

Jefferson College
Student Outcomes Assessment Plan

Revised
August 2008

The Student Outcomes Committee
Michael Booker, Chair

Mission Statement & Vision

JEFFERSON COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

Jefferson College is a student-centered comprehensive community college, committed to providing an accessible, quality college experience as it strives to meet the diverse needs of the students and the community. Superior teaching and services foster a supportive learning environment, which promotes intellectual, social, and personal growth. A strong general education curriculum, college transfer and technical programs, personal enrichment courses, and on-campus experiences prepare students to succeed in their careers, further their education, and prosper in a diverse world. Jefferson College's ongoing assessment of students, programs, and services assures that it is a responsive and progressive community college.

VISION

Our shared vision for Jefferson College is to become widely recognized as a premier comprehensive community college where student achievement and student success are central to every endeavor.

Led by highly qualified college trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff, students master knowledge, skills, competencies, and values in a participative, innovative learning environment.

The institution will be a model for enlightened, shared governance and will continue to strive for accreditation with distinction attesting to the excellence of its policies, practices, and services.

Philosophy and Goals

STUDENT OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PHILOSOPHY

What Student Outcomes Assessment Is ...

Student Outcomes Assessment means measuring the difference college has made on students. This “difference” is a delicate balance of expectations: entering students have their sets of goals, instructors have their goals, and society as a whole has still another agenda. Assessment encompasses the following three aspects of the College (Walvoord, Bardes & Denton, 2007):

Institutional Assessment: To what extent is the institution as a whole achieving its curricular goals? Is the institution adding value to students’ education as measured by increases in student learning? Is progress being made on established benchmarks? How do institutional graduates compare nationally to similar institutions?

Program assessment: Did a program, that is, a sequence of related courses like accounting or composition, impart to the student the necessary knowledge and skills as indicated in the expected learning outcomes (objectives)? Across the curriculum, are the students receiving a broad based liberal education that allows them to be more flexible workers, better citizens, more tolerant neighbors?

Course assessment: Within the confines of each separate course, is the student exhibiting the knowledge (cognitive learning), appreciation (affective learning), or skills/ behavior (behavioral learning) as indicated in the course expected learning outcomes?

Assessment is the ongoing, systemic process (Suskie, 2004; Allen, 2004; Huba & Freed, 2000) by which the college identifies its mission, purposes and objectives; develops and implements multiple methods of measuring how effectively the college is accomplishing its mission, purposes and objectives; and acts upon the analysis of the resultant information in order to enhance student learning. Assessment “offers an opportunity for [the college] to be self-reflective, inventive, and pioneering in undergraduate education” (Leskes & Wright, 2005, p.24). Simplified the process has five stages:

- (1) Establish clearly defined expected learning outcomes;
- (2) Deliver a curriculum in accordance with the expected outcomes;
- (3) Continuously teach, react with, advise, and evaluate students during the college experience;
- (4) Provide multiple measures and a continuous feedback loop that allows intervention strategies that enable students to successfully complete the curriculum;

- (5) Assess the outcomes of the program, and then reevaluate the expected learning outcomes, curriculum, and students, and make program changes as needed.

ASSESSMENT GOALS

Course Level Assessment:

- (1) Develop, and continually revise, effective assessment strategies to determine the extent to which students have met expected learning outcomes and general education goals;
- (2) Analyze what the assessment strategies reveal about student learning;
- (3) Make changes (closing the loop) that need to be made as a result of assessment;
- (4) Document assessment efforts, analyses, and results to share with colleagues (and students when appropriate).
- (5) Keep apprised of emerging discipline-specific assessment strategies and discipline-specific scholarship of teaching and learning.

Program Level Assessment:

- (1) Provide a data collection and distribution system to monitor trends, meet the goals of students, and meet the needs of the community;
- (2) Provide a process to effectively assess student learning and support services;
- (3) Provide the necessary information to strengthen programs, promote access, and insure efficient use of resources;
- (4) Identify needed curriculum and service improvements and revisions;
- (5) Identify equipment, facility, and faculty and staff needs and modifications;
- (6) Identify the need for alternative delivery methods;
- (7) Keep faculty and staff aware of changing trends;
- (8) Identify areas for improvement of teaching, faculty and staff development, and services;
- (9) Compare business and industry's requirements with the college's programs.

Institutional Level Assessment:

- (1) Assess the value added to students' general education through pre and post testing on nationally normed instruments.
- (2) Measure the work readiness of Career and Technical Education students using specific occupational profiles and nationally standardized levels of proficiency.
- (3) Compare the results of general education proficiency and work readiness assessments using national norms and appropriate peer institutions.

