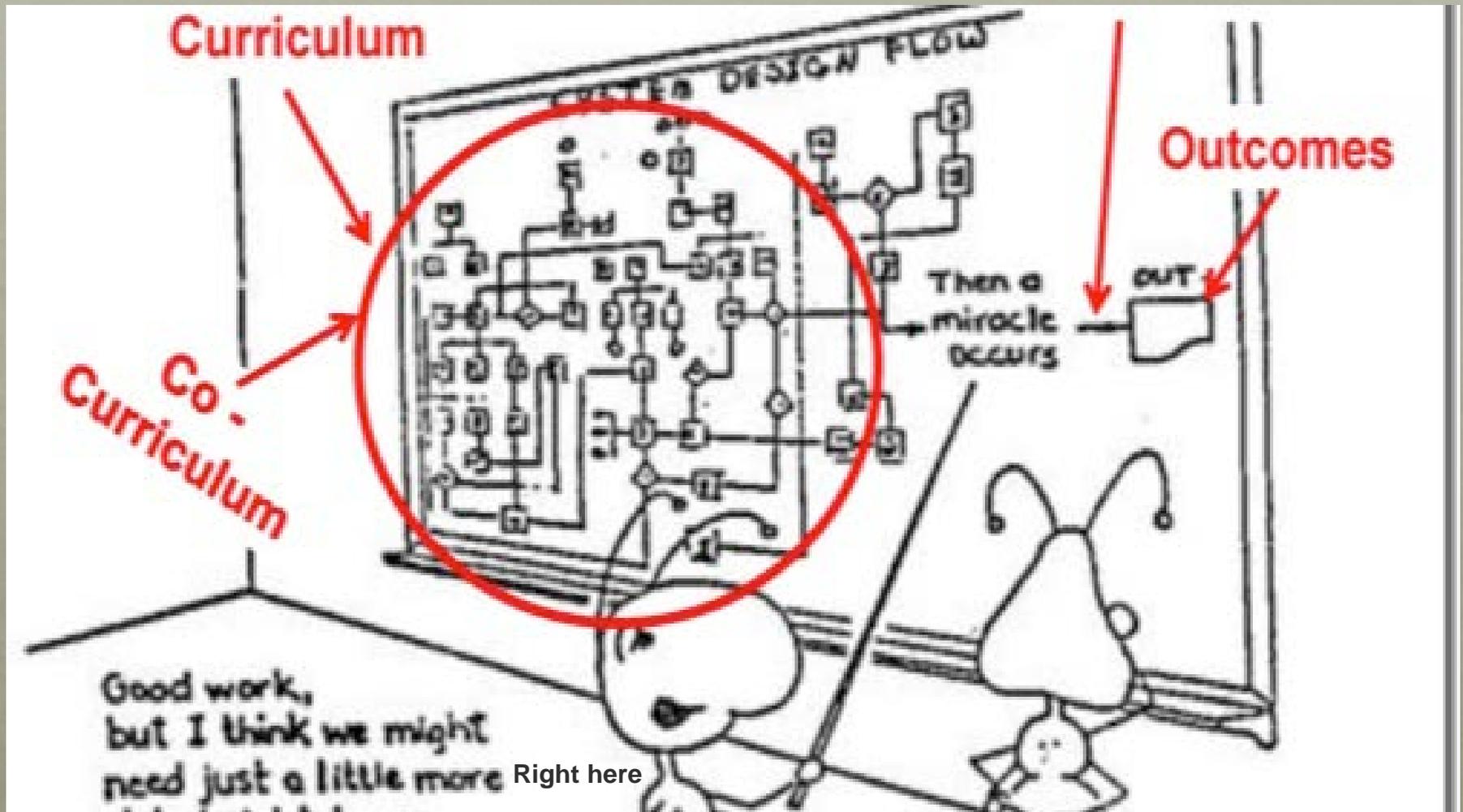


Return on Investment from Work-Based Learning: An Assessment Toolkit

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What to Avoid



Overview

- Pressure for ROI/Accountability in Higher Education
- Student Traits in Work-Based Learning (WBL) Programs
- Taxonomy of Experiential Education Terms
- Culture of Equilibrium (Academics & WBL)
- Creation & Evaluation of Quality WBL Programs
- Principles of Assessment: Student Learning Outcomes from WBL
- Lasell College Pilot
- Strategic Communication for Results

