The Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit: Using Assessment Data to Write Your Learning Narrative

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WELCOME

What’s the series about?

How will our time together today flow?

In case you are wondering:
- Slides will be shared
- This is being recorded and will be shared
- You can keep the convo going on twitter with #NILOAwebinar
- Google doc of updated resource on the NILOA website and all prior webinars as well: https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org
Community Check-in Recap

This is not a test of online education. Remember: It’s not about learning online; it’s about learning in a global pandemic crisis.

Compassion not compliance should drive decisions at this time.

Listen to students and be flexible.

Do not require a higher-level of proof in an online class then you would in face-to-face.
More Community Check-in Recap

Don’t start from a point of negativity in perceptions of students to create policy. A policy should not be about blocking cheating but enabling learning.

Modify end of course/faculty evaluations and use them as a formative planning tool.

Assessment of student learning is ongoing this semester, the reporting of those efforts is a lower priority that can be postponed or altered.
Assignment Design Conversations

Assignment Characteristics in a Time of COVID-19

Assignment characteristics in reviewed pre-review of assignment design, provide an opportunity for faculty members to come together and discuss through a structured pre-review process, the design of their assignments in relation to learning outcomes, evaluative criteria, and the means by which students are prepared to complete the assignment (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Elements of an Assignment Design Conversation

Assignment Characteristics

- Scaffolding Learning
- Assignment
- Learning Outcomes
- Evaluation Criteria

In the current global pandemic of coronavirus, faculty have taken courses online for the remainder of the Spring semester to terms, and are planning now to continue online for the summer and possibly fall. These conversations on modifying assignments are now similar to those. Assignment design characteristics provide a reason:

1. Focus attention on the key learning outcomes of interest within a course and the assignments that allow students to practice or demonstrate their learning – what is it that the students need to do?
2. Bring faculty together to help with physical distance, but also to problems solve collectively about how to focus and refine assignments for the next term, and
3. Provide professional development and support through community in a time of crisis.

While the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) conducted a ‘virtual assignment design challenge’ for several institutions of higher education within Virginia, and made their materials available for others to learn from, such an approach may not work given current faculty and student conditions including home schooling, access to internet and time, and other circumstances related to the coronavirus circumstances. As such, we offer a few considerations for modifying assignment design for the next term.

1. What learning outcomes will students demonstrate with this assignment? How does it need to be modified to better align with the learning outcomes of interest?
2. How does the assignment align with the evaluative criteria? Are there missed signals sent to students?
3. Thinking about the assignment from the point of view of students, what questions or suggestions do you have regarding clarity in instructions, prompt, or purpose?
4. How does this assignment allow for flexible options, alternative demonstrations, and/or culturally responsive demonstrations of learning?
5. How does this assignment need to be modified or adjusted to reflect current faculty and student circumstances and situations in light of COVID-19?
6. What unmet student needs, if any, may need to be addressed to accommodate learning during a global pandemic event?
Planning with Curriculum Maps

Program Planning in a Time of COVID-19

Students had already completed a full term and part of the spring when campuses switched to remote instruction in response to coronavirus, or COVID-19. The process of planning, they found, was complicated by the need to plan for different modes of instruction—online, in person, or a combination of both—depending on the circumstances.

Curriculum maps can help guide faculty discussions in planning for the summer and fall. When planning a course, faculty members need to decide how they will deliver instruction. They can use curriculum maps to help them think about the big picture and the connections between courses.

Here are some questions to consider:

- What are the key learning outcomes for this course?
- How will these outcomes be assessed?
- How will these outcomes be integrated into the course?
- How will these outcomes be evaluated?
- How will these outcomes be communicated to students?

Virtual Discussions for Future Planning

When undertaking programmatic planning conversations based on mapped and aligned curriculum, please consider current virtual constraints. Questions to consider include whether the planning process should be conducted synchronously or asynchronously. What technology should be used?

Given the differences in the lived experiences of faculty and staff as well as differences in current ability to offer blocks of synchronous time in a live, virtual discussions of mapping learning may need to be conducted asynchronously through virtual meetings.

