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A few questions we're no longer asking about assessment : The assessment landscape and possible futures

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A Few Questions We're No Longer Asking About Assessment

The Assessment Landscape and Possible Futures

Todd Lundberg, **Gary Brown** & Robin Jeffers

May 2011

As context, my starting “what if” questions: What if degrees are superseded by “stackable certificates?” “What if 10-week quarters or 16 week semesters are replaced by successions of 2-4 week instructions modules—In their own way stackable?

What if we become authenticators of prior/experiential learning?

*“The future effectiveness of
institutional accreditation
promoting good
reinforcing the
assumption
transp
acc
in the
leader*

**What if
we fumble?**

—Peter Ewell

<http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/occasionalpaperone.htm>

Collegiate Learning Assessment



“The vast number of students who exercise little choice in where to attend because their parents’ decision are

“Even where choice does exist among selected students in higher education, it is often not an academically decisive



the U.S. where they are the winners of this award and price.”

choices do exist but are not academically decisive.”

—Zemsky, 2005, in Ewell, 2010



States Quietly Raising Speed Limits Near Failing Schools



Measure or Perish

December 2010

Yet the prevailing attitude toward assessment still ranges from infinite caution to outright hostility.

—Kevin Carey

<http://chronicle.com/article/Measure-or-Perish/125671/>



"Daddy works in a magical, faraway land called Academia."

“By every possible measure the majority of college graduates are far from prepared for the challenges of either the economy or our democracy.”

**—Carol Geary Schneider, president
American Association of Colleges and Universities**

http://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation/le-wi10/le-wi10_president.cfm

The Creativity Crisis

<http://www.newsweek.com/2010/07/10/the-creativity-crisis.html>

American creativity scores are falling...

A recent IBM poll of 1,500 CEOs identified **creativity** as the No. 1 “**leadership competency**” of the future.



LEMONADE
INC.

Shanahan



***“I’ll be happy to give you innovative thinking.
What are the guidelines?”***

Is this OK?

THIS NEW REPORT * SAYS
THAT NEARLY HALF OF U.S.
COLLEGE STUDENTS LEARN
NOTHING IN THE FIRST TWO
YEARS OF COLLEGE!

THEIR PARENTS,
HOWEVER, ARE LEARNING...

...THAT
NOTHING
CAN BE
EXPENSIVE,

*Kasparianally Adrift

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NORTHWEST COMMISSION ON
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

NWCCU

“All means all.”

Northwest Commission for Colleges and Universities to WSU



program
assessment
portfolio



outcomes
assessment



eportfolios
for learning



Assessment
Tuesdays



critical
thinking

The **Center for Teaching, Learning, & Technology** is a resource for everyone teaching at WSU. The center provides information and support related to assignment and syllabus design, use of educational technology, facilitating group work, and assessment. CTLT can help with your efforts to:

- **design assignments** that connect concepts and skills across courses and make use of collaborative learning;
- **refine syllabi**, which can include guidelines that clarify expectations about learning and set a positive classroom atmosphere;
- **incorporate innovative teaching** approaches and techniques that help engage students;
- **assess your courses** as the semester unfolds and make adjustments. CTLT provides a variety of assessment tools and can help faculty interpret results to refine teaching practices.



The Center for Teaching, Learning & Technology

Genuine

instructor / programmatic
curiosity for improvement



Assessment of Assessment

Overview

It is expected that each program will focus and implement assessment in ways appropriate to its own distinct context, needs, and questions.

1		Minimal	Emerging	Developing	Adequate	Effective	Outstanding
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	ABSENT	Assessment Team and System The assessment process engages program faculty, leadership, students and other stakeholders involved with the program (cross-institutional faculty, accreditors, alumni, advisory boards, and employers) as appropriate. The system is recurring and dynamic. It is implemented and refined over time for continuous improvement.					

2		Minimal	Emerging	Developing	Adequate	Effective	Outstanding
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	ABSENT	Program Goals, Outcomes, and Measures Goals and outcomes reflect stakeholder consensus and, curricular alignment, and support WSU strategic initiatives. Multiple evidence-based measures are complementary and are designed to illuminate questions faculty and administration care about, yielding useful information.					

3		Minimal	Emerging	Developing	Adequate	Effective	Outstanding
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	ABSENT	Analysis and Action Plan* Assessment system informs and guides demonstrable change and engages all instrumental program personnel in the scholarship of teaching and learning. There is follow-through with actions that may include changes and improvements to pedagogy, curricula, faculty development, and/or assessment practices in order to enrich the student learning experience.					

