration for the 2020 Assessment Institute
The 2020 Assessment Institute in Indianapolis will be held virtually this year. The organizers are happy to announce that registration will be complimentary this year for all members of the higher education community, including the pre-conference workshops. NILOA is happy to be a partner as the Assessment Institute continues to find ways to support colleagues facing travel and resource constraints in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Register today!

NILOA’s AALHE Conference Recordings
We invite you to view the recording of two NILOA sessions from this year’s virtual AALHE Conference: Dr. Natasha Jankowski’s keynote “Reflections on Equity in Interesting Times” and an On-Demand Session by Dr. Gavin W. Henning, Dr. Natasha A. Jankowski, Dr. Anne E. Lundquist, and Erick Montenegro “Equitable Assessment in Action: Case Studies of Implementation”.

New Leadership for NECHE and CHEA
Two accreditors announced new leadership changes. Lawrence M. Schall will be the next president of the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), and Cynthia Jackson-Hammond will be the new president of Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

New Article in RPA
Research & Practice in Assessment has moved to a new format by publishing articles as they become ready until a full issue is created. The most recently published article “Institutional Academic Assessment and Effectiveness in Higher Education: A Saudi Arabia Case Study” offers a glimpse into Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University’s attempt to institutionalize academic assessment protocols, procedures, and culture.

New Issue of Change
The latest issue of Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning features many articles of interest focused around the theme of “An Unpaid Debt: The Case for Racial Equity in Higher Education”. Articles in this issue include “The Case for an Anti-Racist Stance Toward Paying Off Higher Education’s Racial Debt” and “Do We Really Know What We See? The Role of Cognitive Bias in How We View Race in Higher Education”.

Presentation Recordings Available from 2020 Higher Ed Assessment Conference
New England College has made available the session slides and recordings from this year’s Higher Education Assessment Conference. There are two recordings for each session: one with closed captioning and one without.
Upcoming Conferences and Programs

3:00-4:00pm. Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE).
**Dr. Natasha Jankowski, NILOA Executive Director, will answer your assessment questions in this conversational one-hour session for registered attendees of this year’s AALHE Conference.

Immersive Learning Research Network (iLRN).

American College Personnel Association (ACPA).

June 24. Webinar: Design Assignments that Promote Academic Integrity in Online Environments.
10:00-11:00am. New England Educational Assessment Network (NEean).

June 25. Webinar: National Research Collaborative on CBE/L – The Evolving Role of Faculty in CBE Programs: Considerations for Research.
American Institutes for Research (AIR).

June 26. HBCU-CEEQA Virtual Annual Convening.
8:30am-5:30pm. HBCU Collaborative for Excellence in Educational Quality Assurance (CEEQA).

The Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE).


Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).

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Back to top
NILOA July 2020 Newsletter

Welcome to the July 2020 edition of the NILOA Newsletter. We are happy to offer an abundance of assessment resources to inform practice including an equity case study, occasional papers on re-imagining student employment and working with employers, assessment in practice examples for library assessment, a curriculum mapping example, featured website, and a call to share equity-minded assessment vignettes. In addition to the news and information on forthcoming events, the newsletter offers announcements of new reports, tools, and surveys. We wish you good health and happy reading!

Equity Case Studies

Capital University:
Campus Climate Assessment through Critical Race Theory

Brittany Lynner, Willie Ho, Mitsu Narui, & Jennie Smith

Capital University, founded in 1830 and chartered in 1850, is a private, liberal arts university located in Columbus, Ohio. In 2015, a broad group of faculty and staff began meeting to engage in discussions about diversity and inclusion at Capital University. A committee was formed and worked for over a year to build the framework for a Strategic Diversity and Inclusion plan. As part of the plan, one of the recommendations was to assess the campus climate. To examine campus climate, the study was undertaken with a Critical Race Theory (CRT) framework, which did not assume that the climate was already equitable for all students. Instead, the study asked the following questions: What are the actual experiences of students of color? Do students of color have different experiences than White students? Are students’ perceptions of diversity and inclusion different by race? This case from Capital University highlights how institutions can use CRT to examine existing processes and practices in order to create more equitable assessment practices. Read more...
Occasional Papers

Working with Employers: Tips for Success

Natasha A. Jankowski & Gianina R. Baker

Stronger, meaningful connections are needed between employers and higher education, however, questions abound about how best to work together. Stemming from conversations with members of the higher education and employer communities over the past three years, this Occasional Paper provides tips for fostering successful partnerships and collaboration between higher education and employers. Three lessons learned from successful employer and higher education partnerships are introduced: the importance of context, tips for sparking conversation between faculty and employers, and questions to ask one another to find common values and deeper understanding. Read more...

