



ESTABLISHING A LEARNING-CENTERED CULTURE: Earning the 2014 National CHEA Award

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Eastern Kentucky University

Great Journeys Begin Here





Eastern Kentucky University

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Eastern Kentucky University

Great Journeys Begin Here

5 Colleges

- Arts & Sciences
- Business & Technology
- Education
- Health Sciences
- Justice & Safety

37 departments

**Over 150 degree programs, including
 30+ master's programs,
 2 specialist degrees, and
 4 practicing doctorates.**

2014-15 Student Enrollments

Total undergraduate	13,949
Total graduate	2,356
Total student enrollment	16,305

Our **16,000 students** are served by
742 full-time faculty.

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Today's Focus:

- **The Goal** – *Keeping our promise to students*
- **The Challenge** – *Creating a learning-centered culture*
- **The Journey** – *Shifting focus from “assessment” to “assurance of learning”*
- **The Award** – *Demonstrating results*

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The Goal?

Keeping our promise to students

“ Access without success is an empty promise –
and a missed opportunity with severe economic
consequences...”

- Tom Sugar, Complete College of America

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The Agenda for Higher Ed in the U.S.

The call for increased accountability:

- Federal Government's Involvement
- Not-for-Profit Agencies' Push to Increase Degree Production
- Families' Financial Challenges
- Public Perception of Higher Education's Value



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The "Completion Agenda"

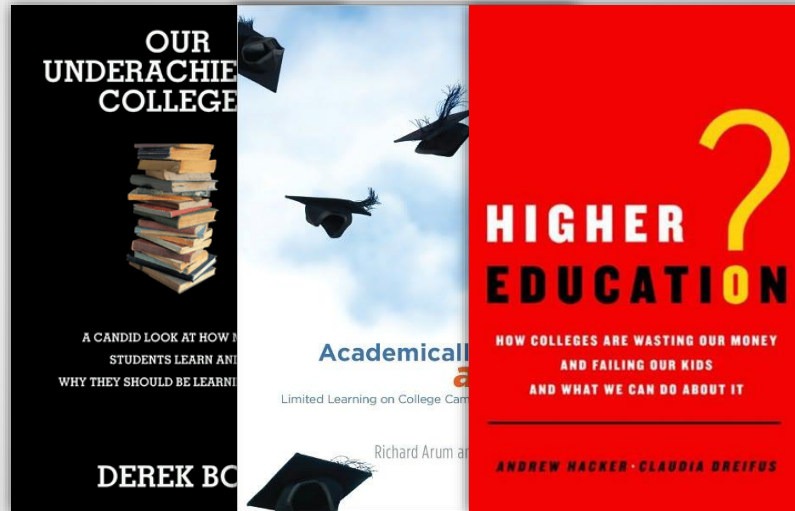
- Increase the number of degree holders
- Close the Achievement Gap
- Require fewer hours to earn a degree
- Reduce costs – Hold tuition down
- Reduce the amount of graduates' debt
- Meet performance-funding requirements



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Higher Ed is under unprecedented scrutiny



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A recurring question:

“Is College Worth the Cost?”

Ivory Tower (Paramount) –
“raises a lot of good questions about **whether a college education remains worth the rising cost, said *The Boston Globe*.**”

-*The Week*, p. 29
October 10, 2014

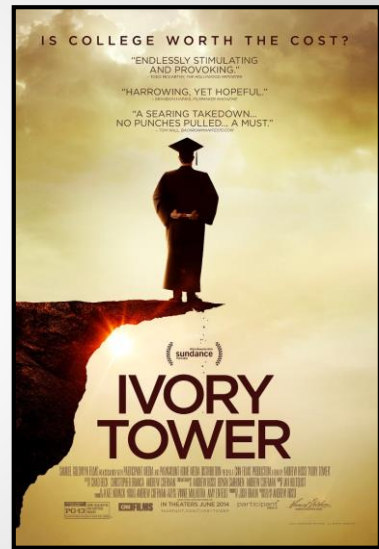


Photo courtesy of IMDB

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The Challenge?

