

Assessment and Integrative Learning



Think: Medina's
"interleaving,"
iteration,
cycles of learning

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“I have had many amazing experiences [as a college student], but I didn’t really know what they meant or how they all fit together. Now, I see patterns and themes....The work I’ve been doing actually makes sense. There has been some direction to it all along.”

--Univ of Michigan student (AAC&U)

On the National Agenda

- AAC&U Essential Outcomes
- Degree Qualifications Profile
- Learning Communities
- Association for Integrative Studies
- Carnegie's "Opportunities to Connect" project (with AAC&U)

What's new here?

What are we
talking
about?



A Sampling from the Field

- Applying concepts to new examples and situations
- Connecting academic learning to experiences outside class
- Taking multiple perspectives
- Drawing conclusions by combining examples, facts, theories from more than one field or perspective
- Integrating disciplines to create a new insight
- Becoming an active manager of one's own learning
 - self assessment, planning, connecting....
- “Envisioning a future self” building on past experiences

--drawing on AACU, DQP, Carnegie Project, Boix-Mansilla, etc

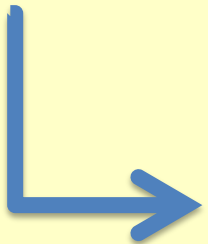
Integrative Learning Connects...

- Ideas, examples, concepts within fields
- Ideas, examples, concepts across fields
- General education and the major
- Theory with practice
- Cognitive and affective dimensions of learning
- Academic learning with personal/civic/work life

Which are most important for your students?
In pairs.

Themes and Implications

- IL is hard...and easy to do poorly (even for faculty)
- Students must be active agents: we can't do it for them.
- Doesn't happen automatically or instantly
- Need intentional settings and occasions



INTEGRATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Making Learning Outcomes Usable & Transparent

NILOA's mission is to discover and disseminate effective use of assessment data to strengthen undergraduate education and support institutions in their assessment efforts.

- SURVEYS ● WEB SCANS ● CASE STUDIES ● FOCUS GROUPS ● OCCASIONAL PAPERS ● WEBSITE ● RESOURCES ● NEWSLETTER ● PRESENTATIONS ● TRANSPARENCY FRAMEWORK ● FEATURED WEBSITES ● ACCREDITATION RESOURCES ● ASSESSMENT EVENT CALENDAR ● ASSESSMENT NEWS ● MEASURING QUALITY INVENTORY ● POLICY ANALYSIS ● ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN ● DEGREE QUALIFICATIONS PROFILE AND TUNING ● ASSIGNMENT LIBRARY INITIATIVE



www.learningoutcomesassessment.org

What is the DQP?

- A framework for what students should be expected to know and do in all majors
- In 5+ areas of proficiency
- At 3 successive degree levels

1. Intellectual Skills
2. Specialized Knowledge
3. Broad Integrative Knowledge
4. Civic and Global Learning
5. Applied and Collaborative Learning
6. A local focus

NILOA as Harvester of DQP Work: What We've Learned

- Clarifying and aligning outcomes
- Curriculum mapping
- Facilitating transfer
- **A focus on assignments**



NILOA's Response

- Inviting applications from faculty with draft assignments
- Bringing the group together for a day-long meeting
- Working in 5-6 person, facilitated “charrettes”



- Introduce my assignment-5 minutes
- Discuss 15-20 minutes
- Written feedback: 5 minutes
- Go home: revise, test, submit

The DQP Assignment Library

- www.assignmentlibrary.org
- 60-some assignments (plus reflective memo)
- Contributed by faculty from a wide range of fields and institutional types
- With a scholarly citation and CC license: ie assignments as publications
- Online, indexed, and searchable
- **Integrative assignments**

Robinson, D., & Levinovitz, A. (2015). Designing an Object of Play. James Madison University

Small groups of students combine theoretical knowledge of play and practical skills such as 3d printing in the making of a toy or game. The assignment is designed to assess applied and collaborative learning.

The object of play is then presented in a “sales pitch” format, which requires students to articulate the considerations that went into their design and manufacture process.

The presentation occurs as part of an exhibit tailored to the general public, during which students speak directly to visitors and get feedback on their work.

While the assignment is meant specifically for a class on play, the general structure could be used by any instructor who seeks to have students transform theoretical knowledge into a material product.



Brown, J. L. (2014). The Business Strategy Report. Fayetteville State University

- Group project introduced at beginning of semester in Business Policy and Strategy course—the capstone for the School of Business and Economics
- Students collaboratively investigate a publicly traded organization (list provided), utilizing and integrating skills from Finance, Management, and Marketing.
- Also assesses the *use of information resources, quantitative fluency, and communication fluency*.
- Culminates in a written “formal business report” and presentation to peers and faculty
- Evaluation criteria provided
- Scaffolded via multiple modules



Reynard, L. (2014). A Bridge from Course to Capstone: The Final “Methods” Paper. Washburn University

- New Communications Studies capstone in 2011 requiring a research paper, applying disciplinary theories...which needed scaffolding
- “Methods” course paper (junior year) designed to prepare students to succeed with capstone research project.
- Task: create a preliminary proposal for the research project.
- EG: title, purpose and significance statements, methods, bibliography...
- Presentation and discussion of proposals to fine tune the final draft.
- Result: improved performance in capstone.



