BACKGROUND:
The Sociology department completed its first multi-section assessment for General Sociology (SOC 101) in May 2012. This particular course (General Sociology) was chosen because it is the course within the department with the greatest enrollment. It is taught by the full-time faculty member and nearly all of the (eleven) adjuncts in this discipline. Thus, the multi-section assessment allowed for an initial view of the department and its most enrolled-in course simultaneously. This multi-section assessment was begun as part of the Institutional Assessment for Sociology in May 2012. The initial multi-section assessment evaluated an expected learning outcome from the SOC 101 course syllabus which stated, “Cite the way collective behavior and social movements are important sources of social change in society, explaining the relationship between collective behavior and social change.”

It is the intention of this department to complete a multi-section assessment each semester. Referencing the most recent Sociology Institutional Assessment, 2012, Impact section, “Review of programs, instruction and specific courses that will support quality and innovation will be accomplished in two specific ways. First, multi-section assessment, first instituted this year, will be conducted every semester. After assessment, if it is determined that the goal has been accomplished, another expected learning outcome, or another course, will be selected for assessment. Results will be utilized to improve instruction and increase student learning.”

PROCCESS:
As of May 2012, all instructors teaching SOC 101 General Sociology, including both online and face-to-face formats, are required to include specific question(s) on the last exam of the semester for the multi-section assessment. A letter is distributed to adjunct faculty along with detailed instructions, including the exact wording of the question(s) to be asked on the final exam for that semester and the method for returning the information with faculty and staff names removed. This information is also posted on the Sociology & Social Work Department Faculty Blackboard page.

Faculty members are instructed to include the question(s) on the final exam of the semester. Upon students’ completion of the exams, each instructor submits unscored copies of the question(s) from every section taught, with students’ names, section numbers and instructors’ names deleted. Packets of responses, with CRN numbers on the envelope are sent.

The assessment revealed a baseline for the department which is satisfactory in terms of students meeting this expected learning outcome.

(Excerpted, in part, from the Institutional Assessment for Sociology, November 2012)
to the Division Secretary. The packets are logged in by the secretary by CRN to document which sections have been returned. For online sections, the IT department provides unscored printouts of all students’ answers to the question(s), again, with the same information deleted. A random sample of student responses is scored using a rubric designed by Susan Welch, Instructor of Sociology, in consultation with Sandy Frey, Social Science Division Chair. Four criteria are used to assess student mastery of the outcome: Collective Behavior Defined, Progression, Organized Group, and Example. Each criterion is scored 0 to 3 points dependent upon whether the response to the criterion was met well (3) met (2), met with concern (1) or not met (0).

SUMMARY:
The information from the first year of gathering data from the multi-section assessment for General Sociology was useful; the assessment revealed a baseline for the department which is satisfactory in terms of students meeting this expected learning outcome. This baseline has been used as a basis for comparison to data gathered in subsequent semesters. There have been several minor revisions to the wording of the essay question on this exam to clarify expectations for students. Most recently, revision from an essay-style question to a combination of two multiple-choice and a short-answer question is being implemented for the current semester to facilitate a more efficient process. Analysis of data collected across all semesters is underway to determine if specific changes to instruction related to this outcome are needed.

As a result of inclusion of the multi-section assessment in our departmental expectations for all faculty, adjunct faculty members are increasingly aware of the need to assess students’ mastery of course Expected Learning Outcomes and to provide students with a quality learning experience specifically aligned with those outcomes. Adjunct faculty have been, and continue to be, receptive to the measuring of students’ mastery of the learning outcomes and using the results of multi-section assessment to improve our instruction in the department.

FORECAST:
In the Institutional Assessment Report for Sociology, 2012, it is noted that “regarding the Assessment aim, the Sociology department meets the objective to review programs to support quality and innovation.” As part of that aim, a transition from a multi-section assessment for SOC 101 (General Sociology) to SWK 105 (Introduction to Social Work) is being planned for the next academic year (2013-2014). There are currently two sections of SWK 105 (Introduction to Social Work) offered per semester: one online and one on campus. The multi-section assessment will aid in efforts to review, compare and increase the consistency of online instruction with face-to-face instruction of this course. Consistency in instruction and mastery of expected learning outcomes are of critical importance at this time, due to the continued development of the Pre-Social Work program and creation of articulation agreements with baccalaureate schools of social work to which students will transfer.
Assessments to Determine Credit for Prior Learning

At the Assessment Committee’s November meeting, Chris DeGeare, Instructor of Computer Information Systems and Chair of the Curriculum Committee’s Credit for Prior Learning subcommittee, presented a draft of the Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Guide, which describes procedures for issuing credit for prior learning to students at Jefferson College. He outlined assessments approved by the guide, which is based on an adaptation of the Missouri Credit for Prior Learning Model (2013) and the Colorado Community College System's Credit for Prior Learning Handbook.

“The Missouri Community College Association supports the concept of life-long learning to meet the retraining, upgrading and personal enrichment needs of students. It is the policy of the Association that a student's experience outside the college classroom shall be evaluated for college credit.”

Missouri Credit for Prior Learning Model

Chris explained the process by which the subcommittee made key decisions, including its continued efforts to solicit feedback from faculty and staff. As the Curriculum Committee has announced, the guide will be presented to the President’s Leadership Council in the next few weeks. The goal is to receive Board approval for adoption into policy by the end of the year.

The proposed Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Guide cites the Missouri Community College Association’s acknowledgment of “the need for a statewide standard for credit for prior learning assessment” in its Missouri Credit for Prior Learning Model, a guide “designed to help Missouri public two-year institutions develop or reevaluate their college’s prior learning assessment (PLA) practices and policies.”

Prior learning assessments in the proposed Jefferson College Credit for Prior Learning Guide include the following:

- **Standardized Tests** (e.g., CLEP, Advanced Placement Examination, International Baccalaureate)
- **Institutional Challenge Examinations** (e.g., departmental examinations)
- **Industry Credentials** (i.e., documented industry certifications)
- **Published Guides** (e.g., Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services by the American Council on Education)
- **Apprenticeship Training** (i.e., credit toward the A.A.S. degree for documented completion of apprenticeship training)
- **Portfolio Evaluation** (for courses that do not have an established method for granting Credit for Prior Learning)

“CPL is not awarded for EXPERIENCE but for college-level LEARNING which entails knowledge, skills, and competencies that students have obtained as a result of their prior learning experiences.”

Missouri Credit for Prior Learning Model
Credit for Prior Learning Related Links:

The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) Study of Prior Learning Assessment and Adult Student Outcomes

Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) Presentation on Academic Credit for Prior Learning

Missouri Community College Association (MCCA) Press Release on Presidents/Chancellors Council’s Adoption of a Statewide Standard for Awarding Credit for Prior Learning

Quality Matters Note:
Jefferson College has officially begun the Quality Matters pilot by joining KC REACHE, the Kansas City Regional Access Consortium for Higher Education. Plans are currently underway for QM instructor training to begin in February. This will be followed by QM peer-reviewer training.

Coming in the Next Issue…
Look for summaries of assessment presentations given at the Fall In-service in the next issue of Assessment Update.

Comments or Questions?
The Assessment Committee welcomes questions and comments from faculty and staff. Please contact any of the following members.