**It is not necessary to fill out the "Analysis and Action Plan" section for the December 18, 2009 report.*

4		Minimal	Emerging	Developing	Adequate	Effective	Outstanding
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	ABSENT	Administrative Leadership & Support The assessment process is prioritized and robustly supported by program leaders, including significant allocation of time and resources. The policy engages all relevant stakeholders. The assessment process yields information used by administration and faculty with demonstrable impact on curriculum, teaching practice, and student learning outcomes.					

The Invitation



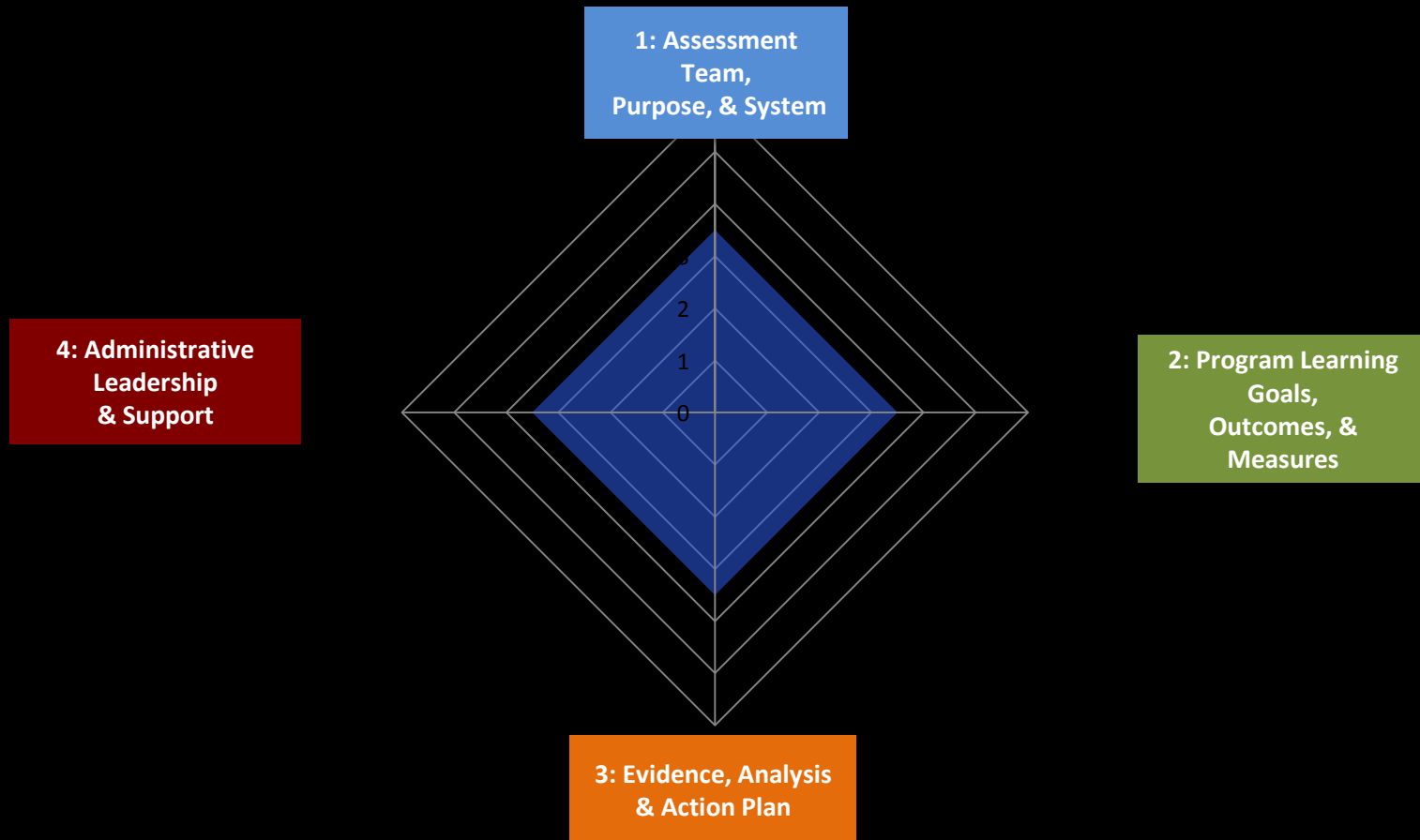
Focus on Program

Team & System

Goals & Measures

Evidence & Action

Leadership



**Systematic
Responsiveness
to Changing
Contexts**

*What to
Report?*

Here's Looking at You:

Transparency, Institutional Self-Presentation, and the Public Interest

Alexander C. McCormick

November/December 2010 *Change*, , pp. 35-43.

“Transparency demonstrates that the academy takes its education mission seriously.”

“Such openness is risky.”

