

Assessment Newsletter

ISSUE NO. 4
June 2024



Learning Improvement Initiatives at TSU: A Collective Will to Enhance Student Learning Outcomes

Greetings from the Office of Assessment and Accreditation! It brings us great pleasure to update our community on the latest developments and initiatives in our educational program assessment process. This quarter, we share the progress of our newly introduced Learning Improvement Projects (LIPs) being conducted by several departments. These projects are a testament to our commitment to continuously improving student learning outcomes through effective communication and innovative approaches.

Since March 8th, six departmental teams have been collaborating and working on their learning improvement projects. These departments include Biology, Education – Curriculum & Instruction, Human Performance & Sports Sciences, Nursing, Speech Pathology & Audiology, and Urban Studies. Our goal is to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning within these programs. To achieve this, we have focused on a six-step process that encompasses: (1) A Collective Will to Improve, (2) Vision, (3) Where are We Now, (4) Interventions, (5) Implementation, and (6) Re-Assessment.

The teams have been diligently working through these steps, guided by the book *Improving Learning at Scale* and consistent homework assignments. Notably, our efforts have focused on refining the scope of each team's learning area of focus. Initially, many teams had broad and vague goals, but through collaborative discussions, we have honed in on specific skills or knowledge areas that align with our learning improvement goals.

Given the varied situational factors across departments, the pace of progress through the six steps has differed. We anticipated that by the time of the Learning Improvement Conference May 13th-16th, 2024, that all teams will have completed Steps 1 and 2, with some teams even advancing to Step 4.

Assessment Development Work Conference, May 13-16

The Learning Improvement experience culminated at the Assessment Development Work Conference, where each team presented their progress in a structured format, focusing on each of the key aspects. This platform will offer valuable insights into our collective efforts to enhance student outcomes.

Through these learning improvement projects, we are fostering a culture of continuous improvement at TSU. Our collective efforts reflect a dedication to enhancing student learning outcomes and a commitment to clear and effective communication. We look forward to sharing more updates and celebrating our successes.



Assessment Cafe 2024

The inaugural TSU Assessment Cafe 2024, organized by the Office of Assessment and Accreditation, was successful. The Assessment and Accreditation office was pleased to bring Dr. Amelia Parnell, newly announced President of NASPA, commencing July 1, 2024, to Tennessee State University to conduct a workshop for our Assessment Coordinators. The workshop focused on the “Four Keys to Leveraging Data for Student Success”.



The full-day interactive workshop allowed participants to embrace their role as data-driven professionals in student services and administrative support. Dr. Parnell discussed the importance of selecting reasonable assessment priorities and timelines while balancing the multiple factors influencing data gathering in higher education. Dr. Parnell challenged TSU to redefine student success beyond retention, persistence, and graduation by considering job attainment and financial stability for our students. Participants received resources to use in their daily assessment journeys.



Five Week Assessment 101 Course Strengthens TSU’s Culture of Assessment for Continuous Improvement

Twelve TSU Assessment Coordinators attended Assessment 101, a NASPA Silver Award-winning workshop offering 5- full-day virtual sessions over five weeks. James Madison University’s Center for Assessment and Research Studies offered the Workshop. The group spent time covering the assessment cycle with a focus on learning improvement within the Academic Support and Student Service areas. Topics included outcomes writing, curriculum mapping, data analysis, and decision-making. Geared towards newcomers and seasoned practitioners alike.



THIS FALL 2024

SAVE THE DATE

AUGUST 23, 2024

OFFICE OF ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION
INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESEARCH, PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

PRESENTS
DR. NATASHA JANKOWSKI



Academic and Student Support Units attend NASPA: Student Affairs in Higher Education Annual Meeting

In March 2024, eight TSU Assessment Coordinators attended the NASPA Annual Meeting. NASPA is a member-centered association supporting a diverse and passionate network of 15,000 professionals and 1,200 institutions worldwide. The 2024 conference was held in Seattle, Washington. It provided opportunities for participants to learn best practices in integrating assessment into student affairs programs and services.



2024 NASPA Reflections

by Dr. Robery O'Keefe Hassell

Attending the NASPA 2024 Conference provided valuable insights and opportunities [for me]. The conference emphasized the importance of collaboration and partnerships in creating a holistic learning experience for students, with sessions like "Integrating Student and Academic Affairs: Providing Students With a First-class Learning Experience." The conference also offered a wide range of seminars and workshops that explored the latest trends, best practices, and innovations in student affairs and higher education.

Overall, attending the NASPA 2024 Conference equipped me with new knowledge, best practices, and a network of professionals that could help advance the mission and goals of the TSU SMART Center - Immersive Technology Division. The insights gained from the conference could be applied to develop and implement innovative immersive technology solutions that support student success and enhance the overall learning experience at TSU.

Assessment Bootcamps

The TSU Assessment Bootcamps, organized by the Office of Assessment and Accreditation, were conducted for Assessment Coordinators throughout April and May 2024. These three-hour in-person working sessions allowed for a deeper dive into the institutional effectiveness process and annual assessment reporting requirements, reinforcing TSU's commitment to continuous improvement.

New Resource Available for Assessment Coordinators!

The Office of Assessment and Accreditation published TSU's Nuventive Improve User Guide.

Click the icon to the right to access a copy or find it on the Assessment and Accreditation website under resources.



Executive Director's Corner



What is the Self-Evaluation or Self-Study?

Every accreditation review starts with an internal evaluation. An institution or program engages in comparing itself to Accreditation Standards, writes an internal (i.e., self) evaluation report, develops its own plans for improvement where needed, and submits the written analysis to its accrediting agency for review.

Please visit the [University's Institutional Accreditation web page](#) for further resources.

What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is a process established to evaluate, assure and improve educational quality in higher education. It is a peer-review process designed to recognize and validate that an institution or program within an institution meets a set of established standards and fosters a commitment to continued excellence. Institutional accreditation is external validation that an institution does what its mission says and meets the agreed upon criteria for higher education. The accreditation process includes an extensive institutional review every ten years and a review at five years. The review is based on a comprehensive self-study performed by the institution, a site team visit, and an evaluation of how the college meets the standards for accreditation. Besides assessing formal educational activities, accreditation evaluates such things as governance and administration, financial stability and planning, admissions and student services, institutional resources, and relationships with internal and external constituencies. Tennessee State University has been accredited by SACSCOC since 1946.

What is SACSCOC?

It is an acronym for our institutional accreditation agency: SACSCOC: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. SACSCOC accredits a college or university as a whole and does not accredit individual programs. Approximately 80 institutions undergo review each year by SACSCOC. SACSCOC as an accrediting agency is reviewed every 5 years by U.S. Department of Education.

TIMELINE FOR TSU's SACSCOC FIFTH-YEAR INTERIM REPORT