Another model might entail a mapping exercise that is shared in a Google doc, grouped by courses, programs, etc., and made available to faculty over the span of a week or offered as an where faculty have time. A further option is to add questions to the online evaluation or survey faculty, staff, and students to capture what learning outcomes they think students have met thus far and what learning outcomes they think they need to continue to work on in the future. It might even be that the best path forward is a combination of various approaches mentioned.

Resources

For additional mapping considerations and ideas, you can access the NIOA Mapping worksheet, which is part of the NIOA, Training Activities, Rebuilding a Learning Toolkit, for information on what curriculum mapping entails, how to go about doing it, sample maps, and examples from other institutions.

Webinar Series – one left to go!

Beyond the Looking Glass: Tenets of Meaningful Transparency

April 30 Register.
Evidence-Based Storytelling

Evidence of student learning is used in support of claims or arguments about improvement and accountability told through stories to persuade a specific audience.
Why Stories?

Shadiow (2013) presents a process to see stories “as something other than sentimental anecdotes with thinly veiled lessons” but instead as a mechanism by which we may reflect on our practices and teaching (p. viii).

We have a story to tell about the decisions we made during this time, why we made those decisions, and the impact of those decisions on our students and their learning.

We have stories of loss to tell, some may be tragedies, and we need space to tell them.

How will we talk about what we did during this time? About the learning? What stories will our students tell about us?
Evidence-Based Storytelling

NILOA assists institutions in the practice of sharing assessment data through evidence-based narratives using a collaborative, field-tested peer review process. Evidence-based storytelling, informed by the NILOA Transparency Framework, offers an innovative strategy to help institutions meet current accountability and transparency demands.

To better tell institutional assessment stories using evidence of student learning specific to institutional context and audience, NILOA’s Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit provides questions, tools, and resources for consideration in narrative development. Click on each banner to expand the selection and access each resource.

Excellence in Assessment Designation
• Evidence-Based Storytelling Development
• Tips for Report Writers
• EBST Handout
• Peer Review Process
• Feedback Sheet
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Audience</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Argument</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Story and Language</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Characters</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Plot</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Data Visualizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Awareness and Discoverability</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- And how does that line up with the organizational narrative -
Communication Planning and Messaging

Today we are releasing new resources for planning communication and messaging on assessment efforts including:

1. Activity for Developing Clear Statements about the Value of Assessment
2. Activity to Make the Case for Assessment
3. Guiding Questions to Consider for Communication of Assessment
4. Communication Plan Template
5. Outreach Plan Template
What we share
Who we share with
Why we share
Real-Time Messaging
We are doing our best.
Faculty and Staff (cont.)
Faculty and Staff (cont.)
Faculty and Staff (cont.)

Let ME, help YOU!
- SHOULDN'T I ACCEPT MY ROLE AS THE VILLAIN?
Keep Telling Stories

Because it's a great story and I'm a teller of stories.
Considerations
Reflect Purpose

I have so much to say, but no one listens.
Understandable Language
Length
Leverage Existing Mechanisms

- Syllabi/course maps
- Contextualize/explain them!
- Websites/fliers/newsletters
- Free ad space!
- Faculty/staff/advisor meetings
- Push seasonal talking points

*POWERPOINT*
Progress & Next Steps
Assessment & Accreditation @ NLU
ULO 1: Specialized Knowledge

Results of program learning outcomes and results of IDEA survey items that map to University Learning Outcome 1.

Definition: This category addresses what students in any specialization or major field of study should demonstrate with respect to that specialization. Tuning, a field-specific effort to map learning outcomes, is necessary to describe the concepts, knowledge areas and accomplishments that students in a particular specialization should demonstrate to earn the degree.

Definition taken from the full text description of each ULO document.

219 PLOs or Measures Aligned
48 Total Programs

71.2% ULO 1 Achievement Overall

Percent (%) of Learning Outcomes Achieved by College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPSA</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kendall</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCE</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent (%) of Measures Achieved

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UGC</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

202 Total Action Items Identified
55 Total Programs/Depts with Action Items

Action Plan Items

Programs create action plans based on their assessment results each year. NCE programs create SMART goals for the year and reflect on ways to improve student learning and performance for each measure in their annual reports. UGC programs are provided their data and provided a template to help reflect on key points in the data and ideas for improvement. CPSA, Kendall College, and Student Affairs use an action item template at the end of their assessment reports. Major themes from these action plans and improvement reflections are presented below. These themes provide NLU an overview of the types of work faculty and staff are engaged in to improve learning.

