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Visit our website for updates and committee resources

www.dhe.mo.gov/lamp.shtml

Upcoming Meetings

Full LAMP Committee:

- Monday, May 11th

Recent LAMP meetings:

Assessment Practices Subcommittee:

- January 2, 2009
- April 1, 2009

Literature Review Subcommittee:

- February 11, 2009
- March 16, 2009
- March 25, 2009
- April 1, 2009

Communications Subcommittee

- December 18, 2008

What is LAMP?

For some of you reading this message, you may be asking yourself: What exactly is LAMP? What is this group doing? What will be the impact of this work?

Recognizing that there are different levels of understanding about the work of LAMP, we have developed a primer that outlines the genesis and intent of the LAMP initiative.



What does LAMP stand for?



LAMP stands for, "Learning Assessment in Missouri Postsecondary Education". The Co-Chairs and organizers of the group considered several different names for the group, but specifically chose the acronym LAMP, because of its significance to the group in its role to provide information and data to policy makers to illuminate their decision-making processes and assist them in making informed policy decisions.

LAMP's Genesis

LAMP was initially conceptualized and initiated by the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) to dialogue and provide research, data, and recommendations to the Commissioner regarding assessment-related policy issues. Three institutional representatives from across the educational sectors were chosen to provide grassroots leadership, with support from MDHE staff. The intent of the group is to bring the experience and expertise of institutional representatives and practitioners to the table as the MDHE begins to consider appropriate ways that assessment be considered from a state-level perspective.

LAMP Drivers

Two initiatives underway at the state level have driven the creation of LAMP to consider assessment in the context of higher education policy: the Curriculum Alignment Initiative (CAI) and the CBHE statewide coordinated plan for higher education—Imperatives for Change.

The Curriculum Alignment Initiative, initiated in 2007, has produced competencies that outline knowledge and skills necessary for success in collegiate-level coursework and for completion of beginning general education courses. While CAI has undertaken the work to develop the competencies, it was the charge of the group was also to identify the policy impacts for a larger group of both content and assessment professionals, LAMP, to consider. To learn more about the history and current status of CAI, visit: <http://www.dhe.mo.gov/casinitiative.html>.

The Missouri's statewide coordinating plan for Higher Education, Imperatives for Change (IFC), was adopted by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education in July 2008. IFC provides a vision that has been developed collaboratively by Missouri's higher education institutions and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education. This plan will serve for the next three to five years as a foundation for prioritizing goals, justifying an increased resource base and allocating resources. This plan has, as one of its main goals, the need to assess student learning outcomes through multiple venues. LAMP has been charged with considering assessment surrounding these areas. To learn more about the IFC, visit: <http://www.dhe.mo.gov/ifc.shtml>.

LAMP Goals

The central goal of LAMP is to “thoroughly and thoughtfully explore assessment-related policy questions, based upon current practice and literature surrounding these issues, and provide the resulting considerations and recommendations to the Commissioner for use in the development of policy”.

The work of LAMP has been shaped by three documents: the LAMP Charge, the LAMP Policy Guidance, and the LAMP inclusion values:

- The [LAMP Charge](#) was put forth by the Commissioner outlining the tasks and end report that LAMP was asked to deliver. This document framed the reason for forming the group, the importance of gathering professionals from across domains, and the specific areas for inclusion in the final report.
- The [Policy Guidance](#) document clarified the policy questions, driven by CAI and IFC, that the MDHE needs addressed in order to develop assessment related policy. These were meant to frame thinking and direct LAMP to specific policy areas.
- The [LAMP Inclusion Values](#) were developed by the LAMP members themselves, as the method and process for moving forward with the work of LAMP was under the purview of the group itself. This document seeks to articulate the process values the group would uphold in moving forward with the work.

These three documents have served to clarify and direct the actions of the group.

