

Open Pathways Assessment Day Survey Results – April 3, 2013

Question 1: What have you learned about your program as a result of testing the Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile?

Responses below indicate that the respondents learned something that presumably could strengthen their programs

Positive Themes

- 1. Examined the relationship between course and program goals.**
- 2. Examined course design and course integration.**
- 3. More closely examined the relationship between student learning outcomes and actual student learning.**
- 4. Recognized the need for multiple assessment points.**
- 5. Reevaluated assessment tools.**
- 6. Made curricular revisions.**
- 7. Reinforced the fact that programs are teaching and assessing appropriately already.**
- 8. Helped us to align our mission, goals, student learning outcomes, and assignments that allowed students to accomplish the outcomes.**

Specific Comments

1. That some of our assessment tools were inadequate in providing the desired data.
2. We have been collecting data for numerous performance tasks and key assessments in our college/program for several years, so doing it for the Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile was really no different for us, other than putting the information in a different format. We continue to learn that the majority of our students perform at the level of experience that we expect and want them to prior to graduating.
3. I've learned that what I expected of students, and what they revealed, were not quite in line. The problem is on my side, and I would re-write some of the objectives.
4. That our program needs to collect more data before it can state it has a definitive analysis. Our program has only graduated four classes. Therefore, we need to continue to gather data and make adjustments. However, through the Lumina project it does appear that our program is on the correct path with the way course are evolving.
5. The need to truly evaluate student learning.
6. We needed to work on assessing dispositions.
7. I have learned that there are different ways to do assessment of student performance as it is almost the same as our program's current assessment model. Also, it is a good idea to do an assessment at the entry and exit levels.
8. It formalized and confirmed more informal analysis of how courses in the program fit together.
9. The department has learned that we need to better refine and reshape our lower-level courses that are delivered to all of the majors within our department to get back to the true "integrated" nature of our department. It was noted and discussed that several years ago we were doing a good job of ensuring points of emphasis from each discipline was brought forward and stressed in courses such as 111, 120, 130, 220, etc. but that we had gotten away from that integration. Redoing and revisiting our learning objectives last fall have caused us all to take a look at those courses to see what each of us can contribute to ensure we get back to our "roots." This can be accomplished by looking at our courses in 3 levels: base - convey background knowledge and students gain an understanding of material; mid - program way of hands-on instruction and

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exploration; high - courses where learning initiates problem solving exploration and techniques to investigate new methods. From this project, we know that we must revisit what made our program work from the beginning and that is integrating the following into our 1xx and 2xx courses: technology, quantitative reasoning, crossing disciplinary borders, and communication skills.

10. What we have already been doing matches the Lumina outcomes fairly well. We needed to define "capstone" a bit differently. We are strapped for resources to do all the Lumina expects. Faculty individually did some rethinking about what happens in the classroom and devised more assessment tools that helped improve the class. There wasn't a place for those individual initiatives, however, to be reflected in the profile. Syllabi need to be changed considerable to comply with the profile, but all the changes weren't necessarily for the better.
11. Sixteen faculty members participated in compiling our summary responses. Responses focused on awareness of the need to more clearly tie course goals/outcomes to program outcomes. Secondary issues identified the need for better course sequencing within the program, the value of multiple measurement points, and that the process actually supports what is already being done.
12. Our program has been using assessments similar to this already. This will help compile information and quantify what we have. It clarified the structure and flow of the degree majors. We have learned more about the assessment process. The DQP is mapped out to show if our courses don't always line up with program goals and allows us to track students' progress. Our existing major test covers/expects learning on all of the Lumina Foundation categories (domains).
13. We are on the right track. We do have a bit of "housekeeping" to finish up in our assessment of our first assessment point, and of the Senior Capstone. Some of the questions that we are asking need a bit more consideration and fine tuning. There is no question that in several instances we were able to make significant changes in the courses design and effectiveness. We have also found a common vocabulary that has proven invaluable in discussions of assessment.
14. That our program of study could be better coordinated with more logical progression through the program. That we needed more focus on expected outcomes and more clarity about what our program goals and objectives should be, making them action-oriented. That we needed to revise our curriculum.
15. For the last few months, our program has been actively pursuing obtaining specialized accreditation. The Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile work helped us to ensure that all bases are covered for student learning outcomes. It also helped us to clearly distinguish between program educational objectives and student learning outcomes. Mapping program objectives to course objectives, and course objectives to student learning outcomes turned out to be a rewarding exercise, though took lots of time. Rubrics to quantify traits need more refinement.
16. I have learned that our objectives needed a little "tweaking" to be more specific to what we do in our program. We did revise our objectives quite a bit as a result of this process.
17. The student's ability to understand and integrate information presented in class has been a long term concern of our faculty. It is obvious that the Lumina Foundation is similarly concerned. The degree profile qualifications have systematically made the faculty aware of the assessment styles necessary to hold students accountable for UNDERSTANDING (rather than memorizing) disseminated material.
18. We discovered that the number and nature of our learning outcomes made it difficult to effectively introduce, reinforce, and finally assess them across an interdisciplinary major.

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19. That our programs already fulfill much of the DQP, even before we rewrote our program objectives to align with its framing. We are, of course, still taking exception that any program would teach multiple languages or multiple disciplines.
20. We have learned that we need to work more with adjuncts and other faculty members in helping identify and measure learning outcomes more consistently.
21. Its ability to objectively optimize student learning and foster scholarship in addressing the needs of stakeholders, families, society and related businesses in local communities, the state, nation and globally.
22. We've been able to focus in on some disjunctures between program objectives/mission and student learning in the program. For example: we were able to identify some issues related to the relationship between our comprehensive exam and the final project or thesis. Depending on the student and project, learning objectives were, at times, working at cross-purposes. So we've been able to bring these two aspects closer in sync with one another and provide what we think is a better learning experience for our students.
23. We have looked more deeply into the outcomes we want our students to achieve and also to better ways to measure student achievement toward those outcomes.
24. Overall, we discovered that we were doing better than we had thought, but we also learned that we did not do a very good job of identifying how assignments reflected the learning objectives. We changed this for the better identification for students.
25. That one of our programs did not have program student learning outcomes; that another program was not directly assessing its learning outcomes; that course outcomes needed to be condensed; that our programs needed to distinguish between objectives and outcomes.
26. The process has encouraged the faculty to engage in conversation regarding our curriculum. We have discussed student learning outcomes for each course and as a result started dialogue regarding our expectations which will assist us with current and new faculty.

