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Lessons Learned in Assessing International Learning

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Introduction

The ambitious FIPSE-funded project, *Lessons Learned in Assessing International Learning Outcomes*, was conceived by the American Council on Education in 2003 to address the challenges higher education institutions face when they attempt to gauge the impact of their internationalization efforts on students. The project grew from the realization that institutions cannot sufficiently explain the extent to which they engage students in international *learning* or the extent to which they aid them to develop global perspectives by simply reporting on the number of students who travel abroad or the number of new study abroad programs that emerge each year. The fact that most regional accrediting bodies now require institutions to measure and report their student learning outcomes renders this project especially relevant to the broad higher education community at this historical juncture.

Barbara Wright, an expert in outcomes assessment and an early consultant to the ACE-FIPSE project, uses a simple model of the “assessment loop” (Figure 1) to explain the iterative relationship between assessment and student learning.

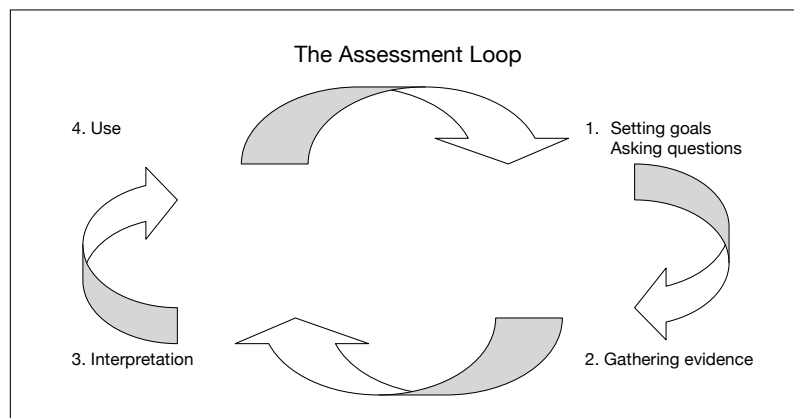


Figure 1.

According to Wright,

Assessment is a process of 1) setting goals or asking questions about student learning and development; 2) gathering evidence that will show whether these goals are being met; 3) interpreting the evidence to see what can be discovered about students' strengths and weaknesses; and then 4) actually using those discoveries to change the learning environment so that student performance will be improved. Then the cycle begins again:

*interventions are checked to see whether they worked, and/or new questions about learning are addressed.*¹

Lessons Learned sought to advance international learning outcomes assessment at U.S. colleges and universities so that, as Wright's model illustrates, student learning ultimately would be enhanced. Tuned to this vision, the project sought to achieve three outcomes:

Targeted Outcomes

1. Faculty and staff from six project sites were to increase their knowledge about assessing international learning.
2. Faculty and staff from the six project sites were also to increase their skill in implementing assessments and making good use of assessment results.
3. The broader higher education community was to gain tools and knowledge for assessing international learning, based on lessons learned from the six project sites.

Project Design

At the heart of the project design was a working group comprised of faculty and staff from six diverse institutions of higher education. Each institution was selected by ACE for its demonstrated history and commitment to campus internationalization and its demonstrated commitment to assessment for purposes of program improvement. The working group included two community colleges (Kapi'olani Community College and Palo Alto College), two liberal arts colleges (Dickinson College and Kalamazoo College), and two research doctoral universities (James Madison University and Michigan State University). In Year 3, James Madison withdrew from the project; Portland State University replaced them. The group convened at the ACE headquarters in Washington D.C. seven times between August 2004 and October 2007, and continued its work between meetings via conference call.

Leadership from ACE was provided by Christa Olson, Assistant Director for International Initiatives; she served as the project director. As a way of guiding the project overall toward achievement of the three targeted outcomes, Olson was to coordinate and facilitate the working group's ongoing efforts. She was also to provide forums for sharing lessons as they were learned over the life of the project with broad audiences of colleges and universities. Olson was to be advised by ACE colleagues Madeleine Green, Vice President, Barbara Turlington, Director of International Education, and Laura Siaya, Assistant Director of Research on International Initiatives. She was provided administrative and technical support from project assistants and other ACE staffers.

¹ Wright, B. (undated). More Art Than Science: The Postsecondary Assessment Movement Today. Unpublished paper. Accessed from the internet June, 9, 2008. www.apsanet.org/imgtest/MoreArtThanScience.doc

Assessment Consultants provided guidance to the working group throughout the life of the project. Barbara Wright played the most substantial consulting role, orienting working group members to the major tasks associated with learning outcomes assessment, and providing them technical support in the early months. Trudy Banta, another nationally recognized assessment expert, reviewed and responded to the group's work on two occasions after Wright resigned from the project in March 2005. At the first working group meeting, faculty from IUPUI and Portland State University presented their experience using e-portfolios.