Mapping and Assessing Student Learning in Student Affairs

Natasha A. Jankowski & Gianina R. Baker

Over the last three years, the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) assisted institutions which were developing Comprehensive Learner Records and scaling high-impact practices. In each of these initiatives, mapping of learning, redesigning assessments, and creating assignments was a staple of practice. Further, assessment practitioners were reminded that before staff jump into implementing assessment and writing the perfect learning outcome statement with just the right verb, time is needed to think about what is being built, why, how, and which students are being served. This Occasional Paper provides inroads to such discussions, offering resources to inform practice and use in professional development. Read more...

Assessment in Practice

Connecting Student Employment to Student Learning & Development

Olivia Baca, Cindy Pierard, & Anne Schultz
University of New Mexico
Many students work during college and many work in libraries. The University of New Mexico University Libraries (UNMUL) Access Services team leveraged a student employment program to enhance students’ connection with the overall educational experience by structuring the employment experience to be beneficial to student learning and success. UNMUL redesigned employment practices to be in alignment with the Iowa GROW® (Guided Reflection on Work) program, which helps students learn about connections between their jobs, learning, and career goals. A study of the implementation of the GROW® program found it to benefit both student employees and student supervisors. Read more...

Outcome Measurement in Libraries: The Project Outcome Model

Sara Goek, Association of College & Research Libraries
Emily Plagman, Public Library Association

Project Outcome is a free online toolkit designed to help libraries understand and share the impact of their programs and services. It provides simple surveys for measuring and analyzing patron-reported learning outcomes in four areas—knowledge, confidence, application, and awareness. Project Outcome also gives libraries resources and training support needed to make use of findings and confidently advocate for their future. The range of assessment skills in the library field is broad but the need to use data for advocacy, planning, decision-making, and funding requests grows. The Project Outcome model provides convenient tools for libraries to measure learning outcomes easily and consistently. Read more...

Call for Equity Vignettes

Call for Examples: Vignettes of Equitable Assessment Practice

An upcoming book from Stylus Publishing aims to assist higher education faculty and staff in implementing equitable assessment at different levels throughout higher education. One central element of the book is providing examples of practice, showcasing how assessment for equity is carried out within classrooms, academic programs, student affairs units, co-curricular activities, and across an institution. We invite you to share examples of equitable assessment practice for inclusion in the book by completing the form by August 1, 2020. Provide Examples...

Curriculum Mapping Toolkit
Curriculum Mapping Example:
Lincoln Memorial University’s College of Veterinary Medicine

Patricia Butterbrodt

The concept of a map indicates the user is searching for information and has gone to the map to locate the information needed, with different types and layers of information available in maps with different foci. Likewise, a curriculum map will look different from one user to another, from one school to another, from one university to another. There are multiple designs for a curriculum map, and depending on the information presented, a curriculum map can be very simple or quite complex. This example from Lincoln Memorial University offers a description of a multi-layered mapping process including the uses of mapping, resource needs, mapping levels, possible formats, and other important considerations.

Read more...

Featured Website

Texas A&M University System

The Empower U website from the Texas A&M University System’s is this month’s NILOA Featured Website in the category of Communication and serves as an example of the Transparency Framework’s component on Student Learning Outcomes Statements. In developing the website, the system relied on NILOA’s Transparency Framework to guide the types of information made available to visitors. Institutions in the Texas A&M University System share a common set of student learning outcomes, and are encouraged to pursue an assessment culture of improvement; emphasizing a commitment “to responsible assessment practices that stress fairness and equity, and transparency.” Website visitors can find information on the six system-wide learning outcomes; including a description of each outcome and an overview of the multiple measures that will be used as sources of evidence for each outcome. Information regarding how different system universities engage in assessment and quality enhancement from an evidence-based and continuous improvement perspective can also be explored.