Pressure for ROI | Accountability in Higher Education

- Since 1980's – concepts of learner-centered teaching & continuous improvement have permeated higher education
- As Work-Based Learning has grown, so has the demand & need for assessment of ROI
- Evaluative feedback from employer & faculty promotes learning which can be measured through assessment
- Learning is assessed directly through the articulation of learning outcomes & artifacts

Taxonomy of Experiential Education Terms

- Cooperative Education
 - Field-Experience
 - Experiential Learning
 - Experiential Education
 - Internship
 - Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)
 - Work-Integrated Education (WIE)
 - **Work-Based Learning (WBL)**
- “Experiential education is a philosophy that informs many methodologies in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people’s capacity to contribute to their communities”

Student Traits in Work-Based Learning (WBL) Programs

- Students are actively involved and receive feedback
- **Students apply knowledge to issues and problems in the workplace**
- Students integrate and apply theory with practice
- **Students understand characteristics of excellent work**
- **Students become increasingly sophisticated**
- Professors coach and facilitate, intertwining teaching and assessment, and reveal that they are also learners
- **Students recognize that learning is valued by employer, and faculty and unique to WBL**

Culture of Equilibrium between Academics & WBL

- Assessment of academic programs has been undertaken for decades
- Learning process & demonstration of learning is unique in WBL
- Experiential Education involves the whole person: intellect, feelings, senses; recognition and active use of all the students relevant life and learning experiences; continued reflection upon earlier experiences in order to add to and transform those experiences into deeper understandings of self and one's place in world
- WBL requires unique assessment methods
- Influence academic culture to adjust to new methods for assessment of demonstrated learning outcomes
- Create a culture of equilibrium between academic learning & WBL

Creation & Evaluation of Quality WBL Programs

- Quality begins with an organizational culture that values high expectations, respect for diverse talents & learning styles, emphasis on reflection and articulation of outcomes from applied learning
- A quality WBL curriculum requires coherence in learning opportunities, synthesizing experiences, ongoing practice of learned skills, integrating and synthesizing classroom learning and field experience.
- Quality field-based instruction builds on active learning, collaboration, reflection on tasks, feedback and assessment

Principles of Assessment: Student Learning Outcomes from WBL

- Assessment begins with institutional educational philosophy
- Assessment is most effective when it is multidimensional, integrated, with performance over time – concurrent with field experience
- Assessment works best when the program has clear, explicitly stated purposes and learning outcomes
- Assessment requires attention not only to outcomes but also to the experiences and reflection that lead to those outcomes
- Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic
- Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives across the field-based learning program are involved
- Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students, employers, and other invested stakeholders

Successful Assessment

- Strategically directed by the institution's mission and has institution wide support
- Has a conceptual framework
- Has faculty ownership/responsibility
- Uses multiple measures
- Provides feedback to the student and institution
- Is cost effective
- Leads to discussion, improvement, and resource re-allocation
- Includes a process for evaluating the assessment program

Purpose of Assessment (Why?)

- Benefits to the Program
 - Practices get better
 - Stakeholders are validated
 - Experiential educators demonstrate value to other parts of the institution, employers, and students
- Benefits to the Students
 - Students know if they have achieved learning objectives, or not
 - Educators respond to their feedback
 - Students learn from completing assessment
- Benefits to the Institution
 - Higher education accreditation
 - Program reviews, promotion and tenure
 - Alumnae Relations, advancement, admissions, and other stakeholders can leverage results

What to Assess (What?)

- Overall Program Evaluation
- Institutional Learning Theory and Assessments
- Student Learning Outcomes
- Field-Work Curriculum Design
- Combination of the above (K.I.S.S.)

Process of Assessment (How?)