Stepping Back

What features would you look for in an integrative assignment or assessment?

Features of Effective (IL) Assignments

- ✓ It depends
- ✓ Integrative action verbs (DQP)
- ✓ Explicit about purpose, task, and evaluation (“transparency”)
- ✓ Engaging (Task as Intriguing Problem: John Bean)
- ✓ Respecting and reflecting different ways of knowing, levels of preparation
- ✓ Allowing useful, formative feedback
- ✓ **Linked to and aligned with prior and subsequent assignments**

IL as Linking and Aligning

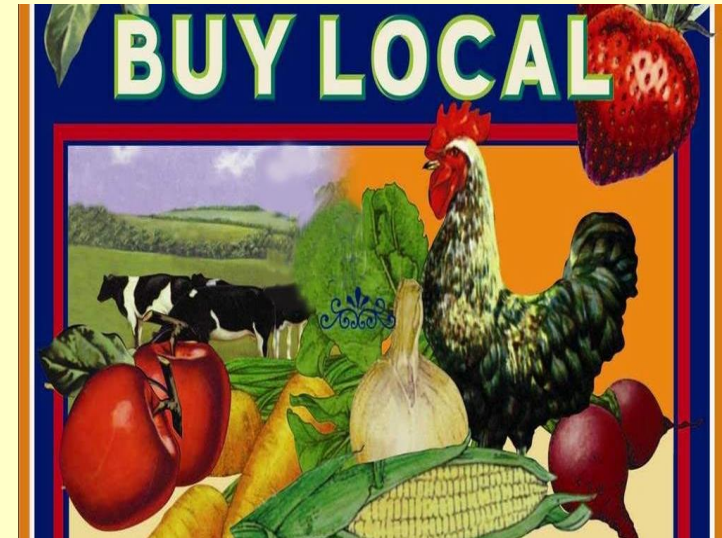


COURSE-O-CENTRICISM (GRAFF)

ASSIGNMENT DESIGN AS A COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY:
CHARRETTEs FOR TEAMS WORKING ON LINKING
ASSIGNMENTS

THE TAKE-AWAY

- To engage faculty
- To make assessment matter to students (because it counts)....
- To advance and document IL
- Shift assessment:



Embedded integrative assignments, collaboratively designed, to create more coherent pathways for student learning

ASSIGNMENT DESIGN AS A HOT SPOT

1. Surfaces connections across courses and contexts and helps build more integrative, coherent pathways for students
2. Animates high-level outcomes
3. Creates a pedagogical trading zone
4. Provides rich, authentic evidence to inform improvement
5. Makes visible and brings value to the intellectual work that faculty do as teachers (the scholarship of T&L)

Resources

- <http://www.aacu.org/leap/vision.cfm> [AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes]
- http://www.aacu.org/integrative_learning/pdfs/ILP_Statement.pdf [AAC&U /Carnegie Statement on Integrative Learning]
- <http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/integrativelearning.cfm> [Integrative and Applied Learning VALUE rubric from AAC&U]
- <http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/DQPCorner.html> [Degree Qualifications Profile, <http://www.evergreen.edu/washingtoncenter/assessment/assessingintlearning.html>] [excellent list of resources about assessing integrative learning from the Washington Center]
- Australian study of capstones: www.capstonecurriculum.com.au
- Huber, M.T., & Hutchings. P. (2004). *Integrative Learning: Mapping the Terrain*. Washington, DC: AAC&U and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Resources

- Hutchings, P., Jankowski, N. A., & Ewell, P. T. (2014). *Catalyzing Assignment Design Activity on Your Campus: Lessons from NILOA's Assignment Library Initiative*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois and Indiana University, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA).
- Anderson, Anson, Gonyea, & Paine. (Nov 2015). "The Contributions of Writing to Learning and Development: Results from a Large-Scale Multi-Institutional Study." *Research in the Teaching of English*. 50(2), 199-235.
- Bean, J. C. (2011). *Engaging ideas: The professor's guide to integrative writing, critical thinking and active learning in the classroom*. (2nd edition). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Winkelmes, M. (Fall/Winter 2015). "A Teaching Intervention that Increases Underserved College Students' Success: Research Findings from the Transparency and Problem-centered Learning Project." *Peer Review*.
- Winkelmes, M. (May 2015). Benefits (some unexpected) of Transparently Designed Assignments." *National Teaching and Learning Forum*, 24 (4), 4-7.
- Melzer, D. (2014). *Assignments Across the Curriculum: A National Study of College Writing*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.
- National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment: www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/
- NILOA Assignment Library: www.assignmentlibrary.org
- **NILOA. (2016). Organizing assignment-design work on your campus: A toolkit of resources and materials. <http://degreeprofile.org/assignment-design-work>**

Ideas for/from your campus?

THANKS!

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