

Sharon Stringer's Key Points during the Chairs' Meeting on Tuesday, October 9, 2006:

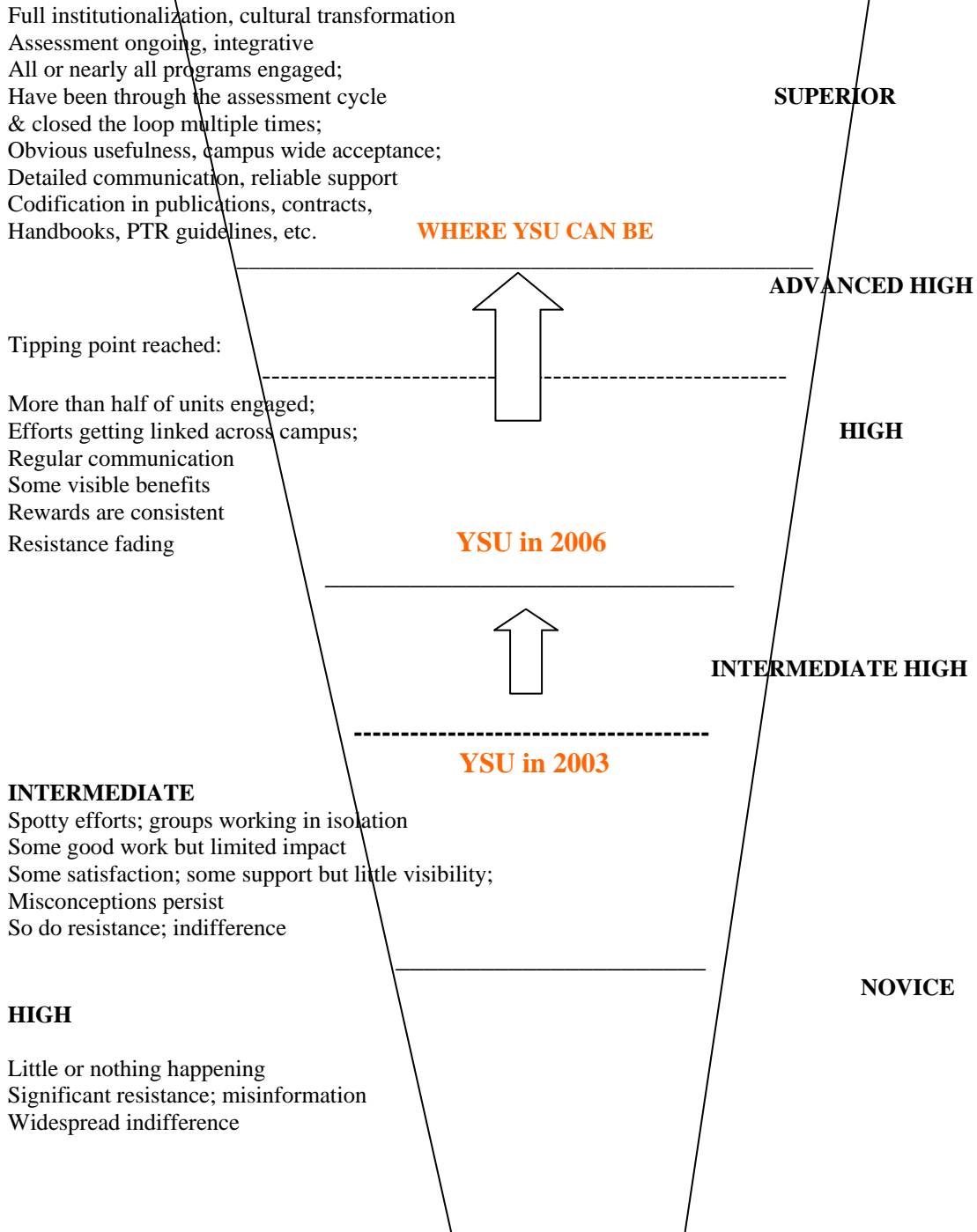
- 1) Please inform faculty about the project on first-year students "Parsing the First Year" which is being conducted by Penn State University with the excellent leadership of Pat Terenzini, a well-know researcher on college students' educational experiences. YSU is one of 37 institutions to be selected for the project. The study will include a survey (relatively brief) of faculty, staff, and administrators during mi- to-late October. During the Spring semester 2007, students will be assessed on academic skills and they will be encouraged to participate in surveys such as the NSSE 2007. We will keep you posted but please encourage your faculty to participate in the October 2006 survey because the results (available in September-October 2007) will be very valuable for our self study and re-accreditation processes.
- 2) The deadline for assessment reports is September 30th on an annual basis. We need to demonstrate that assessment is sustained and valued beyond the HLC visit of Feb 2008.
- 3) Be sure to include any certificate programs (at or above 18 semester hours) in your assessment reports this month and on an annual basis.
- 4) In January 2007, Dr. Stringer and members of the assessment council will be conducting workshops and focus groups to share information about what we are finding regarding assessment reports as well as surveys. Students, staff, and faculty will be included in the focus groups. We will provide advance notice of these focus groups and workshops. Dr. Stringer will be providing a brief newsletter to faculty across campus to help improve lines of communication about deadlines, rubrics, websites, and speakers.
- 5) Dr. Stringer will be working with Career Services, the Alumni Office, and Departments to help streamline the administration and costs of alumni surveys. Chairs noted that response rates are much better when the surveys are mailed directly from the departments. Some of the costs for administration of alumni surveys will come from the Office of Assessment to assist Departments as much as possible. Chairs can forward any recommendations regarding the administration of alumni surveys to Sharon Stringer at sastringer@ysu.edu.
- 6) Last year's reports indicate that across campus we are at "the intermediate" or average level" in terms of assessment. We need to be at a higher advanced level as soon as possible on assessment processes. The two areas that departments can improve this year when they prepare their reports are as follows:
 - a. Provide clear demonstration of the feedback loop. This means collecting data in aggregate form, discussing the results with faculty, students, and constituents and providing clear evidence of how information from outside the department is sought (e.g. it is not sufficient to simply demonstrate internal communication of results among faculty). Closing the feedback loop also means that it is imperative to show how data on student learning informs program improvement (via concrete action steps) on an ongoing basis.
 - b. Data is often best aggregated using shared criteria that faculty discuss.

- c. Other campuses provide “bookmarks” on program assessment as students enter the program (this is one idea for sharing information with students).
- 7) Keep in mind that effective assessment centers on what faculty value most: the enhancement of student learning. Capitalize upon what departments are doing already.
- 8) Sharon Stringer’s office has moved to 139B of Tod Hall near the credit union. She can be reached at 330-941-1347 or by email at sastringer@ysu.edu.

The 2004-2005 annual report from the Office of Assessment included a pyramid diagram (shared with permission by Dr. Barbara Walvoord from one of her national conference workshops in 2004). Using this diagram on the next page as a reference assessment, YSU is gradually moving from an intermediate level of engagement in 2003 to an intermediate high level by 2006. The future goal is to facilitate and sustain active engagement at the advanced level.

The next page provides an excerpt from Dr. Stringer’s 2005-2006 annual report.

The Assessment Pyramid



From Barbara Walvoord, 11/1/04 "with apologies to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and its criteria for oral proficiency in languages"