

# **John A. Logan College Assessment Handbook**

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**Revised Spring 2025**

The image shows a large, bold, blue 'JALC' logo centered over a background of a modern building with large glass windows. The building's facade is visible through the semi-transparent text, and the sky is a light blue. The letters 'JALC' are in a serif font, with the 'J' and 'C' being slightly larger than the 'A' and 'L'.

**JALC**

## **Mission**

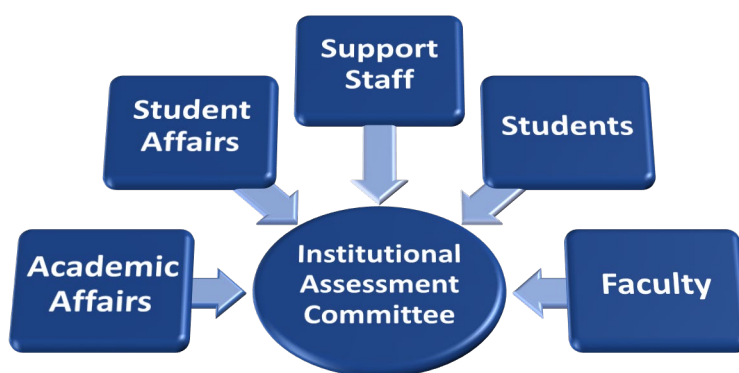
**To enrich lives through learning and  
community engagement**

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## PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment of student learning is rooted in a philosophy of continuous improvement. Among the committees and task forces at the College, the Institutional Assessment committee guides the overall assessment process at the college to ensure a culture of continuous quality improvement. Improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness are the guiding principles of this committee. Members of the committee collaborate to create and update the assessment framework and procedures that faculty and staff use on an annual basis to assess student learning and institutional effectiveness. Members of the committee are comprised of all areas of the college: faculty, academic affairs professionals, student affairs professionals, support staff, and students. Also, the assessment Steering Team is comprised of professionals and faculty who provide direction and leadership for the institutional assessment committee. The team sets assessment priorities and ensures a quality assessment process is practiced.



The College uses [Anthology Outcomes](#) to capture assessment data. Tutorial videos are available on the [Institutional Effectiveness and Research's SharePoint](#) to support individuals recording assessment data.

Assessment is not about merely checking boxes; it is central to the College's mission of enriching lives through learning and community engagement. Consequently, we not only collect data but also reflect on the results. Moreover, to maintain accountability to the College's stakeholders and uphold the spirit of continuous improvement, the Institutional Assessment Committee has established a three-year assessment cycle for curricular assessment and is broadening the scope of assessment to include co-curricular assessment.

## HISTORY OF ASSESSMENT

### Its Beginning

Assessment of academic achievement has a long history at John A. Logan College. The College's first efforts came about because of the 1997 Higher Learning Commission (HLC) reaccreditation visit that required a report on assessment. Over a period of years, nominal groups consisting of internal and external stakeholders identified eight general education goals for the College. With an external facilitator and faculty leadership, these nominal groups met annually to discuss expectations for student learning

and to identify where in the curriculum these goals could be assessed. The major difficulty with this process was that goals were assessed on a four- year cycle and very little analysis of results was documented for improvement of student learning.

### Participation in HLC Assessment Academy

In 2006, the College recognized the need for a more purposeful and productive approach to assessment and applied to the Higher Learning Commission Assessment Academy. A new faculty representative and assessment team attended the 2006-2007 roundtable to develop a student learning project to close the loop on the College's assessment efforts. Over the course of four years in the Academy, John A. Logan College:

- 1) Identified the courses in the academic degree and certificate programs that use mathematical reasoning and communication skills;
- 2) Developed a flexible student learning outcomes rubric for mathematical reasoning and communication skills;
- 3) Piloted, analyzed and revised the rubric for communication and mathematical reasoning skills; and
- 4) Retested the rubrics, analyzing and reporting the results to appropriate stakeholders.

This systematic approach served the College well and resulted in valuable information relative to the written communication learning outcome.

