

MAPPING THE LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT: AN UPDATE FROM THE FIELD

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Overview

- Learning Outcomes Assessment is an important, yet understudied issue in America higher education
- Four years ago, the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) undertook a survey of chief academic officers, finding:
 - Most institutions have identified common set of learning outcomes
 - Most use a combination of institution-level and program-level assessment
 - Most common uses of assessment data is for accreditation
 - Most common drivers of assessment are external (accreditors, national calls)
 - Assessment use varies across institutions
- In 2013, NILOA again surveyed CAOs to consider the landscape of assessment at the institution level
- Here, we offer the findings of a comparison of the responses to the two surveys from the institutions which participated in both

2013 National Provost Survey

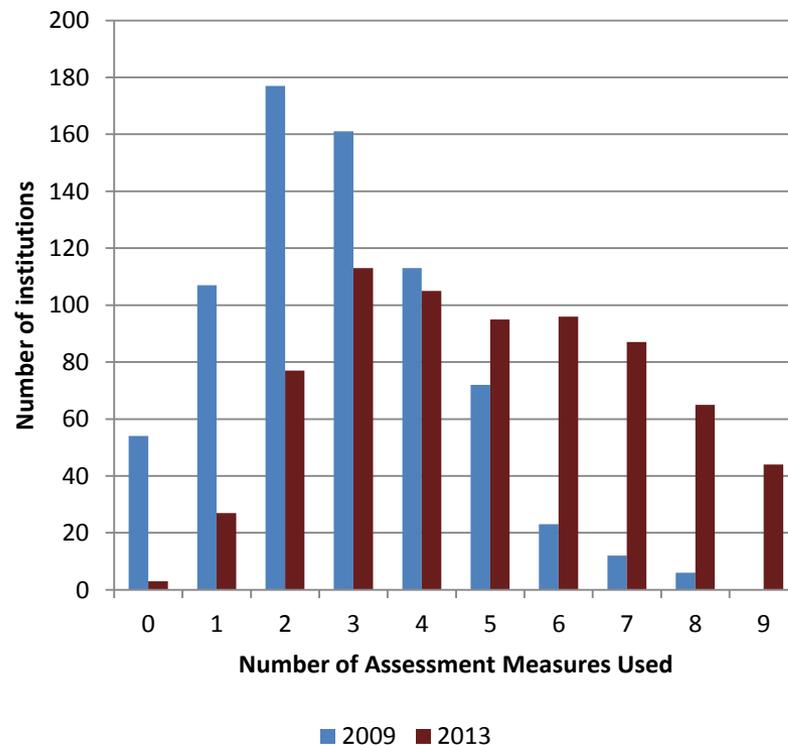
- Sample: All regionally accredited, undergraduate degree-granting institutions (n=2,732)
- Announced via institutional membership organizations, website, newsletter, mailing
- Online and paper
- 44% response rate (n=1,202)
- 725 schools participated in both 2009 and 2013
- We compared the responses of those 725 schools on like-items, looking both at the overall responses and constancy/changes between iterations

Findings

1. **More is happening** in terms of the amount of assessments institutions are using to gauge student learning, and the approaches that institutions are using to assess
2. Accreditation and institutional improvement remain **drivers of assessment**, but national calls are less influential
3. Assessment results are used for **more than just reporting** with the amount of internal uses of assessment results increasing
4. **Professional development** and additional resources remained the highest areas of need according to provosts

