Flossing: Building Healthy, Aligned Planning and Assessment Habits Prior to Accreditation Reviews
INTRODUCTION

- Comprehensive, public university (certificates, associate, bachelor, masters)
- Open admissions/structured enrollment
- 33,000 students
  - 76% are employed
  - 56% work more than 30 hours per week
  - 36% are first generation
Learning Outcomes

1. Align authentic university planning and assessment efforts with accreditation standards, policies, and processes and with internal accreditation monitoring and progress efforts.

2. Communicate the advantages and value of an integrated, on-going planning-accreditation model to senior leaders, boards, faculty and staff to help enable implementation.

3. Use a university-wide planning committee for periodic reflection on mission fulfillment and ideation of the institution’s future.

4. Engage campus groups in annual planning and strategy prioritization processes to sustain planning and assessment efforts.
My dental checkup is tomorrow?
American flossing habits

Only 4 in 10 Americans floss at least once a day

Why poor flossing habits?

According to Dr. Joan Otomo-Corgel, (now vice president of the American Academy of Periodontology), as reported by NPR.org:

- It’s a lot of work and seems to take an eternity
- Floss can be hard to get between your teeth
- It can make your gums bleed
- It’s slimy
- Tiny food particles are flung onto your bathroom mirror
- There’s no immediate payoff
The accreditors are coming next semester!
Why poor planning/assessment habits?

Discussion:
What obstacles do people have in developing habits to assess and plan?
Why poor planning/assessment habits?

Potential reasons:

• It’s a lot of work and is perceived to take an eternity
• It’s hard to get people involved in strategy when they are trying to do their day-to-day jobs
• It can be uncomfortable to expose institutional weaknesses
• It’s slimy (messy procedures with a wide variety of constituencies)
• There’s no immediate payoff and results may not be very visible
• They don’t want to--resistance
Flossing Survey

• 27% lie to their dentist about how often they floss
• 36% would prefer to do an unpleasant task rather than floss
  • clean a toilet (14%)
  • sit in gridlock traffic for an hour (9%)
  • do their taxes (9%)
  • listen to small children crying on a plane (9%)

Harris Poll on behalf of the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) among 2,021 U.S. adults and among the top 10 U.S. markets (2015).
Planning/Assessment Survey?

• ? % exaggerate to their accreditor about their planning/assessment habits

• ? % of administrators, staff, and faculty would prefer to do an unpleasant task rather than plan/assess
"Flossing is simple once you've learned how," she [Dr. Otomo-Corgel] says. And it's the best way to prevent gum disease, along with regular visits to the dentist. Who, by the way, can tell if you're lying.

Planning and assessment are easier once you’ve aligned processes and settled into a routine and habit. It’s the best way to advance sustainable, organizational improvement, as recognized by regular visits from the accreditors. Who, by the way, can tell if you’re lying.

http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/06/24/417184367/are-you-flossing-or-just-lying-about-flossing-the-dentist-knows
Preparing for a successful accreditation visit

Through healthy, aligned planning and assessment habits
Principles of accreditation preparation

• Authenticity (dance as if no one was watching)
• Ongoing habit of periodic reviews and updates vs. Herculean, episodic self-study efforts
• Periodic, proactive check-ups; gap analyses with accreditation standards
What accreditors require

Common themes include:

• Systematic & Ongoing
• Alignment & Integration
• Resource allocation
• Assessment & Improvement
• Participation
• Proactive
• Mission accomplishment & Sustainability
• Process evaluation
An attitude about accreditation

Think of accreditation requirements as peer-developed best practices.

Question: If there were no longer any accreditation requirements, would you still do what you do in institutional planning and assessment?
UVU's model for planning, budgeting, and assessment

Aligns with accreditation requirements
Aligns institutional-level and unit-level planning
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditors themes</th>
<th>UVU characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alignment &amp; integration</td>
<td>Planning, budgeting, and assessment (PBA) system</td>
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<tr>
<td>Systematic &amp; ongoing</td>
<td>Annual, ten years old, under two presidents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resource allocation</td>
<td>Open conversations and prioritization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment &amp; improvement</td>
<td>Increased emphasis in recent years, biennial self-evaluation</td>
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<td>Proactive</td>
<td>Opportunities and threats, biennial SWOT</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
<td>University Planning Advisory Committee (UPAC), President’s Cabinet, Deans, Chairs, Trustees</td>
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<td>Mission accomplishment</td>
<td>Core theme objectives, indicators, measures; process “habits”</td>
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<td>&amp; sustainability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process evaluation</td>
<td>Annual process assessment and updated guidebook</td>
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UVU general model

Assess
- Self-evaluation
- SWOT
- External feedback (e.g., accreditors)

