



Holy Family
UNIVERSITY

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Newsletter of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

Conference Reflection

Carnegie Summit on Improvement in Education

By Chad L. May

I had the opportunity to attend the Carnegie Foundation Summit on Improvement in Education this spring. This annual event brings together over 1200 education leaders from K-12, vocational education, and higher education (many from teacher education programs or schools of education). Many of the sessions were devoted to an emerging methodology called Improvement Science. Over the last decade this new methodology developed by the Foundation has been promoted as an alternative to the tried and true random controlled trial where you select an educational treatment (new pedagogy, new curriculum, etc.), test it out on a sample, and then look for differences in performance between those groups. However, what has been found is that those studies very rarely replicate the findings in different and other circumstances. The results should be that when trying this new “treatment”, it worked in the one specific sample. at that particular geographic location with those specific subjects (children). Therefore, the results are rarely replicated elsewhere.

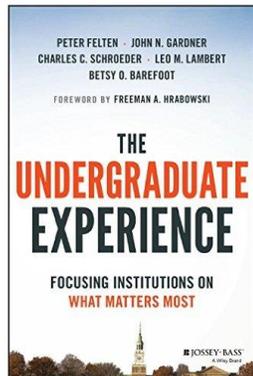
The Carnegie Foundation has developed a methodology where teachers, administrators, and other educational leaders can follow a disciplined methodology to find solutions to educational problems and then setup a process which provides evidence/information that said practice is working to achieve the desired improvement as well as provide formative information to help those implementing the practice. Through the use of Networked Improvement Communities (NICs) on-going support, data, and analysis can be provided to assist the entire community as they all attempt to provide a similar solution for a common set of problems.

During the conference there were many sessions that outlined this methodology comparing it to others such as Lean, Six Sigma, and the Design-Based Implementation Research Approach (DBIR). Many of these approaches started or have business applications and over the years have been applied to educational organizations. All of these ‘continuous improvement’ methodologies can essentially be viewed as particular applications of the assessment process. It is a cycle and not an event, thus it needs to be systematic and not episodic. The graphic below shows the six core principles of improvement that form the core of PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) cycles as well as the core of the improvement science methodology. These steps could be re-worded in the cycle to more common higher education assessment terminology.



- Be problem focused and user-centered- focus on the goal/objective
- Attend to variability- The goal is to see if variable performance can be explained systematically
- See the System- A curriculum map (seeing the whole program as a whole)
- Embrace Measurement- Assessment measures- specific data elements being used to measure how close we are to the desired end state of student learning/goal/objective
- Learn through disciplined inquiry- Reflect and discuss measures and results and tie it back to the core components of the program/department
- Organize as a networks- Team up with other units or reach out to your department/team to help interpret and explain the results in ways that are meaningful and actionable.

For more information about the Carnegie Foundation click <https://www.carnegiefoundation.org/>.



The Undergraduate Experience: Focusing on What Matters Most

Authors- Peter Felten, John N. Gardner, Charles C. Schroeder, Leo M. Lambert, and Betsy O. Barefoot, Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Brand Publishers, 2016

Book Review by Chad L. May

This book is heralded as a practical guide for advancing student learning and improving institutional performance in the ever-changing landscape of higher education. The authors challenge college and university leaders to examine current ineffective practices that fragment the students' experience.

It is divided into 8 chapters. In the first chapter the authors introduce the idea that this book is meant to be different from many recent books on American Higher Education with titles like "Is American Higher Education in Crisis?" (Blmenstyk, 2015), "The End of College" (Carey, 2015), and "Academically Adrift" (Roska and Arum, 2013).

This book was written to highlight examples of excellence that abound at many colleges and universities across the country. "Undergraduates are learning, faculty and staff are working together toward aspirational goals, programs are meeting evolving needs, institutional fundamentals are stable, and the future looks bright." (page 1) The book analyzes characteristics that drive programs and institutions to success using a modified case study approach to draw common parallels and provide some insight into the practices and processes that lead to those results with regard to student learning and the overall student experience at the undergraduate level.