Read more...

News

A Push for Equitable Assessment
NILOA, in partnership with CAS and CampusLabs now Anthology released a series of case studies highlighting equitable assessment practices in higher education. The hope behind these cases are to provide the field examples of practice that can inspire others to use assessment as a tool for equity focused on students and their learning.

How to Engage Students in a Hybrid Classroom
HyFlex, simultaneously teaching students who are physically in the classroom and those
who are attending remotely, “provides options for students who can’t come to class for health or logistical reasons, and allows for socially distant classrooms by rotating students through on alternating days.” A good tip to designing a HyFlex course is approaching it as a fully online class with the in-person aspect being an enhancement to the course, however, particular attention should be paid to issues of equity and access to the option.

**Next-Gen Assessment: A Multimedia Series for Educators Transitioning Online**

AAC&U has created a blog space for assessment specialists, educators, and other professionals to “exchange information about new assessment challenges and emerging best practice.” Through open dialogue amongst professionals, innovation and progress in distance learning and assessment can be effectively and efficiently made. One such piece of advice deals with the argument toward not drastically changing course learning outcomes in the switch to remote instruction. Instead of quickly changing outcomes, discuss with faculty committees and administrators to consider the larger course context and how it aligns with program and institutional goals.

**Should Colleges Rethink Final Exams in the COVID Era? Some Profs Try 'Epic Finales’**

The various pedagogical changes happening in higher education in response to COVID might provide an opportunity to also re-think final exams. Professor Anthony Crider from Elon University uses “epic finales”, which are more memorable and experiential than final exams; such as having students teach course concepts to seniors via Zoom (blending elements of volunteering) along with a brief reflective essay on lessons learned.

**Did Students Learn as Much During Remote Online Instruction?**

This EdSurge podcast episode talks with faculty members to discuss whether students learned as much during the spring semester due to the sudden switch to remote instruction. While the assumption can be that learning took a deficit due to the change in delivery, one faculty member finds the opposite was true: students dove into the course content and conversations were rewarding.

**Equity in College Admissions**

The pandemic created the perfect opportunity for college campuses to have conversations about admissions policies and potentially moving away from standardized tests. But what will replace those tests? Further, how will colleges place students in coursework? With many students not able to take important final exams in high school, such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) exam that awards college credit, many believe this will open the door for admissions to use algorithms that move the conversation away from evaluating the individual student toward creating cohorts that fulfill campus goals. But even algorithms can be biased.

**Another Regional Accréditor Goes (More) National**

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education will join the Western Association of Schools and Colleges’ Senior College and University Commission in expanding its reach, and consider institutions outside their traditional region. The decision follows a recent federal mandate granting this ability to accreditors.

**With a Degree No Longer Enough, Job Candidates are Told to Prove Their Skills in Tests**

More employers are having potential hires take tests that assess their content knowledge, ways of thinking, decision-making, communication, and so on as part of the hiring process. While this creates another potential barrier for college graduates, it also opens the door for employers to find talent who do not have a college degree but do possess the relevant skills and experience.
Announcements:

**Research Report: COVID-19 and Your Campus: Impacts on Teaching & Learning and Institutional Effectiveness**
When COVID-19 closed higher education campuses in March 2020, students, faculty, and staff faced extraordinary challenges. In May 2020, Watermark conducted a national survey, collecting responses from 858 higher education professionals at 706 institutions to understand the effects of COVID-19 disruption on mission-critical processes in Spring 2020. Respondents shared their experiences of assessment, student feedback, faculty activity reporting and reviews, and catalog and curriculum management amid the pandemic, and plans for Fall 2020 and beyond. Respondents suggested practices and technologies institutions can apply in the new, COVID-altered landscape to support mission-critical processes that inform decisions and drive improvements in teaching and learning. You’ll find these and more in the report’s Action Plan. **[Read the Report](#)**

**Paper Release: Measuring Student Strengths: Using Noncognitive Data to Address Retention and Success Initiatives**
Campus Labs (now Anthology) has released a whitepaper exploring the links between enrollment and student success factors. They reviewed trend data for six noncognitive factors—including campus engagement, resiliency, and self-efficacy—with the understanding that noncognitive factors can provide campuses with rich information about their students. The paper also has case studies where such data helped institutions implement meaningful interventions.