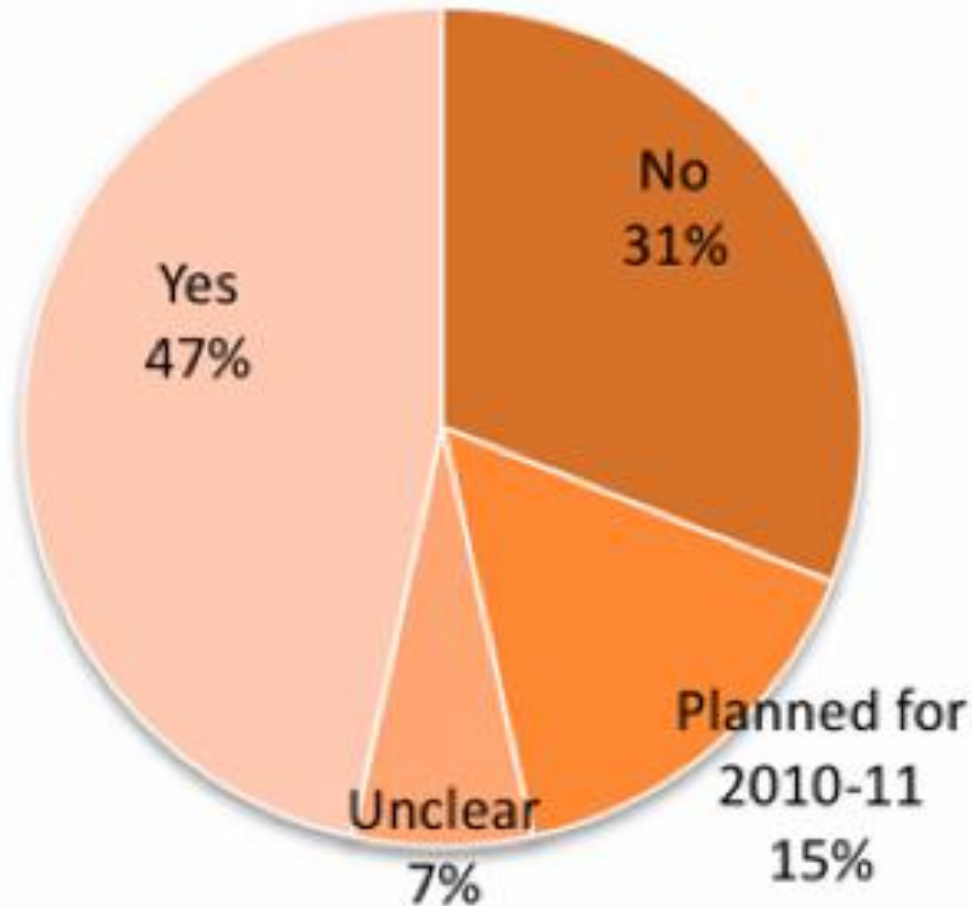
Transparency: *“Strategic Image Management”*

—Alexander C. McCormick
November/December 2010 Change, , pp. 35-43.

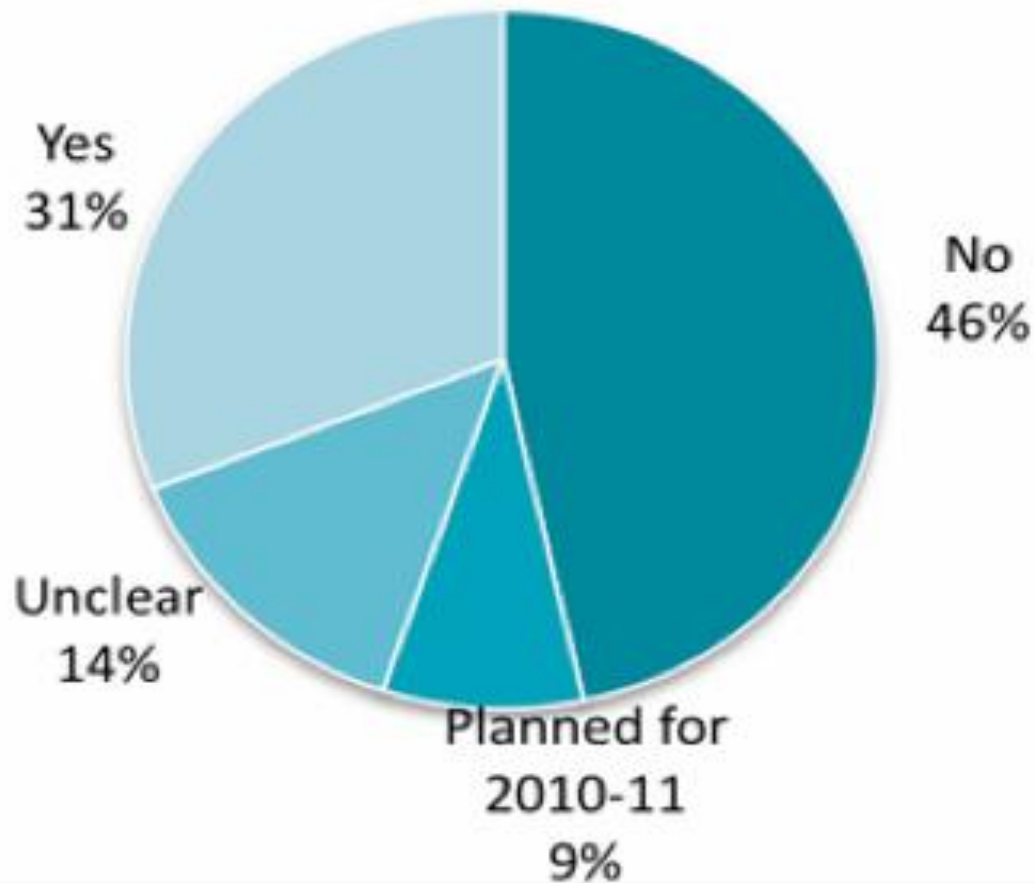
What to Report?

