

# Northern Nevada Assessment Conference – Truckee Meadows Community College

8:00 - 8:30	Registration and Coffee – Sierra Bldg. Rm 108				
8:30 - 8:45	Welcome – TMCC President Dr. Maria Sheehan				
8:45 - 9:35	Keynote – Tracy Schneider Outcomes Assessment Coordinator, Solano Community College				
9:35 - 9:45	Break				
9:45 - 10:45	<b>Writing Assessment: Start With What You Have</b>  Wm. McCauley & Maureen McBride, UNR  Sierra Bldg. Rm 117	<b>If You Build It, Will They Come? Supporting Faculty in Assessing Problem Based Learning</b>  Jane Ostrander & Judy Fredrickson, TMCC  Sierra Bldg. Rm 100	<b>Effectively Using Discussion to Support Student Learning</b>  Teruni Lamberg, UNR  Sierra Bldg. Rm 105	<b>Transforming Curriculum and Informing Teaching Practice: A Reciprocal Learning Arrangement</b>  Rebori, Ferrara, Moltz & Nielsen, UNR  Sierra Bldg. Rm 209	<b>Improving Student Understanding of Numerical Methods with NCLab</b>  Pavel Solin, UNR  Sierra Bldg. Rm 101 (computer lab)
10:45 - 11:00	Break				
11:00 - 12:00	<b>Student-driven Assessment Tools in Content-driven Courses</b>  Steve Schenk, TMCC  Sierra Bldg. Rm 117	<b>Assessment, Achievement and Accountability: An Exercise in - What?</b>  Steve Carman, WNC  Sierra Bldg. Rm 105	<b>Interteaching: An Evidence-based Approach to University Instruction</b>  Thomas Wade Brown, UNR  Sierra Bldg. Rm 209	<b>Gauging the Impact of Studying Abroad On Academic Success: A Self-Selection Control Study</b>  Serge Herzog, UNR  Sierra Bldg. Rm 204	<b>Using Course Assessment Tools in the Context of Writing Center Development</b>  Elisabeth Buck, UNR  Sierra Bldg. Rm 100
12:00 - 12:50	Lunch – Student Center Main Floor				
1:00 - 2:00	<b>Assessment Solutions in Online Classes</b>  Fred Lokken & Cathy House, TMCC  Sierra Bldg. Rm 105	<b>Developing A College Wide Assessment Program: Pitfalls and Successes</b>  Debra Stiver, UNR  Sierra Bldg. Rm 117	<b>Grading Rubrics for Instructor Sanity and Time Management</b>  Tell Gifford, TMCC  Sierra Bldg. Rm 209	<b>Who We Assess and What We Want to Make of Them</b>  Stephen Lafer, UNR  Sierra Bldg. Rm 100	<b>Remediating Remedial Mathematics</b>  Aaron Wong, NSC  Sierra Bldg. Rm 204

Keynote  
Tracy Schneider

Outcomes Assessment Coordinator – Solano Community College, Fairfield, California

### **Assessment – Burden or Benefit?**

As educators, we have so much to do: plan lessons, teach classes, meet with students, calculate grades, attend meetings, and the list goes on. On top of all this, we are required to complete assessment so that we can be held accountable. We have to prove to students, parents, bosses, the community, the state, and the country that we are doing our jobs, right? Of course, that is one legitimate way to look at it, but is that all assessment is, a burden we have to bear? The truth is that we can choose to make assessment about accountability and workload, or we can use it to our benefit, increase student success, improve our institutions, and make our jobs easier. If we take control of assessment, we can make it whatever we want it to be and use it however we deem most useful. It is up to us.

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### Breakout Sessions

Round One – 9:45 – 10:45

#### **1- Writing Assessment: Start With What You Have – Room 117**

William McCauley & Maureen McBride, University of Nevada, Reno – Writing Center

The presenters will discuss and demonstrate ways to make assessment less labor intensive by working with favorite (or most troubling) writing assignments that are already being used, identifying the abilities demonstrated by those assignments and then further the values that those abilities represent. Presenters will invite participants to think about their values in relation to institutional learning goals, to see where they cooperate and where they do not. Finally, participants will discuss other assignments that could help with the goals in mind, with other learning goals, or build from other assignments toward specific learning goals (scaffolding assignments).

