

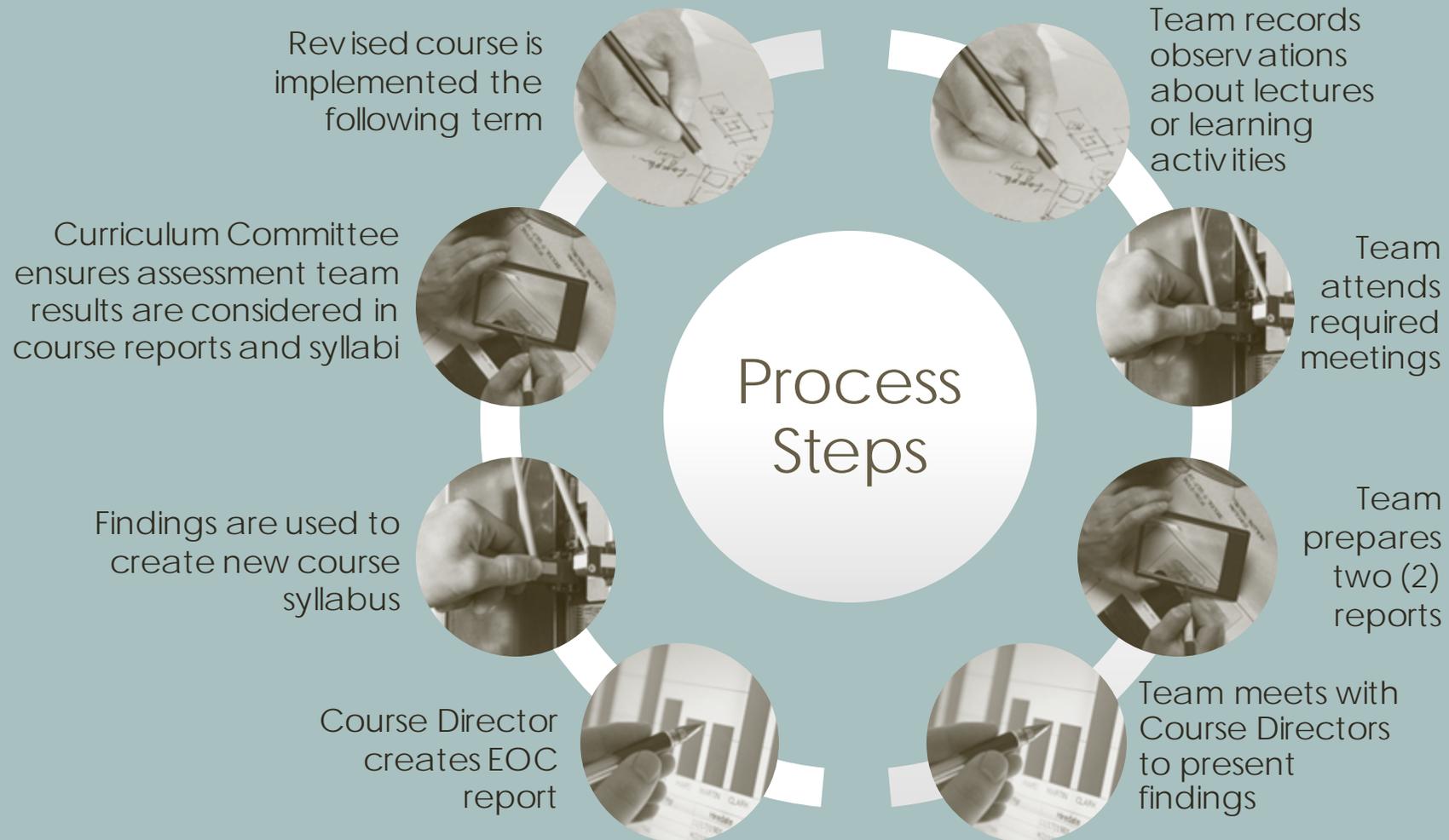
Paying it Forward through Student Collaborations: A Team Approach to Course and Faculty Assessments

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Team Approach to Course/Faculty Assessments



Student Process

- **Students:**

- 16 are randomly selected to serve on each course team
- Are required to serve on at least two (2) teams before leaving didactic years *specified in student handbook*
- Are required to attend all scheduled team meetings
- Record data about their observations and experiences
- Are expected to contribute to the final report
- Attend final meeting with Course Directors (*required for team officers, encouraged for team members*)
- Receive commendation on Dean's letter (MSPE)
 - Level of participation could negate this

