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ABSTRACT | This article argues that general education assessment is an opportunity for engaging faculty and the general education program as a whole in critical reflection on the practices and pedagogies that affect the entire undergraduate body. Through intentional assessment practices tied to learning outcomes, pedagogical expectations, and faculty and student classroom experience, an assessment program can meet accreditation expectations while serving as a rich location for critical reflection and continuous improvement. To illustrate, this article takes the reader through a year in the life of University Studies' assessment at Portland State University. It provides details about the individual elements of our assessment program (e.g., review of student ePortfolios, mid-term feedback, and course evaluations) and how these each provide opportunities for faculty and programmatic critical reflection. It describes both long-standing practices as well as new or experimental elements that arise from the current programmatic context, providing examples of the ways in which we continually evolve our practices. Finally, it weaves the elements together and identifies the strengths and challenges of our approach, as well as opportunities for deeper, increasingly impactful critical practice in the future.

General education assessment is an opportunity for engaging faculty and the general education program as a whole in critical reflection on the practices and pedagogies that affect the entire undergraduate body. Through intentional assessment practices tied to learning outcomes, pedagogical expectations, and faculty and student classroom experience, an assessment program can meet accreditation expectations while serving as a rich location for critical reflection and continuous improvement. To bring this perspective to life, the authors of

this article (University Studies' director of assessment and a longtime faculty member serving as the Program's coordinator of faculty support and frequent collaborator in assessment processes) take the reader through a year in the life of University Studies' assessment. We provide details about the individual elements of our assessment program and how these offer opportunities for faculty and critical programmatic reflection, including longstanding practices as well as experimental elements that arise from the current programmatic context. Finally, we identify strengths and challenges of our approach, as well as opportunities for deeper, increasingly impactful critical practice in the future.

Assessment in General Education

Assessment of general education is critical for a number of reasons. Although accreditation is not in itself a compelling argument, we cannot ignore that assessment of general education programs is required to maintain accreditation. More meaningfully, the general education program, at its best, represents the vital learning that an institution has determined *all* undergraduates should experience and be able to demonstrate. General education is a place of convergence for students and faculty, outside of academic departments and majors, and represents an opportunity for focusing on learning and student experiences that isn't found elsewhere in the institution.

The very reasons that general education assessment is important make it very difficult. On many campuses, a lack of understanding of general education as a coherent whole can undermine ownership and buy-in (Suskie, 2009). Fuhrman (2013) lamented that, at many universities, "there are general education courses with a highly distributed and frequently unengaged faculty, and collectively they make up a general education curriculum that is at best poorly defined." Loosely associated lists of courses do not inspire faculty interest in the general education enterprise, and that lack of interest makes engaging faculty in general education assessment extremely difficult.

Another challenge is deciding on a reasonable number of general education outcomes and agreeing on ways to measure them. Marinara, Vajravelu and Young (2004) described general education learning outcomes as a "loose baggy monster." Work by organizations such as the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has helped universities coalesce around some generally agreed-upon outcomes (AAC&U, n.d.). Even with tools such as the AAC&U VALUE rubrics, faculty must grapple with what their general education learning outcomes mean to their particular courses, programs, and institutions for the results to become meaningful. A danger comes when institutions try to move along too quickly or adopt outcomes or practices from other organizations or institutions without the requisite faculty discussion. Wehlburg (2010)

noted that "[u]nfortunately, many institutions have looked for measures for their general education program without first identifying the specific outcomes. So data can be found for many general education programs, but much of the data are not well connected to outcomes and are often therefore not used to improve teaching." In such cases, there may be assessment data, but those data may not be well related to actual teaching and learning in the institution.

In order to address these challenges, universities may employ strategies that are structural and aimed at engaging faculty. Suskie (2009) suggested that a person should be appointed to coordinate general education assessment and that a faculty committee should be charged with setting policies and reviewing the resulting assessment. Universities must also support faculty who engage in teaching and assessing general education through faculty development and recognition (Fuhrman, 2013; Wehlburg, 2010).

Structures alone will not address the challenges of general education assessment if they are not set up to encourage faculty involvement and ownership of the curricula and assessment processes. On this point, there is wide agreement (Suskie, 2009; Fuhrman, 2013; Wehlburg, 2010). Faculty must understand why they are assessing general education, have a hand in designing the methods and measures that will be used, and believe that any information gathered is actually intended for improvement, not punishment or formal evaluation of them as teachers. All faculty, including adjuncts, must be invited to participate in these activities and conversations (Suskie, 2009).

