



Quincy University

Looking Back: Dr. Teresa Reed.

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Assessment

Insight into Quincy University's Culture of Assessment February 2023

Cycle of Assessment



Guest Columnist, Dr. Teresa Reed reflects on QU's assessment journey.

When I started working at QU in July 2010, I was surprised to learn that I was chairing the Assessment Academy Team. QU joined the HLC Assessment Academy to avoid a focused visit on assessment, for failing to assess student learning in the Liberal Arts Foundation Program, as general education was called here at the time. The Assessment Academy met in October 2010 at that huge facility in Lisle, Illinois, that HLC uses for trainings (you find that place by trusting your GPS when you're lost on rural roads). The Team consisted of Dr. Justin Coffey, Dr. Cynthia Haliemun, Dr. Ken Oliver, Dr. Tiffany Quinze, Dr. Gary Russell, and me. Most of us are still here at QU!

I remember the six of us sitting around a table brainstorming about how to start with what QU wants all of our students to learn. Together we came up with the phrase, "an integrated mission-driven learning experience." Both curricular and co-curricular outcomes would be included. We wanted to rename the LAFP and place it within the Franciscan tradition and decided to recommend naming it after a great Franciscan scholar—St. Bonaventure. To integrate the experience, we thought a student e-portfolio would be a great idea. As we talked, I made a summary diagram. When I showed it to everyone the next day, we agreed we had come up with a real plan! The diagram guided our work through Fall 2014 and eventually became a poster for HLC.

The discussion around that table was the important thing. The vision outlined there has taken many years and many steps for implementation. The faculty agreed on a set of Bonaventure Program student learning outcomes and on using the AAC&U rubrics for assessment. A new Franciscan Knowledge & Values rubric was created and approved. LiveText software was selected and gradually became more familiar to students and faculty. A student e-portfolio was created in LiveText. In Fall 2019, the 0-credit BPP 410 class was created for seniors to complete their e-portfolios and write a critical self-reflection essay.

As one of the first instructors of the BPP 410 e-portfolio completion class, I found the seniors' essays impressive and incredibly moving. Yes, a handful of seniors wrote perfunctory things, but most of them really thought about their whole experience at QU. They described in unique ways how their major, Bonaventure Program courses, and co-curricular activities fit together and shaped them into graduates of QU who understand our mission. This never fails to bring me to tears. At QU, we actually succeed in providing "an integrated mission-driven learning experience." (Continued on page 3)

The following BP Learning Outcomes will be assessed during the 2022-2023 Academic Year:

1. Global Perspective
2. Problem Solving
3. Ethical Reasoning

These BP Learning Outcomes will be the focus of our assessment efforts this year; however, we will continue to assess Written Communication, Global Perspective, and Ethical Reasoning (D and W courses). In the meantime, please start thinking about how you achieve these outcomes in your classes. What assignments do you give that will meet these learning outcomes? Send Dr. Rowland your requests for uploading rubrics into LiveText.



Ethical Reasoning>>>>

According to the AAC&U (2009) Ethical Reasoning is reasoning about right and wrong human conduct.

Ethical reasoning requires students to be able to assess their own ethical values and the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, think about how different ethical perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas, and consider the ramifications of alternative actions. Students' ethical self-identity evolves as they practice ethical decision-making skills and learn how to describe and analyze positions on ethical issues.



Possible Activities Include:

Scenarios which call for ethical judgments about what a person or an organization did in certain situations. Scenarios ask students to weigh multiple ethical considerations before deciding and acting.

Case studies which ask students to identify and synthesize a common ethical issue. Case studies may ask students to use different ethical theories to analyze ethical situations.

Research/Writing Assignments

which call for exploring ethical reasoning in a historical or cross-cultural perspective. Research assignments ask students to reflect rigorously on ethical issues and to apply ethical reasoning theories.