Responses below are critical or indicate that the respondents felt they learned nothing of value

Negative Themes

1. **Specialized accreditation made this exercise redundant and hence, unnecessary.**
2. **Comparing achievement of students from different cohorts is problematic.**
3. **Having faculty do their own assessment is a threat to the integrity of the data.**
4. **We believe the DQP does not reflect what “real” education is all about and the approach we currently use in our program does.**
5. **DQP expectations are too high for MU students.**

Specific Comments

1. Nothing
2. Very little, because our program is accredited and already has a significant assessment/evaluation process in place. We have found it difficult to merge accreditation requirements with those of the Degree Qualifications Profile, which causes redundancy and unnecessary additional workload and time involvement.
3. We have learned that program assessment is full of pitfalls and that although well-intentioned the veracity of the findings of the Lumina project is questionable. Here are the two major concerns expressed by my faculty. 1. Self-report. Although the use of rubrics aligned with program outcomes is interesting, it all hinges on a self-report of student performance by individual faculty. Even if one assumes - rightly - that faculty will not intentionally skew the data,

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it nevertheless is possible. In other words there is no practical way to verify the integrity or accuracy of the data reported. Given what we know of human nature, and the implied point/hope of assessment (that things are going well), it is not hard to see how this is a real concern be it done consciously or subconsciously. 2. The cohorts (at least for now) are not consistent over time. In other words, even assuming accurate data, one would need to track the learning of the same students over time to get an accurate assessment of student learning. However as currently practiced the Lumina project measures different students (different cohorts) and compares them to each other. To get an accurate measure one would need to measure the same students in assessment point #1 and assessment point #2.

4. It is a lot of work which duplicates the same information required by accreditation programs.
5. Please see question 5 (benefits/consequences), however, our Department has been doing significant self-evaluations for a number of years and has had an external review.
6. The stark contrast between the assumptions and procedures of the Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile and those of our program has confirmed the validity of our own approach. It is clear to us that the assumptions and procedures of the DQP altogether fail to recognize what education is, or even the realities of how technical skills are acquired. The extreme contrast has confirmed for us that our pre-existing approach and procedures really do engage with the reality of education and, for that matter, with the teaching of technical skills, and that they do so very effectively.
7. It didn't always properly articulate how a given course fits into a process of learning that reinforces in a progressive manner the mechanism by which the overall objectives (such as grasp and application of the material) are shaped.
8. Nothing of value; it did force me to practice writing more effective rubrics.
9. We learned more about our program through the recent specialized accreditation review process. Since that process occurred a few months ahead of Lumina most of our assessments were already revised and related program revisions already underway.
10. Our program may not have learned as much as some programs because of our existing specialized accreditation. The process of mapping objectives from classes to the program made it clearer what role each course plays in the overall program objectives. Some changes were made to course objectives and assignments to better align courses and program objectives. In general, this adjustment was to move to higher levels of learning outcomes. Overall, for our program, the consensus was that the project added documentation and effort while providing few benefits.
11. The one and only one positive thing that came out of the Lumina work is we were able to discuss and share ideas about what each of us does in the classroom. By looking at how our students are excellent and the progress they have made, then seeing how those excellences (manifest by national recognition, graduate school acceptance, publication, conference acceptances, etc.) do not fit with the Lumina guidelines, I have learned that there is a great deal of mismeasurement out there and misrecognition of what higher education is. Marshall University is not ITT Tech and should never try to be.
12. 8 faculty in our unit provided written answers to this question. 3 of the 8 faculty report "Nothing," as follows: (1) Nothing I did not already know; (2) I haven't taught in the designated courses so I have not yet experienced its use; (3) Nothing yet; it's too early to see how and to what extent the data gathered will impact our programs. 5 of the 8 faculty report the following lessons learned to date: 1) The expectations RE student performance/achievement at the Bachelor's level, both in Core Curriculum and major-specific terms, are too high for MU. 2) Our program has a sound structure, with good PLO's. We are taking appropriate steps to

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promote/facilitate student achievement of our PLO's. 3) Our program is well-designed to teach and assess discipline-specific problem-solving, written communications, and oral communications. We continue to have weaknesses in assessing and teaching Teamwork. 4) Our programs are headed, broadly, in the right direction.

13. To complete this survey, I asked three program heads to fill it out and return. Needless to say, there is no consensus. The expectation that there will be consensus, e.g. in the second questions, demonstrates a fundamental problem with this approach. I will give you a summary: Two of the three (and I concur) feel that the testing of the Lumina Foundation's profile allows programs to examine and adjust their own program goals. One feels that such a cookie-cutter approach flies in the face of what education is supposed to. In my view the profile was rigid and did not take into consideration the stages necessary for language acquisitions, which begins as skills acquisition and then moves into other areas.
14. We have not learned anything other than what we learn in our usual assessment process for accreditation.
15. Our department found little of value in the DQP.
16. The answer to this question is complex. On the one hand, an expected type of answer for this question might be that, in earlier activities, we failed to appropriately identify expected performance levels when we determined the numbers of students in the assessed classes who might meet particular performance levels for each trait. Additionally, it became clear that we might want to revisit our rubrics on some traits because they do not adequately capture the variability in performance across students. We identified two classes to assess at Point 1 (and our Capstone classes to assess at Point 2), and we identified a single exercise to use in the Point 2 classes for the purposes of assessment. Capstone students did not complete the same exercise. On the other hand, there is irony in the apparent point of the question and this assessment exercise: To make inferences based on differences in performance observed at Assessment Points 1 and 2 as demanded by the DPQ exercises violates the principles of experimental design and statistical inference that we are purportedly teaching in our courses. There are at least four issues with this assessment as an experimental design:
 - a. *The underlying populations of students at Assessment Point 1 and Assessment Point 2 are not the same.* The two classes we use for assessment point 1 are required classes for all students who major in our discipline (and as a result, these classes selected for assessment activities); at least one course can be considered a service class. Many students who take the class are not our majors, but they are students in other majors, often from other colleges who are encouraged to take the course to fulfill the requirements of their majors. Furthermore, many students select out of our major before they take the second course. The implied goal of assessment as posed by this question is to compare the performance of students at Point 1 with students at Point 2 (as assessed in Capstone), but these are not the same students and they will never be the same students, even if we can account for the difference in years that it might take to get from the first assessment point to the second.
 - b. *The assessments are not measured in the same way between Points 1 and 2.* For example, our program's second learning outcome is that students will analyze and evaluate basic research methods in our field. At Point 1, they engage in a data analysis

