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Academic Program Performance: An Evaluation Model for Community Colleges

Lori H. Metcalf

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Consultancy Project Executive Summary

Organization: Gardner-Webb University School of Education

Project Title: Academic Program Performance: An Evaluation Model
for Community Colleges

Candidate: Lori H. Metcalf

Consultancy Coach: Dr. Dale Lamb

Defense Date: July 7, 2020

Authorized by: Dr. Heather Woodson
Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs
Dean of the Kimbrell Campus
Gaston College

Amendment History

<u>Version</u>	<u>Issue Date</u>	<u>Changes</u>
Version 1	04/26/2020	Initial version.
Version 2	06/14/2020	Grammatical corrections and clarifications.

Approval

This consultancy project was submitted by Lori H. Metcalf under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to Gardner-Webb University School of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

Dr. Dale Lamb, Faculty Advisor
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Date

Dr. Heather Woodson, Site Advisor
Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs
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Gaston College

Date

Abstract

Academic Program Performance: An Evaluation Model for Community Colleges.

Metcalf, Lori H., 2020: Consultancy Project, Gardner-Webb University.

Educational institutions began a journey of systematic review of programs and strategic planning sixty years ago. During that time the assessment and evaluation movement has produced copious complex models with numerous motivators, such as accreditation requirements and accountability. The objective of the consultancy project was to create a program evaluation model and process to provide community colleges with a clear picture of the health of academic programs with a goal of continuous improvement, including highlighting program strengths, areas for improvement, and specific action plans. A model and process were created to consolidate the data and ultimately tell the story of each academic program in one place. A program performance team, rating system, and scorecard are part of the evaluation process. Although collaboration was done with a host institution, the model is adaptable and transferable to any community college.

Keywords: program evaluation, academic program performance, community college, higher education review

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1 Introduction

1.1 Project Purpose

The North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) outlines the process to initiate academic programs at community colleges within the state system. These procedures dictate a three-year accountability report as well. However, there is not a specified, universal way to determine continued program health, including program maintenance and program sunseting. To initiate a program, the college must present a case for the program, highlighting the purpose and rationale. This involves community surveys demonstrating need, labor market data, student interest surveys, and letters of support from business, industry, and other stakeholders. After the program has been in operation for three years, an accountability report is submitted to the NCCCS with data on enrollment, program completers, employment of graduates, and accreditation.

Determining the continued health of an academic program is a less-structured process at the local level and includes parameters of completing a review every five years that looks at strengths, weaknesses, and identification of areas to improve. The program evaluation model created through the consultancy project includes a scorecard with identified variables for measurement along with action items. Numerous academic programs at the partnering institution have program-specific accreditation; thus, they go through rigorous self-study evaluations. Additionally, there are various assessment measures currently in place. The current assessments and accreditation requirements were incorporated into the devised model. Supplementary to the specific program measurement criteria, other factors were determined as part of the consultancy, such as the evaluation timeframe and presentation audience. Ultimately, program viability is of utmost importance to meet the mission of the organization.

1.2 Associated Documents

Documents are located in the Appendix.

1. Appendix A: Academic Program Evaluation Model
2. Appendix B: Transfer Survey
3. Appendix C: Professional Literature Review

1.3 Project Plan Maintenance

The creation of the academic program evaluation model was one of continuous improvement during the lifecycle of the project, as outlined in milestones one through ten in section seven. Beyond the final (sixth) draft of the evaluation model, the process yielded other significant outcomes including the creation and results of a transfer survey, and the implementation of an evaluation/assessment fair as part of the annual professional development day at the partnering institution. The site supervisor played an active role in the creation of the deliverables and the consultancy coach regularly monitored the progress. The overview timeline with project phases is included in 4.1: Project Lifecycle, and the specifics of the work completed is outlined in 6:1 Work Breakdown Structure.

2 Project Scope

2.1 Outline of Partnering Organization's Objectives

2.1.1 Objectives

The consultancy project had two primary objectives: (1) create a universal program evaluation model for community colleges, and (2) create culture change from assessment (gathering data) to evaluation (decisions based on data). The organizational impact for not having a program evaluation model is profound. Institutions that are not fully aware of the health of their academic programs related to the determining factors, could be faced with an undesirable organizational culture, as well as misplaced funds. Academic organizations running unhealthy programs may have inefficient and inequitable faculty and staff workloads. Additionally, students may be enrolled in programs that are out of date or not in line with current industry standards, or they may receive a degree in which the work is no longer needed in the service area.

The quantified benefits that were expected to flow from the consultancy project were increased completion rate (completion of a credential), more graduates in associate degree programs, increased success at transfer intuitions, more students obtaining jobs, and increased success as reported by employers. As a natural consequence of evaluating programs, some ineffective programs could be terminated, leaving more revenue for expansion of the programs that are healthy.

2.1.2 Success Criteria

Success was measured by the creation of the program performance model. A quantifiable process was developed for rating the programs. The partnering organization is using a modified program performance model, mainly due to the timing of the milestones and needs of the organization. An assessment fair has been implemented during Professional Development Day. A suggestion was made for an addition to the policies and procedures manual to include responsibility for program performance. A measurement on the program

evaluation framework is comparing the performance of transfer students to the native students at senior institutions; thus, a transfer survey was created. It was piloted with one institution in the spring 2019 semester, and then sent to eight senior institutions in the fall 2019 semester, of which five participated with a total of 120 students. The data and themes were discussed.

The program evaluation model is expected to have a positive internal and external impact. The academic programs using the model are expected to be more robust with increased faculty investment with the program review and a higher level of involvement for business leaders. The model will also improve the quality of the student experience and enhance student preparation for the workforce. The increased collaboration with industry and business leaders will result in faculty members being up to date in the field with the current market, the latest regulations, and technological advancements. Faculty investment in evaluation can lead to creativity and out-of-the-box thinking. Furthermore, a comprehensive program evaluation model could be used for other positive benefits, such as grant writing and seeking voluntary accreditation. Continued success is expected as the leaders of the organization desire for the college to be a forerunner in improvement and innovation.

