HLC report core component 4B; pg 25

The team found that the full faculty were not involved in the discussion of data. For example, the same faculty members were representing the faculty body in multiple assessment committees. All data should be shared with faculty and administration, so that assessment and instructional changes can be discussed and implemented. Shared, informed decision making would then be "closing the loop" in the implementation of those data in the instructional process

Assessment Plan Structure for SMSU's Liberal Education Program (adopted 2-13-13 by faculty assembly)

"By the end of October, the LEC will prepare a summary report based on the work of all of the previous year's AHA Teams and deliver this report to the SMSU Faculty Assembly, after which the individual reports and the summary will be distributed to the campus community and posted online. Both the LEC and individual programs will use assessment results to propose adjustments to their respective curricula"

Academic Year LEC Outcomes to be Assessed
2013-14 5. Physical and Social World; 6. Diversity; 8. Citizenship
2014-15 2. Communication; 3. Creative Thinking; 4. Critical Thinking
2015-16 ~~1. Disciplines~~; 7. Moral; ~~9. Life-long Learning; 10. Mind, Body, Spirit~~

"Communicate effectively"

What is shown in the report:

MNTC goal 1 coursework

- **English department: Composition courses**
  - English 151 students continued the trend of surpassing goals, with averages in all areas indicating higher-than-expected achievement.
  - However, English 251 results showed a large dip, with averages in each area coming in at about the same level as the English 100 student averages.
    - o Possibly due to rater disparity
    - o Possibly due to reduced contact time cause by increased class size and fewer credit hours

"Communicate effectively"

What is shown in the report:

MNTC goal 1 coursework

Speech Communication Program: Essentials of Speaking and Listening course

- Course exit surveys were a means of ascertaining the consistency of course requirement delivery and student perception of the course meeting its competencies. Done for on-campus courses as well as college now courses.

- Pre- and Post-test showed a modest increased in mean-test scores. Item analysis revealed several areas where students are increasing their command of core concepts.

- Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA): Preliminary results supported the conclusion that completion of the course reduces communication apprehension in all four of the contextual areas as well as the overall CA score

"Communicate effectively"

What is shown in the report:

Capstone level coursework

English Department: Professional Writing and Communications major
> The PWC major conducted portfolio assessments of its capstone students. The rubric used for this assessment includes an integration of the PWC outcomes and appropriate LEP outcomes

Speech Communications program:
> Did an analysis of Senior Portfolios, Senior Presentations, Senior Project Poster Sessions and Senior Exit Surveys. The overall results, analysis of data, and required action by the program is provided in table form.

Science Department: Biology and Chemistry Programs
> Both programs list student learning outcomes of the program that relate to the communications LEP outcome and provide data taken from the capstone course.

"Communicate effectively"

Recommendations:

- Revision of writing rubric that clarifies the "citing" and "conventions" sections. This revision will come before SmSUFA for approval

- Results of the COMM110 pre- and post-tests, suggest some questions may not be as valid as the program would like. These questions will be reviewed and reworded if necessary

- Since ENG360 is the core communication course for many majors across campus the PWC program should develop an assessment measure that focuses on the work of English 360 students as that work relates to information literacy and communication LEP goals

- Several program specific recommendations are given based on senior projects.

"Practice responsible citizenship in their local and global communities"

What is shown in the report

Local data and resources- SMSU:

Civic Engagement Survey (CES)
NSSE (2008, 2011, 2013)
Campus-wide Survey of Civic
Engagement (2009; previously in 2004)
Service-Learning Outcomes
Data about service activities done in
groups in three areas of campus:
- o Student Clubs
- o Athletics
- o Residential Life

Review of relevant rubrics and
assessment measures

Identification/review of resources from relevant national and regional organizations:

AACU Civic Engagement rubric
Measures available through AASCU American
Democracy Project
Rubrics/measures available via National Campus
Compact, Minnesota Campus Compact, AASCU
Corporation for National and Community Service

"Practice responsible citizenship in their local and global communities"

What is shown in the report

- **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE-2008, 2011, and 2013)**

  - The NSSE results indicate that, with some exceptions, students at SMSU generally increase their learning and practicing of "responsible citizenship" within the university between their first and senior years, and that overall results have improved since 2008

- **Two campus-wide surveys of civic engagement sponsored by Minnesota campus compact**

  - a large majority of SMSU students indicate that they have engaged in service of some kind; however the number of students engaged in "frequent/regular" volunteer service is very low.

