Online and Face-to-Face Comparisons for Academic Program Assessment

Why do we need to compare online and face-to-face programs?

To ensure that both online and face-to-face (f2f) delivery methods support the attainment of student learning outcomes, the program should compare courses that are offered in both online and f2f environments for at least one measure within an assessment plan. This ensures that an equally high quality educational experience is being provided to students in both online and f2f learning environments.

Who needs to compare online and face-to-face programs?

The online and f2f comparisons should be conducted by programs that offer more than 50% of the curriculum online as well as f2f. In these cases, students are able to complete 50% or more of the coursework through online or web-based component.

What needs to be compared?

The unit of analysis here are the learning experiences and assignment(s) within a course (not the students). The measure identified for assessment of the student learning outcomes should be compared between the online course offerings and the f2f course offerings.

If your assessment plan includes a course that is only taught using one delivery method, please indicate this within the assessment report and a comparison is not needed.

OPTIONAL Analysis of Student Types (campus or web)

If programs are interested in analyzing data by student type (campus or web), they are welcome to do so; however, this is NOT required by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment for program assessment.

What are the reporting expectations?

Programs offering more than 50% of the curriculum online as well as f2f need to clearly report comparable assessment data each year in their Academic Assessment report submitted in Weave. This information should be used and discussed within each degree program to determine if

Additionally, a mini exercise on mechanics will be piloted in fall 2017 to reduce the number of mechanical errors in the research paper.

Example 2 – No Differences in Learning Environments (online vs f2f), target not met

Target: 80% (80/100) of students will score an 80 or higher on the research paper rubric.

Target Status: Not Met

Results: 61.5% (123/200) of students scored an 80 or higher on the research paper rubric in SAMP 385W. Online and face to face comparisons were made.

Analysis of Results: SAMP 385W f2f sections, 60% (60/100) of students scored an 80 or higher on the research paper rubric. SAMP 385W online sections, 63% (63/100) of students scored an 80 or higher on the research paper rubric. Based on this data, the course experience is comparable because there is little to no difference between the f2f and online scores.

Faculty teaching in both learning environments reported that students were able to clearly state their purpose in the research paper. However, many of the students struggled to synthesize the literature and to write a complete and well justified argument. While mechanics is not taught in this course, a majority of students are not able to write a paper free of major misspellings.

Improvements: With the addition of a citation exercise this year, students' ability to correctly use and cite sources has improved this past year.

Action Plan: To improve synthesis, a second mini literature review will be piloted in fall 2017 to improve this outcome. For this assignment, students will be engaged in a peer revie