



The Difference A Year Makes

Changing Contexts for Discussions
Of General Education
And the Undergraduate Curriculum

JANUARY 10, 2013

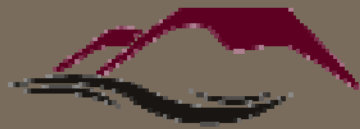
Changing contexts in higher education



Changing contexts for discussions
of general education
and the baccalaureate curriculum



What's happening with the DQP—
and how it relates
to “the thread of intentionality”



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YOUR TURN

Changing contexts in higher education

Our Students

YESTERDAY

- College populations: men (and a few “coeds”) from well-to-do families
- Traditional age: 18-22
- Residential predominantly
- Usually a commitment to a single institution
- Very limited diversity

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TODAY

- More women than men
- Many non-traditional students
 - Older
 - More responsibilities
 - Often part-time
 - Usually commuting
 - Often highly mobile
- Increasing diversity

Our Students *TOMORROW*

- **Even fewer** traditional (18-22) students
- **More** students of color (by 2020, 46%)
- **More** low income students
- **More** first-generation college students
- **More** nonnative students for whom English is a second language
- **More** mobile students, with less institutional loyalty
- **More** part-time students
- **More** students studying through distance education

Competition

- Continued growth in for-profit competitors
- Mission expansion in community colleges
- Sustained increase in online learning
- Introduction of surrogate credentials

And now, MOOCs . . .

Perhaps the most rapidly developing and far reaching change in the higher education landscape is the emergence of **online courses, open (so far) to all, without (so far) tuition charges or credit**. They are usually taught by a world-renowned expert in a field to tens of thousands of students of all ages and nationalities.

–W. Robert Connor, November 27, 2012

And the prospect of “hybridization”

No longer restricted to plants and automobiles, **hybridization is now moving into higher education**, as MOOCs are combined with face-to-face instruction and advising. This may be an opportunity to inject liberal education goals into the content-driven pattern of MOOC instruction and a chance for the small private college to maximize its historic advantages in a new setting.

- –W. Robert Connor, November 27, 2012



Higher Employer Expectations

- 91% are “asking employees to take on **more responsibilities** and to use a **broader set of skills** than in the past”
- 90% say that their “employees are expected to **work harder to coordinate with other departments** than in the past.”
- 88% say that “the **challenges** their employees face are **more complex** than they were in the past.”
- 88% agree that “to succeed in their companies, employees need **higher levels of learning and knowledge** than they did in the past”

*“Raising the Bar: Employers’ Views on College Learning
in the Wake of the Economic Downturn”
(AAC&U and Hart Research Associates, 2010)*

Higher Employee Rewards

From a federal database analyzing qualifications for 1,100 different jobs comes evidence that the highest salaries apply to positions that call for intensive use of liberal education capabilities, including--

→ Writing

→ Inductive and Deductive Reasoning

→ Judgment and Decision Making

→ Problem Solving

→ Social/Interpersonal Skills

→ Mathematics

--Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce



Are there other changes in context or environment that need to be kept in mind?

Changing contexts for curricular discussions

The Curriculum

- ✓ 19th Century college: common core curriculum

The Curriculum

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- ✓ 20th Century university: breadth (general education) + depth (the major)



The Curriculum

- ✓ 19th Century college: common core curriculum
- ✓ 20th Century university: breadth (general education) + depth (the major)
- ✓ **21st Century colleges and universities: connecting liberal and professional learning**

Carol Geary Schneider, President, AAC&U

- “I hear frequently from technical schools . . . that their students need a broader and more multi-faceted education.”
 - November 28, 2012

Carol Geary Schneider (Again)

- “The drumbeat to bring applied learning into the liberal arts degrees grows ever louder.”
 - November 28, 2012

Three irritating axioms

- 1 Every member of the faculty contributes to the liberal education of every student.
For some, the contribution is negative.

2 If the knowledge and abilities offered through general education are not reinforced in every major, they will atrophy. As seniors, students will be less competent writers and will be less computationally literate.

3 If the general education curriculum is conceived and taught without reference to what the majors expect students to accomplish, students will learn less than they should and faculty members will be less effective

Five Vignettes

1

“OK. Now that your general education is behind you, it’s time to buckle down.”



2

“Golly. I think I knew more math when I was a freshman than I do now that I’m a senior.”