  - Faculty place a high value on community service as pedagogy and high value on helping students think of themselves as engaged citizens--higher than similar public 4-year institutions. However, faculty note the primary barriers to teaching service-learning courses include time constraints and logistics of setting up service-learning courses

"Practice responsible citizenship in their local and global communities"

What is shown in the report

- **Civic Engagement Survey (CES) as a means of measuring change over time freshman to senior**
  - Initial comparison of LEP 100 section responses to the CES-R with graduating senior responses to CES indicate improvements over time.

- **pre/post "What does civic engagement mean for you?" for courses that address LEP Outcome– Practice Responsible Citizenship**

  - data suggest that we are able to make distinctions between engaged citizen outcomes based upon how civic engagement is addressed in a given course—Lecture/discussion vs Lecture/discussion including service learning

  - Could be adapted to more specifically address content of a given course –e.g. "How does knowledge of American government relate to being an engaged citizen?"

  - Could be adapted for Student Clubs, Res Life, Athletics—have means of measure more than just WHAT students are doing

"Practice responsible citizenship in their local and global communities"

"CLOSING THE LOOP": CHANGES THUS FAR IN RESPONSE TO INSIGHTS GAINED

o Substantial restructuring of CE website in 2014 to enhance its value as resource for the campus and community (specifically to get the word out about service opportunities and create an efficient means of collecting assessment data, for example)

o Strengthened relationships between Center for CE and Residential Life, Student Activities, and Athletics for assessment gathering purposes

o In process of training CE interns to raise awareness of website as resource via in class presentations, participation in staff (e.g. RA) trainings, visits to student clubs, visits to community partners, etc.

o Creating internships with 5 hr/week commitment for ONE YEAR versus one semester to enhance continuity of staff issue

"Practice responsible citizenship in their local and global communities"

"CLOSING THE LOOP" : IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRICULUM STRUCTURE:

o Use CES-R Survey in all LEP 100 and LEP 400 courses
o Use "What does civic engagement mean to you?" as pre/post measure in "engaged citizen" courses and all LEP 100 and LEP 400 courses
o Retain LEP 400 as part of LEP requirements -- critical opportunity for creating sustained, community problem-solving efforts (as capstone and being interdisciplinary in nature, similar to Portland State model)

"Practice responsible citizenship in their local and global communities"

"CLOSING THE LOOP": IMPLICATIONS FOR ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES:

o Need for additional staffing to allow for making civic engagement more integral to students' learning experiences (vs basic maintenance functions and heavy reliance on website as resource)

o Need to consider software such as Get Connected to enhance ability to gather information about service opportunities and gather data for assessment purposes

"Embrace the similarities among peoples and appreciate the diversity that enriches the human experience"

What is shown in the report:

- "There are many initiatives and opportunities academically, administratively, and extracurricularly through which students gain exposure to diverse cultures and worldviews. On the other hand, there is <u>very little actual hard data being collected and analyzed</u>, so it is difficult to say whether exposure is translating into students making progress toward achieving any of the sub-outcomes"

- The Report:
  - Identified courses that support the student learning outcome
  - Identified program learning outcomes related to diversity
  - Listed offices on campus with diversity related missions
  - Listed campus committees with diversity related missions
  - Listed campus clubs/organizations providing diversity-related extracurricular activities

"Embrace the similarities among peoples and appreciate the diversity that enriches the human experience"

Recommendations:

- The team suggests review of syllabi, SLOs, and documentation for individual courses approved under the MTC Goal areas of Human Diversity and Global Perspective using the attached Instructional artifacts rubric

- The team suggest collecting data from self-identified courses claiming to support the student learning outcomes using the attached student artifacts rubric

- The team suggests connecting with departments at the program level instead of reaching out to faculty individually.

