University of Charleston
2011-2012 Assessment Report

<u>Executive Summary</u>

This report outlines results from the assessment program at the University of Charleston for the Academic Year 2011-2012. Comparisons are made with scores from the 2008-2009 academic year, when 2012 seniors entered as freshmen.

Major Findings / Results:

↑	**CLA: UC's "Value Added" score improved dramatically** from 31st percentile in 2008 to 61st percentile of participating institutions on 2012 on the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)
↑	**CLA:** Direct evidence for Critical Thinking and Writing LLOs. 2012 seniors who entered UC as freshmen in 2008 **showed solid improvement** in Critical Thinking, Math, and Writing on the CLA. The cohort moved from the 29th percentile to the 42nd percentile in relative performance scoring slightly above the mean score for all participants. The CLA terminology for any score within one standard deviation of the mean score is expressed as the performance being "Near Expected."
↑	**DIT-2:** Direct evidence for our Ethical Practice LLO. 2012 Seniors were found to have moral reasoning skills similar to those of all Undergraduate Students in the normed sample on the Defining Issues Test. This was a **significant gain** as the 2008 freshmen class entered with moral reasoning skills similar to those of junior high school students. There is some concern about the large standard deviation in scores, even though it is almost identical with that in the norming sample.
↓	**ETS Proficiency Profile:** Graduating Seniors who were transfer students or whose first language was not English participated in a **pilot of this test** with poor results. Students were poorly motivated and the language barrier proved significant. We are investigating strategies for improving motivation and consulting with assessment experts on how to deal with language issues when testing all students.
↑	**NSSE:** Indirect evidence about multiple aspects of the students' academic experience. Overall, UC freshmen and seniors gave UC good scores the National Survey of Student Engagement (41% response rate). **The institution scored in the top 10% of "Highly Engaging Institutions"** on *Active & Collaborative Learning* and *Student Faculty Interaction*, but in only the top 50% on *Level of Academic Challenge* and *Supportive Campus Environment*. UC seniors rated the institution slightly lower than our peers in that category.
↑↓	**SSI:** The purpose of the SSI is to discover how satisfied students are with academic instruction, campus life, residential life, and the campus environment. Students indicate that they are **well satisfied with** the academic programs, the quality of faculty and instruction, and the interactions with faculty and advisors. They also believe the campus is well-maintained. Students are **not as happy** with access to computers, financial aid, food in the dining hall, or the residence halls. They also do not think it is easy to register for courses or lodge a complaint.
→	**ePortfolio:** Direct evidence of student achievement of LLOs. Mean and median rubric scores on student work submitted to the ePortfolio were higher than would normally be expected, suggesting **the possibility of scoring inflation**. This is the first time UC could actually gather data on such scores.
→	**Academic Program Assessment Reports**: Programs were scored against a rubric with a possible total score of 50. The mean score for this cycle of reports was 37.08. Some faculty had trouble with collecting and/or analyzing assessment data. Other common issues were related to faculty turnover resulting in lack of continuity in assessment practice, unclear program outcomes, lack of terminally degreed faculty. Enrollment, persistence and completion trends were examined and discussed by the Provost with Deans and Program Coordinators, and enrollment goals were set.

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Major Changes and Resource Allocation Decisions Based on Findings:

- CLA -- The University will no longer use the CLA for the assessment of incoming students and exiting seniors.
    1. The CLA measures too few of our LLOs
    2. The CLA is expensive
    3. The CLA test window is so narrow that its use a senior exit exam is not practical.
    4. Student motivation, reflected by measured time-on-task, is a factor in low scores by graduating seniors. We will embed the senior exit assessment in UNIV 459 Senior Capstone in fall 2012 to see if scores improve.
- **DIT-2** – The goal for the next academic year is to reduce the size of the standard deviation on this assessment.
    1. We will ask the Ethical Practice Roundtable to provide faculty development on pedagogical strategies
    2. We will ask the Roundtable and to look at its rubric to assure that it is a valid instrument.
- **ETS Proficiency Profile** – The ETS will replace the CLA as the assessment of incoming students and exiting seniors.
    1. The ETS Proficiency Profile has scaled scores and sub-scores that will measure all of our LLOs except Advanced Citizenship (community involvement) and Ethical Practice.
    2. The test provides a "Proficiency" score that can be used as a diagnostic tool with incoming students.
- **SSI** – There is a concern that this survey and the NSSE are administered in the same test window during even numbered years, when UC participates in NSSE. In the future we will administer the SSI only during odd-numbered years to avoid test/survey fatigue in students.
    1. Resource Allocation – UC academic leadership and the webmaster put time and attention on development of an online complaint form that channels student complaints to appropriate parties and tracks follow-up.
- **ePortfolio** – We will provide faculty development to address scoring inflation.
    1. A workshop about the difference between performance assessment and grading will be offered at August Faculty Institute.
    2. Faculty will be asked to identify issues/concerns about existing LLO rubrics and this information will be referred to the LLO Roundtables for action.
- **Program Review** – The following resource allocation decisions have been recommended as a result of this process:
    1. Creation of a Psychology Laboratory
    2. Upgrade of equipment in the Science laboratories
    3. Development of a Media Lab for use by the Communication and Sport Administration programs
    4. Remodeling of IDES classrooms and studios

Recommendations for **major** academic changes triggered by the process include:

1. Redesign the Communication program curriculum to clarify program outcomes and program outcomes, and increase marketability of the program.
2. Recommendation that the English program develop a focus on Professional Writing to make the program more marketable.
3. Redesign the Political Science and Public Policy curricula to combine the programs in one major with concentrations in specific areas.