

# ASSESSMENT MATTERS

## ASSESSMENT MATTERS SPECIAL SUMMER SERIES

### OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19

We understand that COVID-19 has drastically affected the way programs are able to conduct assessment, and we want to hear your stories in your annual Assessment Cycle reports. In addition to your annual report, please describe how COVID-19 has impacted your program assessment in the special section (COVID-19 Statement) in the 2019-2020 Assessment Cycle in Taskstream. If it hasn't impacted your process, let us know that too. This section will not be evaluated; rather, we want to provide programs with a place to provide context for this year's reporting and learn how your programs are addressing challenges.

Assessment of student learning in degree programs is more important than ever before! We have heard some suggestions about suspending our assessment efforts and reporting to deal with the unusual circumstances, but we think that focusing on the key outcomes for students is the best way to ensure they continue to make progress despite changes in course modality. Programs need to see whether the changes in instruction and program experiences are affecting our students' learning. Maybe some courses or program activities need to be adjusted, or approached differently. Or maybe some of the changes implemented due to the pandemic improved student learning, and should be retained even when we return to regular operations. The only way to know is by assessing the students.

Therefore, we are putting together a few special summer Assessment Matters newsletters to assist you in thinking about how to plan for assessment in these changing times. What questions should programs be asking themselves? From course assessment to program, how can we ensure that our students are completing a program of study with the skills and knowledge intended in that program?

Remember that assessment of student learning can only help improve your programs. It is also required by our accreditors, the Higher Learning Commission. With our 10-year review fast approaching, we need all hands on deck to show the reviewers that we take student learning seriously and work hard to ensure quality of programs.

Some of our Special Summer Series topics will include:

- Aligning courses and learning activities with program outcomes.
- What is a good measure?
- Collecting findings and more...
- Creating Action Plans that have *action*, not just wishful thinking.

