Chapter XVI: MASTER PLAN AND ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP

July 15, 2003 Summary Overview

The 2003 Summer Master Plan and Assessment Workshop was held on July 15 in the Student Union Building. Attendees included faculty from each of the disciplines as well as administrative staff and a few students. Faculty discipline representatives received copies of the 2002-2003 assessment data for their disciplines and divisions and were requested to review the data with their colleagues when the fall semester started.

The Workshop was organized around three plenary sessions – two in the morning and one in the afternoon – with numerous breakout and discussion sessions in between. The three plenary sessions were the following:

- * "The Truman Experience: The Learning-Centered University and Student Engagement" by Vice President Garry Gordon;
- * "Results of the 2002-2003 Interview Project with a Focus on Student Engagement" by Kelly Brown (a student); and
- ❖ "Assessment of Student Learning Accreditation and Beyond" by Debra Kerby and Candy Young.

The morning breakout sessions included the following presentations and discussions:

- ❖ "Student Perceptions of Successful Students: Interview Project Findings" by Randy Smith and Kelly Brown;
- "Preliminary Findings of the First Staff Survey: An Initial Discussion" by the Staff Survey Analysis Committee;
- ❖ "Utilizing Our Assessment Data" by John Ishiyama and the Data Analysis Group;
- * "Portfolios: What Trends Are We Observing?" by Doug Davenport; and
- ❖ "Truman as a Learning-Centered University?" by Stuart Vorkink and Marty Eisenberg

The afternoon breakout sessions included the following presentations and discussions:

- * "Assessment Initiatives: Are We on the Right Track?" by Ruthie Dare-Halma, Sue Pieper, and Doug Davenport;
- ❖ "Interdisciplinary Progress: What Strategies Might We Use to Involve Our Students in Interdisciplinarity?" by David Christiansen;
- ❖ "Key Indicators: A Proposed Short List" by Michael McManis
- * "How Do We Engage Conversation Among Discipline Faculty to Better Conceptualize the Major and How It Relates to Discipline Courses Offered" by Candy Young; and

* "What Students Perceive as a Liberally Educated Student at Truman" by Jason Miller and a Student Panel.

The Workshop began with a short welcome from the President of Truman's Faculty Senate, Dr. Bryce Jones, and brief opening remarks by Truman's new President, Dr. Barbara Dixon. Vice President Garry Gordon then began the first plenary session with his presentation titled, "The Truman Experience: The Learning-Centered University and Student Engagement." His full presentation is attached to this report, but the following are selected highlights.

- ❖ Vice President Gordon reported that learning centered instruction was an emerging national conversation that represented a major paradigm shift − from providing instruction to producing learning. Progress on this issue requires that the institution become a learning organization that acquires a better understanding of how students learn and that envisions students, faculty, and staff as "coproducers" of learning.
- ❖ This paradigm shift requires that the faculty's orientation change from transferring knowledge to students to producing learning and that the institution shifts from offering courses and programs to creating learning environments.
- The research tells us that learners are not "receptacles" to be filled up. At the same time, direct experience shapes understanding and learning occurs best in the context of a compelling problem. Learning requires reflection, and learning is enhanced with positive interaction and personal support.
- ❖ As a learning-centered institution, Truman's strengths include a commitment to student learning, a focus on learning outcomes, and a history of assessment. Our concerns as we improve are to ask such questions as, "What is the Truman experience and is it available to all students?" "Do we have a supportive campus environment for all students, and are all members of the campus community appropriately engaged?"
- ❖ Truman's Graduating Student Questionnaire and NSSE data do not always provide reassuring evidence to these questions. For example, among seniors completing the NSSE survey, Truman ranks well below average on a composite measure of supportive campus environment while student satisfaction with advising as measured by the GSQ has been declining in recent years.
- ❖ As Truman moves forward, we need to make certain that the best of Truman's experiences are meaningfully available to all students; we need to give more attention to advising; and we need to reexamine faculty, staff, and student relationships and personnel practices in the context of producing increased learning.

Following a morning break, Dr. Ruthie Dare-Halma and Ms. Kelly Brown, a student assistant for the Truman Interview Project for 2003, gave an overview of results for the 2003 effort. Their full report is attached, but highlights of their report include the following.