***The percentage of programs
collaborating
with communities of
practice....***

Stakeholders Have Reviewed Goals/Outcomes



Stakeholders Have Reviewed Student Work

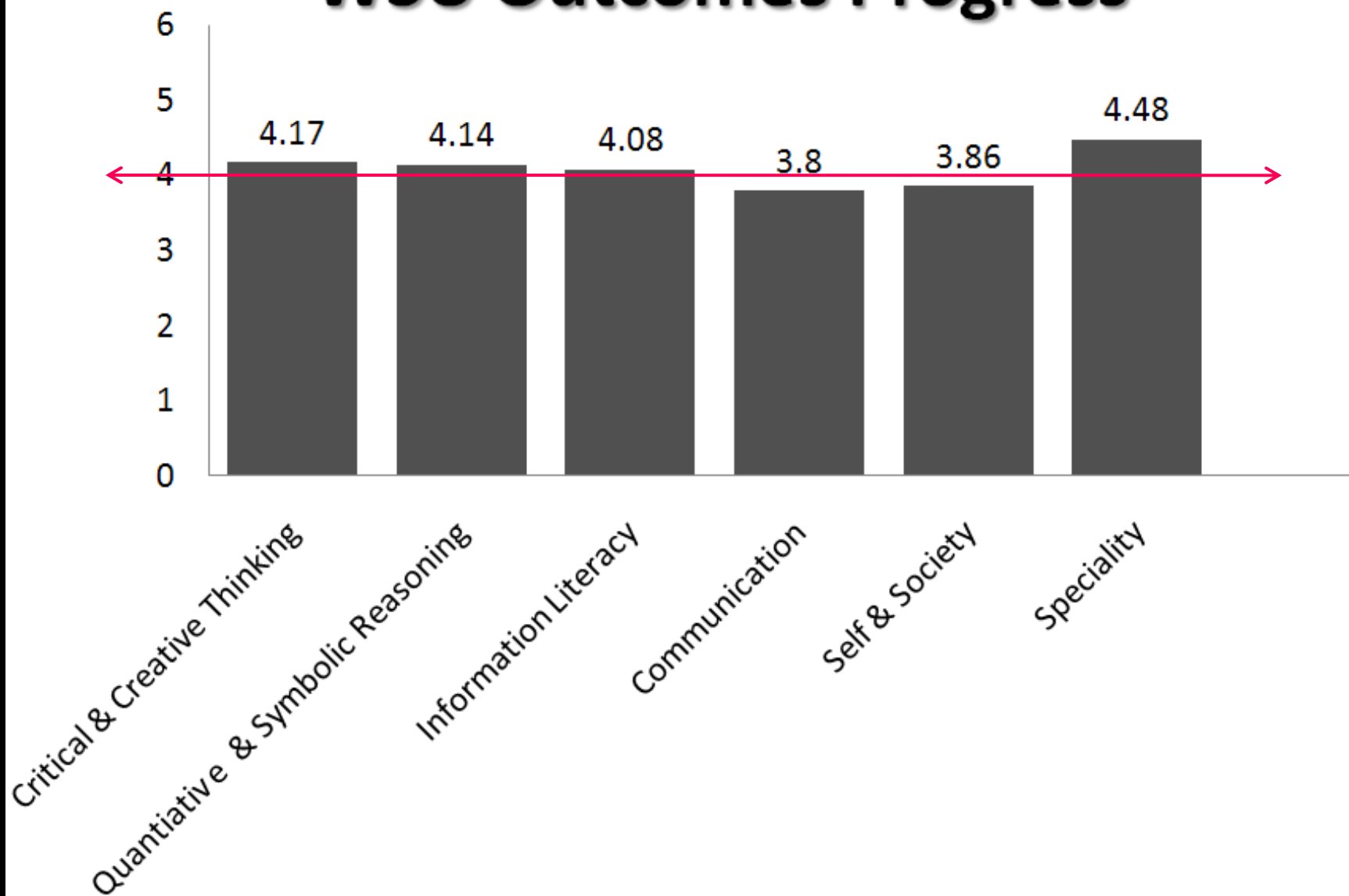


***1190 Graduating
Students***

