



ASSESSMENT UPDATE 2014-2015

From the office of Assessment, Accreditation & Program Development

“If community colleges are going to fulfill their core mission, essential and ongoing assessments must be done to structure an environment of student success and completion.”

(Walter Bumphus)

The open access mission of Cloud County Community Colleges allows faculty to work with individuals with a wide variety of academic skill levels and diverse educational backgrounds. As a result, learning outcomes assessment presents an array of opportunities and challenges for us. During the 2014-2015 academic year, the demand for accountability and transparency from HLC, KBOR, and others has led to our institution needing to take time to reexamine existing assessment systems and, where appropriate, design new practices and models of success, including understanding barriers such as reduced funding, inadequate reporting of student data, changes by regulators, and in some instances faculty resistance. What has evolved is the necessity to measure and report meaningful student learning outcomes (Suskie, 2009). This increased focus on learning outcomes assessment by our accreditors, is occurring in part because they recognize the need for improving accountability and also because of increasing pressure from federal and state governments. Currently we assess learning outcomes, ranging from outcomes of general education courses to outcomes of career-specific programs such as nursing and wind energy.

GUIDELINES & GOALS

Focus on purpose – understanding the quality or level or quality of student learning (Mueller, 2011).

Create a meaningful purpose - faculty involvement in assessment is an essential element in creating an environment where assessment results are used to make changes that help students achieve (Hutchings, 2010).

Assess to learn - build assessment activities into what the educators are already doing and to promote assessment as research into what students are learning (Maki, 2010).

Faculty involvement - effective assessment requires widespread involvement from faculty, effective assessment is faculty driven

Keep it fundamental – selecting a reasonable number of outcomes to measure and create a process for assessing and collecting data which can be managed easily and is understood.

Support & reflective feedback – providing tutorials, workshops, and collaboration to support instructors in all aspects related to assessment on a continual basis.

Use data to support decision making – using data will help determine areas of support needed by both instructors and students

Acceptance of change – understanding by all stakeholders that change is a process that is never completed – we are continually evolving to provide the best learning opportunities for students.

BASIC COURSE ASSESSMENT *updates*

Performance assessments other than test grades can include (simulations, lab and other demonstrations, field experiences, critiques, recitals, projects, etc.)

Rubrics (published or locally developed) to assess student work

The following is a description regarding how Cloud County is and will be addressing the focus on student learning:

1. A test pilot group is utilizing our Canvas reporting system to directly connect student work with a rubric which correctly aligns to course outcomes
2. Based upon the test pilot, Course outcomes have been verified, and in some situations updated to reflect what learning aspects will be measured
3. Course outcome details have been entered into the Canvas reporting system to begin campus wide application by faculty for fall 2015
4. Workshops have been held and are scheduled for the upcoming academic year to support instructors in utilizing Canvas so data can be collected and analyzed to increase student learning
5. Assessment recognition & awards have been updated by the Assessment Committee to strengthen our commitment to student learning by having recipients present their information
6. Application & acceptance by the HLC in their Assessment Academy has been approved with the first meeting to begin June 2015. Members representing Cloud County Community College are: Brenda Edleston, Associate VP Geary Campus - Ragna Mize, Director of Assessment & Accreditation – Brent Phillips, Dean - Cindy Lamberty, Instructor, and Rebecca Murrow, Advising
7. Assessment handbooks are being updated and upon approval by the Assessment Committee will be provided to faculty by January 2016
8. Data will be disseminated and made available to all stakeholders in a variety of formats to provide data details directly related to instruction and learning twice a year (February & September) and faculty led analyze of data will be conducted in order to develop assessment cycles of student learning
9. A reflective update will be provided annually (May) to close out the academic year
10. Assessment findings have been and will continue to be used to prompt college-wide student learning outcomes discussions and improvements at both campus locations and within disciplines to enhance student attainment of college-wide learning outcomes.

GENERAL EDUCATION *updates*

Cloud County Community College uses faculty-developed, authentic assessment tasks to assess students' attainment of General Education learning outcomes.

General Education Outcomes have been clarified through a pilot test group to reflect the details provided above. The General Education outcomes have been entered into the Canvas system to allow instructors the ability to link student work directly to one or more of the outcomes below beginning fall 2015:

- **Communication Skills** *Alternative year 1 oral/year 2 written*
Communicate effectively orally and in writing
- **Evaluation Skills** *cross-curricular*
Demonstrate ability to evaluate information from various means, including written & auditory sources
- **Quantitative & Analytical Reasoning** [KBOR] *cross-curricular*
Demonstrate proficiency in scientific knowledge and mathematical skills
- **Diversity & Culture** [KBOR] *cross-curricular*
Exhibit knowledge of diverse cultural and historical experiences and expressions
- **Critical Thinking** [KBOR] *cross-curricular*
Demonstrate problem solving using critical thinking (upper level Bloom's Taxonomy)
- **Utilize Technology** *cross-curricular*
Utilize technology relevant to disciplines of study

Overall, the emphasis has been to involve faculty, department chairs, deans, and administration in evaluating and making modifications to provide higher quality data reporting, and data which can be utilized more efficiently in order to support student learning.

ASSESSMENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED

- April 2, 2015 presentation & work shop by Director of Assessment & Accreditation
- October 13, 2014 presentation "Rubric Development" by Sean Glassberg
- Tutorials provided via email throughout academic year to utilize software for Assessment
- Assessment & Instructional resources provided on Cloud.edu
- Provided individual support to instructors for rubric creation

STUDENT SURVEYS *updates*

Student Surveys have been modified and re-introduced to all faculty via the Canvas system with data currently being collected.

REFERENCES

- Hutchings, P. (2010). *Opening doors to faculty involvement in assessment* (NILOA Occasional Paper No. 4). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois and Indiana University, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. Retrieved from <http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/documents/PatHutchings.pdf>
- Maki, P. L. (2010). *Assessing for learning: Building a sustainable commitment across the institution* (2nd ed.). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
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