Writing/Projects which identify various conflicting values in order to assess and employ various strategies for resolving value conflicts. These writing/project assignments ask students to apply various ethical theories in order to resolve conflict.

To assess this learning outcome, we will use the Ethical Reasoning Value Rubric presented by the AAC&U (2009).



Assessment Open Office Hours

Beginning Wednesday, February 22, and continuing each Wednesday thereafter, I will be holding "Open Office Hours" from 2:30-3:30 for anyone (faculty or students) who may need help with LiveText, student uploads, identifying a Global Perspective, Ethical Reasoning, or Problem-Solving assignment, or any other assessment question you may have.

No appointment necessary. Just stop by my office on the 2nd floor Rm 243. I will also provide a Google Meets link for anyone who may need to meet online. I will send out reminders and the Google Meet Link each week.

Demystifying the Rubric: Ethical Reasoning

The criteria below are the characteristics represented in the AAC&U Value Rubric for Ethical Reasoning. Each characteristic works to assess students' ability to describe and analyze positions on ethical issues. As we have seen during the assessment process, it is often difficult to determine whether a student artifact exhibits certain criteria. For example, with ethical reasoning, it may be challenging to assess whether students would act ethically when faced with real ethical situations. What can be evaluated using a rubric is whether students have the intellectual tools to make ethical choices.

Ethical Self-Awareness: Students will discuss in detail/analyze their core beliefs and the origins of their core beliefs. Core beliefs refer to the fundamental principles that consciously or unconsciously influence one's ethical conduct and ethical thinking

Understanding Different Ethical Perspectives/Concepts: Students will name at least one ethical theory, present the gist of the theory or theories, and accurately explain the details of the theory or theories used. Ethical theories are those such as utilitarian, natural law, virtue, etc.

Ethical Issue Recognition: Students will recognize ethical issues when presented in a complex, multilayered context. For example, students will be able to identify ethical issues within all levels of a situation and can then recognize the relationships between these various ethical issues.

Application of Ethical Perspectives/Concepts: Students will independently apply ethical perspectives/ concepts to an ethical question accurately and consider full implications of the application. Ethical concepts include areas of rights, justice, duty, etc.

Evaluation of Different Ethical Perspectives/Concepts: Students will state an ethical position and identify the objections, assumptions, and implications of various ethical perspectives and then defend against the objections, assumptions, and implications of different ethical perspectives.

ideas to Contemplate...

Dr. Teresa Reed

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I've been part of general education revision at every institution where I've worked. Success at the integration for most students is not typical; although some students will get it, most of them will not. I believe that the e-portfolio is one reason for our success. We require the seniors to collect samples of their work for the Bonaventure Program learning outcomes, and to think and write about the mission and their experience. This requires them to look for the integration. The most basic reason for our success is that at QU, we provide that integrated learning experience in the first place.

Of course, there are still many ways to improve the Bonaventure Program and the student learning experience at QU. For example, a first-year seminar and transfer seminar are needed for academic reasons; assessment will show how to revise the student learning outcomes and improve coursework supporting the outcomes; changes in Bonaventure Program course offerings are possible. This work in higher education is never finished!

QU has come a long way since that conversation around the table in Lisle. I am grateful to the Assessment Academy team; this faculty dedicated to student learning; Dr. Barb Rowland and the Academic Assessment Committee who lead our practice of assessment; and our honest, funny, and sweet students, who tell us what they really think about their QU experience when they complete their e-portfolios.



More Resources >>>>>

Problem Solving Assessment Workshop Video:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16XpcdCsQjly9-Dhlkb8Vs2f6tKCLgD8J/view?usp=sharing>

Checking Student Uploads in LiveText:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PdsbBI2lUPIIwm7RSbBpwQ4_57PADuHd/view?usp=sharing

Resource for students: Uploading Artifacts to a Class in LiveText

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fCSGco1YNxRjDOjS2h41YUwiZmRBSkj/view?usp=sharing>



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