A one-year planning grant, also awarded by FIPSE, laid a foundation for the group's work. During the planning phase, which began in Fall 2003, the six institutions were able to:

1. develop a common set of nine international learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) that would be assessed across the institutions, and
2. determine two assessment methods—The Beliefs Events and Values Inventory (BEVI) and an electronic portfolio—that all six institutions would use to assess the learning outcomes.

The working group, led by ACE staff and supported by the assessment consultant, formally embarked on the grant, *Lessons Learned in Assessing International Learning*, at a 5-day retreat held in August 2004. At that time, the group took their first steps toward developing:

- **performance indicators for the nine learning outcomes**
- **scoring rubrics for assessing the outcomes**
- **systems for administering the assessments**

With the support of an assessment team of faculty and administrators, working group members were to return to their campuses and implement their assessment plans (i.e. administer the BEVI to a certain number of students from whom they would also collect evidence of international learning through electronic portfolios); analyze and interpret the data collected (i.e. assessment teams would rate the portfolios using a scoring rubric while James Madison University would process the quantitative data collected from the BEVI, a web-based 391-item psychological inventory); and then bring campus teams together to interpret the results and create plans to improve programs and enhance student learning.

An important output of the project, in addition to the performance indicators, rubrics, and institutional assessment plans was a set of lessons learned about implementing international learning outcomes assessment on diverse campuses. This set of lessons was to be disseminated widely throughout the higher education community. According to the plan, tools and materials coming out of the project were also to be made accessible through presentations and a web-based resource.

Evaluation Design

The program logic model (Figure 2) depicts the overall project design described above; it emphasizes the centrality of the six institutions in producing the outputs and achieving the outcomes that serve as precursors to the larger goals of advancing assessment and enhancing student learning. Logic models are useful because they illustrate the “if-then” relationship between a project's activities, outputs, outcomes, and goals

or larger vision. The purpose of evaluation, in a manner of speaking, is to “test out” the links between each component of the project in an effort to determine if the overall design is viable and if the underlying theory of the project is valid.

While the project was underway, the formative evaluation addressed these questions:

- To what extent is the project being implemented, overall, as designed? What changes are being made and to what effect?
- What are the strengths of the project design and what are the weaknesses which, if overcome, would increase the project’s likelihood of success?

The summative evaluation examined:

- To what extent were the desired outcomes for faculty and staff of the six project sites and the broader higher education community achieved?

To answer these questions, the following activities were carried out over the life of the project.

- Observation of the seven working group meetings in Washington, D.C.
- Administration and analysis of a follow-up survey to working group members after each face-to-face meeting
- Observation of most working group conference calls (also referred to as the “Steering Committee”) and project-related email traffic
- Observation of two International Collaborative meetings where ACE-FIPSE working group members shared lessons learned with the broader higher education community
- Monthly collection of “critical incidents” (brief implementation stories depicting successes and challenges) from the six project sites over two years. The critical incident technique replaced the assessment consultant’s technical assistance log and was instituted as a way to monitor implementation on the various campuses.
- Two Interviews with the Project Director, December 2006 and May 2008
- Two-day site visits to the six partner institutions
- Exit interview with the assessment consultant
- Development and administration of an online survey to assess the extent to which members of the ACE Internationalization Collaborative were learning from the FIPSE project. The survey also included a needs assessment component to determine learning needs among higher education institutions that could be met through a web resource, as these needs relate to international learning outcomes assessment.
- Collection and review of all project documents and artifacts

- Review of the final products and web-based resource

Evaluation activities yielded several written products: six site visit reports; results from six online surveys; and critical incident maps for the first two years of the project. ACE staff and the evaluator maintained frequent contact throughout the life of the project and much formative feedback was provided through phone calls and email. Themes identified in the critical incidents were used to frame the site visit interviews and observation plans and provided to the working group members as a resource for mining lessons learned about international learning outcomes assessment. Site visit reports and survey analyses elaborated on emergent project themes and included recommendations for improvement.

