

**Harmonizing Education: Bridging the
Gap Between Academic Assessment
and Teaching & Learning Centers for
Enhanced Student Outcomes**

EMBRY-RIDDLE
Aeronautical University



INTRODUCTIONS



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Welcome!

**Please put your name,
institution, and role into
the chat window.**

“The Gap”



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Structural Barriers

- **Origins and Purposes Divergence:** Educational development emerged as a voluntary initiative focused on individual and course-level enhancement, while academic assessment is more centrally planned and program-level focused, leading to a functional and often physical separation within institutions.
- **Lack of Common Measurement Tools:** The absence of shared metrics for assessing student learning impact at both the program and course levels hinders collaborative communication and the sharing of mutually beneficial information between educational development and assessment.
- **Organizational Separation:** Educational development and assessment are frequently housed in separate areas of the organizational chart, perpetuating the notion that they should operate independently and inhibiting potential synergies.
- **Accreditation Requirements:** The emphasis of accrediting bodies on program-level outcomes over individual or course-level improvements reinforces structural barriers, focusing assessment efforts at a macro level and potentially overlooking the contributions of educational development.

Agency Barriers

- **Institutional Policies Limiting Engagement:** Rigid institutional policies can overstretch faculty by imposing additional activities without offering support or flexibility, thereby limiting their ability to engage in collaborative development and assessment initiatives.
- **Grading Policies vs. Assessment Efforts:** Traditional grading policies can hinder the adoption of innovative assessment methods, as faculty may fear disrupting established norms or negatively impacting student perceptions.
- **Advocacy and Policy Reform:** There is a need for advocacy for policy changes that support integrative practices in educational development and assessment, alongside the development of faculty support programs and incentives that align with broader institutional goals.
- **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Promoting a culture that values interdisciplinary collaboration and breaking down silos can encourage a more integrated approach to teaching and assessment, but requires a comprehensive strategy to ensure sustainability.

Political Barriers

- **Internal Power Dynamics and Cultural Norms:** The entrenched power structures, norms, and values within an institution can significantly influence attitudes toward collaboration, with hierarchical cultures particularly discouraging cooperative efforts.
- **Resistance to Change and Departmental Status:** Tradition, resistance to change, and the varying status of departments within the institution can further entrench political barriers, affecting how collaborative efforts are perceived and undertaken.
- **Perceptions of Goals and Methods:** Misunderstandings and preconceived notions about the goals, values, or methods of educational development and assessment can reinforce barriers, stemming from concerns about pedagogical autonomy and the validity of assessment processes.
- **Professional Identity and Autonomy Concerns:** Resistance among educational developers often stems from a perception that assessment processes undermine their autonomy and expertise, highlighting a deep-seated concern about professional identity and respect in the face of collaborative efforts.

Bridging the Gap



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Using Assessment to Improve Teaching & Learning... but...

Center for Teaching & Learning works with
faculty...

...but not at scale.

Program-level assessment planners
document improvements...

...but only capture small samples.

Faculty may be assessing their courses, and
improving on their own...

... but if so, it isn't widely known, captured,
or visible.

Pockets of QEP-inspired assessment /
improvement...

...but topic-focused and not sustainable.



From Serendipity to Intention: Opportunities to Collaborate

- From proving to improving learning
- New assessment management system
- Curriculum committee needs
- New leadership
- Small Teaching Challenge

Collaboration and Co-Creation of Vision

- Intentional collaboration
 - Actively seeking opportunities to break down silos
- Co-creating a vision for the future
 - Envisioning and creating the university we want to work for





Collaboration and Co-Creation of Vision

- Working closely with leaders to broaden engagement
 - Everybody has a role
- Creating a culture of data-informed decision making
 - Data is accessible and shared

Prompt:

Share an example of a collaboration at your institution that works well. Why does it work well?

Additional Prompts:

What could you do in your current role to encourage collaboration?

Summarizing

Barrier Type	Cost of Not Overcoming	Benefit of Overcoming	Strategies to Overcome
Structural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fragmented educational strategies leading to suboptimal student learning outcomes. - Physical and organizational separation reducing collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved coherence in educational strategies. - Enhanced alignment between teaching methodologies and assessment strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reorganize physical and administrative structures to facilitate interaction and collaboration. - Implement joint training sessions and collaborative projects.
Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited faculty engagement in development and assessment due to rigid institutional policies. - Reduced effectiveness in educational practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased faculty motivation and participation in collaborative initiatives. - More responsive and effective educational systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocate for policy reforms that support faculty engagement in collaborative efforts. - Develop comprehensive faculty support programs and incentives.
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resistance to change and collaboration due to cultural norms and misconceptions. - Hindered communication and cooperation between faculties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhanced mutual understanding and trust among stakeholders. - Creation of a shared vision for student learning improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foster open dialogue to dispel myths and build mutual understanding. - Create a culture of collaboration through shared governance and institutional initiatives.

THANK YOU

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