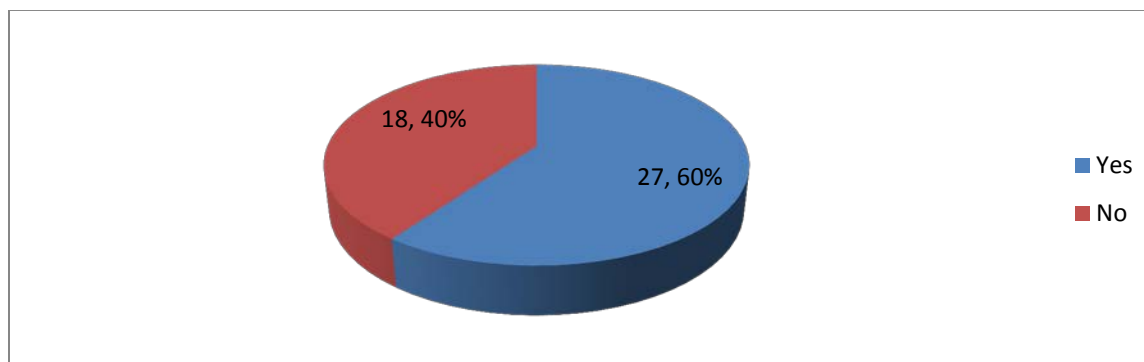
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project that involves completing a *t*-test and examining the design for flawed inference. At Point 2 (Capstone), they complete a written paper and an oral presentation, which may or may not involve any statistical hypothesis testing. These differences exist for all of the learning outcomes. In our discipline, we would say that the operational definitions of “analyze and evaluate basic research methods” are different between Points 1 and 2. One cannot compare performance on one operationalization of a construct with an entirely different operationalization of the construct.

- c. *The skills being assessed are not the same.* Related to criticism (b) above, the skills that students use in order to complete a single *t*-test or to complete a written project and present it orally may be wholly independent skill sets, without any relation to one another.
- d. *The data collection is unethical.* In the second course used to measure student learning at Assessment Point 1, students learn that participants in research are valuable and their responses are valuable. They learn that the data collected from participants should be defensibly collected, respecting the participants’ time and energy, and using their responses in a way that promotes a better understanding of some phenomenon. If no defensible inference can be drawn from Points 1 and 2 via this assessment method, we cannot say that we have a better understanding of our students’ performance, and yet we require it from students anyway, without respect for their time or the energy they put into it.

The irony here is that if we presented these assessment data and the circumstances of their collection to our students, and if these students attempted to make the comparison of performance between Points 1 and 2 of this assessment, they would, by virtue of the foregoing set of threats to the validity of the assessment, fail to reach even the milestone level of achievement as we have defined it. Thus, it is difficult to answer this question, and difficult to administer the assessments when savvy students question the methodology and its purpose, because the appropriate response to them is that it is not a defensible assessment strategy.

Question 2: Do you believe that using a Degree Qualifications Profile, such as the one developed by the Lumina Foundation, has the potential to improve student learning?



Question 3: Please elaborate on your response to the question above.

Positive Themes

- 1. Makes goals explicit for students.**
- 2. Promotes active learning and authentic assessment.**
- 3. Makes connections between course and program outcomes explicit.**
- 4. Establishes consistency of outcomes across course sections.**
- 5. Keeps all elements of the course focused on the development of the student.**
- 6. Emphasizes the feedback loop.**

Yes Responses

1. Yes, only if faculty use the data analysis to evaluate their students and their progress. If programs really take a hard look at the results from the assessments and use them to improve the program, then I think it will ultimately improve student learning. On the other hand, if the reports are submitted just because they have to be and no one takes a hard look the results then the student improvement will not be affected.
2. As long as we are allowed to be as lenient as you have been in interpreting what the intention was rather than what the reality was department by department.
3. For programs without an assessment process already in place, we see potential to improve the evaluation of student learning. However, we are not convinced that the process does improve actual student learning.
4. I feel it can help evolve student learning by keeping the assignments, tasks, and tests all focused on the entire development of the student.
5. I think we have carefully throughout the years assessed and evaluated our program due to the specific accreditation standards we have to meet. This forced us to really look at our learning outcomes for students.
6. I think it is appropriate at the undergraduate level to assure all students receive a standardized foundation in their field.
7. The faculty feel that it would be beneficial for any program NOT accredited by an outside agency. Programs with specialized accreditation are doing the exact same thing as Lumina program.
8. It has the potential to encourage faculty to examine their processes. Classes may be improved for students. It forces faculty to focus on their syllabi. It helps create consistency in outcomes across multiple sections of the same course. The outcomes in the syllabus reveal more to the students than a catalog description. It may help them make decisions about a course within the first week of class. Pitfalls can result from the project as well. The outcomes can encourage teaching to the test, and restrict the course to the point of limiting flexibility and ability to move in a new direction quickly.
9. In Question 2, "Yes" was selected slightly more than "No". Positives focused on the value of identifying the ties between course and program outcomes.
10. The most important part of the process that was missing for us prior to the development using Lumina was the feedback loop. We do loads of assessment but have not often used it to change what we are doing. The faculty will know more about the students. By giving program-level rather than class-level feedback. It will help instructors be more deliberate about assessment. It may highlight holes that we didn't know were there. The Profile could help us focus on what is most important. It gives an opportunity for reflection. I'm sure that any feedback about student learning will provide valuable insights about ways we can improve our courses and our

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program. Improved student learning comes from active engagement with the material. The DQP provides a new approach of assessing students' learning.