Assessment Committee Structure

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

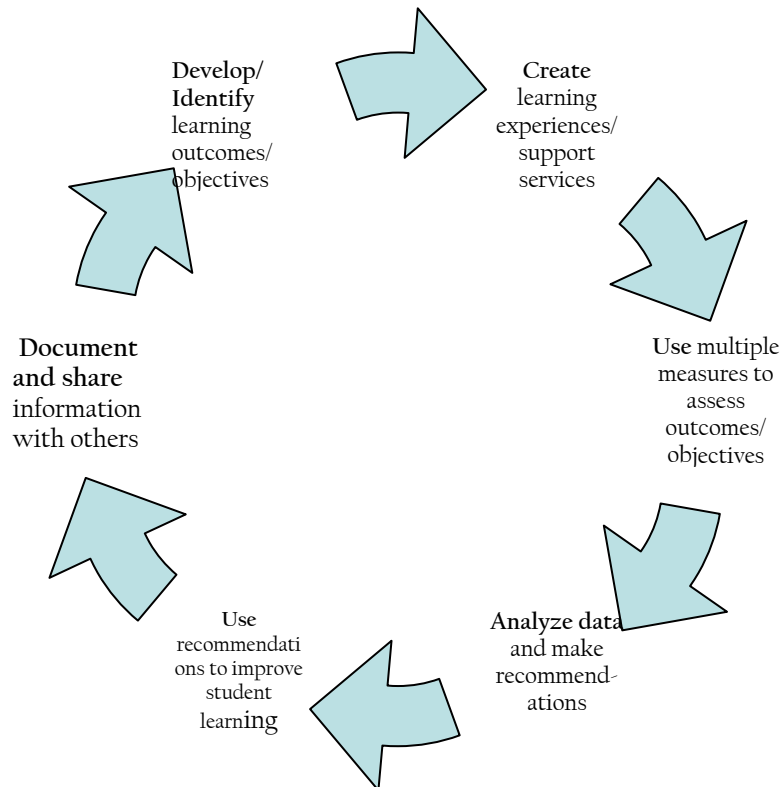
Coordinator of Assessment
Arts & Science Education Representatives (3)
Career & Technical Education Representatives (3)
Director of Research and Planning
Director of Teaching and Learning
Director of Learning Center
Business and Technical Education Division Chair
Arts and Sciences Division Chair
Dean of Arts & Sciences Education

CHARGE OF THE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

The purpose of the committee shall be to serve as the campus-wide conduit for assessment. The committee will review data pertinent to ongoing assessment of student outcomes and make recommendations to the Administrative Cabinet. Recommendations from the committee shall be forwarded to the Academic Affairs Committee.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Assessment is an ongoing, systemic, process which enhances student learning and institutional effectiveness.



The Assessment Plan

Assessment encompasses the following three levels: (1) Course Assessment, (2) Program Assessment, and (3) Institutional Assessment.

COURSE LEVEL ASSESSMENT

I. Develop/Identify Expected Learning Outcomes

Develop expected learning outcomes, statements that “describe, using action verbs, student learning or behavior rather than teacher behavior...and describe an intended outcome rather than subject matter coverage” (Palomba, C.A. & Banta, T.W., 1999, p.36) and list on the official course syllabus. Agreement among the faculty in the discipline on what “students should know and be able to do” (Banta, 2004, p.39) is required.

Identify applicable general education goals/competencies, as stated in the general education matrix, and use course-embedded assessment to determine the extent to which students have met those general education goals (Van Middlesworth, 2004).

II. Create Learning Experiences

Faculty plan student interaction with course content.

III. Measure

Use direct measures of student learning, which “assess the knowledge and skills students have learned by having them actually demonstrate their learning by writing, doing calculations and problem solving” (Rouseff-Baker & Holm, 2004, p.39) and use indirect measures of student learning, which “gather opinions from students and employees about their learning” (Rouseff-Baker & Holm, 2004, p.39), collect data or request data.

Direct measures of student learning include pre-post tests, quizzes, written assignments, demonstrations of proficiency, etc.

Indirect measures of student learning include student surveys to self-assess learning, student interviews, course grades, etc.

IV. Analyze Data

Analyze data to determine student learning. Look at student work “collectively - across students in a course... - to see where learning is at a satisfactory level for most, what needs to be retaught or taught in a different way for some, and which approaches to teaching produce the most learning for which students” (Banta, 2004, p.38).

V. Use Results

Make necessary changes to the course, program, or approach to general education goals. Implement a “process of trial-and-error experimentation ... in using the results to modify curricula and teaching methods” (Suskie, 2004, p.36).

