“Analyze This”: Critical Thinking and Institutional Effectiveness

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Can we agree on a definition?

- Ask the relevant questions
- Gather relevant data through appropriate means of assessment
- Analyze and interpret the data
- Apply reasoned and informed professional judgment
- Propose a solution, implement it, and...
- Ask the relevant questions....
Critical Thinking Skills

- Identify and articulate the issue
- Gather appropriate data
  - Relevant?
  - Important?
- Analysis
  - Experience
  - Bias/presuppositions
- Written and Oral Communication
What’s the relevant issue?
- Student learning
- Administrative functions
- Student/academic support
- Community/public service

What would “success” look like?

What data would be appropriate and useful?

What structures for analysis and reporting would be useful and sustainable?
Foundational Assumptions

- Institutional planning and evaluation process is working
  - Strategic planning
  - Operational planning
- Administrative units and educational programs willing and able to ask important questions
- Purpose of assessment is institutional improvement
- Appropriate faculty and staff members are involved, engaged, empowered, trained
**Sustained Effort**

- Results, not just process
  - Structure, rubrics, etc. = tools
  - Results = “program” improvement
- Course-level may be important, but decisions occur at program- and/or unit-level
- Process focused on success of institutional actors; student success should benefit from our improvements
Failure to Launch

- Conversation constantly returns to process and assessment instruments
- “No further action required”
- Program survival, rather than program improvement
- It’s all about statistics
- Lake Woebegone syndrome
- No one can describe a successful student
- Just ignore it, and it’ll go away....
How to Succeed in Accreditation....

- **CS 3.3.1 (Institutional Effectiveness)**
  - Appropriate use of student learning outcomes (3.3.1.1, 3.3.1.3)
  - Appropriate and authentic assessments
  - Carefully analyzed data
  - Evidence of conversations where data analysis is subject to professional judgment
  - Actions designed to improve programs and units
  - Clear and cogent narratives that argue compliance persuasively
  - Emphasis on improvement, not process
How to Succeed in Accreditation....

- **CS 3.5.1 (College-level competencies)**
  - Identified competencies
  - Definition of “competent”
  - Appropriate and authentic assessments
  - Aggregated data
  - Focus on “graduates”
  - Clear, uncomplicated report on percentage of graduates attaining institutional definitions of “competent” related to all identified competencies
SACSCOC “IE”

- **CS 3.3.1/3.5.1 still top-cited non-compliance**
  - 1/3 being “monitored”
  - Encouraging trends in past 1.5 years

- **Perceived issues**
  - Institutions still adjusting to *POA*; last classes making transition
  - Inconsistent evaluation

- **Strategies**
  - Summer Institute
  - Small College Initiative
  - Sessions at Annual Meeting
  - Workshops
  - IE evaluator training
Questions

It's QUESTION TIME!!