Competency Map: Communicating Curricular Status to Adult Students, Faculty, and Academic Advisors

Capella University
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Agenda

• Context – Competency-based education

• Infrastructure – Fully-embedded Assessment Model

• Visualization - Competency Map

• Direct Assessment - FlexPath
Capella University – Fact Sheet

Programs
- Business & Technology
- Education
- Health care & Nursing
- Counseling & Psychology
- Public service

TOTAL ENROLLMENT
36,405 learners (Active enrollment as of March 31, 2013)

UNIVERSITY ENROLLMENT BY DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE
(as of March 31, 2013)

- Master’s
- Certificate
- Bachelor’s
- Doctorate

LEARNER PROFILE
(updated annually as of December 31, 2012)
Capella learners come from all 50 states and 61 other countries or territories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>ENROLLMENT STATUS</th>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>MILITARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>74% female</td>
<td>40 (average)</td>
<td>5% full-time</td>
<td>54% learners of color</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>26% male</td>
<td>19-69 (range)</td>
<td>95% part-time</td>
<td>46% white, non-Hispanic</td>
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% RECEIVING
- 85%

% URBAN/RURAL
- 82% urban
- 18% rural

FACULTY PROFILE
(as of March 31, 2013)
- 1,523 faculty members
- 1,309 (86%) of our faculty have doctorates
- Of the 1,523 faculty members (100%) who have reported their gender:
  - 840 (55%) are female
  - 683 (45%) are male
- Capella faculty members live in 46 states and 7 foreign countries.

STAFF
(as of March 31, 2013)
1,251 non-faculty staff (refers to staff in Academic Advising, Enrollment Services, Information Technology, University administration, etc.)
Most Valued by Adult Learners?

1. Services
2. Academic advising
3. Campus
4. Technology
5. Instruction
6. Admissions & FA

Adult Learners Prioritize Instruction
Noel-Levitz National Research 2012

The 2 Most Important Concerns of Adult Online Students.

#1 **Instructional effectiveness**
measures students' academic experience, the curriculum, and the campus' overriding commitment to academic excellence.

#2 **Academic advising effectiveness**
assesses the comprehensiveness of the academic advising program, evaluating advisors' knowledge, competence, approachability, and personal concern for students.
The Higher Education Conundrum

Employer

- Employers seek skilled workers
- with industry relevant & current skills
- practical experience
- and a record of accomplishment

University

- Universities confer degrees
- for completing a series of courses
- in which students learn
- and are assessed

How do we connect the conferral of a degree with the ability to apply relevant, in-demand, employable skills?

The Capella Way

Employer

- Industry Alignment
- Position
- Outcomes
- Desired Skills & Abilities
- Competencies
- Demonstrated Competence
- Criteria
- Performance History
- Faculty Judgments

University

- Universities confer degrees
- for completing a series of courses
- in which students learn
- and are assessed

Graduate Preparedness
Institutional Self-Assessment

1. Outcomes?
2. Just a vision.
3. Started, but stuck.
4. Progressing.
5. Tightly integrated system.

Curricular and Instructional Structure

Program Level

Outcomes Alignment
1. Successful Professionals
2. Employer Aligned
3. Unique Standards
Courseroom Experience

Design Principles
Clear and streamlined “First Steps”
- Creates momentum and motivates
- Sets expectations for learner
  - Grades
  - Communication
  - Transparent expectations of faculty

Design Principles
- Engaging multimedia
- Clear instructions
- Clear expectations

Coaching and Support
- Learning resources
- Learning outcomes

Design Principles
- Consistent structure
- Case studies
- Project-based, asynchronous format
- Clear instructions and expectations

Authentic Assessment

Course Project
- Create a presentation for your employees and stakeholders
- Based on your plan for meeting the next challenges of HCL technologies
Most Disruptive for Higher Education?

