

Bismarck State College, ND

Project: Bismarck State College's Assessment Project

Version 7.0- Project

Q: Consider the current tags associated with your project, are they still accurate? If not, modify your tags.

A: Yes, the current project tags are correct.

Version 7.0- Update

Q: Have you achieved the goals outlined in recent posts? Why or why not?

A: In our last project update (Version 6.0), we laid out four goals for the past six months. Below is a status/update for each task:

1. Conclusion of one complete assessment cycle for at least two of the non-academic pilot programs.

This task has been completed, although the impact on student learning at the institution as a result varies between the two programs. For the new student registration and orientation program, analysis of the student survey ($n = 144$) administered after the two-hour orientation event in August 2018 was limited. While the survey had been revised to ensure that the items corresponded with the relevant program learning outcomes, the analysis focused on student satisfaction and the planning committee's satisfaction with the event. The extension and connection to student learning as a result of the program was not documented. Furthermore, the data was not used to create action plans and guide decisions for the program largely because of an upcoming shift in the management of the orientation portion of the program. Beginning in 2019, a different department will be planning and executing the event, with substantial changes in the format and logistics of the event planned. With this change comes an opportunity for the Academy team and the Institutional Assessment Coordinator to help ensure that assessment efforts that have been established continue, are built upon, and are coordinated. To do this, the team will look to facilitate a meeting with all of the departments involved in the new student registration and orientation program to review the program learning outcomes and program curriculum map previously completed, and potentially revisit past assessment data.

Data collection and analysis were completed for the RA training program as well. The Student and Residence Life department documented the methodology employed for assessing the identified program learning outcome, the results of the RA checkpoint survey ($n = 14$), and modifications to implement within the RA training program next academic year as a result of the data. In addition, lessons learned by the department staff during the process were noted. What is of particular interest is the disparity that has emerged between the two non-academic pilot programs while moving through the assessment cycle. In terms of assessment of student learning, the RA training program has been more successful in creating and implementing a meaningful assessment process that is understood by the department staff. Conversely, the assessment process remains not fully recognized and still seemingly confusing in the case of the other pilot program. Where we continue to struggle as an Academy team and institution is in moving non-academic programs, departments, and staff beyond the concept of program evaluation to assessment of student learning. In attempting to discern what has made the difference for the RA training program, the lead shared that everything clicked when attending the Midpoint Roundtable. Replicating that "ah-ha" moment on our campus with other departments continues to be a challenge.

2. Completion and documentation of assessment plan for all career and technical academic programs and liberal arts/transfer disciplines.

Progress has been made on the completion and documentation of academic assessment plans - 43 of the 61 programs and disciplines have submitted an assessment plan, equating to 70.5% of the academic areas. Some additional programs and disciplines are close to completing an assessment plan, with a few outstanding questions and points of clarification to address before the plan is finalized. As stated in previous project updates, the assessment plan provides a road map for faculty in the program or discipline - laying out the program learning outcomes, the connection to an institutional essential learning outcome (IELO), an assessment cycle for data collection, and a program curriculum map. With 70% of the plans in place, we were able to move forward on an institutional level in creating an institutional curriculum map that visually depicts the spread of the IELOs over the programs and disciplines. Going a step further, the assessment plans developed at the program and discipline level have generated an enhanced structure around our institutional assessment framework. The framework is organized around the overarching domains of Awareness, Communication, and Thought within which the IELOs fall. Using the program and discipline assessments plans, the alignment of the programs and disciplines to the IELOs and the assessment schedule of the IELOs set forth by each program and discipline were plotted over a two year institutional assessment cycle. The resulting diagram has allowed us to organize IELO data collection and verify that sufficient sampling will occur each academic year in the Awareness, Communication, and Thought domains. Work will continue with the career and technical programs and the liberal arts/transfer disciplines with incomplete assessment plans. Department chairs, academic deans, and department representatives on the Institutional Assessment Committee have all been made aware of the status of this required assessment task in their particular area and asked to help encourage faculty to finalize this task as soon as possible. For those programs and disciplines with outstanding plans, additional assistance may be offered in a more prescriptive manner.

3. Hold initial meeting of non-academic subcommittee.

This task has not been completed. Resource constraints and other happenings at the institution have led to repeated postponement of a meeting of the non-academic subcommittee. While this task is easily postponed, it may be one of potential great value, particularly as we near the close of the Assessment Academy and consider the sustainability of our work. Gathering together this group of individuals and initiating a regular meeting schedule may help address the concerns and suggestions voiced by our Primary Mentor and Scholar regarding spreading the workload, delegating tasks, and "cultivat[ing] a group of advocates." The Academy team will prioritize this task and work to accomplish it in the next six months.

4. Continue communication about assessment of student learning.

Communication has and will continue throughout the tenure of our Assessment Academy project and will extend beyond the structure of the Academy. During the past six months, we have introduced and implemented Conversations in Assessment (CIA) meetings across campus. The CIA meetings are designed to increase communication and heighten the presence of assessment of student learning at Bismarck State College. The meetings also help successfully close the assessment loop and demonstrate to faculty and staff that the data collected and documentation submitted does not just sit on a shelf (either physical or virtual), but is being put to use. The Institutional Assessment Coordinator scheduled CIA meetings with academic departments that submitted assessment reports during the 2017-2018 academic year. A CIA meeting was also held with staff from the Student and Residence Life department, thus drawing in non-academic assessment into the larger institutional picture in a formalized manner for the first time. During each CIA meeting, a draft of the institutional assessment report was shared with the group for digestion, review, and in hopes of spurring additional dialogue about assessment and student learning. To help minimize any negative associations with assessment and bring a bit of fun into the process as well, participants received CIA badges - window clings in the shape of a badge with a design that incorporated the institution specifically and the Conversations in Assessment title - at the conclusion of the meeting. Annual CIA meetings are planned for future years as assessment of student learning grows, evolves, and strengthens at BSC.

Q: How did you incorporate the feedback from the Mentor Consultation and previous postings?

A: Two points within the most recent feedback from our Primary Mentor and Scholar stood out to our Academy team. First, the need to identify "advocates...[a]ssessment heroes or cheerleaders, peers who have 'survived the

process" at our institution is essential for our efforts to progress in a successful and sustainable way. BSC has had assessment advocates intermittently spread across the institution for some time, but activities and efforts in the last few years have specifically attempted to broaden the group. Additionally, we have taken some steps in the last six months to more fully capitalize on this concept. One-on-one work with faculty in the development of the assessment plans has helped in "winning over" some individuals as they begin to visualize and understand a more clear assessment process that will provide value to them and their department (and the institution). Perhaps even more meaningful has been the CIA meetings with departments where successes, compelling analyses, thoughtful action plans, and potential or realized improvements of student learning have been showcased. To further the idea of showcasing successful practices and exemplary assessment efforts, we have been discussing and begun initial planning conversations about organizing an Assessment Showcase. Currently, an Assessment Showcase is being tentatively planned for fall of 2019 and will involve both academic and non-academic assessment.

The second point of note made by our Primary Mentor and Scholar related to building capacity to properly analyze, interpret, and act upon the assessment data. We recognize we have room for growth in this area and are looking for effective ways to achieve this. One smaller change made to this end was in the reporting form itself. When attempting to aggregate assessment data collected across the institution during the 2017-2018 academic year, the disparity in the format that the data were reported made it extremely challenging, and next to impossible in some cases, to roll it up to an institutional level. Although directions were provided in the form as to how to report the data, results ranged from raw data provided for each performance level for each criterion of a particular IELO rubric to percentages of students achieving a certain performance level or higher (i.e., x% of students achieved a 2 or higher) for each criterion of a particular IELO rubric to qualitative data only, as well as results with seemingly no direct application of the IELO rubrics. The Institutional Assessment Committee has used this as an opportunity to revise the form with a more prescribed results section in order to lessen the variation and elicit more holistic, rich data.

Q: What tasks do you plan to accomplish in the next six months?

A: The primary tasks for the next six months are:

1. Roll out the institutional cycle for IELO assessment, with implementation in fall of 2019.
2. Gather the non-academic subcommittee for an initial meeting.
3. Work with the new student registration and orientation program to ensure continuity and enhancement of assessment efforts.
4. Continue supporting the RA training program as they
 - o proceed with additional conversations about the survey results and translate the data into improvement actions and
 - o prepare to focus on and gather assessment evidence for two different program learning outcomes during the 2019-2020 academic year.
5. Continue planning an Assessment Showcase.

Q: What additional guidance is needed to see your project through to the end of the program?

A: We look forward to continued consultation from our Primary Mentor and Scholar throughout the remainder of the Assessment Academy. As far as specific guidance requested at this point in the project, we welcome advice for getting over the intangible, but very real, obstacle we continue to feel ourselves up against. Throughout the project duration, there have been points where it has felt like BSC is on the cusp of breaking through the past institutional history associated with assessment and challenges accompanying the implementation of a successful assessment process. Yet, we never seem to quite break through the barrier for whatever reason. Perhaps gradual, incremental advances are sufficient and all that can be realistically expected. However, we turn to our Primary Mentor, Scholar, and other institutions for further insight. Also welcomed are tips for sustainability as we near the end of the Assessment Academy and still see the work left to be accomplished.

Q: Now, in your final year, your team should begin to think about how your institution will continue to support and sustain improvement efforts without the structure of the Academy. What are some of your initial thoughts that your team has for continuing your momentum post-Academy?

(Note: Formal sustainability planning will be facilitated at the Results Forum).