The Center for Urban Education has released a free syllabus review guide as part of its Equity-minded Inquiry Series. The guide helps instructors review and reflect on syllabi content through a race-conscious lens, focusing on opportunities to better support students of color.

**Free Toolkit: Inclusive Teaching Practices Toolkit**
This free toolkit from the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) provides ten inclusive teaching practices tailored to online teaching, but can also be useful for in-person classes. Practitioners in the field also provide valuable insight and resources to aid with implementation.

**Survey: The HBCU Assessment Professional**
If you are an assessment professional at a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), please consider participating in this [survey](#) administered by Mercer University. The purpose of the study is to examine the career profile of assessment professionals at HBCUs. The results will depict who they are, where they work, what they do, and what motivates them to continue their engagement in the field of assessment.

**Survey: BSU National Learning Outcomes Transparency Survey**
Bridgewater State University’s Office of Assessment is conducting a [survey](#) to gather perceptions of the visibility and understandability of learning outcomes on higher education campuses and in organizations. The data will be used to refine a Transparency Framework model for BSU and other higher education institutions. We encourage you to participate and share your insight today!

Upcoming Conferences and Programs
July (Ongoing). [AAEELB Annual Meeting 2020 (Virtual Edition)](#).
The Association for Authentic, Experiential, & Evidence-Based Learning.
**Spread over four weeks in July, the virtual AAEEBL Annual Meeting is free and open to all, with live and recorded sessions.**

July 23. **Webinar- How to Design Learning Games Using Online Platforms Such as Zoom, an LMS or WordPress.**
10:00-11:00 am. Contact North: Online Learning.

August 12. **Webinar- An Intentional Process of Forming New (GLOs) Guttman’s Institutional Learning Outcomes.**
10:00-11:00 am. Assessment Network of New York (ANNY).

August 14. **Proposals due- Academic Chairpersons (AcaChair) Conference.**
New Orleans, LA. Kansas State University.

August 14. **Proposals due - AERA Annual Meeting Submissions.**
Orlando, FL. American Educational Research Association (AERA)

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In March 2020, institutions abruptly pivoted to remote instruction in response to COVID-19. In June 2020, NILOA launched a survey to capture a snapshot of assessment-related changes made during Spring 2020, and to help determine remaining professional development needs. NILOA is pleased to release the findings from the national survey. The report, *Assessment During A Crisis: Responding to a Global Pandemic*, presents findings from 813 responses, representing 624 different institutions and organizations. The report provides an overview of findings, couples those findings with other reports released from March through July, and provides “do’s” and “do not’s” for higher education and the field of assessment—looking beyond Fall 2020. Read the report...

**Watermark Webinar**

Join Watermark and NILOA on **August 19th from 3:00-4:00 EST** for a free webinar panel moderated by Dr. Natasha Jankowski offering collective insight into how institutions are planning to move forward this fall and beyond. Register [here for COVID-19 and Your Campus](#) -
Watermark & NILOA Share a Snapshot of Institutional Impact.

In this joint webinar, we’ll share a snapshot of the changes across more than 1,000 different responding institutions, as well as suggested practices to support mission-critical processes in a new, COVID-altered landscape. We will also explore:

- What kinds of assessment-related changes are yielding the most benefit for students and faculty
- How to better prepare faculty for online instruction, assessment, and activity reporting
- Planning to ensure continuity of core institutional processes
- What kinds of data to collect and use to continue driving institutional improvements

Read Watermark’s recently released research report, COVID-19 and Your Campus: Impacts on Teaching & Learning and Institutional Effectiveness.

AEFIS Academy Webinar

To continue the conversation, please join NILOA and AEFIS on September 23rd, 2020 at 2:00 pm EST for a free webinar panel discussion, “Assessment During A Crisis: Checking in on You!”