11. It gives the process of assessment a structure and provides a lens to clearly examine what's being taught, its effectiveness and how much students are retaining.
12. Only if we get to use it (that we don't change YET AGAIN). If it eventually is a reasonable approach to assessment, not burdensome to faculty. We were told this would be bottom up, but it has become top down.
13. Using a Degree Qualifications Profile does help in bringing structure for course content and lays the framework for assessment. This is only one aspect of the problem. Instruction delivery, course management, and pedagogy issues are not addressed by the Degree Qualifications Profile.
14. Because the project helps relate the overall goals with the goals in each course it potentially creates a more dynamic and self-reinforcing learning process for the student.
15. Again, like my response in the first question, our objectives were not really as reflective of what we were actually doing, and how we were measuring student performance - now they are more reflective of that, and will help in improving student learning.
16. The program was split on the potential. Some members said no emphatically. Potential improvement is greater for programs without well-developed assessment programs already in existence. For our own program, little increased student learning is likely as few changes were made.
17. 5 of the 8 faculty respondents said YES; 2 said NO; 1 said "Not Sure." The reasons elaborated upon by those who answered YES are: 1) Explicit PLO's make us think critically about how we are designing our courses to achieve our desired outcomes. Assessment of student achievement helps us improve our course offerings for future students. 2) The DQP can help students understand better what they should be accomplishing in our programs. 3) The DQP encourages reflection in a group setting. It also encourages better coordination of expectations across faculty. 4) Setting specific PLO's assists the instructor in assessing the learning process in a scientific manner. The enhancement of learning will be a systematic and cumulative process.
18. Three agree; one does not. Two feel that having clear goals aids student learning.
19. 1) It systematically allows students to know "what to expect" in terms of how they are going to be evaluated. 2) It holds faculty accountable for comprehensive and accurate assessments of student performance. 3) It promotes the use of essay, case study, and other forms of testing in lieu of the standard "bubble sheet" testing.
20. Any careful examination of curriculum has the potential to improve student learning. That said, we didn't find Lumina's DQP especially helpful in this re-examination.
21. It has this potential, but it is cumbersome and frustrating to enter the information requested. It feels like we are fitting the responses to the "program," rather than designing the course to the needs of the course. It feels VERY bureaucratic.
22. It has potential I suppose, but whether or not it will, needs more evidence.
23. Helps to focus on both academic and professional competencies that prepare the individual as a critical thinker and able to productively apply expertise to different situations.
24. Yes - though, I think it has some drawbacks because of its narrow focus in some areas.
25. Going through this process allows us to better articulate our goals and to then incorporate those on our syllabi. The new syllabus policy forces us to articulate to our students how the assignments in the class meet the objectives. In that sense this process has the potential to improve student learning.

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26. Saying it has potential and its actually happening are two different ideas. Student learning will be improved when students and faculty both actively engage in the process. Learning is not a one-sized process whereby one or the other side gets to 'sit' and watch. Faculties need to respond to the students in real time not next term or next year...learning is now in the present. Students need to be prepared to learn, not just play 'catch-up,' but to really take inventory of what they need to challenge themselves and move forward.
27. It makes us look at the outcomes; helped us determine how certain assignments meet outcomes.

Negative Themes

1. **Too "one-size" fits all.**
2. **Not possible to assess critical thinking, even with best rubrics.**
3. **Comparing performance of different student cohorts at points 1 and 2 is not valid.**
4. **Treats education like "skills" training.**
5. **Is too simplistic.**
6. **The DQP is an organizational device, not an assessment tool.**
7. **Objectives alone are not enough to improve student learning.**

No Responses

1. Those who answered NO elaborated as follows: 1) The administrative structure of the Lumina Project has turned an educational endeavor into a training exercise for faculty. Assessing the qualitative nature of higher education (e.g., CT abilities) is impossible with even the best rubrics. The Assessment Program focuses on the details and misses the big, qualitative picture. 2) Expectations set for our students are too high.
2. One feels that teachers who need a blueprint will not be good teachers.
3. I do think these help the program refine data collection, but I don't think any of the changes really impact student learning one way or the other.
4. We already have assessment procedures in place that are much more comprehensive.
5.
 - The wording of the different categories is confusing so if the professor is not clear about how he/ she will explain it to a student?
 - The measuring of the exit level does not assess the same population or cohort than the entry level so fair conclusions are difficult to associate. And I don't agree that is considered at the program level.
 - It is difficult to draw conclusions if the student has not the same standards of expectations because it is measured by two different faculty with different set of expectations and assignments.
 - By experience it takes a lot of involvement of the professor to emphasis the goals/objectives/trait and if the professor offering the capstone does not have the same incentive to teach and reemphasis what it was taught at the entry level (the first effort at P1) the student will not learn it. And for our program does not offer its own capstone so students have to take capstones in other departments, so the program and the outcomes [which is learning] will never align. This is for both oral and written communications as well for Finances which require a lot of dedication.
 - The positive of Lumina is that has forced the professors of our department to speak with the professors of the department offering the capstone. It may improve learning but in the very long term as it is designed.
 - I consider without sense that civic engagement has to be applied to all schools. It was extremely hard to apply it to our program.
6. No one answered yes outright to this question. One faculty member argued that if we think this is the way to improve learning then it should be front and center and posted on every web site we have and advertised on posters as students walk in, but at the same time, if that is done and

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it is indicated what is expected for the DQP, then the fear is that students will not pay attention to what they are to learn outside of the DQP indicators. Others like some of the components but do not feel it is improving student learning, but instead, changing their teaching styles. Students do not read the syllabi so how is it improving? Another individual then spoke up who believes it has the potential to improve learning at the course level, but we agreed that we are too early in the stage to know for sure. There were also some questions, such as how can it improve learning? What can we do to better improve student learning as a whole? Some asked for presentations, readings, and training along these lines.