John A. Logan College recognized that assessment of student learning is central to its mission and included it as one of 16 projects in the JALC Strategic Plan FY 2014-2018. In June 2014, John A. Logan College applied to the Higher Learning Commission's Academy for Assessment of Students Learning to serve as the Quality Initiative for the Open Pathway process. One of the first initiatives of this Assessment Academy Team was to examine the eight general education goals to determine if they reflected current academic learning outcomes, were valued by stakeholders, and were measurable. The Team recommended refining the general education goals to focus on five student learning outcomes which define the institution's commitment to student learning. The five student learning outcomes included:

- 1) Communication;
- 2) Critical Thinking;
- 3) Cultural and Global Awareness;
- 4) Information Literacy; and
- 5) Quantitative Reasoning.

In 2014, these outcomes were presented and approved by College Council and the Board of Trustees.

Another focus of this Assessment Academy was to build a sustainable process for the assessment of the five student learning outcomes. An Assessment Academy Team consisting of key faculty and administrators was formed to serve as liaisons and mentors in support of the assessment initiative. In addition to building a sustainable process, the Assessment Academy is devoted to changing the organization's culture from a compliance mentality to one of continuous improvement and effectiveness, which will ultimately improve teaching and learning at John A. Logan College.

The Assessment Academy Team approached the Academy work with great organization, detail, and processes that ensured good implementation for current and future cycles. One key difference during this

Academy has been the ability to provide tangible results to faculty each semester. Other accomplishments early in the process included establishing a ten-year assessment cycle, mapping specific courses to the appropriate student learning outcome, developing common rubric and other essential tools vital to the assessment process.

### Expanding Assessment

The College began reviewing its assessment practices in 2017 after being assigned an interim monitoring report by the Higher Learning Commission. In 2019, the assessment team reached out to another institution to update assessment practices to bridge course-level and institution-level assessment to include program-level assessment. In 2021-2022, the College engaged in a redesign of its assessment program with the goal to create an assessment program embedded in institutional culture that offered continuous quality improvement. Faculty representatives sought to implement a process that flowed naturally out of their courses.

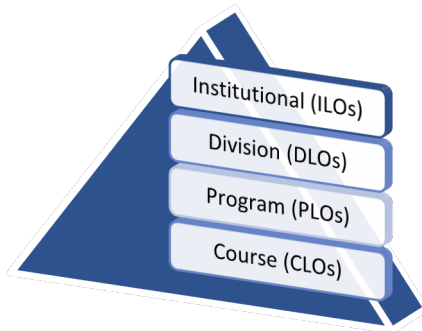
In 2022-2024, the College created a new assessment team that has set goals and outlined a timeline to create a new assessment process. Assessment now includes program-level outcomes and division-level outcomes, which have been mapped to institution-level outcomes. The new outcomes were piloted in fall 2023, with plans to launch overall assessment in spring 2024.

In fall 2024, the Steering Team of the Institutional Assessment Committee developed a three-year cycle to assess all courses. Additionally, to advance co-curricular assessment, division learning outcomes were developed by Student Affairs.

## CURRICULAR MAPPING

### An Overview

In every course, course learning outcomes (CLOs) have been identified, and instructors have determined how these outcomes are to be assessed (e.g., through a project, exam, or paper). Each course learning outcome is mapped to a program learning outcome (PLO) and a division learning outcome (DLO). Finally, each division-level outcome has been mapped to an institutional learning outcome (ILO).



## Outcomes Defined

The institutional learning outcomes have been defined as:

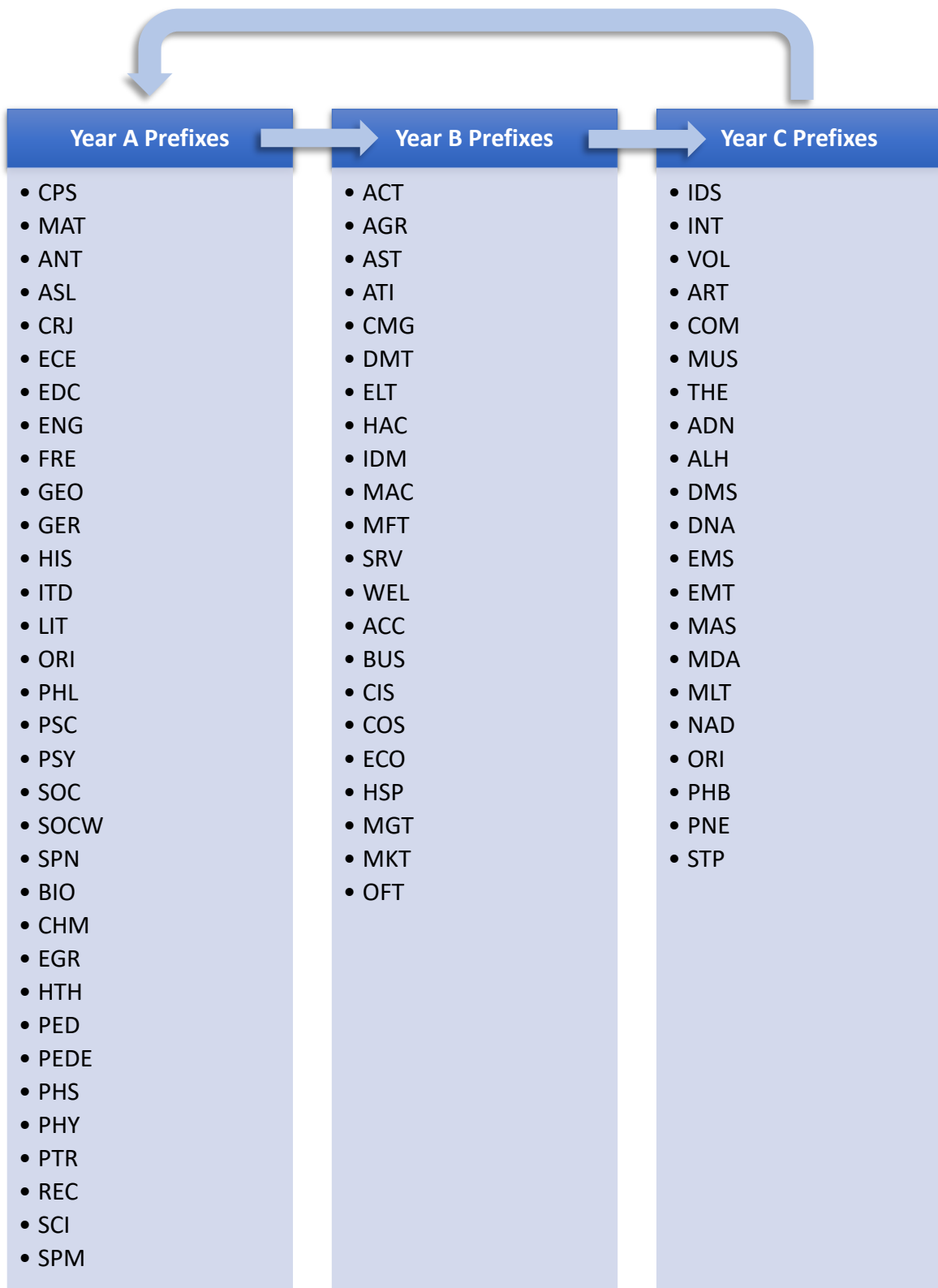
- **Communication:** Students express thoughts, ideas, and feelings in both written and oral modes.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students apply a rational and methodical approach to problem solving based on use of appropriate evidence.
- **Cultural and Global Awareness:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the influence of culture and society.
- **Information Literacy:** Students locate, evaluate, retrieve, organize, create, and disseminate information.
- **Quantitative Reasoning:** Students use and understand numbers to interpret, evaluate, and express information in quantitative terms.

The division learning outcomes have been defined as:

- **Arts & Science Division Outcomes**
  - *Transfer Readiness:* Content area competency, planning and goal setting, communication and advocacy.
  - *Lifelong Learning Practices:* Adaptability and skill development, growth mindset and self-directed learning.
  - *Ethical Citizenship:* Academic integrity, civic engagement, inclusivity and equity.
- **Career and Technical Education Division Outcomes**
  - *Traditional and Standard Industry Specific Skills:* Traditional and standard industry specific skills. Examining and employing current industry trends.
  - *Workplace Safety Practices in the Environment:* Workplace safety practices in the environment and within the products and services provided.
  - *Learned Problem Solving Techniques:* Learned problem solving techniques that are efficient and accurate.
  - *Effective Communication:* Best practices in technical communication in written, oral, and graphical forms. Interpersonal skills in customer service and co-worker engagement.
  - *Material and Waste Management:* Sustainable practices in manufacturing, service, and design.
- **Health Sciences Division Outcomes**
  - *Provide Safe Patient Care:* Provide safe patient care to diverse populations.
  - *Decision-making Skills:* Apply proper moral and ethical decision-making to solve problems.
  - *Display Professionalism Characteristics:* Display professionalism characteristics at all times within the healthcare program.
  - *Communication Skills:* Use closed-loop communication skills to reduce risk and errors.