1. MOOCs
3. Direct assessment
4. Mobile devices
5. Learning analytics
6. Gamification
7. Corporate univ.

Learning Outcome Transparency

Transparency
Capella has proudly led a national conversation on accountability in higher education

CapellaResults.com

Transparency-by-design initiative: a consortium of adult-serving at a distance colleges

- Capella Alumni
- Satisfaction data
- Career advancement data
Fully Embedded Assessment Model

- Instructional activities & assessments intentionally aligned to curricular competencies and learning outcomes.

- As data collection effort:
  - Competencies required clarification & precision
  - Alignments must be clearly described to ensure accurate variable definitions

- As a teaching and learning tool:
  - Faculty-based leadership & education required to support SMEs across disciplines to create intentional curriculum experiences

Consistent University Alignment Guidelines

<table>
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<th>Misalignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>For this project, Capella defines misalignment as:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>Assessment-specific</strong> - Criterion emphasizes the demonstration method or assignment requirements instead of the competency.</td>
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<td>- <strong>Vague</strong> - Criterion is too general or is unclear.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>Multiple</strong> - Criterion aligns to multiple competencies; no single competency is “best.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>None</strong> - Criterion has no obvious basis for measuring any competency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Click the titles for more information regarding these misalignments, as well as examples.
Faculty provide feedback to learners on their course papers and other assignments.

**Inline Faculty Feedback**

Faculty feedback includes:
- **Overall assignment comments**
- **Auto-calculated score**
- **Criterion-specific comments**

**Criterion-referenced Scoring Guides**

These guides provide specific criteria for grading assignments, allowing for detailed and focused feedback.

**Auto-calculated score**

Auto-calculated scores ensure consistency and fairness in grading.

**Overall assignment comments**

Overall comments provide a summary of the student's performance and area for improvement.

**Criterion-specific comments**

Criterion-specific comments highlight specific strengths and weaknesses in each criterion area.
Robust Assessment Structure

Fully-embedded Assessment Model

- Standardized Tests
  + Rigor
  + Measures

- Summative
  + Aligned
  + Graded

- Formative
  + Useful
  + Timely

- Authentic Performance
  + Valid
  + Learning
  + Relevant

Institutional self-assessment: Catalyst?

1. Faculty
2. Students
3. Leadership
4. Ext. Requirement
5. Funding
6. Technology
Competency Map Design Evolution

Self-paced Course Pilot – Q1 2013

Competencies Required
- Grades tied to competency demonstration
- Authentic assessments
- Psychometric measurement
- Voluntary discussions

Flexible Schedule
- Complete at learner’s pace
- Term-based

Coaching and Support
- Extensive feedback
- Open educational resources
- Intrusive advising
- Competency reports via email
- Dynamic alerts
Partners needed? (Max 3)

1. Students
2. Faculty
3. Institute leaders
4. Consortium
5. Tech. vendors
6. Professional assoc
7. Employers
8. Accreditation

What is Direct Assessment?

- In a direct assessment (DA) model, graduation requirements are based on demonstrating competency, not on earning credit hours or fulfilling “seat-time” requirements.
- Capella’s DA model will allow students to earn their degrees as soon as they can demonstrate competence through a series of authentic assessments.
- Authentic assessments are those that have them do activities they’d have to exhibit in the workplace, which integrate theory and practice.
- Capella’s DA model will address learner concerns about time to complete and rising tuition costs. The curriculum would be largely self-directed and self-paced, allowing students to take as many courses as they’d like in a set term. Motivated students who can prove their competence in a given topic will be allowed to move through the program much more quickly.
Current State
Follows DOE/Title IV/Accreditation Rules

Triple Constraint
Restricts Innovation in Higher Education

If we care about learning, we should hold constant the level of learning expected and vary the amount of time it takes to get there vs. now when we hold time constant and vary the level of learning – which we summarize as grades.

Salman Khan, 2012

Future State: Leveraging our Assessment Strengths

Authentic assessment of learning

• Agnostic as to source of learning
• Faculty role as assessor
• Maintains Capella learning outcomes infrastructure/framework
Capella University’s Direct Assessment Option

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