7. Not for us. Our Department has already implemented an improvement program. We find the Lumina mandate to be an inefficient and ineffective use of faculty time.
8. The Lumina Foundation's DQP treats education as if it were skills training. The focus is on standardly and stably specifiable criteria producing outcomes that can be compared with each other. Most of what education has to offer does not fit into this mold, as human capacities are specified by criteria that are unlimited in number and indefinitely various in quality. (The history of the theory and development of IQ testing, for example, has demonstrated this to the satisfaction of most of its scholars and informed practitioners.) Human lives and the processes that lend to them are not describable by formulae and so cannot be prepared for or assessed by formulae. What is more, even the more limited and shallower undertaking that is skills training depends on these indefinitely flexible human capacities. While the skills can be specified in standardized ways, the ways in which they are acquired are parts of the indefinitely flexible human process that belongs to the broader context of real education. Further, each step of establishing and applying the DQP's own data requires exactly the unlimitedly various, non-comparable qualitative judgments that it aims to replace with comparison of stable common features. The procedure relies at every step on exactly what it believes it succeeds in supplementing and improving upon. As a result, while the Lumina Foundation's DQP is a very well worked out organizational device, it is not one that is capable of recognizing what education is, let alone of assessing it. Equally, it is not designed to address or assess what skills training actually consists in. We are not denying the importance of assessment, but noting that assessment in education, as in human life, is not a matter of formulae but of informed, continuously flexible judgment.
9. Without tracking either individual students or cohorts of students, the data are meaningless...as it is now, pre- and post- data collected in the same year are compared against each other--this has ZERO validity.
10. Because we already have an accreditation process designed for the purpose of continuous improvement I did not find the Lumina process to be helpful or necessary. However, a college or program that does not have an accrediting body should be able to benefit more from the process.
11. It's like calories. Through personal experience and review of the literature, we all can see that calories really aren't the be-all and end-all about weight loss or gain. Insulin resistance, genetic predisposition, exercise, glycemic load, mood, medication, social factors, time and speed of ingestion, and stress are all factors to give a better picture of how food works in the body. Calories, on the other hand, are easily and cheaply countable, so they get the most attention. 1000 calories of lard, legumes, or bread all behave quite differently in a body, and if a person just counts calories without paying attention to other factors, they are likely to be depressed at their outcomes. Lumina is the academic version of calorie counting. It emphasizes certain narrow, countable slices of an educational picture, with some gaping holes in student development as well as some basic skills. Hell, if someone at the Lumina foundation just looked

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at a list of departments at ANY university, he would have seen that there were some basic competencies the plan just plain missed.

12. Having a set of objectives alone is not sufficient to change the administrative, legislative, or societal support for higher education. We would hate to see the DQP turn into "no child left behind" style testing and teaching to tests as we see in primary and secondary education. Marshall faculty now face the consequences of that mentality in the sadly unprepared students we are forced to remediate.
13. Our program has been successfully placing graduates into employment and graduate school for many years without the DQP. Our most recent 5-year assessment showed 97% (!) of students employed in the profession or in graduate school. Positive feedback from alumni and their employers – which we receive on a regular basis and independent of university initiatives like Open Pathways – is a far better measure of program effectiveness than the DQP. Although there are always ways to improve one's program, we feel that our time would be better spent teaching rather than on seemingly endless assessment.
14. We hope that our answer to question 1 above is sufficient to illustrate that our best students—should they be motivated enough to investigate these data on their own—would conclude, after reviewing the data in the report, that our participation in this project represents a flawed system.
15. Negatives focused on the one-size-fits-all process that may not work equally well across colleges/programs.
16. It is not helpful to make our outcomes fit those of Lumina.
17. Not every bachelor degree is the same and it is difficult to have common language across disciplines regarding the level of learning

Question 4: What do you think are the real benefits and unintended consequences of a Degree Qualifications Profile on higher education?

Themes – Benefits

1. Encourages comprehensive review of curriculum.
2. Provides a vehicle to help higher education achieve excellence.
3. Challenges faculty to be more intentional in what they do.
4. Has potential to improve the caliber of our graduates.
5. Emphasizes the interconnectedness of courses.
6. Improves learning through setting clear expectations and encouraging self-reflection.
7. Places an emphasis on program assessment.
8. Offers everyone, students, faculty, and other stakeholders, a clear understanding of what is expected of students in the program.

Themes – Unintended Consequences

1. Too great a time commitment for faculty.
2. Reduces class flexibility – temptation to “teach to the test.”
3. Too prescriptive.
4. Feels uncomfortable.
5. Too rigid.
6. Can't compare the same outcomes using students from different majors.
7. Might cause a program to have to restructure its courses.

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Specific Comments

1. The benefits for a program such as ours are to look at multiple courses and refine data collection so the program itself can be evaluated.
2. For programs to take a hard look at the performance of their students, how they improve/progress through the program from the initial stage to graduation. If programs use the information gathered to improve the program, they will ultimately improve the caliber of student that graduates from that program and the university.
3. Mostly busy work. Everybody will make sure their trend lines show improvement from the first to second assessment points.
4. As much as this has been painful, a more standardized assessment tool across institutions seems like a good idea. But the results need to be taken with a grain of salt in certain settings. I've been teaching almost 30 years, at a wide variety of institutions, and I have to alter my pedagogy for each institution.
5. A Degree Qualification Profile helps you identify and assess the skills/knowledge important for graduates to leave the institution well-prepared for future endeavors (i.e. higher learning, professional practice, civic engagement). It is less useful in identifying necessary skills and knowledge for a particular profession/practice. Because the focus is departmental, the Profile fails to assess students' total learning experience outside their major department.
6. Some of the real benefits are the ability to, through Lumina, have data formatted in a way that show programs are meeting students' needs. Lumina helps program to focus their structure in a manner that helps students develop. Then, Lumina helps the program provide documentation of learning met, outcomes met, student development met. The unintended consequences are that, while not with this school, a program might have to restructure its course content. Assignments that might be staples of the course might have to be redeveloped or eliminated because they do not promote a desired outcome for that level course or that level student.
7. Improved assessment of student learning.
8. I think it is important that we be able to indicate what students should know and be able to do when they complete a program.
9. I don't see any real benefit as each school has its own accreditation organization and different programs' requirements are different from each other. And adding Lumina requires effort to an already taxed faculty in their workload. Unintended consequence is the administration of the University trying to compare communications outcomes from liberal arts [or another school] with our school which is comparing apples with oranges from my own point of view.
10. Potential benefits: a uniform system to measure student performance. Unintended Consequences: extra paperwork/time commitment by faculty.
11. For undergrads, it provides standardization. As a consequence, it appears too rigid to provide for the needs of all students. Specifically, at the graduate level with students who come in with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and topic knowledge, each time the course is taught, it is tailored to the needs of that particular group of students. Graduate students are typically working professionals in the field already having foundational knowledge, so the class has to be flexible enough to meet their diverse needs.
12. Redefining and refining our learning objectives has made several faculty more intentional in their development of assessments and delivery of course content. The syllabus' rubrics made it easier to show students what they were working toward as well. One instructor even changed his upper-level courses based on the learning objectives implemented in his lower-level course. Another instructor has been able to make content more specific because of the course objectives listing manner in the syllabus. Several indicated a phenomenon they have noticed in