University Studies grapples with many of these challenges. Although its existence as a fully distinct academic program has helped clarify structure and makes visible those who participate in the delivery of general education, we are constantly working to engage faculty in assessment conversations. We have also declared and updated our learning goals, but they are arguably somewhat "loose and baggy." In the rest of this article, we intend to represent what we have done to enact assessment practices that are "transformative," per Wehlburg (2008). We attempt to keep the focus on teaching and learning, we incorporate and value many kinds of assessment data and information, and we honor the experience and voice of faculty.

We also emphasize a spirit of critical reflection, described below. We see assessment as part of our reflective practice at the program level, as it is through reflection and the connections it reveals to practice that improvement is possible.

Critical Programmatic Reflection

When we identify our assessment practices as examples of critical programmatic reflection, we mean the term "critical" in several ways. Most basically,

we understand that close examination of our practices and the student learning and engagement that result from those practices is "critical," in that it is essential for continuous programmatic improvement. As practitioners of assessment that is both meaningful and useful know, creating ever-more-productive environments for learning and teaching requires that we inquire into the effectiveness of our learning and teaching strategies and seek to understand what is working in our approach and what is not. This process of inquiry and examination at both the individual and program level is "critical" when we are open to identifying and challenging assumptions. For faculty, this may mean acknowledging that a favorite assignment does not engage all students equally or that a course needs updated curriculum to reflect and support the students in our classes. At the program level, we continually ask which students we are serving, what needs to change to serve them better, and what we believe about our students and our practices that may not be true.

Secondly, programmatic assessment is "critical" if it goes beyond the two steps outlined above by intentionally putting to use the insights gleaned from inquiry and analysis in a continuous improvement of practice. Much of the assessment work that happens in University Studies is formative in nature, allowing the Program to glean information about the state of learning and teaching in general education with the near-term goal of immediate improvement. Further, those processes that are distinctly summative in nature—for example, end-of-term course evaluations and end-of-year portfolio assessment—don't stop with the summative findings reported to administrators and accreditors, but become the foundation for the faculty support programming that is on continual offer at 1:1, small-group, and Program-wide levels.

A third understanding of the "critical" nature of assessment in University Studies is imperative to address: that of requiring, at the very least, an acknowledgment of power and differentials in power that attend our professional interactions in institutions of higher education. This inquiry into power takes numerous forms in the Program's assessment processes. First and foremost, the Program operates from a place of fundamental belief that a faculty member is the expert on their own teaching practice, and, further, that the responsibility of a program interested in furthering promising practices in learning and teaching is to support that faculty member both to use their expertise in the service of their teaching and to provide opportunities for its continuing development, on the faculty member's own terms. At, say, the end-of-year portfolio review gatherings involving faculty from across the University, those gathered represent every rank (adjunct, non-tenure-track full-time, and tenure-related faculty, as well as graduate students) and numerous disciplines, as well

as those who do and do not have experience teaching general education courses. The assessment director, who serves as facilitator of that day's processes, welcomes the full participation of all, and makes use of the insights shared during the communal assessment activities of the day. This inclusion of faculty across rank and discipline lays the groundwork for a recognition of the contributions of all faculty within the programmatic community, no matter their relationship to institutional power.

As good as this radical inclusivity of faculty across rank and discipline is for this (and all) assessment processes in the Program, however, the power differential across labor categories is real, and causes real challenges for individual faculty and within the Program. Throughout this article, we attend to questions of power and power-sharing in the Program's assessment processes, including the places and ways that different power interests exist in tension. This examination of power, we contend, is necessary to the work of a program that articulates its identity, culture, and aspirations to be about transformation, and it yields its own insights about the nature of teaching and learning in general education broadly, and in and through University Studies in particular.

A Year in the (Assessment) Life(cycle)

Before we start at the beginning of an academic year, we want to give you this taste of the end. As in so many things, and certainly in assessment, the end really is a beginning, a fresh start with new information and renewed energy to put that information into practice. We will say much more about the final steps we take in programmatic assessment later in this article, but first an anecdote to set the stage for this "year in the life" of assessment in University Studies.