Why you should be interested in LAMP

LAMP is an opportunity to bring together individuals across the state with experience and expertise in multiple domains, and engage in dialogue and discussion with the express intent of bringing quality information to senior officials and upper-level administrators tasked with developing assessment-related policy. The LAMP process is an open opportunity to collaboratively identify the issues, challenges, and prospects for policy development. There is no expectation that participants must be in agreement, but that as a group LAMP can illuminate the critical issues for consideration in developing effective assessment policy for the state of Missouri.

LAMP: Myths and Facts

MYTH: *LAMP is making policy regarding assessment.*

FACT: LAMP does not make policy. The group is charged with exploring assessment practices in Missouri and professional assessment literature in order to provide information and recommendations to the Commissioner. This information will be utilized by MDHE to make informed, data-driven decision making and policy development. The Commissioner and MDHE Senior Staff develop policy in consultation with institutional leadership; these policy recommendations are then brought forth to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education for consideration and action.

MYTH: *LAMP will constrain or devalue institutional autonomy.*

FACT: LAMP's purpose is to critically look at the policy issues faced at the state level surrounding assessment and provide quality information to policy makers about the issues and concerns that need consideration in the development of thoughtful and effective policy. Members of the group are not being asked to all agree on the same thing; indeed, there are many opinions about possible policy solutions. It is the synergy of bringing together so many individuals that will allow LAMP to provide thorough and nuanced recommendations to these assessment policy issues.

MYTH: *The purpose of LAMP is to produce statewide assessment tests.*

FACT: LAMP is charged with examining best practices and professional literature, and dialoguing about that information as a group in order to identify areas of critical consideration and recommendations for policy consideration. There is not any foregone conclusion regarding assessment put forth to the group; MDHE is seeking information to better inform the development of policy and the appropriate use of assessment.

MYTH: *The MDHE will not take LAMP recommendations into consideration.*

FACT: The Commissioner and MDHE are committed to promoting collaborative dialogue and sharing policy development. LAMP was expressly initiated to utilize the expertise available in the state in the area of assessment, so that policy development and policy decisions might be better informed. It is of course, no guarantee that all recommendations will be acted upon, but they are of great value in bringing forth the critical areas of concern in the policy development process. Good policy cannot be created in a vacuum.

MYTH: *These issues are too big for LAMP to consider.*

FACT: Indeed, these are significant and complex issues for the group to consider, especially considering the breadth of the field of assessment. However, the MDHE has provided guidance as to the specific domains within assessment with which they are requesting assistance and information, as outlined in the [Policy Guidance](#) document. In addition, Commissioner Stein recently wrote a [letter](#) requesting the LAMP group specifically focus on completing recommendations regarding access and placement for the June 2009 report, with the understanding that LAMP would continue to work on other policy recommendations after that date

MYTH: *There is no way LAMP will be able to make recommendations by the June 2009 deadline.*

FACT: Early on, LAMP members, with support from the Commissioner, decided that given the number of policy areas that the MDHE was seeking input and recommendations on that it would be necessary to limit scope the first year. The group decided it would focus their attention initially on three areas of primary interest: access and placement; beginning general education course transfer; and college level general education. Work has progressed on all three fronts, but with the Commissioner's request to prioritize access and placement, it has been decided that LAMP will provide a report on progress to date for all group activities but provide a comprehensive analysis of critical issues and factors only in the area of access and placement for the June 2009 report.

MYTH: *Policies resulting from LAMP's recommendations will force all institutions to have the same admittance policies.*

FACT: As mentioned above, LAMP is not a policy making body, and therefore would not have the authority or power to enact such policies. In addition, since LAMP's members come from the institutions themselves, their dialogue and recommendations are based out of their experience and expertise as well as examination of practice and literature; it does not seem likely that LAMP recommendations would include such draconian suggestions.



Volunteer to Participate with LAMP

If you are interested in participating in LAMP, please email Angelette Prichett at angelette.prichett@dhe.mo.gov. Your experience and expertise are welcome!

LAMP Leadership

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Co-Chair, LAMP and
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