A: Much of the progress our institution has made during the Assessment Academy experience has been organic. This has allowed our team and the project to flex with changing circumstances at the institution. While it may have led to further deviation from our anticipated project and goals going into the Academy, the organic nature has allowed progress to unfold in a way that is sustainable without the structure of the Academy. With a high degree of self-accountability demonstrated, the Academy has supported and supplemented our work primarily in an advisory role - with our Primary Mentor, Scholar, and other HLC affiliates offering advice and input on our efforts, activities, and progress. However, participation in the Assessment Academy has not necessarily spurred substantially more action on our part.

One component unique to the Assessment Academy structure that has been particularly useful for our team is the dedicated, focused time to advance project work during the Roundtable events. While the dedicated time away from the demand of other tasks and responsibilities offered at the Roundtable events cannot easily be replicated on our campus, we can look to recreate those opportunities on a smaller scale as much as possible to aid in the sustainability of the work. Coupled with this, the establishment of a non-academic subcommittee may help continue the momentum post-Academy. By engaging more individuals beyond the Academy team, we feel there is a better chance for continuation of the efforts. Lastly, our institution is planning for sustainability by supplementing and clarifying documentation of the assessment process and procedure. By minimizing the *what* to do and *how* to do it, we can keep the focus on what we are going to do about it.

Version 6.0- Project

What projects have you been following on the Collaboration Network? What have you learned from the experiences of other schools that is useful to your project?

Q: *To learn more about the progress and development of other projects, get alerts by following other projects*

A: Heeding the advice we received from our facilitator at the Assessment Academy Midpoint Roundtable, our team has been trying to follow our fellow Academy cohort institutions more closely. Additionally, during the interim since our last project update (Version 5.0), we have used the Collaboration Network for idea gathering. In doing so, we have not followed one specific project in detail, but rather have turned to the Collaboration Network for insight on assessment processes and procedures at other institutions. The updates in the Collaboration Network provide our team with examples of the nuts and bolts that other institutions have put in place and spark ideas for further consideration. Equally meaningful, the updates continually remind us that all institutions experience a natural ebb and flow when working on assessment efforts and transformation generally takes time and perseverance.

Version 6.0- Update

Q: What were the most significant results from the Third Year Consultation?

A: The Third Year Consultation led to a few noteworthy results for our institution, as detailed below:

Increased involvement and association with assessment across campus.

In our initial phone consultation with our Primary Mentor, we opted to schedule multiple follow-up calls with each call focusing on a different goal that our team had set for the remainder of the project. Structuring the consultation calls in this way allowed a variety of individuals from BSC to be involved. While some of the individuals (e.g., leads from non-academic programs participating in the pilot project) participated in team meetings or project meetings previously, others (e.g., academic deans) had limited to no formal involvement in the project up to this point. The inclusion of more individuals in the consultation was purposeful - signaling the far-

reaching nature of assessment efforts and the importance of campus-wide involvement. Our team is hopeful that it confirmed to those involved in the consultation that their role at BSC has a connection to student learning and assessment of student learning is a "we" thing versus a "them" thing.

Expectations finalized for academic assessment planning to be completed this fall.

In many ways, the Third Year Consultation was extremely timely for BSC as our initial assessment plan going into the 2018-2019 academic year changed over the summer. Initially, liberal arts/transfer courses aligned with a set of pre-identified institutional learning outcomes (IELOs) were going to be required to collect data, report results, and document action plans during the 2018-2019 academic year. Based on some conversations that took place over the summer, though, the decision was made to instead ask each discipline within the liberal arts/transfer programming to create an assessment plan this fall (similar to those that the career and technical academic programs have/are completing) that lays out program outcomes, the connection to institutional learning outcomes (IELOs), an assessment cycle, and a discipline curriculum map. This decision, while seemingly a beneficial and fitting approach for BSC, left us with some questions and concerns that we were admittedly still working through prior to the consultation. For example, how will a discipline assessment plan look as compared to career/technical academic program plan? Also, by allowing faculty the opportunity to create a feasible assessment cycle for them (within a certain set of parameters and guidelines), will we still be able to collect robust data for each IELO at any given point in time (e.g., if some may collect assessment data for Critical Thinking in 2019-2020 and others in another academic year)? By talking through the discipline assessment plan with our Primary Mentor, we were able to get a better sense of what would be asked of liberal arts/transfer discipline faculty and consider potential opportunities to still maintain institutional consistency.

Confirmed institutional practices already in place and brought forth suggestions for additional best practices to consider.

The Third Year Consultation allowed us to talk through our institutional approach to assessment for both academic and non-academic programs. It provided a natural environment for us to ask an assessment expert from another institution very specific questions and seek advice that will help us proceed with our project and efforts beyond the Academy. And while this opportunity for us to reach out to our Primary Mentor has been present throughout our Academy journey, having a Third Year Consultation built into the Academy experience nudged us to have some very pointed conversations in real time. More specifically, our Primary Mentor offered suggestions related to data analysis (namely mentioning scorecards and statistical sampling) and provided feedback in determining how granular to structure co-curricular assessment. She also confirmed the acceptable practice of a velcro rubric - in which one of the criterion of a rubric may be excluded - which BSC had already adopted for the institutional use of common rubrics for the IELOs.

Emphasized impact on students.

During the Third Year Consultation, our Primary Mentor continually reminded us and asked us about the impact of our project and assessment overall on students. This was a welcome reminder of the ultimate goal of our efforts - to positively impact student learning and promote student retention and success. Articulating a response about the impact on students has not always been easy, particularly in respect to non-academic assessment. This is in part due to the point at which our non-academic pilot programs are within the assessment cycle - collecting data during the later summer and early fall months of 2018. We are going to strive to show the impact on student learning by the end of the Academy, but recognize that the results might be limited in scope.

Q: Looking back at the tasks that you had outlined for your project following the Midpoint Roundtable, what progress has been made and what tasks remain? What is your plan to address the remaining tasks in the next six months?

A: Below are the tasks we outlined for our Academy project following the Midpoint Roundtable as well as a status/update for each task:

1. Follow up with the four non-academic pilot programs.

Our Academy team has followed up with three of the four non-academic pilot programs, working closely with staff leading RA training, orientation, and new student registration. We moved forward in combining orientation and new student registration under the umbrella of a single program. As a result of this restructuring, we worked with staff members to reconsider and establish program learning outcomes that appropriately reflect the array of events that fall within the program. In addition to reworking the program learning outcomes, we completed a program curriculum map to visually indicate where and how each event and activity supports the program learning outcomes and selected institutional learning outcomes (IELOs). The survey administered to students after the orientation event was reviewed and adjusted to ensure that the survey items correspond to the program learning outcomes with which the orientation event aligns. The revised survey was administered to students in August 2018, allowing staff to now begin analyzing the data with our team's support and assistance.

The RA training program has emerged as not only a valuable example or model for other non-academic programs to emulate when initiating a formal assessment process, but also as a real showcase for our institution. The lead for the RA training program, who joined BSC's Assessment Academy team just prior to the Midpoint Roundtable last fall, has excelled in grasping the assessment process, translating and applying the steps to the RA training program, and leading colleagues in a department-wide collaborative effort. Since the Midpoint Roundtable, the department put together an assessment plan detailing the program learning outcomes, assessment cycle, program curriculum map, and assessment methods/measures in a thoughtful, deliberate, and methodical manner. Additionally, they constructed a RA checkpoint survey, scoring rubric, and protocol that has been implemented this academic year. Throughout all of this, the Institutional Assessment Coordinator has largely acted in a support capacity - the staff lead has conferred with the Institutional Assessment Coordinator throughout the process for feedback, questions, or guidance. The distinction, though, is clear. The Student and Residence Life department, without question, has taken on the ownership of assessment of the RA training program – which is remarkable in part because a structure has been built that is meaningful to the stakeholders and sustainable over time.

2. Gather the non-academic subcommittee for an initial meeting.

While we hoped to gather this group for the first time in February of 2018, that was not accomplished. This task remains and is expected to be completed in the fall of 2018.

3. Identify our non-academic programs that are "sensible" to assess.

Steps were taken to restructure current non-academic pilot programs as discussed in task 1. Our team has contemplated whether to approach non-academic assessment from a discipline/department versus program level, researching examples from other institutions to inform our decision and seeking the input from our Primary Mentor during the Third Year Consultation. Determining the priority six or seven non-academic programs to focus on for assessment of student learning will be an agenda item for our first non-academic subcommittee meeting.

4. Work with technical academic programs to ensure that an assessment plan is documented and is meaningful for the program.

This task is in process. Of the 43 career and technical academic programs offered at BSC, 25 of the programs have initial assessment plans in place. The Institutional Assessment Coordinator will continue to follow up with the remaining 18 programs, providing further assistance where needed. As explained above, BSC has decided to have liberal arts/transfer disciplines develop assessment plans that mirror those of career and technical academic programs. The Institutional Assessment Coordinator will work one-on-one with the roughly 35 disciplines to complete that task by the end of the fall 2018 semester.

5. Increase communication about assessment of student learning.

Communication about assessment of student learning is an ongoing task that will continue for the remainder of the Academy project and beyond. Progress made since the Midpoint Roundtable include providing assessment updates at department meetings and governance group meetings. Further strides in this area are desired, however, so it will continue to be a topic of discussion and action for our team.

6. Continue to explore how we can leverage Blackboard to support assessment efforts.

Constraints in time and human resources and the expansion of other tasks has necessitated that we table this task for the short-term. While the institution is still committed to the idea of leveraging Blackboard further, we will be focusing our efforts this fall on other items and returning to the implementation of Blackboard's primary assessment software in the spring of 2019.

Q: How is the Academy project contributing to creating a culture of learning? How is the team engaging institutional stakeholders in the Academy work?

