

JOHN A. LOGAN COLLEGE
RESULTS FORUM IMPACT REPORT

John A. Logan College joined the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Academy Team and attended the 2006-2007 Roundtable to develop a Student Learning Project that would close the loop on the College's assessment efforts. Initially, the project's goals were to create an institution-wide process for the implementation/assessment of the eight established general educational goals (listed below) and to strengthen current assessment processes through enhanced communication networks throughout the College.

Eight Educational Goals:

1. Communication
2. Ethical Awareness
3. Critical Thinking
4. Mathematical Reasoning
5. Community Responsibility
6. Wellness
7. Aesthetic Response
8. Workplace Readiness

As a result of this Student Learning Project, our goal was to create a culture of assessment in three key areas:

1. Instruction
2. Student Services
3. Workforce Development

Changes Made and Challenges Encountered

Although previous efforts had resulted in much assessment data being collected, questions remained:

- What should be done with the data?
- How should the data be used to improve student learning?

Within the first year of the academy commitment, the team concluded that the original project was too broad to assess effectively. Therefore, we narrowed the focus to two goals at a time and planned to develop a common rubric for each goal, beginning with Mathematical Reasoning and Communication. This narrowed focus would allow for a more thorough exploration and assessment of what is happening on campus. Communication, the most common educational goal across disciplines, was assessed first using a common rubric.

Other changes were made to the original project. Workforce Development was eliminated from the assessment effort, narrowing the project to assessment in the Instructional and Student Services areas. Finally, a shift was made from classroom-level assessment to institutional-level assessment. This shift allowed for the development of a successful cross-curricular assessment process within Instructional Services:

- Collecting student artifacts during the academic year
- Forming a multi-discipline team to evaluate the collected artifacts during the summer
- Training team members to use a common rubric to evaluate the collected artifacts
- Discussing and analyzing findings
- Recommending ways to improve student learning for the assessed educational goal

While developing this assessment process, several challenges were overcome, including but not limited to:

- Lack of “buy-in” by key players
- Limited understanding regarding the assessment process
- Delivery of feedback of assessment data findings to key players
- Primary job responsibilities taking precedence over assessment roles
- Leadership change (assessment coordinator)

The team also attempted to assess Mathematical Reasoning using a common rubric. However, the Academy Team and Math Department decided to assess this goal through final exam scores from MAT 113, Introduction to Contemporary Mathematics. The Math Department has linked each of the final exam questions in this course to the course’s learning objectives.

The learning objectives are linked to specific learning outcomes for Mathematical Reasoning. This close association of outcomes to course objectives to exam questions makes this an acceptable starting point for assessing Mathematical Reasoning at John A. Logan College.

Achievements

Several positive products, conversations and support systems were achieved as a result of the cross-curricular assessment process.

Written Communication Rubrics (see Appendix A and B)

Initially, a team of 15 faculty and staff members from across the campus gathered to discuss essential components of effective writing. The discussion resulted in the creation of a common rubric that could be used to assess all student writing assignments on campus. The English Department was then asked to use the common rubric to assess their research papers and report their findings to the Assessment Coordinator as a primary measure of the written communication goal. Findings indicated that there were significant differences in the English faculty averages in the areas of support, mechanics and documentation of sources.

During the summer of 2010, a multi-discipline team applied the common rubric to student writing artifacts gathered from English, physics, chemistry and biology with a majority being from ENG 101. At the completion of the activity, the team had three major findings. One, rubric revisions would be necessary in order for it to work effectively. For example, some evaluation criteria needed to be clarified to allow for consistent assessments by all evaluators. Two, the rubric did not fit well for technical writing, so a second rubric was developed to be used specifically for technical writing. Three, students' writing strengths lay in the areas of focus, organization, and support, with overall weaknesses in the areas of mechanics and the documentation of source materials.

English 101 Faculty Workshop

After the summer project, the Assessment Coordinator met with the English Department chair. They discussed the revised common rubric, the team's findings and the English Department's use of the common rubric. It was decided to hold a workshop for all ENG 101 faculty (full-time and adjunct). The first goal of the workshop was to get faculty to apply the rubric consistently when evaluating student performance; in turn, increasing the validity of the data. The second goal was to open dialogue regarding the improvement of student performance in the areas of mechanics and documentation of sources.

At the workshop, the English 101 faculty used the revised communication rubric to assess student writing artifacts. Upon completion of this task, scores were compared to ensure inter-rater reliability. Consensus was reached among the participants. This was the first time that all the instructors of ENG 101 had met to discuss the course and student performance. That alone is an exciting step forward, and a positive result of the new assessment process.

Instructional Research-Writing Video Clips

As another outcome of the summer 2010 workshop, instructional video clips were developed to provide support to students in the areas of mechanics and documentation of source material.

Additional Products and Support Systems Developed

Assessment Academy Link (http://www.jalc.edu/assessment_initiative/)

The addition of the Assessment Academy link to the John A. Logan College website provides public access to documents regarding the history of assessment at John A. Logan College, minutes of assessment meetings, assessment form templates and rubric examples.

