

Building a Quality Comprehensive Assessment Program in “*Fast Forward*” Mode

Doug Binsfeld, ED.D.

Associate Vice President for Learning and Student Success

Council on Accreditation for Two-Year Colleges

2019 Conference

September 8-10, 2019

Columbus, Ohio

Goal: describe processes and strategies we used to build our assessment program

- Provide CONTEXT (background) that led to our charge
- Summarize the COMPONENTS and the expedited TIMELINE
- Outline the initial IMPLEMENTATION
- Discuss our TAKE-AWAYS

Context



Background

Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC)

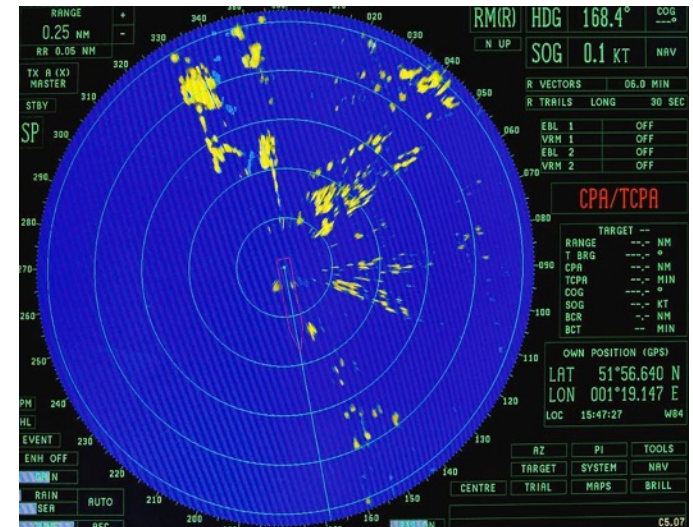
- 4,500 students (almost half in dual enrollment)
- 500 faculty members (full and part time)
- 62 academic programs of study
- >600 unique courses
- 2 campuses, 13 additional locations, partnered with 26 high schools in (5,000 square mile) district



Background

Assessment had “fallen off the radar”

- Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) initiative
 - Viewed writing in *every* class
 - Gen Ed only (although we had four common learning outcomes)
- No formalized plan, common process, or college expectations



Background



Catalyst for action

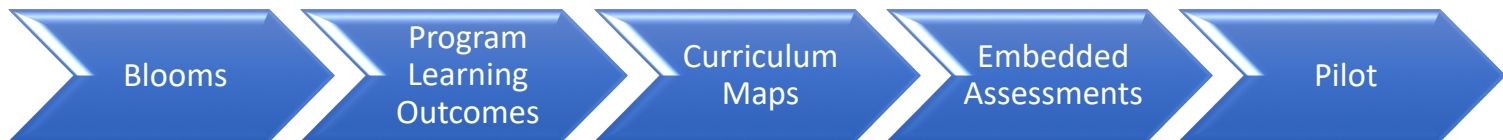
- My role: dean until just before visit (1.5 years)
- Joined the HLC Assessment Academy June 2016
- Comprehensive Quality Review September 2016
- Results January 2017

Background

- Assigned an *Interim Monitoring Report* due in **18 months** and *Focused Visit* two years later
 - ONE semester to develop it all, then start collecting immediately
- No sanctions, but clear expectations were outlined:
- *Collect data for every CLO (Gen Ed), in every class*
- *Collect data for every program*
- *Collect data for co-curricular assessment*
- *2 semesters of data*

IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED!

