

10/24/09 SLO Roundtable

Attendees: Debbie Klein, Susan Dodd, Nikki Dequin, Hope Jukl, Rosa Sharboneau, Lisa Franklin, Sabrina Lawrence, Randy Brown, Kathleen Rose, Fran Lozano, Sherrean Carr.

Notes:

Lisa welcomed all for attending and requested a brief presentation of how folks are using SLO assessment data.

Debbie thought originally that it was an extra thing, but has more recently embraced it as a way to learn more about what is going on in her classes. She reported focusing on assessing her intro course. She used 3 different assessments and found that students performed well with the paper and projects, yet did not do as well with the weekly quizzes. This led her to reconsider the assessment she was using.

Another area Debbie said that she has used SLO assessment was to address a concern over the exam results in her physical anthropology course. She found results were so poor that she experimented with a take-home final. Her preliminary findings suggest that the results were the same and she does not quite understand why that is the case.

Nikki did an assessment on heart rate for one of her SLOs for a Fitness course. What she found, even though she repeatedly taught this skill, students were performing poorly. She said that she ended up having students keep a daily log, which required them to practice this task consistently over time. She has found that this practice has improved their acquisition of this skill.

Susan said that she had a low success rate on a particular SLO that she had assessed in her swimming class. Accordingly, she decided to emphasize the idea of a second wind: pushing through discomfort. She suggested that it sounds simple and that it doesn't need to be that hard.

Lisa said that assessing SLOs has forced her to examine her assessment methods. She expressed her opinion that we all love those teaching moments, when we can see the light turn on in a student's head. This work has helped her in measuring these moments with more certainty. She suggested that most instructors already do this, but this effort is a way to add more structure to this process.

Debbie stated that it is very difficult to assess more abstract learning such as critical thinking. She said that most ways to do this were labor intensive such as writing assignments.

Susan noted that the SLO effort is really about a constant reevaluation.

Lisa offered that instructors cannot do everything. She struggles to motivate her students, particularly those who are so tech-savvy.

Nikki suggested that instructors need to be creative to connect with their students and that we may have to step outside of our comfort zones to do this.

Sandy reported that he already picked up a few things about assessment from the discussion and that he was looking forward to the next time he could participate.

Debbie brought up concerns that some students into classes for which they were unprepared, particularly with regards to writing requirements.

Hope stated that conscientious instructors already perform assessment of their learning outcomes and that the SLO process is just about report the data we routinely collect.

Rosa acknowledged that the SLO effort is time consuming.

Lisa asked what topics would be interesting to this group and others.

Debbie suggested that something interesting would be what do we do with the data.

Lisa suggested that folks could share their own assessment rubrics at the next meeting.

Kathleen suggested that there would be more roundtables to come.