Logic Model: Lessons Learned in Assessing International Learning

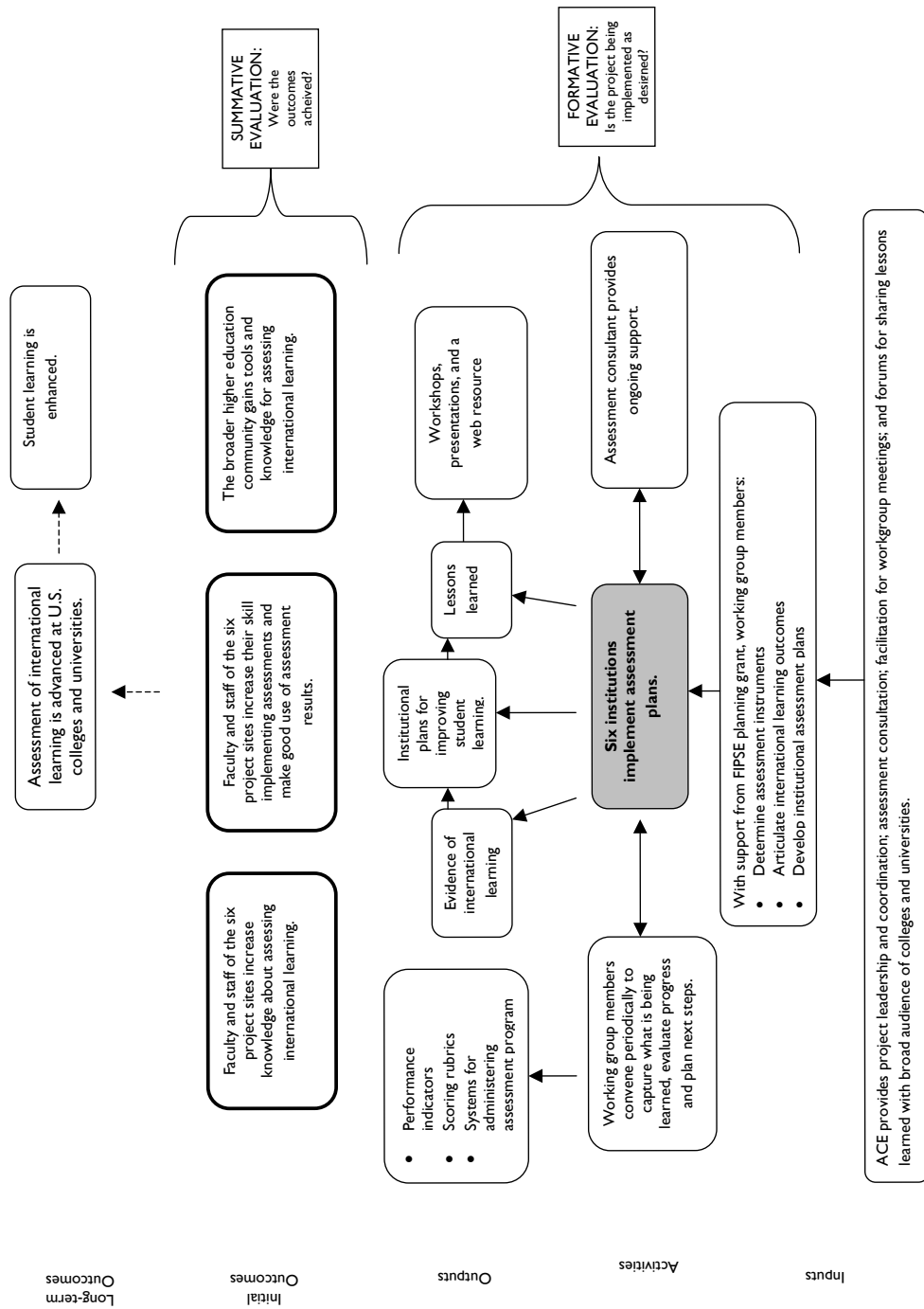


Figure 2.

Formative Evaluation

This section explores results of the formative evaluation which focused on the project model. *How was it implemented in practice? How did the overall design change over time? What were its particular strengths and challenges? How could the project have been improved from a design standpoint?*

Exploring these questions while the project was in motion served ACE by stimulating recommendations intended to keep the project on course and improve its chances for success. Now that the project is over, documenting the formative evaluation primarily serves those who may be in a position to apply the findings to other projects in the future.

Strengths

Several features of the project design effectively advanced ACE toward achieving the overall goals of the grant. The following list includes some of the most successful design features as well as planned activities and outputs that were successfully accomplished:

- The planning grant allowed ACE staff and members of the working group to undergo a thoughtful decision making process — as it pertained to choosing assessment methods — prior to launching *Lessons Learned*. For example, the group evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of more than 13 existing assessment instruments before choosing the electronic portfolio for the ACE-FIPSE project.
- Moreover, the period constituted by the planning grant was widely regarded as a high point of the ACE-FIPSE project overall. It was during that time that a cross section of faculty was invited to identify and prioritize international learning outcomes that would be assessed as part of the grant. This highly participatory process stimulated interest on all six campuses in the assessment of international learning outcomes generally, and it fostered a degree of buy-in that working group members drew upon later when faculty support was needed for implementation of the assessment plans.
- The fact that the six institutions represented all Carnegie types assured that lessons learned under the auspices of the grant would have broad relevance throughout the higher education community.
- The recursive process of intensive working group meetings followed by campus implementation was effective in building a learning culture across the six institutions. By learning culture, we mean basically that learning opportunities were built into virtually every activity of the grant, and that learning was a value which was deeply embedded in the grant. As evidence that the learning culture was developing,

- Half the working group members, described themselves in August 2004 post-session evaluation either as being “Only Somewhat Knowledgeable” or as knowing “. . . Virtually Nothing” about international learning outcomes assessment. By the end of the first working retreat, these same individuals reported knowing “A Whole Lot More” than they did before about the topic.
- ACE employed a wide variety of methods, especially early in the project, to engage the working group members in learning about international learning outcomes assessment — from readings to outside speakers to consultants and more. The overwhelming majority of the group reported that working with colleagues on small group tasks was the most effective way they learned.
- After each working group meeting, the majority of members reported being “Highly Satisfied” with the collaboration they were having with colleagues across the six institutions, particularly when they worked in small groups to accomplish tasks.

