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Portfolio Review: Evidence of Student Learning Outcomes

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Portfolio review: Evidence of student learning outcomes

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When faculty members seek consensus, is anything lost in the process?

- **History**
  - Small department at a small university (under 14,000)

- 2000-2008 rapid growth (over 21,000)

- 2008 NASAD recommendation following Self-Study Report
  - Reduce numbers, examine resources

- Entry portfolio logistical way to solve population problem
Building consensus

- Challenge – convince faculty the process was necessary

- Criteria
  - Examined many paths, established logistics of process
  - Process went from clunky to codified
  - Continuous improvement through process evaluation
  - Asked questions, questions, questions, 3 years to develop a solid system
Net results of consensus building

- **Losses**
  - Closed department in an open access university experiencing rapid growth

- **Gains**
  - Created accurate population data for administration
    - Increased student oversight on individuals
    - Controlled access based on potential
  - Curriculum updated – overall & within disciplines
  - Process created philosophical unity among divergent faculty
    - Non-homogenized viewpoints
    - Power shifts occurred, more egalitarian
    - Led by common concern for student experience and learning outcomes
  - Increased department self-view re: quality of programs
Do admission standards forecast future success?

- What is future success?
  - Commercial success: not a trade school

- Intellectual/artistic skills
  - Representation of form & conceptual inventiveness – very subjective

- Academic
  - For BFA majors – skills & competencies for success in the curriculum & ultimately in field success
  - For BS Art Education – skills & competencies for certification and teaching
Criteria Development

- High school review vs. first semester review
- Review criteria reflects the evolution of student learning outcomes
  - Began with all principles of visual arts at foundational level
  - Evolved into core values of visual art at all disciplinary levels including upper level courses
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<th>Spring 2008 (4 criteria)</th>
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<td>Spring 2007 (6 criteria)</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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Assessment of review process

- Long list
  - Thorough but time consuming for reviewers
  - Academic scrutinizing loses overall perception of student potential

- Short list
  - Logistically easier to review
  - Allows reviewer freedom of interpretation
  - Personal subjectivity of reviewer comes into play (for good or ill)
  - Conceptual inventiveness now at top of list
Other effects of criteria development

- Criteria refinement began a curricular change
  - Committee members re-prioritized their syllabi
  - Recommendation to all faculty members to include student learning outcomes/criteria in their syllabi

- Other affected topics
  - Recruitment
  - Foundation values
  - Curriculum logistics
  - Value of assessments in the liberal arts
  - Program identity compared to peer institutions
  - Type & quality of students
  - Adjunct faculty adherence to principles
  - Program ideology
Tracking progress

- **Academic success**
  - GPA
  - Graduation rate increased 20% post review process
  - Tracking graduate school acceptance – increased requests for letters of recommendation

- **NASAD review 2008**
  - Insufficient resources & faculty for student body
  - Reduce numbers
    - 2002 – 300 students
    - 2006 – 700 students (portfolio implemented) 80% accepted
    - 2011 – 550 students – 65% accepted
  - Perceived lack of conceptual inventiveness
    - Became core value of review criteria

- **Anecdotal evidence from students/faculty**
  - Quality improved, increased rigor, better work ethic, work became fun
What are the ultimate goals of the admission portfolio?

- **Primary Goals**
  - Increase the quality of the student body
  - Increase the quality of the institution
  - Successful innovative thinking

- **Secondary goals**
  - Create curricular change
  - Jumpstart an academically stalled program
  - Continuous improvement/examination
  - Increase student learning outcomes
  - Refine teaching methods/instructional strategies
Applying our experience to other disciplines

- Set standards within the discipline
- Define evidence
  - Set criteria
- Judge evidence
  - Continuous improvement
Representation of form
Conceptual inventiveness
Composition