Jefferson College’s Online Course Design Quality Rubric and Review Process

The Assessment Committee entered into a one year pilot of Quality Matters (QM). The purpose of the pilot was to help determine if the QM process was the right tool to help guide and ensure quality online course design at Jefferson College. Information on QM has been provided in other Assessment Updates; therefore, a full description is not provided here.

Over the course of the pilot, 23 faculty and staff went through the Applying the QM Rubric course. This is the first course in a series of courses that can be taken by those who are involved in the QM design and review process. Other courses can be taken if one wants to be a faculty peer reviewer, the leader of a peer review team or the QM coordinator for a college or university. As the pilot unfolded and we learned more about pricing, time commitments, and processes of other participating KC Reache Consortium colleges and universities, the Assessment Committee formed a sub-committee to investigate designing a local quality rubric and process.

The design work that took place in the Fall of 2014 and Winter of 2015 was informed by QM and other nationally recognized quality design rubrics and processes. Sub-committee members represented the 5 divisions. The sub-committee members were Ms. Connie Kuchar, Dr. Cindy Rossi, Ms. Mary Baricevic, Ms. Niki Vogelsang, Ms. Lisa Pavia-Higel and Ms. Christy Cornelius. Additionally, Mr. Allan Wamsley and Ms. Lori Kovarik participated in the process. The end result is a draft that has been approved by the Assessment Committee to be brought forward to faculty at the beginning of the Fall 2015 semester. The Assessment Committee will consider faculty input at that time and use it to make further revisions, if necessary. The new quality rubric and process to review Jefferson’s online courses could be implemented as early as 2016 as part of the Institutional Assessment review process.

A draft of Jefferson College rubric and process can be found by going to: http://vega.jeffco.edu/likovarik/Course_Review_Rubric_15.pdf
In the fall of 2010, thirteen of Missouri’s public two-year institutions worked together to apply for the USDOL Trade Act Adjustment Community College Career Training (TAACCCT) grant, which Missouri received and dubbed “MoHealthWINs.” A key funding priority was increasing completion of degrees, certificates, and industry-recognized credentials. The consortium identified granting academic Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) as an evidence-based strategy for increasing completion. All thirteen institutions assembled in a small work group to develop a statewide standard for CPL policies and practices. Dr. Melinda Selsor represented Jefferson College. Leveraging the expertise of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and Colorado’s established state model for CPL, the Missouri Credit for Prior Learning Model was developed. In January of 2013, the thirteen Presidents and Chancellors voted to adopt the model, requiring individual institutions to implement supporting policies and procedures.

**Excerpt from the Missouri Credit for Prior Learning Model:**

*Prior Learning is an alternative education or experience-based learning that has been attained outside the sponsorship of an accredited postsecondary education institution. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) includes learning acquired from work and life experiences, community and volunteer extension courses, individual study and reading, civic, community and volunteer work, and participation in informal courses and in-service training sponsored by associations, business, government, and industry. 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.*
Jefferson College’s Adoption of the Missouri CPL Model

In November of 2012, the Curriculum Committee was charged with establishing a subcommittee to guide the implementation of the Missouri Credit for Prior Learning Model at Jefferson College. Due to its direct relationship to the MoHealthWINs grant, Chris DeGeare (MoHealthWINs CIS Instructor) was appointed to the state task force on Credit for Prior Learning and was selected to chair the CPL Subcommittee, which included Dr. Melinda Selsor, Ms. Shirley Davenport, Dr. Mary Beth Ottinger, Mr. Skyler Ross, Mr. Bill Kaune, Ms. Bridget Webb, Dr. Kim Harvey, and Ms. Laura Klaus. From January 2013 - November 2013, the CPL Subcommittee met seven times. They reviewed current policies and procedures, identified CPL methods not currently addressed by policies and procedures, researched best practices for implementing CPL, solicited stakeholder feedback, and developed supporting documentation, including the Jefferson College Credit for Prior Learning Guide and Board Policy and Procedure revisions.

Throughout the process, the CPL Subcommittee engaged stakeholders at all levels, hosting a Brown Bag Lunch on CPL to disseminate information and a CPL Open Forum on Faculty In-service Day to gain stakeholder feedback. The CPL Subcommittee later presented to the Curriculum Committee, Assessment Committee, Division Meetings, and President’s Leadership Council. On December 9, 2013, the Curriculum Committee voted unanimously to approve the CPL Guide. On January 16, 2014, the proposed policy and procedure revisions and guide were presented to the Jefferson College Board of Trustees, who later voted unanimously to approve the policy and procedure revisions and adopt the guide.

The Jefferson College Credit for Prior Learning Guide

The Jefferson College Credit for Prior Learning Guide centralizes information related to CPL. It includes forms of CPL previously offered, such as Credit by Examination, International Baccalaureate Credit, Retroactive Credit for Foreign Language, and Apprenticeship Training, and adds additional forms of CPL required by the Missouri CPL Model. These include the American College Testing Proficiency Program, DANTES Subject Standardized Tests, Industry Recognized Credentials, Portfolio Evaluations, and credit recommendations from the American Council on Education. The guide updates and consolidates related fees, includes policies and procedures, and outlines the process for students to obtain CPL. It also provides a process for faculty to secure approval of CPL.