A: We are gradually shifting the institution from compliance to commitment - or assessment *for* student learning. Participation in the Assessment Academy has contributed to this shift by enhancing our institutional self-accountability when requiring goals and plans to be regularly written down and project updates to be posted. The project updates have also prompted us to reflect on our progress over time and celebrate successes that can easily be overlooked. When talking with our Primary Mentor during the Third Year Consultation, her comment that "success is having this effort stay alive" rings so true for our institution. BSC, like many other institutions, has experienced setbacks and a slower momentum than hoped for, but the effort has stayed alive and the cultural shift is gradually unfolding. Perhaps the best evidence of the shift, while anecdotal in nature, has taken place during individual meetings that members of our Academy team have had with faculty across campus. During these meetings, faculty have shared feedback, such as, "This makes much more sense [than previous iterations of assessment undertaken by the institution]." Furthermore, staff involved in the pilot phase of the project have started to voice a clearer understanding of the connection between activities and events to program learning outcomes, and ultimately the impact on student learning.

As the project has progressed and morphed over time, more individuals across campus have been inherently drawn in and involved. The team anticipates that this will continue, particularly given that the project has expanded to include both non-academic and academic assessment efforts. Communication about assessment of student learning and the Assessment Academy project will further the reach and engagement of the institutional community, hence rationale for the continuation this task.

Q: What are your plans and goals for the next six months? What challenges do you anticipate?

A: The primary goals for the next six months include:

1. Conclusion of one complete assessment cycle for at least two of the non-academic pilot programs. Impact on student learning demonstrated or in the process of being captured.
2. Completion and documentation of assessment plan for all career and technical academic programs and liberal arts/transfer disciplines.
3. Hold initial meeting of non-academic subcommittee.
4. Continue communication about assessment of student learning.

The challenges mentioned in previous project updates remain applicable - namely a constraint in resources. In addition, BSC continues to take on new opportunities and initiatives, with some recent large-scale items now underway, that can pull time, attention, and potentially momentum away from already existing tasks.

Version 5.0- Project

Q: What projects have you been following on the Collaboration Network? What have you learned from the experiences of other schools that is useful to your project?

A: *To learn more about the progress and development of other projects, get alerts by following other projects.*

A: Based on the suggestion from our facilitator at the Assessment Academy Midpoint Roundtable, we plan on

following the institutions in our Academy cohort more closely. While these institutions may not have the same priority or focus as our project, as the conversations at the Roundtable event made clear, our shared work on cultivating and moving forward assessment of student learning at our respective institutions results in a fair amount of overlap and common experience. Moreover, the conversations at the Roundtable demonstrated that we can always gain useful tidbits from other institutions, often in unexpected topic areas. We feel that this same benefit can be gleaned from the Collaboration Network when reviewing project updates of other institutions, even if there is not an apparent direct connection to our Academy project.

Version 5.0- Update

Q: Identify and explain any specific changes to your project scope and design since the last Project Update.

A: While we have been conscious of the threat of scope creep and taken deliberate steps to avoid that pitfall throughout our project, the need to change and extend our project scope has become evident. Just prior to the Midpoint Roundtable, our institution was in the process of examining our academic assessment efforts and engaging in some frank discussions about where we are at versus where we need to be. These discussions flowed into our conversations and team time at the Roundtable event, which provided us an even more concentrated opportunity for introspection and reflection. All of this culminated in the conclusion that even though our project initially had a focus on non-academic assessment, we feel it prudent to extend the scope to include specific academic assessment initiatives to mirror where we will be spending our time and effort on in the upcoming two years. Furthermore, we believe our efforts on specific academic assessment initiatives could progress further from the support, advice, structure, and benefits that can be gained from inclusion in the Assessment Academy project scope.

Thus, our project scope in the upcoming two years will be two-fold. First, our project will continue to have a non-academic assessment component as previously intended. We may not initiate the assessment process in as many non-academic programs and activities as previously planned during the remaining two years, but would rather spend our time on following through, properly supporting, and ensuring that actionable, useful data is collected and used by those programs that are involved. In order to get increased institutional buy-in and participation, we know that real life testimonials and showcasing actionable steps that have been taken as a result of the process are critical. We want to spend the time to foster this result and develop internal advocates for the process. Second, the extension to the project will be to shore up the assessment process for technical academic programs. We will be working one-on-one with technical program faculty to develop and document a program assessment plan, complete program curriculum mapping, and ensure a tie has been established from the program to at least one Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes (IELO). Following the adoption of the IELOs, our institution had been moving forward on aligning an IELO to each course because a.) not all programs have well-developed program outcomes and assessment plans, and b.) our institution continues to struggle with how to define a program in the liberal arts/transfer areas. After starting with this approach, we have come to realize that skirting over the program level of assessment is actually frustrating faculty further and resulting in a less meaningful process. Therefore, we are now taking a step back and will be aligning one IELO to each technical academic program (liberal arts/transfer areas will continue to align the IELOs to the course level). By expanding our project scope to include this academic assessment initiative, we also want to shift the focus away from developing the perfect process and perfect form, a pitfall that we have repeatedly fallen into at our institution, and focus more on the evidence and highlighting the stories of how our efforts have resulted in improved student learning.

Describe your short term plan for measuring student learning. What specific tasks do you plan to accomplish in the next six months?

A: Our tasks to accomplish in the next six months are detailed below:

1. Follow up with the four non-academic pilot programs.

Each of the four pilot programs are at different stages in the assessment process, but we recognize that all of them would benefit from additional support from our team. Following discussion, our Academy team agreed to first

work with staff leading RA training, orientation, and new student registration. Heeding our Roundtable facilitator's advice to consider whether a non-academic program or activity is "sensible" to assess, we also decided to restructure our pilot projects and combine orientation and new student registration. The structure of those events on our campus - one event (new student registration) naturally leads to the other event (orientation) - and the connection they have in terms of an overarching goal to welcome and acclimate new students to BSC support this decision. Furthermore, it will alleviate some of the challenges we have been grappling with when implementing assessment of student learning in each program separately - namely determining what student learning transpires in a one-hour registration session and how to most appropriately assess it. Along with restructuring those programs, we want to make sure that all of our pilot programs are comfortable engaging in the assessment process and understand what is being asked of them and why. While we provided initial support and guidance to the pilot programs, following up will make sure that assessment is not seen as something to check off, but rather a continuous effort for improvement. Finally, following up will serve a prompt for programs for closing the loop and making use of the data to inform decisions.

2. Gather the non-academic subcommittee for an initial meeting.

The membership for the non-academic subcommittee was discussed and identified during the Midpoint Roundtable. We will meet for the first time in February of 2018 in order to acquaint members to the group and determine the charge for the group going forward.

3. Identify our non-academic programs that are "sensible" to assess.

Based on feedback from our facilitator at the Midpoint Roundtable and the natural progression of our conversation at the event, our team determined that we need to identify potential future non-academic programs appropriate for assessment of student learning. Rather than trying to assess everything, our time will be better spent and the data and results will be more meaningful if we concentrate on our priority six or seven programs.

4. Work with technical academic programs to ensure that an assessment plan is documented and is meaningful for the program.

Technical programs need to have an assessment plan with program curriculum mapping completed, a tie to one Institutional Essential Learning Outcome, and a cycle set forth for assessment in the upcoming academic years. The Institutional Assessment Coordinator will be working one-on-one with programs to ensure that this is in place.

5. Increase communication about assessment of student learning.

The idea of distinguishing between assessment "of" student learning versus assessment "for" student learning that was presented at the beginning of the Roundtable event resonated with our group. In order to move our institution further into the "for" column, we want to increase communication around assessment so that it is talked about at all levels of the institution and goes beyond one person or group. Specific communication activities to complete in the next six months have been identified by our team and range from updates at department meetings and governance group meetings to campus-wide updates from our President. One common thread between the Midpoint Roundtable and the feedback from our Primary Mentor is the advice to make students a partner in assessment of student learning by being transparent about academic expectations. This suggestion spurred some interesting ideas for our team that we will continue to consider as the project progresses.

6. Continue to explore how we can leverage Blackboard to support assessment efforts.

The idea to leverage Blackboard further represented another common thread from our team time at the Midpoint Roundtable and the Consolidated Response from our Primary Mentor and Scholar. Our team conversations during the Roundtable touched on the potential that Blackboard may offer, an idea that was reinforced by the comments from our Primary Mentor and Scholar in their feedback to Version 4.0 of our project. Our institution is currently moving toward a minimum requirement that all courses utilize Blackboard for course management by the summer of 2018. This encompasses using Blackboard for posting syllabi, managing grades, tracking attendance, and gathering assessment data. With this move, we have been exploring the capabilities of Blackboard and are currently in the process of implementing Blackboard's primary assessment software to enhance our capabilities and support our assessment process.

Q: How well are you positioned to complete the project in the final two years of the Academy? What additional tools, resources, and engagement do you need?

A: We feel that we are well positioned to set up a solid foundation for assessment of student learning during the final two years of the Academy and are structuring it in a way that will be sustainable beyond our participation in the Academy. For us, the end of the Academy is not so much a wrapping up point per se, but rather a milestone in the journey. We have things that we want to accomplish by the completion of the Academy experience, but also know that the work will continue beyond that time. For our project to be successful by the end of the Academy, perhaps our biggest need in terms of resources and engagement is additional campus (faculty, staff, and students) involvement in the conversation and efforts. Because our institution remains in the "of" student learning column in certain areas of the process, comprehensive commitment to assessment does not yet exist. Previous tasks that have been completed, as well as our tasks outlined above for the next six months are intended to help move our institution in that direction. For example, the newly revised structure of the Institutional Assessment Committee ensures representation from across the institution and draws non-academic staff into the process. By working further with the current non-academic pilot programs, we hope to increase their understanding and comfort level with assessment so that they can in turn help others as additional non-academic programs embark on the process. One-on-one work with technical program faculty, while time consuming, will allow us to work through any nuances and the unique nature of each program while encouraging faculty to take ownership and accountability of the process. Lastly, increased communication will be, as our Scholar noted, "of primary importance" and establish assessment, in the words of our Primary Mentor, as "a high-frequency word" at our institution.