While time at the working group meetings was spent negotiating details of the assessment methods and processes, campus work was to focus on piloting the assessment methods, gathering feedback from colleagues and students, and capturing lessons learned. After periods of campus implementation, working group members convened again in face-to-face meetings (or gathered via conference call) to reflect on what they had accomplished; then they moved forward with the next steps in their collective efforts. ACE meticulously documented the groups learning process and all iterations of their products. These records were an invaluable resource when it came to extracting lessons learned from the project.

- The project broadly disseminated resources and lessons learned. ACE sponsors the Internationalization Collaborative, an invitational forum of 88 higher education institutions with a mission to advance the national dialogue about internationalization. The annual meeting of the Collaborative in Washington D.C. provided working group members access to higher education representatives from the member institutions. Yearly, they made presentations to the collaborative and conducted workshops on international learning outcomes assessment and emerging lessons learned. Additionally, ACE staff and members of the working group extended themselves to the broader higher education community at conferences and other forums of international educators to share what they were learning about assessing international learning outcomes assessment. During the grant period, they conducted 16 presentations to more than 500 participants across the United States (Table 1.)

Assessing International Learning Outcomes: Forums for Disseminating Lessons Learned

Date	Approximate # of Participants	Forum
2005	20 faculty and administrators	Annual Meeting of the Internationalization Collaborative, Washington, D.C.
2005	25 education abroad administrators	Annual Meeting of the Forum on Education Abroad, Miami.
2006	25 faculty and administrators	ACE Internationalization Collaborative Assessment Workshop, Washington, D.C.
2006	150+ conferees	International Studies Association Conference, San Diego.
2006	30+ community college practitioners	League for Innovation Conference, Atlanta.
2007	not available	North Carolina State Undergraduate Assessment Symposium, Cary, NC.
2007	25 attendees	Annual Meeting of the Association of International Education Administrators, Washington, D.C.
2007	28 faculty and administrators	ACE Internationalization Collaborative Assessment Workshop, Washington, D.C.
2007	25 attendees	American Association of Community Colleges Meeting, Tampa
2007	20 attendees	IUPUI Assessment Institute, Indianapolis
2008	15 attendees	FIPSE Project Director's Meeting, Washington, D.C.
2008	18 faculty an administrators	ACE Internationalization Collaborative Assessment Workshop, Washington, D.C.
2008	25 attendees	Association of International Education Administrators, Washington
2008	17 attendees	Annual Meeting of Community Colleges for International Development, Long Beach, CA
2008	50 faculty and administrators	U.S. Department of Education sponsored roundtable discussion for grantees in international programs, Washington, D.C.
2008	35 attendees	Annual Meeting of NAFSA: Association of International Educators, Washington, D.C.

Table 1.

- The project resulted in tools and resources that advance the practice of international learning outcomes assessment. Some of these were anticipated at the outset of the project, the need for others became clear as the project progressed. The tools and resources include:
 - The Student Portfolio Information Form (SPIF) for collecting demographic and background information on students' international learning experiences
 - a ranking document for prioritizing international learning outcomes
 - a rubric for scoring evidence of international learning collected through student portfolios
 - anchor portfolios for use by raters in gauging low, medium, and high scoring portfolios
 - a portfolio rater training handbook
 - student instructions
 - a comprehensive web-based resource housing all the project tools, resources, and lessons learned about international learning outcomes assessment as well as an interactive forum for sharing new resources. Content posted on the web-resource has been favorably reviewed by a panel of outcomes assessment experts.

Challenges

ACE and the working group encountered a number of challenges over the life of the project; in some cases, addressing a challenge required negotiating a change to the project design with the FIPSE program officer. Some of the more significant challenges are listed below:

- **Effectively harnessing expertise within and outside the group.** ACE staff lined up a superbly qualified team to implement the FIPSE project – faculty and administrators from a diverse group of institutions that were experienced with and committed to campus internationalization along with nationally recognized experts in learning outcomes assessment. Tapping the wealth of expertise was not always easy, however.
 - *The expertise of outside consultants was not fully utilized.* Members of the working group, especially those who were institutional assessment professionals, considered themselves competent to carry out the group's mission; they tended to consider the outside assessment consultants superfluous. As a result, in the early months of the project, Wright was met with resistance when she offered the group guidance. In the latter stages of the project, Banta's recommendations received only minimal consideration by the working group. RESULT: Ironically, the *Lessons Learned* project did not effectively build on lessons offered from previous assessment work. Also, Wright resigned from the project all together after less than one year.