What are the challenges of creating a culture of learning?

- *What do we value?*
- *How do we impact student learning?*
- *How do we engage faculty?*

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The Journey?

Shifting the focus from “assessment” to “assurance-of-learning”

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Our Values: Critical and Creative Thinking and Communication Skills

Establishing A Learning-Centered Culture



Structure

- ❖ **Identified** essential student learning outcomes (SLO's) **relevant** to all academic programs.
- ❖ **Embedded** SLO's into ECU's Strategic Plan, **required** of all academic programs.
- ❖ **Requested** all academic programs to **report meaningful changes** resulting from assessment.

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Steps to Impact the Culture

Establishing A Learning-Centered Culture



Aligned Strategic Learning Outcomes–



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Steps to Impact the Culture (cont'd)

Establishing A Learning-Centered Culture



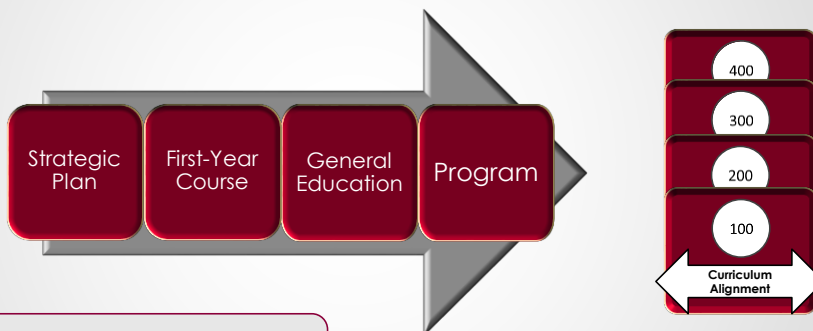
Identified 5 “Applied Critical and Creative Thinking” requirements, at least one of which must be embedded into each program:

- Capstone Experience
- Service Learning Course
- Internships/Co-operative Education
- Undergraduate Research
- International Exchange/Study Abroad

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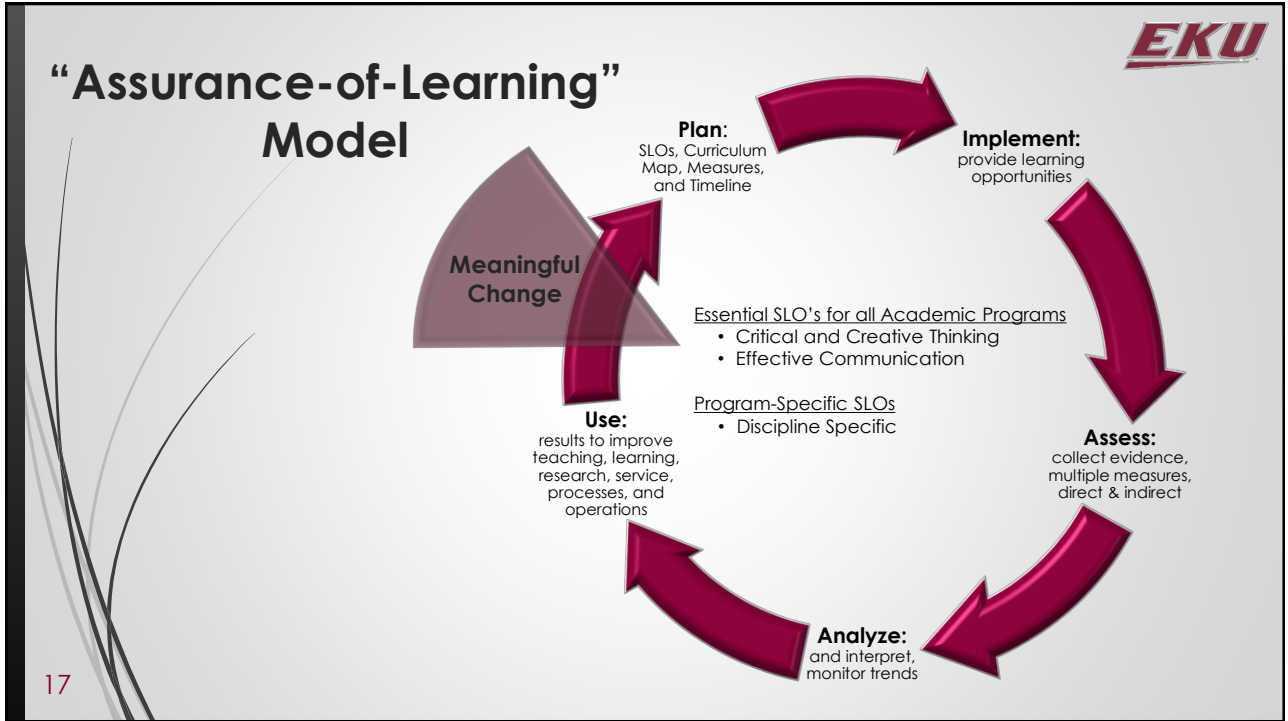
EKU committed in 2007 to **graduate informed, critical, and creative thinkers who can communicate effectively.**



