From Progress Report to “Superlative”

A PRR Road Map

Gerard P. Lennon and Jennifer M. Jensen
Lehigh University
December 5, 2014

Presented at the Middle States Commission on Higher Education annual meeting, Washington, DC, December 3-5, 2014.
Outline of Presentation

I. Challenges facing Lehigh & how we dealt with them: *The Big Picture*

II. Specific Illustration of our process
- Assessment of Student Learning
- Focus on graduate programs

III. Moving Forward

The main presentation focuses on process. Results & outcomes are provided in Appendix for the interested reader.
Where we were in 2008

- Reaccredited 2008 with progress report (CAS-specific)
- Standard 7 (institutional assessment) and Standard 14 (learning outcomes/assessment)
- 2010 Progress Report
  - Art & Sciences assessment of student learning
  - Included both undergraduate and graduate
    - 42 pages, including appendices
- MSCHE evaluates progress toward standards
  - Citing only CAS did not mean other colleges were exemplars!
Fast forward to 2013’s PRR reviewer report:

• Lehigh’s assessment program is a model: credit to the report authors, as well as steering committee and institution as a whole

• Lehigh’s [undergraduate] core competencies, identified in its 2009 strategic plan, were mapped to learning outcomes an exemplary manner.

• Graduate competencies particularly thoughtful
2013’s PRR reviewer report
(excerpts from page 9)

We are compelled to notice the constructive and positive way that the university has taken the entire process of planning and assessment seriously, such that the university’s mission and service to students can only be enhanced.
How did we accomplish this result?

• So how did we develop university-wide learning outcomes and assessment processes?
• What were Lehigh’s challenges?
• What was going on at Lehigh that the process had to overcome?
• Communication, communication, communication
Challenges facing Lehigh in 2010

*(general campus context)*

- College-centric campus $\rightarrow$ needed college-centric assessment process
- Historically, faculty have not felt they had a strong voice...
- Lack of long-standing committee structures used and respected by all
- Tension between engineering/STEM and arts and sciences
Challenges when creating assessment programs

- University assessment program had to mesh with 4 existing college assessment programs
- MSCHE and professional accreditation processes (AACSB, ABET, Pennsylvania Dept. of Ed, others) had to mesh
  - Especially true for College of Education
- Strong college views and territoriality
- Mix of university players
How we achieved our goals... and why they worked

• Leadership led graduate assessment and program review while partnering with faculty
• Key role: faculty co-chair of PRR Committee, who wrote on “Challenges and Opportunities”
  • Wrote 14 page statement on challenges and opportunities to address by 2018
  • Interviewed > 20 faculty and administrators on Lehigh’s challenges and opportunities
  • Unburdened by other PRR responsibilities such as extensive committee obligations
• Started work early with only a few (and small!) committees, added more over time as needed
Advice for you... that worked for us

• Work within faculty governance structure
  
  You might not like it, but they trust it more than they trust you!

• “Provost committee” approach falls short

• Take the time to create structures that work

• Evaluate the team: strengths and weaknesses

• Take time for buy-in
II. Specific Illustration of *process*

Challenging *process* of

- Developing Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment practices at *university-level* for all students in all undergrad & graduate programs
- Need to mesh with existing college & program assessment
- Many have external accreditation requirements

**Notes:**
- Appendix 1: results & outcomes
- MSCHE and other accrediting agencies have called our graduate assessment practices a great *model*
Process to develop university-level assessment practices for Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

- **College level:**
  - Undergraduate & graduate programs
  - Must support new university-level SLO assessment

- **University level:** Overarching, comprehensive assessment at the across whole campus
  - Adds another level of assessment
  - Already have established college assessment

- **Need buy-in** from faculty & college administrators
  - *Two* levels of assessment needed for graduate engineering programs
Show **evolution/progress** in evaluating student learning assessment processes.