2.1.3 Risks

The risks were minimal and included increased workload or perceived increased workload for the faculty and staff involved in the evaluative process. The true risks to the organization are that of not having a robust, comprehensive program evaluation process. Any perceived risk to the process is mitigated by the benefits received.

2.2 Outline of Student's Objectives

2.2.1 Objectives

The primary objective was to gain experience in the entire lifecycle of a project. The project's process included the creation of the program evaluation model all

the way through its implementation. In addition to establishing the model, other goals emerged during the creation phase, including the process for the model, the assessment fair, and tracking transfer student success.

2.2.2 Success Criteria

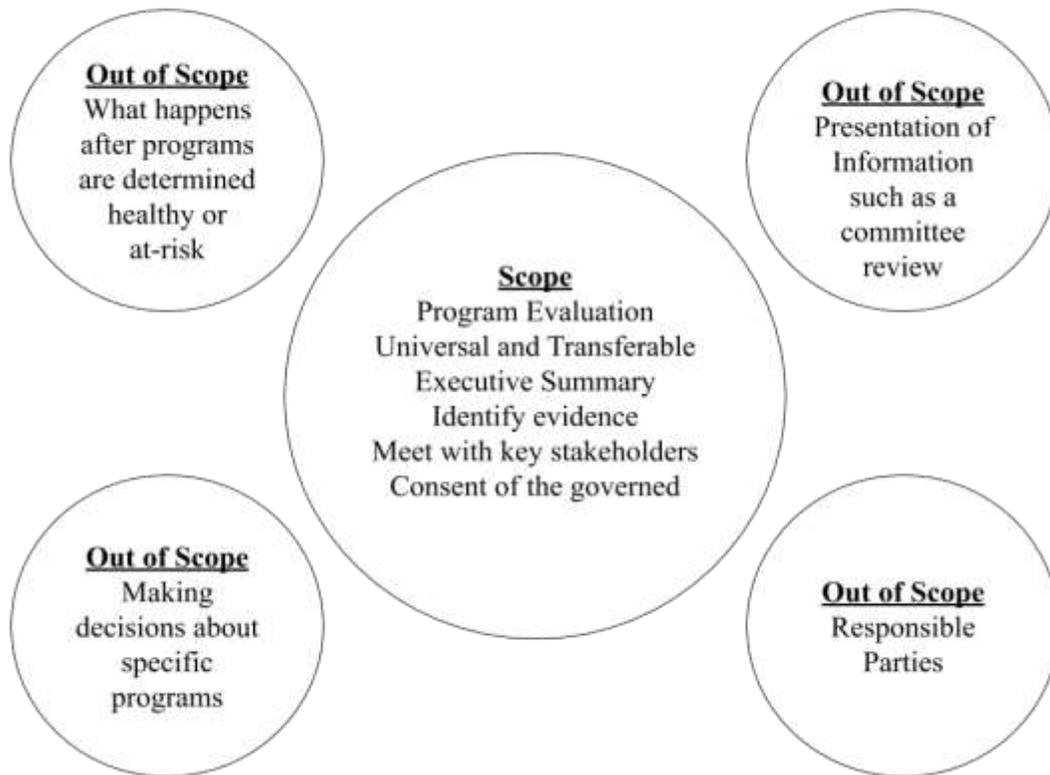
The success of the project was based on the completion of the program performance model and process with all associated tasks.

2.2.3 Risks

The risks for project progression involved the timing of the milestones with the change of staff in the Institutional Effectiveness Office of the partnering institution. The risks were minimized with consultation from the Consultancy Coach and the awareness that the goal was a universally-transferable model.

2.3 Definitive Scope Statement

The scope of the project is the creation of a career and technical education program evaluation model. The model will be universal and transferable to other community colleges; thus, how the partnering institution carries out the program evaluation after the forms are created is outside of the scope. Additions to the scope and expansion of the boundaries were made as the process evolved. In addition to career and technical education programs, college transfer programs were added to the model. Furthermore, although not part of the original scope, an evaluative process was proposed for the partnering institution (see Appendix A). A graphic depicting the original scope and boundaries is illustrated below.



3 Deliverables

3.1 To Partnering Organization

Organizational benefits realized:

1. A program evaluation (program performance) model was created.
2. A quantifiable process was created for rating and scoring.
3. An assessment/evaluation fair was implemented as part of the annual Professional Development Day.
4. Revisions to the policies and procedures manual were written and shared to include responsibility for program performance (faculty job descriptions and the evaluation and development of existing programs).
5. A transfer survey was created, piloted, and then deployed to eight institutions. The individual data was shared with each institution and the identified themes were discussed internally.
6. A comprehensive financial worksheet with formulas was shared (received from a Chief Financial Officer at a similar institution).

The original deliverables are listed in the table below. The tracking of the deliverables will take place as part of the review process.