- *ACE's leadership capabilities were challenged by the working group.* Early in the life of the project, some working group members were outspoken about the staff's facilitation style which they characterized as task-oriented. They also considered the project goals unambitious and harshly criticized ACE for not taking the time necessary to design and conduct rigorous research. The working group proposed a steering committee structure that would relegate ACE staff to the role of "secretariat" and distribute decision-making authority among working group members who they felt had the expertise that a research-focused project demanded. RESULT: As the official grantee, ACE chose to continue leading the project much as they had but heeded the group's underlying message and instituted a more participatory decision-making approach. They formed a steering committee with a representative from each institution. ACE facilitated monthly conference calls with the committee during which key issues were addressed on behalf of the larger working group.
 - *Group members did not have an opportunity to freely share concerns about the quantitative assessment method selected for the project outside the presence of its author.* The group selected the BEVI — a survey instrument developed by one of its own members — as the quantitative assessment method to pilot through the ACE-FIPSE project. Once this decision was made, however, the survey author continued to participate as a working group member rather than assuming a consultant's role similar to Wright's. RESULT: The instrument author, who in effect served the group as its quantitative methodologist, ended up influencing the direction of the project far more significantly than he would have in the role of an external consultant like Wright.
 - *On most of the campuses, assessment teams were not as engaged in the project as originally envisioned.* Most of the institutions reconsidered their original plans, and decided to give the assessment project a lower profile until they could collect enough assessment data to present a compelling case to faculty that measuring international learning outcomes was worthwhile. A few faculty on each campus were trained to rate portfolios but otherwise they had little exposure to the project. As a result, the assessment initiative did not achieve much traction on campuses. RESULT: Minimal faculty awareness of the project contributed to scant data for analysis and progress on campuses was stymied.
- **Balancing a collaborative style with an authoritative style.** Instituting the new steering committee structure came with its own set of challenges. ACE staff struggled to honor the group's need to feel ownership of the project while also bearing the responsibility to meet the deliverables of the grant on time. RESULT: The first two years of the project were marked by a high degree of tension between ACE and the working group members; many decisions ACE felt they rightfully made as the grantee were challenged by steering committee members.

- **Negotiating philosophical differences among ACE staff, consultants, and working group members.** Throughout the life of the project, its fundamental purpose was a source of debate between ACE and the consultants on one hand and members of the working group on the other hand. All stakeholders never reached agreement on whether the project was about good practice of assessment or if it was about researching and validating assessment measures. Also debated was whether outcomes assessment was about accountability or student learning, and whether the results of outcomes assessment were best interpreted and applied on the individual, course, program, or, institutional level. There was general consensus that these debates mirrored conflict within the the larger assessment field. RESULT: Recurring philosophical debates slowed decision making and often led to frustration and misunderstandings.
- **Finalizing the quantitative instrument.** The original intent of the project was to pilot two assessment instruments. Progress toward developing and administering the qualitative instrument — the e-portfolio — was steady. Incorporating the quantitative instrument into the ACE-FIPSE project did not go smoothly, however. Initial concerns expressed by members of the working group and campus faculty who reviewed the instrument necessitated substantial revision of the instrument. These concerns centered around the length of the instrument, the ability of the instrument to measure international learning outcomes of interest to the ACE-FIPSE project, and the inflammatory nature of some survey items. Faculty and students still responded unfavorably to the revised instrument once it was piloted, however. Working group members also received complaints from faculty and students about computer glitches during administration of the inventory on campuses; and, data storage and analysis subsequently proved problematic as well. Most notably, individual institutions were informed that access to their own data would be prohibited. RESULT: ACE discontinued use of the BEVI all together in April 2006 and replaced it with a 50-item demographic inventory referred to as the Student Portfolio Information Form (SPIF). Demographic data previously collected through the BEVI should still have been viable for purposes of the project. However, when the change was made from the BEVI to the SPIF, some data was reportedly lost.
- **Gathering and analyzing sufficient data.** All six campuses underestimated the extent to which students would be willing to contribute data to the project in the form of an e-portfolio and the BEVI (and later the SPIF). The prevailing assumption at the outset of the project was that portfolios would be developed and rated in three cycles beginning as early as Spring 2005, and that it would be relatively easy to engage students in the portfolio development process. In fact, it took much longer than expected to prepare the assessment tools and processes and for campuses to receive IRB approval for the project. Then, far fewer students than expected expressed interest in submitting portfolios since in most cases there was no grade attached to the portfolio, no course requirement to complete it, and no feedback on the portfolio from a faculty member. RESULT: The campus data sets are much smaller than anticipated — in most cases, they are too small to be useful in making claims about the outcomes of international learning experiences (Table 2).

Assessment Data Collected from Campuses

Institution	Completed Questionnaires (SPIFs)	Rated Portfolios	Matched SPIFs and Rated Portfolios
Dickinson College	1	7	1
Kalamazoo College	5	10	5
Kapi'olani	22	11	11
Michigan State University	64	30	30
Palo Alto Community College	3	35	3
Portland State University	95	105	89

Table 2.