- Determine intended outcomes, who will benefit? Be disadvantaged?
- Determine: Who? What? How?
- Develop assessment methods and measurements
- Collect and analyze evidence related to outcomes
- Disseminate Results
- Use assessment results to improve (feedback loops)

Possible Assessment Methods

- Surveys, interviews, focus groups (regularly)
- Student, Faculty and Employer Evaluations (every semester)
- First Destination Survey (1-2 times per year)
- Alumnae feedback

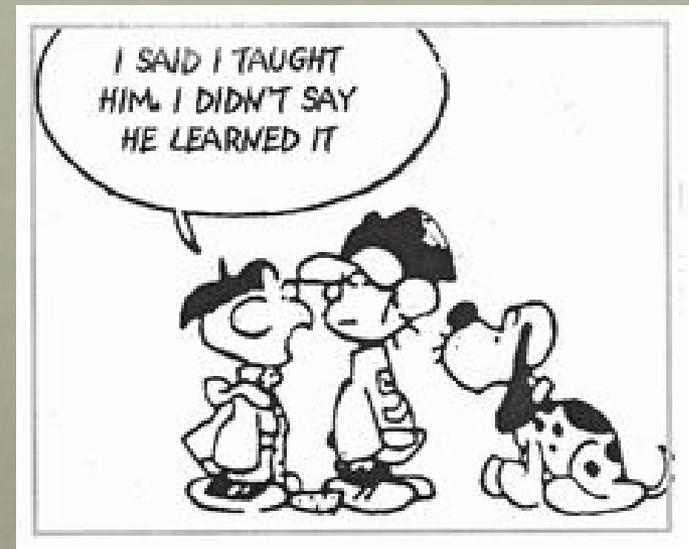


Competency-Based Rubrics

- Standardizes criteria for evaluation of learning outcomes
- Allows program faculty to explicitly articulate criteria for learning to all stakeholders
- The outcomes and evaluative criteria should be outlined in the program or course: communicate expectations
- To promote clarity for all parties, an identifiable label should be chosen for each evaluative criteria

Measurement of Competency from WBL

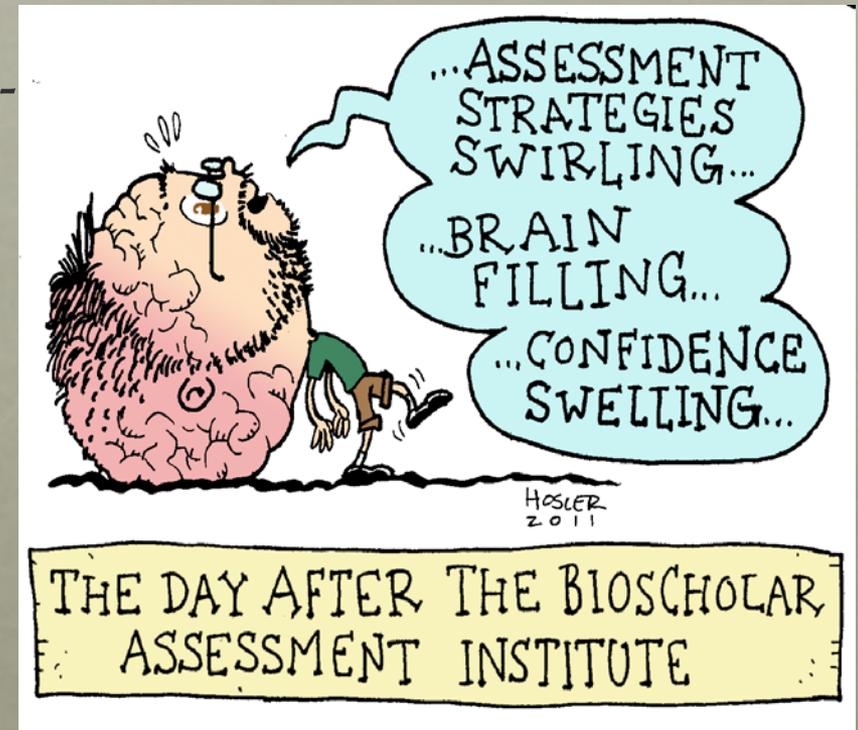
- Primarily interested in the development of knowledge, skills and attributes as students apply theory to the workplace.
- These align with the stated institutional learning outcomes
- Actionable, sustainable, usable evidence as part of a continuous improvement culture



Identify Source of Criteria for Learning Outcomes

(Institution, Department, Center, Program, accrediting bodies)

- NEASC Accreditation (every 8-10 years)
- Academic Review Process (every 5-7 years)
- Other Accreditations (AACSB, COSMA)
- Keep perspective!