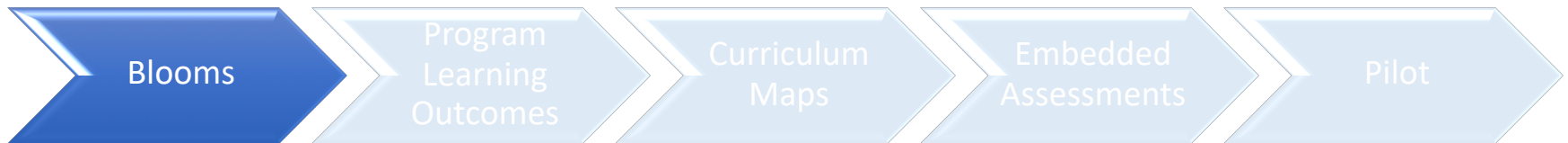
Components & Timeline



January 2017

Blooms taxonomy

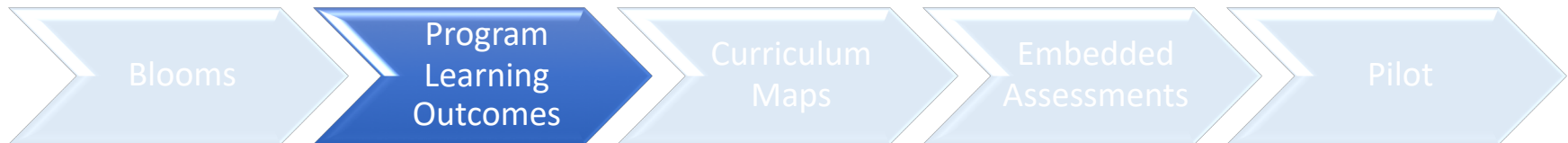
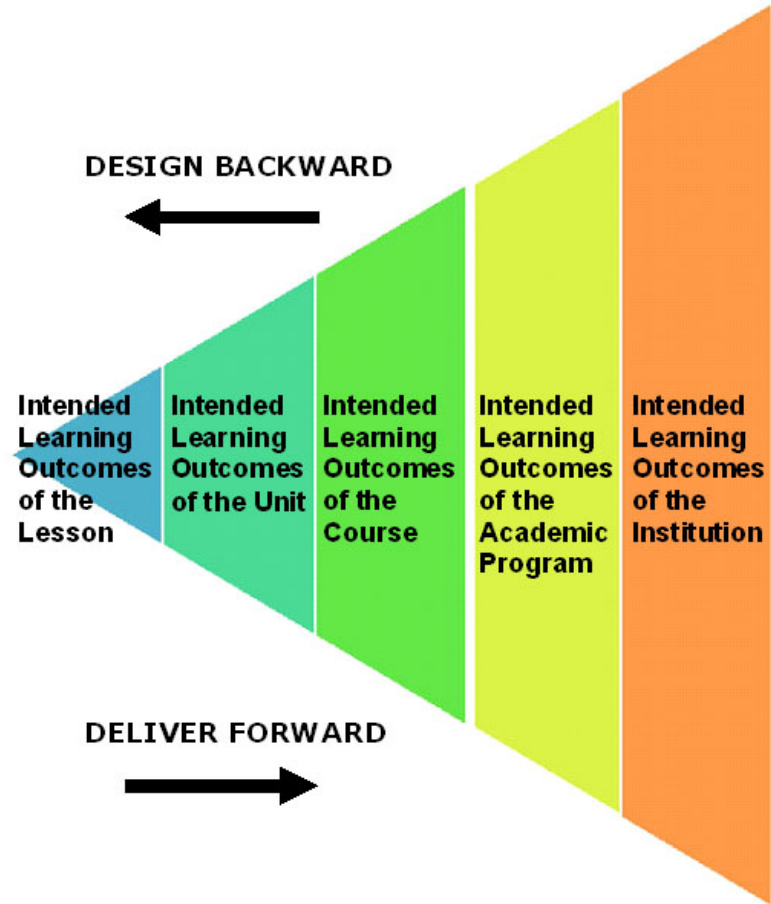
- Taught faculty Blooms taxonomy
- Faculty lead assigned (Full time faculty in most cases)
- Every course identified the Blooms level of the course
- Based on course objectives and level of proficiency expected from students
- Deadlines enforced



February

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

- Taught faculty how to develop PLO (only 6 had accreditation beyond HLC)
- Departments examined existing resources for possible “retrofit”
 - “counter-intuitive”



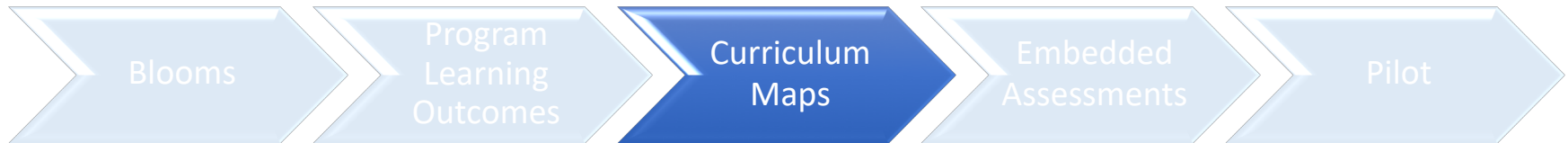
February...