Assessment Repository

In addition, an assessment repository of all completed assessment plans and results is accessible through the Assessment Academy link (http://www.jalc.edu/assessment_initiative/).

Standardized Assessment Forms (see Appendix C).

Faculty and staff complete a standard form when assessing either of the two general education goals that are up for review each semester. The standardized form allows everyone to report assessment in the same way; including learning outcomes, evaluation tools, benchmarks, results and plans for improvement.

Assessment Handbook (see Appendix D)

The *Assessment Handbook* was developed as a reference tool for College administrators, faculty and staff responsible for conducting and/or coordinating assessment activities in their departments. General assessment information is provided as well as an assessment schedule for each student learning goal and examples of completed assessment forms. In addition, frequently asked questions and common misconceptions regarding assessment are addressed. Finally, a list of resources is provided.

Graduation Survey Results (see Appendix E)

A survey has been added to the online graduation application in order to collect indirect evidence of student learning outcomes. Students are asked to rate how prepared they feel that they are in terms of each of the eight educational goals.

Campus Culture

Other accomplishments center around the campus culture regarding assessment. We have seen an increase in the following non-tangibles:

Visibility

- Assessment is becoming a common question during hiring practices.
- Academy Team members are represented on the Online Assessment Team and participate in rubric development for online courses.

Participation

- Additional faculty are completing assessment plans (50 plans currently in place) and attending training.
- Adjunct faculty have been added to assessment processes and the Assessment Academy Team.
- Diversity among team members allows for growth of assessment concepts in individual offices.
- As a direct result of faculty's application of assessment, more students are receiving specific measurable objectives tied to assignments and the rubrics that measure them. Because this information is transparent from the beginning, students have a better chance of meeting course or program expectations.

Understanding

- Assessment training sessions are held during Faculty Staff Development.
- Individual meetings are scheduled as needed.
- A survey (taken in March 2011) of full-time faculty, term faculty and non-teaching professionals that are involved with the Academy Student Learning Project indicates an increase in the following:
 - Communication about assessment
 - Understanding of assessment concepts, terminology, use, etc.
 - Understanding of the process/cycle for completing assessment plans
 - Active engagement in assessment activities
 - Use of rubrics
 - Use of assessment data to make changes
 - Showing students how class content, activities, and evaluations are tied to course objectives
 - Student learning

Development of co-curricular assessment plans

- Student Services assesses the learning goals of critical thinking, communication, wellness and community responsibility. There are currently nine plans in place to assess these four goals in the areas of Admissions, Financial Aid, Placement, and Student Success Center. Christy McBride, Director of Student Success Center and Assessment Academy Team member reports:

The processes have resulted in people thinking more about how students can benefit from a particular activity, event, etc. When I plan an event now, my thinking has a lot more to do with how much and what I feel a

student will gain from the activity and how I will be able to evaluate what I want to know. I think some of the others would agree. But, I still think we are still far away from everyone taking the time to actually do something about it on their own initiative.

- Further achievements in the Student Services area include:
 - Awareness of the need for the assessment of student learning in Student Services has increased.
 - Understanding of how Student Services areas can effect student learning has increased.
 - Willingness to become a part of the assessment process has improved.

Program Review and Institutional Planning

Assessment data collected is beneficial for use in program review reports that are submitted annually to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. During Faculty and Staff Development sessions, the Assessment Coordinator demonstrates how faculty can incorporate this data into program review reports for their department. Two professional staff members that also serve as Assessment Academy Team members provide guidance to individual departments that are completing the program review process.

The Future

We are in the midst of a “common handbook initiative.” Based on the data from the 2010 summer findings regarding student performance on written communication, the Academy Team is working to get a common handbook for our campus. Every department has been given an opportunity to vote on three possible handbooks; we have selected *The Little, Brown Essential Handbook*. Next, any faculty who want to require this handbook will put it on their syllabi and receive a desk copy. The idea is that students will be using the same handbook in a variety of classes and will become familiar with using it, ultimately improving their writing and research skills.

There has also been some discussion among English faculty about how to improve and build upon assessment of written communication skills within the English Department. One idea is to work toward a portfolio approach rather than relying on just the research paper in ENG 101. Another idea is to track the ENG 101 students into ENG 102. This would allow faculty to assess how well students are retaining what they learned in ENG 101, and how much they are improving on their research skills in ENG 102.

Furthermore, the Assessment Team plans to expand the cross-curricular assessment process to the other learning goals. We will create small teams, which will have two co-chairs, for each learning goal. These teams will be responsible for the collection of student artifacts throughout the year, and the assessment of the specific learning goal as demonstrated by those student artifacts. This process will help ensure the sustainability of the Assessment Initiative at John A. Logan College.