Q: What changes do you anticipate as you move into the second half of the Academy term? What have you learned from the first two years of the Academy to mitigate these challenges?

A: We know that a decrease in employees and budget constraints will continue to be felt across our institution as we move into the second half of the Academy experience. Doing less with more will remain a reality, but one that we have shown ourselves we have the fortitude to overcome. Another anticipated challenge during the second half of the Academy is the pressure of an abbreviated timeline to achieve certain tasks and goals. We are currently in the process of writing our AQIP Systems Portfolio and will be preparing for our accreditation site visit in April of 2019. We would like to be able to point to a certain amount of evidence during this point of our accreditation process, but know that the accreditation timeline and the timeline of this project may not coincide as seamlessly as desired.

Q: How have you used what you have learned about student learning to improve your educational strategies (curricular and co-curricular)? What evidence do you have that your work thus far has improved student learning? What more do you need to know?

A: For academic assessment, perhaps our biggest obstacle and continued sticking point is that too much time and energy is still being spent on creating and building the process, without fully managing to shift the attention and focus to conversations about the use of the data and how it can improve student learning. Consequently, the work we do in the final half of our project must get us to a point where we can provide evidence and share stories about how we are improving student learning – stories that we know are out there (albeit informally and anecdotally at the present moment) - rather than continue to belabor the process.

From a non-academic perspective, our team will be following up with the non-academic pilot programs to see how the assessment process has resulted in changes to the program and improved student learning. If the data has not been used to its fullest potential, we will investigate as to why and remedy that (i.e., staff unsure how to analyze the data, data collected doesn't correspond to program outcomes, etc.).

Version 4.0- Project

Q: What projects have you been following on the Collaboration Network? What have you learned from the experiences of other schools that is useful to your project?

To learn more about the progress and development of other projects, get alerts by following other projects.

A: Since the last project update (Version 3.0), BSC's Assessment Academy team has continued to follow and refer back to the same projects in the Collaboration Network that we previously identified. Overall, we have found the Collaboration Network to be an advantageous platform to support our Academy work by spurring ideas, providing real-life guidance and examples, offering reassurance regarding shared struggles that institutions face, but also by allowing us the freedom to turn to other institutional examples and projects when it best fits into our journey. Namely to this last point, we found our work and attention during this past interim largely internally focused with less reliance on the experience of other institutions. We anticipate that as our Academy project moves forward, we will once again use the Collaboration Network and refer to other projects more frequently.

Version 4.0- Update

How have you incorporated the feedback from the Consolidated Response to your previous Project
Q: Update?

A: The feedback to our previous project update as well as the consultation we were grateful to have with our Primary Mentor during the HLC 2017 Annual Conference gave us much to consider. In particular, the input from our Primary Mentor and Scholar prompted our team to reevaluate our plan to develop common rubrics for BSC's non-academic specific Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes (IELOs). Developments on our campus further supported the need to review and reconsider our approach, as faculty across disciplines and programs were struggling with applying the common rubrics that had been developed for the academic IELOs.

Before explaining where our reconsideration over the past six months led us, we want to first offer a brief recap of the evolution of our assessment process at BSC in recent years in hopes of answering the questions and addressing the need for further clarity that our Primary Mentor and Scholar raised in the Consolidated Response. BSC's Academic Assessment Committee, which at the time was primarily made up of faculty members, developed Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes (IELOs) to guide and cohesively tie together the learning opportunities that take place in the classroom setting. These agreed upon outcomes were categorized into three overarching domains – Awareness, Communication, and Thought – that extended back to 2007 when the Academic Assessment Committee initially adopted that framework as a way to structure academic assessment efforts at BSC. In direct response to the question our Primary Mentor posed, the definitions following the overarching domains of Awareness, Communication, and Thought on the IELO document are considered general and applicable to both academic and non-academic learning opportunities. As BSC joined the Assessment Academy in 2015, one of the first tasks undertaken by the Academy team was to review the IELOs, identify any gaps, and add outcomes deemed pertinent and imperative for non-academic student learning opportunities on our campus. The resulting IELOs from these two entities - the Academic Assessment Committee (subsequently renamed the Institutional Assessment Committee) and the Assessment Academy team - were combined into one document and shared across campus. After the final IELOs were finalized and approved, members of the Institutional Assessment Committee developed common rubrics for those IELOs designated as joint (applicable to either academic or non-academic student learning opportunities) or as academic specific. These rubrics are largely based on the AAC&U LEAP VALUE rubrics, with some changes made to the verbiage to more appropriately reflect and fit our institution. Beginning this past spring, faculty have been aligning their courses with an IELO and displaying that information on the common course syllabus. Faculty will begin collecting assessment data demonstrating the identified IELO for a course this fall. As the integration of institutional outcomes into courses and curriculum has progressed, we found the common rubrics to be an obstacle and point of tension for various disciplines and program. Knowing that a common rubric cannot and should not be used for a variety of demonstration opportunities, assessment instruments, and student artifacts, we eventually realized that this flexibility in an institutional approach had not been properly established and clearly communicated. Consequently, we have been concentrating a lot of effort on shifting the focus from the common rubric to the common criteria or indicators of each outcome. For example, Lifelong Learning consists of the criteria Curiosity, Initiative, Independence, Transfer, and Reflection. We will now be following a similar approach for the non-academic IELOs - identifying common criteria for the IELOs rather than trying to design a common rubric.

A final point that was brought up by our Primary Mentor and Scholar in the Consolidated Response pertains to assessment data management. BSC has transitioned to a new LMS system over the summer and this fall. Data management for assessment has not been significantly affected at this point because we had not been using our

last LMS system for that purpose. However, with our switch to Blackboard, we are looking to leverage the system for assessment data collection, reporting, and management. In fact, we have already started moving that direction for our academic assessment process. We have entered the joint and academic IELOs into Blackboard both as rubrics and as goals, which will allow faculty to align the outcomes with their course curriculum and assessment activities in individual courses. Training was held for faculty on this topic and guides providing step-by-step instructions have been placed on our Intranet for faculty to refer to and to assist those who were unable to attend the training. While we have not had discussions about whether and how Blackboard could be used to support the non-academic programs and activities for assessment, we appreciate the suggestion. We also have not looked into the possibility of using Hobson's CRM software for gathering metrics to support non-academic assessment and look forward to pursuing that idea further.

Link : [BSC's Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes](https://bismarckstate.edu/uploads/0/BSCsInstitutionalEssentialLearningOutcomes.pdf)
<https://bismarckstate.edu/uploads/0/BSCsInstitutionalEssentialLearningOutcomes.pdf>

Q: Your team has reached the midpoint in the Academy. Summarize your team's accomplishments thus far.

A: The accomplishments of our Assessment Academy team thus far include:

- **Modifying Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes (IELOs) to encompass student learning opportunities both inside the classroom and those provided by non-academic programs and activities**

Our Assessment Academy team reviewed the IELOs developed by the Academic Assessment Committee and identified any gaps from the perspective of non-academic programs and activities. We researched examples from other institutions and drew on our strategic plan and initiatives in order to discuss and select additional outcomes that rounded out our institutional framework.

- **Sharing IELOs across the campus to increase awareness, garner support, and obtain approval from governing entities**

The combined IELOs that culminated from the work of the Academic Assessment Committee and the Assessment Academy team were shared with Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, the Student Affairs Leadership Team, and administrative leadership groups. Adhering to our institution's formal governance process to share the IELOs, while time consuming, was done intentionally in order to ensure that awareness permeated the campus and to elicit as much buy in and support as possible.

- **Creating a form to guide non-academic assessment process**

In completing this step, the Assessment Academy team had two goals: 1.) to create a form that helped guide individuals through the assessment process in a logical manner and that was not cumbersome, confusing, or required too much time to complete and 2.) to craft a form that mirrored the process, structure, and reporting requirements being established for academic assessment in order to maintain as much internal consistency and streamline the institutional approach.

- **Initiating the pilot project with four non-academic programs**

Our Assessment Academy team began working one-on-one with the staff leading four different non-academic programs - orientation, RA training, new student registration, and tutoring. We worked with these individuals to varying degrees based on their comfort level with the task at hand, their knowledge and familiarity with the assessment process, and the particular details of the program (e.g., the history of the program at BSC, whether there have been any recent changes or modifications to the program, how long the individuals have been involved with the program, etc.). Our assumption that this point of our Academy project would be lengthy, but also provide us with the most direction about further work that the Academy team needs to accomplish has indeed come to fruition. We are continuing to work with the four pilot programs as our Academy experiences continues and feel that the Midpoint Roundtable has come at an opportune time for us to regroup, refocus, and elaborate where we as an institution want and need to go from here.

Q: Describe the most significant challenges and opportunities encountered in the development and initial implementation of your Academy project.

A: Our most significant challenge during the tenure of our Academy project has been planning and implementing a project amidst a drastically changing landscape and environment at our institution. We have been faced with budget challenges that we had no hint of when we joined the Assessment Academy and that have altered in some sense who we are. We have dealt with restructuring, reduction in positions, and cutbacks that have forced us all to adapt and change to one extent or another our day-to-day work.

