

**APPLYING THE PATTERNS OF SUCCESS TO  
YOUR INSTITUTION AND CULTURE**

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**Arkansas Association for the Assessment of  
Collegiate Learning (AAACL)  
Fall 2008 Workshop**

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## Conversation 1: Challenges and Hurdles

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**Purpose:** To identify the challenges involved with creating and embracing a culture that is centered on learning and students.

**Timeframe:** 30 minutes

**Conversations & Presentation:**

1. (5 minutes) Individually, jot down a quick response to these four questions about your institution:
  - Why is creating and embracing a culture centered on learning so difficult?
  - Where are the structural points of resistance for creating a culture that is committed to understanding, confirming, and improving learning?
  - Who are the individual points of resistance for creating a culture that is committed to understanding, confirming, and improving learning?
  - Why is it difficult to engage stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, administrator, staff, board members) in the process of learning and assessment?
2. (15 minutes) As a group discuss your answers to the questions above. What are the common themes? Capture the major points of your discussion.
3. (10 minutes) Presentation on Common Issues, Hurdles, and Challenges

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## Conversation 2: What's Working? ...and Why?

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**Purpose:** To identify the pockets where there is a commitment to learning and students. To identify the activities and initiatives that are successfully working toward creating and embracing a culture that is centered on learning and students.

**Timeframe:** 45 minutes

**Conversations & Presentation:**

1. (5 minutes) Individually, jot down a quick response to these questions about your institution:
  - What is working on your campus? Where are the pockets of activity that reflect a commitment to learning and students? What's different? Why?
  - What communication strategies are successfully being used to educate and engage people in understanding, confirming, and improving student learning?
  - What resources are successfully engaging people in understanding, confirming, and improving student learning?
  - What are leaders doing to successfully engage people in understanding, confirming, and improving student learning?
  - What data already exists on student learning? How is it being successfully used to inform decision making?
2. (15 minutes) As a group discuss your answers to the questions above. What are the common themes? Capture the major points of your discussion.
3. (10 minutes) Groups and individuals will report out the important points and themes from their conversations.
4. (15 minutes) Presentation on the Patterns of Success: Observations and Trends in Assessing and Improving Student Learning.

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## Conversation 3: Applying the Patterns of Success

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**Purpose:** Identify what a culture that is centered on learning and students looks like for your institution. Identify the best strategic levers for creating a culture that is centered on learning and students.

**Timeframe:** 30 minutes

**Conversations:**

1. (5 minutes) Individually, jot down a quick response to these questions about your institution:
  - What attitudes, values, and behaviors are essential for developing and sustaining a culture centered on learning and students?
  - How do you create a commitment across your institution that fosters shared responsibility for understanding and improving learning?
  - What are the strategic levers that can make it happen? ...the structures, processes, people, resources, and leadership?
2. (15 minutes) As a group discuss your answers to the questions above. What are the common themes? Capture the major points of your discussion.
3. (10 minutes) Groups and individuals will report out the important points and themes from their conversations. Try to articulate enough details and specifics that others understand how to turn this into action.