## Curricular Assessment Cycle

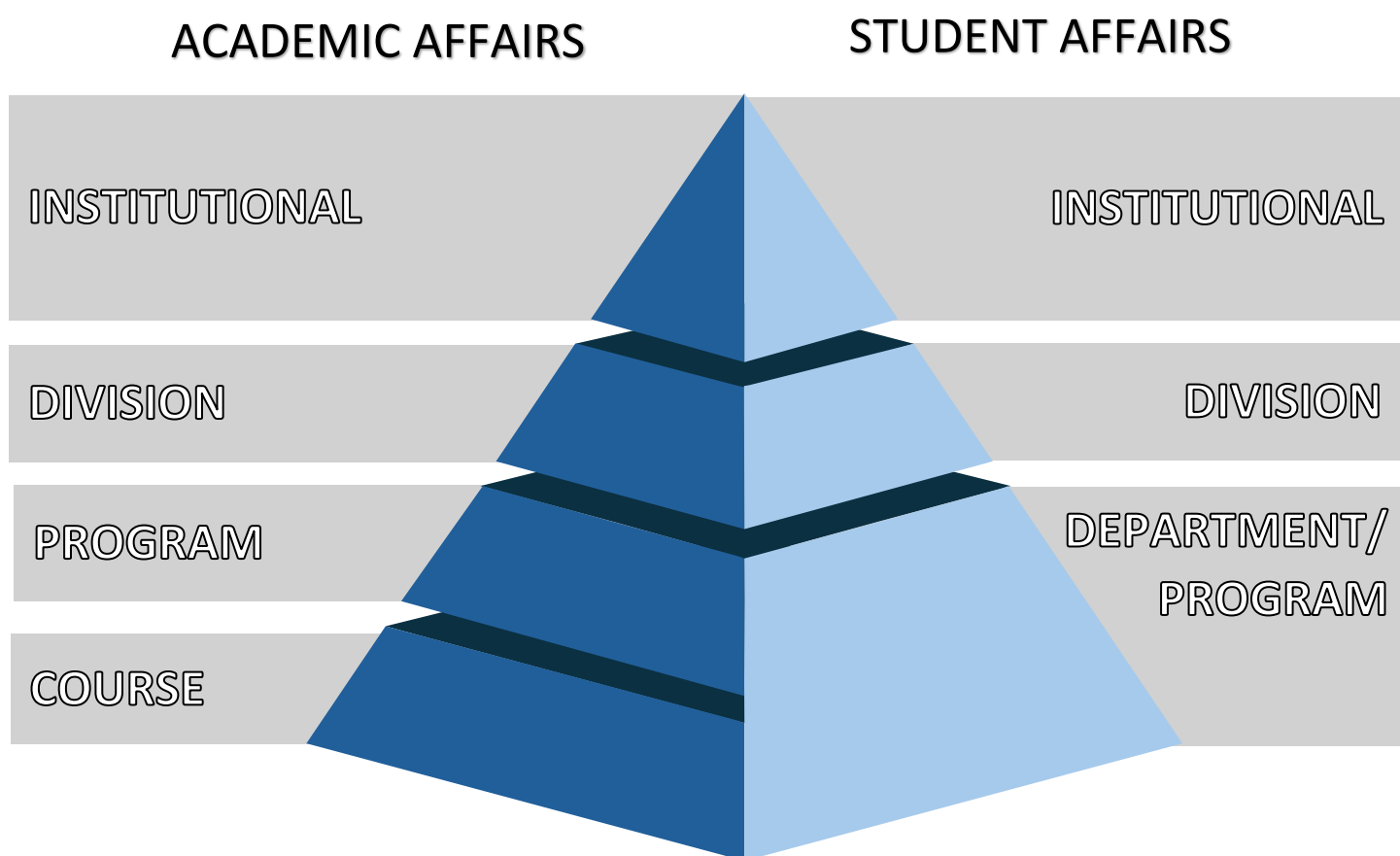
The Institutional Assessment Committee developed a cycle by which all courses will be assessed. The cycle is based on the prefix of the course. After the third year, the cycle will repeat.



