Question 1: How can we strengthen the faculty/staff ownership of the ILO and assessment processes and results?

Connecting ILO assessment to teaching

1. Faculty need to understand how the ILOs tie into what they’re doing in the classroom. If faculty can’t see how ILOs/assessment of ILOs directly benefits what they’re already doing in the classroom, then ILO assessment becomes something they “just have to do.” How can we help them see those connections?
2. When faculty see the how specific ILOs will help benefit their students (students’ ability to do good work, ability to grow as people, or function better in the workplace or their discipline, etc.), they’re more likely to want to engage in the process.
3. Do the ILO assessment results impact faculty's *actual teaching in the classroom* to the extent that they would agree to “mull over these standards on a deeper level”?
4. In a recent WSCUC meeting, a colleague made the point that ILO assessment data allows departments to justify changes/funding requests. This could be shared with the faculty.
5. The best assessment shows faculty a real problem, or gap in student learning, and then makes it clear to them what the issues are and invites discussion about how to address them.

Strengthening the language of liberal arts and community service

1. Be upfront about WASC assigning us the terms for ILO's 3-6. Be willing to use different descriptors in campus dialogue, and find a way to communicate the rationale for that language change to WASC. Try moving from bureaucratic language to liberal arts language. For instance, English colleagues may be much more enthusiastic about an ILO in "Writing for an Audience" than in "Written Communication."
2. Anything that requires little to no work. E.g. ask me directed questions rather than have me come up with something from scratch. Also, I suspect some of the feeling of lack of ownership might be because we don’t really think that a Westmont education is primarily directed at accomplishing those things (with the exception of CUPA). They tend to strike me as the kinds of things someone could learn as well or better by getting a job after high school than by attending a liberal arts college.
3. We have so many learning outcomes floating around (program level, ILO, GE, etc.) but a lot of what we are doing with and for students is really hard to quantify/assess. That needs to be acknowledged. There needs to be a better balance between the “need for numbers” and the “softer side of things.”
4. Frame the language of ILO assessment as a community service that is important for the health of the entire institution.

Connecting professional development for faculty to ILO assessment

1. Few if any of us are trained in assessment, yet we’re doing it. More education/training would be helpful around what this should even look like in the first place.
2. Student life engages in a professional development activity/expert speaker/session around the outcome for the year (one of the four Student Life cycles through, two of which align with campus ILOs). This helps staff get on the same page, get excited, get
focused, and gets them thinking about things in a new way. Perhaps this could be similarly done with faculty via faculty forum/faculty meeting.

**Engaging students in ILO assessment**

1. Provide a single page handout that gives examples of how to get students to engage in the ILOs.

**Changing logistics/organization of the processes**

1. Allow faculty to have more of a hand in creating the assessment techniques. In my experience, faculty tend to disengage somewhat when just handed ILO assessment processes or techniques. Allow us to come up with ways to assess, and I think this could increase engagement and ownership.
2. Anything that requires little to no work. E.g. ask me directed questions rather than have me come up with something from scratch. Also, I suspect some of the feeling of lack of ownership might be because we don’t really think that a Westmont education is primarily directed at accomplishing those things (with the exception of CUPA). They tend to strike me as the kinds of things someone could learn as well or better by getting a job after high school than by attending a liberal arts college.
3. To me, it feels as though there are too many repetitive administrative steps being taken all over campus, steps that do not tap into the expertise of the faculty; therefore, it would be my vote for the administration either to be more supportive of each department by being more hands on (read offer far more administrative support) or relinquish more control to the faculty. The hybrid scenario, as it exists today, is one of oversight but not much help, which I find very frustrating.
4. Do faculty have a clear understanding of where the ILOs came from?
5. Faculty need to feel legitimately “listened to.”
6. Faculty and staff need to see tangible results in order to get a sense for how the ILOs/assessment really matters.
7. Involve more people in the process of not only administering assessment, but in planning it in the first place.
8. A really beneficial piece in the past has been bringing key folks into the same room and having conversations about what they see (i.e. reading/rating sessions for papers/tests).

