

CHEWING ON LEARNING OUTCOMES

CABRILLO'S COLLEGE WIDE ASSESSMENT PLAN INFORMATION PACKET

SPRING FLEX 2005

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The Core Four

by Rory O'Brien

We've got the Core Four, the core for Cabrillo
We've got the Core, Four the core for Cabrillo

Just a few years ago
The accreditation people let us know
They were coming down heavy
'Cause they thought we were ready
To assess learning in a new way

So they changed the standards
Even though we put up a fight
It seems they were yearning
To see student learning
Shining in a brand new light

We've got the Core Four, the core for Cabrillo
We've got the Core Four, the core for Cabrillo

When we saw the new rules
We started feeling quite depressed
But on closer inspection
We saw the direction
Was all about student success

We've got to make some changes
Nothing ever stays the same
We've got SLO's
Now we're ready to go
And do this the 'Cabrillo Way'

We've got the Core Four, the core for Cabrillo
We've got the Core Four, the core for Cabrillo

All across the campus
We know our job
Is to assess learning
And to dialogue!

We've got the Core Four, the core for Cabrillo
We've got the Core Four, the core for Cabrillo

Core Competency Descriptions

Upon completion of Cabrillo College's General Education program, a student will demonstrate competency in the following areas:

I. Communication

Students will communicate effectively, which means the ability to:

A. Reading – Students will be able to comprehend and interpret various types of written information in (1) prose and in (2) documentation, such as manuals and graphs

B. Writing – Students demonstrate the ability to:

- Communicate thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing
- Compose and create documents, such as: letters, reports, memoranda, manuals and graphs with correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and appropriate language, style, and format
- Check, edit, and revise written work for correct information, appropriate emphasis, form, style, and grammar

C. Listening—Students will be able to receive, attend to, interpret, and respond appropriately to (1) verbal and/or (2) nonverbal messages

D. Speaking and/or Conversing – Students have the ability to:

- Organize ideas and communicate verbal, or non-verbal messages appropriate to the audience and the situation
- Participate in conversations, discussions, and group activities
- Speak clearly and ask questions

II. Critical Thinking and Information Competency

Thinking critically is characterized by the ability to perform:

A. Analysis – including:

- Applying rules and principles to new situations
- Discovering rules and applying them in the problem solving process
- Using logic to draw conclusions from information given
- Differentiating between facts, influences, assumptions, and conclusions

B. Computation – demonstrated by an ability to:

- Use basic numerical concepts, such as: whole numbers, percentages, estimates of math without a calculator
- Use tables, graphs, charts, and diagrams to explain concepts or ideas
- Use basic geometrical shapes, such as: lines, angles, shapes, and space

C. Research – demonstrate abilities to:

- Collect Information
- Identify the need for data
- Obtain data from various sources
- Organize, process, and maintain records of the information collected
- Analyze the information for relevance and accuracy
- Synthesize, evaluate and communicate the results

- Determine which technology resources will produce the desired results
- Use current technology to acquire, organize, analyze, and communicate information

D. Problem Solving – Students demonstrate the ability to:

- Recognize whether a problem exists
- Identify components of the problem or issue
- Create a plan of action to resolve the issue
- Monitor, evaluate, and revise when necessary

III. Global Awareness

Students will demonstrate a measurable understanding and appreciation of the world including its:

A. Scientific complexities – Students demonstrate an understanding of:

- The scientific method
- How experiments work
- The major differences between social, natural and physical sciences

B. Social diversity and civics – Students demonstrate an ability to:

- Interface with people from a variety of backgrounds
- Understand different cultural beliefs and behaviors
- Recognize important social and political issues in their own community

C. Artistic variety – Students have been exposed to:

- The visual arts, including: drawing, painting, sculpture, photography and digital media, and/or music of one or many cultures.
- Analytical techniques for understanding the meaning in art, or they have
- Hands-on experience with creative endeavors

IV. Personal Responsibility and Professional Development

A. Self-Management and Self-Awareness – The student is able to:

- Accurately assess his/her own knowledge, skills, and abilities
- Motivate self and sets realistic goals
- Accept that taking feedback well is important to success
- Respond appropriately to challenging situations

B. Social and Physical Wellness – Students make an appropriate effort to:

- Manage personal health and well being
- Demonstrate appropriate social skills in group settings

C. Workplace Skills – Students understand the importance of:

- Being dependable, reliable, and accountable
- Meeting deadlines and completing tasks
- Maintaining a professional attitude

SECTOR ASSESSMENT PLANS

Instruction Sector Assessment Plan

Why?