Another challenge we noticed during our work with the pilot programs is the potential for scope creep, a challenge most clearly illustrated during our work with the new student registration program. The staff involved with this program met multiple times with members of the Assessment Academy team to discuss and lay out their assessment plan. As one of the early meetings was progressing, it became apparent that individuals were easily getting swept up in connecting to and supporting the high-level goal of student success that we continually strive for at BSC. By recognizing the inflated focus and taking a step back, we were able to make certain that the assessment plan being constructed aligns with the constraints of that particular program. Based on this experience, we now routinely ask the questions: 1.) What exactly can students learn and demonstrate within the confines of the program or activity (e.g., a one-hour student registration session)? and 2.) What are the specific goals of that program (e.g., a student registration session)? in order to hopefully continue to keep scope creep at bay.

To this point, who has been engaged in the Academy process. Are there additional stakeholders who need to be included in the Academy process? How can they be engaged?

A: The primary individuals who have been involved in BSC's Academy process thus far include the Vice President of Student Affairs, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Institutional Assessment Coordinator, staff from the Mystic Advising and Counseling Center, staff from Student and Residence Life, the Associate Registrar, the Student Accessibility and Academic Support Services Coordinator, and the Alternative Learning Coordinator. The President of the college and Vice President of Academic Affairs have served in a supportive role throughout the duration of the project. Others across campus have been kept up to date about the project, including the Institutional Assessment Committee.

Going forward, we anticipate that the Institutional Assessment Committee will play a more substantial role in the project for two reasons. First, the newly approved and adopted charter for the Committee expands the membership to include a non-academic subcommittee along with the longer standing academic membership. Second, we would like to take steps in uniting our institutional assessment process as much as possible and when and where it makes sense. The bridge between academic and non-academic assessment has been diminished with the introduction of Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes and we are trying to structure the process and procedures (for instance, in designing the reporting form) in a way that promotes overlap and consistency between academic and non-academic assessment.

Moreover, we anticipate that additional employees directly involved with non-academic programs and activities that provide opportunities for student learning will be more engaged in the Academy process. We recognize and are aspiring to make assessment just a normal part of what we do at BSC. To achieve this, we need it to be something that most employees participate in and find meaning and value in. This ties back to the suggestion that our Scholar highlighted - the importance of communicating assessment outcomes. We hope to engage the campus community and cultivate the desired culture by increasing our communication about assessment efforts.

The Midpoint Roundtable will offer an opportunity to review, refocus, and recharge the Academy team's efforts. What particular goals does your team have for the Midpoint Roundtable?

A: One of our Assessment Academy team's main goals for the Midpoint Roundtable is to further elaborate our next steps for success of non-academic assessment efforts. Our team had initially planned to expand the non-academic programs and activities involved in the assessment process in the third year of the project. However, it has become evident that more time may be needed to follow through on the data collection and analysis of results for the initial four pilot programs and for, as emphasized by our Primary Mentor and Scholar, thoughtful and extensive communication of the findings and resulting outcomes. As we elaborate our next steps as a team, we want to ensure that we are constructing and implementing a process that will be sustainable beyond the Assessment Academy experience - a process that will be embedded in our culture. Consequently, we plan to have some focused conversations leading to actionable steps around this matter at the Midpoint Roundtable. This will be

particularly important given that we are embodying the doing less with more mantra at BSC and the effects of that can be felt across the institution.

Another item that we will be addressing at the Midpoint Roundtable is determining how we want our assessment process and program review process at BSC to work hand in hand. We have come to realize as the Academy project has unfolded the importance of clearly distinguishing and articulating between program evaluation focusing on assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of a program or activity and assessment of student learning. While both have a place at our institution, we are finding that the assessment process and procedure our Academy team has devised may need to distinguish more clearly between the approach for both.

Furthermore, we have found in working with the four pilot programs that employees can fairly easily identify student learning outcomes for their programs and activities, but determining the methods to measure those outcomes has been more challenging. Oftentimes the initial methods suggested do not actually measure the outcomes they are intended to measure. In addition, making the leap to shared Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes has been just that - a leap. Asking employees to think about how their non-curricular programs and activities offer student learning opportunities and support our IELOs has required more guidance and assistance from our Academy team. Employees, and admittedly even our team members at times, have struggled with determining how to demonstrate the IELOs within the confines of the particular program or activity. We would like to take some time at the Midpoint Roundtable to determine if there is a better way to help employees (particularly staff members not previously involved in academic assessment) select appropriate assessment measures.

Version 3.0- Project

What projects have you been following on the Collaboration Network? What have you learned from the experiences of other schools that is useful to your project?

Q:

To learn more about the progress and development of other projects, get alerts by following other projects.

A: Since the last update (Version 2.0), our use of the Collaboration Network has largely been to support institutional assessment efforts including but also extending beyond the scope of our Assessment Academy project. We have and will continue to use the Collaboration Network as a resource for our Assessment Academy project and co-curricular assessment efforts - namely by continuing to follow Minnesota State University Moorhead's project and referring back to Wartburg College's project as both have direct connections to our Assessment Academy project. However, we have found the Network to be a rich resource for a wide range of assessment efforts and activities that are happening at BSC simultaneously with our participation in the Assessment Academy. For instance, we have adopted Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes (IELOs) and are crafting the process and framework for how those will be implemented across campus - both inside and outside of the classroom. In developing the implementation plan for the institutional outcomes and determining best practices for the use of institutional rubrics, we have sought examples and resources from other institutions. The Collaboration Network has provided us one such outlet from which to direct our search. We have found value in using the Collaboration Network to identify institutions who have tackled similar tasks in order to read about their journey, learn from their experiences, and oftentimes gather practical, real-life applications and examples to help guide our efforts.

Version 3.0- Update

Q: Describe your team's initial implementation of the project you have designed.

A: With some of the building blocks of a non-academic assessment process in place, we have been able to move on to the pilot phase of our project. Specifically, we have started piloting the non-academic assessment process with three co-curricular programs previously identified - orientation, RA training, and tutoring. New student registration was also added as a pilot program. These programs were selected as they presented themselves as

"low-hanging fruit" at our institution. In other words, the individuals in these programs have either already been collecting some data to help make improvements to the programs and/or they have begun developing or expressed an interest in developing program outcomes prior to their participation in the pilot project. To on-board each of these programs, an initial meeting was arranged involving the individuals spearheading the program and the Assessment Academy team members. During this meeting, background information about the Assessment Academy project was shared, the non-academic assessment process that is being piloted was explained, and expectations for the program during the pilot project were reviewed. Following the meeting, the first step for the pilot programs has been to develop and document an initial assessment plan consisting of:

- Program student learning outcomes,
- Assessment methods and measures for those outcomes,
- Intended results, and
- Identifying the Institutional Essential Learning Outcome (IELO) aligned with their program.

We have strived to tailor these initial meetings to the specific program - to meet them where they are at. As we have discussed the non-academic assessment process and shared the draft form that the Assessment Academy team developed to help guide them in this process, there has been a variance in how the individuals representing the programs find it most helpful to proceed. Some have wanted to work closely with the Assessment Academy team or the Institutional Assessment Coordinator (the Assessment Academy Team Lead) to develop and/or refine program learning outcomes and draft an assessment plan. Other programs have chosen to complete this task more independently and sought feedback and guidance from the Assessment Academy team after completing a draft assessment plan. Our flexible approach seems to be appropriate and beneficial for the programs involved thus far.

The next step for the pilot programs is to gather the assessment data, which will occur over the summer and fall of 2017. Each of the programs also need to spend additional time fleshing out how they plan to assess the identified Institutional Essential Learning Outcome within the confines of their program. This step has not been completed because it relies in part on the availability of common institutional rubrics for the non-academic specific IELOs that are still under development. Moreover, this step is the biggest departure from how things have been done in the past at BSC. The concept of institutional outcomes that tie together all the student learning at BSC is a new direction for our institution and as such, this part of the assessment plan raises more questions and requires a greater degree of guidance from our Assessment Academy team. We have found that, not unexpectedly, it can take multiple discussions and iterations to determine the most appropriate IELO for the non-academic program and the measurement of an institutional outcome is not as easily determined as measurements for program outcomes.

Q: How has your project developed and changed since the last posting?

A: Our Assessment Academy project continues to develop fairly closely with our anticipated outline developed at the initial Roundtable. We are trying to mirror our non-academic assessment process after our academic assessment process which has proven difficult at times given that our academic assessment process is currently also under revision. In the past six months, the changes to the assessment process and framework for academic assessment has taken more time and attention than anticipated. In particular, the alignment of course, program, and institutional outcomes and the assessment of the Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes in the classroom through the use of common institutional rubrics has led to many questions and challenges raised by faculty. Faculty have notably struggled with the common rubrics and whether that approach can work for an institution that encompasses general education courses and programs, career and technical courses and program, and co-curricular courses and programs. While trying to work through these details, we have been unable to move forward as quickly on the development of institutional rubrics for the non-academic specific IELOs.

How have you incorporated the feedback from the Consolidated Response to your previous Project
Q: Update?

A: The feedback from our primary mentor and scholar has, time and again, been extremely helpful and encouraging for our Assessment Academy team members and the larger BSC community as a whole. First, we would like to address the question from our primary mentor about the lack of disaggregation of BSC's Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes (refer to the link below) into academic specific and non-academic specific outcomes within the "Thought" category. This omission was intentional. In reviewing and modifying the IELOs originally developed by the Academic Assessment Committee, the Assessment Academy team concluded that additional

non-academic specific outcomes within the "Thought" category were not necessary. Rather the team felt that the shared outcomes - "Critical and/or Creative Thinking" and "Integrative Learning" - sufficiently covered the learning environment offered by non-academic programs at BSC.

