

PRAC Discussion Group Summary

Post-Pandemic Planning As It Relates to Assessment and Improvement

Based on what we have learned during the pandemic, what has worked well?

1. For the Campus Center and for programs related to student experiences, a benefit has been having a focus be on the impact of programs rather than solely paying attention to the numbers.
2. Instructors have discovered that moving to online learning creates opportunities to get rich sets of data in new ways (e.g. electronic tools for measuring engagement, more opportunities for quizzes and other assessment measures, and so on).
3. Some programs have found that deepened skills in assessment have occurred (Herron students, for example, have become more sophisticated in their reflections).
4. Nursing discovered a useful process whereby students were allowed to vent 15 minutes at the beginning of each class. The feedback from students through this mechanism helped Nursing to work with the students to solve the problems they are facing. A deeper discussion occurred during class because a safe space and connection was created.
5. Faculty learned to teach creatively using technology. This improved the potential for significant learning, but the results were not as good as is seen in face-to-face classes.
6. Faculty have adjusted well to working in Zoom. DFWI rates are higher but technology is making communication with the students possible.
7. We anticipate these technologies will continue to be used when back to face-to-face classrooms.
8. Virtual global engagement proved beneficial as examples with universities in Rwanda, India, and Costa Rica highlight.
9. Smaller courses have benefitted from technology.
10. Faculty are more comfortable with technology and with teaching online. More faculty appreciate online teaching now, including its benefits and challenges and how to address these challenges.
11. Technology is affording us the opportunity to engage all students because students are not able to hide.
12. Using Canvas to support learning outcomes, assignments, and rubrics has been beneficial.
13. The Canvas gradebook functions were a positive.
14. Canvas may help us with reporting data (assuming we can get that data).
15. Using Qualtrics surveys help faculty and staff to see what people's preferences are.
16. IRDS is developing a feedback form that will allow IRDS website visitors to share something they want to contribute.
17. Some things that worked well include faculty using Canvas and other technology more widely and better.
18. The Center for Teaching and Learning, and others, have provided wider support and access to training.
19. Higher levels of participation in events has occurred (online meetings, extracurricular activities, orientations, and so on). The School of Liberal Arts and the McKinney School of Law in particular saw this higher level of participation.
20. In general, attending committee meetings was made easier.
21. Increased use of technology for assessing student learning. (The assessment was more authentic with the use of digital technology: ePortfolios, online quizzes, online exams, and so on.)
22. Zoom office hours worked very well.
23. Faculty did not get into issues with parking, and it was easier to bring outsiders in without contending with parking concerns.

24. More visibility of activities because the work was online.
25. Lower DWFI rates, which may have been related to faculty being more accommodating. (Perhaps being more accommodating should be employed more in the future.)
26. Conferences were more meaningful because the papers could be seen.

What are some challenges that remain?

1. STEM fields have found it challenging to engage in course assessment without running into the temptation by students to cheat when unsupervised in the online environment.
2. It has also been hard to make sure students are meeting outcomes in labs, as contact hours are decreased due to social distancing constraints.
3. A steep learning curve has faced instructors delivering courses in the new learning environment and performing assessments.
4. How faculty use technology varies, which has been difficult for students to navigate.
5. Another problem for students has been access to stable internet and to technology tools.
6. Larger courses encounter frustration with technology.
7. Workload issues arose, such as faculty reluctance to agree to independent projects and research with students because of the extra burden this entailed.
8. Confusion arose over lab and clinical pandemic-related course policies.
9. Student surveys show that students are stressed, which may create enrollment challenges.
10. A critical mass of students want on-campus experiences while other students may now appreciate the flexibility of a hybrid modality. A question for us now is, how do we serve both sets of students and other students expressing preferences from their Covid experiences? How do we communicate to them in order to help them?
11. PRAC Reports and looking at the data: the pandemic has created a massive confounding effect with our data mainly because it is difficult, if not impossible, to look at trends over time.
12. IUPUC is reporting that the pandemic is providing course offerings that are giving opportunities for students who can only take classes online. For those students with high internet speeds and who can handle the online environment, the pandemic has been a positive.
13. Cheating is a concern, especially when exams are reused by faculty.
14. Generating student participation in synchronous activities and class meetings was a challenge.
15. Connecting with students was more difficult.
16. There is a sense that everyone wants time and access to faculty and staff at all times, leading to problems with burnout.
17. The extra time needed for programming and teaching has been a challenge.
18. Financial and technological hardships have been witnessed in students.
19. Some challenges to assessment of student learning have occurred. Some examples: the loss of collaboration in capstone work, no on-campus presentations, and so on.
20. Some students have been expecting "high quality," if not the same quality of learning, in experiences this past year, but they are not recognizing that not all learning experiences are equivalent.
21. Negative feedback has been reported on course evaluations.
22. Lower quality final student work is occurring.
23. Campus childcare benefits were not sufficient to cover costs.
24. Being able to have informal conversations with colleagues at conferences was missed.
25. Flip classroom efforts were cut short.
26. Minority and international students have been alienated even more.

What are some things that we should adapt/adopt/scale in the future?

1. Continuing to use engagement tools in Canvas to track student interactions and flag low engagement.
2. Aspects of online delivery of courses will continue to be useful, as will outreach and support. Some programs may continue to see more participation if a robust online presence continues.
3. Moving lecture material online frees up more time for assessment in the classroom.
4. Continuing to use or expanding the Center for Teaching and Learning support for learning new technologies and sharing best practices for consistency across classes would be a plus in the future.
5. Continuing to look for opportunities for student interaction, such as options for small group interactions.
6. Virtual options create opportunities for students to lead. These include peer engagement, such as virtual game nights, virtual talent shows, and so on.
7. The use of engaged learning showcases where student work can be disseminated.
8. Synchronous connections are helpful to facilitate student interactions.
9. Using technology to scale up faculty engagement in professional development offerings.
10. We are more aware of student mental health issues and we need to make more accommodations and incorporate strategies that can help: not all students are OK. How can we use assessment to identify and highlight these accommodations and strategies?
11. We should continue to look for opportunities to engage in authentic assessment.
12. We have an opportunity to reach student populations who may not have attended the IUPUI campus—technology is allowing us to expand.
13. We should continue to develop new or different ways of learning in different modalities. Assessments of these modalities are not easy to do.
14. There are opportunities to continue with technology improvements and scale them.
15. One size doesn't fit all for teaching and for students: how do we communicate this to students?
16. We have a large sample of students who have learned online. Could this now show us a market for the future?
17. More extensive use of Canvas and other teaching technology.
18. Continuing to provide and improve faculty training, and to provide opportunities for training in order to improve teaching and learning.
19. The use of virtual meetings for large groups.
20. The continuation of virtual orientations and advising for non-traditional and other students (both graduate and undergraduate students).