

Making the Best of Assessment When You Can't Entirely Avoid It: A Skeptical Look At LEAP-ing Over the Moon

UW Whitewater has committed the university to LEAP, a framework for assessing educational programs established in 2005 by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. LEAP—which stands for Liberal Education and America's Promise—emphasizes the liberal arts component of all kinds of post-secondary education, including courses that are primarily technical and career-oriented. Many faculty members find that emphasis attractive in principle but are sometimes less enthusiastic about the way LEAP translates into practice.

LEAP deserves skeptical scrutiny and the AAC&U's ideals, though superficially wholesome, may not necessarily be the best way to conceptualize the purposes of higher education. But if a university has made an institutional commitment to LEAP, a faculty member faces more immediate challenges than considering the philosophical and policy implications of the program. How do faculty members make some constructive use of the LEAP framework? Can the logic of LEAP-ing be bent to good purposes? This workshop will look at ways in which faculty members can turn assessment tools from being obstructive nuisances into occasional opportunities for improvement.

Peter W. Wood is president of the National Association of Scholars, based in Princeton, New Jersey. He previously served as provost of The King's College in New York City, and as associate provost and president's chief of staff at Boston University, where he was also an associate professor of anthropology.

Dr. Wood has had extensive involvement with college accreditation and the assessment movement. Dr. Wood's essays on American culture and higher education have appeared in *Partisan Review*, *The Claremont Review of Books*, *Society* and many other journals. He is the author of two books, *A Bee in the Mouth: Anger in America Now* (2007) and of *Diversity: The Invention of a Concept* (2003).

Tuesday, October 19 (Lunch Included)

12:30-1:30 p.m. UC 275



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Register online at: <http://signup.uww.edu> using your Net-ID
The workshop is listed under "LEARN Center."