The year we piloted our Capstone course portfolio review process, we did not know what to expect. We imagined that faculty would engage productively in the collegial work of sharing about their courses, reviewing course portfolios, and offering constructive, contextualized feedback to each other, but we also recognized that this was not a risk-free proposition. Opening up one's dearly held work to the discerning minds of others puts even the most seasoned professional in a vulnerable position, and we hoped this vulnerability would lead to an inspiring outcome, not a dispiriting one.

At the end of the session, we invited participants to offer qualitative feedback on their experience of the process. One faculty member wrote this: "I'm heading to my office right now to note changes to my syllabus and assignments." And so in the end, a beginning: a formative experience out of a summative assessment process, leading one of the faculty member/assessors directly back to her course to improve it for the following year.

In the following sections, we tell the story of assessment as critically reflective programmatic practice across an academic year. Portland State's academic year is organized into three 10-week terms, along with a summer session with multiple course formats and lengths. When assessment is engaged as a critical practice, it's impossible to identify where exactly it starts each year. We'll begin in the weeks leading up to Fall term 2018, when University Studies administrators and faculty working on assessment and faculty support programming plan for the beginning of the academic year. Each section includes a table with further details about the processes described in the narrative.

Pre-Fall: Starting from Results

In the late summer run-up to the start of Fall term, University Studies personnel charged with forwarding assessment and faculty support initiatives (including the director of assessment; the directors of Freshman Inquiry (FRINQ) and Sophomore Inquiry (SINQ); and the faculty support coordinator) meet to plan the faculty gatherings that will kick off the new academic year.

With the adoption of University Studies revised Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice (DESJ) learning goal in AY 2017 (see Fernandez, Lundell, and Kerrigan in this issue), assessment efforts in AY 2018 and 2019 have been focused on understanding what and how our students are learning relative to the goal—and, further, what and how faculty require support to teach to the critical dimensions of the goal. Additionally, during AY 2018, a group of faculty (in an endeavor that explicitly merged faculty support and assessment processes) engaged in a rich and generative process to develop a rubric to assess student learning around the DESJ goal. To the assessment and faculty support personnel who were planning for the start of the 2019 academic year, then, it was clear where the academic year should start: in sharing the results from the analysis of students' comments on their learning relative to the DESJ goal, alongside the revealing of the new DESJ rubric, scheduled for implementation in this current academic year.

Fall term: Reviewing and Launching

FRINQ, SINQ, and Capstone faculty members came together in workshops in the week before the start of Fall term, as they do every year. (Invited to these workshops is everyone who teaches a University Studies course: adjunct, full-time teaching intensive faculty, and tenure-related faculty.) FRINQ and SINQ faculty, in their joint workshop, considered the DESJ rubric, discussed in their thematic teams the relationship of the goal and the rubric to their courses, offered critical feedback on the goal and the rubric to the Program, and planned

for deepened engagement around the goal within their theme and in individual courses. Faculty completed evaluations of the workshop that included questions about what support would be most beneficial to them as they engage with the goal this year, and how that support could best be provided. These evaluations were used immediately to identify and provide support on the individual, group, and programmatic level going forward through the academic year.

This academic year includes an exciting assessment development in the Program: At the SINQ level, a number of faculty will participate for the first time in a process similar to the Capstone portfolio review, in which faculty members create portfolios of their courses to reflect teaching and learning around a particular goal (Carpenter, Kerrigan, & Reitenauer, 2018; see also Carpenter and Fitzmaurice in this issue). During Fall term, a small committee (the director of assessment, the SINQ director, and two Cluster coordinators, one of whom is also the Program's faculty support coordinator) met to develop the parameters for the expansion of this assessment process at the SINQ level.

Additionally, course surveys and syllabi were collected during Fall term for a review of the Knowledge, Values, Rationality (KVR) cluster. This material provides the foundation for a review of that cluster and its connected SINQ course as part of a wider and ongoing effort to refresh that level of the Program.

Finally, the standard assessment procedures occurred throughout the term: the completion of the Prior Learning Survey by students in Senior Inquiry (SRINQ) and FRINQ; mid-term assessment processes, including an online survey completed by students in the levels identified above and the small-group instructional diagnostics (SGIDs) conducted at the SRINQ, FRINQ, SINQ, and Capstone levels (Reitenauer, et al., 2013); consultations and classroom observations at all levels, at the request of faculty members; and the end-of-term survey administered at each level of the program.