APPENDIX A

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION RUBRIC FOR MLA

Criterion	4 - Excellent	3 - Acceptable	2 - Developing	1 - Beginning
Audience/Purpose	<p><u>Thesis statement</u> shows reflection Captures the essence of topic/purpose using eloquent language and style</p> <p><u>Tone</u> Vocabulary is perfectly appropriate for audience and purpose throughout</p>	<p><u>Thesis statement</u> reflects purpose and establishes main idea or position</p> <p><u>Tone</u> Maintain appropriate point of view Vocabulary is appropriate for audience and purpose, with few exceptions</p>	<p><u>Thesis statement</u> is misleading or unclear</p> <p><u>Tone</u> Appropriate point of view at times Appropriate vocabulary at times</p>	<p><u>Thesis statement</u> is not present or is an announcement</p> <p><u>Tone</u> Inappropriate</p>
Support/Development	<p>Not left with any further questions – Plenty of relevant examples and details</p> <p>Sophisticated, consistent movement from general to specific</p>	<p>Most ideas are fully developed with adequate details/examples (1-2 ideas/details could have been added)</p> <p>Clear/logical movement from general to specific is consistent throughout</p>	<p>Some ideas are developed Some details/examples are missing or repetitive</p> <p>Clear movement is present but inconsistent</p>	<p>Few if any ideas are developed Few details/examples are present (these may be general, irrelevant, or repetitive)</p> <p>Little or no movement is evident</p>
Organization	<p><u>Structure/Format</u> Attention getter (all of #3) + WOW factor</p> <p><u>Conclusion</u>: pulls together main points and provides closure in interesting manner</p> <p><u>Topic sentences</u>: do #3 in sophisticated/complex manner</p> <p><u>Transitions</u> More complex, diverse, varied throughout (single words, phrases, clauses)</p>	<p><u>Structure/Format</u> Preview of points is clear and matches order of body</p> <p><u>Intro</u>: grabs attention, focuses on topic, flows smoothly to thesis</p> <p><u>Conclusion</u>: pulls together main points of paper without duplicating intro</p> <p><u>Topic sentences</u>: introduce body paragraphs, support thesis</p> <p><u>Transitions</u> Basic, clear Effectively move reader from one point to another throughout paper w/out choppiness</p>	<p><u>Structure/Format</u> Preview of points must be inferred Matches order of body</p> <p><u>Intro</u>: Attention getter is present but not creative Ex: rhetorical question, overused quote Mentions topic but does not develop it</p> <p><u>Conclusion</u>: duplicate of intro</p> <p><u>Topic sentences</u>: Some attempt is present but may not be consistent or appropriately placed</p> <p><u>Transitions</u> Few are present and may seem forced A few are missing in obvious places</p>	<p><u>Structure/Format</u> Preview of points is not evident May not match order in body</p> <p><u>Intro</u>: No attempt made at attention getter</p> <p>May not focus on topic</p> <p><u>Conclusion</u>: short, abrupt</p> <p><u>Transitions</u> Attempt is made Some inappropriate or misleading</p>

Criterion	4 – Excellent	3 – Acceptable	2 – Developing	1 - Beginning
Mechanics	<p><u>Readability</u> Sophisticated word choice, sentence structure</p> <p><u>Grammatical Errors</u> Near perfect</p> <p><u>Proofreading</u> Near perfect</p>	<p><u>Readability</u> Variety of word choice and sentence structure</p> <p><u>Grammatical Errors</u> Limited errors in paper Overall does not distract reader or impede understanding</p> <p><u>Proofreading</u> Clear evidence of proofreading Vast majority of spelling is correct Spacing correct No missing or extra words</p>	<p><u>Readability</u> Simple, basic sentence structure Meaning is clear</p> <p><u>Grammatical Errors</u> Same few errors throughout paper Punctuation at times distracting but overall does not impede understanding</p> <p><u>Proofreading</u> Some evidence of proofreading A few homonym problems, etc. No obvious spelling or word choice issues Spacing correct - Some missing or extra words</p>	<p><u>Readability</u> Structure is simple, repetitive, or nonsensical. Reader must stop & determine meaning</p> <p><u>Grammatical Errors</u> Multiple, varied types of errors throughout Punctuation (or lack of) impedes understanding</p> <p><u>Proofreading</u> Little to no evidence of proofreading Spelling, Spacing, Wrong or missing words throughout paper</p>
MLA Documentation	<p><u>Sources</u> Reflect high understanding of material through integration Are cited with sophistication / variation in style</p> <p><u>In-text citations</u> Show clear understanding of Proper format throughout paper Contains only a few typos</p> <p><u>Works Cited Page</u> All information is correctly ordered and formatted with only minimal typos</p>	<p><u>Sources</u> Meets assignment criteria with a variety of sources that are credible and scholarly Are properly integrated</p> <p><u>In-text citations</u> Are properly formatted for the most part</p> <p>Contains a maximum of 1-2 types of minor errors (punctuation, spacing, etc.)</p> <p><u>Works Cited Page</u> Does not contain major formatting errors Has all sources cited</p>	<p><u>Sources</u> May not all be credible Meet minimum number for assignment but lack variety Are found in paper but now always properly integrated</p> <p><u>In-text citations</u> Are improperly formatted Missing information that allows reader to locate original source (pg #s, year, etc.) Use title when author is available, etc.</p> <p><u>Works Cited Page</u> Has 1-2 major types of major formatting errors Contains most of the sources cited</p>	<p><u>Sources</u> Are not credible (Wikipedia, Joe's Page) Do not meet min. # for assignment Are not integrated sufficiently</p> <p><u>In-text citations are not present</u></p> <p><u>Works Cited Page</u> Does not exist or Has major formatting errors Not double spaced No hanging indent Not alpha order Improper pagination Improperly titled Missing major information regarding source (title, city/publisher, date)</p>