Because Cabrillo faculty do not have the pleasure of talking to each other often enough about teaching and learning. Though we constantly think about our classes, evaluating and revising what we do, we often work in isolation.

And because the new accreditation standards require that Cabrillo define, assess and evaluate student learning outcomes (SLOs) for all courses, programs and degrees and certificates. Though the Faculty Senate fought unsuccessfully against these new standards when they were first proposed, since they are now required the Senate has developed the Cabrillo model, a simple process of assessment that focuses on breaking down instructor isolation. Our assessment plan provides an opportunity for faculty to talk to each other about classroom assignments, resulting in consistency across classes with multiple sections and improved student learning.

Who?

Because we believe this process is valuable and not only improves classroom teaching, but also increases communication between faculty, it's our goal that everyone, both adjunct and contract faculty, participate in the process.

How?

The Faculty Senate has designed an easy process, called **course-embedded assessment**, that asks faculty to look at assignments already being given in your classes to spot-check on how students are doing. This process will be used for assessing the college wide-core competencies (which are our SLOs for degrees) and for assessing individual courses. The process asks faculty to:

- Choose one major assignment in one class to examine. This should be an assignment you are already giving as part of the class. No extra assignments are required.
- Give the assignment as usual.
- Assess it as usual, but use a rubric. If you are not already using one, you'll need to design it. A rubric articulates how you define each grade and the specific skills or components that go into it. If your assignment is a major exam, there is a slightly different process involved to analyze groups of questions, but it's just as simple.
- Faculty evaluate the results of the students' assessments and, using a two-page form, record how and if they will alter the assignment or teaching activities to improve student learning.
- The results are discussed in department meetings, including what help the department needs from the college to improve teaching and learning. Faculty share their assignments, their evaluation of the results and their ideas for improvement. Suggestions that arise during the discussion are recorded on a form that is forwarded to a new college-wide Assessment Committee. The committee archives the forms for accreditation records.

Occupational programs have a slightly different task. They must assess the certificates that they offer by:

- Defining SLOs for their program
- Developing a regularly-occurring assessment process for them.
- Implementing it

They can use the process outlined above or develop another more appropriate one that fits their curriculum.

When?

Faculty will choose **one** individual course to assess **once** a year and will discuss the results in a department meeting during Flex week.

In the next three years, faculty undergoing Instructional Planning will begin to assess the four core competencies. Eventually, all departments on campus will assess the core competencies, one per semester, for two years before Instructional Planning begins. This will occur **in addition to** the yearly discussion of assignments in individual courses, although faculty can use the same assignment for both discussions. Faculty will meet during Flex week each semester to discuss their results.

In addition, during Instructional Planning, each department will write SLOs for the individual courses they offer, using the new section of Fiesta.

What is actually required of faculty?

1. Once a year, faculty are asked to:
 - Give an assignment that addresses one of the Core 4 or a course SLO.
 - Assess the assignment.
 - Discuss the results with colleagues during Flex Week and develop a plan to improve teaching and learning based on that discussion.
2. During Instructional Planning this occurs once a semester for two years.
3. Once your department defines the SLOs for each of your courses, list them in your syllabus.

Other Tidbits

The Faculty Senate has proposed two other assessment activities to help us evaluate Instruction. They are:

Transfer Breakfast – Given each spring to honor transfer students, the breakfast will also include a short survey to assess students' experiences at the College.

Cabrillo Festival – a celebration of Cabrillo courses on Graduation Day that will include art, poetry, scientific demonstrations, theatre, musical offerings etc. Folks who attend will be asked to complete a short survey about Cabrillo.

The new Accreditation standards require faculty involvement with SLOs to be included as part of their evaluation process. This negotiated item will be discussed next spring.

Library Assessment Plan

The instructors and staff at the Cabrillo College Library deliver both credit instruction and a wide range of services to students.