- Capturing lessons learned on the campuses about international learning outcomes assessment.** In reflecting on the successes and challenges of the grant, the Project Director observed that the capacity of working group members to reflect on their own learning varied considerably across institutions and many had difficulty articulating what they had gleaned from the process. This was partly attributable to the fact that membership on the working group evolved significantly; only a few group members were involved from beginning to end. RESULT: Many of the final “lessons learned” disseminated through the project website reflect what ACE learned from observing the institutions and interacting with the assessment consultants over the life of the project rather than lessons specifically learned by the institutions. It is not clear if lessons learned about international learning outcomes assessment by other stakeholder groups are reflected as part of the project knowledge base — students, administrators, international faculty, portfolio raters, assessment experts, etc.

Recommendations

The range of unanticipated challenges encountered when attempting to achieve the goals and objectives of the *Lessons Learned* grant led to some valuable insights that ACE and others can apply when designing similar projects in the future:

- Establish common ground first.** *Lessons Learned* suffered because of differing beliefs in the working group about learning outcomes assessment generally, and the purpose of the project specifically. In hindsight, the planning grant was a missed opportunity to establish common ground for carrying out the work. Were it to be done again, a portion of the planning grant could be used to acknowledge the ongoing debates in the assessment field and establish where the project is positioned within these debates. It also could be used to establish the purpose of the project, whether that is to engage in practice and document lessons learned or conduct rigorous scientific

research. Finally, clear roles and responsibilities as well as decision-making processes could be established.

- **Assess needs before contracting with consultants.** Had the working group been involved in assessing their own knowledge and skill gaps and in selecting consultants with whom to work, it is likely they would have made better use of the expertise the consultants had to offer. In the future scenarios, bringing an outside consultant on board after the project is underway and after a needs assessment is conducted might ultimately prove more fruitful.
- **Prepare working group members and others in how to recognize and capture “lessons learned” when such lessons are a key deliverable.** A shared definition of “lessons learned” should be developed, as well as agreement on whose lessons should be part of the project. Agreement should also be reached on who should be involved in collecting lessons and how often, and how much rigor should be applied to validating lessons before they are disseminated to broader audiences. Capture points for lessons should be established and adhered to. Lessons should be vetted periodically by the whole group and critiqued so a collective knowledge base develops.
- **Make clear distinctions between consultants and working group members; maintain parity in these roles.** The project would have been better served if the BEVI author had been removed from the working group as soon as his instrument was selected to be piloted through the ACE-FIPSE project. As an external consultant to the group —like Wright and Banta — he could have effectively assisted the institutions when the group felt his assistance was needed, and thereby avoided any possible conflict of interest. Under this arrangement, the working group would have been afforded the opportunity to critique, in private, their experience implementing his instrument. Any sense of obligation they may have felt to advance a colleague’s product could possibly have been diminished.

Summative Evaluation

This section explores results of the summative evaluation. *Did faculty and staff of the six project sites increase their knowledge about assessing international learning and their skill in implementing assessment and making good use of assessment results? Did the broader higher education community gain tools and knowledge for assessing international learning, based on lessons learned from the six project sites?*

Although it is not easy to quantify, there is evidence to suggest that working group members from the six institutions gained knowledge and skills related to assessing international learning outcomes on their campuses. The group's lengthy collaborative process for developing scoring rubrics which resulted in the rater training guide, the student instructions, and other products, was meticulously documented and reflects an increasing depth and breadth of understanding. The assessment tools and resources the working group produced; the "lessons learned" which they helped craft; the presentations they made in forums throughout the nation; and the campus assessment plans which most developed all serve as representations of their learning about assessment.

To the extent that the project engaged other faculty and staff on the campuses, institutions "got smarter" about international learning outcomes assessment as well. Evidence of this learning was found during the site visits through conversations with faculty, staff and administrators. Illustrative quotes follow.

At Kalamazoo:

- "The ACE-FIPSE project pushed us to think about how to measure international learning at a time when the college was ready for it."
- "The idea of assessing international learning is slowly creeping into the consciousness of the faculty."
- "We've always gotten evaluations with students and gotten their feedback, but no one until now has ever intentionally asked the question, What is it about our students and their experiences abroad?"

At Kapi'olani

- "As a result of the ACE-FIPSE project there is a much more heightened awareness on this campus of knowledge, skills, and attitudes."
- A faculty members shared the realization that, "When faculty map their courses to outcomes it begins the process of allowing them to see how they fit into the larger program and what their students are getting out the class."

At Dickinson

- “This project has caused us to look more closely at the systematic things we do like the study abroad essay.”

At Michigan State

- A faculty rater described himself from a department that is especially interested in what students have learned. He remarked, “There are a lot of people who think assessing portfolios is simple.” After his experience rating portfolios for the ACE-FIPSE project, he said he would still recommend portfolios as a methodology to other faculty in his department, but he thinks they should understand it’s “terrifically labor intensive” to rate portfolios.