In each chapter the authors elucidate the concept of what matters through both the use of citing research and scholarship as well as 3-4 well-chosen institutional case studies highlighting the core theme through describing those institutions programs and results in light of the theme. At the end of each chapter, the authors have a set of questions for reflection that enable the reader to reflect on the main points and ideas of the chapter. In addition, the authors provide a set of action principles in Chapters 2-7. The last chapter reiterates the 6 core themes and provides four sections within the chapter urging institutional leaders to act on what matters the most by focusing on institutional culture, becoming a learning organization, taking action, and not allowing constraints to stymie change efforts.

This book certainly belongs in the library of any leader in higher education as it boils down years of research into manageable concepts and can be applied in a variety of ways within an institution. Everyone in higher education should read this book especially because of all the depressing gloom and doom literature out there. This book provides a refreshing perspective and offers some insights into how institutions can and are coping with the myriad of challenges facing higher education today. I highly recommend this book and would love to see it used as a point of conversation for the entire campus around the question; ***what matters most at Holy Family University?***



Where do I find more information about student learning outcomes assessment?

On the Web

The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) (<http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/>) is a great resource for information on how “academic programs and institutions can productively use assessment data internally to inform and strengthen undergraduate education”.

Their resource library includes a variety of publications on topics from Accountability to Using Assessment for Improvement. Be sure to sign-up for their

newsletter to keep up to date on the work that NILOA is doing and the changing assessment landscape.

In Print

Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide, 2nd edition (2009) by Linda Suskie is a very useful resource for those new to the assessment process, as well as those who need a refresher and want to ensure that they are utilizing good assessment practice. Suskie provides a practical framework for developing and implementing an assessment plan. Additionally, the 2nd edition includes expanded coverage of assessment topics such as promoting an assessment culture, characteristics of good assessment, organizing and coordinating assessment, assessing attitudes and values, setting benchmarks and standards, and using results to inform and improve teaching, learning, planning, and decision making. Faculty and staff involved in academic program assessment and administrative unit assessment will benefit from the advice and guidance provided in the book. This standard reference for assessing student learning is available in the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.

Where do I find more information about administrative/educational support unit assessment?

On the Web

[Creating a Culture of Assessment](http://videos.myacpa.org/creating-a-culture-of-assessment) is a three minute video which puts into clear, concise words why administrative assessment is important (<http://videos.myacpa.org/creating-a-culture-of-assessment>).

In [Assessment Methodology](http://videos.myacpa.org/product/assessment-methodology), Drs. Jen Wells and Martha Glass outline the different methods of assessment and how to create an assessment plan that meets your objectives

(<http://videos.myacpa.org/product/assessment-methodology>).

You can find additional topics and video resources on assessment and student affairs in the video library on the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) website: <http://videos.myacpa.org/home>.

On Campus

Please contact Dr. Lisa Belfield, Associate Director for Institutional Research and Assessment, lbelfield@holysfamily.edu for all of your assessment needs and questions.

Upcoming Conferences

Members of the Holy Family faculty and staff have previously attended and presented at the following conferences.

Association of Institutional Research 57th Annual Forum

May 30 – June 2, 2017

KyMBER Taylor, poster presentation

Lisa Belfield, attending



The Forum, the annual conference for the Association for Institutional Research, is the world's largest gathering of higher education professionals in institutional research, effectiveness, assessment, planning and related fields. The four-day event features more than 300 educational sessions and an Exhibit Hall showcasing the latest tools and services for these higher education fields



4th Annual Drexel Assessment Conference

September 13, 14, 15, 2017

<http://drexel.edu/acnf/>

Call for Proposals

Deadline is May 31, 2017.

“Share your passion for teaching, learning, assessment, and providing a quality student experience. We are looking for engaging, informative, and all around terrific presentations on research, best practices, insightful teaching and learning experiences, or innovative assessment methods that speak to academic quality as a driver of assessment.”

Session format options:

Concurrent Session (60 minutes with a three-presenter maximum)

Snapshot Sessions (5 minutes for 15 slides, 20 seconds each)

https://drexel.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2rU0Nme0rgXl62p



**AALHE's Seventh Annual Conference
June 12-14, 2017
Louisville, KY**

The Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE) is an organization of practitioners interested in using effective assessment practice to document and improve student learning. As such, it serves the needs of those in higher education for whom assessment is a tool to help them understand learning and develop processes for improving it. For more information go to <http://www.aalhe.org/>.