The Library's credit instruction program centers on Library 10, a co-req with English 1A.

The library's information services are: Reference, Collection (books and videos), Reserves, Interlibrary Loan, and Course related information resources sessions

Instruction assessment in the library will likely follow the course-embedded model for course evaluation. Yearly updates to the Instructional plan for the library will include data from the activities surrounding this self evaluation.

Information services assessment will begin with Fall 2005.

All of our information based services have already had a concerted outreach effort intended to create a campus awareness of the library's services. We need to measure outcomes at our service points. One method being considered is a questionnaire that is distributed to students/library users for two weeks at the time when we are busiest. We can administer the questionnaire to everyone entering/leaving/sitting/and asking questions at reference or checking out a reserve item or a book. We will be discussing and selecting the measurement options for finding learning impact of our services during Spring 2005. We will survey the faculty separately about library services.

Assessment Timeline

1. Fall 2004

- Held preliminary discussions on accreditation process & the new standards.
- Researched other colleges reporting on SLOs within library service units,
- Initial review of options for assessing SLOs for library service operations.

2. Spring 2005

- FLEX week division meeting will include all library staff in a review of accreditation process, learner outcomes, core competencies, etc.
- Reinforce understanding/training of campus core competencies & how they are impacted by library operations
- Form group(s) to identify new ways to measure outcomes for specific library operations (including Library 10 program, all student service points, faculty questionnaires, etc.)
- Discuss & review the available measurement options (existing surveys, learning impact surveys), collecting anecdotal evidence, etc.
- Decide upon initial assessment tools to use; design tools as needed, document process, & prepare for initial use in Fall 2005.

3. Fall 2005

- Begin assessment of library services using identified tools.

Student Services Comprehensive Assessment Process

Purpose

To adequately assess and quantify our commitment to serving students, Student Services will be engaging in a comprehensive assessment process that will measure how we help students master the college's core competencies. Information collected as a result of the assessments conducted will assist in measuring what we do best and in identifying areas for improvement. This information will be used as part of our five-year rotating Program Planning Review process. Ultimately, this planning and assessment process will strengthen the delivery of quality programs and services, and influence policy development and decision making within each department.

Outcomes

Each department will identify and select specific outcomes that address each of the four college-wide competencies. Some examples are:

Critical Thinking & Information

- Financial Aid: Students will be able to assess where they are in the financial aid process and articulate what steps are needed.
- A&R: Students will be able to utilize multiple sources for applying and registering for classes (website, schedules, phone, email, in-person).
- Transfer Center: Students will identify the specific courses they need to meet the admission requirements for their desired transfer institution.

Assessment

While engaged in Program review, each department will gather data on its services through program utilization statistics and other college resources. In addition, each department will create assessments that measure their defined outcomes. Some examples of possible assessments are surveys and focus groups.

Process

Each department will follow the process described in the flow chart attached.

Business Services Department Review/Assessment

Purpose:

The purpose of systematic review, assessment and analytical critique is to recognize quality and assist in the continuous strengthening and improvement of support services. This process is designed to:

- Provide a rigorous examination of services and their outcomes
- increase the department's effectiveness in contributing to student mastery of the four college-wide competencies
- engage areas in planning program improvements that are responsive to student and community needs
- provide information for decisions regarding resource allocation
- define the department's current and future needs to meet the demands placed on it in an effective, efficient, timely and cost-effective manner

Process:

- Each department conducts a self-study on a six-year rotation, discusses the findings, and documents the process and findings in a written report
- Before analysis begins a draft of the research plan will be submitted to the Planning Resource Committee (PRC) outlining the proposed data to be used, the issues to be covered and the planned format
- PRC will review the plan and provide feedback to the department review team
- At the mid-point of the six-year cycle, the department will complete an interim report
- PRC may recommend a full review sooner than six years if warranted by changes in technology, internal and/or external trends, etc.

Minimum Requirement for Data Collection and Analysis

- Describe the service the department provides and its relationship to others in the college and the community
- What factors are used to determine the quality and the success of the department?
- Analyze trends affecting the department: internal/external factors
- What changes need to be made?