3

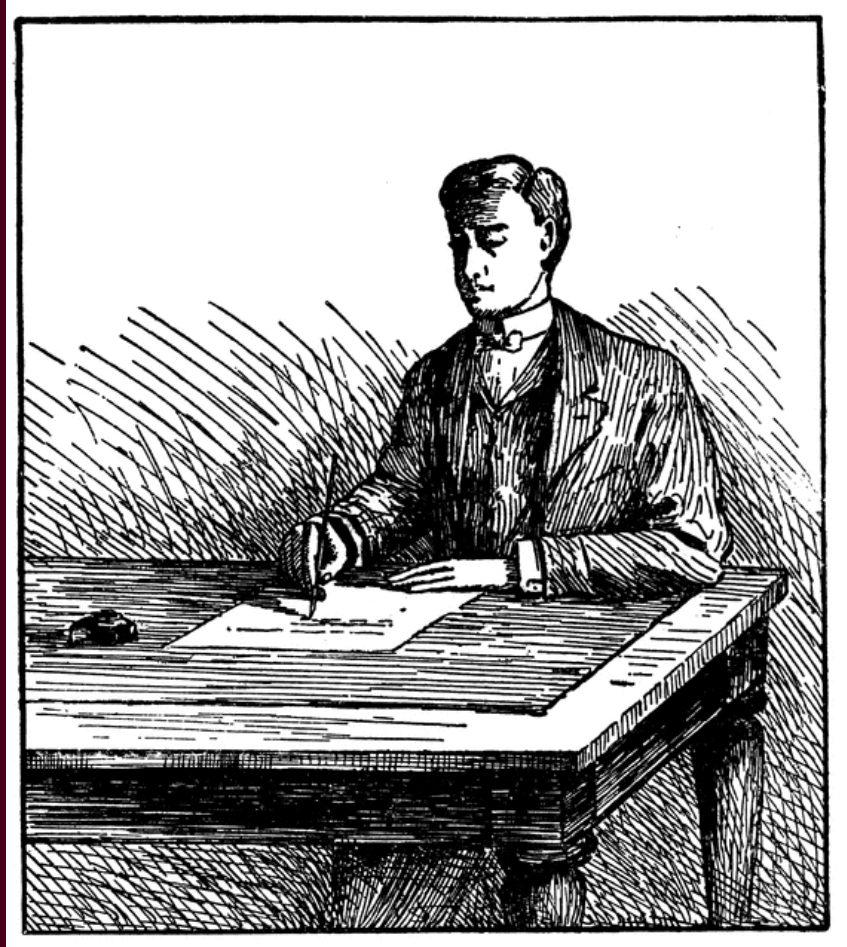
I'm so glad that I can teach my gen ed students what really matters—

before they get swallowed up in majors like business . . . or fashion design . . . or . . .



4

“My students can’t write!
Why isn’t the English
Department doing its
job?”



5



“So how do I get my name off this core curriculum e-mail list? All the courses I teach are in the major, for heaven’s sake!”



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TABLE DISCUSSION

Which (if any) of the
“irritating axioms” may
apply at CMU?

- 1 Every member of the faculty contributes to the liberal education of every student. *For some, the contribution is negative.*
- 2 If the knowledge and abilities offered through general education are not reinforced in every major, they will atrophy. As seniors, students will be less competent writers and will be less computationally literate.
- 3 If the general education curriculum is conceived and taught without reference to what the majors expect students to accomplish, students will learn less than they should and faculty members will be less effective.

No names or departments, please!



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LET'S HEAR FROM THE
TABLE DISCUSSIONS

One other context:
The HLC is changing
the ends and means
of accreditation

Why?

1

The HLC has been cited twice by the Inspector General of the USDE. In 2009, the IG offered “a harsh assessment” of the HLC recommending consideration of “limiting, suspending, or terminating the organization’s status.”

--Kelderman, *CHE*, 2009

The IG renewed her call for sanctions in 2010.

--Kelderman, *CHE*, 2010

2

Members of the HLC board have read Arum/Roska and recommended that the HLC do more through accreditation to require the documentation of student learning.

3

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges has published a new draft handbook that promises far greater emphasis on institutional warrants for student learning.

4

Draft recommendations from NACIQI and ACE point to a far greater emphasis on the diversity of US higher education and to the need for greater responsiveness to such diversity on the part of regional accreditation. That is one reason why the HLC now “uses the term ‘criteria’ rather than ‘standards.’”

5

From CHEA, from presentations at its own annual meetings, and from its board members the HLC has heard an increasing demand that accreditation be made more “useful” for HLC members. This impetus has come primarily from the HLC’s larger and more prestigious schools.

6

With a grant from Lumina Foundation, the HLC has been exploring applications of the *Degree Qualifications Profile* to the process of preparation for renewal of accreditation.

What's different?

The new process more clearly separates an institution's demonstrating "that it meets the Commission's Eligibility Requirements" from its participation in "the accreditation process."

Example 1

An institution must be able to *demonstrate* “any claims it makes about contributions to its students’ educational experience” through “research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development” (3.E.2).

