

Campus Assessment Report for 2007-2008

Sharon K. Calhoon

Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Director, Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

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The campus continues to make excellent progress in assessing student learning. Reports describing assessment activities in 2007 - 2008 were received from 21 of the 25 degree programs. The Library, the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, and Student Development and Campus Life also submitted reports of their assessment activities. Attached to this narrative is a spreadsheet summarizing my review of the reports from the various degree programs.

Nearly all of the degree programs submitting assessment reports described direct assessment of student learning outcomes. For instance, the Biology faculty used a rubric to review student lab reports to assess students' ability to apply the methods biologists use to explore living organisms. Business (undergraduate and graduate), Psychology, and English students demonstrated their knowledge of the content areas of their major on the ETS Major Field Test. Radiography and Medical Imaging Technology faculty directly observed and rated their students' ability to demonstrate proper lifting and transportation techniques. Several programs, including New Media Communication and Humanities, assessed students' writing skills using a rubric. Education faculty created a focused report on their efforts to assess their Diversity metastandard, which included review of students' portfolios and ratings by host teachers who supervised student teaching. Just one program used only indirect assessment (a survey of graduating seniors), because a technical problem with ePortfolio prevented the direct assessment activities that they had planned. It is very likely that faculty will be directly assessing student work in this program next year.

In about two-thirds of the degree programs, faculty systematically assessed student learning at multiple points in the program. For example, Business, Education, Nursing, Radiography, and Medical Imaging Technology faculty assessed student learning at every level. Other programs, such as Psychology and History/Political Science, assessed students at the senior level and mid-way through the program (in 200- or 300-level courses).

Most reports compared the results to a pre-set benchmark stating the percentage of students meeting the learning outcome. A few programs set benchmarks of "average student performance," and those programs have been asked to revise their benchmarks to show the proportion of students meeting the outcome. One program included only students who pass the course in the benchmark, and this program has been asked to revise the benchmark to include all students. Most of the programs which collected sufficient data did use the information to evaluate program effectiveness, but somewhat fewer programs used the information to recommend specific improvements to the program.

Nearly all programs disseminated their assessment results by placing their assessment reports and report summaries on their departmental website. Very few programs reported efforts to distribute the information more intentionally, such as by notifying students and other stakeholders of the location of the report online, by discussing assessment findings with students or stakeholders in meetings, or by summarizing assessment findings in departmental newsletters or other communications.

Regarding assessment of general education, Educational Policies Committee (EPC) requested that CTLA work with the English faculty to assess writing in the ENG W131 portion of the Freshman Learning Communities and in stand-alone W131 classes in Fall 2007. Although all ENG W-131 faculty were asked to participate in this project, first and final assignment papers were submitted to ePortfolio from only 7 of the 12 sections of W131. Four English faculty assessed these papers using a rubric developed for this purpose. Unfortunately, due to technical problems in retrieving the papers for assessment, retrieving the evaluator ratings after assessment, and putting the ratings into a usable format, the results could not be analyzed. What data we could retrieve suggested problems with inter-rater reliability on the rubric, and the English faculty are considering revising it.

As shown by a review of assessment activities over the past several years, a little more than half of the degree programs have demonstrated evidence of commitment to ongoing, systematic assessment of student learning which results in program improvement. This is a real achievement for this campus, especially compared to where we were four years ago when we stepped up our assessment efforts. The faculty are commended for their honesty, good humor, and hard work in developing their assessment skills. With continued commitment of resources by the administration and continued good faith effort by the faculty, we expect that, within a year or two, *all* degree programs will show evidence of sustained, effective assessment. In so doing, we demonstrate our firm commitment to student learning to ourselves, to our students, and to those who depend on us to enhance the educational and professional attainment of the residents of this region.