#### **Learning Objective**

- Identify strategies to minimize the workload of assessments while still producing useful data

## **2- If you build it will they come? Supporting faculty in assessing problem based learning – Room 100**

Jane Ostrander & Judy Fredrickson, Truckee Meadows Community College  
Experiential Learning Center and Destination Problem-Based Learning Project

Problem based learning (PBL) curricula involve students in acquiring skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the world of work, but assessment is still needed to signal to students what is valuable to learn, to provide evidence of student learning, and to supply both students and instructors with feedback for continuous improvement of instruction. This presentation describes an effort to develop a process to support community college and university faculty in learning to design and use assessments with one model of PBL (scenario-based learning or SBL), discusses challenges encountered by researchers and faculty in implementing and scaling SBL nationally, and demonstrates tools designed to assist faculty in designing and implementing an assessment design.

### **Learning Objective**

- How to use a principled assessment model to assess students in a problem-based learning class

## **3-Effectively Using Discussion to Support Student Learning – Room 105**

Teruni Lamberg, University of Nevada, Reno – College of Education

This session outlines an approach for effectively using discussion to support student learning. This approach is particularly useful to help students engage in critical thinking skills and problem solving as an approach to learning. The presenter will focus on basic techniques outlined in her recently published book, Whole Class Mathematical Discussions: Improving in-depth mathematical thinking and learning by Pearson.

### **Learning Objective**

- The presentation will describe research about how people learn, the role of communication and provides strategies for effective instruction.

#### **4-Transforming Curriculum and Informing Teaching Practice: A Reciprocal Learning Arrangement – Room 209**

Marlene Rebori – Western Extension Area

Margaret Ferrara, Michael Moltz, & Greg Nielsen – University of Nevada, Reno

The researchers will share a research design that has the capacity to work in 9-12 and college programs that include a component of service learning. As teachers, we strive to keep our curriculum current and sometimes do not have an opportunity to study our own practice. Also, many of our programs contain a volunteer or service learning requirement. In this session, participants will gain an understanding of curriculum-focused research design which includes several data points: data analysis of a classroom reflection exercise gained through a civic reflection activity; a final survey on students' perceptions of their level of civic involvement ranging from volunteering to service to learning to civic engagement, and a world caf' activity modeled on the civic reflection process which helps raise the awareness of students in their role and level of "making a difference" in a service learning project.. Data in the study are analyzed through a word text analysis: Leximancer (<https://www.leximancer.com>) and the students' perceptions are gathered also through video clips and virtual field trips narrated by the student.

##### **Learning Objective**

- This is a systematic research design that includes a structure that infuses a curriculum focus and a service learning component. This design is transferrable to other programs both within the university and beyond who have an interest in studying their own practice during a curriculum transformation initiative, especially one that includes a service learning opportunity.

#### **5- Improving Student Understanding of Numerical Methods with NCLab – Room 101 (computer lab)**

Pavel Solin, University of Nevada, Reno – College of Science

Networked Computing Laboratory (NCLab) is a novel web application that makes it possible for students and teachers to use advanced programming and computing resources on an anytime-anywhere basis, share and collaborate on projects, communicate in real time, and be connected. In this presentation we describe how the introduction of this tool completely transformed the class and student interest in programming and scientific computing. NCLab will be demonstrated if Internet connection is available. It is freely accessible at <http://nclab.com>.

##### **Learning Objective**

- Modern online tool improves students understanding of numerical methods.

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## Round Two – 11:00 – 12:00

### **6-Student-driven Assessment Tools in Content-driven Courses – Room 117**

Steve Shenk, TMCC

Multiple-choice question sets offer an appealing means for assessing student learning in content-driven courses, as they are easily administered assessment tool. These tools, however, are only as good as their questions and it is surprisingly easy for faculty to inadvertently develop ineffective questions. This workshop will explore the evolution of assessment in human anatomy and physiology from faculty-driven multiple-choice questions to student-driven multiple-choice questions using an open-ended question bridge. Besides seeing how the multiple-choice assessment process is developing for two courses, participants will have the opportunity to work in groups to develop (or re-develop) their own course-level assessment questions.