Example 2

- An institution must be able to show improvement in its “retention, persistence, and completion rates” (4.C) and, to this end, must present “ambitious but attainable” goals and demonstrate how the use of information regarding these goals is used “to make improvements.”



TABLE DISCUSSION

To what extent should this increased emphasis on the demonstrability of educational value provide a further context for our discussions?

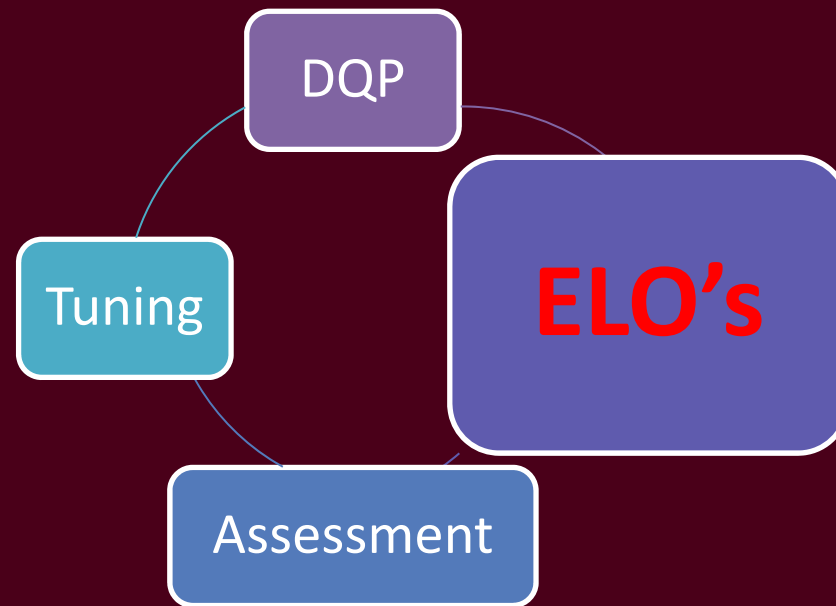


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**LET'S HEAR FROM THE
TABLE DISCUSSIONS**

What's happening with the
DQP—
and how does it relate
to “the thread of
intentionality”

Following the Thread







*The Essential Learning
Outcomes*

*A new framework to guide
students' **cumulative** progress
through college*

The Essential Learning Outcomes Across the Curriculum

What? When 	Knowledge of Human Culture & The Natural World	Intellectual & Practical Skills	Individual & Social Responsibility
First-Year Experiences 	A plan of study . . . should clearly connect the expected outcomes to the student's choice of courses and major field(s). Learning goals, experiences, resources, and assessments should be aligned		
Focused Studies, Major/Minor(s)	Milestone assessments as students progress in their studies in both general education and the major should be tied to key outcomes		
Advanced Integrative & Culminating Work	Experiences in which the student actively demonstrates and is assessed for his or her cumulative accomplishments of the college career.		

The Essential Learning Outcomes

Are intended to

- Provide the academy with a conceptual, aspirational frame for a cumulative liberal education
- Guide student and faculty understanding of *essential* outcomes for learning
- Create the base for a consensus on cross-curricular priorities