APPENDIX B

TECHNICAL WRITING RUBRIC

Criterion	4	3	2	1	0	Assessment Score
Audience and purpose	The purpose is evident for the appropriate audience	The purpose and audience are not fully developed.	There is a weak understanding of the document's purpose and audience.	There is a poor understanding of the document's purpose and audience.	The purpose and audience of the document is not identified.	
Structure, organization, and format	The document is formatted, well-developed, and organized correctly with two or fewer errors: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Headings 2. Sequence 3. Transition 4. Intro/con 	The document is less well-developed and organized and has three to four formatting errors: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Headings 2. Sequence 3. Transition 4. Intro/con 	The document is not well-developed and organized and has five formatting errors: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Headings 2. Sequence 3. Transition 4. Intro/con 	The document is not well-developed and organized and has six to ten formatting errors: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Headings 2. Sequence 3. Transition 4. Intro/con 	There is no evidence of transitioning, intro/conclusion, development, nor organization and has ten or more formatting errors.	
Mechanics	There are fewer than two of the following mechanical errors: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spelling Grammar 2. Punctuation 3. Sent. Structure 4. Word choice 	There are between three and four of the following mechanical errors: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spelling Grammar 2. Punctuation 3. Sent. Structure 4. Word choice 	There are five of the following mechanical errors: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spelling Grammar 2. Punctuation 3. Sent. Structure 4. Word choice 	There are between six and ten of the following mechanical errors: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spelling Grammar 2. Punctuation 3. Sent. Structure 4. Word choice 	There are more than ten critical errors such as errors in dosages, data analysis, formulas, chemical or drug names, liability issues, equations, etc.	
Discipline-specific (referencing)	The document is cited appropriately with either MLA, APA, <u>How 12</u> , (for Business courses), and/or <u>Investigating Biology Lab Manual</u> , by Judith Morgan and M. Eloise Brown Carter (for life science courses). There are no errors on the works cited page, endnotes, reference page, or footnotes.	The document has two or fewer errors with the citation style or there are errors on the works cited page, endnotes, reference page, or footnotes.	The document has three errors with the citation style or there are errors on the works cited page, endnotes, reference page, or footnotes.	The document has four errors with the citation style or there are errors on the works cited page, endnotes, reference page, or footnotes.	There are significant citation errors or the citations are incomplete or missing.	

APPENDIX C

ASSESSMENT FORM

Program/Department/Division:

Department Chair:

Semester:

College Mission: *We are a diverse learning and teaching community committed to improving individual life and society through high quality, accessible educational programs and engaged learning opportunities.*

Program/Department/Division Mission Statement:

I. Assessment Plan

Learning Goal:

Intended Learning Outcomes:

Lead Instructor:

The Plan:

What?

Why?

How?

When?

Who?

Criteria for Success:

II. Assessment Results

What were the results?

What was learned?

III. Action Plan

APPENDIX D

ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

Introduction

This handbook has been developed as a reference tool for John A. Logan administrators, faculty, and staff members responsible for conducting and/or coordinating assessment activities in their departments. General assessment information is provided as well as an assessment schedule for each student learning goal, and examples of completed assessment forms. In addition, frequently asked questions and common misconceptions regarding assessment are addressed. Finally, a list of resources is provided.

Assessment Website: http://www.jalc.edu/assessment_initiative/

Contents

Fundamentals of Assessment

Assessment Cycle

Reporting Form

Examples

FAQs

Resources

Education Goals

The faculty and staff of John A. Logan College are committed to providing students with opportunities to develop learning abilities that will last a lifetime. Graduates will be prepared to succeed in their personal and professional lives because of achieved competence in the following general education goals:

- **Communication.** To participate in the entire communication process of listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- **Mathematical Reasoning.** To develop mathematical reasoning and an ability to apply quantitative methods.
- **Wellness.** To achieve physical and psychological wellness by learning to take responsibility for personal well-being.
- **Community Responsibility.** To become a responsible member of local, national and global communities by recognizing the values of diverse histories, economies and cultures.
- **Critical Thinking.** To cultivate the process of critical thinking by analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating objects, concepts, theories and hypotheses.
- **Workplace Readiness.** To accomplish workplace readiness by acquiring competencies and technological application skills related to chosen careers.