**Question 2: How should we collect the ILO data from our graduating seniors across the curriculum?**

**Collecting data in capstone courses/senior seminars**

1. I think what we are doing now is fine. We target the senior seminar classes in each discipline and assess the students in those classes. That way, we are able to see how most of our students are doing relative to each ILO when they are on the brink of graduation. Perhaps we could also administer the same assessments to our first year students so we could compare the results. We could do that if we wound up having a sufficient number of our first year students take a first year seminar.
2. I like assessment that is embedded in courses, rather than surveys or the like. My answer to this question, however, would depend on the particular ILO in question. ILO assessment should be based on the work students produce - authentic, direct assessment of actual student work.
3. Implementing the assessments in the senior capstone courses in the dept. has worked well for us in the past. If there are capstone courses, that is a logical place. One hour of capstone/senior seminar time for collecting the data seems reasonable. The PRC members should be involved in motivating students.

4. Ideally, you would collect every single piece of capstone work in all disciplines, or work from whichever is the most advanced research class - wherever students are putting together everything they've learned right before graduation. If every major had a senior seminar and every student did a portfolio, of course that would be ideal, and the ideal place to assess ILOs. But again, it would be a huge undertaking to make this happen.

**Revisiting and restructuring assessment design**

1. Do we need to collect it across the curriculum? Can’t our data be reliable if it is randomly selected? or even better selected? That step would save a lot of effort in collecting data and it might allow for more meaningful analysis of that data.
2. Make this a more regular piece of the process for faculty - establish expectations, get organized, etc., so it just becomes part of the routine.

**Using qualitative data**

1. Qualitative data is more valuable, though admittedly requires more work to assess. Can we be more thoughtful about working with qualitative data we have, instead of requiring quantitative data?
2. Focus groups are an interesting way to gather “sound bites” from students as they talk about their own progress toward ILOs. If we ask questions like “How have you grown in this area,” their answers would allow us to capture how they articulate their own development (or not) in learning related to certain ILOs.
3. Arrange for faculty members to meet with two or three graduating seniors for 30 minutes each. This would capture nearly all graduating students and would give students an opportunity to share about their learning.
4. Opportunity/necessity here to code interview/focus group data and then look at it over time (past three years, for example).

**Using e-portfolios / Creating a depository of student work that could be tapped by various people for various purposes**

1. The idea of a depository of some kind - a collection of student work that could be tapped by various people for various purposes.
2. It would be best if assessment wasn’t solely done in disciplinary strongholds, especially as you student work together to look at progress toward an ILO. A chemistry faculty member should be able to look at student artwork and say something meaningful, for example. This is a liberal arts college!
3. Portfolios are one idea. These have worked well to help students frame their learning and know what they’ll be expected to show they’ve learned at the end.
4. If every major had a senior seminar and every student did a portfolio, of course that would be ideal, and the ideal place to assess ILOs. But again, it would be a huge undertaking to make this happen.

**Discussing ILO results at the department level**
1. If ILO results were discussed at the individual department level, that would be more likely to lead to creative, brainstorming ideas.

**Improving connections between GE & ILO assessment**

1. Important to ask what relationship GE assessment has to the ILO assessment process. If a GE is teaching toward an ILO, should work be collected from those classes?

**Addressing an ILO in major**

1. It does not make sense to ask departments to imbed assignments related to ILO’s that don't directly fit into the curriculum (Diversity ILO).

**Question 3: What could be a more effective and sustainable mechanism for acting upon our ILO assessment findings at the course level?**

**Moving the conversation/implementation of the ILO to the departmental level**

1. Do not ask for more data; encourage faculty to consider these as part of their syllabi and teaching. For acting upon findings – recognize that not all ILOs can be followed in each course. Perhaps encourage departments to think about how they, as departments can cover these ILO bases.
2. Think about how to keep these things in people’s minds and giving them tips for easy ways to do them, while avoiding the “you must do this” sort of talk.
3. When other faculty share their experiences and present positive stories, that is compelling.
4. Incorporate the areas of weakness into new assignments or course techniques.