The Self-Study Document Includes:

- A six-year plan created by the department
- An action plan that provides for measurable goals
- Recommendations that are specific and supported by facts and documentation
- A statement that identifies how the department helps students to master the four college-wide competencies

Instruction Non Classroom Related Department Planning

Purpose

The purpose of systematic review and assessment is to recognize quality and assist in the continuous strengthening and improvement of college academic programs as well as to support services in the instruction component. The process is designed to:

- provide a rigorous examination of services and their outcomes
- develop new insights into effectiveness through assessment of the College's Core Four Competencies
- engage departments in planning program improvements that are responsive to student and community needs
- provide information for resource allocation within departments and within the college.

Process

This self-study is conducted by the members and users of the department/office. The self study should address the way in which the departments/offices

- contribute to a student's ability to achieve the College Core Four Competencies
- are effective in supporting and improving the instruction processes and services of the college
- are cost effective to the institution

Data collected and analyzed will be both objective and subjective. Emerging trends will be analyzed and used for improvement of services. Programs will identify how office functions or activities address aspects of the core four competencies.

On a six-year rotation each department will conduct a self-study, review the data, discuss the findings and document the process and findings in a written report. This process will begin in October with a meeting of the department and the Council for Instructional Planning (CIP). At this meeting the assessment process will be reviewed and an assessment team chosen.

The draft assessment process will outline the proposed data to be gathered, the issues to be covered and the planned format. All five Division Offices will conduct the assessment as one unit, and produce one report. The draft of the assessment process is due the end of November. The CIP will review this plan and provide feedback to the review team. The final written report is due to the CIP March 31.

A summary of the written report will be submitted to the College Planning Council. It will include a prioritized list of unmet needs, supported by facts. The College Planning Council will forward this to the College Board.

CLOSING THE FEEDBACK
LOOP: DISCUSSING
ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Assessment Committee

Assessment is a meaningless activity unless the results are analyzed, discussed and used as the basis for any necessary changes to improve teaching and learning. This is known as **closing the feedback loop**. As components of each sector undergo assessment, they will close the loop by discussing their results within departments and then within the sector. For example, any academic program's assessment results will become part of the department's Instructional Plan, which will then be discussed by the Council for Instructional Planning. But it's necessary to get a look at assessment results across the entire college. The group which will take on this task is the Assessment Committee. It will be the central clearing house for all the assessment activities on campus. This subcommittee of the Faculty Senate will be chaired by the Assessment Coordinator and composed of representatives from all sectors of the campus: faculty, students, managers and classified staff.

The charge of the committee is to oversee all campus assessment activities and to discuss their results, in other words, to close the feedback loop on the broadest level. The details of this charge are currently being defined by the campus Accreditation Planning committee, but in general the Assessment Committee has been given three main tasks.

One is to collect the assessment reports produced by departments in each sector across campus. Those reports will be archived for accreditation purposes.

The second task of the committee is to pass on assessment data from those reports to pertinent committees on campus. The committee's work in this area is shaped by and tied to the Master Planning process.

Finally, the Assessment Committee will organize and facilitate a campus dialogue process that is defined in detail in the next section of this information packet. The committee's job is to facilitate a campus-wide discussion of issues related to the improvement of student learning. The Accreditation Planning committee has developed a six-step process to create these dialogues. It begins with several small Think Tanks composed of 8-10 representatives from Student Services, Transfer and Occupational Education, the library and Administrative Services. The dialogue process culminates in town hall meetings that involve the entire campus.

The Accreditation Planning Committee will continue to work on defining the role of the Assessment Committee this spring. Stay tuned for more details!

Talking the Talk

A Proposal for Dialogue

1. WASC Definition of Dialogue

- On-going
- Self-reflective
- Collegial
- Explores complex issues
- Uses Evidence
- Inclusive

“Unlike debate...the goal of dialogue is mutual understanding and respect. A conscious commitment to engage in dialogue ensures that a group welcomes a wide range of viewpoints during its search for effective ways of addressing important issues.” (WASC Standards)

2. Proposed Cabrillo Definition

An on-going process of self-reflection and sharing about issues related to the four college-wide core competencies and the overall improvement of student learning. Cabrillo College conducts dialogue in an inclusive, collegial manner both within and across campus components. A wide range of viewpoints and evidence is used to discuss issues and brainstorm solutions to them.