- **Ethical Awareness.** To develop an ethical awareness which focuses on the value of integrity, honesty and personal responsibility.
- **Aesthetic Response.** To develop an aesthetic appreciation of life through creative, artistic and cultural experiences.

Fundamentals of Assessment

The goal of assessment is to improve student learning. Assessment also helps the college fulfill its mission; by assessing what students have gained in terms of the institution's learning goals, administrators, faculty, and staff members can monitor the quality of the education provided and strive for constant improvement of that education.

The basic principles of effective assessment include the following:

- A. Faculty should have primary responsibility for developing, implementing, and maintaining assessment activities.
- B. Clearly defined learning outcomes are essential.
- C. Assessment is ongoing, systematic, and cyclical.
- D. Assessment should be logical, attainable, and consistent with the institution's mission.

The process is relatively simple.

1. Identify in general terms what educational goals are valued (institution and program mission statements should be used).
2. Determine where (in courses and outside of courses) these goals are addressed.
3. Write measurable objectives (learning outcomes) relevant to the goals.
4. Determine criteria for success (pretest/posttest, % accuracy, etc.).
5. Administer assessment activity.
6. Document, analyze, and communicate assessment findings.
7. Use findings to make curricular and instructional changes when necessary.
8. Reevaluate the assessment process with the intent to continuously improve the quality of student learning.

Assessment Cycle

Beginning Fall 08, the John A. Logan assessment cycle will include two of the eight learning goals per semester. The cycle will consist of five steps. *(Some learning goals will not be applicable to certain programs or departments. Only those goals that apply need to be assessed.)*

1. Submit a plan for assessing the goal.
2. Implement the plan.
3. Analyze the data.
4. Submit a report of the findings.
5. Implement any necessary changes the following semester.

Goal to be Assessed	Plan Due Date	Report Due Date
<u>FALL 2010</u>		
Communication	June 1, 2010	June 1, 2011
Mathematical Reasoning	June 1, 2010	June 1, 2011
<u>SPRING 2011</u>		
Wellness	October 1, 2010	October 1, 2011
Community Responsibility	October 1, 2010	October 1, 2011
<u>FALL 2011</u>		
Critical Thinking	June 1, 2011	June 1, 2012
Workplace Readiness	June 1, 2011	June 1, 2012
<u>SPRING 2012</u>		
Ethical Awareness	October 1, 2011	October 1, 2012
Aesthetic Response	October 1, 2011	October 1, 2012

Assessment Form

Program/Department/Division:

Department Chair:

Semester:

College Mission: *We are a diverse learning and teaching community committed to improving individual life and society through high quality, accessible educational programs and engaged learning opportunities.*

Program/Department/Division Mission Statement:

I. Assessment Plan

Learning Goal:

Intended Learning Outcomes: *List what students will be able to do (in relation to the above learning goal) upon successful completion of this course.*

Lead Instructor: *The lead instructor's role is to communicate the plan to all faculty members involved and to coordinate implementation of the plan and analysis of results. (If there is more than one learning outcome to be assessed, there may be more than one lead instructor.)*

The Plan:

What? *Describe the performance or task to be measured. (This could be an essay, a question or questions on an exam, a lab assignment, a project, etc.)*

Why? *State the rationale for choosing this particular process for this particular goal.*

How? *Explain how the results will be measured. (This could be a rubric, a checklist, or any other standard of measurement.)*

When? *State the target date for collecting the data. (Most likely this will be by the end of the semester during which the plan is implemented.)*

Who? *Identify who will review the results. (This will probably be the lead instructor, the department chair, and other faculty.)*

Remember: Since accurate assessment measures the achievement of only those students who have successfully completed the course or program, only include those students when collecting your data.

Criteria for Success: *Establish a benchmark to determine success. (One way is to establish a percentage of students who meet the outcome to an acceptable level, which should be listed here as well.)*

II. Assessment Results

What were the results? *After the data has been collected and analyzed, list the quantifiable results in relation to the benchmark used to determine success.*

What was learned? *Describe what was learned from the above results. For instance, could certain changes (such as textbook selection, better communication among faculty, greater emphasis on certain concepts, or upgrading equipment) lead to future improvements in student learning?*

III. Action Plan

Explain how the assessment results will be used to improve student learning.