“Assessment of Assessment” by graduate associate deans

3 of 13 sample rubrics shown for 1 college shown below

Adapted from the basic process evaluation form, created by and available From MSCHE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No plans</th>
<th>Few areas</th>
<th>Some areas</th>
<th>Most areas</th>
<th>Everywhere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Leadership supports assessment culture</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Clear SLO statements at:</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Institutional &amp; college level</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Program &amp; course level</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Program-level faculty &amp; staff develop, articulate &amp; assess SLO at curriculum level</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Process to establish undergraduate, university-wide SLOs

Developmental competencies implemented in 2009

• Important part of new 2009 Strategic Plan launched by President Alice Gast (now President of Imperial College, London)
• Led by student affairs (initially & currently)
• Initially limited faculty buy-in; now have better participation;
  • Faculty Committee on Student Life is working well
• Complements College SLO assessment processes in place ≤ 2009
• 2012: integrated into an extended 8 week orientation period, increasing participation by faculty

[Reminder: see Appendix 1 for selected results & outcomes of process]
Evaluation of undergraduate student developmental competencies via skill map (one example shown for each cell)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level I</strong> (1st Year)</td>
<td><strong>Intellectual Exploration</strong></td>
<td><strong>Individual Identity Development</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interpersonal Development, Equity,...</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communicates effectively in written form (8)</td>
<td>Identifies personal strengths, styles and abilities (6 total)</td>
<td>Understands group dynamics, operates successfully in group setting (4 total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Understands role of society in shaping personal values (5 total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level II</strong> (2nd Year)</td>
<td>Asks intellectual questions to inform personal views (8 total)</td>
<td>Demonstrates resiliency and ability to overcome obstacles (5 total)</td>
<td>Navigates personal role in diverse group settings (5 total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Respects identities, practices of various cultural groups &amp; societies (6 total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level III</strong> (3rd/4th Year)</td>
<td>Employs complex reasoning when problem solving (8 total)</td>
<td>Uses moral/ethical reasoning to inform actions and decisions (4 total)</td>
<td>Appropriately challenges unfair and intolerant behavior (5 total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Articulates advantages &amp; challenges of a diverse society (5 total)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Process to develop five graduate student university-level competencies
started in 2010, adopted in 2013 (3 years !!!)

• University-level committee initially appointed by Provost
• Committee chair asked Graduate & Research Committee, a university-level standing faculty committee, if the appointed committee could be considered to be a subcommittee of GRC
  • To help faculty buy-In
  • Improve trust
  • Provided excellent Communication with faculty for 3 years!
• Final report to the faculty was made by faculty leaders
• Committee defined each of 5 competencies by one word:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

LEHIGH UNIVERSITY
Process to develop graduate competencies
(continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Programs interpret what each word means, how to implement

- Allows existing practices to fit into the new model
- Provided short sample interpretation for guidance (only)
- Selected programs report progress to GRC annually
- Cycle: each 5 to 7 years, often dictated by program accreditation
- Example:
  - Whole business college accredited on a 5-year cycle by AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business)
  - Following year all business college programs report progress to GRC
  - MBA program mapping of *AACSB accreditation objectives* to university-level graduate student competencies shown on page 3 of Appendix, simultaneously satisfies both MSCHE & AACSB

Knowledge

- Application
- Context
- Communication
- Leadership
Assessment of Graduate Competencies Integrated with External Review Process

Example: College of Education (COE)
Each graduate program on 7-year external review cycle.
• Increased frequently if problem detected in previous review.
• Schedule/frequency published on Lehigh Website
In 2013-14:
1. School Psychology: APA accreditation
2. Counseling Psychology: MCAC accreditation
3. Comparative & International Education (CIE) (not accredited)
This example shows how the process was used for a mix of accredited & non-accredited programs
COE External Review Process (continued)

Cycle for *externally accredited* programs dictated by accrediting agency’s schedule using their format.

*Non-accredited Programs* in each academic area reviewed at same time as accredited programs.

