

SLO Committee Platform/Direction
April 24, 2013

The Issue/Context:

With decreases in funding and the emergence of accountability, MOOCs, and the completion agenda, MPC finds itself in an “environment that is effectively encouraging a diminishment of quality while asking for a product of demonstrable value”.*

The recommended Platform/Direction:

The institution must act as a team to demonstrate the value of an MPC education by using SLOs to demonstrate what MPC students learn, the degree to which they’ve learned it, and how the institution has endeavored to improve.

Steps MPC will be taking to survive in this context:

1. Use SLOs to build and improve upon MPC’s successful Reflections process by integrating them into all aspects of MPC’s governance structure
 - a. They need to be in our institutional goals, e.g., “The institution will demonstrate what MPC students learn and the degree to which they’ve learned it.”
 - b. They need to be in our component goals, e.g., “Academic Affairs will provide appropriate tools to easily record assessment results and the essence of the dialog that provides the context for the results.”
 - c. They need to be prominently displayed on all documents describing what we do, including job announcements, job descriptions, handbooks, plans, reports, mentoring efforts, and whatever else I’ve forgotten to mention here.
 - d. They need to be in the hearts and minds of all MPC personnel; we need to encourage the attitude that in addition to being great educators and service providers, “student learning is what we do and we can demonstrate its quality and value.”
2. Integrate the expertise and experience of MPC adjuncts—who currently teach many of MPC courses—into the reflections process in order to enrich the dialog about assessment of student learning, and provide critical context for the results.
 - a. MPC currently invites adjuncts to participate.
 - b. We need to do more.
3. Communicate more specifically and precisely about assessment results.
 - a. Without forgetting its commitment to the uniqueness of the individual student, MPC must endeavor to communicate the results of the whole
 - b. MPC must become more quantitative in the way it reports its assessment results.
 - c. Quantitative data without context is incredibly dangerous. Contextualized data can communicate the results of the whole and include its nuances and complexities.
4. Utilize Reflections/SLO results to provide context for the student achievement and “student success” data that is becoming increasingly pervasive in this climate of accountability and completion agendas.

Academic Senate motion (Robynn Smith, Elias Kary): The Academic Senate is in support of the SLO Committee and the direction stated in the platform document, and asks the SLO Committee to continue with this effort. Motion carried unanimously, 3/21/13.

*From ASCCC President Michelle Pilati’s March 2013 update
http://www.asccc.org/newsletter_archive