Main Themes of Action Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme of Action</th>
<th>Total Action Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Planning</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection planning</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to use the assessment tool</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement planning</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review outcomes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Tools</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Modifications</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition of topic or content</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasize topic</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modification or redesign of course or program</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student support</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data exploring and analysis</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement Planning</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention for struggling students</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process or Service Change</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results Sharing</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and PD</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 202
Masters of Business Administration – AY1819 Assessment Led Actions

AY1819 CompXM results suggest our MBA students are surpassing our target for success, and scoring close to the population average! Students scored lower in finance and accounting.

Action Plan: To support student performance, course-level improvements were made to MBA 518 (Financial Management) that will provide more in-depth exposure to financial ratios, capital structure analysis, investment decision evaluation, and scenario risk analysis. Because student performance on the Capstone Simulation and CompXM varies markedly across students, we have recommended a linked revision of MBA 501 (Graduate Management Foundations) and MBA 524 (Strategic Management). The revisions would specifically address student preparedness for the program and for the sophisticated
Top 3 Goals:

1. DEI efforts (12 of 45)
2. Curriculum enhancements (5 of 45)
3. Enrollment & Marketing (5 of 45)
Sharing Examples@ NLU

Career Bridge Overview

Preparing for a rewarding career is not just about creating your resume and practicing for an interview. It takes strategic mapping to assess careers of interests, key employers, and means to connect to opportunities. The Career Bridge partners with students, alumni, and employers to build such strategies and bridges, hence the name. Connecting great people to great opportunities is what we love to do. Whether you are just beginning to think about your career plans or already have a plan in place, we are here to partner with you to see you reach your goals!
Pattern Piecing

@joebookslevy
What stories are we telling vs not?
Who is included as part of the story vs not?
Who is being engaged vs not?

To minimize the “not”, we can work to prioritize how/when to implement changes.
Saint Xavier University
Department of Communication
Telling the story of COMM 101 – Public Speaking at SXU
Using the NILOA Evidenced - Based Story Telling Took kit – Consider your Audience!

- Primary Audience(s) - Who is the target audience of the narrative (such as administration, policy maker, students, staff, etc.)? Is it internal or external? Are there other audiences who may be interested?

- Secondary Audience – Any other audiences you hope to target?
SXU’s Audiences

- Primary Audiences:
  - General Education Committee
  - Faculty teaching the course
  - Students
  - Dean of College

- Secondary Audience:
  - Accrediting bodies
Next up in the tool kit: What’s your Argument?

- What argument do you want to make to your target audience(s)?
- What are the goals for the story?
- What do you want the audience(s) to take away from this story?
- GEN ED COMMITTEE – Keep our course as a requirement because it does meet the oral communication outcome well.
- Faculty – especially adjunct faculty. Getting on board to teach the course as designed and actively participating in assessment.
- Students – Convince them the course is worth while.
- Dean – straight up compliance!
Next up in the tool kit: What’s your Evidence?

- What evidence do you have to assert your claims (i.e., data sources, indirect/direct evidence of learning, etc.)?
- For the primary audience, what counts as compelling, actionable evidence?
- Do you have that evidence?
- And is it the evidence that you think they should be aware of?
We collected speeches delivered in all classes and used this rubric to evaluate:

**Formal Assessment Process:**

- Artifact Collection (Panopto)
- Adapted VALUE Rubric
- Normed 4 of 39 speeches
- Assessed 28/39 speeches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Minimally Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Falls Below Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oral Communication</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exceeds Expectations</td>
<td>Meets Expectations</td>
<td>Minimally Meets Expectations</td>
<td>Falls Below Expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>VALUE Rubric</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exceeds Expectations</td>
<td>Meets Expectations</td>
<td>Minimally Meets Expectations</td>
<td>Falls Below Expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Capstone</strong></td>
<td><strong>Milestones</strong></td>
<td><strong>Brochures</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Organization pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable and is skillful and makes the content of the presentation cohesive.</td>
<td>Organization pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable within the presentation.</td>
<td>Organization pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is automatically observable within the presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Language choices are imaginative, memorable, and compelling, and enhance the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.</td>
<td>Language choices are thoughtful and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.</td>
<td>Language choices are mundane and commonplace and partially support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is inappropriate to audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery</td>
<td>Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation compelling and speaker appears polished and confident.</td>
<td>Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation interesting, and speaker appears comfortable.</td>
<td>Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation understandable, and speaker appears tentative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Material</td>
<td>A variety of types of supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that significantly supports the presentation or establishes the presenter’s credibility/authority on the topic.</td>
<td>Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that partially supports the presentation or establishes the presenter’s credibility/authority on the topic.</td>
<td>Insufficient supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make reference to information or analysis that minimally supports the presentation or minimally establishes the presenter’s credibility/authority on the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Message</td>
<td>Central message is compelling (specifically stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported).</td>
<td>Central message is clear and consistent with the supporting material.</td>
<td>Central message is basically understandable but is not often repeated and is not memorable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Mean</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>The speech is well organized and cohesive (introduction, body, and conclusion).</td>
<td>2.598</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Language is imaginative, memorable, compelling, and effective.</td>
<td>2.551</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery</td>
<td>The posture, gestures, eye-contact, and vocal expression are polished.</td>
<td>2.551</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>The explanations, examples, illustrations, analogies, and quotations are effective at establishing credibility.</td>
<td>2.673</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message</td>
<td>The central message is compelling, precise, memorable and well supported by the presentation.</td>
<td>2.925</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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What We Learned

- TECHNOLOGY ISSUES
  - Changed Collection Method
- DIFFERENT GUIDELINES AND OBJECTIVES
  - Developed Common Assignment
- ASSIGNMENT TIMING IN SEMESTER
  - Suggest “Final” Assignment
Next up in the tool kit: Story and Language

- What kind of story are you telling? (i.e., compliance, improvement, loss, struggle, quest, tragedy, fantasy, etc.)?
- Is your audience interested in that type of story?
- What context is needed for readers to understand the story?
- What is the setting?
Next up in the tool kit: Characters

- Who are the character(s) in your story?
- Is there a protagonist in your story—someone who is driving the action and/or someone with whom your audience is likely to identify?
- What are the motivations of the characters?
Next up in the tool kit: What’s the Plot?

- **Exposition** is the information needed to understand a story.
- **Complication** is the catalyst that begins the major conflict.
- **Climax** is the turning point in the story that occurs when characters try to resolve the complication.
- **Resolution** is the set of events that bring the story to a close. However, not all stories have a resolution—it could be a cliff hanger.
- **Conflict** What are we trying to address or overcome? (internal/external barriers)

**What is Plot?**

Plot is the literary element that describes the structure of a story. It shows the a causal arrangement of events and actions within a story.
Next Up in the tool Kit: Data Visualizations

- If you are using visuals in your narrative, are they appropriate?
- Do they support the story you are trying to share or detract from it?
- Did you make meaning of them for the reader, or are you presenting the visuals and expecting your reader or listener to make sense of them (and is there enough presented visually to enable this approach)?
Finally Consider:
Awareness and Discoverability

- Based on the story you crafted, what is the best medium through which to share it?
- Video, written narrative, shorter visual image pieces, a combination, others?
- Which means are the best to reach your target audience?
- How will you make them aware of it and how will they find it?
- What usability testing to determine communication fit with your target audiences will you employ?
SXU’s COMM 101 Story Results

- Needs of the various audiences were met (GEN ED endorsed the course, faculty follow a standard syllabus, students evaluate the course positively, the Dean is happy we assessed)
- Our evidence led us to change our assessment procedure making ours a story of improvement and struggle
- Our story is an episodic one, the next episode is in progress. Focusing on the low score in delivery we created a new assignment and new instruction to help us improve.

- Created common assignment
- Speech delivered electronically
- Created additional instruction by producing this instructional video:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mDrp8z-UYEU
Crisis Communication Tips
Telling the assessment story in current times

- Communicate honestly with candor and openness
- Collaborate with credible sources, like NILOA, AAC&U
- Communicate with compassion, concern and empathy
- Accept uncertainty and ambiguity
- Send messages of self-efficacy – “You can do this!”
Keep Discussing

#NILOAwebinar

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