Results of CPL Implementation

The new CPL policies were fully implemented at the start of the 2014-2015 academic year. Since the policies were adopted, 18 students have used new CPL methods to earn 136 hours of college credit for their prior learning. Additionally, the Computer Information Systems Department received approval from Curriculum Committee to grant CPL credit for students successfully completing the Computer Proficiency exam.
Computer Proficiency Now Tied to Credit

Students were previously allowed to test out of the Computer Proficiency graduation requirement via examination. However, they did not receive academic credit. Students now have the option of using the Microsoft Digital Literacy Certificate Exam to meet the Computer Proficiency requirement at Jefferson College. Students who complete the certificate exam at a Jefferson College Testing Center can receive credit for CIS125 Computer Concepts and Applications (3 credit hours) through Credit for Prior Learning.

There is a $40 testing fee for the exam. Upon passing the exam, students will pay the equivalent of one credit hour to post the credit. Students must earn at least one credit hour at Jefferson College before the credit will be posted (per the Credit for Prior Learning guidelines).

Benefits of Awarding Credit for Prior Learning

A 2010 study of 48 institutions offering students the opportunity to earn college credit through prior learning assessments indicates that these assessments hold promise for meeting the goal of 60 percent of Americans having a college degree or credential by 2025. That study found that adult students who received prior learning assessment credit were 2.5 times more likely to persist in their education and complete their degrees than students who received no credit for prior learning (Klein-Collins, 2010). Credit for Prior Learning has been proven to support a competency-based approach to degree completion, accelerate completion, increase persistence, support student mobility and transfer, and streamline workforce development.

Rebecca Klein-Collins, Fueling the Race to Postsecondary Success: a 48-Institution Study of Prior Learning Assessment and Adult Student Outcomes (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, 2010). Retrieved from http://www.cael.org/pdfs/PLA_Fueling-the-Race
Assessing the Reading Program

The MyReadingLab program tracks reading comprehension improvement all semester. This is a formative assessment that is mastery-based, meaning it does not penalize students because they can re-do every assignment until they have mastered it. We use the end data to analyze which aspects of MyReadingLab appear to be promoting overall student success. (The jury is still out.)

The written exit assessment evaluates whether students are meeting specific course objectives. Our objectives are recognizing the main idea of a passage, the support, and the organization, as well as analyzing whether the argument was valid or whether the main idea is convincing.

A third tool is the Compass reading test. Even if students fail RDG 030, they are generally able to show improved Compass reading scores. Although we don’t use this to assess our course, we use it to assess the broader objective of moving students out of remediation through improved skills.

Finally, longitudinal data will paint a picture of which efforts have led to higher college completion rates. For example, did students in contextualized reading sections outperform those in regular reading sections? Are we matching the nationally predicted outcome that at-risk students can achieve one grade level below non-at-risk students?
Nursing Program Assessment

The Bi-level Nursing Program at Jefferson College is designed with multiple entrance and exit points. First level students obtain a certification leading to becoming a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN). After completion of the LPN portion of the program, the second level consists of courses and clinicals for students to receive their Associate of Applied Science Degree and take the State Licensing exam for becoming a Registered Professional Nurse (RN). Some students have obtained their LPN license elsewhere and returned here to obtain their RN degree.

The two levels require continuous and ardent assessment in order to have the program run successfully. Nursing's ultimate assessment of the program is the NCLEX examination from the State Board of Nursing, after the student has completed the program.

There is never just one method of assessment for the program, so various assessment strategies are used to assure success of the students. Standardized testing is a portion of all courses, showing the students' ability to pass examinations and comprehend material with critical thinking skills.

More is required to have the students succeed in their knowledge and nursing skills. One of the primary assessment tools the program initiated in 2013 was the Student Success Indicator. This tool has successfully identified several students who might have fallen through the cracks before but are now receiving additional support. This process has dramatically improved our board exam pass rates. The Student Success Indicator has information for the faculty advisor to monitor and address with the student. It contains grades from their admission criteria testing, along with course grades. The advisor meets with the student throughout the program to identify risks and educate the student on ways to increase success. Comments are placed in the tool by the faculty, identifying success of the student, along with student areas of concern. Faculty note how the problem was addressed and the resolution of the situation. Students who are having family problems, work issues, or financial issues feel comfortable going to their nursing faculty advisors where they are then given the information to the proper resources the college offers. In this way, students who can be at risk are found before it is too late for success.

Another early intervention assessment tool used in the department is the Systematic Evaluation Plan, which looks at every aspect of our program. This assessment plan uses the State Board of Nursing Minimum Standards as a basis. The Systematic Evaluation Plan, begun in 2012, identifies successes and areas of improvement in the classroom, in the institution, and in our interaction in the community. The development of these additional assessment tools has assisted the nursing program in being focused and consistent on how to advance student, faculty and program success.
2015-2016 Assessment Committee

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