Deliverables		
	Quantitative (Data)	Qualitative (Social Constructs)
Determine what “evidence” documents need to be included in the evaluative executive summary.	To determine the evidence and identify what is already being done and how.	To determine the evidence and identify the key stakeholders to interview.
Create the Executive Summary Sheet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine what is to be 	FTEs, Enrollment	Student Satisfaction – surveys and focus groups
	Completion Rates	Advisory Committees
	Faculty/Student Ratio	Job Placement
	Number of Staff	Recruitment

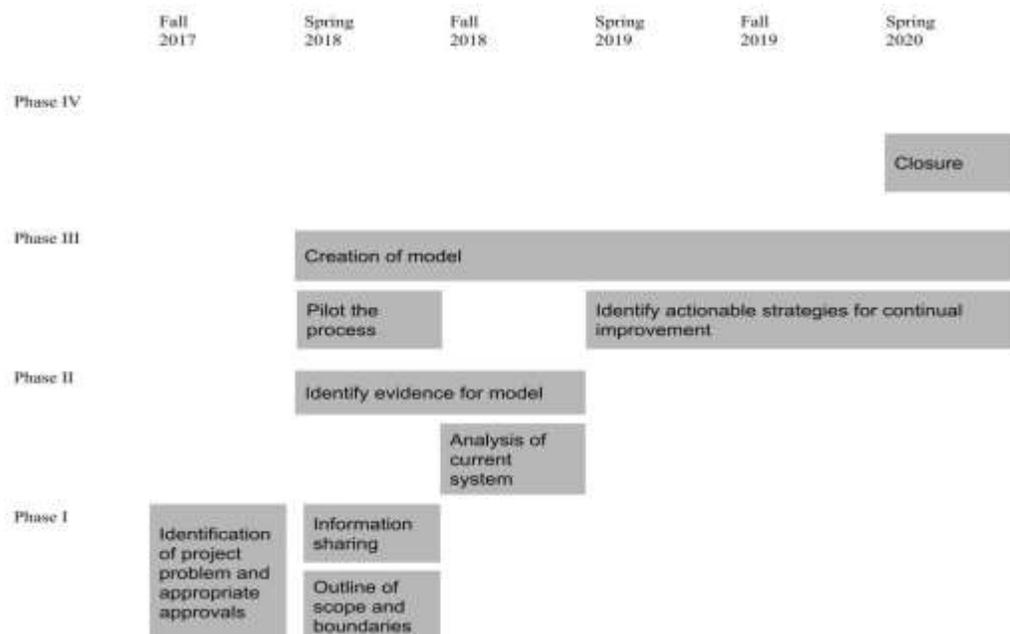
<p>included on the executive summary sheet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the rating system 	Financial Profile	What do they want? (stakeholders, consumers, clients, four-year colleges)
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3.2 From Student

1. Created a comprehensive evaluation model to determine the health of each academic program at the institution.
2. Organized an annual evaluation/assessment fair as part of Professional Development Day (April 2019, March 2020 postponed).
3. Increased faculty involvement in the evaluation and assessment process.
4. Coordinated the survey process by validating the questions, gaining approvals from senior institutions, organizing the deployment, and sharing the data.

4 Project Approach

4.1 Project Lifecycle Processes



Project Management Phases	Timeline	Goal (broad outcomes)	Strategies and Activities (approach to achieve goal)	Results
Phase I	Fall 2017	Identification of project problem and appropriate approvals	Brainstorming and discussions	Problem identified and approvals granted
	Spring 2018	Information sharing	Share project goals with stakeholders	Project goals shared with stakeholders
	Spring 2018	Outline of scope and boundaries	Meetings with site supervisor	Scope created
Phase II	Fall 2018	Analysis of current system	Interviews and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis	Analysis completed; goals, strategies, and actionables created

	Spring 2018 – Fall 2018	Identify evidence for model	Interviews with Deans and Institutional Effectiveness Staff	Components identified and incorporated into documents
Phase III	Spring 2018 - Spring 2020	Creation of model	Creation of model utilizing the Completion by Design framework: Meetings with Associate Vice President (AVP)	Drafts 1-6 discussed with Site Supervisor and Consultancy Coach
	Spring 2018	Pilot the process at Professional Development Day	Inclusion of activity as required for faculty in one division	Conducted April 2019
	Spring 2019	Identify actionable strategies for continual improvement	Create and deploy surveys; create and conduct focus groups	Survey questions were created and vetted; survey was deployed at one university
	Fall 2019	Identify actionable strategies for continual improvement	Survey deployed	Survey sent to eight institutions; Focus groups to take place Fall 2020
	Spring 2020	Identify actionable strategies for continual improvement	Survey results reviewed and themes identified	Assessment and Evaluation Fair for March postponed
Phase IV	Spring 2020	Closure	TBD	Final Evaluation Model vetted; Survey results analyzed and discussed

4.2 Project Management Processes

The project management processes included collaboration with the key stakeholders of program review at the partnering organization. These key stakeholders are the

Associate Vice President (Site Supervisor), deans, associate deans, and staff from the institutional effectiveness office. Regular meetings were held with the core members, as well as progress meetings with the site supervisor, and meetings with the consultancy coach. Performance information was captured and reported in detail and can be seen in the Communications Plan.

4.3 Project Support Processes

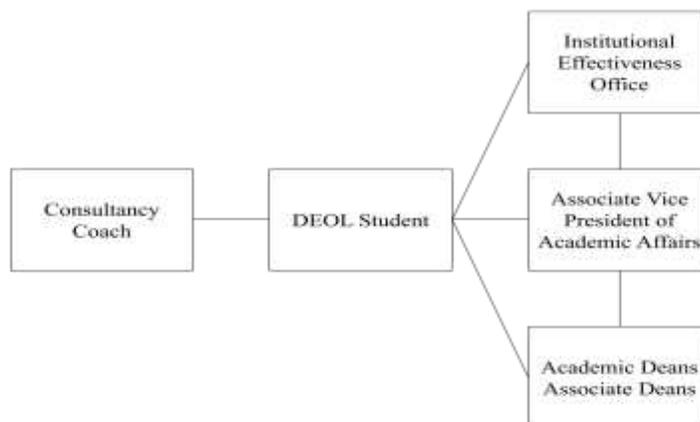
The project support processes are the processes that occurred throughout the lifecycle of the project and supported the activities. Configuration management in this case included predetermined characteristics that defined the deliverables. The scope was altered and the impact assessed (added benefits to the partnering organization). Status accounting was performed with each draft of the program evaluation model. The support infrastructure involved identifying and working with the core team, as well as the training at Professional Development Day.