- Every program (incl. AA and AS) developed 5-7 PLO
- VERY difficult for some (especially those with outside accreditors)
- Consulted with advisory boards, alumni, employers
- IF programs had LO, had treated them as a “skills checklist”
 - Especially true in CTE
 - Health areas had exhaustive lists

March

Curriculum Maps

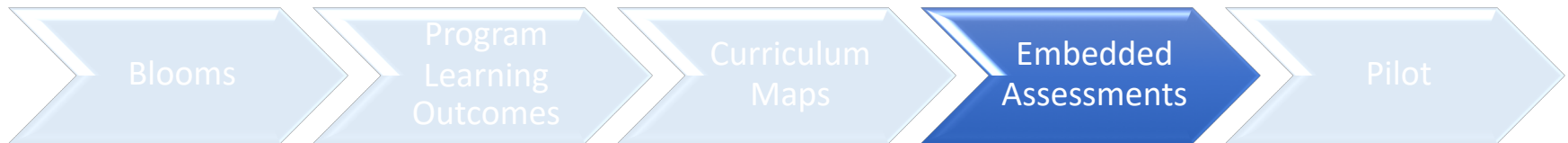
- Taught faculty how to develop program curriculum maps
- Departments collaborated to track course progression against newly developed PLO
- Holes in curriculum were identified, “orphan PLO” were adjusted (eliminated), CLO (gen eds) correlated, and co-curricular efforts tracked



April

Embedded Assessments

- Taught faculty about value and development
- Every course had:
 - 1) Direct assessment
 - 2) Formative Assessment
 - 3) CLO assessment
 - 4) Indirect Assessment
- Allowed to “double/triple count”
- Course evaluations were “universal” for indirect
- Restricted development to full time faculty



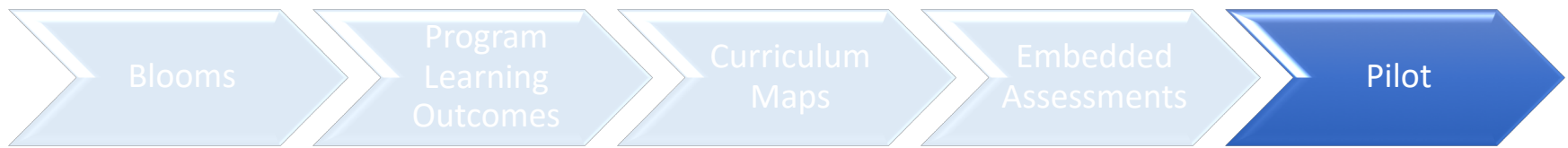
May

Pilot

- Built into the LMS (Brightspace/D2L)
 - Allowed for reporting on all levels – PLO, CLO, Course
 - Mapped into courses
 - Implementation issues were identified (mostly mechanics)

August

- Full implementation
- All modalities, all sites, and all faculty
- New processes and changes were difficult



July 2018

Interim Monitoring Report

- Data on every program
- Data on every CLO
- Data from every site
- Data from (most) faculty

Faculty realizations:

- Room for improvement
- Continuous – not an end or way to “be done”
- Not as bad as initially thought
- Spontaneous discussions started popping up

Take-Aways

What did we learn and how did we get it all done?

Culture Shift

- Create small, manageable tasks to move the big items
- Completion before perfection (we will continuously evolve; learning from our mistakes is just as important as the results/data)
- Assessment is about the COLLEGE not just academics
- Responsibility of education, not an accreditation mandate

Transparency!!

- Be as open and candid as possible
- Leadership must come from within (faculty not just *ON*, but *ARE* the team)
- Connect to bigger pictures and processes
 - Program Review
 - Curriculum approval
 - Add to the faculty job description



Make it EASY

- Centralize
- Embedded in the LMS
- Templates
- Tutorials
- Resources
- Handbooks and guides
- FAQ's



Communication!



- Regular Newsletters
- Monthly Brown Bag Discussions
- Professional Development
- Dashboards

Advice:

- 20/60/20 Rule
- Find your champions early and let them lead
- Be organized and frequently in front of the College
- Lay the seeds for growth with *new* people



Dialogue!!



© The Advisory Board Company