

Outcomes Assessment Update

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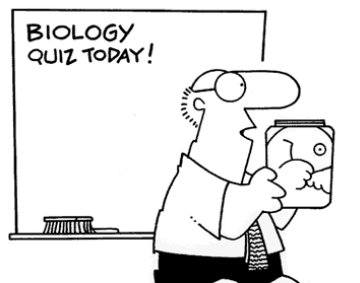
OFFICE OF STUDENT OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

New Hire

It is with great pleasure that we announce the hiring of Ms. Elizabeth "Lisa" Gualdoni, as the new Research Associate for the Office of Student Outcomes Assessment, effective September 7, 2004. Lisa brings to SOA an impressive skills set and experience in program development, data collection/analysis, and report writing. She is currently employed as Assistant Director for Planning and Development at ODU. Prior to that, she served as Program Development Specialist for the Massachusetts Department of Social Services' Teen Living Program Network, and Program Director for the Serving People In Need (SPIN) Teen Living Program. She holds a Master of Social Work degree from Boston University, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University. Without reservation, Lisa will make a significant contribution toward Tidewater Community College's data-driven assessment efforts.

Mantra

Some of the major themes that we have attempted to convey to the faculty during a recent run of presentations and meetings are: (1) the assessment process is being implemented or phased-in over at least three years ("BABY STEPS"), (2) we need a certain level of specificity when identifying assessment measures (e.g., identify course, section, semester, type of assessment/grade), (3) make sure that the data collection process is "MANAGEABLE" yet provides "MEANINGFUL" information/results (The "M&M" Rule), and (4) **NOTHING** is written in stone in terms of our processes, our forms, our expectations, or even our basic understandings.



"Class, who can tell me what I have preserved in this jar?
No, it's not a pig or a baby cow...it's the last student
who got caught cheating on one of my tests!"

SACS Update

Although SACS and other accrediting organizations call for the assessment of learning outcomes, there are few, if any, peer institutions with program review processes that actually list student learning outcomes, let alone assess them with direct or course-embedded measures. Those that do list learning outcomes (typically 4-year IHEs), invariably limit their measures to course grade distributions (pass rates) and/or survey data from seniors or employers.

See for yourself at the SOA website: Peer Plans & Reports webpage (<http://www.tcc.edu/welcome/collegeadmin/OIE/SOA/review/toolkit/Samples.htm>). With regard to program review and assessment, TCC is truly a national model of a comprehensive community college.

Captain Mike



SACS Update—Continued

“The only person who is educated is the one who has learned how to learn... and change.”
Carl Rogers

Again, as we write our outcomes and identify assessment measures, keep the “M&M” rule in mind. For some programs, grade distributions or success/pass rates provide the most MEANINGFUL data with regard to a particular outcome. On the other hand, some programs will seek to collect course- or test-embedded assessment data (such as a graded assignment or targeted items on a test). In either case, we need to carefully consider the M&M principle.

SACS does NOT define “learning outcomes” nor do they provide a “best practices” for assessment. Based on a recent conversation with Ron Head, SACS is looking for each program to list essential/core outcomes, collect and analyze data from appropriate measures, and then use the results for program enhancement, when appropriate. SACS will not necessarily seek to determine the appropriateness of the outcome or measure, but rather the process and the use of data for program enhancement.

So what does this mean for us? Write outcomes that are CORE to your program’s mission. Ask yourself: (1) “What foundational knowledge and/or skills would you expect a student to be able to demonstrate as a result of attaining the degree?” or (2) “What essential knowledge/skills would an employer expect a recent graduate to possess and demonstrate?” or (3) “What core knowledge/skills would faculty at a 4-year IHE expect to see demonstrated by a graduate?”



In addition to the guiding questions, we also wanted to stress the “M&M” rule: the need to identify Measurement Tools that produce the most **meaningful** information, yet minimizes the burden of collecting and analyzing data (maximize **manageability**).

While navigating through this uncharted territory, we will need to keep the communication lines open and tap our leadership abilities to maximize the meaningfulness of the process while minimizing its drain on resources...easier said than done. As you lead your faculty through this assessment reporting process, please encourage them to review the SOA website (<http://www.tcc.edu/welcome/collegeadmin/OIE/SOA/index.htm>) and contact us for any assistance. We are here to serve.