Register now!

This panel gives the higher education community an opportunity to listen in on overarching themes gleaned from the data collected to “check-in” and see how things are going now that the fall semester is underway, and learn some promising practices from leaders who have acted on student feedback during the pandemic. Panelists to be announced - stay tuned!!

It is our goal to provide the audience with the following intended key takeaways:

1. Consider your current efforts to use data to inform your changes to processes and policies
2. Think beyond quick fixes and tackle broader issues and systems
3. Deliver authentic lifelong learning, skills recognition, and employability enablement in courses, co-curricular, and experiential activities
4. Create a student-centered institution using feedback to continue to drive changes
5. Build a sustainable momentum and demonstrate the impact of ongoing work to deliver authentic lifelong learning
Welcome to the August 2020 edition of the NILOA Newsletter. We begin with an announcement that Erick Montenegro, NILOA's communication coordinator and research analyst, will be joining the Credential Engine as their new director of communications starting in September! Erick has been an integral member of the NILOA team for the last five years, and we are excited that he is bringing his background on transparency and equity to the Credential Engine. We are also delighted that Erick will continue to be affiliated with NILOA as a NILOA Fellow focused on addressing issues of equity and assessment. Please join us in congratulating Erick and wishing him well in his new endeavors!

This newsletter highlights NILOA’s COVID-19 survey report which provides snapshots of assessment-related changes made during Spring 2020 as a result of higher education’s abrupt pivot to remote instruction. We also feature an occasional paper on the Comprehensive Learner Record. We also invite you to join us in congratulating the 2020 class of Excellence in Assessment Designees - the largest class yet! The newsletter concludes with an equity response, and news and information on forthcoming events.

NILOA COVID-19 Survey Report

Assessment During A Crisis: Responding to a Global Pandemic

Natasha A. Jankowski

In March 2020, institutions abruptly pivoted to remote instruction, sending students, faculty, and staff away from college campuses in response to COVID-19. In June 2020, NILOA launched a survey to capture a snapshot of assessment-related changes made during Spring 2020 and to help determine remaining professional development needs. The report provides an overview of findings from 813 responses representing 624 different institutions and organizations, couples those findings with other reports released from March through July, and provides “do’s” and “do not’s” for higher education and the field of assessment—looking beyond Fall 2020. Read more...
Occasional Paper

Documenting Learning:
The Comprehensive Learner Record

Gianina R. Baker & Natasha A. Jankowski

Traditionally, transcripts present a collection of lists of courses and grades in a format valuable for trading information between and among institutions of higher education. What if transcripts were reimagined to not only provide information on credits earned, but also provide information on learning acquired both inside and outside the classroom? What if the transcript documented learning in a digital portable record, regardless of where the learning took place or was acquired? Beginning from a partnership between the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) and NASPA: Association of Student Personnel Administrators, the work to develop Comprehensive Learner Records (CLR) sought to address these questions with the help of a group of pilot institutions. NILOA provided professional development support to the pilot institutions as the pilot participants mapped learning and identified assessments of learning from both within and outside of the classroom for inclusion in a formal record. This occasional paper provides an overview of the Comprehensive Learner Record project as well as connection points to assessment. Read more...

Excellence in Assessment

Twelve Colleges & Universities Named as 2020 Excellence in Assessment Designees

The Excellence in Assessment (EIA) program recognizes colleges and universities that successfully integrate assessment practices across the institution, provide evidence of student learning outcomes to stakeholders, and utilize assessment results to guide institutional decision-making and improve student performance. The EIA designations are sponsored by VSA Analytics, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), and NILOA. The EIA designations are endorsed by the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC).

Three institutions were awarded the 2020 Sustained Excellence in Assessment designation for maintaining integrated institution-level student learning outcomes assessment for five or more years:
Nine universities were awarded the 2020 Excellence in Assessment designation recognizing their commitment to the comprehensive assessment of student learning outcomes as a means to drive internal improvement and advance student success:

- Davenport University
- East Carolina University
- Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University
- Messiah University
- Northwestern State University
- Oregon Health & Science University
- University of Florida
- University of Texas at Arlington
- Wayne State University

Congratulations to all of our 2020 Excellence in Assessment Designees!