The Essential Learning Outcomes

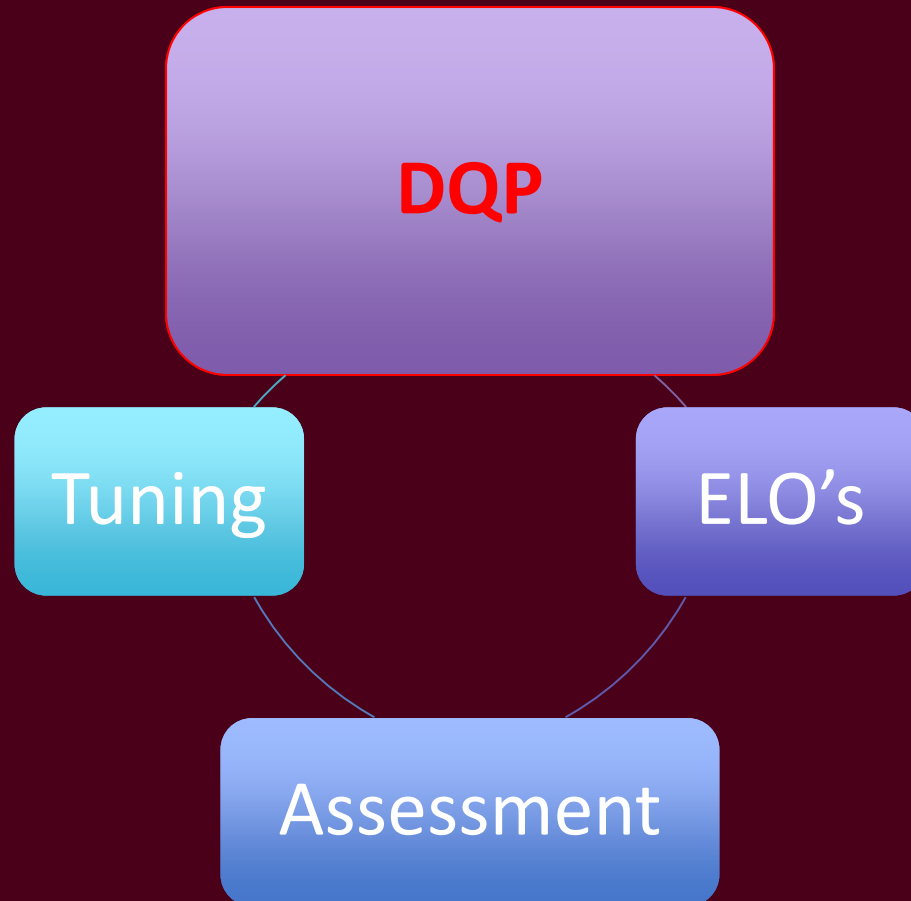
Are intended to

- Provide the academy with a conceptual, aspirational frame for a cumulative liberal education
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Are not intended to

- *Define in detail what degrees (associate, bachelor's, master's) mean*
- *Offer an explicitly operational basis for assessing student performance*
- *Articulate the expectation that undergraduate education be incremental and cumulative*

Following the Thread



As you know . . .

- The DP “describes concretely what is meant by each of the degrees addressed.”
- The DP “illustrates how students should be expected to perform at progressively more challenging levels.”

What a Degree Profile Is Intended To Do

- ➔ Offer reference points for students, faculty, advisors, accreditation
- ➔ Create expectation for a curriculum that is clearly intentional, coherent, cumulative
- ➔ Encourage assessment
- ➔ Support institutional reporting

- and

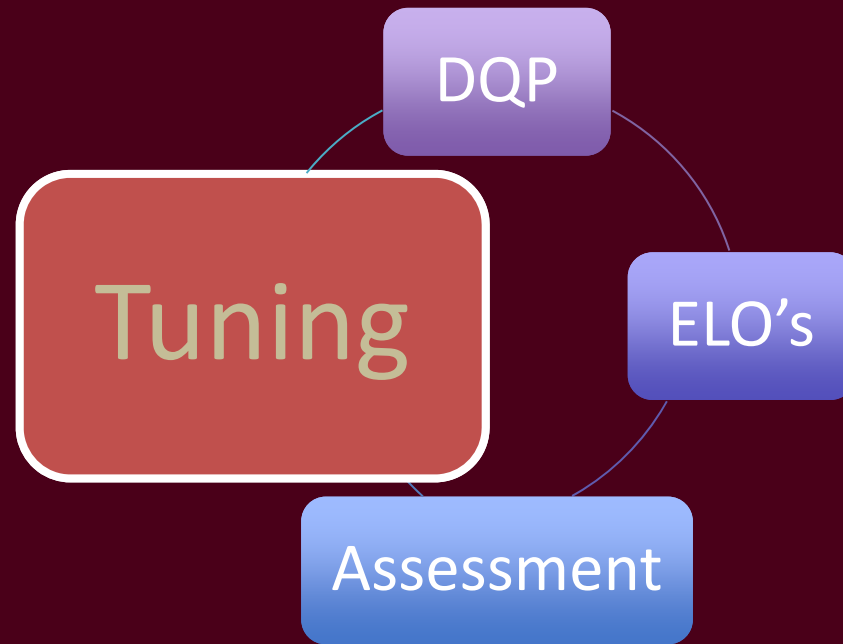


- ➔ Provide a baseline for institutions seeking to clarify their distinctiveness, e.g.
 - ➔ Expectations *beyond* shared reference points
 - ➔ Innovative curriculums and curricular paths
 - ➔ Alternate strategies for confirming learning
 - ➔ Exceptional student services
- ➔ Clarify the incremental nature of degree levels, thereby encouraging progression

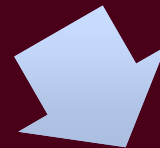
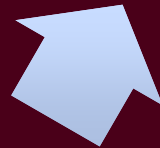
What a Degree Profile Is *NOT* Intended To Do

- ➔ Standardize degrees
- ➔ Define what should be taught
- ➔ Prescribe pedagogy
- ➔ Encourage rankings, internally or externally