#### **Learning Objective**

- Develop effective course-level assessment questions

### **7- Assessment, Achievement and Accountability: An Exercise in - What? – Room 105**

Franklin S. Carman III, Western Nevada College – Biological Sciences

Assessment, achievement and accountability go hand in hand. Assessment must be used to propagate change and improve student outcomes. Measurements of achievement judiciously applied provide direction to improve student outcomes. Accountability must come from within all tiers of academics, i.e., the 'system', faculty, students, administrators and staff. Failure of one criterion guarantees failure of all three.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Data must take the place of politics in driving academic change and improving student outcomes.
- Data must be made easily available to drive academic change and improve student outcomes.

## **8-Interteaching: An Evidence-Based Approach to University Instruction — Room 209**

Thomas Wade Brown, University of Nevada, Reno –Instructional Researcher

This presentation will describe the use of Interteaching (Boyce and Hineline, 2002) as a way to incorporate an evidenced-based method of instruction into the college classroom. In an inter-teach session, the instructor composes a preparation guide consisting of several questions that outline a required reading and distributes the guide during class. Students form small groups and work collectively on the guide while the instructor goes from group to group to answer questions. This approach is heavily derived from the behavioral education literature and is grounded in both learning theory and practicality. A review of the literature supporting Interteaching will be presented. Suggestions for application and limitations will also be discussed.

### **Learning Objective**

- Participants in this session will learn how to implement and design a course using Interteaching as their primary method of instruction.

## **9- Gauging the Impact of Studying Abroad On Academic Success: A Self-Selection Control Study — Room 204**

Serge Herzog, University of Nevada, Reno – Institutional Analysis

The importance of studying abroad as part of the undergraduate curriculum has been touted increasingly in response to growing global economic, social, and political interdependence. As a result, the number of research studies examining the impact of study abroad on student outcomes has risen considerably in recent years. Though the findings of these studies cover a broad range of outcomes, few are cognitive in nature, and thus relate to student learning, almost all are based on student self-reported data, and none use a methodological approach that teases out the effect of study abroad net off student self-selection bias. To correct for these limitations, the present study gauges the influence of study abroad on graduated students' time to degree and various measures of cumulative grade performance (GPA) vis-a-vis graduates who attempted to study abroad--and started the matriculation process--but who ended up not going abroad for a course of study. The study relies on actuarial course registration data (instead of student self-reported data) to control for the type of study abroad course(s), the length of study, abroad location, in addition to covariate controls for student socio-demographic background, precollege preparation, financial aid burden, and academic experience leading up to graduation (including selected major, change in major, honors course taken, internships completed, independent studies taken, courses repeated, and number of math and science credits accumulated).

### **Learning Objective**

- Participants will learn about one of the country's largest study abroad consortium, the type of data required to measure its effect on students, and the methodological rigor desired in order to approach accurate correlations associated with student experiences, such as study abroad.

## **10- Using Course Assessment Tools in the Context of Writing Center Development – Room 100**

Elisabeth Buck, University of Nevada, Reno

The presenter will discuss the development, expedition, and assessment of the University of Nevada, Reno-University Writing Center WebCampus (Blackboard) portal. This online “space” represents both a forum for the collection of consultant-developed writing resources, and an opportunity for students and faculty from the UNR campus to engage with staff in an interactive capacity. This portal was created in Fall 2011, and data from this project was assessed at the conclusion of the semester. In this manner, it was possible to discern which resources were being most utilized by UNR users. Assessment also provided helpful feedback for how the Writing Center can continue to provide assistance, and further meet the needs of given student and staff populations. This presentation will help participants think about how this type of data collection and report generation can be used to assist with a range of other assessments, including classroom and programmatic.