EKU's Essential Learning Outcomes

- ✓ Critical and Creative Thinking
- ✓ Effective Communication

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Steps to Engage Faculty

Establishing A Learning-Centered Culture

Strategy

- 1. Identified a “Critical Thinking” Coach** for each Academic College.
- 2. Showcased the programs** in each College that were already using an assurance-of-learning model.

EKU

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Steps to Engage Faculty (cont'd)

Strategy

Establishing A
Learning-Centered
Culture



3. Provided tools:

- The Paul Elder Model* for teaching critical and creative thinking.
- Videos produced by ECU Faculty demonstrating how their programs were assessing SLO's.
- ECU-led Assessment Workshops (for novice, intermediate, and advanced levels).
- Workshops conducted by U.S. leaders on student learning.

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*from The Foundation for Critical Thinking



WHY DO FACULTY OFTEN RESIST ASSESSMENT?



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Engaging Faculty

Establishing A Learning-Centered Culture



- **Changed** the **paradigm** and the **terminology** from "Assessment" to "Assurance of Learning."
- **Began** a **campus-wide conversation** with academic leaders about Continuous Improvement, Assurance of Learning, and Student Success.
- **Gave** the faculty a **non-instructional day** to review the SLO data they have collected during the past year and to report meaningful changes.

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Launched an Assurance-of-Learning Day in 2012

4TH ANNUAL **EKV**
ASSURANCE OF LEARNING DAY
 FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25
USING DATA TO IMPROVE LEARNING

FACULTY— This is your day to evaluate student learning outcomes to make meaningful changes in your programs and enhance student learning.
Resources: <http://oio.eku.edu/assurance-learning-day-resources>
 All EKV day classes will be dismissed. (Classes resume at 4 p.m.)

STUDENTS— Scheduled activities include:
 ✓ 2nd Annual Freshman Academy for Diverse Students Fall Conference
 For more information, visit <http://freshmanacademy.eku.edu/>
 ✓ Explore **service activities** with **Student Life**, including on-campus and Danville-campus activities and the Paddle Out Pollution project.
 To learn more and sign up, visit communityservice.eku.edu/

Assurance of Learning

- ✓ Held annually during the Fall semester.
- ✓ Gives faculty the opportunity to
 - Collaborate on a vision
 - Align the program's curriculum
 - Review student progress
 - Make meaningful changes

**4TH ANNUAL
 ASSURANCE-OF-LEARNING DAY**
 Friday, September 25, 2015

2015 Assurance-of-Learning Day Ad in campus newspaper.

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The Assurance-of-Learning Day

A non-teaching day

- ❖ Each Academic Program holds an all-day meeting on campus. Lunch is provided.
- ❖ Chairs provide agendas to the Dean and the Provost in advance.
- ❖ Institutional Effectiveness (IE) offers workshops during the day.
- ❖ IE sets up an assessment "hot line."
- ❖ Chairs submit a follow-up report to IE, identifying meaningful changes.

