Why Are We Assessing?

Linda Suskie
Assessment & Accreditation Consultant

www.LindaSuskie.com
Linda@LindaSuskie.com
What Are UB’s Priorities?
Mission

• Three traditional pillars
  – Research
  – Education
  – Service
Vision

Advance into the highest tier of the nation’s leading public research universities thereby expanding the scope of its reach and the strength of its world-wide impact
(Academic) Goals

• Build intellectual and instructional capacity, research funding, student opportunities, & academic reputation
• Enhance student educational experience, raise academic profile, graduation rates
• Educational and research environments
• Faculty & student diversity
• Recognized leader in international education
• Contribute to vitality of Western New York
• Health care outcomes & rankings
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UB 2020 Strategic Plan Focus areas

• Focus on research
  – *Cultivating strategic strengths*

• Focus on place
  – *Building UB*

• Focus on services
  – *Transforming operations*
Key UB Metrics

• Enrollment & student metrics
  – *Total enrollment*
  – *Student quality (SAT, HS GPA, transfer GPA)*
  – *Diversity*
  – *Degree attainment*

• Faculty & teaching effectiveness
  – *Faculty count, student/faculty ratio, diversity*
  – *Awards & recognitions*
Why Assess at UB?

- Office of Accreditation & Assessment
- Compliance Assist info management system
- Increasing competition
- Need for transparency
- Calls for accountability
UB’s 6-Year Graduation Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main</th>
<th>2011 6-Year Grad Rate</th>
<th>Estimated Median SAT / ACT</th>
<th>Size (Undergrad FTE)</th>
<th>Carnegie Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of California-Irvine</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>21,676</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of California-Santa Barbara</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>18,934</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Delaware</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>1,185</td>
<td>16,432</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rutgers University-New Brunswick</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>1,190</td>
<td>29,386</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of California-Santa Cruz</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>1,150</td>
<td>15,352</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina State University at Raleigh</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>23,172</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University at Buffalo</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>1,155</td>
<td>18,474</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois State University</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>1,110</td>
<td>17,624</td>
<td>Doctoral/Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Iowa</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>1,165</td>
<td>19,784</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of South Carolina-Columbia</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>1,190</td>
<td>20,345</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Missouri-Columbia</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>1,165</td>
<td>23,893</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple University</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>1,110</td>
<td>25,637</td>
<td>Research High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Massachusetts Amherst</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>1,160</td>
<td>20,338</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stony Brook University</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>15,272</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Oklahoma Norman Campus</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>1,185</td>
<td>18,038</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn University</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>1,225</td>
<td>19,225</td>
<td>Research High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Oregon</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>1,110</td>
<td>18,389</td>
<td>Research Very High</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: CollegeResults.org, sponsored by the Education Trust
What Helps Students Persist?

• Help students succeed in their studies
  – Engagement
  – Students and faculty share responsibility for learning
What Helps Students Persist?

• Make students want to come back
  – *Clear and high expectations*
  – *Support*
  – *Feedback*
  – *Exposure to diverse viewpoints*
  – *Analyze, justify, evaluate, integrate, reflect*
What Helps Students Persist?

A university that truly focuses on helping students learn, persist, and succeed
Are You Satisfied with Your Students’ Learning?

- Why?
- What are you doing about it?
What is Assessment?

• Deciding what we want our students to learn

• Making sure they learn it!

—Jane Wolfson, Director, Environmental Science & Studies Program, Towson University
The Teaching-Learning-Assessment Cycle

1. Learning Goals
2. Learning Opportunities
3. Assessment
4. Using Results
What is “Good” Assessment?
Which is most important to “good” assessment?

A. Benchmarked against peers
B. Reliable
C. Quantitative
D. Useful
Useful...and Used

• Clear and important learning outcomes
• Informs important decisions
  – Resource allocations
  – Strategic goals and plans
Reasonably Accurate, Truthful Evidence

- Good enough to use with confidence to inform decisions
- Current evidence
- Enough evidence
Easy to Understand

- Short, simple, clear
- Easy to find
- Make a clear, meaningful point
  - *It’s all about goals.*
Clear, Appropriately Rigorous, Justifiable Standards

• What are your standards for success?
  – What is an “A” paper? “C” paper? Why?
• Are they appropriately rigorous?
• Externally informed?
  – Peers
  – Employers
  – Disciplinary associations
Laying the Groundwork for a Culture of Assessment
An Enduring Culture of Evidence-Informed Improvement
Which is the biggest source of assessment foot-dragging at UB?

A. There’s no benefit in getting involved.
B. There’s no time.
C. People don’t understand assessment.
D. There isn’t any foot-dragging... everyone loves assessment!
Three Major Barriers to Assessment

1. Lack of understanding of the value & importance of assessment
2. Lack of resources to engage in assessment
3. Fear of change and risk-taking
Make Student Learning & Success a Priority
Make Sure Your Curricula Address Your Big Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This is what you’ll learn how to do.</th>
<th>This is how you’ll learn it.</th>
<th>This is how you’ll show that you’ve learned it.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Culture of Improvement & Innovation

- Change is hard!
- We are tweaking around the edges.
- A great teacher is always improving.
Value Efforts
to Change, Improve & Innovate

• Fund needs identified through systematic assessment evidence
  – *Priority to collaborative efforts*

• Incorporate student learning & success into P&T

• Stipends, fellowships for extraordinary work to understand & improve student learning
A Culture of Community & Collaboration

- Others teaching your course
- In your program
- Cohort programs
- Co-curricular programs
- Institution-wide
- Students
The Perfect is the Enemy of the Good

- There is no perfect assessment
- Keep things simple & cost-effective
- Look for the biggest return on investment
  – *Capstones*
- Don’t collect more than you can handle
- Keep reports to a bare-bones minimum
Support

- Active leadership support
- Time
- Professional development
Periodically Regroup & Reflect

Has this assessment been useful?

Has its value been in proportion to the time and money put into it?
Why Are We Assessing?
Give Individual Feedback & Grades
Tell the World How Good We Are

...and what we’re doing to get even better
Stewardship

Make sure we use limited resources effectively
Give Students the Best Possible Education
Keep Our Promises

- We help students learn what we promise.
- Our graduates have learned what we promise.
- We are prudent stewards of other people’s money.
Time to Reflect!