All programs report to GRC after accreditation visit.

Accredited programs also provide:

- Summary of accreditation review process & outcomes
- How accredited program outcomes mesh with the five university-wide competencies, as well as any program- or reviewer-identified issues warranting discussion at GRC.
## Comparative & Int’l Education (CIE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/13</td>
<td>CIE Program Director notified review due for fall 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program submitted 6 reviewer nominations; dean picked 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grad. Assoc. Dean scheduled external review visit for Nov.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/13</td>
<td>CIE finalized self-study (37 pages + 8 appendices)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-study shared with external reviewers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/13</td>
<td>External review visit (Nov. 7-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/14</td>
<td>External review final report received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/14</td>
<td>CIE program analyzed review report; prepared response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/14</td>
<td>CIE program met with department chair &amp; dean to discuss action plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Excerpts from the CIE External Review

This on-site visit was thoughtfully orchestrated and enormously informative...extraordinarily detailed and reflective self-study report prepared by the CIE faculty.

Alignment with 5 university competencies

• Reviewers impressed by clarity and incisiveness of student learning competencies in self-study & model for assessing SLOs
• Had not seen such explicitness in previous self-studies.
• Noted that CIE faculty refer to local-to-global understandings they seek to develop in their students, using terms globalization and contextualization, matching terminology used across university.
Excerpts from CIE Reviewer Recommendations

External reviewers considered process a *model*
Share CIE self-study (see GRC Moodle site) with other programs to show how can align *directly* with 5 university competencies.

**COE Dean’s Evaluation:**

*Previous review attempts always had same format:*

*program needs more faculty, more resources, more...*

*This process enabled me to truly evaluate the program, goals, and program quality and expectations of programs and students*
Coda: 
Getting Ready for the 2018 Review

with a new deputy provost...
Challenges facing the new ALO

• No administrators with lead roles in 2008 Self-Study are still in their positions
• Lehigh gave itself 47 recommendations in 2008 self-study
• Delayed Progress on 2008 Strategic Plan
• Major new initiatives developed since 2008 Strategic Plan
ALO Road Map for January 2014-Summer 2015

- Learning what we’ve done and where we are
- Messaging to department chairs
  - “Now is the time to get ahead on this.”
  - “I want assessment that is useful to you.”
  - “What help do you need to learn about assessment?”
- Clearing the decks
- Attend MSCHE ALO Institute
- Creating Steering Committee (and cycle begins anew)
Questions?

The slide deck of this presentation is available on MSCHE’s conference DVD.

It is also available, along with a 2014 paper focusing on engineering, on Dr. Lennon’s web site:

Use Q-R Code to right or
http://www.lehigh.edu/~inkee/people/faculty_lennon_g.html

& scroll down to sample publications, click on pdf file icon(s)
Appendix 1: Results

Although we focus on process, readers may wish to see some example outcomes of the Process:

• Undergraduate, university-wide developmental competencies

• mapping to university-level graduate student developmental competencies
  • MBA Objectives for AACSB in business college
  • Innovative Technical Entrepreneurship competencies in engineering college

• Graduate Program Review with Integrated Assessment of Graduate Competencies, in education college
Undergraduate, university-wide developmental competencies

Implemented in 2009 as part of university Strategic Plan

1. **Intellectual Exploration:**
   - Develop interests, strategies to advance cognitive/academic abilities; Learn/integrate their academic experiences & develop drive for/value of life-long learning

2. **Individual Identity Development:**
   - Student’s exploration & understanding of Personal values, attitudes, beliefs, & feelings about self: “Who am I?” & “What does that mean?”