**Developing strategies for faculty buy-in**

1. This is the question I find most difficult to answer. In my experience with the Critical Thinking ILO assessment, faculty were willing to have conversations about the assessment results in various groups and some faculty were even willing to come to brown bag lunches to talk about it further, but it has been a real challenge to interest faculty in changing any of their courses in light of ILO assessment findings. Even when the provost was willing to offer small stipends, it was hard to find volunteers. I think faculty need to see ways to incorporate new things in their courses in such a way as to take advantage of what they are already doing so it doesn't seem like such a burden but instead enables us to do better what we are already trying to do. I wish I had some good specific suggestions along these lines, but I don't!
2. Sustainability happens when faculty buy in. If faculty members of the PRC don't really believe that it's crucial to effective assessment to assess the ILOs at the level of every course, then we probably shouldn't be doing it, and the energy of coming up with a sustainable plan would be better spent coming up with an alternate assessment plan. If faculty members on the PRC genuinely do believe that we need to assess ILOs at the course level, tell the faculty why you believe that and demonstrate its usefulness.
3. This relates to the “buy in” question. If more people actively care about the ILOs, then more people will care and invest in acting on the findings.
4. If a prof was involved in the process in the first place, they’re more likely to have buy in and say “wow, my students are struggling! I’ll address that.”
5. If ILO results were discussed at the individual department level, that would be more likely to lead to creative, brainstorming ideas.
**Improving administration of ILO assessment**

1. Perhaps having some standard mechanisms that can be used across all departments.
2. Giving faculty tangible things that they can easily incorporate into their classes/assignment would be more attractive than just saying “you need to build more critical thinking into your classroom/assignments.”
3. Another consideration is: “Who is in charge of curriculum design?” Professors don’t want to be told what to do in their classes, especially when part of the joy of teaching is being creative and designing assignments reflective of what you think is important. Westmont is distinctive because there is departmental cooperation but no one dictates that “you have to do it this way” (His 10, Eng 002, as examples where professors can design the course in unique ways to suit their style, while still keeping with the basic content).
4. You have to prioritize and be clear about what’s most important, and accept that in a given course you might not be able to do all the things you want to do.
5. Ask faculty who teach classes that directly apply to a particular ILO to meet after an ILO assessment is complete and discuss strategies for strengthening courses.
6. See above for best practices at institutions we respect. Maybe find assignments in courses that are already assessing the LO?
7. Finding ways to tie ILO findings to particular departments would be helpful. Perhaps we could encourage particular departments to make something that came up in an ILO assessment one of their key questions for the next cycle, if there seems an obvious connection?
8. Some question about the effectiveness of the Brown Bag Conversations. They are a good idea, but what are they really doing for us? How do we do something that gets better participation?
9. It may be necessary/helpful to revisit the GE: reassess the categories and rethink which courses count for which GEs. Then, prioritize these categories and incorporate them into the curriculum across the disciplines.

**Restructuring the curriculum or revisiting the ILO implementation**

1. Can we collectively revisit how to infuse more critical thinking, information literacy, global thinking, etc. into all areas of the curriculum, sort of in the spirit of the “cross-cutting priorities” in the strategic map?
2. Any effort has to be succinct enough, especially when you get so much data. We need to think strategically about where to focus on different ILOs. Targeting particular classes allows us to grab “low-hanging fruit” rather than giving a blanket statement of “go do something about this” to all faculty.
3. Possibly we should look at the First Year Seminars differently in the future.
4. Be creative and think broadly about restructuring courses, knowing what is and isn’t important to emphasize and being clearer about objectives.

**Connecting ILO assessment to student evaluations**

1. Is there any role a course evaluation should/could play in this?

**Surveying faculty for feedback**

1. There could be a survey, simple chart, or similar method to provide feedback on ILO’s for the college and by department?

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS (from various respondents in the Library and Student Life)**
1. It’s important to recognize that it is hard to gauge how students are doing and it’s tempting to use ready made solutions for testing student learning. And it’s hard to craft effective assignments!

2. Devise something akin to the existing “Futures Group,” but for the ILO/assessment process. This could generate conversation about what’s going on in the wider world around institutional assessment, and would keep you on the edge of learning and thinking through important questions. Assessment can be dreary, but this could bring it more alive and help us focus on the bigger picture.

3. Is there any way to use faculty research to inform ILOs? Or are there faculty who might be able to further their own scholarship by engaging in assessment? This would be a win-win.