4.4 Organization

4.4.1 Project Team

The project was organized to accomplish work through literature review and collaboration with the informal project team of the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, Academic Deans, Associate Deans, and Institutional Effectiveness Office Staff.

4.4.2 Mapping Between Organization and Student



5 Communications Plan

What	Who	When	How
Problem Identification	Vice President of Academic Affairs, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs	Start of project	Meeting
Project Topic Approvals	Executive Council	Start of project	Email
Identification of Evidence	Deans, Associate Deans, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, Institutional Effectiveness Staff	During the planning phase	Meetings
Program Evaluation Drafts	Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs	On-going throughout the project	Meetings and Emails
Surveys	Institutional Effectiveness staff at partnering institution and partnering colleges; Advisory Committee Members	During the implementation phase	Meetings, Phone Calls, and Emails
Assessment Professional Development (Evaluation Pilot)	Divisional Faculty and Associate Deans/Assessment Coordinators	During the planning phase	Email and In-person
Final Draft	Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs	During the Closure Phase	Meeting
Actionables	Academic Deans, Associate Deans, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, Program Coordinators	During the Closure Phase	Meetings and Emails

6 Work Plan

6.1 Work Breakdown Structure

Fall 2017
<p>Meeting with the Vice President and Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussed proposal ● Idea approved ● Decision to have the AVP as Site Supervisor
<p>Emails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approvals from the College President, Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, Vice President of Economic and Workforce Development, and Vice President of Finance, Operations, and Facilities
<p>Meeting with Site Supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overview of process
<p>Meeting with Associate Deans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overview of project ● They expressed concerns of increased workload for faculty
<p>Milestone 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultancy Proposal ● Research Paper: History of Academic Assessment and Evaluation
Spring 2018
<p>Meeting with the Dean of Business and Information Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overview of project ● Discussed evidence documents to be included in the evaluation framework
<p>Meeting with the Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussed current program review process ● Mapped out ideal (pie in the sky) process
<p>Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultancy Coach site visit with Site Supervisor
<p>Meeting with Associate Deans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brainstormed evidence documents
<p>Meeting with the Vice President of Academic Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussed modeling the evaluation model after the Completion by Design loss/momentum framework ● Discussed email from Achieving the Dream Coach
<p>Milestone 2: Project Objectives and List of Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective 1: Create a transferable program evaluation model for community college career and technical education programs ● Objective 2: Culture change from <i>Assessment</i> (gathering data) to <i>Evaluation</i> (decisions based on data)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rationale: There is an outlined way, with approvals, to begin academic programs in the state system, and a three-year accountability report; however, there is not a specified, universal way to determine continued program health. It is important that programs are still viable to meet the mission of the organization. Besides assessing the health of programs in order to achieve continuous improvement, an added benefit of housing all documents in one place (executive summary) will be ease of access to information for the VP, AVP, and Deans.
<p>Milestone 3: Scope and Boundaries</p> <p>Scope: Creation of a program evaluation model for community colleges</p> <p>In Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Program Evaluation ● Universal and Transferable ● Executive Summary Sheet ● Identify all of the evidence that will be included in the evaluation ● Meet with key players to determine evidence documents ● Consent of the governed <p>Out of Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation of information (committee review) ● Responsible Parties ● Making decisions about specific programs
<p>Summer 2018</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Received “Mapping Pathways: Program Revision Guiding Questions” from Academic Affairs Vice President ● College working towards guided pathways model ● Draft of program evaluation created
<p>Meeting with Institutional Effectiveness Director</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Importance of defining the criteria for a viable program ● Data collection must have narrative to have purpose ● Sharing of data websites to gain the metrics needed for evaluations ● Difficult to quantify programs in a comparable way as some high cost programs with low enrollment are needed to satisfy industry and community needs ● Gained a big picture view of program evaluation, as well as specifics for the project
<p>Meeting with Site Supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussion of program evaluation draft ● Big picture and timeline of inclusion in program review ● Suggestions about mode ● Where to go from here? Consent of the governed? Pilot? ● Discussed rating system choices and determined rating system ● Brainstormed ways to marry Cbd and Guided Pathways into the model ● Considered adding program evaluation as part of the newly created Curriculum Impact Committee (follow up after Curriculum Committee)

<p>Collaborated with Consultancy Coach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Let the data tell the story ● Be cautious about: <i>Difficult to quantify programs in a comparable way, since some high cost programs with low enrollment are needed to satisfy industry and community needs.</i> ● Program evaluation versus program validation
Modified draft to reflect brainstorming session with Site Supervisor
<p>Milestone 4: Summary of Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draft of Program Evaluation model ● Paper with the following conclusion: The quantified benefits that are expected to flow from the consultancy project are increased completion rate (completion of a credential), more graduates in associate degree programs, increased success at transfer intuitions, more students obtaining jobs, and increased employer satisfaction. As a natural consequence of evaluating programs, ineffective programs that are sunset could leave more revenue for expansion of successful programs.
Fall 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opinion data from Denison's Culture Change Model: Overall versus assessment culture ● Idea of assessment/evaluation component as part of Professional Development Day
<p>Meeting with Site Supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Went over SWOT analysis and culture surveys ● Suggestion of K-12 partnerships to be added to the opportunities section of the SWOT analysis ● Discussion of the interest gap to be added to the SWOT analysis threats
<p>Milestone 5: Risk Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SWOT Analysis ● Histograms: Denison Culture Surveys
Spring 2019
<p>Meeting with Associate Deans and Consultancy Site Supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Went over Program Evaluation draft ● Sent draft to all members for feedback
<p>Meeting with the Chair of the IRB at a senior institution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussed piloting the transfer survey
<p>Meeting with Arts and Sciences Dean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussed the transfer survey and focus groups
Program Review Meeting
<p>DEOL Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shared survey and focus group drafts with cohort members and consultancy coach for feedback
<p>Meeting with Site Supervisor, Arts and Sciences Dean, and Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborated and completed the final draft of the survey questions
Collaboration with IRB Chair at senior institution