Winter Term: Preparing

With procedures and parameters have been set for the expansion of the course portfolio review into the SINQ level of the Program, we held orientation meetings for participating faculty during Winter term. This assessment process, initiated at the Capstone level five years ago, deeply reflects the critical reflection at the heart of the Program's assessment methodology and approaches. For the years that we've engaged this process at the Capstone level, we have been pleased and moved by the collegial sharing that occurs among faculty gathered to talk about their courses, contextualize their teaching toward the Program's learning goals within their courses, and explore approaches to deepen their and students' engagement with the goals. We anticipate a similarly robust

Table 1 | Fall term assessment activities

Fall Faculty Gatherings

- Levels: FRINQ, SINQ, Capstone
- Participants: All faculty who teach any UNST-prefix course (adjunct, full-time teaching intensive, and tenure related) are invited
- Workshops last three or more hours and take different forms, but all include these elements:
  - Presentation of assessment data (course evaluation, student work sample review, analysis of student comments, etc.)
  - Opportunity to discuss the data with colleagues via prompts that invite connection to and questions about teaching practice
  - Opportunity to share practices with colleagues
  - Opportunity for feedback to the program
  - Reflection at the level of both the individual and the group to generate possibilities for faculty support initiatives for the year.
- As critical programmatic reflection, these workshops draw explicitly on the preceding year's assessment results and follow from the emergent needs that those results surfaced. Faculty are invited into generative conversation to identify their desires for faculty support initiatives for the coming year, build community across faculty positions and ranks, and catalyze action towards the year's stated goals.

Upper Division Cluster Review

- Level: Upper Division Cluster
- Participants: Department chairs and directors of units with Cluster courses, plus all faculty who teach Cluster courses (i.e., courses offered by departments that are given a general education Cluster designation)
- Cluster course faculty respond to a survey asking them to map their course(s) to the Cluster learning outcomes. Faculty also provide a syllabus and a statement of their pedagogical approach in the course.
- A faculty committee reviews the survey responses and course materials using a rubric to determine continued alignment (or not) with the learning outcomes of the Cluster.
- In AY 2019, we are piloting a process to provide feedback to chairs and faculty regarding the courses' alignment with the Cluster. We anticipate that most courses will remain active in the Cluster. We may suggest that some courses are better aligned with a different cluster, or request clarification or adjustment if the course does not seem to align well with the cluster in question.

Table 1 | Fall term assessment activities (*continued*)

- Given that there are 15 clusters, we anticipate clusters will be reviewed on a seven- to ten-year cycle.
- The survey data will provide a curriculum map for this level of the program, revealing any gaps in coverage of the Cluster learning outcomes.
- This process allows us to closely examine one to two clusters each year for continued fidelity to the University Studies goals and the Program's Vision, Mission, and Ethos. As with all curriculum, courses can and do drift over time from their foundational principles. Investigating the alignment of cluster courses with the University Studies goals and the learning objectives of their particular cluster(s) keeps faculty teaching in the program at the Cluster level and department chairs aware of the Program's expectations for the focus and approach of Cluster courses, and alerts the Program to areas for deeper relational connection between general education and discipline-based studies at the University. This process is one that can be fraught with tension. Departments hold authority over their courses, but want them included in the general education curriculum. The Program wants courses to remain aligned with the learning outcomes and pedagogy, but has little authority to require changes. We address these tensions and the power relationships associated with them through consistent, transparent communication about our expectations and the process.

Small Group Instructional Diagnostics (SGIDs)
- Levels: All. At the SRINQ, FRINQ, SINQ, and Cluster levels, SGIDs are conducted by a seasoned faculty support team member by invitation. At the Capstone level, a percentage of courses each term receive SGIDs, with the intention that every Capstone faculty member will receive one SGID per academic year.
- A faculty support team member conducts a feedback session with students within a given course through the facilitation of small-group discussion. Students respond to questions about what is helping them learn, what could be changed to make deepen their engagement, how those changes might be implemented, and how, in their view, the course connects to the University Studies goals. Before the in-class session, the facilitator talks with the instructor to get a sense of the course and to invite the instructor to add additional questions; after the session, the facilitator compiles the student responses, notes patterns and themes, and communicates both the responses themselves and the themes to the instructor. (For more information, see Reitenauer et al., 2013.)

