

CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT: A PANEL DISCUSSION

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ABSTRACT

In this panel, speakers from two very different institutions - one from a small, private college, and the other from a large, state university - present their respective experiences with curricular assessment.

INTRODUCTION

The speakers argue that excellence in learning outcomes may be attained through variety of approaches. They demonstrate how institutions with different philosophies, missions, size of student enrollment, profiles, and geographical footprints, may adopt different strategies to achieve excellence in learning outcomes. Maintaining focus on fulfillment of mission is essential for achievement of excellence. Speakers discuss the important role comprehensive, outcome-based assessment initiatives can play in helping to strengthen and improve institutional curricula at the program level. They explore how Alumni and Advisory Boards can also serve as important and powerful resources. Concepts of continuous quality improvement are applicable to processes through which learning outcomes may be managed. Metrics and benchmarks to flag interventions for ongoing improvement can be developed for learning outcomes. The speakers describe how institutional philosophy and mission impact organization for learning outcomes, and how learning outcomes contribute to the fulfillment of institutional mission. This is an opportunity for the attendees to compare and contrast achievement of excellence in learning outcomes in two distinctly different institutions, one with relatively small student enrollment, and the other with relatively large student enrollment. Alternative approaches to achieving excellence in learning outcomes through continuous improvement are, thus, explored.