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey finalized • Survey sent to students at the end of spring semester 2019
<p>Milestone 6: Assumptions, Quantitative, Qualitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constraints Identified • Survey created and deployed at senior institution (pilot group) • Questions created for Focus Groups
<p>Summer 2019</p>
<p>Correspondence from IRB Chair at senior institution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low response rate on survey due to lack of incentives (incentive culture) and survey fatigue
<p>Meeting with Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed the survey mechanism to deploy questions to other senior institutions
<p>Meeting with Site Supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on process and feedback received
<p>Milestone 7: Outline of Project Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline Phase I-IV
<p>Milestone 8: Financial Worksheet</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Collaborated with Chief Financial Officer in DEOL program to determine financial health of programs 2 Discussed financial worksheet with Site Supervisor
<p>Fall 2019</p>
<p>Program Review Retreat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborated and completed the Program Review for the Arts and Sciences Division
<p>Meeting with Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed survey deployment
<p>Emails and phone calls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corresponded with eight senior institutions regarding the surveys
<p>Emails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sent senior institutions the survey link
<p>Meeting with Site Supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of policy and procedures including the addition of responsibility of program evaluation to be added to job descriptions and Institutional Effectiveness duties
<p>Milestone 9: Quality Assurance Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle
<p>Spring 2020</p>
<p>Meeting with Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed data from surveys
<p>Emails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sent senior institutions their individual data
<p>Meeting with Consultancy Coach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed the reliability and validity of the instrument and process

<p>Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Program Review debrief with Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator and Associate Deans
<p>Meeting with Site Supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check-in to update on process
<p>Professional Development Day: Assessment/Evaluation Fair (postponed due to COVID)</p>
<p>Milestone 10: Track Overall Plan Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Revisited SMART goals ● Reviewed benefits to date ● Personal reflection
<p>Summer 2020</p>
<p>Milestone 11: Final Product</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Executive Summary ● Presentation

6.2 Resources

The resources were minimal due the integration of the project into the regular workload. Physical resources included the basic workstation and human resources included the staff involved.

7 Milestones

Milestone Number	Title	Date
1	Consultancy Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Statement of Purpose ● Description of Topic ● Historical Perspective ● Organizational Impact 	Fall 2017
2	Project Objectives and Deliverables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developed objectives ● Rationale ● Quantitative and qualitative deliverables 	Spring 2018
3	Scope <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mapped scope and boundaries ● Outlined organizations and systems impacted 	Spring 2018
4	Summary of Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quantified benefits expected to flow from the project. 	Summer 2018
5	Risk Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conducted SWOT analysis ● Denison Culture Surveys 	Fall 2018
6	Key Assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Constraints Identified ● Quantitative: Surveys ● Qualitative: Focus Groups 	Spring 2019
7	Project Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Timeline Phases I-IV 	Summer 2019
8	Financial Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Financial Worksheet 	Summer 2019
9	Quality Assurance Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle 	Fall 2019
10	Track Overall Plan Performance	Spring 2020
11	Final Product <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Executive Summary ● Presentation 	Summer 2020

8 Metrics and Results

A transferable program evaluation model and process have been created. The nomenclature changed to program performance due to the connotation of evaluation versus performance. Key evidence for the program evaluation model was determined through a vetting process with the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, the academic deans, institutional effectiveness staff members, and a literature review process. The executive summary sheet was created, as well as the quantifiable process for rating, ensuring reliability and validity. To help with increasing the data-driven decision-making process with faculty investment, an assessment fair has been incorporated into the annual professional development day.

During the planning phase, the transfer degrees were added to the program performance model and process. In addition to the review process, student satisfaction after completion of a program was measured. The goal was to look for themes for program improvement. Since job performance is already tracked for the Career and Technical Education programs, a satisfaction metric was developed for the college transfer programs. Transfer performance is measured at the state level; however, the addition of program satisfaction and program improvement was measured through surveys and will later include focus groups. The goal was to identify roadblocks and take corrective steps.

9 Risks, Constraints, Assumptions

9.1 Risks

A SWOT analysis, yielding heavy strengths, was completed for implementing program evaluation at the partnering institution. Additionally, two histograms were completed using the Denison Organizational Culture Survey. Looking at a subset of culture comparison data can be instrumental in finding out if a subgroup is stand-alone in their culture or aligned with the global organizational culture. In this case, the goal was to analyze the assessment/evaluation culture by comparing it to the overall campus culture. There was a mixture of opinion data. Some of the factors produced the same results for both groups, such as core values and goals/objectives. Other factors showed a steep difference, such as team orientation, customer focus, and strategic direction and intent.

Since introducing program evaluation creates a culture shift and disruption in usual customary practice, implementation needs to be planned out with specific steps. After doing the SWOT analysis and culture surveys, several key steps have been identified for implementation. Instilling consistency from the ground-level up is important; thus, all stakeholders should be part of the change process. Clear oversight of the evaluation process is necessary, as well as the creation of shared core values and overall purpose. The Social Cognitive Framework could be beneficial in achieving consistency with the process, specifically reciprocal determinism, behavioral capability, reinforcements, expectations, and self-efficacy.

A significant component of the initiative is to create an evaluation team with an evaluation director and divisional coordinators. The director, in charge of the oversight, should have this assignment as chief responsibility, not an add-on to a current position, and ultimately should be responsible for the consistency of the process as well as the consistency of the documents. The divisional coordinators become experts in the evaluation process, and, in turn, become resources for faculty. Creating a robust program evaluation process that is part of the college culture takes

time. The processes should become ingrained into the daily language of the organization.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths: What are the positives of program evaluation?