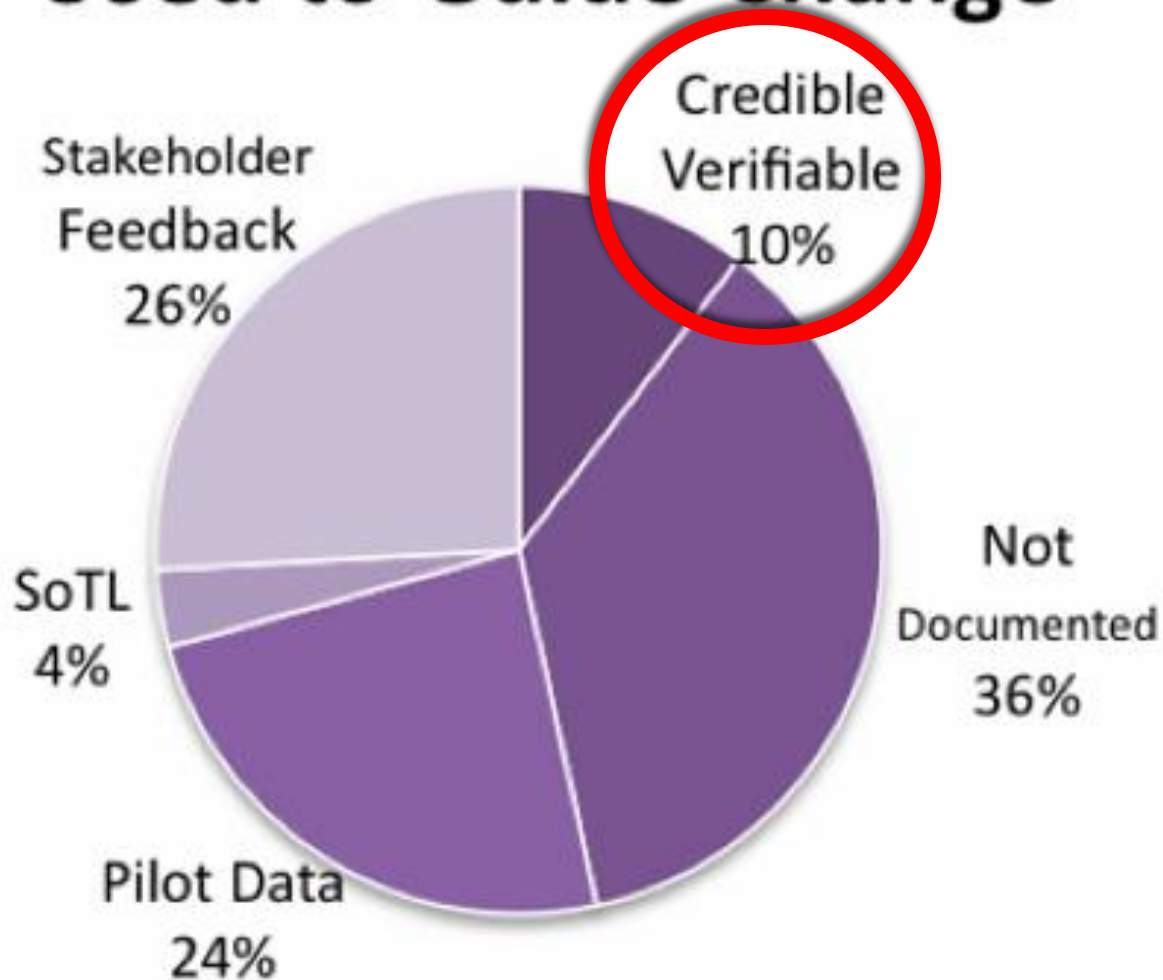
***17% of WSU Undergraduate
Programs***

Almost 20% of Graduating Class

WSU Outcomes Progress



Information Used to Guide Change



Information type WSU Programs used in the 2009-2010 cycle to inform or guide change