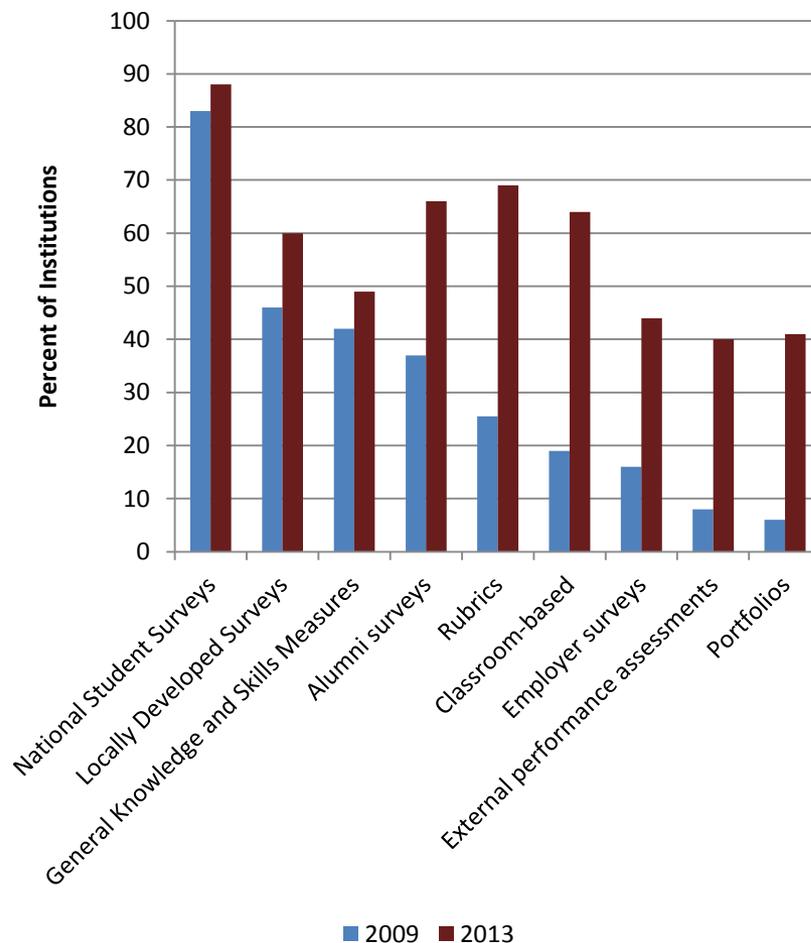
Finding 1: More is Happening

- More institutions (85.2% compared to 78.2%) have a common set of learning outcomes for all students
- Provosts reported the use of an average of 5 assessments at the institution level, up from 3 in 2009



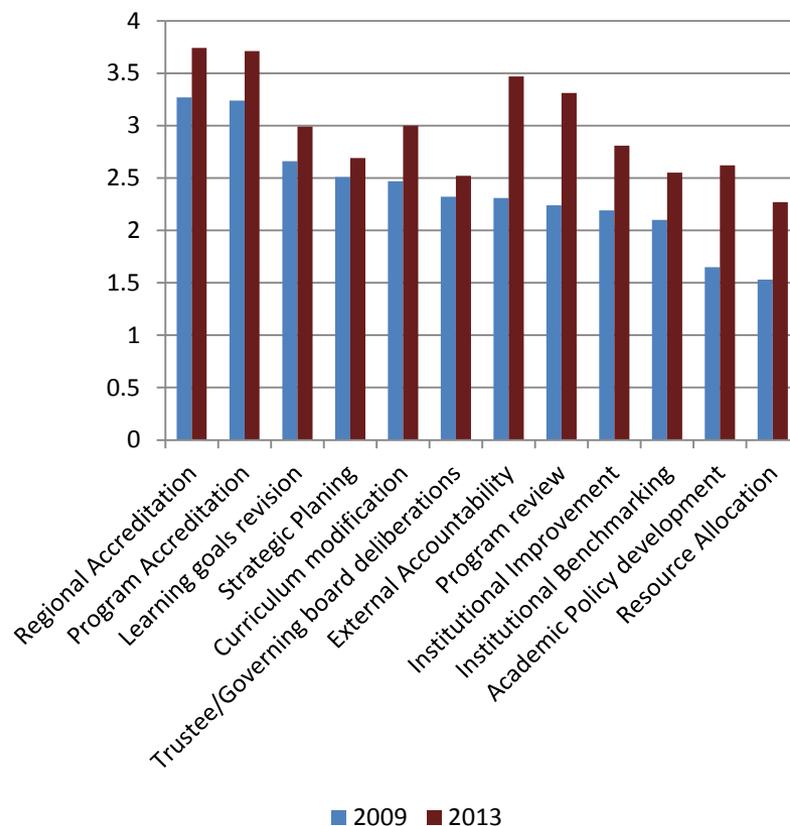
Finding 1: More is Happening

- Across-the-board increases in each type of measure
- National surveys remain the most oft-used measures
- Notable growths in rubrics, portfolios, and classroom-based assessments
- Smaller, if still significant, growth in general skills and measures