Assessment Form Checklist

Section	Criteria for Evaluation	Y	N	Notes
Top	Is all of the basic information listed and correct?			
Mission	Do the learning outcomes reflect the mission?			
Intended Student Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the outcomes clearly defined? 2. Are they measurable? 			
Lead Instructor(s)	Is it clear who will lead the assessment process for each outcome listed?			
Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the rationale for selecting this process clearly stated? 2. Is it clear what performance or task will be used to measure student learning? 3. Will the process lead to results that are measurable and evaluated uniformly against a designated standard? 4. Are the target dates listed and appropriate? 5. Is it clear who will analyze the results? 			
Criteria for Success	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the benchmarks realistic? 2. Would meeting or exceeding the benchmarks indicate program/course success? 3. Were only those students who successfully completed the program or course used in results? 			
Summary of Results and Analysis of Data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the listed results quantifiable? 2. Is it clear what was learned from this assessment process? 			
Action Plan	Is it clear what steps will be taken to improve student learning?			

Sample Assessment Form

Program/Department/Division: Social Science – PSC 131 American Government

Department Chair: Perry Knop

Semester: FY 06 - 07

College Mission: *We are a diverse learning and teaching community committed to improving individual life and society through high quality, accessible educational programs and engaged learning opportunities.*

Program/Department/Division Mission Statement:

I. Assessment Plan

Learning Goal: Mathematical Reasoning

Intended Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to accurately answer questions about voter turnout in US elections and statistical accuracy of opinion polls. We expect students who completed PSC 131 will improve their post test scores as compared to pre test scores on these two questions.

Lead Instructors: Jane Bryant and Perry Knop

The Plan:

What?	Two multiple choice assessment questions
Why?	The pretest provides a point of reference of prior student knowledge of these two items and allows professors to judge the difference in mean scores of the post/pretest on these two questions related to mathematical reasoning.
How?	The results will be measured by comparing the mean percentage of correct responses on the pretest score to the mean percentage of correct responses on the post test score. A paired sample t test will verify the change in learning from the beginning of the semester. The statistical significance level is set at $p > .05$.
When?	The assessment tool is administered during the first week of instruction and during the last week of instruction. These results of the assessment are in no way used to calculate the students' grades.
Who?	The lead instructors will review the results.

Criteria for Success: The lead instructors would like to see the post test score on each item be at least 75% (an average grade in the course). However, it is more important to see a statistically significant increase in student learning on the item as opposed to an arbitrary percentage.

II. Assessment Results

What were the results?

During FY 06 – 07, student learning in PSC 131 did improve in regard to Mathematical Reasoning on one of the questions, but not the other.

Q1 asked students to identify the election with the largest turnout. The mean percentage score on the pretest was 88%, but the mean percentage score on the post test was 83%. Therefore, there was a 5% decrease in the mean percentage score from the beginning of the semester as compared to the end. However, upon statistical analysis of a paired sample t-test, the difference in percentage is not statistically significant.

Q2 asked students to identify how the accuracy of an opinion poll is determined. The mean percentage score on the pretest was 66%, but the mean percentage score on the post test was 80%. Therefore, there was a 14% increase in the percentage score from the beginning of the semester as compared to the end. Upon statistical analysis of a paired sample t-test, the difference in percentage is statistically significant ($p > .01$).

What was learned?

Students in PSC 131 know more about voter turnout than public opinion research as they relate to mathematical reasoning upon entering the course. Incidentally, students in PSC 131 know more about voter turnout than public opinion research as they relate to mathematical reasoning upon exiting the course.

While there was a slight *decrease* in the mean percentage score on the voter turnout question, it should be noted the difference in scores was not statistically significant. Yet, the researchers are concerned that no improvement in student learning occurred in this area.

There was a statistically significant improvement of student learning on the second question.

III. Action Plan

Improved communication regarding voter turnout will assist in improving student learning on this question.

The instructors are pleased with the results on the second question, but will try to build upon this success through better communication of the fundamentals of public opinion research.

Based upon these findings, the instructors are not convinced that assessing mathematical reasoning is best served by the use of these two questions. Thus, consideration will be given to changing the questions or choosing a better method for assessing mathematical reasoning in PSC 131.

Frequently Asked Questions

(Questions in quotation marks were asked by JALC faculty/staff at the workshop held during the fall Faculty and Staff Development Day.)

1. **What is assessment?**

Assessment is the collection and interpretation of information about what, how much, and how well students are learning.

Assessment is *not*...

- a part of faculty evaluation.
- an intrusion on faculty members' classrooms nor academic freedom.

2. **How does assessment help faculty/staff?**

- Faculty can increase their awareness of student learning.
- Adjustments to teaching strategies can be made to address gaps in learning.
- Faculty can better identify what to teach, including sequencing of discipline-specific knowledge and skills.
- Section-to-section consistency can be improved.
- Structure is provided for co-curricular programs.

3. **Won't assessment take a lot of extra time? "Will we have time allotted to work on this, or is it coming out of our already very busy schedules?"**

In the beginning assessment activities may require some extra effort and time. However, most faculty are already doing assessment, they simply need to formalize the procedure and provide documentation of what they do. In addition, the benefits of assessment could actually save time in the long run if faculty use the results to make changes that improve efficiency in the classroom. Furthermore, the process will slowly become second nature and no longer "extra" work. Finally, much of the work involved will be done during workshops held during faculty/staff development days.

