Concurrent Session Proposals

Concurrent sessions are 60-minute presentations. We're looking for real-world case studies, research, best practices, and creative perspectives that can inspire and guide attendees. During proposal review and selection, preference will be given to those proposals that align with one of the established themes and include how the use of one or more Watermark platforms provides a foundation for such teaching, learning, and continuous quality improvement initiatives. Product demonstration is not necessary.

Consider presenting independently or with colleagues from your institution (and/or other institutions), or collaboratively with a member of the Watermark team. Our attendees come from all corners of academic and non-academic affairs, and because of this, are open to a range of topics in the following areas:

Track 1: Best practices for using data to improve outcomes and quality
Transforming the use of data from primarily a compliance exercise to a platform for action is easier said than done. And using data to make intelligent decisions to improve student outcomes is the most important, and often, most difficult step in the institutional effectiveness cycle. Share your approach to building that institution-wide sense of responsibility for using data to mobilize action. Describe your process for integrating, analyzing, sharing, and using data to inform improvements at your program or institution. Share tools and techniques used to analyze and visualize data, as well as strategies for connecting data across the institution and engaging others in the interpretation and use of results. Discuss how your data informed curricular, pedagogical, or other changes that made real, tangible impacts on your campus.

Track 2: Planning for Assessment
Share your program or institution's best practices for planning for assessment. Describe your process for defining learning outcomes, preparing and evaluating the quality of assessment plans, providing feedback and using rubrics to collect data, and using cycles of results to guide improvements. Describe your program/institution's use of portfolios, as well as other direct/indirect measures to best determine if learning outcomes have been met and students have acquired the knowledge, behaviors/attitudes, and applied skills necessary for post-graduation success.

Track 3: ePortfolios for Learning and Development

Share how your institution has implemented and uses ePortfolios across campus. Describe strategies used to implement e-Portfolios in ways that have allowed students to better track their learning journeys, feel engaged in a learning community, and see their academic growth over time. Describe how the use of e-Portfolios on your campus helped to clarify, advance, and demonstrate outcomes. Share how your faculty are using ePortfolios to demonstrate professional growth and showcase their teaching, research, and service activities. Discuss your program's or institution's process for reviewing faculty portfolios and using them as part of performance review activities. Share your experiences, both successes and lessons learned, as well as practical tips for what could have been done differently during implementation to ensure ePortfolio success for students and faculty.

Track 4: Managing and assessing experiential learning experiences
Share best-practice models of measuring core competencies and learning objectives outside the classroom, particularly in co-curricular student activities as well as field/clinical/student teaching/service learning experiences. Share the models and methods of how your institution assesses non-academic units to determine whether objectives are being achieved, as well as your program's process for determining if students/candidates are meeting learning outcomes during field-based and student-teaching learning experiences. Discuss how your institution is integrating efforts across all learning experiences in order to get better insight into performance and identifying gaps/areas for improvement.

Track 5: Engaging students in their own learning to drive improvements
Share your program or institution's approach to encouraging student feedback. Describe your institution's process for soliciting feedback from students on courses, faculty impact, and preparedness. Share best practices and practical tips for encouraging students to become a part of these processes, communicating the vision and value-add of their engagement, and increasing responsiveness. Share how the use of data from these processes feeds multiple levels of stakeholders and multiple institutional processes – senior administration, dept/school administration, and faculty. How does this data impact teaching and learning, managing faculty, managing quality at the course, program, department, school, and intuitional levels, student course selections, and for accreditation?

Track 6: Responsive curriculum development and management to drive improvement
Describe innovative practices and strategies for the curricular design of appropriate measures and meaningful quantifiable performance targets for learning outcomes. Share your institution's process for proposing, reviewing, approving, and implementing curricular changes intended to improve courses and outcomes. Discuss how these changes are communicated, presented, and measured for student success and how they contribute to student preparedness post-graduation. Present concrete examples of improvements seen over time.

Track 7: Engaging and supporting faculty in professional growth and performance review

Share your institution's process for supporting faculty activities in the areas of teaching, research, publications, professional development, and service, as well as how you encourage or require faculty to document these activities. Discuss the processes in place for tracking, monitoring, and evaluating faculty members' teaching, service, research, and publication work. Describe the benefits of this process to essential campus stakeholders, including faculty, students, and third parties, as well as areas to improve efficiencies.

Track 8: Preparing for Accreditation
Share your program's or institution's best practices for preparing for accreditation. Share how your institution integrates your institution's core processes in preparation for demonstration institutional effectiveness. These processes include but are not limited to strategic planning, assessment planning and outcomes measurement, program review, resource allocation, curriculum review, and reporting on faculty qualifications. Focus on regional/specialized/professional accreditation bodies welcomed.