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their classes that they have dubbed "coveritis" - that being to try to cover too much material too quickly just to ensure they talked about each of the rubric areas within their class. Even so, it does allow instructors the opportunity to stress (intentionally) our integrated teaching approach, stressing to students that our learning strategies are what bring them together across their multiple disciplines. There is a concern, though, that the downstream work involved in changing books will be a deterrent to ever changing courses (syllabi revision, fitting in rubric details, course objective matrices edits, etc.). If an instructor needs to change a course at the midpoint in a semester due to student progress, the rubrics and matrices make it hard to do so. Other thoughts on this were that some felt they were going to have to build in assessments to their courses that are not chapter/book driven which could take away from what is important to their course. By the same token, others stated that this has caused them to take interest in explaining to students how the content relates to the final objectives of their degree curriculum. This has exposed a perceived weakness in freshman classes within our senior project four years down the road (as noted in #1). We then grabbed a student who is one of our better students and asked their opinion. They stated that they like the course objectives as laid out in the syllabus, knowing how they will be assessed and what is to take place in the course. There has been some confusion conveyed in a couple of courses, especially adjuncts, on how the objectives matrices are to work and relate to their course.

13. University is paying a lot of money out to duplicate same program as accreditation. Non accredited programs would benefit from doing the work.
14. While we believe that the long term tracking involved in Lumina will be of little to no benefit to this Department, choosing the learning outcomes for our program and the associated courses has caused us to look at the curricula associated with those courses. In a few cases, most notably our Seminar course, we have developed grading rubrics for the senior seminar and Capstone paper to distributed to students. There has also been some consideration of how to better support the interconnectedness of our courses.
15. Benefits / With student buy in it could have value, but that buy in is rare. Unintended consequences / Encourages teaching to the test and reduces class flexibility. Who bears the consequences of assessment? Will faculty suffer if their assessments fall short? What is the point of assessment if there are no consequences? The emphasis on assessment can lead to "assessment inflation" just as there has been "grade inflation." We can lower expectations of performance to increase assessment results. It's difficult to determine what a rubric label is communicating. For example, "capstone" seems to be a minimum measure. It appears any student meeting minimum criteria is a capstone student. There could be A, B and C students at the capstone level. The rubrics seem to be less discriminating than grades. The system seems to be dragging down the exceptional student so that can meet the minimum.
16. Benefits focused clearly on the fact that if the results are used prescriptively, a consistently better-prepared graduate will be the result. Unintended Consequences focused on the most negative connotation of "teaching the test". That is, will courses lack the individuality and personal flavor that expose students to many views of a discipline? Other Unintended Consequences focused on the lack of common students at multiple test points, the perception that students do not care about this process, and that there is the potential to harm retention rates due to more failures mid-stream.
17. It offers all involved in a Program a clear picture of what is expected of students in the Program. May be an easier way to compile information. Improved information flow, possibly across the whole higher education. It will be more likely that we'll individualize the way we guide students. Improving the assessment process and degree program. It can make the curriculum more

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relevant. Now for the unintended consequences: An unintended consequence might be a focus on surface features of the degree, rather than deep learning, with a consequent homogenization of the programs. I am concerned that rather than being used to identify student and program weaknesses to target for improvement, the Profile will be used as a basis to withhold funding/support from “underperforming” Programs, as happens in K-12. Faculty will get bogged down in ever-increasing record-keeping. Watering down the program. Some courses may be dropped, and others severely changed. Extra committee work, extra paperwork.

18. There are no benefits for higher education: no doubt it has benefits, but not as a procedure for addressing education or skills training. An unintended consequence is that it takes up a tremendous amount of time, attention, and energy that should be given to our students and to working on our teaching.
19. For benefits, see answers #1 and #2. As far as "unintended consequences" are concerned, the faculty felt that the shifting of outcome narrative caused some issues in the process. We began with certain benchmarks that got changed over time and this proved to be frustrating and difficult. We also find that because we are a small program the notion of "systematizing" can be problematic. Our students received a good deal of personalized teaching and mentoring that is not easy to report. Our disciplinary progress is very often subjective by its very nature and not easily quantifiable.
20. Real benefit: more clear instruction; self-reflection, standardization across disciplines, more clear expectations, focus on instruction. Unintended consequences: disenchantment from having to switch assessment methods so many times; burden on faculty.
21. Using a Degree Qualifications Profile forces faculty to look at “big picture” issues and helps to track students' intellectual development as they progress through the curriculum. There is great synergy between Lumina Foundation work and preparation for specialized accreditation.
22. It has the potential of creating smarter citizens who will contribute notably to society once they apply what they have learned to the outside world.
23. The idea of tracking student improvement is valid, but how it's been implemented is not...if data were analyzed by cohort, it could be used to make meaningful observations and improvements. The diverse "quality" of rubrics across the university is also not good--for example, I tried to make 5 meaningful differences from "remedial" to "post-professional," but others I've seen across campus are poorly worded.
24. Reflection on program goals is beneficial in general, but would be more so if the objectives were program focused rather than generic.
25. Just being able to take a look at our program, and standardize the objectives and ways that we measure student success.
26. The only benefit mentioned related to the requirement of two measurement points. Adding a second measurement point focused learning objectives on lower-level courses rather than only on final assessment. However, because learning experiences and outcomes are different at the two levels of assessment, it is unclear that the measures can truly be compared as the administration seems to think. Unintended consequences include increased meetings and extra work in assessing two points. Also, the potential for the two point assessment to create the need to "dumb down" the upper level assessment to demonstrate improvement if pressure is applied to show improvement as is the expectation. There is the danger that administrators, legislators, and the public believe that program quality can be monitored by a few assessment points of a few learning outcomes. Our assessment program covers only a small portion of all we do in our programs. Concerns also were raised about tracing results to students or faculty members for punitive assessment.