Both our primary mentor and scholar commented about the non-academic assessment form that was drafted by the team. The comments suggest the need to clarify that the draft form is a reporting form intended to help non-academic programs develop and document an assessment plan, report results, and establish an action plan and share any follow-up to demonstrate continuous improvement and close the assessment loop. Criteria for the non-academic specific outcomes, such as "intrapersonal development" and "interpersonal development," are being laid out in the institutional rubrics still under development. As for the evidence for non-academic specific outcomes, we are allowing programs to determine for themselves the most appropriate measurements. The Assessment Academy team and the Institutional Assessment Coordinator will be instrumental in this process, though, by offering suggestions and ideas for meaningful methods and measures for programs to consider. Thus, the reminder from our primary mentor to "remain mindful of the inherent challenges of assessing affective and behavioral learning," "assessing for 'efficiency' and assessing for 'effectiveness,'" and the common reliance on indirect evidence in co-curricular assessment are valuable pieces of advice for us to keep at the forefront as we move forward with our project.

Finally, we want to express our appreciation for the encouragement offered by both our primary mentor and scholar. Progress on assessment efforts and activities seems to ebb and flow greatly at our institution, and seemingly at most institutions based on experiences shared within the Collaboration Network. With the reality that it often requires incremental change in order to truly move the larger effort forward, it is easy to get disheartened by the frequent obstacles and the small steps forward.

Link : [BSC's Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes](https://bismarckstate.edu/uploads/0/BSCsInstitutionalEssentialLearningOutcomes.pdf)
<https://bismarckstate.edu/uploads/0/BSCsInstitutionalEssentialLearningOutcomes.pdf>

Q: Thus far, what have you discovered about student learning at your institution.

A: Assessment data for the pilot projects has not been formally collected (albeit some of the programs were collecting data previously and not formally documenting the data). The pilot programs will begin gathering data and formally documenting it beginning in the summer or fall of 2017. However, in working with the pilot programs, they have shared some changes that they have already made to their programs in the past in order to improve student learning. This goes to show the importance for our institution to be capturing this data and the changes that are being made to the programs as a result.

Another thing we have learned about student learning so far is that most of the programs in the pilot phase already have a solid idea of their program learning outcomes. These outcomes may not be written down, but the individuals leading these programs have clearly spent time thinking about the goals and purpose of the program and formulating some ideas prior to them ever being approached about participating in the pilot project. This supports what the Assessment Academy team has believed to be true and iterated to the pilot project participants - that non-academic assessment is already taking place at BSC in an informal manner, but, again, we have not formally captured the data and the continuous improvements being made to the programs.

The Assessment Academy project has also brought to light that, as expected, individuals involved in non-academic programs and activities clearly see their connection to student learning, but need assistance in formalizing that connection. In working with non-academic programs to develop and refine their program learning outcomes, there has been a tendency to write outcomes that align with the mission and vision of our institution, but are grandiose given the boundaries and logistics (i.e., length of time, content actually covered, etc.) of the particular program or activity. In working with programs, the Assessment Academy team has encouraged and assisted colleagues in adhering to the best practice of keeping the outcomes SMART, with a particular focus on keeping the outcomes specific to the program and realistic.

Q: How will you continue to advance your project in the next six months?

A: During the next six months, the non-academic assessment process pilot with the aforementioned selected programs will continue. The focus will be for the programs to conduct the planned assessments, analyze the results, and determine an action plan for improvements and change based on the data. In addition, further efforts

will also be made to strengthen the alignment of non-academic programs to the institutional level. The Assessment Academy team will continue to work closely with each of the programs to ensure that a fitting IELO has been selected and to determine how each of the criteria of the selected IELO will be measured. We will look to the pilot programs for feedback about the institutional rubrics as they are closer to completion. We are finding thus far that many of pilot programs align with the Intrapersonal Development outcome, so we plan to seek their input before finalizing the rubric as a method of confirming that appropriate criteria for the outcome are included and the rubric fits the student learning opportunities offered at BSC. Furthermore, we will be anecdotally assessing the non-academic assessment process as we are progressing with the pilot project to determine what is working, possible revisions to the reporting form, and additional resources that may need to be developed.

As mentioned in our previous update (Version 2.0), BSC is also currently restructuring our Assessment Committee. The renamed Institutional Assessment Committee crafted a charter that has now been approved and shared across campus. The shift in the membership of the committee as outlined in the charter will begin in the fall of 2017, which includes the addition of a non-academic subcommittee. Consequently, we will begin identifying individuals willing to serve on the subcommittee in the upcoming months. Members of the Assessment Academy team and individuals involved in the pilot project represent potential candidates for this role given their exposure and understanding of our institutional assessment efforts.

Q: What challenges do you anticipate? How will you address them?

A: The increasing revenue shortfalls facing the state of North Dakota have dramatically impacted our institution. We have had to make drastic budget cuts with much time, attention, and resources being devoted to making it through this difficult time. The implications of the budget has altered and continues to impact who we are as an organization. We know that we will come out of this adversity a changed institution. In addition to the budget situation, we are currently in the process of switching to a new Learning Management System. While this overall is a positive change for our institution, it requires employees to become familiar and accustomed to a new system. Gaining motivation for assessment amidst all of this change, even though one could argue that assessment of student learning is even more important during this time when we are having to adapt to doing more with less, is a continual struggle. Our administrative support for the Assessment Academy project and assessment efforts in general have not waned, however, which will help us overcome these and any obstacles we may encounter.

Version 2.0- Project

What projects have you been following on the Collaboration Network? What have you learned from the experiences of other schools that is useful to your project?

Q: *To learn more about the progress and development of other projects, get alerts by following other projects.*

A: Bismarck State College's Assessment Academy project represents one facet of the assessment efforts and activities currently happening at our institution. As stated in our previous update (Version 1.0), a complementary AQIP project focused on academic assessment is underway as are some huge shifts and strides at the institutional level largely driven by the work of the newly renamed Institutional Assessment Committee. The Collaboration Network has been a useful resource for the institutional assessment efforts encompassed within our Assessment Academy project as well as the complementary and simultaneous activities beyond the scope of the project.

Our use of the Collaboration Network initially was concentrated on following and referring to other projects involving co-curricular learning that directly related to our Assessment Academy project. This approach led us to the projects of Wartburg College and Minnesota State University Moorhead, both of which have provided us support beyond the realm of co-curricular learning and tied to our institutional efforts. Wartburg College's project, while tagged with "Co-curricular Learning" is truly comprehensive in design and closely mirrors the overall happenings in assessment at Bismarck State College. Our institution currently is closely aligned to the progress and activities reported in Version 2.0 of Wartburg College's Assessment Academy project. Following the progress that Wartburg made during their project tenure provides us with a roadmap of sorts and affirms the steps we have already accomplished and those that we are still planning to take. One of the main achievements that Wartburg accomplished was the creation of an Assessment Committee. While BSC has had a long-standing Academic

Assessment Committee, the committee is currently restructuring in order to more appropriately reflect the expanding institutional nature of assessment at BSC. The first step in this shift was to formally change the name of the committee from the Academic Assessment Committee to the Institutional Assessment Committee to better align assessment efforts at our institution with our holistic approach of providing student learning experiences both inside and outside of the classroom. The committee is now in the process of developing a charter, which will include a redesign of the membership and more clearly define the role and purpose of the committee. The structure that Wartburg's Assessment Committee assumed and the duties for the committee laid out in their proposal have been useful for our institution to refer to as we work on the restructuring of our committee.

One key lesson gathered from Minnesota State University Moorhead's Assessment Academy project and experience arose from how they dealt with an unforeseen turn of events when facing a deficit. Their recognition of the need to pause until things settle down and the encouragement from their primary mentor and scholar in overcoming this turn of events was beneficial for us to see as we face our own budgetary challenges. Another key takeaway garnered from MSUM's updates in the Collaboration Network came in response to a question posed by their scholar as to how they plan on soliciting student input (response to Version 5.0). MSUM's team stated that consistent student representation on committees has been challenging, but that they intend to meet with the Student Senate President and the chair of the Student Senate Academic Affairs Committee to seek feedback and ideas. Our team received similar feedback, with our primary mentor emphasizing the importance of a student perspective as we move forward with our project. As a primarily two-year institution, we struggle with involving students in long-term projects such as the Assessment Academy project. And while it would be ideal to have a static student voice on the Assessment Academy team throughout the project duration, it is more realistic for our team to follow the approach by MSUM to seek input from students at various points. We look forward to reading MSUM's latest update (Version 7.0) to learn more about how successful they have been at incorporating a student perspective and what that voice has done in shaping their project.

We have also begun using the Collaboration Network as a resource for our institutional efforts that complement our Assessment Academy project. By browsing the projects of various institutions, we have found ideas and resources on institutional websites from which to draw. We have also made note of some patterns and practices for advancing assessment efforts and tackling challenges that seem to be common across institutions – such as ways to encourage the use and adoption of institutional student learning outcomes, how to gain faculty and staff buy-in, cycles for institutional assessment, etc.

Version 2.0- Update

Q: How has your project developed and changed in the months since the Roundtable?

A: Our project has been progressing steadily since the Roundtable. We have been adhering to our original timeline and are now in the phase of piloting a non-academic assessment process with three co-curricular programs - orientation, RA training, and tutoring.

Previous activities completed by the Assessment Academy team include:

1. Conduct research to guide and advance our Assessment Academy project

Assessment Academy team members used the months following the Roundtable to research examples from other institutions regarding all aspects of assessment of co-curricular learning. The members felt this was an essential use of time in order to get our bearings as a team and determine the direction we wanted to proceed prior to moving forward. While team members continue to research and refer to other institutional examples (which has been supported and made easier by the Collaboration Network), the bulk of this process was intentionally completed in the early months of our Assessment Academy tenure.