3. Types of on-going Dialogue about Assessment

- Department meetings discussing results
- Division Meetings on SLOs
- CPC and Faculty Senate when assessment issues are discussed.
- Curriculum Committee
- CIP
- Assessment Committee

4. Campus-wide Dialogues about Big Issues

The Assessment Committee acts as both a clearing house of information and as a facilitator for issues that need a campus-wide discussion.

Step One: As the Assessment Committee reads assessment reports from across the campus, it searches for issues that need a campus-wide dialogue. Also, individuals and groups (CPC, Instructional Council, Administrative Council, Faculty Senate, Student Senate, CIP, CCFI, SEIU and Student Services) can come to the committee to suggest issues that require a campus-wide dialogue.

Step Two: The Assessment Committee uses the following criteria to evaluate issues to discuss:

- How does the issue relate to the four college competencies?
- How does it affect student learning?
- Is there any evidence in assessment reports to support it being a problem?
- How will discussing it improve student learning?

Step Three: The Assessment Committee organizes 3-4 Think Tanks on the issue. The Think Tanks:

- ❑ Are composed of 8-10 people with representatives from the five areas across campus (Student Services, Administrative Services, Transfer and Occupational Instruction and the Library).
- ❑ Receive background materials prepared by the Assessment Committee on the issue (defined in Step Two), including evidence.
- ❑ Discuss the issue in depth
- ❑ Brainstorm possible solutions to it.
- ❑ Prepare a written report on the discussion that goes back to the Assessment Committee.

Step Four: The Assessment Committee compiles the reports from the 3-4 Think Tanks into a written report with the proposed solutions that is made available to the college and posted on the Assessment Web site.

Step Five: The Assessment Committee organizes two Town Hall meetings on the issue. These two meetings are held at different times so that as many campus members can participate. They are facilitated. The Meetings use the Let's Talk format and rules for dialogue (see separate page) for the discussion. What's said is recorded.

Step Six: The Assessment Committee summarizes and writes a report about the Town Hall Meeting. The report is posted on the Assessment web site and is also sent to: CPC, Instructional Council, Faculty Senate, Component Heads, President's office, CCFT and SEIU.

Let's Talk Dialogue Format

Conversation Etiquette:

- Focus on what matters
- Contribute your thinking
- Speak your mind and heart
- Link and Connect Ideas
- Listen together for insights and deeper questions
- Have Fun

Conversation Agreements:

- Acceptance: suspend judgment of others as best you can
- Listen: actively and with respect
- Curiosity: Seek to understand rather than to persuade
- Diversity: Invite and honor diversity of opinion
- Sincerity: Speak from the heart
- Brevity: Go for honest and depth, without dominating the conversation
- Have fun

Conversation Process:

The Assessment Committee will design 1-3 questions that Town Hall participants will answer regarding the issue at hand and its proposed solutions.

For More Information...

Jing Luan has created a campus website that both archives Cabrillo's assessment activities and provides many useful links for information on assessment. Many of those links were compiled by Topsy Smalley as part of her original web site on learning outcomes. For more information log on to:

www.cabrillo.edu/services/pro/assess/assessweb/index/html.

Another source of information is Marcy Alancraig, Cabrillo's assessment coordinator. Contact her at x6366 or maalancr@cabrillo.edu.

What Comes Next

At the end of this program, brunch will be provided while attendees provide feedback on what has been presented. As you leave the Forum, please pick up a name tag and a room assignment for the feedback session from 11-12:30. Then go to Room 403 to get your brunch and take it to your assigned room for a discussion of the plan.

Following the feedback session, those academic departments who are undergoing Instructional Planning in 2005 will have the opportunity to meet and share assessment results from assessing one of the four core competencies from 12:30-2. Each department will meet in its usual room for department meetings.

The departments who will be meeting from 12:30 are:

- Accounting and Finance
- Art History
- Construction and Energy Management
- Dance
- Engineering Technology
- English
- Geography
- History
- Learning Skills
- Meteorology
- Nursing
- Sociology
- CABT
- ESL