Consultation Services

During the months of July and August, SOA performed a variety of services that included providing recommendations for draft reports, participation in informational meetings, and making formal presentations. The month began by working closely with Dean Lyle Bagley in finalizing the draft assessment reports for the AAS Industrial Engineering and AS Engineering programs. An update on the reporting process and timeline was provided to the Academic and Student Affairs Council on July 12. Then on July 13, Mike met with Dean Robbie Cool and Ms. Cynthia Pedigo (Program Head) to clarify reporting expectations and review feedback on the draft program report for AAS Legal Assisting. Finally, a formal presentation that outlined the assessment process, report form, and resources was made on July 23 to 10 attendees at the 2nd Annual Portsmouth Faculty Retreat. Thank you to Dean Ann Ambrose for the gracious invitation and warm welcome extended to each presenter.

During August, presentations were made to approximately 21 attendees at the New Faculty Orientation Program (August 13) and 15 attendees at the Colleague-to-Colleague Concurrent Panel Presentation (August 16). Similar to the meeting with the Legal Assisting program faculty, Mike met with Dean Robbie Cool and 5 full-time accounting faculty on August 17 during the Accounting Discipline meeting. (<http://www.tcc.edu/welcome/collegeadmin/OIE/SOA/review/services.htm>)

Consultation Services—Continued

Assuming not all 19 program draft reports were submitted to the Provosts. What assistance is needed by the Lead Deans in order to complete the reports? SOA and others have found that the most helpful strategy has been face-to-face consultations with Lead Deans and Program Heads, as was the case with the quality assurance, legal assisting, engineering, accounting, and physical therapy programs. Others have not requested meetings, but rather a review of their draft reports that included suggested modifications. In some instances, however, barriers that some will need to resolve are (1) writing outcomes that are too narrowly defined (e.g., misses the “big picture” or purpose of the program/discipline, and (2) identifying measures that don’t follow the M&M rule: data collection process must balance the needs to be “manageable” yet optimize the results’ “meaningfulness”...a fine line that we must balance. Because this is a ground-breaking venture in many respects, we have been promoting a “baby steps” approach, which many Deans and faculty appear to be embracing.

Featured Report

The report for the AAS Legal Assisting program, which included the LGL discipline, was recently drafted by Dean Robbie Cool and Ms. Cynthia Pedigo, Program Head.

Their programmatic outcome section stated their intent to increase the number of graduates, as well as track (via program-designed survey) the degree to which these graduates entered the world of work or transfer to a 4-year IHE.

Concerning their three student learning outcomes, the Legal Assisting program intends to collect course-embedded assessment

measures such as a trial/appellate brief assignment in LGL 126, a comprehensive final exam in LGL 110, and a legal research project in LGL 125.

The Legal Assisting program has decided that these measures are “Manageable” in terms of data collection and “Meaningful” with regard to the information they will yield.

Each program needs to identify for itself assessment measures that produce the **greatest meaning without overburdening its resources to collect the information.** In many instances, data collection for course-embedded assessment

measures may require faculty submitting (possibly via email) the # students passing/failing a given test or other graded assignment.

These figures could then be incorporated by the Dean or Program Head into a spreadsheet to calculate basic pass rates.

Other instances may require greater coordination/communication because of a program’s size (large # of faculty/sections from which data will be collected). In either case, please feel free to contact us with your data collection issues.

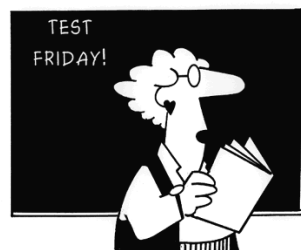
“The one real object of education is to have a man in the condition of continually asking questions.”
Bishop Mandell
Creighton



Reporting Process

By July 30, the Provosts should have received all scheduled 2003-04 draft reports (19 programs and up to 26 disciplines).

Scott Langhorst will be convening a meeting with the Provosts within the next week or two for the purpose of (1) confirming the standards/expectations by which the drafts will be reviewed/assessed, (2) finalizing [at least for now] the Provost review process and timeline, and (3) developing a master schedule or timeline for reviewing the remaining programs.



“Class, I’ve got a lot of material to cover, so to save time I won’t be using vowels today.
Nw lts bgn, pls trn t pg 122.”