- The story of each program will be told
- Program strengths and weakness will become evident
- Benefits institution accreditation and program-specific accreditation
- Financial resources could be allocated according to program evaluation outcomes
- Involvement in the process will create a culture of investment for faculty
- Without program evaluation there is no real determination of the health of programs
- Accountability
- K-12 Partnerships

Weaknesses: What are the negatives of program evaluation?

- Faculty may feel threatened that low performing programs will become evident
- Possible closing or restructuring of programs could equate to reassignment or loss of jobs
- It is not part of the organizational culture

Opportunities: Are there external factors that program evaluation could benefit?

- Involvement/investment by industry and business leaders in existing programs
- Input for future program needs
- Collaboration between community and faculty
- Strengthen relationship with K-12 partners in regards to streamlining the CCP pathways

Threats: What external factors are preventing forward progress?

- Outside pressure to keep low enrollment programs
- Competing colleges
- Community perception
- Interest gap (community needs versus student interests)

9.2 Constraints

The main restriction for the overall project was that the timeline for the partnering institution did not match the timeline of the DEOL milestones. Two main constraints (limiting factors) were identified for the qualitative and quantitative component of the

project, including not having access to student emails at their senior institutions, and a tight time frame for deploying the surveys.

9.3 Assumptions

Organizational assumptions can be referred to as the unconscious beliefs and perceptions that make up the organizational culture. For the overall project, the assumption was that all stakeholders would be on board for a revamp of the program review process. Part of the discovered perceptions involved groupthink of initiative overload resulting in concern and weariness with the consent of the governed. Assumptions are not easily controlled. The key assumptions for the quantitative and qualitative projects (survey and focus groups) were cooperation from senior institutions and student participation. External dependency, factors outside of direct control, involved approval and cooperation from other parties for access to information. Another factor was internal dependency as one task had to be completed before the next step, as evidenced by completion of the surveys before the focus groups.

10 Financial Plan

With collaboration from a Chief Financial Officer in the DEOL program, a financial worksheet to be used with program evaluation was provided in Milestone 8. The worksheet included formulas to be tailored to specific institutions. Currently, the partnering organization is not using the financial worksheet.

11 Quality Assurance Plan

Quality assurance in business and industry fields is related to the quality of a product or service in meeting the needs of the customer. In the quality management model created by W. Edwards Deming, the goal is improvement with a continuous feedback loop. Program evaluation has a similar goal of continuous improvement. The evaluation model utilizes a process framework, so, in a sense, it refers to evaluating the evaluation system. The evaluation of processes is pertinent, and collecting and analyzing data for compliance should be considered minimal.

The goal of the program evaluation model is for continuous improvement, and highlights program strengths, areas for improvement, and specific action plans. The model consolidates the data and other relevant program information and ultimately tells the story of the program in one place. The program review culminates with one summary document that indicates the current health of each academic program. When looking at the entire process through the lens of quality assurance, several components should be highlighted, including competition, the user experience, continuous improvement, data analysis, defining goals, setting policies and procedures, implementation, and feedback. Of importance is the idea of the continuous loop in quality improvement. Part of the process is to identify loss/momentum points along the life cycle of a college student, from connection to completion. Once these points are identified, strategies are put in place to keep the student on path to completion of a credential. Below is the Quality Assurance Plan created to measure the effectiveness of the program evaluation model, with the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle.

Plan: Mapping out the Plan

- Primary problem: The lack of an organized way to determine the health of the programs. Program evaluation needs to be part of the college culture.
- Secondary problem: Identification of loss/momentum points for student completion.
- Solution: Structured program evaluation
- Measures of Success: FTEs in program, student completion rate, job placement



Do: Testing the Solution (Structured Program Evaluation Model)

- Test of Solution - Trial
 - Program evaluation model was used October 2019
 - Professional Development Day to collaborate regarding program outcomes
 - Student Satisfaction Surveys
 - Responsibly: Program evaluation should be added to the job descriptions

**Check: Review and Analyze Results**

- Rating System (dislike the scale – Outstanding, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory)
- Improved consistency between divisions, but more consistency needed

**Act: Full Implementation**

- Need interdivisional training to be sure all areas are using the same definitions and processes
- Annual Professional Development Day
- Keep looping



Appendix A

Academic Program Performance

Academic Program:

Program Chair (Name and Contact Information):

Total Number of Active Students:

Number of Full-time Students:

Number of Part-time Students:

Number of Completers the Last Cycle:

Total Number of Faculty in the Program:

Number of Full-time Faculty:

Number of Part-time Faculty:

A: Connection	%	Team AVG/30
B: Entry	%	Team AVG/24
C: Progress	%	Team AVG/42
D: Completion	%	Team AVG/18
E: Transition	%	Team AVG/24

Program Performance Score	
%	$A+B+C+D+E/138$

Performance Outstanding = 3 Accomplished = 2 Developing = 1	<p style="text-align: center;">Scoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outstanding: exceptional and distinguished; little room for improvement ● Accomplished: proficient and meets expectations; improvements can be made ● Developing: In progress; improvements needed
	Connection: Interest to Application
	A1: The program is viable. FTE data provided.
	A2: Marketing and recruiting is effective for program stability and growth. Describe specific marketing and recruiting actions, including who, what, and when. Describe marketing needs.
	A3: Admissions, advising, and financial aid processes are efficient and effective.
	A4: The current market need and future job outlook is positive. JobsEQ data provided.
	A5: The enrollment goal from the last cycle was met. Enrollment data provided. Set a new enrollment goal.
	A6: The equipment needs for the program are met. Program equipment is up to date and in good working order. List equipment needed.
	A7: The program faculty-student ratio is comparable to other programs at the institution.
	A8: Faculty diversity represents the student population.
	A9: Faculty are given an opportunity to develop themselves as scholars and practitioners.
	A10: In comparison to similar programs at other institutions, this program provides unique components that are desirable to the student population.
	Entry: Enrollment to Completion of Gatekeeper Courses
	B1: The program mission statement is part of the culture of the program. The faculty and students are aware of the mission statement.
	B2: Developmental education is designed in a way for students to quickly progress and/or take entry program courses at the same time.
	B3: Discipline-specific academic support for gateway courses are in place, such as a writing center and math/science center.
	B4: Mandatory proactive advising is in place.
	B5: Courses in the program are ADA compliant. If not, describe where the program is in the process.
	B6: There is a structured onboarding process in place within the program.
	B7: Customized advising plans are in place for students. Provide a sample plan.