## CO-CURRICULAR ASSESSMENT

### The Beginning Stages

In fall 2024, Student Affairs developed division learning outcomes, introducing them to the Institutional Assessment Committee's Steering Team. The goal was to bring Academic Affairs and Student Affairs into alignment.



### Outcomes Defined and Mapped

Student Affairs has outcomes that are vertically aligned with the previously stated institutional learning outcomes. The division learning outcomes for Student Affairs have been defined as:

*Student Learning:* Students gain information literacy, academic skills, and professional behaviors essential for success in academics, personal life, and the workplace.

*Personal Development and Well-Being:* Personal Development and Well-Being: Students cultivate unique identities and build transferable skills, including communication, critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and leadership.

*Sense of Belonging:* Students value diverse perspectives, form meaningful campus connections, and enhance teamwork skills.



Programs and departments in Student Affairs are currently developing program learning outcomes. The following departments have developed PLOs: Student Life, Recruitment, and Financial Aid.

- **Student Life Outcomes**

- *Identity Exploration*: Students will engage in student life activities that encourage self-reflection on personal values, strengths, and career interest
- *Leadership Development*: Students will observe and learn leadership techniques demonstrated by speakers or facilitators and apply these skills in event participation or follow-up activities.
- *Communication Skills*: Students will practice effective verbal and non-verbal communication by participating in interactive sessions, networking opportunities, or group discussions during events.
- *Valuing Diversity*: Students will attend cultural or diversity-focused events and share reflections on the significance of inclusion and diverse perspectives in group or post-event discussions.
- *Campus Connections*: Students will build meaningful connections by attending student life events and engaging with peers, faculty, staff, or community members in event activities or networking opportunities.

- **Recruitment Outcomes**

- *Career Exploration*: Students will participate in workshops, activities, and presentations that expose them to different career pathways, specifically those offered at JALC.
- *Financial Literacy*: Students will attend a basic financial aid presentation to learn about the opportunities to pay for college, including the differences in grants, loans, and scholarships. They will be able to make informed financial decisions related to college expenses and the impact of borrowing on financial health.
- *Post-Secondary Education Planning*: Students will participate in workshops, activities, and presentations that expose them to different postsecondary educational pathways, specifically those offered at JALC.
- *Personal Growth*: Students will develop self-awareness by recognizing personal strengths and areas for growth and apply this awareness to set realistic personal and academic goals.

- **Financial Aid Outcomes**

- *Understanding the Financial Aid Process*: Students will be able to explain what the FAFSA is, its purpose and importance in accessing financial aid for higher education.
- *Compliance with Financial Aid Policies*: Students will understand financial aid policies and requirements, such as maintaining satisfactory academic progress (SAP) and completing FAFSA applications accurately and on time.
- *Understanding Financial Aid Types*: Student will identify and evaluate various types of financial aid, including grants, loans, and work-study opportunities.

## Piloting Co-Curricular Assessment and Future Plans

In spring 2025, Student Affairs initiated co-curricular assessment by evaluating student learning in Student Life, Recruitment, and Financial Aid. Student Life will assess Black History Month, Recruitment will assess Sophomore Day, and Financial Aid will assess the financial aid module in ORI 100.

A key goal for Student Affairs in spring 2025 is to continue developing program learning outcomes across its departments and programs, as well as establishing a structured cycle for assessing these outcomes.

## ASSESSMENT AS A TOOL FOR IMPROVEMENT

Because assessment of student learning is rooted in a philosophy of continuous improvement, every assessment process has embedded in it a time for reflection, where the individual who is assessing student learning provides an analysis, a summary, and how the results will be used.

Furthermore, the College's annual program review has begun incorporating PLO assessment results. These results inform faculty recommendations for changes or goals to enhance program success.

## THE FUTURE OF ASSESSMENT

The assessment process itself cannot remain stagnant either. Therefore, the process must be refined and furthered.

- **Academic Year 2025-2026:** The committee plans to broaden the culture of assessment by piloting the inclusion of adjunct and dual-credit faculty.
- **Academic Year 2026-2027:** Stakeholders will review ILOs and DLOs as part of the long-range strategic plan.
- **Beyond 2027:**
  - The committee, in collaboration with Curriculum and Instruction, will develop a syllabus review process.
  - The taxonomy of learning outcomes will be assessed and aligned with the Introduced/Reinforced/Mastered (IRM) model, Bloom's Taxonomy, or another suitable framework.
  - The committee will explore refining Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) to distinguish between certificates and degrees.