Plan
- Establish strategies
- Develop objectives
- Collaborate & align

Allocate
- Prioritize strategies
- Obtain and allocate resources

Act
- Follow through on strategies and objectives
- Collect data
UVU process

Institution

- Evaluation of process
- Plan implemented
- Resource allocations

Divisions

- Objectives & indicators
- Assessment: Self-evaluation & SWOT
- Strategic areas of focus
- Rolling strategic plans updated
- Resource needs identified
- Unit plans & resource request conversations
UVU institutional-level assessment

**What we do**

**Core Themes**
- Student success
- Inclusive
- Engaged
- Serious

**Administrative Imperatives**
- Operate effectively
- Manage growth
- Secure resources

**How we do it**

**Objectives**

**Indicators & Measures**
Student success: UVU supports students in achieving their educational, professional, and personal goals.

1. UVU supports students' preparation and achievement of academic success at the University.
2. UVU provides a meaningful and well-rounded university experience.
3. UVU prepares students for success in their subsequent academic, professional and lifelong learning pursuits including serving as leaders, people of integrity and stewards of their communities.

Indicators:

A. Retention rates
B. Graduation rates

Measures:

• IPEDS graduation rate (all degrees)
• IPEDS graduation rate (bachelor degree only)
• Degrees awarded (types and trend)
UVU process

Self-evaluation and SWOT

Alternating biennial self-evaluations and SWOT analyses; presented to Trustees

University Planning Advisory Committee:
- Annual charge
- Meets twice monthly
- Membership:
  - Representatives from each division; faculty & staff, one academic dean (2-yr terms)
  - Governance group representatives
  - President and his cabinet
  - Blue Sky Thinking
  - Co-chaired by IE&P director and a faculty member
- Annual report to President responding to the charge
UVU process

Division/unit plans
Rolling four-year plans
Annually submitted to IE&P
UVU Division/Unit Rolling Strategic Plans

**Mission**: concise statement of purpose

**Objectives**: delineate/operationalize mission; ongoing and assessable

**Assessment**: internal and external; self-evaluation, SWOT, academic program review, assessment of student learning outcomes, etc.

**Strategies**: multi-year, coordinated courses of action supporting an objective based on needs identified in the assessment; can be further delineated with work plans and action steps
UVU’s integrated planning model

**Aim**
- Mission
- Core Themes
- Administrative Imperatives
- Objectives
- Indicators

**Assessment**
- Institutional Review Process
- Division/Department Review Process
- UPAC—Biennial SWOT Self Evaluation
- Years 3 & 7 NWCCU Evaluations

**Planning**
- Annual Areas of Focus
- Rolling 4-year Strategic Plans
- Annual Work Plans Resource Requests
- Ongoing Institutional Improvements
  - Institution-wide Plans
    - Inclusion Plan
    - Completion Plan

**Action**
- Resource Allocation
- Complete Work Plans
- Daily Activity
UVU underlying philosophy

• Follow a process regardless of whether or not NWCCU requires it
• Keep the process as simple as possible while still being meaningful
• Create habits through alternating biennial SWOT and self-evaluations, annual updating of unit four-year plans, and annual PBA conversations
• Eliminate secret backroom resource allocation decisions that create unnecessary contention and reduce collaboration and alignment
UVU underlying philosophy

• You must play (plan) to win (receive new resources)
  • Why would a division receive new resources/investments if it has no assessment/plan?

• Assessment (internal self-evaluation and/or external SWOT) makes the best justification for unit strategies and resource requests

• While recognizing that units have their own operational needs, priority is given to initiatives that support institutional areas of focus
What can work for you?

Discussion:

• What are the pros and cons of UVU’s process and philosophy?
• What can (or does) work at your institution?
UVU lessons learned

• Tone, leadership and direction from the President
• Build support from senior and mid-level leaders through consistency, evaluation, adaptation, etc.
• Keep institutional assessment at the 30,000 foot level
• Use institutional assessment to identify strategic areas of focus
• Require resource request to be supported by assessment and aligned with plans
• Tie resource allocation decisions to Core Themes/Administrative Imperatives, strategic areas of focus, and unit plans
UVU lessons learned

• Involve key stakeholders through a representative committee
• Establish routines to foster habits
  • biennial SWOT & self-evaluation
  • annual unit strategic plan updates
  • update “resources/capacity” for accreditation)

Keep it simple, aligned, and integrated
Flossing analogy revisited

• When you first start, flossing can hurt and it may take some time. However, your gums toughen up, you refine an efficient technique, you commit and develop a habit. It’s similar for planning and assessment.

• Flossing can be a bit messy but it’s worthwhile. Planning and assessment can be messy and imperfect, but still worthwhile.

• Just as dentists and dental hygienists help people improve their oral health, our roles in higher education are to improve organizational health.
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Questions?

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