- This process allows faculty to receive qualitative data from their students mid-course about what is working and what could be changed to better support of their learning–and it provides that feedback to faculty through a relational model of constructive collegial support. Participating faculty experience 1:1 informal mentorship through the focused work of a seasoned faculty member, increasing faculty socialization to the vision, mission, and ethos of the Program. The Program retains and analyzes these qualitative data at the end of the academic year to note trends and to take the emerging themes from the data into deliberations for future faculty support efforts. Because this practice is by invitation or is a common practice across all courses, it is generally welcomed and not seen as an imposed way to "check in" on faculty. This is a place in which student voices directly make their way into our practices.

End-of-Term Survey
- Levels: SRINQ, FRINQ, SINQ, Capstone
- Ask questions about UNST learning goals as well as active learning experiences
- Provided to faculty at the end of the term to inform future course delivery
- Aggregated at the theme (For FRINQ and SINQ, which have multiple offerings of a course in each theme each term) and Program levels at the end of the year to provide a snapshot over time
- Supplements and provides context for other assessment findings
- Our evaluations are faculty vetted, explicitly reflect our expectations for learning goals and pedagogy, and offer another opportunity to hear from students. When presenting aggregated findings for programmatic reflection, we invite faculty to consider how the findings reflect their own sense of their courses, how the findings do or do not align with other assessment findings, and provide opportunities for discussion about what the findings could mean for our practice. This practice puts student feedback in conversation with faculty experience and expertise, valuing both.

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experience at the SINQ level, and look forward to observing both the similarities and the differences across these Program levels.

We were also excited to pilot the DESJ rubric with a small selection of student work. Pilot assessments have been conducted several times before, after the revising of the rubric for the Program's Inquiry and Critical Thinking goal, as well as for writing as a component of the Communication goal. As with those earlier pilots, a small group of faculty, led by the assessment director, met to use the rubric, discuss their experiences applying it to student work, and suggest approaches for the successful deployment of the rubric in end-of-year assessment processes.

Another initiative that continued in winter term was the facilitating of several student focus groups. A project developed in 2016 by the Program's assessment director, this student research team is made up of undergraduates who conduct focus groups with other undergraduate students to add student voices and perspectives to our assessment efforts. This year, they focused on the Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice learning goal to understand how students experience the goal through both the content of their courses and their interactions in the classroom.

Finally, we reviewed the KVR materials collected during fall term by the group of faculty connected to that cluster. And, as every term, mid- and end-of-term surveys were completed by all students in SRINQ, FRINQ, and SINQ courses, with Capstone students completing end-of-term surveys. SGIDs continued for courses across levels, as did 1:1 consultations with faculty and course observations, at their request.

Table 2 | Winter term assessment activities

Rubric Pilot
- Level: FRINQ and SINQ
- Spend 3-4 hours applying a newly developed rubric to make final refinements before using the rubric to review student work
- Participants: Faculty who participated in developing the rubric and faculty who are familiar with portfolio review process but did not help develop the rubric (for a total of 6-10 faculty)
- The task is not to score the work samples, but rather to determine how well the rubric functions in scoring the samples.
- On the day of the review, we will
  - Read the rubric together and answer any questions that come up, noting questions that indicate potential areas of confusion for reviewers
  - Apply the rubric to one student ePortfolio, noting scores as well as areas of confusion
  - Discuss the scoring process, identify areas that may need clarification, and work to make those clarifications
  - Apply the rubric to two or three more student work samples, including individual papers or assignments in addition to ePortfolios, implementing any clarified language developed in the previous step
  - Debrief this process and any further clarifications that may be needed before deployment of the rubric at the end of spring term

- This process features a critical application of the work product from an earlier assessment/faculty support project, namely the design of the rubric by a diverse group of faculty in the previous year. As such, this process is tethered to both past and future assessment events and involves a critical engagement with 1) what was accomplished in the past event, 2) how well that product serves its intended purpose, 3) how it might be adjusted to better serve that purpose, and 4) how it in its adjusted form might best be applied to the full-group assessment process to come. During the large-scale assessment process to follow this pilot, facilitators will make transparent the stages in the development of the rubric and how this is an example of critical programmatic reflection.

Student Focus Groups
- Level: Focus on FRINQ, SINQ, and Capstone student experiences
- Investigate student perspectives and experiences not captured in surveys, faculty reports, or student work samples
- Participants: Four undergraduate student researchers, and 40-80 student participants
- Student researchers
  - Are paid student employees
  - Attend a training on facilitating focus groups, including leading mock focus groups
  - Facilitate focus groups in pairs
  - Assist with the development of the IRB, focus group questions, and findings
- This process centers the persons the program is committed to serving—namely, students–as direct informants on their experiences. Further, the process has been deeply informed by the undergraduate student researchers who, through facilitating the focus groups and engaging in data analysis, play a key role in every stage of the process, increasing the likelihood that authentic and critical data on the Program's impact will emerge.