To gauge whether the broader higher education community was gaining tools and knowledge for assessing international learning through the ACE-FIPSE project, we surveyed the ACE Internationalization Collaborative in April 2007. Fifty-nine (59) institutions responded to the survey. The survey revealed that, when it comes to educating these members of the higher education community about assessing international learning outcomes, the American Council on Education is the most potent source of information. Eight-four percent of survey respondents said they obtain information about AILO “by reading ACE publications on this topic (e.g. *A Handbook for Advancing Comprehensive Internationalization; What Institutions Can Do and What Students Should Learn* (2006); and *Building A Strategic Framework for Comprehensive Internationalization* 2005). Eighty percent report obtaining information on this topic “from attending the ACE Internationalization Collaborative Meetings.” Although more than 70% of respondents also learned about these topics from attending other conferences and talking with colleagues, the percent of respondents who use additional learning strategies — such as reading books, receiving mentoring, and searching the internet — was much smaller (less than 25%). The findings suggest the likelihood that members of the higher education community will continue to be receptive to lessons learned from the ACE-FIPSE project if these are reported through print publications, the Internationalization Collaborative meetings, and conference presentations.

We also asked members of the Internationalization Collaborative the extent to which their exposure to lessons learned from the ACE-FIPSE project had expanded their knowledge of AILO (Table 3.) Three topic areas stood out relative to others. Members report learning “A Lot” or “A Great Deal” about:

- Selecting International Learning Outcomes (67%)
- Preparing and Implementing an Institutional Assessment Plan (51%)
- Mapping International Learning Outcomes Across the Curriculum (47%)

Only 15.6% of respondents reported significant learning from the ACE-FIPSE project when it came to motivating students to complete portfolios. This is not surprising given the difficulty that working group members encountered getting students on their own campuses to complete them; they had relatively few success stories about this topic to share in the form of lessons learned.

We would like to know if your exposure to lessons learned from the ACE-FIPSE project has increased your knowledge of AILO. For each topic below, please indicate how much you feel you may have learned about it through the International Collaborative meetings, ACE-FIPSE mentoring, or publications sponsored by ACE

**What Members of the Internationalization Collaborative
Perceive They Have Learned about AILO through the
ACE-FIPSE Project (N=45)**

	Nothing New	Some New Knowledge	A Lot	A Great Deal	Response Count
Assessment Principles	15.6% (7)	46.7% (21)	24.4% (11)	13.3% (6)	45
Selecting International Learning Outcomes	8.9% (4)	24.4% (11)	37.8% (17)	28.9% (13)	45
Mapping International Learning Outcomes Across the Curriculum	13.3% (6)	40.0% (18)	31.1% (14)	15.6% (7)	45
Revising Courses or Programs to Include International Learning Outcomes	15.6% (7)	46.7% (21)	31.1% (14)	6.7% (3)	45
Preparing and Implementing an Institutional Assessment Plan	13.3% (6)	35.6% (16)	33.3% (15)	17.8% (8)	45
Motivating Students to Complete Portfolios	40.0% (18)	44.4% (20)	8.9% (4)	6.7% (3)	45
Incentivizing Faculty Participation	22.2% (10)	48.9% (22)	24.4% (11)	4.4% (2)	45
Using ePortfolios to Assess International Learning Outcomes	24.4% (11)	46.7% (21)	15.6% (7)	13.3% (6)	45
Collecting International Learning Outcomes Assessment Data	13.3% (6)	46.7% (21)	28.9% (13)	11.1% (5)	45
Interpreting and Sharing International Learning Outcomes Assessment Results	28.9% (13)	37.8% (17)	26.7% (12)	6.7% (3)	45
Planning and Implementing Changes Based on the Results of Outcomes Assessment	24.4% (11)	46.7% (21)	26.7% (12)	2.2% (1)	45
Connecting International Learning Outcomes Assessment to other Assessment Activities on Campus	17.8% (8)	42.2% (19)	33.3% (15)	6.7% (3)	45

Table 3.

Finally, we asked survey respondents to tell us if their assessment practices had changed since exposure to lessons learned from the ACE-FIPSE project. Figure 3. indicates that over the life of the project, practices were changing at least “Somewhat.” The biggest changes in practice were in the areas of “collecting international learning outcomes assessment data,” and “revising courses or programs to include international learning outcomes.” The survey results also suggests that increasingly, institutions are “planning and implementing changes based on assessment data.” However, according to the survey, great numbers of institutions did not adopt e-portfolios as the tool to assess international learning outcomes.

We would like to know if your exposure to lessons learned from the ACE-FIPSE project has influenced any assessment practices on your campus. For each practice below, please indicate to the best of your recollection, how engaged your institution was in this practice PRIOR to February 2005 (the Internationalization Collaborative Meeting when ILOA was introduced) and NOW.