Lasell College Pilot

Learning outcomes integrated throughout
4-year curriculum for all disciplines

Core Intellectual Skills

- reading comprehension
- write clearly & persuasively
- listen and speak effectively
- demonstrate quantitative skills
- understand & use technology
- demonstrate ethical research skills
- demonstrate teamwork

Knowledge Perspectives

- demonstrate self-expression and creativity

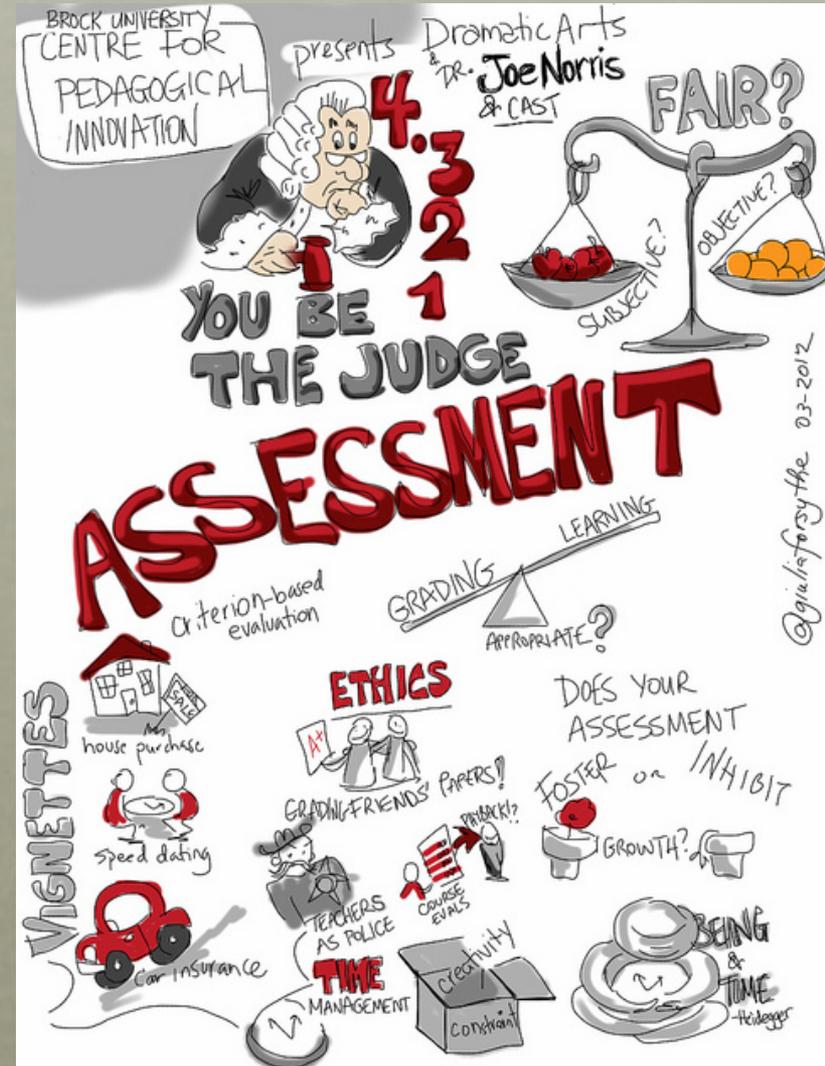
- understand global & historical perspectives
- show respect for differences in individuals & society

Synthesis & Application

- understand how multicultural knowledge is created and how it changes over time
- respond to moral quandaries ethically
- Participate actively as a community member

Evaluation of Capstone Internships

- Employer evaluation
- Student self assessment
- Faculty assessment
- Triangulated report



Sample Employer Survey Results

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A	Responses
Please choose one:	0 0.0%	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2

23. Please rate the intern's understanding and handling of individual and cultural differences and what impact, if any, this may have had on the organization:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A	Responses
Please choose one:	1 50.0%	1 50.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2

24. Please rate the intern's ability for self-expression and creativity:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A	Responses
Please choose one:	0 0.0%	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2