The *Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education* (AALHE) conference features small sessions, networking excursions, nationally-known speakers, skill building and more.



**2017 Assessment Institute at IUPUI
October 22-24, 2017 Indianapolis, IN**

The Assessment Institute in Indianapolis is the nation's oldest and largest event focused exclusively on outcomes assessment in higher education and is designed to provide opportunities for:

- individuals and campus teams new to outcomes assessment to acquire fundamental knowledge about the field
- individuals who have worked as leaders in outcomes assessment to share and extend their knowledge and skills
- those interested in outcomes assessment at any level to establish networks that serve as sources of support and expertise beyond the dates of the Institute

The Institute is designed to introduce you to good practice and innovations in assessment that you can use in your own setting. Plenary events are presented by national assessment leaders. Concurrent sessions provide a more in-depth perspective on specific topics. A poster session will present details about instruments or techniques. In addition, make some time for networking and enjoying the city of Indianapolis. Registration for the 2017 Assessment Institute is available on the website, <http://assessmentinstitute.iupui.edu/overview/>



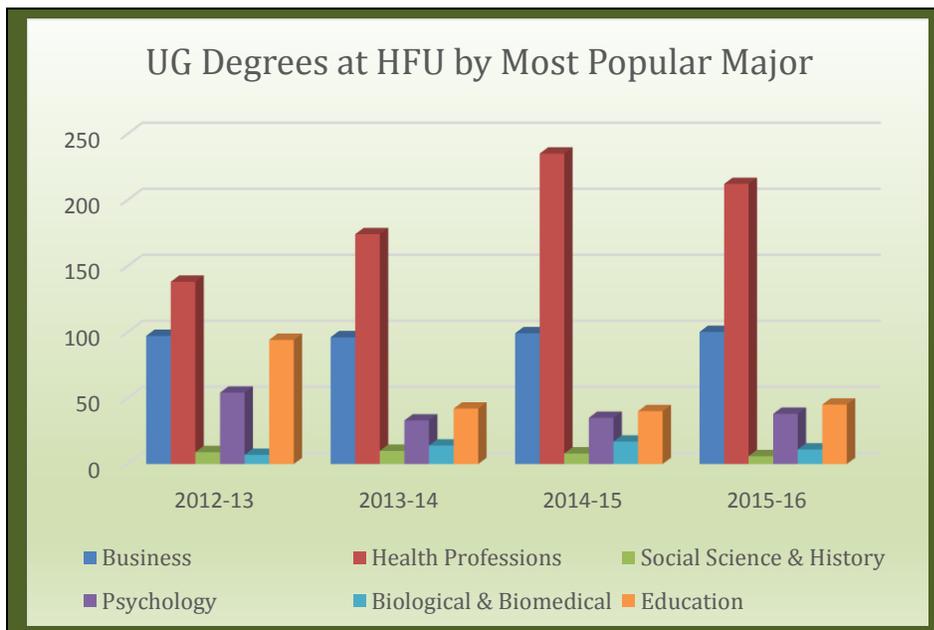
FAST FACTS from NCES

Question:

What are the most popular majors for postsecondary students?

Response:

Of the 1,870,000 bachelor's degrees conferred in 2013–14, the greatest numbers of degrees were conferred in the fields of business (358,000), health professions and related programs (199,000), social sciences and history (173,000), psychology



(117,000), biological and biomedical sciences (105,000), and education (99,000). At the master's degree level, the greatest numbers of degrees were conferred in the fields of business (189,000), education (155,000), and health professions and related programs (97,000). At the doctor's degree level, the greatest numbers of degrees were conferred in the fields of health professions and related programs (67,400), legal professions and studies (44,200), education (10,900), engineering (10,000), biological and biomedical sciences (8,300), psychology (6,600), and physical sciences and science technologies (5,800).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2015* (NCES 2016-014) Chapter 3. <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/>.