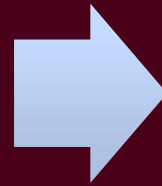
Following the Thread



THE EUROPEAN CONNECTION



Tuning
Europe



Tuning
USA



Differences

TUNING EUROPE

- Discipline faculty from many nations
- Focus on baccalaureate
- Faculty driven
- Many languages

TUNING USA

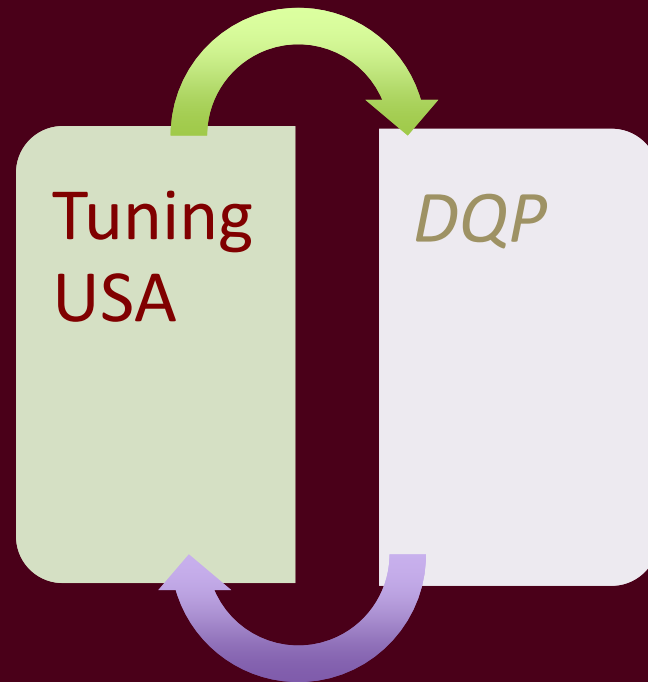
- Discipline faculty within selected states
- Community colleges
- Student participation
- One language



Tuning

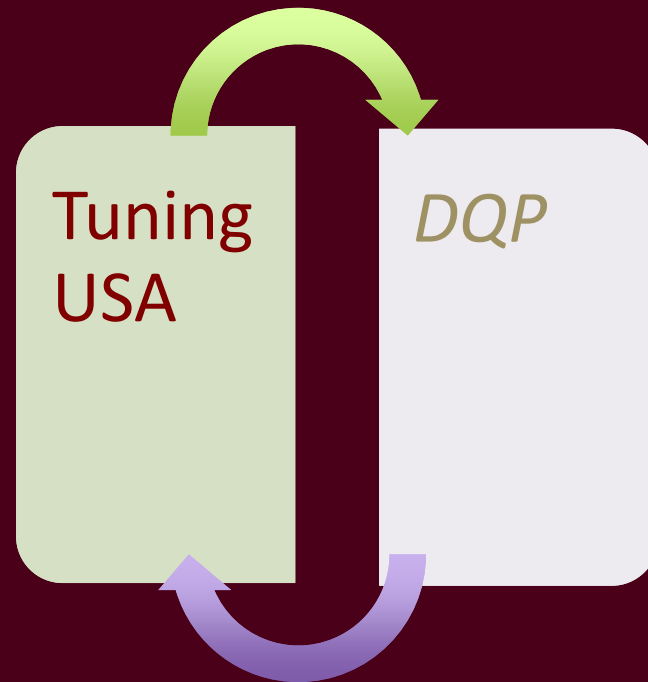
DQP

What students within specific disciplines should know and be able to do at each stage of a coherent and cumulative curriculum within that discipline.



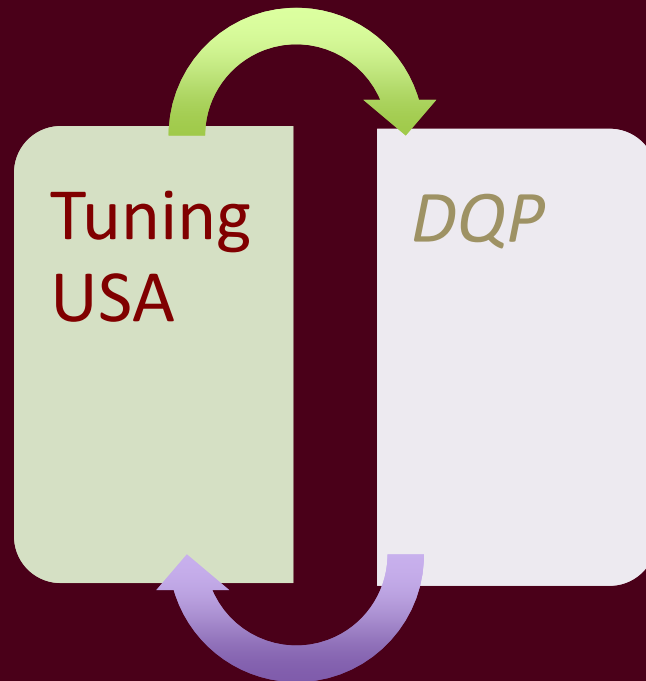
What students awarded a degree (associate, bachelor's, master's) should know and be able to do through a coherent and cumulative curriculum integrating general and disciplinary education.