2. Review and modify BSC's Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes

The Assessment Academy team reviewed BSC's Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes (IELOs) for appropriateness, gaps, and extension to non-academic programs and activities. Upon reviewing the IELOs originally developed by the Academic Assessment Committee, the team made additions to the original document to

fill any perceived gaps. These additions were shared with leadership in Student Affairs for review and feedback. The resulting IELOs formally went through our governance process to ensure that they were shared and received approval from faculty (via Faculty Senate), staff (via Staff Senate), and administration (via multiple administrative leadership groups). The final product combines the efforts of both the Assessment Committee and the Assessment Academy team into a comprehensive document that is intended to be used and guide assessment across the institution. The combined IELOs are shared below.

Bismarck State College is dedicated to providing innovative educational programs that develop individual abilities, strengthen human relationships, enhance community life, and heighten global consciousness. Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes at Bismarck State College promote the development of an informed and educated person who recognizes and respects the diversity of communities; understands the value of active, critical thinking; and is competent and proficient at fundamental skills which encourage a positive attitude toward lifelong learning and equip students to participate in a complex, interdependent world.

Awareness

Students demonstrate the ability to successfully function in a diverse society which requires knowledge and awareness of the environment, self, and others.

- **Diversity:** examine our capacity to understand societal knowledge, to identify our own cultural patterns, and to compare and contrast those with others
- **Lifelong Learning:** develop the disposition and skills necessary to engage in learning throughout life in personal, academic, and professional contexts

Academic Specific

- **Civic Engagement:** demonstrate knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make a difference in our own lives and the civic life of our communities

Non-Academic Specific

- **Social Responsibility:** demonstrate integrity and behave ethically with sensitivity toward social, cultural, economic and environmental issues, while striving to make a positive impact on the community and other societal entities
- **Intrapersonal Development:** cultivate a strong sense of identity; develop and understand personal beliefs, values, and interests; demonstrate growth and self-management to promote lifelong learning; and have the capacity to learn from life experiences

Communication

Students demonstrate the ability to communicate in a manner that is essential in interpersonal relationships, working environments, and civic duties.

- **Written Communication:** develop and express ideas in writing using a variety of genres, styles, and technologies
- **Oral Communication:** deliver information designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listener
- **Information Literacy:** identify when a need for information exists and then locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information

Academic Specific

- **Teamwork:** contribute to team tasks and discussions and interact effectively

Non-Academic Specific

- **Interpersonal Development:** form mature and respectful personal and professional relationships using effective communication and listening skills

Thought

Students demonstrate the ability to think, reason, and learn in a manner that is imaginative, methodic, and can serve as the cornerstone of learning success for a student.

- **Critical and/or Creative Thinking:** identify a problem, recognizing and evaluating relevant ideas, concepts, theories, or approaches, and create possible strategies and processes to solving emerging problems in a transformational, innovative, and/or original way
- **Integrative Learning:** transfer skills from learning experiences to complex and everyday life situations

Academic Specific

- **Ethical Reasoning:** recognize, describe, and/or analyze positions on ethical issues in a variety of contexts
- **Problem Solving:** design, evaluate, and implement a strategy to answer an open-ended question or achieve a desired goal'
- **Inquiry and Analysis:** examine issues through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions and break complex topics into parts to gain a better understanding
- **Quantitative Literacy:** apply reason and solve problems from a wide array of authentic contexts and everyday life situations and clearly communicate arguments supported by quantitative evidence in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc., as appropriate)

Each student may demonstrate varied levels of proficiency of Bismarck State College's Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes depending upon the specific degree, program, or credential that s/he pursues and the co-curricular activities and programs in which s/he participates.

3. Create a non-academic assessment form

Another task completed by the Assessment Academy team was the creation of a form to help guide the non-academic assessment process. The form is based primarily after the form that was drafted and will be implemented for academic programs. The draft form is being used during the pilot project and will be adapted as we continue with our work and receive feedback.

One unforeseen change that has altered the atmosphere at our institution is a downturn in our financial landscape. We are facing budgetary constraints that have led to restructuring, cutbacks, retirement incentives, reduction in force, and other tough decisions. This has led to employees having to carry more responsibility, an increase in competing interests for time and resources, and an underlying buzz that can distract from institutional projects and progress.

Q: How did you incorporate the feedback that you received on your previous posting?

A: We appreciate the feedback received on our previous update and have acted on the input provided as much as possible. Our response to the feedback and resulting actions are outlined below.

Our primary mentor suggested "tapping into your population for assessment mentors" – a suggestion that coincides with an idea that was independently sparked at our institution to develop an Assessment Fellows program. This potential program, while still in the planning stages, would entail peer-to-peer mentoring, consultation, and guidance primarily for program/discipline-level assessment. The current proposal for this idea is geared towards engaging faculty as Assessment Fellows, with conversations underway about how to replicate this approach for non-academic programs and activities in a way that would differentiate the work from the Assessment Academy project and ensure sustainability of the program into the future.

Our primary mentor also suggested maintaining an assessment glossary in a shared space available for campus constituents to view. The development of a glossary is a task that our team had discussed upon returning to our institution following the Roundtable and completed some preliminary work around in the early months of our project. We intend to follow up on these initial efforts in the coming months.

A comment by our primary mentor illustrated the need for our team to further clarify the timeline we presented for our project. We initially stated that we intend to look at the impact of the project on the improvement of student learning in year three. She suggested that we consider moving this step earlier in the process and we wholeheartedly agree with this feedback. We really do see the exploration of the impact on improving student learning as a continual activity throughout the project. However, we do not anticipate having evidence of this impact until the project progresses further. With the focus now on piloting the non-academic assessment process with a small group of programs, there will be an opportunity at the end of year two to demonstrate the impact, which we intend to do and share widely across campus as a way of spurring the project and our overall institutional assessment efforts forward.

Our scholar mentioned referring to the CAS Professional Standards in our work with assessing co-curricular learning. We had already been referring to that resource and were pleased to see that it was in line with our scholar's train of thought for our project.

Based on our Version 1.0 project update, our scholar raised the question, "is there a lack of appreciation of the non-academic work as it relates to student learning?" Our team has considered this possible issue and came to the conclusion that there is not so much a lack of appreciation as simply a perceived separation or difference between student learning inside the classroom and opportunities outside of the classroom. We have seen that this disconnect exists both among faculty who tend to be academic-centric and not immediately or naturally think of assessment efforts as extending to non-academic programs and activities as well as those involved in the non-academic programs and activities who may not consider what they are involved in as part of the student learning experience. This lack of unity is something that we are striving to address and help remedy through our project.

Interestingly, a point raised by our primary mentor has come to fruition in recent months of our team's work. She stated, "Knowing what level of assessment knowledge is acceptable for different stakeholders can help you move forward." Our team initially discussed the need for a glossary, education, and training about assessment for employees involved in non-academic programs and activities. While these pieces are good in theory and have a place and time, we have found that we need to consider the perspectives of the various constituents across campus and engage each individual in institutional assessment in the most natural and easy way possible. For instance, those involved in non-academic programs and activities may not necessarily need to know and understand the ins and outs of assessment, or at least perhaps not immediately. Rather, it has been more beneficial to keep the focus on the program/activity, which they are the expert in, and weave the assessment process into what they are already doing while making any adjustments or suggestions for improvement and expansion along the way. While the difference in approaches may seem nuanced, it has been crucial to our success and an early lesson learned as we have embarked on the pilot project phase of our Assessment Academy project.

Q: What are the plans for the next six months? How will this work advance your project?

A: During the next six months, the Assessment Academy Team plans on continuing to pilot the non-academic assessment process with the selected programs. We will work hand in hand with these programs as a guide throughout the assessment process to develop or refine program learning outcomes, tie the program/activity to BSC's Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes, conduct the assessment, analyze the results, and use the data to make improvements and changes. In turn, we will be seeking feedback from these individuals regarding what would be useful for other programs as they start to formalize the assessment process.

In the upcoming months, the Assessment Academy team will also continue to work on the development and gathering of training materials and resources for non-academic programs and activities. For example, a glossary and FAQs document developed by faculty with academic assessment in mind will be reviewed and possibly edited in order to ensure that it is a resource that can be used across the institution. The Institutional Assessment Committee is finalizing the development of institutional rubrics for each of the IELOs - a step that the Assessment Academy team will undergo for the non-academic specific IELOs.

Beyond the purview of the project, but related, the Institutional Assessment Committee will be completing their charter and seeking approval for the restructuring of the committee. This change will help promote a shift in the culture and advance a comprehensive viewpoint of assessment, further supporting the work of our Assessment Academy project.

Q: What challenges do you anticipate? How will you address them?

A: As mentioned previously, the budget shortfalls facing our institution have created a degree of uncertainty about the future. It would be easy to let the changes that are happening derail the course of the project; however, we are committed to ensuring the project continues to progress and keeps its momentum. Our institution is truly at a crossroads with an opportunity to shift the assessment culture and practices and it is an opportunity that we do not want to squander. Knowing that, though, we are also realistic in recognizing that a degree of distraction and competing interests on our time and energy will continue to arise. Administration remains supportive of our assessment efforts and those involved with assessment both inside and outside of the classroom have been largely embracing the opportunity to achieve an institutional perspective on student learning.

Version 1.0- Project

Q: Describe the project you developed at the Roundtable. Focus particularly on the general strategies you developed. (500 words)

A: Bismarck State College's Assessment Academy project is focused on creating and implementing an assessment framework for non-academic programs. As it is being developed, the non-academic assessment framework will be integrated with academic assessment efforts in order to achieve a comprehensive, campus-wide view of student learning at BSC.