**Equity Response**

Crippling Equity and Assessment: Disability as Identity and Culture in the Context of Culturally Responsive Assessment
Montenegro and Jankowski establish an ambitious goal in their occasional papers *Equity and Assessment: Moving Towards Culturally Responsive Assessment* and *A New Decade for Assessment: Embedding Equity into Assessment Praxis*. Their model, which ties together disparate elements of the assessment cycle with intentional consideration of students’ unique needs and experiences, calls for administrators, staff, and faculty engaged in the assessment process to view this work as integrally linked to the educational experience writ large. However, despite the many laudable features of Montenegro and Jankowski’s proposed approach to culturally responsive assessment, the occasional paper offers only limited attention to issues of disability or to the experiences of disabled students. In response, we offer a “cripped” reading of their occasional papers—raising questions about how Montenegro and Jankowski’s work might be supplemented by insight from crip theory. Read more...

News

**Grading in a Pandemic (Still)**

Colleges adopted flexible assessment policies due to COVID-19 last spring. Many are reverting to their normal practices this fall—though the term will be anything but. Dr. Natasha Jankowski urges us to remember that “We are in a pandemic. Still. Do not forget that it is also an inequitable pandemic”.

**Prior Learning Credits Help Students Cross the Finish Line to Earn Degrees**

A recent report offers insights into the growing trend of prior learning assessment (PLA) from the perspectives of 1,200 college students and registrars at 400 institutions. About one-third of respondents agree that institutional policies make it difficult for students to earn credit for what they’ve learned outside classroom walls.

**Equity-minded Assessment: The Time is Now**

A commitment to equity-minded assessment is needed to better support students and drive their success. Luckily, we are seeing more and more campus leaders reaffirm a commitment to equity, and we need assessment (and assessment leaders) to follow suit. To this end, NILOA has helped provide examples of practice to follow.

**Thinking Twice About Testing**

A recent report from the National Association for College Admission Counseling sheds further light on the place standardized tests have within the current education landscape. As more colleges and universities are urged to rethink their standardized testing policies from both admissions officials and high schools, the debate is still ongoing regarding their use and what could replace them.

**Recommendations for Online Learning this Fall**

To make online learning successful, Indiana University recommends aligning classwork with clear learning outcomes, and creating plenty of opportunity for students—especially first- and second-year students—to interact with instructors. Similarly, online engagement can be increased by giving students more freedom to be creative and create virtual solutions to real-world problems; to implement more hands-on approaches in online settings. Implementing creative practices can help foster inclusive classrooms, and create successful learning environments even in lab courses.
Grading Fears
A survey in the UK has revealed that almost a third of students are less likely to be admitted into their first-choice university due to exam cancellations and other complications with moderated exams due to COVID-19. The rest of the UK is considering following Scotland’s approach and using teacher estimated grades as universities seek clarification on grading and testing policy. In response to the controversy, the International Baccalaureate program has decided to heavily consider students’ coursework to tabulate final grades as opposed to standardized test results.

First-Generation Students’ Experiences During the COVID-19 Pandemic
A recent survey of over 28,000 undergraduate students conducted by the Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) Consortium finds that the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted first-generation students enrolled in large public research universities. This includes financial hardship, household issues, food and housing insecurity, and mental health.

COVID-19, Reopening, and the Role of IR
IR professionals are playing an important role in helping institutions navigate questions about planning for Fall 2020 and beyond, with an increased focus on the physical health of the campus community. In these uncertain times and changing landscape, IR professionals have been asked to help institutions make a variety of data-informed decisions which further centralizes the important role of IR.

Announcements:

Assessment Update
The latest issue of Assessment Update is now available! Of special interest are the NILOA Perspectives article authored by Dr. Natasha Jankowski which offers “Guideposts for Assessment During COVID-19” and Dr. Jillian Kinzie’s piece “How to Reorient Assessment and Accreditation in the Time of COVID-19 Disruption”.