Information gathered from Tuning will illuminate issues bearing on planned revision of the *DQP*.



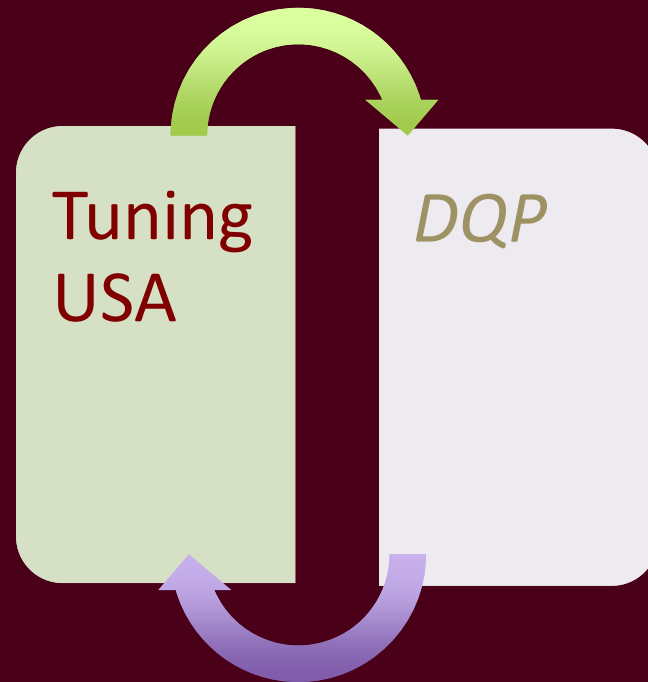
Responses to the *DQP*—especially from employers—can provide a perspective useful to those engaged in Tuning.

The more thoroughly Tuning is informed by the *DQP*, the more coherence there will be among the different Tuning efforts, discipline by discipline, state by state.



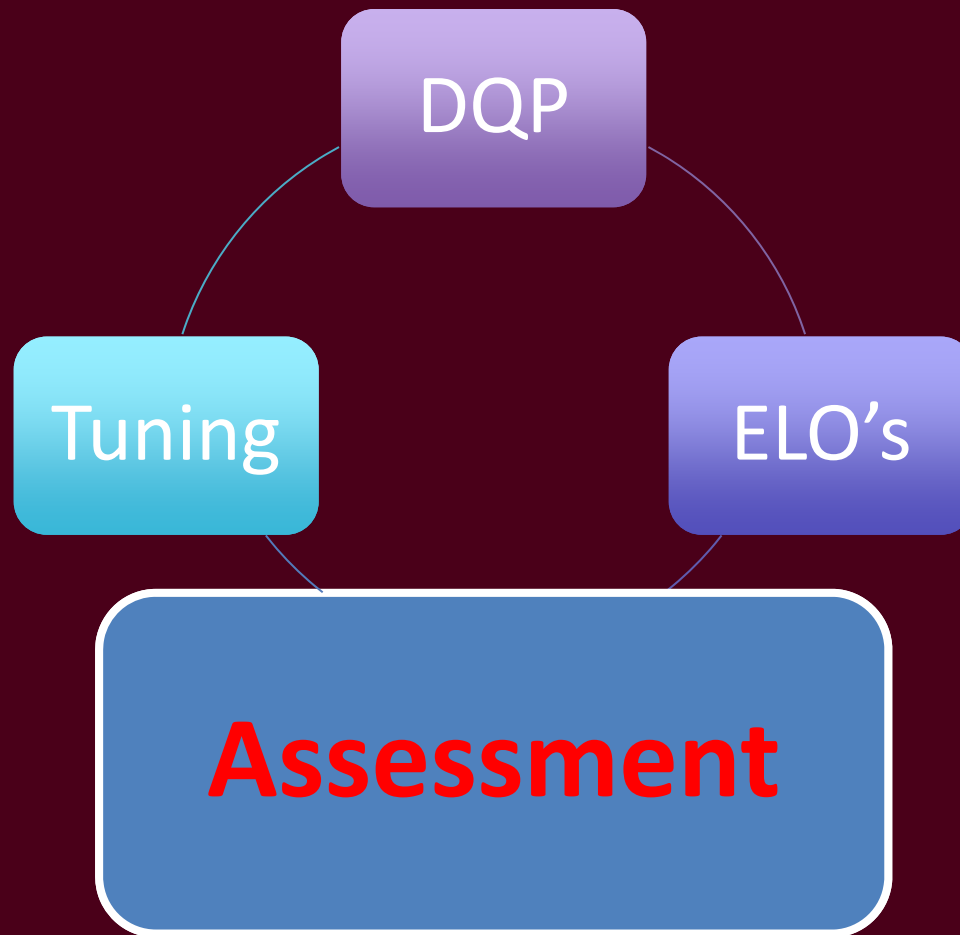
The greater the awareness in the *DQP* of the experience gained through Tuning USA, the more credible and substantive will be its implementation—and second iteration.

