Assessing Learning in Graduate Program

Workshop Evaluation Report, March, 2014

Executive Summary:
As part of the Spring 2014 Making Program Learning Assessment Happen workshops, the Assessment Office (AO) offered a workshop called Assessing Learning in Graduate Program on two dates: March 14 and 18, 2014. The workshop was advertised as a beginner level workshop suitable for faculty and assessment coordinators looking to develop their strategies of planning and implementing student learning outcome assessment in graduate programs.

The workshop combined both presentation and interactive activities. Among 12 participants, 10 submitted an evaluation survey (83% response rate). 100% of the respondents who gave an opinion (N = 10) reported the workshop as useful and 90% felt the workshop was effective.

1. **State the SLO(s) Assessed, Targeted, or Studied**
   Upon completion of the workshop participants will be able to (1) identify characteristics of good assessment, and (2) develop strategies for carrying out assessment in a graduate program.

2. **State the Type(s) of Evidence Gathered**
   The facilitator distributed a paper evaluation form with one direct assessment quiz question.

3. **State How Many Pieces of Evidence Were Collected**
   10 out of 12 attendees submitted an evaluation survey (83% response rate).

4. **State How the Evidence was Interpreted, Evaluated, or Analyzed**
   The facilitator scored one quiz question, used descriptive statistics to summarize the results, and identified themes from a close reading and coding of the open-ended responses.

5. **Summarize the Actual Results**
   - All (100%) respondents correctly identified at least one characteristics of program learning assessment on the quiz question. Six (60%) respondents correctly identified all three characteristics. No one selected a wrong characteristic. This is the evidence of the achievement of the first learning outcome.
   - Overall, 100% of the respondents who gave an opinion (N = 10) found the workshop useful and 90% felt the workshop was effective in increasing their understanding of assessing learning in a graduate program.
   - The most valuable aspect of the workshop recognized was the assessment examples, sample rubrics, hands-on assessment planning activity using one’s own department SLOs, and the interaction with the faculty specialist in the Assessment Office. Participants also offered constructive comments: “A consistent day and time for all trainings, if possible, would be nice.” or “more examples”.

Please see Appendix A for more detailed results.
6. **In addition to the actual results, were there additional conclusions or discoveries?**
   Participants seemed to value the time in which they worked on their own plan, got individual consultations from the assessment specialists, and shared their plan with a partner. Every participant seemed to be able to leave with a plan for the next step. This form of activity worked well. However, one participant’s partner left early and it is probably this participant who felt “[t]oo much time given to developing idea for own dept. assessment tool.” It seemed important for everyone to have a partner to work with.

7. **Use of Results/Program Modifications**
   The workshop’s content and format will remain the same because of the positive evaluation of the workshop. The facilitator will make small modifications based on the constructive feedback, such as providing more examples.

8. **Reflect on the Assessment Process**
   The evaluation form was an effective method of collecting workshop evaluation data.

9. **Other Important Information**
   None
APPENDIX A: DETAILED RESULTS

Q1. Circle the characteristics of graduate program assessment of learning. Choose all that apply.

A. It assesses student knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or values developed upon program completion.
B. It involves tracking retention and graduation rate.
C. It is tracking scholarly paper/thesis/dissertation completion numbers.
D. It shows learning outcome achievement at the aggregate level (e.g., 80% achieved SLO1).
E. It should be used to drive programmatic actions that improve teaching and learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Item</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 points</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 points</td>
<td>0</td>
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Q2. Please rate the overall usefulness of this workshop (check one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Item</th>
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<tr>
<td>Very useful</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Little Use</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not useful at all</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>0</td>
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Q3. To what extent was this workshop effective in increasing your understanding of the topic?

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Response Item</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Effective</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat effective</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very effective</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>0</td>
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Q4 What was the most valuable aspect of the workshop? Why? (Open-Ended Question)
- Clarifying program level assessment, time and assistance looking at our own program SLOs
- One-on-one interaction from Dr. Hill
- Resources
- Reviewing examples of different types of program assessment and types of data for specific SLOs. Example of SLO rubric also helpful.
- Understanding the goals and importance of collecting report and decision making
- Examples given creating and assessing rubrics
- Comparison of bronze, silver and gold levels and discussion of how to evaluate assessment attempts.
- Clear! Explanation of what SLOs are and are not. Hands on "use" of material (i.e. Activity worksheet; using own department SLOs)

Q5 What was the least valuable aspect of the workshop? Why? (Open-Ended Question)
- NA
- None
- Nothing particularly
- Too much time given to developing idea for own dept. assessment tool

Q7 Other Constructive Comments? (Open-Ended Question)
- A consistent day and time for all trainings, if possible, would be nice.
- More examples
- Thank you
- Thank you for having program SLOs available!