25. Please rate the intern's ability to make informed, ethical decisions:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A	Responses
Please choose one:	0 0.0%	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2

Sample Student Survey Results

12. Interpret and analyze the complex interrelationships and inequities in human societies in a global and historical context (Global & Historical Perspectives)

Count	Response
1	N/A

13. On a scale of 1-4, how prepared were you to perform this skill?

	1.Very well prepared	2.Prepared	3.Somewhat prepared	4.Not prepared	Responses
Experience modes of self-expression and creativity (Aesthetics & Creativity)	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2
Apply the process of scientific inquiry to comprehend the physical world and to solve problems (Scientific Inquiry & Problem-solving)	0 0.0%	1 50.0%	0 0.0%	1 50.0%	2
Evaluate and understand how individual differences and societal contexts impact human behaviors, beliefs, values, interactions, and emotional and intellectual processes (Individuals & Society)	1 50.0%	1 50.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2
Interpret and analyze the complex interrelationships and inequities in human societies in a global and historical context (Global & Historical Perspectives)	1 50.0%	0 0.0%	1 50.0%	0 0.0%	2

14. How important is this skill to you for the future? (1-5)

Sample Student Survey Results

How Important was this outcome for the internship?

	1.Very Important	2.Importan	3.Somewhat Important	4.Not Important
ically and analytically to moral issues and make ical decisions	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
ctively as a citizen in local and global communities nd complex interrelationships and inequities in	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
meanings and knowledge are created by diverse how they evolve over time	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%

Sample Faculty Survey Results

Interpret and analyze the complex interrelationships and inequities in human societies in a global and historical context (Global & Historical Perspectives)

1	1	0	0	2
50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	

8. On a scale of 1-4, how relevant is this skill to this professional field?

	1.Very Relevant	2.Relevant	3.Somewhat Relevant	4.Not Relevant	Responses
Experience modes of self-expression and creativity (Aesthetics & Creativity)	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2
Apply the process of scientific inquiry to comprehend the physical world and to solve problems (Scientific Inquiry & Problem-solving)	1 50.0%	0 0.0%	1 50.0%	0 0.0%	2
Evaluate and understand how individual differences and societal contexts impact human behaviors, beliefs, values, interactions, and emotional and intellectual processes (Individuals & Society)	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2
Interpret and analyze the complex interrelationships and inequities in human societies in a global and historical context (Global & Historical Perspectives)	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2

9. How well did this student demonstrate this outcome in the classroom?

1.Very Effectively	2.Effectively	3.Somewhat Effectively	4.Not Effectively	Responses
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Triangulation of Data

- Goal is to compare responses from employer, student, and faculty to assess each outcome in regards to preparedness, performance in the internship, and relevance to the internship.
- Employer has the option to select “Not Observed” which will indicate if that skill/outcome was relevant to that internship or that field.
- Students are asked to give examples of incidents when they demonstrated each outcome. This gives insight as to how well they understand the outcome.

Challenges & Opportunities

Challenges:

- Collecting the data
- Faculty resistance to uniform processes
- Faculty desire for unique content
- Generating interest in results
- Demonstrating value in reports
- Incorporating change into curriculum
- Assessing the assessment
- Draw attention to quality programs
- Deepen the experiential learning for students
- Promote experiential education
- Garner additional resources & support
- Improve programming, processes, and protocols in experiential education across campus (es)

Opportunities:

Strategic Communication for Results

- What do you do with data once you have collected it?
- How do you identify the appropriate audiences to communicate to?
- What are your goals for the report, and communications?
- How can you use the data to meet your goals?