Tuning offers to the DQP the experience of **defining incremental and cumulative stages towards degrees *within disciplines.***



The DQP offers tuning a **new standard of specificity and concreteness in defining learning outcomes *for the degree.***

Following the Thread



Assessment & the DQP:

(Peter Ewell and Clifford Adelman)

Faculty members would be asked to identify the DQP learning outcomes *that are emphasized* in their courses

For each outcome, faculty members would be asked to identify assignments they *currently use* that lead to outcomes assessable in terms of the outcome statements: e.g., exam questions, papers, performance instructions, lab exercises, etc.

One approach, cont'd

From the examples provided by colleagues, a Beta list of “assessments” would be selected by a faculty committee or the faculty as a whole

Every faculty member would be expected to address two or three of the 37 DQP student learning outcomes—some of them “tweaked” to secure closer alignment with course objectives and to facilitate assessment

All assessments—existing, new, “tweaked”—would be reviewed by a faculty consultative panel

Finally

Perhaps a dozen qualifying assessments for each learning outcome, spread out across the curriculum, emerge

Rubrics of performance and grading would remain in the hands of individual faculty

Grading—judging the “how well” of performance—would remain the prerogative of the faculty member



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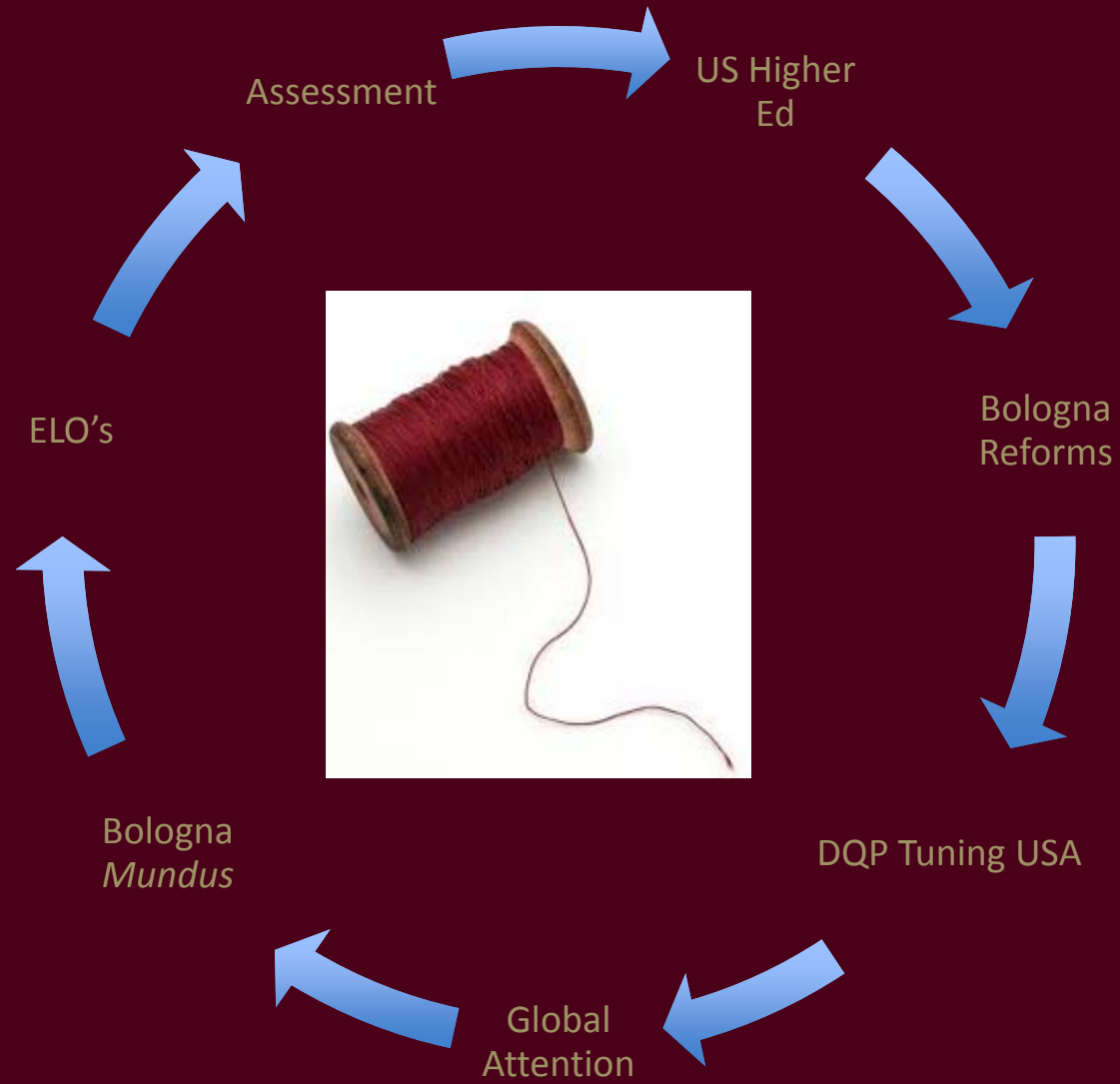
TABLE DISCUSSION