4. **Will assessment information be "authentic," or "Are we doing this just to fill out forms to be filed away?"**

The goal is most definitely to use the information to "close the loop" and make improvements in student learning. However, much of that is up to the faculty; they are the ones that must decide to make whatever changes are revealed as necessary by the data.

5. **"Will the administration actually follow through with implementing your suggestions and ideas for assessment?"**

To this point, administration at John A. Logan College has been very supportive of assessment, as indicated by funding for travel and other resources as needed. In addition,

as indicated in the answer to question four, time at faculty and staff development day has been allocated to working on assessment. Finally, as also indicated in question four's answer, the real follow through with assessment is up to faculty and staff and what they do in their classrooms and offices.

6. “Will the assessment initiative address our services for the community or only for students/students learning?”

Although assessment began with the instructional level, we are currently working on incorporating its use in all divisions of the college, so yes; it will eventually address our services for the community as well.

7. “Will we be provided with resources (books, websites, articles, and workshops, conferences) to start and continue to improve our assessment processes?”

Absolutely! In fact, some of these are listed in the back of this handbook under “Resources” and can be found in our library.

8. How does assessment benefit students?

An immediate benefit for students is that faculty expectations of them are clarified. In addition, the lines of communication and feedback between faculty and students are improved. Finally, students will learn more and be better prepared to compete in the job market or at four-year institutions.

9. How does assessment benefit the college?

Assessment has already helped the college with accreditation and applications for grants and other funding sources.

10. How does assessment benefit the community?

Because of the increased funding that assessment data can help the college obtain, the community will benefit by having a better facility. In addition, because assessment will improve learning, graduates will be better qualified when they enter the community's workforce.

Resources

John A. Logan College Assessment Website: http://www.jalc.edu/assessment_initiative/

Books available in our library:

Assessing for Learning: Building a Sustainable Commitment Across the Institution

Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide

Assessment Case Studies: Common Issues in Implementation with Various Campus Approaches to Resolution

Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers

Collaborative Analysis of Student Work

The Department Head's Guide to Assessment Implementation in Administrative and Educational Support Units

Educating Citizens: Preparing America's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility

Learning and Teaching: Research-based Methods

The Mapping Primer: Tools for Reconstructing the College Curriculum

Moving into Town – and Moving On: The Community College in the Lives of Traditional-age Students

The Outcomes Primer: Reconstructing the College Curriculum

A Practitioner's Handbook for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Outcomes Assessment Implementation

Thinking about Teaching and Learning: Developing Habits of Learning with First Year College and University Students

Helpful websites:

Glossaries of assessment terms you may encounter:

- <http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/assess/terminology.htm>
- <http://www.sabes.org/assessment/glossary.htm>
- <http://www.fetaweb.com/06/glossary.assessment.htm>
- <http://artswork.asu.edu/arts/teachers/assessment/glossary.htm>

Other sites containing helpful information:

- <http://www.ecs.org/html/issue.asp?issueID=12>
- <http://www.idea.ksu.edu/StudentRatings/index.html>
- <http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm>

Sources used in the design of this handbook include the following:

- Cochise College. *Program/Discipline Assessment Handbook*, 2006.
- Nichols, J. O., and Nichols, K.W., *The Department Head's Guide to Assessment Implementation in Educational and Academic Support Units*, Agathon Press, 2000.
- Schuh, J. H., and Upcraft, M. L., *Assessment Practice in Student Affairs: An Applications Manual*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001.
- Upcraft, M. L., and Schuh, J. H., *Assessment in Student Affairs: A Guide for Practitioners*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996.
- <http://oregonstate.edu/studentaffairs/assessment/educationaltraining.html>
- <http://www.vpsa.txstate.edu/programs-and-services/planning-and-assessment.html>

JOHN A. LOGAN COLLEGE

GRADUATION APPLICANTS SURVEY -- TALLY

January 1, 2010 : December 31, 2010

n = 10

1. Please list the degree(s) and/or certificate(s) you have earned at John A. Logan College.

Certificate of Interpreting
AS - Elementary Education
Certificate Massage Therapy
associates in science
welding technology certificate
medical coding
Tourism Management
Associate of Science

2. John A. Logan College has eight learning goals for its students. Please rate how prepared you feel that you are in terms of each of these goals.