VI. Document and Share

Choose an appropriate means to document course-level assessment, such as logs, records of assessment, narratives, etc. Share results with others as appropriate.

PROGRAM LEVEL ASSESSMENT

Institutional Effectiveness Review

I. Develop/Identify Outcomes

Directors, program coordinators, faculty, and staff conduct meetings with appropriate Deans to discuss the current status of the program/services and objectives. The primary purpose of the review, as with all assessment, is improvement (Gray, 2004; Leskes & Wright, 2005).

II. Create Learning Experiences/Support Services

Directors, program coordinators, faculty, and staff conduct meetings with appropriate Deans to review current strategies/methods.

III. Measure

Those involved (stated above) determine data needed and collect and request data. Consider collecting data across sections of a course to determine the extent to which students have met one or more of the expected learning outcomes. One option is to gather assignments which “have been assessed once by a course instructor for the purpose of giving feedback and grades to individual students, and give them a second review to see how many students have mastered the skill” (Banta, 2004, p. 40).

Participants collect data related to:

- faculty/staff (Degree to which faculty/staff are qualified, effective, and supported.)
- students/ constituents (The degree to which student needs are met.)
- curriculum/services (The degree to which curriculum/services are thorough, current, and supported.)
- community (The degree to which the program contributes to the community and responds to community needs.)

IV. Analyze Data and SWOT Analysis

Those involved with the program analyze data to determine effectiveness of program as it relates to the following: Faculty/Staff, Curriculum/Services, Students/Constituents and Expected Learning Outcomes, and Community.

V. Use Results

Based on the data analysis and the SWOT analysis, those involved propose Future Learning and/or Service Goals, indicating the following:

- measurement
- persons to implement
- time frames
- resources implications

For example, students may “need more and perhaps different ways to practice the skill in the curriculum (Banta, 2004, p. 40). Those goals are monitored by the appropriate dean on an ongoing basis. Discipline status is determined.

VI. Document and Share

Findings are documented in the Institutional Effectiveness Review and annual reports, submitted by March 15 to the President, and subsequently submitted to the Board of Trustees; instructional Institutional Effectiveness Reviews are also submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee. Results are shared with others as appropriate.

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL ASSESSMENT

I. Develop/Identify Outcomes

(a) Assess the value added to students through the institution's general education program; (b) assess the work readiness of Career Technical Education students; and, (c) compare the levels of proficiency of graduating students with national norms and to appropriate peer institutions.

II. Create Learning Experiences/Support Services

Directors, program coordinators, faculty, and staff conduct meetings with appropriate Deans to review current strategies/methods.

III. Measure

(a) Nationally standardized instruments are utilized for institutional level assessment. Currently, ACT's Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) is used to assess general education proficiency, and WorkKeys is used to assess proficiency in work skills areas; and, (b) certain program level assessments such as the CollegeBASE (CBASE) for the teacher education program and the state and national licensing and certification assessments for LPNs, RNs, and Vet Techs also have implications for institutional level assessment. Transfer data is collected.

IV. Analyze Data

Institutional level assessments are routinely analyzed through the office of research and planning and reported with conclusions to the Administrative Cabinet and others as appropriate.

IV. Use Results

Analysis of institutional level assessments are used in instructional effectiveness reviews (program reviews) to improve curricula learning outcomes and support services as needed.

V. Document and Share

Use of institutional level assessment results is documented in the instructional program review reports. Documents are posted electronically. Results are shared with others as appropriate.

ASSESSMENT IDEALS

To encapsulate, Student Outcomes Assessment at Jefferson College is based on the following ideal premises:

- Assessing student outcomes is designed to improve student learning;
- Assessment of student academic achievement is a measure of student learning, not a direct measure of individual student, class, or faculty performance;
- Assessment is an ongoing process;
- Assessment should be made at various points in the students' academic careers with multiple measures of assessment;
- Outcomes criteria should be determined and designed by the faculty, not imposed;
- Because assessment measures are determined by the faculty, they may be in-house measures as well as nationally normed tests;
- Student assessment measures should measure affective, cognitive, and behavioral domains;
- Because affective, cognitive, and behavioral domains are measured, assessment does not have to be quantitative but can be “soft” measures based on judgment, inference, case studies, etc., such measures as described by Angelo and Cross in *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers*;
- Data collected must be returned in a timely manner and presented in a user-friendly format;
- Data must be used to improve student learning and a record kept of that use;
- Student Outcomes Assessment should be a well-defined and distinguishable part of Institutional Effectiveness Review.

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