**August, 2009 Health Institute Feedback:**

**Assessment Committee Contact Person: Beth Lincoln**

**Plan also reviewed by: Melissa Mercer-Tachick**

Thank you for the hard work that went into your assessment plan. As we carefully reviewed your Steps, it became clear just how much thought and effort went into your work. There were some real strengths in your work, and we celebrate these with you!

In general, there were a few themes that the Assessment Committee noticed. First, it is most helpful when the progression from Step 2 to Step 3 and Step 3 to Step 4 are clear. That is, after you have articulated your learning goals, the clearest proposals are explicit in how the courses/experiences in Step 3 directly support the learning goals. And Step 4 should take full advantage of all of the places in Step 3 where data might be collected. Second, make strategic use of both direct and indirect measures[[1]](https://docs.google.com/a/albion.edu/Doc?docid=0AUaAHaCO2ORDZGh0bWJ0NXJfNmNxMndkNGY4&hl=en" \l "_ftn1), and think about whether data can be collected at the beginning, during the program of study, and at the end. This gives a richer sense of where and when your work contributes strongly to learning goals and where improvements might be made. Third, make your plan manageable! All data need not be collected annually; some can be done every other year. And you may choose not to measure for all of your learning goals right now. Make claims that you can (a) intellectually, ethically stand behind and (b) find resources to measure.

Please feel free to contact either of us with questions about your feedback. We want to help your assessment plan be successful in collecting relevant data to inform your work! We will be happy to work with you toward timely completion revisions to the first four steps, submission of preliminary findings, and/or completion of this iteration of data collection.

Comments specific to your plan:

In Step 1, Mission, we found the statement unclear.  How does the institute “complement” and “enrich” classroom experiences – by advising and assisting with applications?

In Step 2, Learning Goals, the bulleted list is what the institute offers, and is not a list of student outcomes.  These should flow from the mission statement, and reflect what students who complete this program should be able to think/do/know.  They should be written from a student perspective (“Students will be able to…”) and be measurable.

The program components listed in Step 3 are the levels of membership.  It’s not clear how these relate to outcomes, nor actually what the differences are between the levels.  There is passing reference here to learning modules, internships, and job-shadowing experiences – these may by some of the program components that would relate to outcomes.

The course evaluations and surveys discussed in Step 4 are all indirect assessment measures.  Once learning outcomes have been determined and the program components that address these outcomes have been identified, direct and indirect measures can be constructed.

Please remember that you do not have to assess everything every year, but can select a few of your data collection methods to use each semester or year.  A timeline showing how these will rotate is useful.  Also, assessment should not mean much extra work for you or the students; you can tailor classroom assignments to also measure attainment of student outcomes.

We look forward to reading the revisions of your plan and how the data collection and analysis has gone, and to learning how you used the data.

[[1]](https://docs.google.com/a/albion.edu/Doc?docid=0AUaAHaCO2ORDZGh0bWJ0NXJfNmNxMndkNGY4&hl=en#_ftnref1) *In assessing student learning, there are direct and indirect sources of evidence. Direct evidence is clear and convincing information about student learning, such as: tests, examinations, papers, projects, assignments, field experience assessments, and portfolios. These are particularly strong sources of evidence especially when accompanied by articulated standards (such as a rubric). On the other hand, with indirect evidence there is room for other factors to affect the outcomes either positively or negatively. Examples of indirect evidence include: retention, graduation, and placement rates (may be impacted by economic conditions or college policies); surveys of students and alumni (may indicate feelings about college experience); grades (standards and even content may differ across instructors and institutions).*

**Next Steps:**

**In coordination with your Assessment Committee reviewers and their written and verbal feedback, please observe the following deadlines for your assessment cycle:**

* **September 15:  Revisions to Steps 1-4 due (if necessary)**
* **October 1: Completion of Steps 5 & 6 using preliminary data**
* **November 2: Final Fall 2009 plans due**

**Fall 2009 Health Institute:**  
I wanted to remind you that your assessment report as presented on Google Docs is incomplete.  Please note the comments provided as feedback to the first steps of your plan, and make sure to continue with steps 5 and 6.