- ❖ Both first-year and upper-class students identified well-roundedness with a lot of interests as the top characteristic of a liberally educated person. Both groups also gave high marks to such additional characteristics as being a renaissance person who is articulate on a variety of topics, as having general academic knowledge, and as being open-minded.
- ❖ Both groups of students placed a high value on class discussion and student/professor interactions when describing class experiences that contributed most to their education. Upperclassmen were also very likely to value experiences that reflected different teaching and learning methods.
- ❖ When asked what characteristics contributed to a successful class, both first-year and upper-class students valued most highly how well homework assignments related to tests. They also valued being able to apply course material to new problems and understanding the course material. Not surprisingly, their final grade in the class also had a significant impact.
- ❖ First-year and upper-class students were more divergent in their opinions about outof-class experiences. For example, when asked which out-of-class experiences contributed most to their education, upper-class students were more likely to mention professional organizations, student employment, and research while first-year students mentioned most other university organizations and clubs as well as volunteer and service organizations.
- ❖ These students were in broad agreement, however, on the characteristics of successful out-of-class experiences: having fun; gaining personal satisfaction; and connecting with other students.
- ❖ When asked how Truman might strengthen their liberal arts experience, both groups of students who had an opinion reported "more choices" and "fewer requirements."
- ❖ These students also strongly agreed that successful students were those who really learned and that successful faculty were those who were flexible and willing to help students. These students also agreed that a successful educational experience was characterized by acquiring knowledge of a subject and learning to apply that knowledge to other problems.

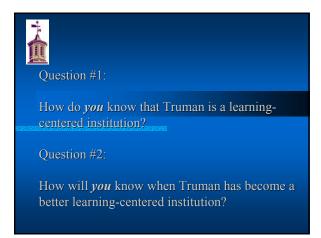
The Summer Workshop attendees next participated in a variety of breakout sessions which were then followed by a buffet lunch and conversation. The afternoon began with the final plenary session led by Debra Kerby and Candy Young on the topic "Accreditation and Discipline-based Assessment." Highlights of their presentation (which is attached in its entirety) included the following.

- ❖ Truman is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Our last visit was Spring 1995, and our next visit will be January 31-February 2, 2005.
- ❖ The five criteria that Truman will be evaluated on are the following: mission and integrity; preparing for the future; student learning and effective teaching; acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge; and engagement and service.
- The self-study report asks Truman to formally examine itself to determine whether it meets the accreditation criteria; to assess its strengths and challenges; to plan how to capitalize on strengths and alleviate its challenges; and to clarify plans for improving and enhancing its programs and operations.
- ❖ The self-study year will be AY 2003-2004 and will focus on the whole university. The study will be broad-based, will be evaluative rather than just descriptive, and will identify strengths as well as areas for improvement.
- ❖ The University's goals will include: providing evidence that Truman meets the HLC's accreditation criteria; assessing and fostering the implementation of the University Master Plan Update; and enhancing and invigorating Truman's assessment program.
- ❖ With respect to assessment and accreditation, Truman has an interesting history. Truman's 1984 self-study was possibly the first to use assessment data to document student learning and was well received. By 1995 assessment had become a nationwide requirement, and Truman had a very comprehensive program − although there was some evidence that there was more data available than was being used. In 2005 Truman's reputation for assessment is likely to raise expectations for evaluators, who will be looking to see if we have assessed assessment, improved our patterns of use, and extended assessment practices deeper into the disciplines.
- ❖ The Higher Learning Commission expects that disciplines will decide what students should know, value, and be able to do upon completion of courses and graduation from their program; will consciously design a curriculum to achieve desired student learning outcomes; and will implement an assessment program that uses University-wide data and discipline specific assessments to monitor discipline objectives.
- ❖ Truman has a very well-developed, widely recognized institutional accountability assessment program, and its discipline-level assessments are also strong but are less well known − even on campus. For example, disciplines publicly articulate knowledge, skill, and attitude objectives for their programs, and they use University-wide data to evaluate their programs. There are also many examples of discipline-specific assessment, but there is also room for improvement.