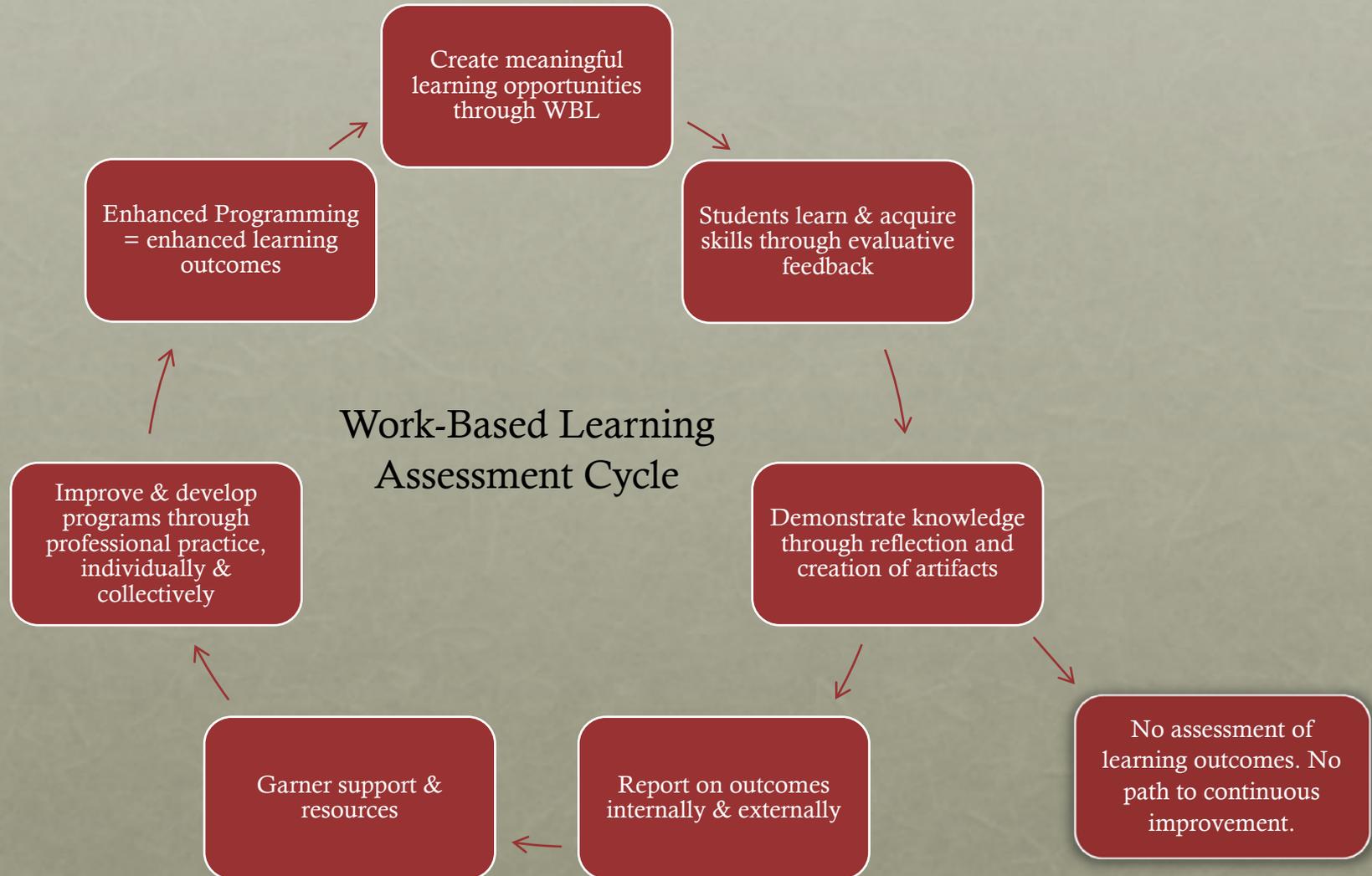
Dissemination of Results

- Think creatively about who might benefit from reported data
- Critical to report results to wide variety of stakeholders
- Package reports with clarity & simplicity
- Make reports easily available: preferably on-line

Create Value for Assessment

- Analyze stakeholder needs
- Deliver reports that meet those needs
- Customize and target each audience
- Deliver reports consistently
- Commit to storytelling about the results of assessment
- What benefits were gained for whom and how?
- Budget Resources- facing limited resources how do you use the data reported to garner additional resources?

Assessment Feedback Loop



Conclusion

Without assessment practices in place & without effective reporting protocols:

- Meaningful learning and results get lost
- Student learning outcomes are not measured or documented and remains hearsay
- Cannot create an institutional culture of continuous improvement
- Will not move towards equilibrium of academics and experiential education

Thank You!

Please contact me with any feedback or ideas about assessment of work-based education.

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