The core team gathered for this project includes the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, the Alternative Learning Coordinator, the Director of Counseling and Advising Services, the Student and Residence Life Coordinator, and the Institutional Assessment Coordinator. The team will sustain the continued work on this project, drawing in other employees from campus as appropriate throughout the duration of the project. In addition, the Institutional Assessment Coordinator will serve as the link between this project and assessment endeavors in the academic realm, particularly the development of a framework to guide the academic assessment process and plan (the focus of another AQIP Action Project at BSC) and the work of the Academic Assessment Committee.

General strategies and key steps in the Assessment Academy project are outlined as follows:

Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek out education opportunities regarding assessment practices for the core team• Review BSC's Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes (IELOs) to determine if any gaps are present in terms of learning outcomes reflective of the non-academic programs and activities and revise as needed• Research non-academic assessment plan/process examples from other institutions• Create the non-academic assessment process for BSC
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pilot the non-academic assessment process with two to three non-academic programs and/or activities
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revise the assessment process based on results and feedback from the pilot project• Guide the pilot programs in using the data collected to improve student learning• Expand the number of non-academic programs and activities involved in the assessment process

Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to expand and refine the non-academic assessment process • Ensure the sustainability of the assessment process
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate the non-academic assessment process with academic assessment efforts to ensure a consistent, cohesive institutional assessment approach • Communicate with campus the progress of the project, assessment results, and actions taken to improve student learning

* The term "co-curricular" was originally used when describing and sharing information about the project both verbally and in written communications across campus. When faced with confusion among faculty and staff, the team deliberately selected the term "non-academic" instead in an effort to make the project and the resulting assessment process and plan as understandable, manageable, and approachable as possible.

Q: How will your project contribute to making assessment an activity that leads to the improvement of student learning?
A: The Assessment Academy project is aimed at developing a comprehensive assessment process on our campus. We know that student learning does not occur only in the classroom and believe that assessment should be reflective of that. By extending assessment efforts to non-academic programs and activities, BSC will gain a more holistic view of the student learning experience. This extension will help shift our institutional culture to view everyone as collectively contributing to the same end - student learning and success. The project will also help the institution make wise decisions with our resources (including, but not limited to, human and fiscal capital) by providing data in a structured, formalized manner. We too often place ourselves in situations where resources may be stretched thin, but without knowing if we are truly benefiting student learning as a result. A structured assessment process will allow us to determine what the meaningful experiences outside of the classroom are for students and justify why we may be investing in certain programs and activities

Q: What are the desired outcomes of this project? How will you know that you have achieved each of these outcomes?
A: Desired outcomes of the project are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation and evolving implementation of non-academic assessment process and plan <p>Achievement of this outcome will be reached when we have a document outlining the non-academic process and plan (i.e., a handbook) and non-academic programs and activities have begun implementing the plan and using the resulting data to improve student learning. The implementation and use of the data will be documented on reports that will be created by the team during the course of this project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive, campus-wide assessment program of student learning at BSC <p>This outcome will be achieved when we have an assessment process and plan in place that interweaves both academic and non-academic programs and activities. The assessment process and plan will be joined together in one respect by the overarching Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes. The successful achievement of this outcome will also rest in employee perceptions and attitudes about student learning, with the goal of having all employees recognize the contribution of both classroom and out of classroom experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution toward a cultural shift at BSC regarding assessment <p>It is not expected that the Assessment Academy project alone will shift the attitudes and perceptions about assessment across campus. However, the team anticipates that the project will help push our institution toward such a shift. Achievement of this outcome will be demonstrated as an increasing number of employees become knowledgeable about assessment and can articulate the importance of assessment in improving student learning. In addition, participation of programs and departments in the assessment process and more importantly, the way in which these programs and departments use the results can attest to the cultural shift.</p>

Q: What serious challenges do you expect to encounter? How will you deal with them?

A: The primary challenge that the team expects to encounter is the limited time and already overburdened workloads of employees. In order to combat this challenge, communication and the presentation of the assessment process and plan will be of the utmost importance. Careful attention will need to be paid to keeping everything relevant and manageable when developing and sharing the assessment process with staff. Furthermore, the team is already cognizant and will continue to recognize the assessment efforts that are already being completed by staff in non-academic programs - the difference is that the current assessment practices are being done in an anecdotal or informal manner while a goal of the Assessment Academy project is to formalize this. Another way in which the institution is dealing with this challenge is to have administrative support of assessment throughout the project and beyond. In part for that reason, the Associate VP for Student Affairs was included on the core team for the project. While she does not oversee all non-academic programs, student affairs departments will play a substantial role in the non-academic assessment efforts of the institution.

Various levels of understanding of assessment is another challenge that we may encounter. As discussed during the Assessment Academy Roundtable, the team believes that the commitment to assessment efforts and improving student learning will largely be present among staff. However, a majority of the staff have never been exposed to or learned about assessment. Thus, education and training about assessment will be necessary and time will need to be spent on helping staff reflect on and perhaps alter their perception of their impact on student learning.

Q: Describe the specific steps you will be taking in Year 1 to develop and implement the early stages of your project.

A: In the first part (November 2015 to January 2016) of year one of the Assessment Academy, one of the first steps will be to further educate the team about assessment best practices, which will provide them with the comfort level and knowledge to move forward. During this time, the team will also research assessment process/plan examples from other institutions. Lastly, the team will review the Institutional Essential Learning Outcomes (IELOs) that have been developed for BSC by the Academic Assessment Committee to ensure that they coincide with the learning opportunities offered by non-academic programs. Upon reviewing and analyzing the IELOs, the team will recommend updates as deemed necessary and share those updates across campus for consideration. The task for the later part (February to May 2016) of year one will consist of creating the non-academic assessment process. This task will encompass developing a clear plan for programs to follow, creating any necessary reporting forms, outlining the timeline for the assessment cycle, and establishing a communication plan to guide the way in which this information is then shared with campus.

Version 1.0- Update

Q: Please confirm that this Activity is ready for review.

A: This project is ready for review.

Context

Please introduce your institution to other Academy Teams. Provide contextual information on your institution including but not limited to institutional type, size and student populations served. (100 – 200 words).

A: Bismarck State College (BSC) is an innovative community college offering high quality education, workforce training, and enrichment programs reaching local and global communities. As the third largest college in North

Dakota, BSC serves over 4,000 students each semester. BSC offers over 40 programs leading to a certificate, diploma, or an associate degree, as well as liberal arts courses that transfer to 4-year colleges and universities. BSC offers 18 online degree programs and one bachelor's degree in energy management, and in cooperation with other North Dakota University System institutions, provides several additional bachelor's degrees and graduate programs on campus.

Q: Summarize what have your institution has done in the past related to the assessment of student learning and what are current assessment initiatives? (100 – 200 words).

A: An emphasis on student learning has long been a part of BSC, with assessment present at the institution on both a formal and informal level for some time. While not discounting past assessment efforts and history at BSC, it is crucial to note that attention to measuring and improving student learning has risen to the forefront in the past few years. The BSC 2013-18 Strategic Plan explicitly identifies assessment as a priority of the goal to ensure high quality education. More specifically, an objective exists to develop and implement systematic approaches to measure, assess, document, and communicate student learning outcomes. The institution created and filled a position focused on assessment, titled the Institutional Assessment Coordinator, in the summer of 2012. BSC has an Academic Assessment Committee that consists of faculty, the Institutional Assessment Coordinator, the Dean of Academic Affairs, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. The work of the Academic Assessment Committee has recently shifted, with the committee developing institutional essential learning outcomes (ILOs). These ILOs are now being shared across campus and work is being done on structuring the institutional level of assessment and connecting it back to program level outcomes and course level outcomes. AQIP action projects have been initiated that have set some of the groundwork for moving assessment efforts forward. One of BSC's current AQIP action projects, entitled "Reinvigorating Academic Assessment," is aimed at creating a consistent, sustainable framework for academic assessment at BSC. All of these initiative and developments in the past few years have positioned the institution to make some fundamental progress in our assessment process, culture, and ultimately, support of student learning and success.

Q: Now that your team has a better idea of the structure and purpose of the Academy, what are your institution's primary needs for participation in the Academy? (100 – 200 words).

A: BSC's interest in participating in the Academy stems from the recognized need to extend assessment to include both curricular and co-curricular activities. Although this need has been discussed at our institution, making this extension continues to be a challenge for BSC. BSC needs structured assistance with moving our institution to a collective, comprehensive view of assessment and in the development of specific strategies to implement assessment successfully across the campus. Within this overarching need, there are several specific areas of focus that have been identified. With co-curricular assessment representing a new initiative at our institution, a plan will need to be developed for offering professional education and training for staff. In addition, program learning outcomes will need to be reviewed, and more likely developed, for co-curricular programs. BSC's institutional essential learning outcomes will need to be integrated into co-curricular programs. A final need driving BSC's participation in the Academy is to retool our supporting structure for comprehensive assessment. Current assessment processes are curricular in focus. A mechanism needs to be developed for bringing together curricular and co-curricular assessment in such a way that supports the implementation, monitoring, and reporting of both in a cohesive manner.

Q: What potential barriers does your team see to progress? (100 – 200 words).

A: BSC still lacks an effective, sustainable, and adopted framework for academic assessment. Thus, we cannot simply take what is working in one area and translate it into another area. Past history, opinions, and perceptions about assessment among faculty and staff represent another obstacle that the institution has experienced and that may continue as a barrier as we move forward. BSC needs to overcome the negative viewpoints and past inconsistencies in order to successfully implement and sustain a comprehensive assessment program. Another potential barrier is lack of time for team members, other commitments, and competing priorities that may arise as the project progresses. While all of these barriers, and others, may be present at some point during the project, we feel confident that the resources, support, and guidance acquired from participation in the Assessment Academy will allow us to facilitate a cultural shift regarding assessment at our institution.