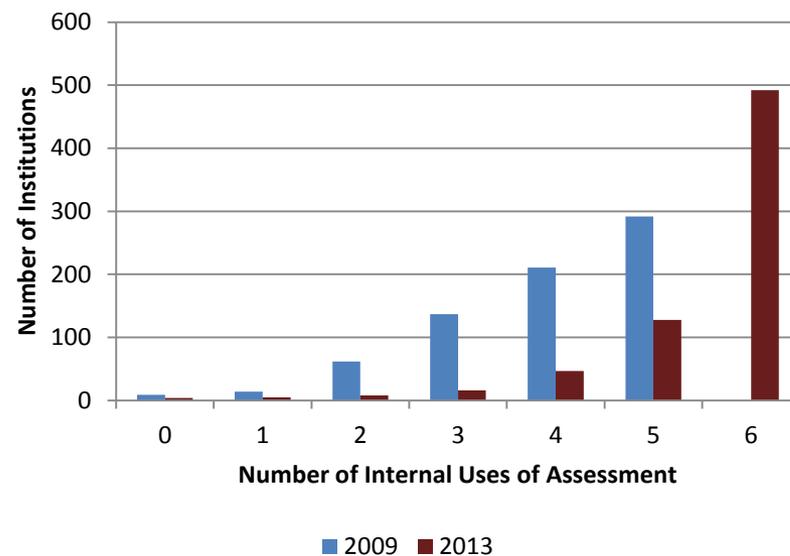
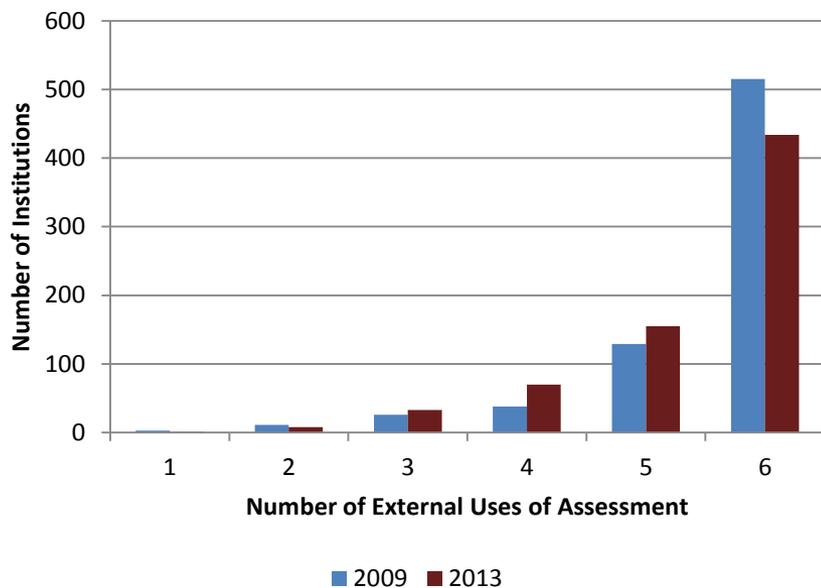
Finding 3: More than Just Reporting

- Assessment results are used for accreditation and external accountability more than other uses
- But provosts report higher levels of use for learning goals revision, academic policy development, program review, curricular modification and institutional improvement



Scale: 1 (Not at All) to 4 (Very Much)

Finding 3: More than Just Reporting



- When uses are grouped, we can see significant increases in both external and internal uses of assessment, but with a greater mean difference of internal uses

Conclusion

- “Outcomes assessment is more extensive than some think, but considerably less than is needed to secure the future to which we aspire” (Kuh and Ikenberry, 2009, p. 29).
- Four years later, the comparison of responses of the 725 institutions who completed both surveys reveals that institutions are engaging in more assessment, using more of the assessment data gathered, and responding to a diverse array of interest in terms of drivers of assessment work. Yet, areas of need remain in terms of institution support of this work with professional development opportunities and the support of leadership remaining high on the list of needs.
- We may be seeing a pendulum swinging toward embedded direct measures, which may offer more promise than external summative assessments.

Thank You

- National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA):
www.learningoutcomesassessment.org

The screenshot shows the homepage of the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA). The header includes the organization's name and tagline, a search bar, and a navigation menu with links to 'About Us', 'NILOA Resources', 'Resource Library', 'Degree Qualifications Profile', 'Transparency Framework', and 'FULL NAVIGATION >>'. Below the header is a 'Welcome to NILOA' banner with a graphic of overlapping colored squares. To the right is a featured article titled 'Assignment Library' with a sub-header 'Occasional Paper 19' and a link to 'NILOA Newsletter'. Below this is a 'DQP Webinar' link and another 'Occasional Paper 18' link. The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column features a 'VIEW POINT' graphic and a 'NILOA Calendar' for November 2013. The middle column highlights 'Queensborough Community College' as the 'FEATURED WEBSITE', with a brief description of its assessment website and a link to the 'Featured Website Archive'. The right column lists 'In the News' items, including 'Scorecard for Scorecards' (dated Nov 12, 2013) and 'New Lumina Foundation Publication' (dated Nov 11, 2013). A 'Join Our Email List' link is also present.

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- Questions and comments: njankow2@illinois.edu