

Student Learning Assessment

Student Learning Assessment Report, Spring 2002 Submitted: Summer, 2002

The Assessment Committee for 2001- 2002 consisted of Sharon Church, Ron Adams, Carol Fisher, David Harris, Denise Tridle, Brian Casey, Greg Bochee, Greg Delzeit, and Sue Winchester.

Sharon Church, Director of Assessment, attended the AAHE Assessment Conference. As a part of the conference, she completed a three-hour assessment graduate course through the University of Montana.

Sharon also attended two state-wide Kansas Specialists of Assessment meetings this year. Two faculty members, Bill Noll and Tim Sexton, joined her for the spring session.

The Assessment Director's goal for the year was to improve communication of Highland's assessment efforts. Accordingly, an Assessment Web Site was created and posted to the Highland web page. The site includes the following links: the HCC Assessment Plan, courses currently being assessed, course syllabus format, CAAP results, assessment reports, assessment committee members, assessment examples, on-campus and regional review sheets, and HCC assessment instructions.

An additional communication tool implemented this year was to have all the syllabi posted on-line. There are only a few syllabi missing and this project should be completed in the next school term. In addition, an assessment statement was included in the new college catalog, assessment posters for the school halls were hung, and an article was written for the school newspaper.

Two faculty in-service assessment meetings were conducted this year. Topics presented at the fall meeting were: a General Education Assessment, CAAP results, techniques for teaching critical thinking in our classrooms, and CATs (Classroom Assessment Techniques). The faculty was also asked for input for ways to improve assessment at HCC. Their recommendations included: a common area with forms and examples of assessments, regional and on-campus faculty meetings, discipline meetings where faculty could work together to improve their competency statements and assessment materials, and a short report to be written by each faculty at the end of the semester about classroom changes to improve student learning.

The administration (President, Vice President, and Assistant Dean of Instruction) related later that they would like the assessment efforts to stay focused on the in-course assessment. They felt the CAAP results are sufficient for the general education assessment so no changes were currently necessary.

The spring in-service meeting was a working meeting in which the faculty were divided into departments and reviewed part of the materials submitted for assessment by on-campus and regional faculty. A new review sheet for on-campus instructors to help make the process more meaningful was discussed. Faculty also chose the class they wanted assessed in the fall of 2002. The Assessment web site and on-line syllabi were also demonstrated.

FIG (Faculty Interest Group) was started as a discussion group this year and was very successful. Ten faculty members met and discussed student learning, classroom assessment techniques (CATS), as well as successes and problems in the classroom.

There were twenty-five courses assessed in the fall. There were thirty on-campus instructors teaching the assessed courses. Twenty-eight of those instructors submitted their materials to the assessment committee. This was a submission rate of 93%.

There were ninety-six regional instructors who had received requests to submit fall assessment materials. Twenty-seven of those were not returned. This was a 72% submission rate. This figure was much improved from the previous years. The abundance of materials created a problem for the reviewing process. On-campus faculty members teaching in the discipline of the submitted materials were paid to review the materials.

Of the materials reviewed there were 12 faculty contacted about concerns with their assessment submissions. Most of the concerns were not with the quality of the materials but that the materials did not match the intention of the assessment goals.

The assessment for classes taught on campus was changed between the fall and spring semesters. The review sheet that the instructors were asked to submit is attached to this document. This change was implemented after much discussion on how to make the In-Course Assessment more meaningful to the instructor. The main changes are that the instructor will not actually submit materials to the committee. Rather, they will submit a form that requires that they conduct a thoughtful review of the assessment of that course and report changes that they will conduct to help increase student learning. They will also report any training or budgetary needs they foresee that would help with their changes.

There were twenty-seven courses assessed in the spring semester. There were twenty-six on-campus instructors teaching the assessed courses. Twenty-five of those instructors submitted their materials to the assessment committee. This was a submission rate of 96%.

The majority of the faculty were satisfied with the competency statements (18/25) and the assessment items (24/25). Twenty-two faculty related that they will make changes in their course based on this year's review and most believed they had a better way to assess the competency items (14/25). Ten faculty felt they had budgeting needs to help implement the changes and nine felt they needed training to help improve their courses. Training needs included discipline-specific workshops, power-point training, and additional software training. Several faculty requested help with writing competency statements and creating meaningful assessment items.

There were twenty-nine regional instructors teaching the assessed courses. Only ten of those instructors submitted their materials. This was a submission rate of 34%. It was apparent in half of the packets submitted that the regional faculty member was not following the standard course syllabus. The materials sent in were acceptable but in the majority of the cases the assessment items were not linked to the competencies.

The fall and spring review generated a total of 133 assessment packets that were reviewed by the assessment committee. This was a submission rate of 73% for the 2001/2002 school term.

Changes in the regional assessment were discussed. It was decided by the committee to continue with the current system of submission as a means of quality assurance of regional courses. It was recommended that the Regional Coordinators be members of the Assessment Committee. They would then oversee a regional faculty assessment committee at each site that would review the materials and submit their findings to the HCC Assessment Committee.

Submitted by Sharon Church

August, 2002