Spring Term: Gathering

Spring term, in the Program's assessment world, is a time of gathering up. In SRINQ and FRINQ classes, students complete their final end-of-year course evaluations after 30 weeks of learning and engaging together. The regularly scheduled events continue to take place–the mid- and end-of-term evals in one-term courses like SINQs and Capstones, the course observations and SGID mid-term feedback sessions requested by faculty—but increasingly the end of the academic year makes itself felt and known, to students, faculty, administrators and staff alike.

During spring term, for example, SRINQ and FRINQ students put the finishing touches on their ePortfolios, those curated exhibits of student learning

around each of the Program's learning goals and reflection on the meaning and value of that learning. In these student-created ePortfolios, they include signature coursework (in both finished and, in some cases, draft form) that provides evidence of learning. At the SINQ and Capstone levels, faculty members create course portfolios (containing their course syllabus, assignment guidelines, and student work samples from that assignment). The director of assessment and a graduate assistant take those hundreds of portfolios in, organize them, and prepare the online interface for the collegial assessment processes that will take place just after the end of spring term.

At the very end of the term, an end-of-year gathering takes place, bringing together faculty, staff, and administrators connected to the Program for one or more facilitated activities (typically linked to the year's assessment focus), to recognize faculty receiving Program-sponsored teaching awards, and to celebrate. Although not expressly an event in the assessment calendar, this gathering is pivotal, as it provides the community of practitioners connected to University Studies with another opportunity to be together with common purpose, to acknowledge the power in such relating, and to turn towards the work we have before us.

Table 3 | Spring term assessments

Portfolio Review Preparation
- Levels: SRINQ, FRINQ
- Participants: All SRINQ and FRINQ students enrolled during Spring term
- From among enrollees, we randomly select 20-30 ePortfolios per theme, totaling approximately 300-400 portfolios for review. We then check to ensure that the ePortfolios are working, which will eliminate a few prior to review. These are noted so that we report on non-working portfolios as a part of our results.
- We translate the rubric into our online survey platform, Qualtrics, to create a scoring interface for reviewers. We update the survey as needed.
- We work to ensure that every meaningful element of the process in question gets captured and reported out. In this case, keeping track of the number of non-functional ePortfolios and noting the breakdowns in user effectiveness provides critical information back to the program about the success of our ePortfolio project at the SRINQ and FRINQ levels.

Course Portfolio Review Preparation
- Levels: SINQ and Capstone
- SINQ and Capstone faculty submit syllabi, assignment instructions, and five to seven examples of student responses to the assignment.

- We organize these course artifacts into an electronic repository that is easily reviewed. We use Atlas, which is the course manager side of our ePortfolio platform, PebblePad.
- We identify exemplary ePortfolios from previous years to use as norming portfolios.
- While this step in the assessment process is administratively functional, we make note of any elements that emerge as particularly meaningful to our assessment events or may disrupt those processes, and we work to manage potential difficulties before they arise.

Summer Term: Meaning-making

At an institution operating on the quarter system—and in a Program where a significant number of faculty members have just concluded one or more courses that they have taught for a full 30 weeks—holding intensive assessment processes immediately following Finals week might seem like a terrible idea. Since its founding, however, University Studies has engaged faculty members and administrators in these precisely intensive ways.

During this early-summer week, several dozen faculty members and graduate students come together across several days of generative collegial work. At the level of SRINQ and FRINQ, this looks like one or two days in shared review of students' ePortfolios. Compensated for their time and offered breakfast and lunch, participants start their day learning how to approach the ePortfolios, using the rubric developed to assess the particular learning goal in question. Reviewers come from across campus, invited through an open call for participants who have and have not taught in the Program. (Cultivating this institutionally inclusive group of Program assessors is one way University Studies promotes transparency and professional co-learning for colleagues not directly involved in the Program.) After engaging with two sample ePortfolios and a calibration process marked by robust discussion, each participant reads, reads, reads. At the end of the day, the director of assessment facilitates more rich discussion about what participants perceived in the artifacts, how well the rubric worked to capture what they saw, and how the process worked for them. The results of this assessment are data that reflect SRINQ- and FRINQ-level learning holistically.