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27. First, as above (in question 3). Second, a large extra burden has been placed on instructors in the classroom to suit Lumina requirements. Third, it opens universities up to Kafka-esque litigation. Think of how crummy grade appeals are right now, how litigious a pre-med or pre-law student gets over a genuinely earned B. Can you imagine how a student could turn a university's profile against them? "Marshall is supposed to have a 3.25 in Civic Learning, but it is more like a 2.75, and that's why I didn't get into my MPH. We need an intellectual audit; it's false advertising." Finally, I believe that the way Lumina has been implemented, especially with the patently false facade of dialogue, as well as documented lies regarding the implications of various stages of the process has driven a wedge between faculty and administration over assessment. We need to be accountable, we need to articulate what we do in the classroom, we need to have standards for accreditation. Lumina is the wrong project and whatever merits there may have been to it have been poisoned by the ill-conceived program as well as the people imposing it.
28. The faculty respondents identified the "Real Benefits" as follows: 1) The communication and sense of common-cause it encourages among faculty members. 2) Not sure yet of the benefits: Have to wait and see how and to what extent the assessments get translated into program-level improvements. 3) Helps us develop a systematic CT process for analyzing our curriculum. 4) Provides a structure to properly assess the efficacy of classes, and to facilitate in quantifying the value of each course (and ultimately the degree). 5) The learner and the teacher will both know each other, and the program, better. This will promote student learning. 6) A more structured overall approach between departments and within departments. The faculty respondents identified the "Unintended Consequences" as follows: 1) A tendency to rely too much on easily measurable traits, which will favor the teaching of specific "hard" skills at the expense of more holistic and subjective creative thinking. 2) Striving to achieve too much and leaving students behind. 3) DQP contains too much information and too much description that comes across as prescription. This reduces the enthusiasm of the participants. 4) Unless the DQP is complete and properly articulates the central goals of a program, it will not be helpful. 5) This is an unnecessary burden placed on faculty, which takes away time that could be used for educational purposes. 6) Too much assessment activity can reduce students to a number instead of allowing their learning to be assessed in a well-rounded framework.
29. I quote my curmudgeon: "The 'one size fits all approach to assessing and directing higher education is very alarming and disappointing." One thinks it will improve our training; one thinks it will improve our students. I think that good teachers will continue to be good teachers and bad teachers will continue to be bad teachers. Paying lip service to the latest round of directives does not indicate real change on the part of an individual.
30. The Degree Profile is an attempt to upgrade higher education to a standard of excellence required by a contemporary workplace in an ever-changing global economy. It also creates a system of quality assurance across the entire higher educational system. The end result is a graduating student population that can think critically, analytically, and accurately to solve multiple problems presented in the complex work environment.
31. Not much
32. Again, anything that encourages departments to think more carefully about what they're doing is potentially beneficial.
33. The benefit is that the student, potential employers, and legislators get a clear idea of the minimum skills that students are certified to have with their degree. The unintended consequence is that the public expectations would lead to a cookie-cutter approach to higher education, expecting that the skill set specified in the DQP could be assessed through

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standardized "no-child-left-behind" type of testing. Our concern is that much of the process is inherently subjective, and that initiatives like the DQP can be taken by some as providing more objectivity in the assessment than is warranted.

34. Not sure about the benefits. It feels uncomfortable.
35. Not sure
36. Benefits include preparing individuals with expected level of competency as a professional.
37. One of the real benefits of the Degree Qualifications Profile, it seems to me, is its use to document and demonstrate some of the taken-for-granted relationships between Program objectives/mission and student learning. Though we do a great deal of this already, having a way to elaborate these relationships more explicitly may have a great deal of value to outsiders who don't always understand the role of things like the Humanities.
38. The real benefits are that we have to carefully evaluate our program and courses to make sure they accomplish our goals. The unintended consequences are that morale is down, as we feel that our work on this will never end, and that one set of evaluations will merely be replaced by another in the coming years. We also feel that the purpose of our Capstone class is no longer an intellectual exercise in synthesizing and analyzing what students have learned in the discipline, but rather a vehicle for Lumina Assessment.
39. The main benefit is that we were able to show what we do in the classroom is in line with our learning outcomes. The unintended consequence was that faculty realized how very important each and every assignment is in meeting the goals of our stated learning outcomes.
40. Some focus on program objectives and their assessment is justified, but the DQP and Open Pathways is over the top.
41. The benefits of having completed this project include a comprehensive review of the curriculum in the assessed courses. Completing lists of learning objectives and how those objectives can be measured is a worthwhile exercise and it is a practice that should be encouraged at least to some limited extent. There are two glaring examples of unintended consequences. One is that even on the limited basis for which data were collected, the data collection process is unwieldy for professors who are providing the assessment data and for the person who is tasked with reporting those data. It is not difficult to report but it is time consuming. To the extent that the University may plan to extend this to all classes, it asks far too much of the people charged with collecting and reporting the data, particularly in light of the fact that the data are not useful as collected. The second is that there is conflict presented by participation in this evaluation process, which is concrete for professors in my discipline who emphasize research methods in their courses. To encourage students to participate in a process that cannot yield the inferences sought from that process—no matter how much we may wish for it to be able to do so—is contradictory.
42. Benefits include forcing programs without external accrediting bodies or licensure exams to look at outcomes more closely.
43. Faculty like the idea of being able to talk with parents and students regarding the value of a bachelor degree.

Question 5: How could the Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile be improved?

Themes

1. **DQP language should be simplified.**
2. **Outcomes should include examples.**

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3. **Some programs thought that the learning outcomes should be broadened to make them applicable to a variety of degree programs, while others thought they should be more specific.**
4. **Scale back the profile's expectations.**
5. **Definition of "civic learning" should be expanded.**

Specific Comments

1. In the effort to make this fit multiple degrees, it is often too ambiguous to be beneficial. I'm really not certain how this could be improved as one is the consequence of the other.
2. This is not really an improvement on the program, but had we been able to see where we are now and what we've done AND then been able to start the process, I think we would have had better reports (maybe). It was all so new to each of us and we really didn't know what we were doing, I think we initially started the process (blindly) just to get it done and in a quick timeframe. Now that we've gone through the process, I think we better understand what it is and maybe what we should have done in the beginning.
3. I think if you look at the results (and maybe Lumina does), you can assess where it went well, and where the trouble areas still are. Then Lumina can iterate.
4. The language of the Degree Profile should be simplified. Statements are difficult to understand and often double barreled making them complicated to use. The biggest issue for our department has been the reporting system and process. Throughout each step, deadlines are presented; however, we are not provided the resources to complete each step in a reasonable time frame. Additionally, the computer application utilized is antiquated and difficult to navigate.
5. Make the program more user friendly, more compatible with multiple internet browsers. I could only get parts of the Lumina project when using Google chrome.
6. Too early to really tell at this time.
7. The process does not seem to fit the stated outcomes for the project.
8. Not being a top down program and allow flexibility and difference between schools, as the values and mission of each one are very different sometimes.
9. Focus on the programs where it best fits and provide more flexibility to the others.
10. Many believed that the end product should have been made clear in the very beginning so that all faculty were aware of the goals instead of baby-stepping us through the process. There needs to be more critical thinking for the freshmen to succeed. It was reiterated that a need exists for faculty to be exposed to additional training on syllabus creation, rubric creation, assessment development, etc.
11. University needs to exempt programs with specialized accreditation from participation. Only look or require participation of non-accredited programs in this.
12. Create the flexibility necessary for Departments to develop improvement plans that would be supported by data.
13. Keep faculty in the loop better about what is happening and why and when the target moves. Many, many faculty invested a good deal of time in the initial stages to create requested documents, sometimes with a misunderstanding of how it was to be implemented. Faculty had a sense that a piece of the profile puzzle was complete, for example a particular rubric, only to discover it had been altered for a next stage of development. Then the faculty would feel as if they were redoing work rather than revamping or improving. The changes made it hard to understand what was the ultimate goal and hard to take the process seriously. Having everyone involved in testing and revising created mess and resentment rather than buy in. Aligning Lumina outcomes with existing assessments was challenging. Concurrent with the HLC Lumina