***What is Learned
&
Applied***

Sample Findings

Finding:

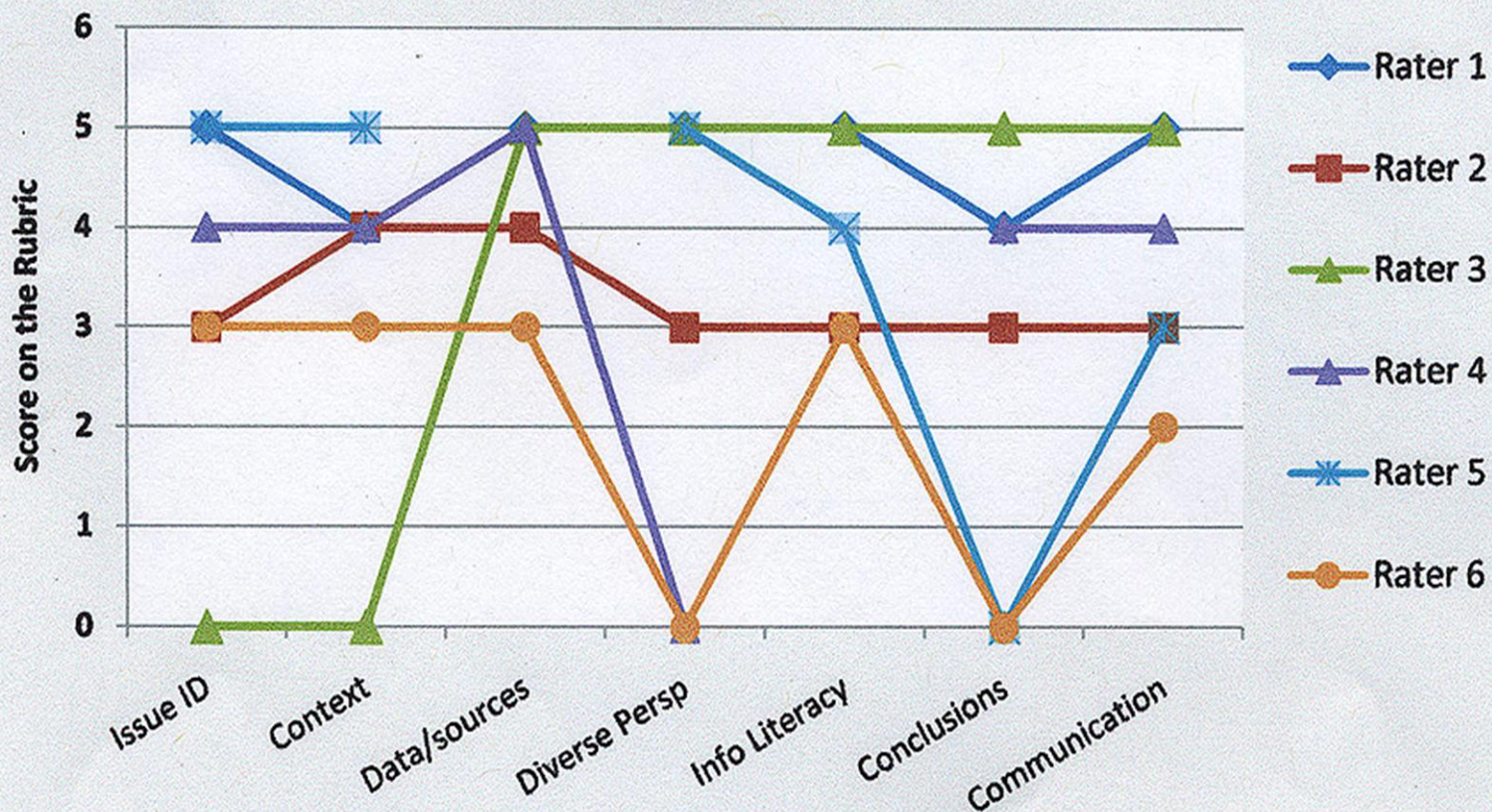
More than 50% consistently fail intro calculus

Action:

1. Ask Why
2. Follow Successful Students
3. Experiment
4. Isolate Problem—*exponentials*

Sample Findings

Rater Reliability on Assignment Prompt #2 Hist 300
History, Spring 2009, 6 Raters



Sample Findings

Finding:

Inconsistent perceptions of goals, performance expectations as reflected in assignments and grading....