At the SINQ and Capstone level, participating faculty members will come together similarly to practice with sample portfolios and calibrate their responses. Their work proceeds in a thoroughly relational way, though, as the

portfolios reflect the curation done by the instructors, and not students themselves. Given this, the participating faculty revisit their conversations from their orientation meetings, held during winter term, as they recontextualize the contents of their course portfolio with and for their colleagues. The results provide the Program with both level-specific insight and data about individual courses.

At this point, the work of faculty assessors is complete for the year. The work of data analysis now moves into high gear, with the director of assessment, the faculty support coordinator, and additional Program faculty and administrators (including Cluster coordinators) sharing in analysis and report-writing. In the remaining weeks of the summer, this group aggregates the numerical data from course evaluations for each Program level; thematizes comments from course evaluations and mid-term SGID processes across the academic year; engages in a review of the data by course theme; and reports out on course portfolio findings.

At the end of the summer, the director of assessment shares the University Studies Assessment Report with upper-level administrators and publishes it on the University Studies website. Long before the ink on that report is dry, the team has started to frame the faculty support and assessment agenda and to design the fall term faculty gatherings for the academic year that is right around the corner.

Table 4 | Summer term assessment activities

FRINQ/SRINQ ePortfolio Review
- Levels: SRINQ and FRINQ (ePortfolios from both levels reviewed together)
- One seven-hour day per learning goal
- Participants: An open call for reviewers is sent out across campus. All faculty members are invited to join us in reviewing student portfolios. We supplement the team of faculty reviewers with graduate students, so that we have about 40 reviewers per year.
- We practice reviewing a portfolio using the rubric and discuss the scoring. We do this a second time to be sure reviewers agree about applying the rubric.
- Reviewers then read and score portfolios for the remainder of the day, with each portfolio reviewed twice. If scores are within one point, the final score is an average. If the scores are two or more points apart, a third reviewer reads and scores the portfolio.
- We reconvene at the end of the day to gather feedback about the rubric and to surface patterns reviewers noticed across the portfolios.

- This process provides an opportunity for campus-wide engagement with University Studies. As discussed elsewhere in this issue (including in Ramaley and Hamington), the relationship of the Program to other units on campus has been a complex and complicated one over time. In the interest of transparency and in the spirit of collegiality, the Program invites participation in the process from faculty associated with and invested in University Studies, as well as faculty who are not (including faculty who have been critics of the Program). In any given year, about 1/3 of the faculty who participate in ePortfolio review have no direct teaching or administrative link to the Program. In this way, the Program intends to expose itself to view by all members of the Portland State community and to open itself to the critical feedback that grounds productive programmatic development.

Course Portfolio Review
- Levels: SINQ and Capstone
- See the Carpenter and Fitzmaurice article in part 2 and Carpenter, Reitenauer, and Kerrigan (2018) for a more robust description of this process.
- One six-hour day is spent with faculty sharing their courses and reviewing each other's materials.
- The review takes two forms: one is a rubric rating for programmatic assessment purposes, and the second is feedback to faculty from their peers.
- This process reveals the foundational operating principle in the Program: that assessment and faculty support initiatives must necessarily be understood and advanced as twinned processes. This collegial review is centered in the relating of faculty to each other, with the process facilitator working explicitly to evoke curiosity among participants alongside an openness to share both the successes and challenges in individual participants' teaching practices. What results is the practice of critical reflection 1) at the level of individual faculty members, 2) in terms of discrete courses taught, 3) within the Program level under review, and 4) revealing of the Program's successes and challenges. Directly out of these reviews, future faculty support initiatives will be identified and pursued.

Year-End Analysis
- Levels: All
- Participants: The University Studies assessment director, faculty support coordinator, directors for Program levels, and others with assessment projects during the year
- Course evaluation data are aggregated and plotted over time to look for any potential areas that need attention.

Table 4 | Summer term assessment activities (*continued*)

- ePortfolio review data are aggregated, including rubric score means and frequencies. We are particularly interested in understanding how many students are meeting our learning expectations.
- Course portfolio review data and comments are reviewed and reported.
- Data from SGIDs across the year are analyzed and reported.
- We'll continue to analyze student comments related to the DESJ goal.
- A single comprehensive report is developed and shared directly with Portland State upper administrators and distributed through the Program website (https://www.pdx.edu/unst/university-studies-assessment-reports)
- For the start of fall gatherings, we present faculty teams with student comments about their learning; aggregated course evaluation data for the DESJ learning goal; a histogram of rubric scores that shows the range of student learning; and a few examples of student work that represent our expectations. This rich set of information will give faculty plenty to work with as they consider the learning goal in the context of their courses.
- The creation of the Program's assessment report allows those directly responsible for leading assessment and faculty support efforts with a measured and meaningful way to sit with, understand, and communicate about the data that emerge from our assessment events, with the intention of putting our learning into use going forward. In this way, we hope to model within our community of practitioners a version of the critically reflective practice that we aim to instill at all levels of the Program.