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Degree Profile creation was the Quality Matters program for online courses. The two often became confused, and those who participated in QM are of the belief that the QM guidelines are more useful than Lumina. Can the two be aligned? The process seemed to require a lot of duplicative effort in grading and then transferring essentially the same material into Lumina materials.

14. The most often mentioned improvement would be for the process to accommodate both lock-step and non-lock-step degree programs. In non-lock-step programs, the "milestone" measurement may not be a valid indicator. Other possible improvements suggested were to include more practitioner points-of-view, simplify data collection, make the process more fluid, and to lengthen the cycle by completing initial collection early in the Fall and final collection late in the Spring.
15. More sharing between institutions. Those of us who aren't directly involved with it would profit by having a succinct brochure or website that could explain what it involves. We could expand the scope to cover the other subdivision in the dept. – the developmental level.
16. For those concerned with higher education, whether in the broad and deep sense of helping people enrich their lives and cope with life's challenges, or even in the drastically truncated sense of training students in useful skills, it can only be improved by being eliminated.
17. Two thoughts from our faculty: 1. Now that the system is in place, remain consistent in its process. 2. Let the programs examine for a few years so that the assessment is evaluated over time. A one or two year sampling is not going to produce serviceable results.
18. Clarity, account for differences across disciplines, it should not be a one-size fits all plan. The issue of benchmarks continues to be problematic. If they are at the benchmark, then we are "too easy," if they are not at the benchmark, we have to figure out what more to do to help them, when in fact, a proportion of students will never reach the benchmark. Will data be reflected on me? That is, will assessment data from my class be used to evaluate my worth as a professor/my teaching quality?
19. Currently, Degree Qualifications Profile framework is generic. It is a solid starting point. However, process guidance is needed to help implement the framework. If not for individual disciplines, process guidance should be provided for discipline groups such as Sciences, Engineering, Business, and Humanities.
20. Terminology should be refined further.
21. The use of paper and pencil evaluations is also crazy (kills too many trees)--the university should have developed a system through BB organizations for us to upload the rubrics and assign them to faculty to complete (so the student names and 901 numbers would import directly).
22. The deadlines seemed to come pretty fast during the process, more lead times for entering required data would have been better.
23. The outlines of learning outcomes in the initial guide seemed to have a liberal arts orientation. They could be broadened to make them more applicable to all types of programs, especially those of a more quantitative rather than conceptual nature. The use of so many "ands" in the description when they were interpreted as "or" confused issues. Slower process to give more time to reflect on the process and what it really means for programs and student learning. It seemed like all we did this year was move from one rushed action step to the next. Also, the guidance of what was really desired at each step was too slowly received to make for truly well thought out and useful feedback to the desired items.
24. I believe the Lumina project is fundamentally flawed and onerous and should be scrapped. I sincerely hope that Marshall did not pay for the privilege of burning all those faculty hours and confusing all those students.

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25. 5 faculty provided suggestions, as follows: 1) Eliminate it. 2) The Profile is very specific. Descriptions can be shortened or made clearer via examples. It is also too broad, and should be constructed along more discipline-specific lines. 3) Scale back the expectations for our students. 4) The program needs to provide better ongoing instruction in expectations.
26. One suggests abandoning the system. One does not have the time to write. One would like to get away from jargonistic terminology.
27. The delivery of the program reports and assignments is marred by vagueness and some confusion because of its attempt to work seamlessly across all disciplines. If samples and examples of the assigned reports and projects that are "discipline specific" could expedite the process.
28. Greater flexibility/adaptability.
29. Separate the levels at which it is assessed. Some items in the DQP are obviously assessable by the student's major program; others are more obviously assessable through a general education program, like the language requirements and the "multiple discipline" requirements.
30. Make it so we don't all have to fit the same mold.
31. One of things that I've mentioned before is the need to expand notions of Civic Engagement, which seem very narrowly constructed in the Degree Qualifications Profile.
32. In some key ways our perception is that we have to alter our program to meet Lumina's categories. This also depresses morale as we perceive higher education to be moving toward a trade school model, rather than an opportunity for higher learning and analysis.
33. The language used to describe learning outcomes needs to be more explicit, thus more explanatory.
34. If the DQP and Open Pathways are to be used, it should be limited to programs with documented problems such as negative feedback from students or employers, or inability of graduates to find employment. For programs without these types of problems, the old adage, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it," should apply.
35. To the extent that the DQP relies on assessing different people in different ways using different criteria from Assessment Points 1 and 2, there is no defensible means of saving the system. It is fatally flawed, and as a Department, we are not sure, given this flawed system, what could be done to "improve" it.
36. It needs to be clearer, less cumbersome. The DQP itself is too generic, so not very usable. We recommend changing the objectives to make them more specific. In their current form, they are too broad. The project's structure needed to be clearer from beginning to end. Connections need to be clearer. At the beginning of the project, programs needed to know what the end product should look like.
37. Improvement and comments
 - Faculty time involved in not only preparation but assessment each semester is too demanding-too heavy a load; easier method to collect data.
 - Clarify directions to make it simpler and provide guidance to streamline the process.
 - Not force all to fit in the same molds.
 - Question validity of ratings as it is very subjective and there is no inter-rater reliability.
 - Department will re-visit program outcomes as the information obtained is not providing the department with usable information.