Pre Proposal - Quality Enhancement Plan at FAU
Classroom Assessment for Student Learning – Formative Assessment

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2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM OR ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED

2.1 Problem or weakness in student learning: Students Academic Achievement, and Retention and Graduation Rates. Florida Atlantic University Ranking out of the 12 Florida State Universities (2010 SUS Admissions Tour Matrix [1] and FAU Institutional Effectiveness Analysis [2]): (1) FAU total undergraduate enrollment: 6/12; (2) FAU first year retention rate: 9/12 (**Problem); and (3)** FAU 6- Year graduation Rate: 11/12 (**Problem).**

2.2 Students to be targeted: All students (see Figure 1)
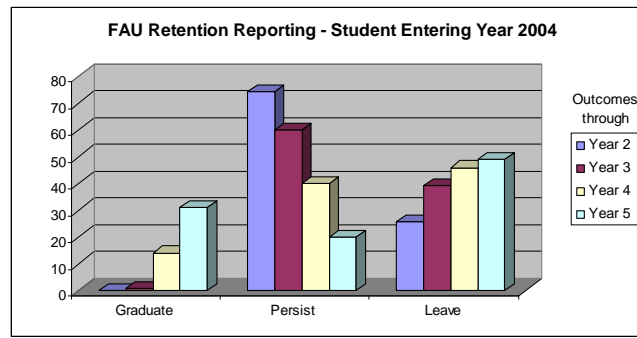

Figure 1 Example: FAU retention reporting for students entering year 2004

2.3 How the problem or weakness was identified - The problem was identified based on:

- 2010 SUS Admissions Tour Matrix [1]
- Data collected by FAU Institutional Effectiveness Analysis – Retention reporting [2]
- Faculties Personal Observations

3. PROPOSED SOLUTION

3.1 Proposed Solution/ QEP Topic: Classroom Assessment for Student Learning – Formative Assessment

3.2 Why Assessment for Student Learning: Formative assessment is ongoing classroom assessment for student learning that should occur throughout the learning process. While summative assessment provides an end evaluation, formative assessments provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate attainment of identified targeted goals without concerns about grading. Formative assessment provides ongoing feedback and ongoing direction for improvement and/or adjustment in learning and instruction. Classroom assessment for student learning or formative assessment is the gathering and using information about students' ongoing learning by both teachers and students to modify teaching and learning activities. Formative assessment is not dependent on tests, which introduce bias into measures of achievement. Classroom Assessment for Student Learning makes the distinction between assessment *of* and *for* student learning. These two purposes for assessment provide different information to serve the needs of different decision makers at different times. In formative assessment, we use assessment results and materials to maximize student learning before graded or assessment of learning events occur. The process of formative assessment involves the teacher in gathering evidence about students' skills, concepts, and attitudes relevant to the goals of learning; interpreting this evidence in terms of progress toward goals; deciding the next steps; and finding ways of helping students take the next steps.

3.3 Desired Student Learning Outcomes: Improve Student Learning, Raise the Academic Achievement of Students; Increase the Retention and Graduation Rates at FAU, and Improve FAU Ranking within Florida State Universities.

3.4 Literature Review and Best Practices: Research shows that most assessments should be formative in nature. Compelling research results indicate that the practice of formative assessment may be the most significant factor in raising the academic achievement of all students—and especially that of lower-achieving students (Black & Wiliam, 1998a). Black and Wiliam (1998a) identified and analyzed 250 studies comparing classrooms where formative assessment was and was not practiced. This revealed evidence that, on almost every kind of academic measure, students whose teachers systematically applied formative assessment techniques out- performed similar students who did not receive such treatment. There was also evidence that the gain was greatest for lower achieving students.

3.5 Actions to be implemented: At the University level: Review University policies on assessment – Formative assessment should be part of the assessment plan at the University. At the **University/College/Department:** provide professional development for enhancing the knowledge and skills Faculties need to implement formative assessment.

Faculties: Making formative assessment part of their course planning; continually develop new insights into how students learn—and how they can best facilitate student learning; Systematically gathering evidence of students' learning during teaching by observing, listening, questioning, and discussing concepts and activities with students; Interpreting evidence in relation to class goals and, with students, deciding the next steps in learning; Enabling students to take the steps to advance their understanding and skills by, for example, extending their experience, helping them test their ideas, or providing access to alternative ideas; Involving students in assessing their own work; and Reviewing and reflecting on the teaching and learning to inform future work.

Model for Quality Assessment for Student Learning: A model will be developed by qualified FAU faculties and Administrators for the entire university - Quality Assessment for Students Learning. The five keys for quality classroom assessment are: Key 1: Clear Purpose; Key 2: Clear Target; Key 3: Sound Design; Key 4: Effective communication; and key 5: Student involvement.

Seven Strategies of Assessment for Student Learning: Strategy 1: Provide students with a clear and understandable vision of the learning target; Strategy 2: Use examples and models of strong and weak work; Strategy 3: Offer regular descriptive feedback; Strategy 4: Teach students to self-assess and set goals; Strategy 5: Design lessons to focus on one learning target or aspect of quality at a time; Strategy 6: Teach students focused revision; and Strategy 7: Engage students in self-reflection, and let them keep track of and share their learning.

3.6 Timeline for Implementation: Develop 5- year plan to address the proposed QEP topic that will enhance student learning. A realistic timeline plan will be developed. The plan will include timeline for professional development activities and administration of assessments, and for providing meaningful results for the University reports.

3.7 Lines of responsibility for implementing and sustainability:
A plan will be developed during the proposal development. The plan will describe the infrastructure for the implementation and the continuation of the QEP: Who is responsible for each activity? Are they qualified to fulfill those responsibilities? Who is responsible for keeping within budget, for monitoring progress, or for modifying the plan? Do these individuals have sufficient time to complete their task? Do we have to compensate their efforts?

3.8 Necessary Resources:
An important step in the development of the proposed QEP is in the estimation of the costs of the physical and human resources necessary for developing, implementing, and sustaining the proposed plan. The cost of the allocation of human, financial, and physical resources will be developed during the proposal development.

3.9 Assessing the Success: During the proposal development, a comprehensive evaluation plan will be developed to evaluate the overall goals of the proposed quality enhanced plan. The primary emphasis will be on the impact of the QEP on the quality of student learning.

References:

[1] http://www.admissionbydesign.com/florida-state-university-system-2010-stats-and-sus-admissions-matrix.html
[2] http://www.fau.edu/iea/
[3] Black, P and Wiliam, D. (1998) Assessment and classroom learning, Assessment in Education, 5 (1) 7 – 74 .