❖ Truman's strategy for the HLC report and visit is to develop a Web site for discipline-based assessment that uses the University's Five-year Program Review process as a basis. Disciplines are asked to review the Web site, review their objectives, and review, enhance, and embed assessment processes into their discipline's activities.

Following a full selection of afternoon breakout sessions which were noted at the beginning of this report, the Workshop concluded with an informal social hour held in the Downunder Room of the Student Union.









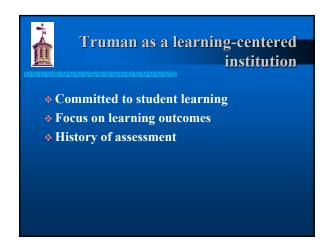




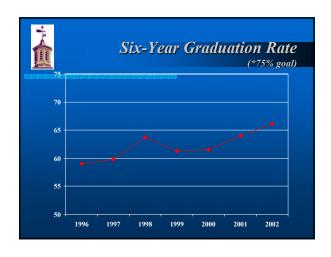


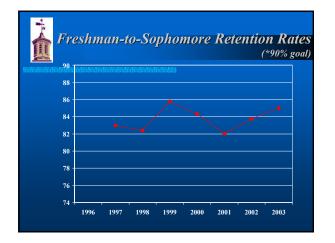


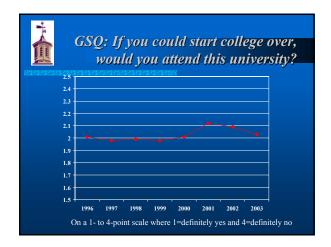




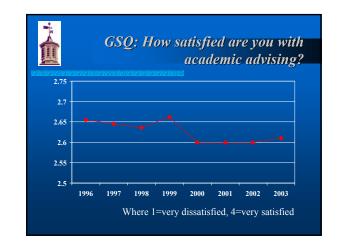


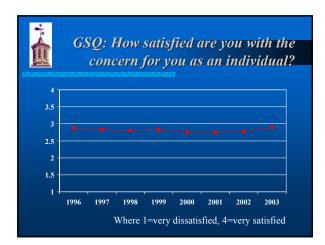


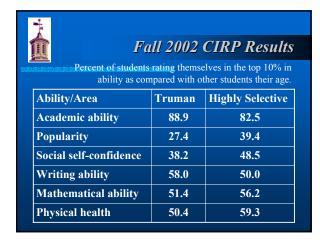




200	2002 NSSE Results		
	Truman mean	COPLAC mean	
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution? ¹	3.28	3.40	
If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending? ²	3.03	3.29	









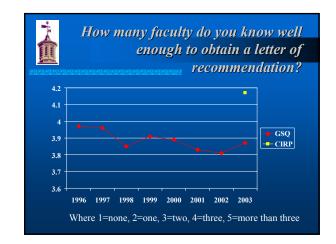
Fall 2002 CIRP Results

Chances are very good	Truman	Highly Selective
Make at least "B" average	69.7	61.7
Get a bachelor's degree	89.6	81.7
Communicate regularly with your professors	38.9	33.6

2002 NSSE Result		
To what extent does your institution emphasize the following?	Truman mean	COPLAC mean
Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	2.77	2.95
Helping you cope with your non- academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	1.59	1.95
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	2.01	2.14

Where 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much







NSSE Results Highlights: According to First-Year Students

- Enriching Educational Experiences: Top 15%
- Student-Faculty Interactions: Top 16%
- Level of Academic Challenge: Top 25%
- Active and Collaborative Learning: Top 33%
- Supportive Campus Environment: Middle of the pack



NSSE Results Highlights: According to Seniors

- ***** Enriching Educational Experiences: Top 10%
- Student-Faculty Interactions: Top 25%
- **❖** Level of Academic Challenge: Top 10%
- * Active and Collaborative Learning: Below Average (40th Percentile)
- * Supportive Campus Environment: Well Below Average (33rd Percentile)



Truman Environment:

What our Assessment Suggests

- **❖** Average number of students/faculty (65-70)
- Participation rates: Study abroad & Undergraduate Research comparatively high; internships, service learning, other application not as high
- * Deeper relationships with faculty not what we might anticipate

