

Collegewide Outcome Assessment

Assessment of the Collegewide Outcomes (CWOs) and use of the results to make improvements will ensure that WITC graduates have the skills necessary for career and personal effectiveness.

History

In response to recommendations from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) in 2006. An Assessment Team was established in 2007 to address the recommendations to develop one set of common outcomes for all associate degree and substantial diploma programs, measurements for assessing them, and a process for assessing them. Through the Assessment Team's work and attendance at the HLC Academy for Assessment of Student Learning, the Collegewide Outcomes and Indicators and an implementation timeline were developed.

Process

The implementation timeline established by the Assessment Team outlined implementing the collegewide outcomes one at a time with a one-year pilot with a limited number of programs, developing a rubric to be used collegewide and parameters for assignments, followed by three years of collegewide assessment of all programs with 30 or more credits. This allowed faculty to develop and modify assessments to embed in their programs. The first CWO to be assessed was Communicate Effectively, followed by Demonstrate Critical Thinking Skills and Apply Mathematics.

Collegewide assessment occurred in the spring of 2010 through 2015. Teams of faculty and deans were assembled to review artifacts. Program faculty sent a random sample, identified from rosters faculty had identified as the course a summative assessment for the outcome would occur. The artifact review teams assessed the artifacts using the collegewide rubric and provided feedback to the program faculty regarding student performance and the assessment tool.

Expectations of Associate Degree students to be a minimum average score of 3 and Technical Diploma students to be a minimum average score of 2 for each CWO criterion. All CWO rubrics are on a 4-point scale for each criterion.

Results for the assessments are posted below. Collegewide assessment of CWOs has been suspended for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 as the AQIP Assessment project, examining the content of the CWOs and the process, is implemented.

Communicate Effectively

1. Read for information gathering, appreciation, and enjoyment
2. Write clearly, concisely, and accurately in a variety of contexts

3. Speak clearly, concisely, and accurately in a variety of contexts and formats
4. Practice active listening

Written Communication Results					
Year Assessed	# of Artifacts Reviewed	Organization	Content	Style	Total Average
2010	77	2.81	2.99	2.83	2.88/4
2011	82	2.81	3.36	3.03	3.07/4
2012	80	2.09	2.90	2.27	3.07/4
2015	64	3.12	3.20	3.00	3.11/4

Oral Communication Results											
Year Assessed	# of Artifacts Tallied	Tone	Pronunciation	Volume	Vocabulary	Clarity	Posture	Facial Expression	Eye Contact	Gestures	Total Avg.
2010	156	3.32	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.41	3.22	3.2	3.36	3.37	3.39/4
Rubric Modified		Tone	Pronunciation	Volume	Vocabulary	Clarity	Active Listening	Facial Expression	Eye Contact	Gestures	Total Avg.
2011	127	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.41/4
2012	141	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.44/4

Communicate Effectively Action Plans

2010: The action plan centered around assisting program instructors in feeling more comfortable/at ease in assessing oral presentations and writing in their classrooms - knowing that if program faculty start utilizing the rubrics, students will become more familiar with the rubrics and expectations related to oral presentations and written communication. As a result, two communication instructors developed a training video on how to use the oral rubric. The training video is available on the assessment website. Additionally, communication instructors are planning to work on guidelines related to using the written communication rubric.

2011: Spring 2011 college-wide assessment results were shared with all faculty at the fall in-service and programs were provided program results. Training was provided on the next CWO, Critical Thinking. In January 2012, programs were given dedicated time to develop improvement plans related to CWOs.

2012: The results of the 3 year assessment were shared with all faculty at the fall in-service. Small group activities focused on the development of a college-wide improvement plan based on a review of the results. Recommendations from the day included the following:
 Related to the oral results: Facial Expressions scored low all 3 years. Related to the written results: Organization scored lowest each year. To address these areas and communication overall, other recommendations from the faculty included: communication instructors continue working with program instructors to help with use of the rubric; sharing the rubrics with students as much as possible and practice across the curriculum related to oral presentations and writing, and sharing of best practices. In addition, a Communication Instructor was provided time to develop an instructional video/presentation on the use of the written rubric.

Demonstrate Critical Thinking Skills

1. Analyze Situations
2. Evaluate Assumptions
3. Design Solutions

Demonstrate Critical Thinking Results									
Year Assessed	# of Artifacts Reviewed	Problem/ Issue/ Situation	Key Assumptions	Perspectives/ Positions	Other Perspectives	Quality of Evidence	Resolution	Conclusion	Total Average
2012	55	3.32	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.41	3.22	3.2	1.94/3
Rubric Modified		Problem/ Issue/ Situation	Key Assumptions	Perspectives/ Positions		Quality of Evidence	Resolution	Conclusion	Total Average
2013	72	2.9	2.31	2.21		2.27	2.75	2.52	2.49/4
2014	101	3.31	2.52	2.46		2.67	2.78	2.67	2.73/4
2015	80	3.10	2.88	2.76		2.68	2.84	2.80	2.84/4

Demonstrate Critical Thinking Skills Action Plans

2012: The Assessment Team reviewed the assessment results and noted low scores in the areas of: Other Perspectives and Quality of Evidence. To help students better understand and improve these areas and their critical thinking skills overall, the subcommittee developed a structured template with questions relating to the rubric to help faculty improve their assignments. It was also noted that the assessment process seemed difficult with a 3 point rubric. Therefore, the subcommittee decided to revise the rubric to a 4 point rubric. The revised rubric along with the structured template should improve the instructor assignments, student understanding, and the assessment process.

2013: The Assessment Team reviewed the assessment results and found that the new rubric and structured template helped with both assignment development and the assessment process. The college-wide scores indicate room for student improvement, as all areas scored under a 3.0 on the 4 point scale. The faculty asked for more in-depth feedback on their program results and on their assignments, so as a result feedback reports were developed for each participating program. The feedback is meant to be used to further develop Critical Thinking assignments, instructor understanding, and, as a result, student performance on the Critical Thinking outcome.

Apply Mathematics

1. Select or devise a strategy for solving
2. Extract relevant data
3. Apply the strategy
4. Communicate the results

Apply Mathematics Results								
Year Assessed	# of Artifacts Reviewed	Select/devise a strategy for solving	Extract relevant data	Apply the strategy/ units	Apply the strategy/ calculations	Communicate results/ relevance & accuracy	Communicate results/ precision	Total Average
2013	134	3.68	3.61	3.60	3.52	3.36	2.93	3.45/4
2014	159	3.05	3.56	2.72	3.61	2.51	2.83	3.05/4
2015	62	3.20	3.24	3.08	3.36	3.04	2.88	3.13/4

Apply Mathematics Action Plan

2013: The Assessment Team reviewed the results and found that the rubric and mentoring with faculty on the development of assignments during the two years of piloting resulted in collegewide average scores ranging from 3.36-3.68 on a 4-point scale, with the exception of communicate results/precision which scored 2.93. The math subcommittee developed feedback reports for each program with information provided on how program students performed, the strengths of the assignment, and recommendations as to how the assignment could be improved so that future students' scores could be improved.