"understand both physical and social aspects of the world and their place in it"

What is shown in the report:

- **Identified courses that support the student learning outcome**
  - relied on faculty members to self-identify courses
  - Courses were mostly from the 100/200 level but did range across all four years

- **Gathered assessment data from select classes based on the following criteria 1) they are high-enrollment classes; 2) they come from different MnTc goal areas; 3) they represent different stages of assessment. Courses selected were:**
  - Biol100: Biology in the Modern World
  - Envs180: Introduction to Environmental Science
  - Soc101: Introduction to sociology
  - Geog101: Introduction to geography
  - Eng360: Scientific and Technical writing

"understand both physical and social aspects of the world and their place in it"

What is shown in the report:

Provided data/information

- **Basic information;** Course name; Primary area within MnTC/LEP; Student impact; Enrollment/year; Course goals and outcomes and their alignment with LEP student learning outcome #5

- **Assessments**
  - Description of at least one assessment tool used in the course
  - Description of how the assessment tool is scored
  - Description of how the tool shows student learning
  - Description of how assessment results have modified course content/delivery (if available)

"understand both physical and social aspects of the world and their place in it"

Recommendations from the report:

- To meet HLC requirements, data is needed from across 4 years not just 100/200 level!
  - This is partially a result of AHA team's focus on high enrollment entry level classes.
  - It is also a result of the difficulties in obtaining assessment data from faculty

- Department annual reports should include assessment data to make the data collection process easier for the AHA teams

- Information is needed on how data is driving change. Based on the small sample, programs seem to have lots of data, but few provide information on what changes resulted from that data.

"Be creative thinkers able to identify, formulate, and solve problems using interdisciplinary perspectives"

What is shown in the report:

 Data was available from 4 LEP400 sections and COMM450

The work of ten random students was assessed using two different assessment tools – the AAC&U Creative Thinking Rubric and a SMSU rubric that ranked each of the creative thinking sub-outcomes from a high score of 4 to a low score of zero

When comparing assessment scores from each of the two assessment tools, the results were very similar. More specifically, both sets of results suggest that the overall performance level of the students sampled was midrange (i.e. score of 2 or 3 on scale of 0 to 4)

"Creative Thinking"

What is shown in the report:

Student responses to select questions from NSSE survey
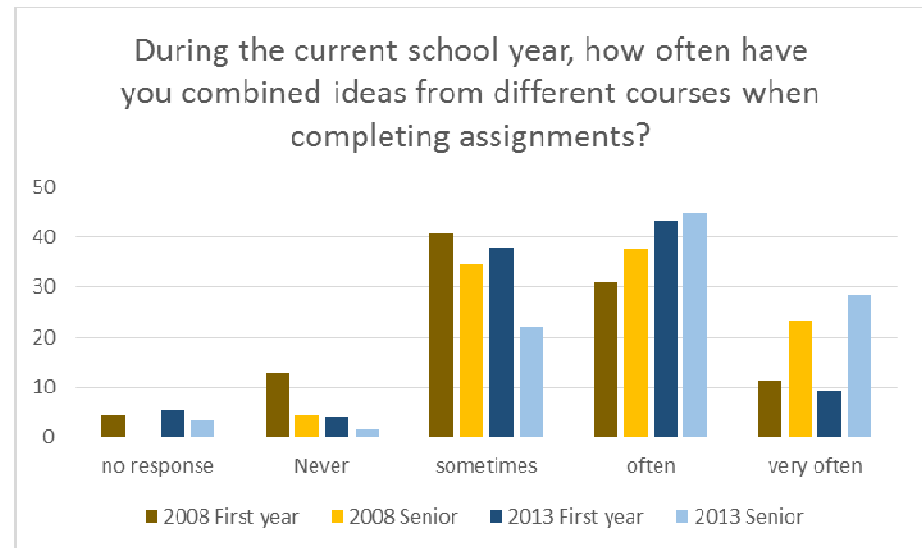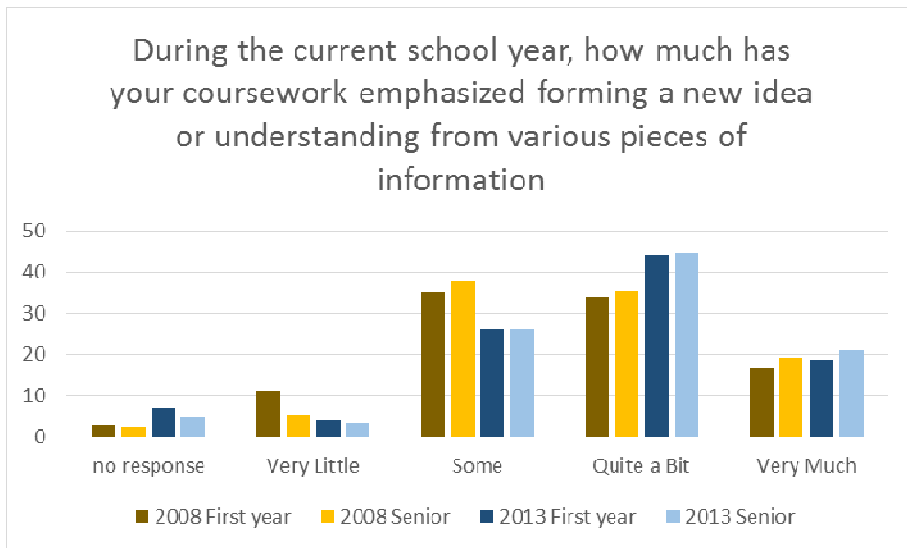
"Creative Thinking"

Recommendations:

1. Revise the assessment plan for learning outcomes. The plan currently in use is cumbersome and largely ineffective.

2. Embed assessment for learning outcomes into existing program reviews/annual reports.

3. Provide faculty with an assessment tool that can provide meaningful information at the university level because the dimensions of the AAC&U creative thinking rubric do not align with the LEP sub-outcomes, the rating tool used by participating faculty should be considered.

"Be critical thinkers who evaluate information wisely and examine how assumptions and positions are shaped"

What is shown in the report:

LEP100: An introduction to critical thinking
Eleven (11) instructors provided data for twenty-one (21) of the thirty-six (36) sections of LEP 100; 58% of all sections of LEP 100 taught in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.

64% of instructors provided raw numbers and/or the mean or average and no analysis. Another 9% provided information such as the median, mean, and other statistics and analyzed that data. Finally, another 27% provided information such as the average, analyzed that data, and provided evidence that the instructor is using that data to "close the loop".

The available data suggests that LEP 100 does improve students' critical thinking abilities. Students did better on the modified Moorburg Letter after taking the course. Average percentage increase was 34.83% but was quite variable from section to section.

"Be critical thinkers who evaluate information wisely and examine how assumptions and positions are shaped"

Recommendations for Closing the Assessment Loop: LEP100

a) The LEC and/or CIA should periodically educate instructors on recommended critical thinking assessment measures for LEP100

b) the manual should include the "LEP 100: First Year Seminar: Modified Moorburg Letter Assessment Template" as a means of gathering such information as the mean, median, and mode of each test, along with statistics on conclusion identification. The assessment template also requires that all LEP 100 instructors analyze their own data and use that information to close the assessment loop.

c) The "LEP 100: First Year Seminar: Modified Moorburg Letter Assessment Template" should be completed and passed on to the Liberal Education Committee within six (6) weeks of the end of the course.

