Testimonials for HLC abbreviated self-study:

Our forestry discipline recently completed or accreditation self-study for the Society of American Foresters (SAF). Even though we have completed several self-studies to date, the many workshops hosted by the UWSP Assessment Committee advanced our ability to evaluate what we do, how we do it, and how we link our forestry curriculum amongst faculty. I can safely say these workshops provided us with many new and different approaches to assess our program and courses. The SAF considers assessment as an important part of delivering a sound forestry education.

➢ UWSP Faculty Member in Forestry, College of Natural Resources

Our department participated in all of the assessment workshops. Like any other department, we're busy folks. Most of us didn't receive formalized training in teaching methodology and assessment as graduate students. The Assessment Workshops were very helpful to us in helping us understand how integrated assessment can and should be with our curriculum. In particular, we learned how to incorporate a variety of formative and summative assessment methods that connect learning outcomes in discrete courses to broader programmatic learning outcomes. In other words, we learned that assessment isn't just an administrative task, but a central activity in our department. As a result of these workshops, we have a better—and collective—understanding of the role that assessment plays in ensuring our curriculum remains viable and sustainable.

➢ UWSP Faculty Member in Computing and New Media Technologies, College of Letters and Science

I believe the university’s approach to revising our assessment efforts was insightful and progressive. We stopped a process that was not providing meaningful results, educated ourselves about better practices, trained those who needed to do the work and allowed the users (the faculty) to create a process that will generate a useful result. Departments are now being allowed to implement the new plan in measured steps to permit refinements to take place as we learn the strengths and weaknesses of our initial work.

This bottom up driven plan has helped generate faculty buy in. The sequence of supportive workshops leading to reasonable expectations for progress has been more effective than any campus wide initiative that I can recall in the last quarter century.

➢ UWSP Faculty Member in Theatre and Dance, College of Fine Arts and Communication
As chair of my department’s assessment committee, I have benefitted tremendously from the assessment workshops in which I’ve participated during the past two years. As a result of the assessment methods workshop, in particular, I was able to host two assessment workshops for members of my department. We were able to have a candid discussion about our program learning outcomes, break them down to see how they could be measured, and identify some strategies for measuring learning related to the outcomes. It was a very valuable experience for everyone who participated, because it helped some of them connect more to the idea of assessment and to see how they could participate. For quite some time, assessment in my department has been done by a small group of faculty – only when needed – and the results were never used to improve our teaching or our students’ learning. I feel the training I and a few others received in the assessment workshops run by the Assessment Subcommittee gave me the knowledge and confidence to broaden that discussion.

- UWSP Faculty Member in Communication, College of Fine Arts and Communication

The design of the [Assessment Academy] workshop was extremely well organized. With a clear plan, the workshops took us through the rigor of this important work with not only effective presentations on the methods of assessment but ways of connecting faculty to each other for conversations about the work that are unique to each area.

What brought it all together for me was the final workshop. Up to that point, as mentioned above, our department had a plan and I think a good idea of the overall effectiveness of our teaching. However, the concept of Curriculum Maps put into focus what our department needed for the next step. As a result of your workshop, I found the maps easy to design. Most importantly the maps offer a means for the department to have an ongoing meaningful discussion about our curriculum. With the perspective that we all gained from seeing the “Primary Level” connected to “Secondary Level” courses, we now have an appropriate way to assess our curriculum. Further, we are having a productive discussion on how to design ways of measuring our student learning.

Thanks to you and the sub-committee for the valuable professional-development workshops on assessment. The experiences through those workshops will help us continue the work for years to come.

- UWSP Faculty Member in Music, College of Fine Arts and Communication