Action:

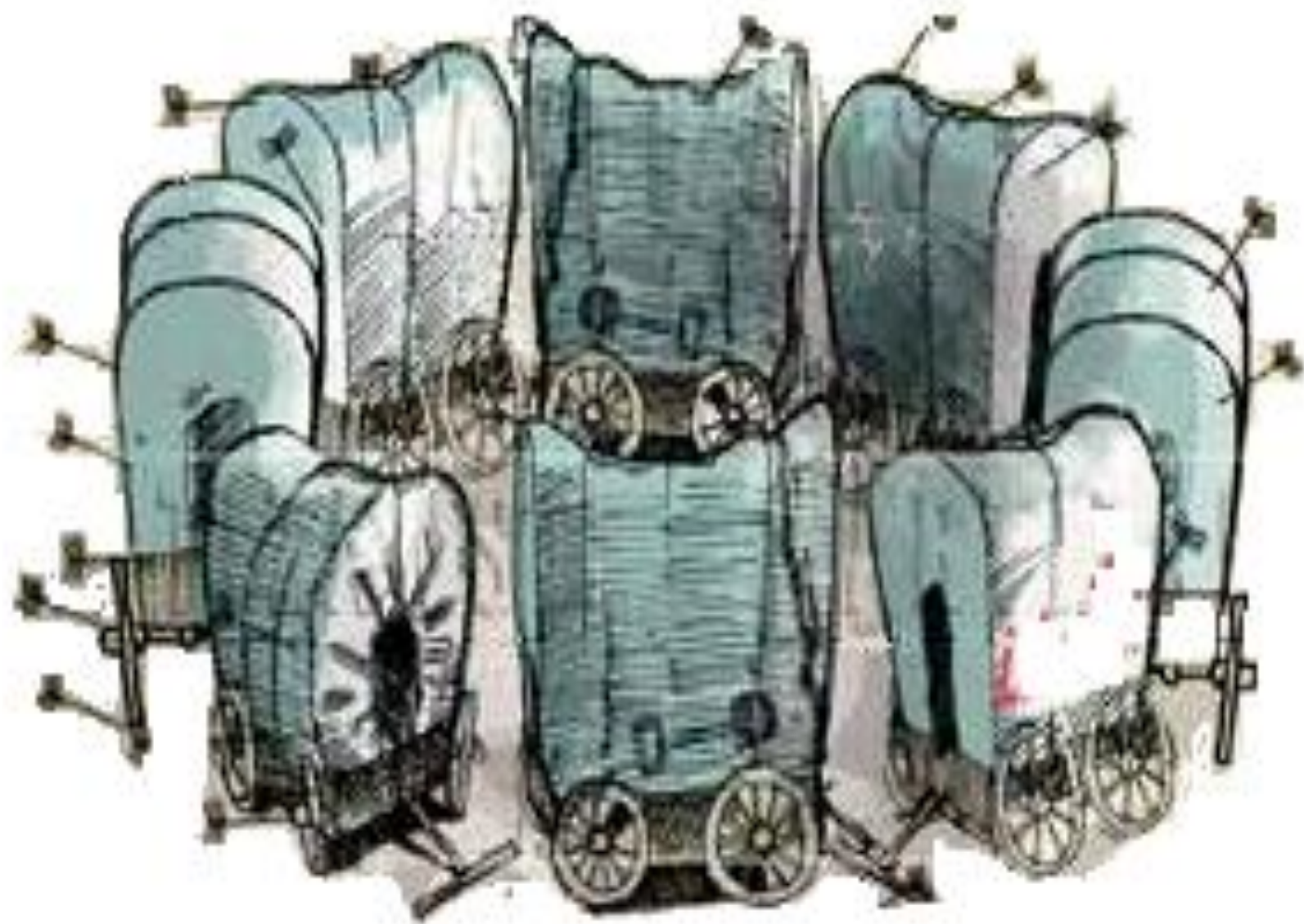
“Imagine how students perceive our curriculum?”

Initiate peer assignment review.

*What NOT to
Report?*

Sample Findings of Concern





Sample Feedback

Junior faculty:

How should we respond to the Office of Assessment's feedback on our assessment plan?"

Tenured professor:

"Oh -kiss my ass! I have been here long enough to know that THAT thing will be flushed down the toilet, so I wouldn't worry too much."

“The future effectiveness of institutional accreditation in both promoting good practice and in reinforcing the academy’s assumption of consistent and transparent standards of student academic achievement lies entirely in the hands of the academy and its leadership.”

—Peter Ewell

<http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/occasionalpaperone.htm>

EPILOGUE

Sample Findings of... Concern

Finding:

Report submitted to
NWCC&U in October...

The report reveals that
33% of units have
problematic
assessment initiatives.