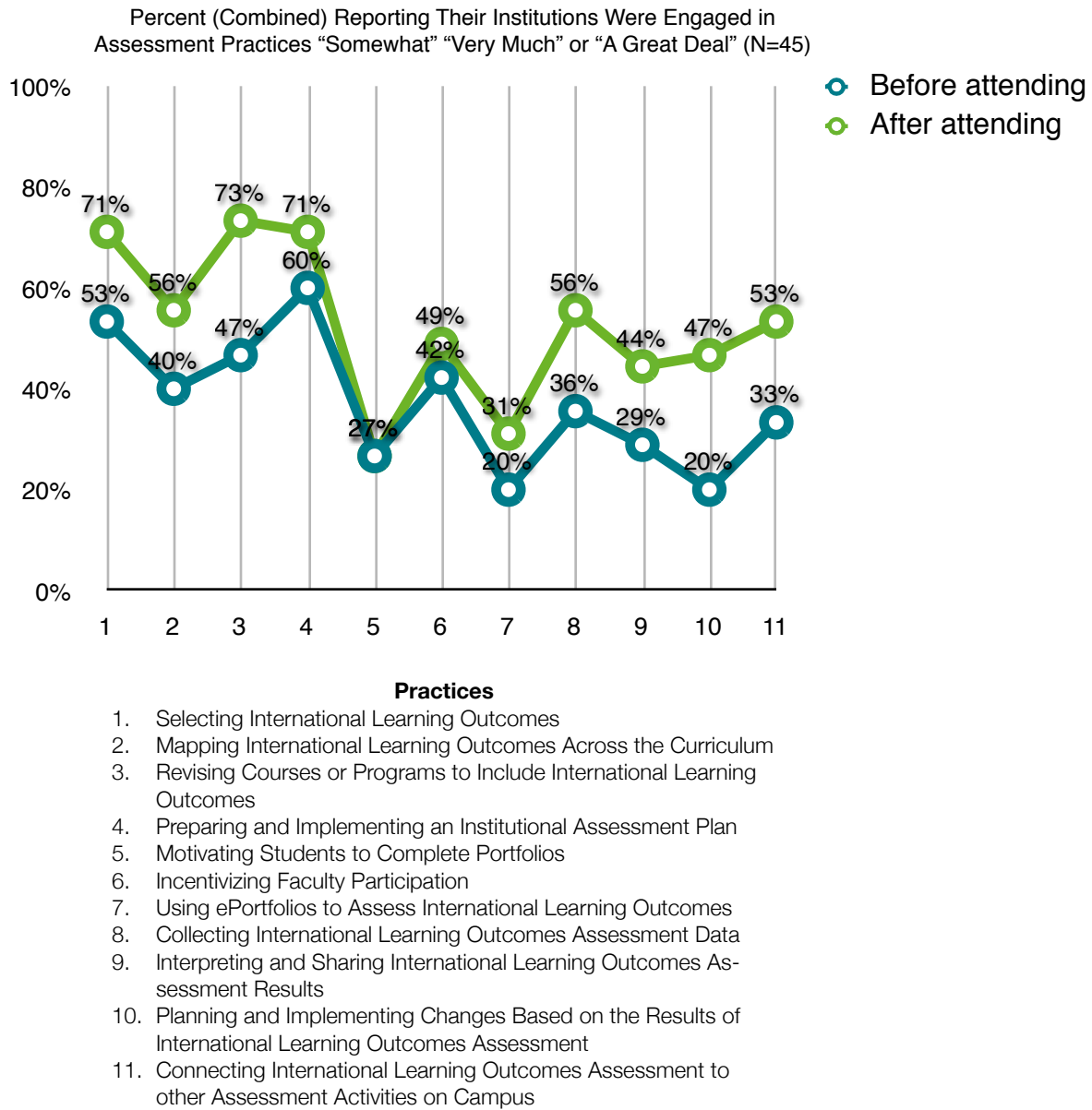


Figure 3.

Final Thoughts

ACE staff encountered a host of challenges in their effort to achieve the goals and objectives of the project, *Lessons Learned in Assessing International Learning Outcomes*. Some of those challenges resulted from mere missteps in designing the project initially; once they were corrected, the project was able to advance relatively smoothly. Other challenges, stemming from unresolved debates about the nature and purpose of assessment, mirror debates that continue to simmer in the larger outcomes assessment movement across the United States. Finally, some challenges were unexpected and unavoidable. Despite the nature of the challenges faced, ACE staff achieved the purpose of the project and extracted lessons learned about assessing international learning outcomes that can be broadly applied by the higher education community. The final web resource advances eleven robust lessons that encompass a wide range of the learning experiences shared by ACE staff and the six collaborating institutions. While this important work, in a sense, has only just begun, those who worked on this project have substantially advanced the national conversation about international learning outcomes assessment, and they have provided the broader higher education community with a wealth of practical tools and resources that are ready for immediate use.