"Be critical thinkers who evaluate information wisely and examine how assumptions and positions are shaped"

Recommendations for Closing the Assessment Loop: LEP100

d) The Liberal Education Committee (LEC) should require that all LEP 100 instructors live up to their agreement to "participate in the FYS assessment process" by giving the modified Moorburg Letter as pre-test and post-test and providing assessment data to the LEC.

e) Departments should not schedule instructors who refuse to participate in the assessment process and/or fail to submit the assessment template on time to teach LEP 100

f) Should a signature assignment in addition to (or instead of) completing the Moorburg Letter Assessment be considered across all sections of LEP100? Such an assignment could be evaluated with the critical thinking rubric.

"Be critical thinkers who evaluate information wisely and examine how assumptions and positions are shaped"

What is shown in the report:

LEP400:

Although creative thinking is the primary outcome, it should be noted that as part of that approval process, faculty agree to participate in assessment of the Core Skills of the LEP – one of which is critical thinking.

The limited amount of data retrieved from four sections of LEP 400 does not support making significant curricular changes. The data demonstrates the majority of the students in these limited number of LEP400 sections are at the Advanced Level on the assessed critical thinking measures, but a significant number remain at the developing level. The data at the Emerging level is particularly concerning considering students have to have a minimum number of credits and meet a number of prerequisites to enroll. Without a larger sample, it is difficult to discern the significance of each set of numbers.

"Be critical thinkers who evaluate information wisely and examine how assumptions and positions are shaped"

Recommendations for Closing the Assessment Loop: LEP400

1. For LEP 400, a consistent use of the LEP rubrics across all LEP 400 sections would be useful in gathering assessment data. Enough data has not been gathered to make curricular recommendations.

2. agreement should be made about benchmarks for each of these rubrics. For example, what are the expectations in meeting critical thinking outcomes for this graduation-required course?

3. While the LEP 400 proposal document does indicate in two places that the core skills are a portion of this course and need to be assessed, this may need greater emphasis if assessment data is to be gathered from this course.

4. Should a post-test be considered to gauge growth from LEP 100?

"Be critical thinkers who evaluate information wisely and examine how assumptions and positions are shaped"

What is shown in the report:

Capstones, Core Skills courses within major:
Requests for data from the capstones, core skills, and other relevant critical thinking courses did not result in much data or analysis of data. Data that was gathered is useful for individual areas to make curricular adjustments. Assessment narratives indicate that is or will be happening at the program level, but not at the university level

"Be critical thinkers who evaluate information wisely and examine how assumptions and positions are shaped"

Recommendations for Capstone and Core skills course in the major:

1. Discussions within departments should take place to ensure consistent assessment data is being collected.

    a) Each department might consider if a signature assignment within each course would help alleviate this.

    b) Each department should discuss whether, and how, current course assessments for their core skills and capstone courses could be mapped onto the critical thinking rubric. It may be possible to make adaptations to current course assessments that would provide valuable critical thinking assessments.

2. As a means of analyzing core skills data across the university, all faculty should engage in a dialogue about what the capstone courses entail. For example, should a policy for including specific core skills learning outcomes be included in each capstone course?

Overall Recommendations and common themes from all AHA reports

1. Greater faculty participation in assessment

2. Increased faculty education about assessment--How to gather data; Ways of analyzing the data; How to provide evidence of closing the loop

3. The use of the Liberal Education faculty-approved rubrics as an assessment tool needs greater awareness and education

4. A consideration of the use of templates both to collect and submit data

5. A realignment of all SLO sub-outcomes with their associated rubric

6. A more systematic means of collecting data needs to occur—i.e. Requests for data can't occur on a three-year cycle, but need to retained annually or by semester-- Possibly using department annual reports