Team Process

- **Teams:**
 - Are supported and monitored by the Assessment office
 - Attend a mandatory training session
 - Self-elect officer positions with pre-defined roles
 - Meet every 2-3 weeks to record findings *Google doc*
 - May give mid-course feedback if:
 - urgent change could benefit students for the remainder of the term
 - Course Director requests information on a specific item
 - Create a report based on vetting information coming from the *class consensus based*
 - Present and discuss findings with Course Directors

Assessment team report

- Curriculum Committee approved report templates
 - Flexible; allows faculty to add additional questions
 - Template design teaches students the cognitive task of condensing volumes of recorded information into consensus-based findings
 - Template specifies 2-3 pages
- Structure of feedback is a brief observation narrative followed by bullet point recommendations
- Assessment office reviews initial drafts for clarity
 - Students have noted that our feedback makes report recommendations more likely to be implemented
- Assessment office does **not** change report content

Course report sample

Case Studies/Assignments

The case studies were a good exercise in connecting topics we learned about in lecture and TBLs to an actual patient. The case studies allowed groups to meet to discuss not only the case, but also to relate current research and publications. Students appreciated that feedback was given quickly and that groups were able to look at their previous case before submitting their next one.

We suggest the following recommendations:

- **case studies remain a portion of the course, but a rubric be included to ensure that groups have clear guidance as to what is required**
- **cases could be followed up with a “debrief” as to what the correct course of action would be and the possible outcomes**

Faculty report sample

Dr. Smith

The team agrees that Dr. Smith is a very thorough lecturer who exposes the students to a high volume of the topic in each lecture. His desire to prepare us for the COMLEX is evident and greatly appreciated. Though the class appreciated the thorough nature of Dr. Smith's lecturing, some students expressed frustration regarding his time management. A common finding concerning his lectures is that "they frequently run over the allotted time". This results in the end of his lectures being covered very lightly. Dr. Smith's exam questions are considered fair and an appropriate representative of the material, and overall, the class feels Dr. Smith is an excellent member of the faculty.

We suggest the following recommendations:

- **Schedule extra lecture hours for review of material not covered like Dr. Jones did at the end of the microbiology course.**
- **Include TurningPoint questions or another form of student participation that would help solidify understanding.**

Benefits of student-led assessment

Students:

- Work collaboratively as a team on a professional committee
- Demonstrate professional behaviors with their peers, the Assessment office and faculty
- Gain improved professional written and oral communication skills
 - Training includes how to author constructive feedback
- Understand how offering recommendations leads to continuous curricular improvement
- Feel like valued stakeholders

Students benefit the next cohort, or “pay it forward.”

Benefits of student-led assessment

Students say...

- “Benefits are from a professional development standpoint. Allowing students to hone those skills of giving constructive feedback before stepping into the field is useful.”
- “It was important for personal accountability regarding attendance and report deadlines.”
- “Having the final meeting with Course Directors gives us the opportunity to give feedback, even though we may be uncomfortable presenting to someone that is a superior. It is a valuable skill.”
- “It is reassuring to know we are heard.”

Benefits of student-led assessment for faculty

- Eliminates cheap shots on anonymous surveys
 - Faculty find it useful to read a professional, condensed report with actionable items
- Eliminates faculty “cherry picking” feedback to be included in End-of-Course reporting
 - LMU-DCOM faculty must attach assessment team feedback to EOC reports submitted to the Curriculum Committee
- 83.3% of Course Directors agree they have changed their course based on Student Assessment Team feedback.
- 86% of teaching faculty agree they have changed their personal teaching based on individual Student Assessment Team feedback.

Benefits of student-led assessment for faculty

Faculty say...

- "It is better, more concise and thought out rather than [reading] 200 random comments."
- "The assessment teams are infinitely more helpful than information gathered from surveys."
- "For the most part the assessment team is more useful, especially than the open-ended survey questions. Open-ended survey questions tend to be answered by students who have strong emotional reasons for responding; often they contradict each other. For example, some students are bored because the pace is too slow, while other students would complain that the pace was too rapid. The team approach seems to filter this to produce a useful balance."

What is needed for implementation

- The backing of Curriculum Committee/Administration
 - Pilot first, gather focus group feedback from the team, then implement
 - Make student participation mandatory
- Course Director/Faculty buy-in:
 - Encourage training session attendance where they briefly address multiple teams of students *student anonymity is retained*
 - Identify champions
- Committed Assessment office
 - Electronic surveys vs. assessment team workload is about equal
 - Perks of teams include working with student groups, witnessing students improve their feedback skills and facilitating exchange of ideas for implementation between students and Course Directors