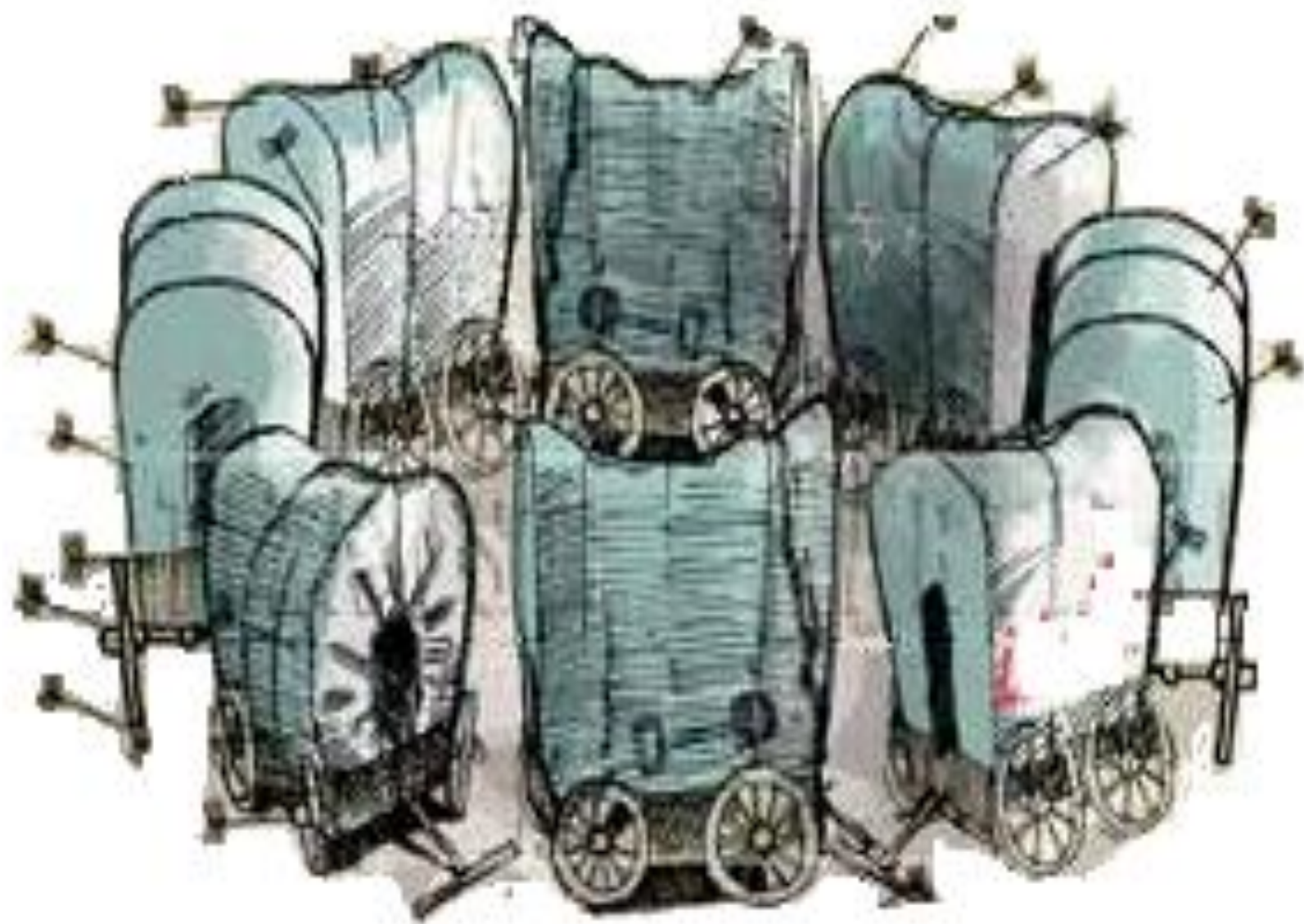












NWCC&U Responds

Dear xxxx

*I hope this message
finds you doing well.*



“The University indicates, which is good, that a majority of the programs have “established processes for providing independent review of their assessment efforts to ensure that the assessment is verifiable and credible.”

“Please provide greater explication of these processes.”

*“How are the results of the assessment efforts being utilized to inform future planning, decision making and **budgetary** allocations?”*



“We trust this is helpful as you move forward in preparing the University's response.”



**EFFECTS OF THE BUDGET CUTS ON
FACULTY, STAFF, AND
ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS:
A FEEDBACK REPORT**

**Faculty report they are
devoting less time to
providing service ... and
more time to providing
service to their
professional organizations.**

***“The future... lies
entirely in the hands
of the academy and
its leadership.”***

—Peter Ewell

<http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/occasionalpaperone.htm>