



## ENMU-Roswell ASL Project

### Response - Version 4

2020-03-07

Please give your name and contact information (email address and/or phone number).

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What are some strengths of this project/Academy work? Why are these strengths?

Wanda Baker

Where to begin?

At the beginning of your Academy participation, the ENMU-R team identified quite an ambitious set of initiatives. Here you are at the midpoint and you've made amazing progress across the board. You have encountered challenges and roadblocks, acknowledged that this is a normal part of the assessment journey, studied how other schools addressed challenges, and refocused your efforts. You haven't thrown up your hands and given up. You've approached each challenge strategically, in ways that are likely to yield long term benefits. That in itself is a major accomplishment.

The end goal of assessment is the improvement of student learning. To accomplish that, it's also important to "assess the assessment" and refine our assessment methods and follow-up actions as indicated. You're doing that - and in true ENMU-R form, you're being strategic about your efforts. No scattershot try this, try that, and try everything else. You're learning from your efforts and improving your processes as part of your work. By the way, I love your Try It Track It!

One of the things that most impressed me about this submission is the richness of the questions you're taking with you to the Midpoint Roundtable. Thinking about possible linkages among your various assessment efforts, looking at how to push deeper with current efforts - these are all good.

I also like that you're paying attention to respect, collegiality, and the human factors that can impede efforts. These issues can derail assessment work faster than anything.

Susan Hatfield

As usual, Wanda's comments are complete and leave me with little to add. ENMU-R has an impressive team working that is working systematically and strategically to implement their plan. Good Job!

The discussion agenda identified for the Mid Point Roundtable in June shows a clear understanding of the issues that need to be addressed to continue to develop and enhance your project.

**What remains unclear or what questions do you still have about this work to assess and improve student learning?**

Wanda Baker

At this point, I don't have any unanswered questions. I'll be excited to hear how the Midpoint Roundtable goes!

I think you'll benefit a great deal from the Roundtable. Ask a lot of questions, explore things that other schools are doing, and get some ideas from other mentors and scholars. Be ready to share the work that you've done as well and spark some ideas for other teams!

Susan Hatfield

I appreciate the revised VALUE rubric. Was this developed in house, or was it part of a larger (state wide?) effort?

By what process were you able to accomplish the development of common course syllabi and with clearly stated course and institutional learning outcomes? I applaud this monumental accomplishment!

How was this effort viewed by faculty?

Just to make sure I understand: Are your institutional learning outcomes the same as the state-wide General Education?

**What are some critical things to which the institution should pay attention as it plans its work for the next six months?**

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Wanda Baker

I do worry that your core assessment team may begin to burnout. What are ways to mitigate that? A few thoughts come to mind:

- Is it time to get more faculty involved in the work? Better now than when people burn out, leave, etc. I have a friend who is an Assistant VP for Assessment at Illinois Central College. A few years ago, she created a group of Faculty Assessment Fellows and invested in considerable professional development opportunities for them. They're now responsible for the continued development of their assessment system and for training faculty. They've started bringing in additional Fellows who are getting up to speed and taking on some of the effort. I wonder if you could "subcontract" some of the assessment tasks you identified in your response to a group of faculty who might be your next round of assessment experts? Perhaps a tiered Masters and Journeymen approach? Anything like this always calls for remuneration or other perks, of course.
- Take a moment to celebrate the outstanding work your team has done. How can you reward yourselves? You've earned it.
- Use the Roundtable time as a retreat and opportunity for renewal. Focus on identifying next steps for your Academy project and ongoing assessment work, but don't feel like you need to commit to having everything on your wish list completed in the next two years. Identify priorities and timelines that go beyond Academy completion. Build some of the work into your next ENMU-R strategic plan to document institutional commitment to continuing the work.

Susan Hatfield

This is a good project. Please do not be in a huge hurry to "get through" the process. I'm seeing a few schools that are going through the process more as a "check off" than as an attempt to collect genuinely useful data. Remember - the first time you collect data, you are really just testing your methods, measures and processes. That data is probably not actionable, nor should a single data point be actionable. Establish patterns of data in which you feel confident accurately represent your students' learning.

Now would be a great time to see if you can get any time on the campus' faculty development agenda in August to move your project forward. There is so much information to share! Are there ways that you could engage faculty in an activity that would lay the groundwork for the next phase of your work? The roundtable in June might be a great time to talk about what you might do to engage even more faculty in discussions about student learning.

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Wanda Baker

In your response, you discussed the challenges of identifying quantifiable improvements in student learning that have resulted from your project. Education is messy business, and causal relationships are particularly messy. Unless you're designing specific studies along the way to isolate the effects of specific initiatives, you probably won't be able to get at it quite that way. Think about what you can do ...

1. Continue tracking the things you're already tracking so you'll know what's a trend and what's a blip.
2. Look at disaggregated data to study differences in student performance related to variables that matter to you (e.g., instructors implementing improvement efforts vs. those who are not).
3. Track student success variables (retention, transfer, completion, course completion, developmental, gateway courses, etc.) to see if there are relationships with efforts coming out of the assessment work.

And don't forget that countless things are happening all the time that impact student learning: the curriculum, individual classrooms, advising sessions, co-curriculum, and individual student characteristics. We can't control for all of them. Continue your efforts to build in as much rigor as possible in your efforts.

You mentioned in your response a desire to develop valid/reliable approaches to measurement of student performance. I think I gave you one of the yellow book by Johnson, Penney, and Gordon. That book is full of things that can help with that - how to design good assessments, how to design good rubrics, how to score artifacts, and how to analyze the data. It's written by members of the team I was with in North Carolina, and they're among the best at this. The book is aimed at educators rather than psychometricians, so it's very approachable. If I didn't give you a copy, let me know and I'll send you one.

Susan Hatfield

Wanda continues to be a great resource for you! The HLC annual meeting is coming up -- Watch for an email from Kim Davis outlining the programming and networking opportunities for Academy members. I will also look forward to visiting with you in person at the June midpoint roundtable!

Reviewed by **Wanda Baker** (Primary Mentor)

Reviewed by **Susan Hatfield** (Scholar)