

# Setting the Stage for Productive Measures of Learning: Assessment at Brandeis University

Provost Marty Krauss

December 3, 2008



## Building on the 2006 NEASC Re-Accreditation

Brandeis is expected to describe our success in “developing and implementing a comprehensive approach to the assessment of student learning, including the systematic review of academic programs to maintain and improve quality.”

Letter to President Reinhartz from Judith Gordon, Chair, New England Association of Schools & Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, April 10, 2007



## Approaches to Assessment in the Academy: Program Review Practices

### Strong Internal Review Mechanisms:

- School and university faculty committees
- A&S interdisciplinary programs reviewed

### External Reviews in Place:

- Process for external/internal review of research centers
- Accreditation standards for graduate professional schools
- External reviews of schools within A&S and individual departments have occurred regularly



## Phase One: Inventory of Instruments, Data Sets

- Examples: Senior Survey, Career Center Survey, Alumni Survey, Graduate Student Exit Survey (master's and doctoral), Course Evaluations (on-line)
- What are we using well? What could we be doing better?





## Phase One: Inventory of Instruments Data Sets

### o What is missing?

- No clear set of statements about what students are expected to gain, achieve, demonstrate and know after finishing at Brandeis



## Phase One: University Learning Goals

- o Created by NEASC subcommittee
- o Mapped mission to key learning goals
- o cursorily reviewed by department chairs and deans
- o Approved generally re: overarching goals



## Phase One: University Learning Goals

1. Pursue knowledge responsibly, evaluate and transmit it to others
2. Communicate clearly and effectively in both written and oral forms
3. Demonstrate competency and ability in chosen areas of study
4. Appreciate social and ethical responsibilities as citizens of the world



## Phase Two: More to be Done

- o New Provost's Assessment Committee with faculty and student life staff
- o Two cultures coming together
- o Key Principle: Learning occurs both inside and outside the classroom
- o Subcommittee develops learning goals for undergraduates



## Phase Two: Learning Goals for Undergraduates

### Core Skills

- Master communication skills
- Master quantitative skills
- Exhibit strong critical thinking skills

### Knowledge

- Demonstrate intellectual depth, intellectual flexibility and ability to apply knowledge



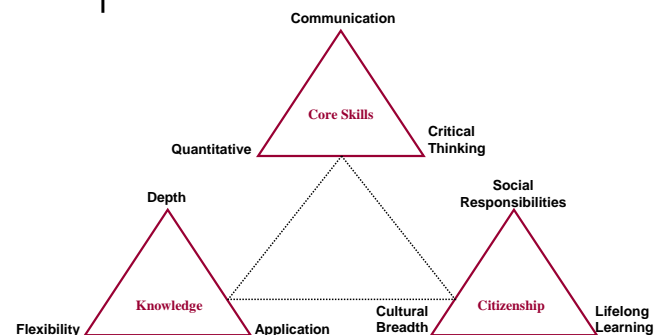
## Phase Two: Learning Goals for Undergraduates

### Citizenship

- Appreciate social and ethical responsibilities as citizens of the world
- Exhibit knowledge of and respect for cultural traditions other than their own
- Deepen desire to inquire and learn throughout life



## Learning Goals for Brandeis Undergraduates



## Next Steps for Provost's Assessment Committee

- Distribute undergraduate learning goals for community feedback and review (faculty committees, students and enrollment units, trustees)
- Work with pilot units (Economics, Math) to develop departmental learning goals within the framework of undergraduate learning goals
- Make visible and culturally embed learning goals to enhance the unique Brandeis experience





### **Lessons Learned: Assessment As a New Academic Function**

- Must be intellectually interesting and engaging
- Demands a full university effort
- Requires management of culture clashes
- Necessitates top leadership
- Requires time (and \$) for full and authentic development