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The Award?



2014 CHEA Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes

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2014 CHEA Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes



Criteria

- ✓ Articulation and evidence of outcomes.
- ✓ Success with regard to outcomes.
- ✓ Information to the public about outcomes.
- ✓ Using outcomes for improvement.

CHEA: Council on Higher Education Accreditation

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Increased Student Learning Outcomes (University-Level Measures)



Freshman
Year


Senior
Year

Critical Thinking

Critical Thinking Assessment Test (CAT)

- ✓ Analysis of longitudinal data from 2008-2012
- ✓ Critical thinking improved significantly from freshman to senior year
- ✓ Seniors score significantly higher than first-year students

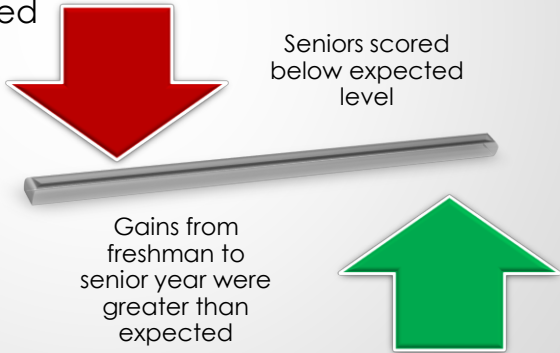
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Student Learning Outcomes (University-Level Measures)

Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP):

- Seniors scored lower than expected
- Student learning gains from freshman to senior year were greater than expected



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Student Learning Outcomes (University-Level Measures)

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE): Four Criteria

1. Seniors will have more positive scores than freshmen GOAL MET
2. Senior scores will increase over time GOAL PARTIALLY MET
3. Native seniors will have more positive scores than transfer students GOAL MET
4. The difference between native and transfer seniors will increase over time GOAL PARTIALLY MET

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Student Learning Outcome/Goal (University-Level Measures)

General Education (GE) Program

- Faculty developed scoring rubrics to evaluate critical/creative thinking and communication in every GE course every two years (170 courses)
- At least 85 percent of students must achieve GE outcomes in each course

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Student Learning Outcome/Goal (University-Level Measures)

General Education (GE) Program

Results 2006-2010

- 70-91% achieved critical thinking outcomes
- 80% achieved written communication outcomes
- 86% achieved oral communication outcomes
- **Criterion for critical thinking was met in 3/11 GE areas**

Results 2010-2012

- 68-98% achieved critical thinking outcomes
- 85% achieved written communication outcomes
- 88% achieved oral communication outcomes
- **Criterion for critical thinking was met in 7/11 GE areas**

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Examples of Using Information to Make Meaningful Change University First-Year Seminars

➤ Data

- ✓ Goals and University data showed poor retention of exploratory (under-prepared) students
- ✓ Exploratory students do not effectively use career services resources
- ✓ University data showed poor retention for frequent major changers

➤ Change

- ✓ All freshman seminars are required to use the same EKU-specific textbook that focuses on EKU resources, the Paul & Elder Model of Critical Thinking, and strategies for success
- ✓ One-third of the course is now devoted to career/major exploration
- ✓ Career services experts assisted with the design of the curriculum, preparation of lesson plans, and development of outcome measures



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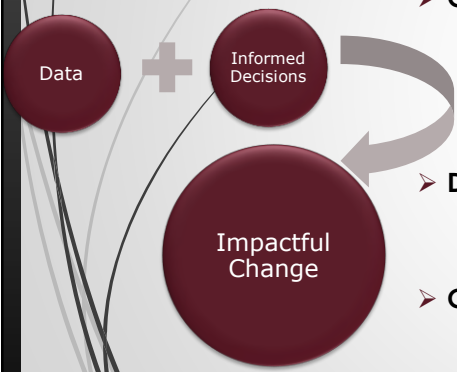
Examples of Using Information to Make Meaningful Change Tutoring