Challenges, Limitations, Opportunities

At their most aspirational, the assessment methods employed in University Studies are powerfully inclusive mechanisms which center faculty at every stage of the assessment process and which directly inform faculty support approaches across Program levels. These methods exemplify principles of "critical programmatic reflection," as they begin in a spirit of shared inquiry, yield insight gleaned from individual and collective analysis, and catalyze the continuous development of faculty expertise as facilitators within transformative learning communities.

In practice, issues of power and positionality persist, given the Program's context, history, and institutional location. Like many other institutions of higher education (in particular state institutions dogged by financial challenges), Portland State has come to rely on a large cadre of adjunct faculty members to fulfill its mission. This has been especially true within the Program, particularly at the Sophomore Inquiry and Senior Capstone levels, where

60-70% of courses are taught by adjunct faculty each term. In our view, this has had powerfully positive consequences for our students, as the Program includes in its teaching ranks tremendously gifted and dedicated instructors holding adjunct appointments.

For the faculty themselves, the consequences of their precarious labor positions are more complex. For example, should adjunct faculty choose to expose their difficulties in the classroom during assessment and faculty support activities, they risk a visibility that could threaten their jobs, unlike their tenure-related and non-tenure continuous appointment colleagues. Similarly, course evaluations have differential impacts on faculty of different statuses and ranks, and may be used by administrators disproportionately against adjunct faculty.

These opposing forces—the commitment to include faculty across all ranks and statuses in assessment and faculty support processes, and the collegial desire to protect faculty from potential job loss—are constantly in play within the Program. An additional factor complicating the Program's navigation of these forces is an aspect of the collective bargaining agreement won by the Portland State University Faculty Association (PSUFA, the University's chapter of the American Federation of Teachers, the union representing adjunct faculty): the right of adjuncts to receive pay for activities they take on outside their direct teaching. Since the inclusion of this right in the bargaining agreement in 2015, it has become increasingly difficult to include adjunct faculty in assessment and faculty support initiatives, particularly during lean budget years.

Another area for improvement is around inclusion of students as developers, facilitators, and participants of/in assessment processes. While we have made some significant progress in this regard with the initiation of the student focus groups and the empowering of student researchers/facilitators as drivers of that process, we have failed to include meaningful student participation in other assessment events. This failure stems in part from our desire not simply to choose seemingly standout students for these roles without having created inclusive, equity-minded mechanisms for recruitment of students. The question of compensation for students has also been a factor in our slowness in involving students in assessment efforts. As with faculty, issues of positional power and privilege are always in play—which is both a reason *to* include students as fully welcomed participants in assessment processes and a challenge to overcome in providing that welcome.

These roadblocks, institutional in nature, illustrate the internal undermining of the University Studies vision, mission, and ethos around the practice of assessment as critical programmatic reflection. Despite the dedication of Program administrators and faculty in forging inclusive collegial community for the practice of inquiry-based assessment and faculty support processes,

the persistently pressing challenges of power and positional differences attend every aspect of the Program's functioning. Transparently and continually communicating these truths—that the Program is committed to equitable access to and participation in assessment and faculty support processes, and that institutional bureaucracy work against the full flowering of that commitment—remains a work in progress.

Conclusion

When University Studies approaches assessment as critical programmatic reflection, we move beyond checking boxes for accreditation. We take seriously the commitments we make in our mission, vision, ethos and learning goals and work to align our assessment processes with those guiding statements. Even the more mundane assessment processes, such as course evaluations, are treated as opportunities for inquiry, uncovering assumptions, and communal conversations about shifts in practice. We work to acknowledge power differentials between students and faculty and among our faculty, and we challenge ourselves to be as inclusive as possible, knowing our assessment practice, and ultimately our students' learning experience, is richer, more meaningful, and more truly reflective of our diverse learning and teaching communities when all voices are heard in the process.

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