3. **Interpersonal Development, Equity Community & Global Engagement**
   - Identification, understanding & implementation of life skills
   - Understand relationship to others who are different from them
   - Evaluate type & quality of interactions with others
   - Feel part of community, commitment to broadly shared ideas & interests
   - Work toward a common purpose; develop a sense of personal responsibility for promoting sustainability of larger community
# MBA’s AACSB’s Program Objectives mapped to university-level graduate student developmental competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University-level Competencies</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Knowledge, methods &amp; modes of thought &amp; reasoning in the field.</td>
<td>Use of knowledge &amp; methods of the field to understand &amp; solve problems; fundamental professional responsibilities.</td>
<td>Development of the field over time; relationship with related fields &amp; those with which it is applied.</td>
<td>Communication of ideas with peers &amp; others</td>
<td>Recognizing constructive roles of self &amp; others; assembling, leading &amp; working in teams; mentoring; ethical awareness &amp; action.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| MBA Program Competencies | Provide a clear understanding of business concepts & the skills necessary to apply them in the context of the overall organization. *(MBA#1)* | Enable students to solve complex, unstructured business problems. *(MBA#5)* | Integrate diversity, globalization & ethics in curriculum. *(MBA#2)* | Develop oral, written, & virtual communication skills critical to students’ success. *(MBA#4)* | Develop students’ abilities to provide leadership while working in teams. *(MBA#3)* |
Technical Entrepreneurship program competencies mapped to university-level graduate student developmental competencies

First semester skills courses-level with qualitative importance rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Competencies</th>
<th>Knowledge &amp; Context</th>
<th>Application &amp; Context</th>
<th>Leadership &amp; Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical Entrepreneurship Competencies</td>
<td>Knowledge Development</td>
<td>Application Development</td>
<td>Skill Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Title</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity &amp; Systematic Innovation Methods</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Property Creation &amp; Management</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods in Visual Thinking</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods in Prototyping, Modeling &amp; Testing</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**School Psychology program: APA accreditation review findings**
(Their response organized by our graduate student competencies)

### Knowledge

- **Curriculum well planned and executed:** “For each objective ... provides competencies and knowledge students are expected to learn.”

- **Constant improvement:** “During a recent retreat, program decided to revise their goals and objectives based on their evaluation of their current goals and objectives. Students were involved in the retreat and participated in the decision to create a new evaluation structure.”

### Application

- **Extensive applied experience:** Students complete 1200 practicum hours during first four years in program, 600 in educational settings, including full-year, full-time internship following completion of course and practicum requirements.

- **Well prepared:** “Interviews with internship supervisors ... indicated Lehigh students were well prepared for research components of their internships.”

- **Strong integration of science and practice:** “...school psychology students very skilled at conducting research related to practice.”
School Psychology: APA Accreditation review findings

Context

• “The program embraces scientist practitioner training model emphasizing research based practice in applied settings (e.g., schools and hospitals).”

• Consistent theme throughout interviews: “program had ... culture that emphasized value of research and need to continue to integrate new knowledge into practice and research endeavors.”

• “Field practicum supervisors were unanimous ... practicum students were well-prepared for the activities at their site; this reflect the careful synchronization of practicum requirements with other coursework.

• Lifelong Professional Growth: “Students indicating desire to continue to learn during internship and after program completion.”

• Adept in Field: “Field practicum supervisors described Lehigh students as independent and proactive, highly professional, and particularly adept at data-based problem solving, consultation, and applied behavior analysis.”
School Psychology: APA Accreditation review findings

Communication

- **High-level Products:** “Several [non-School Psych] faculty specifically mentioned how impressed they were with the school psychology students' qualifying projects and dissertations.”
- **Confirmed Skill:** Program exhibits included detailed rubrics for judging oral and written communication, including Qualifiers and Comps.

Leadership/Collaboration

- **Leadership focus:** “The program's goal is to produce leaders in school psychology who operate from a scientist-practitioner model.”
- **Well-mentored:** Faculty available to students in mentorship roles “as documented anecdotally by faculty and, most importantly by students.”
- **Outstanding Professionals:** Practicum and internship supervisors reported “Lehigh students were easy to supervise, willing to learn, and stood out among interns for their professional attitudes.”