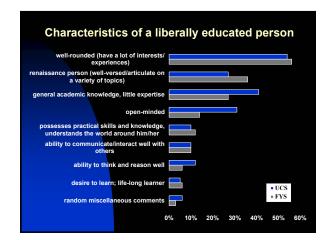


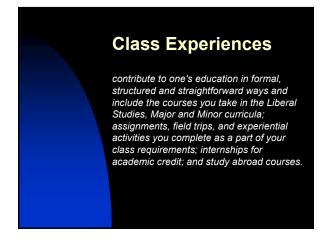
The Next Step

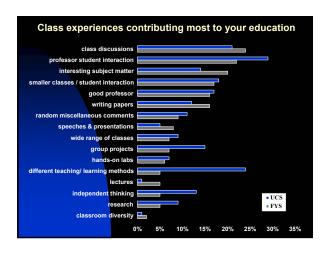
- Student Engagement/An Engaged Faculty & Staff
 - Extend the best of Truman experience/support to all students
 - · Classroom assessment
 - Advising
 - Reexamine accessibility, faculty/staff-to-student relationships, and personnel practices in the context of producing learning
 - Conversations guided by desire to produce learning
 - Appropriate analysis of our situation

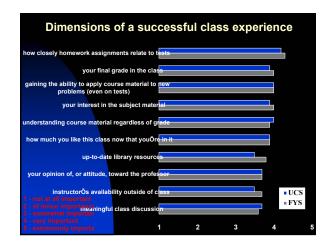
Interview Project 2003 Student Engagement Project Director: David Gillette Project Assistants: Kelly Brown Christy Dixon Allison Dougherty Jennifer Kayser

Brief Overview Truman initiative 12 years ago in response to current interests annual/bi-annual themes student engagement in our LAS environment faculty-student team interviewee selection personal nature immediate impact, if...



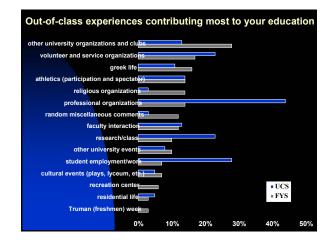


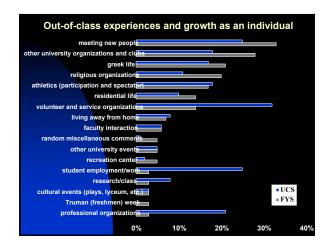


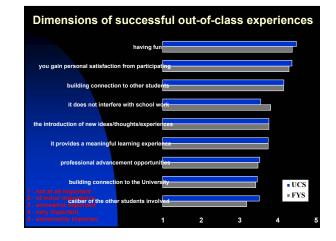


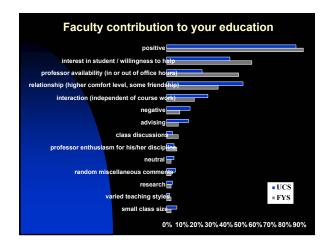
Out-of-class Experiences involve any other activity in which you are involved as a part of your Truman experience such as participation in or attendance at athletic events, dramatic or musical performances, art shows and displays; participation or leadership in honor societies, professional fraternities, social fraternities and sororities, and other student organizations; volunteerism; campus work experiences; involvement in student government; attendance at speeches, cultural events, conferences and workshops; participation in intramurals and fitness activities; involvement with counseling, mentoring, and advising relationships; collaboration in research, projects, or programs with students, faculty,

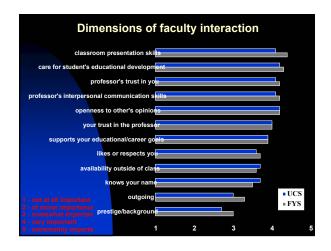
and/or staff at Truman; etc.

