University/College (U/C) Specifics

Who are your students?
Who are you? -- What is your U/C mission/vision? College/School missions?
What do you want your students to “look like” when they leave your:
  University
  Program
  Course

Student Learning

What is the U/C INTENTIONALLY doing to promote student learning in U/C wide initiatives/goals?
  Curricular/ Co-curricular
  Single events/courses
  Sequences of events/courses
  Required/voluntary
  Etc...

Assessment

Authentic assessment: Is your ‘assessment plan’ actually documenting/measuring the qualities you want to assess?

U/C- wide goals (typical) for student learning
  Character development
  Global competence (international, intercultural, diversity)
  Citizenship
  Life-long learning
  Communication: Writing and speaking competence
  Critical thinking
  Information literacy

Does someone document evidence of student learning in U/C-wide areas?
  Who and how?
  How does this “evidence” get evaluated?
  How do the evaluations/conclusions get communicated to all related constituents?

Does your U/C tie co-curricular learning with curricular learning?
How are students encouraged/enticed to engage in co-curricular opportunities?
  How do you assess the effects of co-curricular participation on the student as he/she leaves?
Program “authentic assessment”
Students engage in the activities that a professional in that field would actually do... measure/document their attitudes/knowledge/behaviors... evaluate the student.

Examples of “Authentic Program Assessment” at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Public Relations (Speech Communication): design campaign proposal/present to organization; execute event
Art & Design: art show and advertising/promo materials for it
Computer Science: teams work with external clients and design the product
Civil Eng: teams respond to real call for proposals – business/proposal and civil design. Submit it as a ‘real’ bid and get feedback from the review team (and get copy of winning proposal/bid)
Psychology/Interpersonal Communication: (these are grad school prep programs) research project and conference paper/poster/presentation submitted to regional conference
Elementary/Secondary Ed: student teaching (supervisory teacher & faculty feedback) & portfolio
Nursing: practicum and boards (pass rates)

Student “Issues” related to producing evidence that will be assessed
1. Assessment is often tied to students’ writing abilities (if they cannot write/document well, then it affects how their abilities are rated).
2. Students don’t always know what they know/cannot articulate it/ don’t think to “show” it.
   a. Students take for granted their abilities/skills/knowledge. It is so second nature to them, they do not think about the knowledge/skills they are using.
   b. Some know what they are doing, but cannot articulate it or document it (process).
   c. Without specific guidelines for what you want to see from your students, they may have learned well, but not think to “show” an aspect of their learning.
3. Students also compare themselves against their peers (in program) moreso than those in the U/C... they may underestimate their abilities/knowledge.
4. Often students get the feedback on their “abilities” in their first jobs
   a. Alumni realize what they got/didn’t get once they are required to work
   b. They have a new perspective on their learning—they realize they are better prepared (or worse) than their colleagues
   c. Employers provide feedback (performance review) that is useful for student as well as the program (are they staying up to date in the field)

Faculty “Issues” related to evaluation of student learning evidence
1. How well can you articulate what “excellent/good” learning looks like?
2. Looks different depending on the student, the project, etc...
3. How much faculty agreement is there for assessing the evidence of excellent/good/weak student learning? (inter-rater reliability among faculty)
4. Often we resort to rubrics that break learning down into small pieces in order to improve inter-rater reliability and to see where the student is strong/weak. BUT, this often doesn’t capture the holistic effect/effort of student learning that is so essential. (student has the mechanics down- follows the req’t of project, but is lacking that intangible “something extra ’)

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