A) Mathematical Reasoning -- *to develop mathematical reasoning and an ability to apply quantitative methods.*

Very Prepared	8	80.0%
Somewhat Prepared	1	10.0%
Somewhat Unprepared	0	0.0%
Very Unprepared	1	10.0%

B) Communication -- *to participate in the entire communication process of listening, speaking, reading and writing.*

Very Prepared	8	80.0%
Somewhat Prepared	2	20.0%
Somewhat Unprepared	0	0.0%
Very Unprepared	0	0.0%

C) Wellness -- *to achieve physical and psychological wellness by learning to take responsibility for personal well-being.*

Very Prepared	9	90.0%
Somewhat Prepared	1	10.0%
Somewhat Unprepared	0	0.0%
Very Unprepared	0	0.0%

D) Community Responsibility -- *to become a responsible member of local, national and global communities by recognizing the values of diverse histories, economies and cultures.*

Very Prepared	9	90.0%
Somewhat Prepared	1	10.0%
Somewhat Unprepared	0	0.0%
Very Unprepared	0	0.0%

E) Critical Thinking -- *to think critically when solving problems, making decisions and applying scientific inquiry methods.*

Very Prepared	9	90.0%
Somewhat Prepared	1	10.0%
Somewhat Unprepared	0	0.0%
Very Unprepared	0	0.0%

F) Workplace Readiness -- *to accomplish workplace readiness by acquiring competencies and technological application skills related to chosen careers.*

Very Prepared	8	80.0%
Somewhat Prepared	1	10.0%
Somewhat Unprepared	1	10.0%
Very Unprepared	0	0.0%

G) Ethical Awareness -- *to develop an aesthetic appreciation to improve the quality of life through creative activities, art responses, and cultural experiences.*

Very Prepared	10	100.0%
Somewhat Prepared	0	0.0%
Somewhat Unprepared	0	0.0%
Very Unprepared	0	0.0%

H) Aesthetic Response -- *to develop an aesthetic appreciation to improve the quality of life through creative activities, art responses, and cultural experiences.*

Very Prepared	8	80.0%
Somewhat Prepared	2	20.0%
Somewhat Unprepared	0	0.0%
Very Unprepared	0	0.0%

3. What is your main Objective in Attending (sic) John A. Logan College?

Prepare for transfer to a 4-year College (sic) or university	5	50.0%
Improve skills needed in present job	0	0.0%
Prepare for future job	5	50.0%
Prepare for GED test or improve basic academic skills	0	0.0%
Personal interest/self development - not career oriented	0	0.0%
Unknown/Other	0	0.0%

4. To what degree did your experience a (sic) John A. Logan College satisfy the above chosen objective?

Very Much	9	90.0%
Somewhat	0	0.0%
A little (sic)	1	10.0%
None	0	0.0%

5. Are you currently enrolled to be a full (sic) or part time (sic) student at any college or university after your graduation from JALC? **If no, select not applicable under question 4 categories. If yes, select not applicable under question 5.** [SIC]

Yes	5	50.0%
No	5	50.0%

6. Enrolled

Not Applicable	8	80.0%
Full-time	2	20.0%
Part-time	0	0.0%

Field of Study

Not Applicable	8	80.0%
Enrolled in a field of study directly related to my JALC degree	1	10.0%
Enrolled in a field of study <u>not</u> related to my JALC degree	1	10.0%

Name of College College (sic) or University (sic) enrolled in

SIU
SEMO

7. Not Enrolled

Not Applicable	2	20.0%
Not enrolled at this time, but intend to continue my education in a field of study related to my degree	2	20.0%
Not enrolled at this time, but intend to continue my education in a field not related to my current degree	0	0.0%
Not enrolled at this time, with no plans to continue my education in the future	0	0.0%
No Response	6	60.0%

8. I am currently employed at (sic)

Name of Employer

Wal-mart Murphysboro
Silkworm, Inc.
Herrin Hospital

9. Please rate your satisfaction with the following items as they pertain to SKILLS COURSES in your major.

A) Content of Lectures (sic)

Very Satisfied	8	80.0%
Somewhat Satisfied	1	10.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	1	10.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

B) Lectures, lab experience and group and individual projects

Very Satisfied	7	70.0%
Somewhat Satisfied	2	20.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	1	10.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

C) Equipment, facilities, and materials

Very Satisfied	6	60.0%
Somewhat Satisfied	3	30.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	1	10.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

D) Job preparation

Very Satisfied	6	60.0%
Somewhat Satisfied	2	20.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	2	20.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

E) Preparation for further education

Very Satisfied	9	90.0%
Somewhat Satisfied	1	10.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0	0.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

10. Please rate your satisfaction with the following items as they pertain to General Education or other courses outside your major program of study.

A) Content of courses outside your program

Very Satisfied	10	100.0%
Somewhat Satisfied	0	0.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0	0.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

B) Lectures, lab experiences and group and individual projects

Very Satisfied	10	100.0%
Somewhat Satisfied	0	0.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0	0.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

C) Equipment, facilities, and materials

Very Satisfied	10	100.0%
Somewhat Satisfied	0	0.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0	0.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

D) Job preparation

Very Satisfied	8	80.0%
Somewhat Satisfied	2	20.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0	0.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

E) Preparation for further education

Very Satisfied	8	80.0%
Somewhat Satisfied	1	10.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	1	10.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

11. Overall how do you rate your experience with John A. Logan College?

Very Satisfied	10	100.0%
Somewhat Satisfied	0	0.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0	0.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

Tallied by Office of Institutional Research