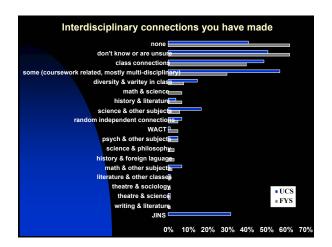


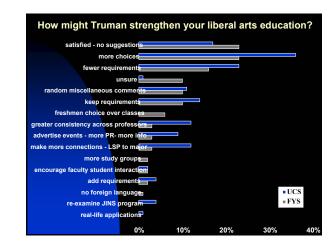


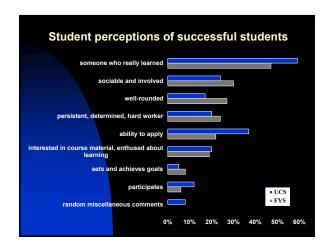


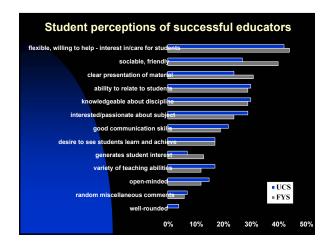


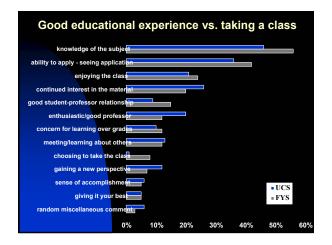














ACCREDITATION AND DISCIPLINE-BASED ASSESSMENT

Master Plan Workshop July 15, 2003 Debbie Kerby and Candy Young

Institutional Accreditation

- Truman is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission: A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
- Self-study and peer evaluation
- Last visit was Spring 1995
- Next visit: January 31 February 2, 2005

Role of Accreditation

- Sustain and enhance the quality of higher education
- Maintain the academic values of higher education
- Buffer against the politicizing of higher education
- Serve public interest and need

Criterion One: Mission and Integrity

- The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.
- Five core components: communication, diversity, support for the mission, governance & administrative structures, integrity

Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future

- The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities
- Four core components: environmental scanning, resource base, institutional effectiveness, mission-aligned planning

Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching

- The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.
- Four core components: student learning outcomes and assessment, values & supports effective teaching, learning environments, learning resources

Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

- The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.
- Four core components: life of learning, breadth of knowledge & skills, assessment of curricula, support

Criterion Five: Engagement and Service

- As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.
- Four core components: learns from constituencies, capacity & commitment to engage constituencies, responsiveness to constituencies, constituencies value the services provided

Purpose of Self-Study

(in general)

- Truman will formally examine itself to:
 - Determine whether it meets the accreditation criteria:
 - Assess its strengths and challenges;
 - Plan how to capitalize on its strengths and eliminate or alleviate its challenges; and,
 - Clarify plans for improving and enhancing its programs and operations.

Self-Study Year

- Picture year: 2003-2004
- Focus on the whole university
- Involvement by many—administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, other
- Linked to existing processes for planning and self evaluation
- Evaluate rather than describe
- Identify strengths and areas for improvement
- Produce self-study report

REALIZING THE PROMISE:

A Self-Study for the Higher Learning Commission

GOALS

- To provide public evidence that Truman meets each of the Higher Learning Commission's accreditation criteria;
- To assess and foster the implementation of the University Master Plan Update 2003-2007, Affirming the Promise: Fostering a Nationally Recognized Community of Learners;
- To further enhance and invigorate Truman's assessment program.

REALIZING THE PROMISE Self-Study Participants

- Board of Governors
- President Barbara Dixon
- Vice-President Garry Gordon
- Self-Study Coordinator, Debra Kerby
- Steering Committee—17 administrators, faculty, staff, students
- Five Subcommittees by Criterion—over 60 administrators, faculty, staff, students
- In reality—the entire Truman community

REALIZING THE PROMISE Committee Chairs

- Mission & Integrity
- Preparing for the **Future**
- Student Learning & Effective Teaching
- Acquiring, Creating, & Developing Knowledge
- Engagement & Service

- Adam Davis
- Jay Bulen
- Doug Davenport

REALIZING THE PROMISE Self-Study Report

- Discuss the purposes of the report
- Respond to the 1995 Evaluation Team Report
- Discuss operational indicators as needed
- Report and evaluate examples of evidence related to each criterion
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
 - Link to the University Master Plan Update
- Offer recommendations

REALIZING THE PROMISE **Key Dates**

- September April, 2003-2004:

 - Develop draft reports
- Communication with Truman community June-July, 2004:
 Draft the Self-Study Report

- October December, 2004:

 Campus-wide information session about Evaluation Team Visit

- January 31 February 2, 2005:

 Evaluation Team Visit

Accreditation and Assessment of Student Learning

- From the Higher Learning Commission's Statement on Assessment of Student Learning:

 - Explicit public statements regarding the knowledge, skills, and competencies students should possess as a result of completing

 - Effective assessment is integrated into processes for program review, departmental and organizational planning, and unit and
 - Commitment to and capacity for assessment of student learning will figure more prominently than ever in the accreditation relationship

Focus on Assessment

- Three objectives for this portion of the presentation
 - Look at Truman's previous use of assessment for accreditation in 1984 and 1995
 - Introduce current assessment expectations
 - Offer a strategy for meeting the HLC/NCA standards.

1984 Accreditation Self-Study

- To our knowledge. Truman was the first to use assessment data to document student learning for accreditation
- Types of assessment data used?
 - Value-Added Testing
 - National Exams in the Major
 - Student Surveys
 - Traditional and Unobtrusive Measures (e.g. percent of students who purchase the text book, grade distribution, transcript studies)
- NCA Response?

1984 Evaluation Team Report

- Assessment "crystallizes what they are looking for in [student learning]..."
- "Students are studying longer hours, and are performing significantly better on national examinations."
- "It is an integrating process for the university."
- "Faculty...are redesigning courses, questioning old assumptions,applying new standards, and making significant improvements to the curriculum."

Truman's 1995 NCA Self-Study

- Assessment a nationwide requirement
 - NCA required an assessment plan and evidence of use.
 - Truman case studies showed use of multiple types of assessment data for improvement.
 - We had a much more comprehensive system of assessment -- included university portfolios, writing assessment, interviews, and capstone courses.

1995 NCA Evaluation Report

- "The assessment program, conducted for both improvement and accountability, forms the foundation for ... continuous improvement."
- "[Assessment] enhances the teaching and learning function"
- NCA report agreed with our self-study concerns that there was far more data than evidence of use and that newer faculty were not as appreciative of the system. Suggested a review looking to costs, benefits, and use.

How do the 1984 and 1995 reports affect the up-coming self study?

- Truman's reputation for assessment of student learning is likely to raise the expectations of evaluators
- Evaluators will be looking to see if we have
 - assessed assessment
 - improved our patterns of use
 - extended assessment practices deeper into the disciplines

Recent Assessment Activities

- Assessing Assessment
 - Review by an External Consultant
 - Review by the Assessment Committee
- External Consultant Visit -- Spring 2002.
 - HLC expects increasing maturity in assessment system
 - Cited Truman's enviable tradition of commitment to assessment
 - Critical of discipline-based assessment which is the current focus of HLC

HLC/NCA Expectations: The Ideal

Disciplines are encouraged to:

- Decide what a student should know, value, and be able to do upon completion of courses and graduation from their program
 - Study internal and external constituencies and national professional associations to inform their discussion
 - Make sure objectives are stated as measurable student learning outcomes.
- Consciously design a curriculum to achieve desired student learning outcomes

Ideal Practices (cont'd.)

Discipline faculty should:

- Implement an assessment program that uses university-wide data and discipline-specific assessments to monitor discipline objectives
- HLC encourages course-embedded assessment, but remember assessment must include more than a single faculty member's
- Document structures, policies and expectations that lead to discipline use of assessment data.

2005 HLC/NCA Assessment Strategy

- Use Five-Year Program Reviews
 - Significant overlap with HLC expectations
 - Develop a Web Site
 - Encourage disciplines to refine
- Initial Evidence
 - Truman does a better job of discipline-based
 - Disciplines do publicly articulate knowledge, skill, and attitude objectives for their programs
 - Disciplines do use university-wide data such as senior test scores, portfolio performance by majors, and

Some Assessment Ideas

- Methods
 - Discipline portfolios
 - Senior thesis
 - External Examiner
 - Alumni focus group
 - Employer focus group

 - Licensure exam

 - Collective review of

- Processes
 - Team teach capstone

 - about program strengths and weaknesses
 - Facilitates review of curricular course

 - Remember Students!

What Disciplines Need to Do

Review web site, deliberate, talk to each other!

- Review knowledge, skills, and attitudes objectives

 - - employersgraduate schools

Questions?

Comments?

Suggestions?