	B8: Curriculum Maps are used to help students develop their plan of study. Provide the curriculum maps.
	Progress: Entry into Program through 75% of Requirements
	C1: The program is set up for continuous enrollment. Course sequencing is arranged for timely completion of the credential and students can progress through the program without delay.
	C2: The first semester is designed for students to gain knowledge and attain skills that will be built upon in subsequent semesters.
	C3: Student-centered learning is evident in the program. The program courses provide student engagement through individual and collaborative learning.
	C4: Students are supported at multiple campuses, instructional modalities, and time of day.
	C5: Program staff monitor student plans and intervene when the student is off plan.
	C6: Instructional and non-academic support is provided throughout the program of study.
	C7: There are multiple types of assessments in the program courses.
	C8: Activities for specific college-wide initiatives are embedded in the program, such as growth mindset, global awareness, writing across the curriculum, etc.
	C9: Program faculty are actively involved in persistence and retention efforts. Comment on specific persistence and retention strategies employed. Retention data and course success rates provided.
	C10: Course evaluations are administered at a set interval and actionable themes are identified, as well as strategies developed.
	C11: Themes are identified during the program outcomes evaluation process and strategies developed. Program outcomes are used to improve teaching and learning.
	C12: Ongoing student career development is provided.
	C13: Students have opportunities to apply and deepen their knowledge through work-based learning, service learning, research, and/or active learning activities.
	C14: Portfolios and/or capstone courses are utilized in the program.
	Completion: Complete Course of Study
	D1: The program has an appropriate number of credit hours. All courses in the program are necessary for student success. If beyond the state minimum describe the rationale.
	D2: The passing rates for certifications and/or licensure in the program correspond with confidence in the teaching and learning. Passing rate data provided.

	D3: There are college or system-wide incentives for transferring with a credential, such as transferring with junior status and/or all general education requirements met at the senior institution.
	D4: Program faculty actively encourage students to complete with a credential before transferring to a senior institution.
	D5: There are no financial barriers to the graduation process. The forms are electronic and there are no fees.
	D6: The graduation rate goal was met. Completion rate data provided.
	Transition: After Completion of Credential or Transfer to Senior Institution
	E1: The program has career placement advisors who assist students with career readiness and job placement.
	E2: The students in the program are successful post-graduation. Job placement data provided.
	E3: The program produces graduates who are able to earn life sustaining wages.
	E4: Performance of transfer students is similar to the native students at the senior institutions. Quantitative and qualitative transfer data provided.
	E5: Students are satisfied with the experience in the program. Student satisfaction data provided.
	E6: Advisory committee meetings occur annually. The composition of the advisory committee has a process for ensuring feedback from all stakeholders (faculty, students, graduates, and industry leaders). Specific criteria for membership is based on program accreditation if applicable.
	E7: Advisory committee recommendations are valued. Provide advisory committee agenda and minutes.

The Academic Program Performance Team is a small group of five members (three core members and two rotating members) that evaluate the items (A1-E7). The evaluative process involves the academic program chair and one faculty member presenting the evidence and artifacts to the Academic Program Performance Team in a biennial cycle. Suggestions for the team members of the partnering institution for the core membership are the Academic Affairs Associate Vice President, Student Affairs Associate Vice President, and the Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator. The rotating members would be a Faculty Senate representative and a mid-level program administrator. The team is trained on the rules for evaluation to ensure inter-rater reliability. Each team member

rates the items independently, and then sums each category. The average for the team per category is entered on the summary sheet and divided by the possible points to determine an overall score for each stage along the framework, as well as an overall program performance score.

Completion by Design Framework (Connection, Entry, Progression, and Completion)

Appendix B

Transfer Survey Questions

1. I completed the following degree at the community college:
 - Associate in Arts
 - Associate in Science
 - Associate in Fine Arts
 - Associate in Engineering
 - Associate in Applied Science (Nursing, Business, Criminal Justice, etc.)
 - I did not complete a degree, but completed 30 or more semester hours before transfer.
 - I did not complete a degree, but completed less than 30 semester hours before transfer.
 - Other

2. I would choose the community college again to begin my academic career?

Likert Scale

Agree Drop-down choices:

 - It improved my employability
 - Involvement in a special program
 - Affordability (tuition, fees, textbooks)
 - Small class sizes
 - Advisor/Mentor
 - Quality Faculty
 - Academic Support (tutoring, writing center, math lab)
 - Other:

Disagree Drop-down choices:

 - Did not get enough instructor feedback on academic performance
 - Misadvised regarding class scheduling
 - Did not receive advising
 - Lack of course availability
 - Difficulties with instructional technology (WebAdvisor, BlackBoard, Email, etc.)
 - Other:

3. If you were involved in a special program at the community college, which one?

4. How would you rate your academic performance at your current institution as compared to the community college?

- I am performing better academically at my current institution than I did at the community college.
 - I am performing the same academically at my current institution as I did at the community college.
 - I am performing worse academically at my current institution than I did at the community college.
5. If you completed an English course at the community college, are there any specific skills that you felt underprepared to apply in your coursework at your current institution?
- Writing
 - Citations
 - APA/MLA
 - Information Literacy/Library Research
 - Other:
 - I feel comfortable with applying these skills
 - I did not complete an English course at the community college
6. If you completed a math course at the community college, are there any specific skills that you felt underprepared to apply in your coursework at your current institution?
- Statistical analysis
 - Quantitative literacy
 - Other:
 - I feel comfortable with applying these skills
 - I did not complete a math course at the community college
7. I received credit for all of my community college courses at my current institution. If you did not receive credit for all of your courses, which specific course(s) did not transfer?
8. At the community college, I received adequate advising and the resources necessary for a seamless transfer experience. Likert Scale
9. At the community college, I found the following resources most helpful in my transfer experience.
- Transfer Advising Center
 - Faculty/Staff Advisor or Mentor
 - Academic Plan
 - ACA Course
 - Other

10. What were the barriers at the community college related to your transfer experience?
- Timely delivery of transcript
 - Timely posting of grades/degree
 - Graduation application process
 - Transferring of credits
 - Financial Aid
 - Advising issues
 - Other
11. As a result of my community college experience, I feel competent in the following areas
- Study skills
 - Time management
 - Critical thinking
 - Problem solving
 - Basic computer skills
 - Team work
 - Persistence/project completion
 - Confidence in my abilities
 - Other
12. If you could make any improvements to your experience at the community college, what one thing would you change?

Appendix C

Professional Literature Review

The objective of the consultancy project was to create a program evaluation model to provide community colleges with a clear picture of the health of academic programs. Although collaboration was done with a host institution, the model is adaptable and transferable to any community college. The professional literature review revealed the following common themes; the lack of research about academic program of evaluation, the evolution of the evaluation and assessment culture, program evaluation standards, the data-driven decision-making movement, and reasons for evaluation.

After an exhaustive literature review Goetsch (2015) discusses how research is lacking in evaluating academic programs even though most institutions of higher education participate in internal review of their programs. Attempts have been made to define criteria for evaluation and acceptable outcomes have been defined; however, research has not supported a validated program evaluation framework. Beyond the lack of knowledge for the creation of program evaluation models, there is an additional gap in the research in comparing program evaluation frameworks (Goetsch, 2015).

The present-day view of academic assessment and program evaluation has been shaped and molded by the past. The history of academic program evaluation can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s when the federal government used quantitative methods for specified educational programs (Ewell, 2002). Several key reports and events occurred in the 1980s to create the current assessment and evaluation culture. The National Commission on Excellence in Education published a document on how higher

education institutions should use research and the scientific method for improvement of the educational process. Additionally, a report titled *Involvement in Learning: Realizing the Potential of Higher Education* addressed the use of research to enhance knowledge of higher education and enhance the improvement process (*Involvement in Learning*, NIE,1984). The United States Department of Education wanted more accountability as indicated in the report, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative of Educational Reform*. By the end of the decade the majority of states mandated academic assessment and evaluation reporting.

With requirements for compliance to evaluate academia, institutions are looking for guidelines. In 2012, a comprehensive report with guidelines to evaluate undergraduate programs was generated by the Undergraduate Committee of the University Faculty Senate and the Faculty Council of Community Colleges in New York. The emphasis of the report is on creating a culture of evaluation and continuous improvement. The report describes the purpose of program evaluation in depth, as well as the characteristics of good academic program evaluations. The themes in the *Guide for the Evaluation of Undergraduate Academic Programs* are similar to other literature reviewed and include specifications for documentation, artifacts and evidence, stakeholder involvement, accreditation, capacity building, faculty empowerment, and meeting community needs (Undergraduate Committee, 2012).

The academic assessment and evaluation culture has exploded, and is evident in every step in the educational path. Accrediting agencies embrace the assessment culture as it can make the learning process less subjective. Academic institutions have groups and committees working on expansion of assessment, from core questions on common

exams to universal course learning objectives and academic program evaluation. The leading resource today is the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (2018), which provides standards and a checklist for educational evaluation. The program evaluation standards are grouped into the categories of utility, feasibility, propriety, accuracy, and evaluation accountability. Examples include the credibility of the evaluators, attention to stakeholders, project management strategies, transparency, fiscal responsibility, and documentation.

Data-driven decision making has become the latest buzz in the academic arena. Leaders of academic institutions want objective ways to help with decision making. The data-driven decision-making culture has been modeled by other improvement approaches such as Total Quality Management, Organizational Learning, and Continuous Improvement (Marsh, Pane, and Hamilton 2006). According to a paper written for the nonprofit research organization RAND Corporation, the basic conceptual framework consists of four types of data (input, process, outcome, and satisfaction) that provide information, actionable knowledge, and types of decisions. The authors conclude that more research is needed to determine the relationship between data use and student achievement. Concerns are presented about the quality of data, the analyses, and the misuse of data. Administrators and educators need an appreciation for data, which includes knowledge of use and interpretation. The theme throughout the literature is that data should be used for improvement not just accountability.

The themes of accountability and continuous improvement appear as the main reasons for academic program evaluation in the literature, along with stakeholder involvement and community need. Royse, Thyer, and Padgett (2016) discuss four reasons

that programs are evaluated in the text *Program Evaluation: An Introduction*. The reasons include competition for scarce funds, evaluation of new interventions, accountability, and requirement. The authors also discuss motivations for program evaluation. Organizations want to know that their programs are good, and they need data to help make decisions. The motivators the authors present could equate to academic program evaluation by determining if students are being educated and business leaders are gaining skilled employees. Additional motivators include determining the program worth, identifying program improvement, identifying how staff and faculty are utilized, and looking at what is needed for additional resources, including monetary expenses.

Gone are the days when higher education institutions are trusted to create programs that produce successful graduates. The path to evaluating academic programs is filled with selling the idea of the importance of closely looking at programs for improvement, as well as creating accountability through mandated regulations. Research is needed on proven parameters for designing a generalized and comprehensive academic program evaluation model, as well as comparisons of academic program evaluation models.

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