AEFIS & NILOA Webinar
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Book Review: Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education
“Few topics have permeated the higher education landscape in the past several years more than academic assessment and the issue of how colleges can better assess student learning. From legislators and politicians, to the general public and the media, there are seemingly endless calls for colleges and universities to share evidence of their effectiveness. George Kuh, the founding director and senior scholar at the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, joins Ikenberry, Jankowski, Cain, Ewell, Hutchings, and Kenzie (2015) to outline approaches to the assessment process in Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education.”

Student Affairs and Services in Higher Education: Global Foundations, Issues, and Best Practices
This new, free e-book covers a vast breadth of issues including assessment, theories and
frameworks, professionalization, social justice, equality and gender issues, engagement, retention and graduate competencies, leadership and much more. This book is a global collaborative effort—boasting 250 authors and editors from over 125 countries—to capture the diverse efforts provided by student affairs in higher education around the world. Of special interest may be: "Research, Evaluation, Assessment, and Strategic Planning in Higher Education Student Affairs and Services" (Chapter 5, pp. 65-73) and "The Future of Student Affairs and Services in Higher Education: Trends, Directions and Predictions" (Chapter 14, pp.225-240).

**Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning**
The latest issue of *Change* is now available! Of special interest may be “Equity, Opportunity, and Quality Learning Essentials (QLEs)” authored by Carol Geary Schneider and “Re-Energizing Student Success: High-Impact Practices as a Mechanism to Connect State Policy to Classroom Practice” from Claire E. Jacobson.

**STEM Teaching and Learning**
This free resource curated by Inside Higher Ed and DigitalEd provides a useful exploration of diverse perspectives related to the delivery of online STEM education, and the efforts of some institutions as they attempt to attract more students to STEM.

**Lumina Foundation Seeks to Fill Multiple Positions**
Lumina Foundation is currently searching to fill four positions: director for Lumina impact ventures, strategy director for data and measurement, strategy director for community college workforce education and training, and strategy director for participation. Please contact Lumina for additional information.

**FEATuring YOU: A Soft Skills Training and Assessment Program for Opportunity Youth**
Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) created a digital assessment and learning program that connects marginally engaged youth, or “opportunity youth,” to employment and education opportunities. It uses a set of five validated, retail-based skills assessments and one game-based assessment developed in-house to test six soft skills: communication, critical thinking, customer service, adaptability, drive for results, and problem solving. Users can earn shareable digital badges once they master each competency.

**Delivering High-Quality Instruction Online in Response to COVID-19**
The Online Learning Consortium, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, and Every Learner Everywhere, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has created this faculty-focused playbook intended to improve course design, teaching, and learning in online environments. With special attention to the needs of instructors teaching online for the first time, the guide offers strategies for getting started and improving over time.

**Institutional Effectiveness Certificate**
The UNC Charlotte Office of Assessment and Accreditation (OAA), in partnership with the Office of Continuing Education, is excited to announce the availability of a NEW asynchronous, online Institutional Effectiveness Certificate (IEC). The certificate provides valuable training to higher education professionals seeking to expand their skill set or to individuals seeking to enter the field.

**Upcoming Conferences and Programs**
1:00 - 1:30 pm. AEFIS Academy.

2:00 – 3:00 pm. Watermark and NILOA.

**Dr. Natasha Jankowski, NILOA executive director, will be the moderator.**

August 26. **Webinar - Measuring Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Results from an Inaugural Campus Climate Survey**
11:00am – 12:00 pm. New England Educational Assessment Network (NEean).

August 28. **Webinar - Examining the Intersection of Equity, Trauma-Informed Pedagogy, and Social-Emotional Learning**
1:30 - 3:00pm. Kennesaw State University's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

September 9-11. **2020 Drexel University Virtual Assessment Conference**
Philadelphia, PA. Drexel University.

September 9. **Webinar - Boot Camp: CLR 101—How to Launch Comprehensive Learner Record at Your Institution**
10:00 – 11:45 am. AEFIS Academy.

September 16. **Webinar - Where is Equity in the Program Review Cycle?**
11:00 am – 12:00 pm. New England Educational Assessment Network (NEean).

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