To what extent should
discussion of the curriculum
consider assessment?



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LET'S HEAR FROM THE
TABLE DISCUSSIONS



What's been happening with the
DQP since last we met?

MOMENTUM

1

- Institutions in at least 8 AAC&U LEAP states (CA is one) now seek to address liberal learning outcomes throughout the curriculum
- 4 of 7 regional accrediting associations are encouraging reference to the *Degree Qualifications Profile*, which proposes *institutional* outcomes

2

- More than 200 colleges and universities are adapting the *DQP* to articulate outcomes, enhance admissions, streamline curricula, enhance co-curricular activities, etc.
 - American Association of State Colleges and Universities
 - Council of Independent Colleges
 - American Historical Association

3

Eight states are “tuning” selected disciplines so as to clarify the synthesis between liberal and professional learning

4

The Profile is being used by institutions with strong outcomes statements as a rubric for identifying gaps

5

The Profile is being used as a standard for measuring specificity and measurability of outcomes—for both internal use and external reporting.

6

The Profile is being used as a platform for discussions with high schools to improve preparation of students for college – thereby reducing the remedial burden.

7

The *Profile* may give high school students a way to evaluate the promotional materials of colleges and universities with respect to a clear understanding of essential competencies.

8

At Texas A&M, students may soon use the *Profile as a CPS* (curricular positioning system) for understanding and navigating their degree paths



9

Advisors are considering how degree recipients might use the DQP to interpret their credentials to potential employers and graduate programs—and to offer assurance of their readiness.

10

Institutions could share a common platform for interpreting accreditation results to their publics.

Changing contexts in higher education



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CONTEXTS FOR DISCUSSION

- CMU's general education goals
- CMU's general education ideals
- CMU's current SLOs

"Thinking Beyond the Mesa"



Your Mission, Should You Wish to Accept It

- *Colorado Galactic University will welcome its first students in August 2014.*

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- *Colorado Galactic University will welcome its first students in August 2014. By May 2013 the university must have established (a) baccalaureate learning outcomes and (b) general education outcomes objectives.*

Your Mission, Should You Wish to Accept It

- *Colorado Galactic University will welcome its first students in August 2014. By May 2013 the university must have established (a) baccalaureate learning outcomes and (b) general education outcomes objectives. Documents developed at Colorado Mesa University may offer useful sources but should not constrain thinking in any way.*

Your CGU Think Tank

- Which elements in current statements (ten general ed goals, seven baccalaureate ideals, current SLO's, the DQP) should influence or be retained in CGU's baccalaureate learning outcomes?

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Your CGU Think Tank

- Which elements in current statements (ten general ed goals, seven baccalaureate ideals, current SLO's, the DQP) should influence or be retained in CGU's baccalaureate learning outcomes? What may be set aside—with gratitude for the contribution they have made. What gaps are there—either in terms of specificity or in terms of overlooked areas—that should be addressed? Having considered these questions, each small group should develop a short list of *representative baccalaureate outcomes* that may (or may not) draw on existing sources.

Each small group should develop a short list of *representative* baccalaureate *outcomes*

“Rubrics”

The outcome is imaginative, distinctive, and clear.

It will offer GCU a competitive advantage in attracting well-qualified students.

It is expressed as a genuine “outcome.” That is, a faculty member or student can easily understand how the competence is to be demonstrated.

By its specificity, it invites assessment.

Debriefing

Each group should advance its most explicit, most easily assessable baccalaureate outcome.

(It is understood that such outcomes are representative and that a comprehensive statement would be unrealistic.)

See you tomorrow!