➤ Data

- ✓ DFW rates analysis across the University

➤ Change

- ✓ Implementation of a coordinated tutoring model that provides additional resources in areas most challenging to student success



Gateway Courses

➤ Data

- ✓ Achievement of learning outcomes in ENG101 strongly related to retention

➤ Change

- ✓ Addition of 3 new faculty lines for these courses
- ✓ Development of a "Writing Fellows Program" in which trained upper-division students serve as writing coaches

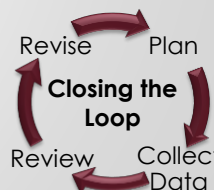
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Examples of Using Information to Make Meaningful Change

Psychology Program

- Data
 - ✓ Student learning outcomes data showed weaknesses in critically analyzing/synthesizing research and written communication
 - ✓ Institutional data indicated that over 50% of psychology majors change to another major
 - ✓ Survey data indicated that students want more information about careers
- Change
 - ✓ Developed a discipline-specific orientation course focused on information literacy, critical analysis/synthesis of research, writing in the discipline, and careers in Psychology
 - ✓ Subsequent data have been used to further change course content and pedagogy



TracDat Report

As further documentation, we submitted a sample TracDat report for our College of Arts and Sciences. The 105-page report included details about objectives, measures, results, and meaningful changes for all A&S programs.



Objectives	Means of Assessment & Criteria / Tasks	Results/Observations	Use of Result & Follow-Up
Anthropology, Sociology, Social Work - 11-15 ANT Student Learning Objective: Critical Thinking - ANT majors will think critically Objective Types (Control-click to select multiple): 11-15 Plan Anthropology Critical Thinking Learning Objective Student Learning Objectives Objective Status: Active	Assessment Method: Graduating ANT majors will average at least 75% in final exams for three upper division courses. The courses will be those in which the student received the student's highest grades in each of archaeology, cultural anthropology, and physical anthropology. Who will use the data (How and When)? Coordinator	09/09/2012 - Criterion Appears to be Met: Only six of the twenty-one graduating ANT majors had three accessible final exam scores that met this assessment's requirements. These six graduating ANT majors averaged 87% in final exams for these three upper division courses. Result/Observation Type: Strength Result Status: Result Open-Further action needed notes: Continuity of full-time, upper division course instructors posed significant issues in obtaining scores for both Archaeology and Cultural Anthropology. ANT now has long-term, full-time instruction in both of these subdivisions. As students take fewer upper division courses under departed part-time instructors, future assessments for this criterion will be more complete, and more students will have accessible final exam scores for each of the program's three subdivisions.	
		09/20/2011 - Criterion Appears to be Met: All six graduating ANT majors averaged 81% (well above 75%) in final exams for the three upper division courses in which the student received his or her highest grades in each of archaeology, cultural anthropology, and physical anthropology. Result/Observation Type: Strength Result Status: Result Open-Further action needed notes: This was the first year we examined this issue with these two measures. We were not prepared to evaluate precisely the critical thinking skills in ANT 305 History and Theory of Anthropology. For this initial attempt in ANT 305 History and Theory of Anthropology. For this initial attempt in ANT 305, all four	01/10/2012 - This was the first year we examined this issue with these two measures. We were not prepared to evaluate precisely the critical thinking skills in ANT 305 History and Theory of Anthropology. For this initial attempt in ANT 305, all four graduates received 87% in the course, so we are inferring this one time that final grade scores will relate directly to critical thinking skills. We are assuming that the scores for critical thinking skills in this course, as reflected in the final exam scores, averaged 83%, somewhere in the low-to-mid B

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2014 CHEA Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes



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To conclude...



The environment of higher education is changing rapidly. Academic programs must lead this change.

1. Identify what faculty value and what students need.
2. Through collaboration, develop a strategy for ensuring students meet essential learning outcomes.
3. Track data and show evidence of meaningful change to improve student learning.

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Thank You!

COMMENTS? QUESTIONS?

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