### **Learning Objective**

- How to use course assessment tools in other contexts, and how the tracking of user data/generating system reports can facilitate educational advancement and opportunities for resource expansion.
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Round Three – 1:00 – 2:00

## **11 - Assessment Solutions in Online Classes – Room 105**

Fred Lokken. Associate Dean TMCC WebCollege  
Cathy House, Computer Information Technologies

This session will explore the unique capabilities of the online Learning Management System to support course assessment. An overview of key features/functions will be provided, and examples of effective assessment solutions will be demonstrated. The session will include information about current and future LMS solutions used by NSHE institutions.

### **Learning Objective**

- Identify ways to use Learning Management Systems to support course assessments

## **12-Developing A College Wide Assessment Program: Pitfalls and Successes – Room 117**

Debra Stiver, University of Nevada, Reno – College of Business Assessment Chair

The University of Nevada College of Business has adopted an assessment program in response to an AACSB mandate to change the way colleges of business are evaluated for accreditation. The college developed a substantial program designed to measure student performance as it relates to several major learning goals. The presentation will discuss the development of the program and its successes and short-comings in the implementation of the measurement process and reporting process.

### **Learning Objectives**

- A useful template for developing an accreditation assessment program.
- Successful and not so successful techniques for assessment.

## **13- G.R.I.S.T. for the Mill: Grading Rubrics for Instructor Sanity and Time Management – Room 209**

Tell Gifford, Truckee Meadow Community College

This workshop is a variation of W.R.I.S.T. (Writing Rubrics for Instructor Sanity and Time-Management), where participants learned how to use interactive rubrics for grading written assignments. G.R.I.S.T. is designed for grading assignments such as posters, works of art, speeches, musical performances, and other non-written projects. Assessments can be completed by the instructor alone or in collaboration with the student. Students can also evaluate each other's work using this process. G.R.I.S.T. is ideal for assessing group projects or presentations, and offers instructors a fair and thorough approach to assignment feedback with minimum stress on the part of the instructor.

### **Learning Objective**

Participants will learn how to use interactive rubrics for grading assignments other than written ones.

## **14-Who We Assess and What We Want to Make of Them – Room 100**

Stephen Lafer

University of Nevada, Reno – College of Education

Assessment in education assumes that there exists knowledge of proper goals. Proper goals for others assumes that the goal maker/staters know what is good for those others. This session will discuss the origins and arguments for such assumptions and how discussions such as this one could lead to dramatic shifts in the way assessment is understood and applied.

We will also consider the consequences of current assumptions might be and what changes in those assumptions might mean for educators, students, and members of the various communities affected by issues of assessment.

### **Learning Objective**

- Develop a sense of assumptions underlying assessment and how those assumption affect assessments and those assessed.

## **15-Remediating Remedial Mathematics – Room 204**

Aaron Wong

Nevada State College, Mathematics Department

At NSC, in order to address the retention issues associated to remedial mathematics we have created a new system to deliver math content to our students. The basic concept is to teach in the structure of 5-week mastery-based modules instead of 15-week semesters. For such a system to be effective, it is important that the instructors have the ability to accurately assess student performance in a short amount of time. Through a series of quizzes and an exam, we are able to track student progress and reach a determination of that student's performance in a matter of weeks. Students who do not meet the required performance benchmarks of a given module are required to immediately repeat the module. The data show that when these students take the module the second time, their performance dramatically improves and most students are able to meet the requirements. Now that we have started to gather this data, we intend to combine it with other forms of academic support (through E-alert and student tutoring) in order to increase retention by actively focusing on the students who would most likely benefit from the direct attention. Furthermore, we attain a sufficient level of granularity in order to distinguish between several types of advising strategies for our students. Participants will learn about a focus assessment on growth of reasoning power, informed decision making and about putting content in its proper place.

### **Learning Objectives**

- Teaching remedial mathematics using 5-week mastery-based modules is effective at identifying struggling students and placing them into a setting where they can meet the desired learning objectives.
- By creating and tracking student data, instructors can quickly sort students into performance categories, which can be used to improve retention by enhancing student academic advising.