

# AQIP Action Project #1

**A. Project Title: Advance culture, purpose, and process of student learning outcomes assessment.**

**Initiated: 03/26/2010**

**Updated: 09/13/2010  
9/13/2011  
9/14/2012**

**B. Describe the Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer**

Determine and implement strategies to communicate clearly to the entire college community the purpose and process of assessing student learning outcomes.

**C. Identify the single AQIP Category that the Action Project will most affect or impact.**

Category 1 – Helping Students Learn

**D. Describe briefly your institutions reasons for taking on this Action Project now**

BHC is adjusting to significant changes: Leadership Changes: (New College President & Academic Dean of Instruction and Student Learning, Spring 2010), Accreditation Process: AQIP, Spring 2010, Institutional Reporting Technology (WEAVEonline Fall 2009).

The College needs to assess and improve our current culture and processes of student learning outcomes assessment, then communicate clearly to the entire college community the purpose and process of assessing student learning outcomes.

**E. List the organization areas- institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units most affected by or involved in this Action Project**

Vice President: Instruction  
Director of Institutional Effectiveness  
Deans of Instruction  
Department Chairs of all Instructional areas  
Faculty  
Teaching Learning Center  
Student Learning Committee

**F. Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve.**

Student Learning Committee charges  
Annual Assessment of Student Learning  
Program Review process

**G. Explain the rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project (from kickoff to target completion)**

Spring 2010

Student Learning Retreat, March 26<sup>th</sup>. The following priorities emerged as a result of the Student Learning Retreat:

- Enhance communication within and across disciplines regarding the assessment of student learning.
- Increase faculty involvement in assessment processes.
- Provide training opportunities for the college community to improve the efficiency and effectiveness assessing student learning.

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## Fall 2010

- Implement Conversation days on student learning assessment.
- Provide training opportunities for Department Chairs and faculty on student learning assessment.
- Refine the General Education Review process based on feedback from the 2008/2009 General Education Review Team report.
- Update the charges of the Student Learning Committee for cycle 2011.

## 2011

Implement new charges for the Student Learning Committee developed in 2010. SLC Minutes will be reviewed, best practices and opportunities for improvement identified by Dean of Student Learning and Student Learning Coordinator with input from the Student Learning committee.

## 2012

Review the action project and make recommendations to continually improve student learning assessment.

### **H. Describe how you plan to monitor how successfully your efforts on this Action Project are progressing.**

Student Learning Coordinator, Dean of Student Learning, Student Learning Committee sets annual goals and appropriate assessment measures for each goal. The measures are reviewed at the end of each cycle and recommendations are made for the upcoming cycle. Reports on decisions provided in the Student Learning Committee minutes and/or the Annual report on student learning.

### **I. Describe the overall “outcome” measures or indicators that will tell you whether this Action Project has been a success or failure in achieving its goals.**

- Training and Conversation opportunities for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of student learning provided monthly.
- 100% of Instructional Department Chairs will participate in conversation days on assessment.
- Comparison of Annual WEAVE reports will demonstrate increased documenting of the assessment of student learning, including demonstration of feedback loops.
- Minutes of Student Learning Committee will document the refinement of assessment of General Education and the General Education Review Team process.

### **J. Other information (e.g. publicity, sponsor or champion, external partners, etc.)**

### **K. Project Leader and contact person (First name, Middle Initial, Last name, Title, Email, Telephone)**

Interim Dean of Instruction and Student Learning: Karla Miley;  
Student Learning Coordinator: Michelle Johnson

### 1. Project Accomplishments and Status

**A:** BHC held a Student Learning Retreat on 03/26/2010 to kick off the Project. Department Chairs reported on faculty polls regarding the assessment of student learning process and identified opportunities for improving and implementation strategies. In total, three conversations were conducted with faculty involved in the assessment of student learning- the Student Learning Committee (SLC), the General Education Review Team (GERT) and the Faculty Senates (FS). SLC implemented dedicated time for discussion at Fall Assembly 2010 and as an ongoing Instructional Services Council agenda item. SLC also formed a subcommittee to create a template for a dictionary of assessment terminology. GERT evaluated its process on 05/07/2010. Data reflects class level assessments do correlate to General Education. Making connections between assessments and the General Education grid is the step consistently missing. As currently structured, the student learning report does not encourage disseminating information laterally and although departmental reports provide evidence of widespread assessment of student learning, feedback loops are not always transparent. Career and Technical Education Programs demonstrate proficiency for program-level assessment; however, developing a workable plan for assessing general education at the program-level is a challenge. FC's continue to receive updates and provide direction.

**R:** This Action Project is in its early stages of implementation, having been launched in March of this year, as a result of the 2010 Student Learning Retreat. It is designed to communicate clearly "... the purpose and process of assessing student learning outcomes," "... to the entire college community." It is expected to be completed by 2012. The institution is experiencing significant changes: in leadership, as well as in its new commitment to AQIP and WEAVE for assessing student learning outcomes. The College is to be commended for making this commitment and beginning the journey of continuous improvement and all this represents, beginning now. This sensitivity and responsiveness to the college community reinforces the College's commitment to AQIP Category - 1 Helping Students Learn, as well as AQIP Categories 3, 4 and 9, and the AQIP Principles of collaboration, involvement, learning, information and people found in high performing organizations.

### 2. Institution Involvement

**A:** This Action Project has aligned conversations in four key groups of the college: Student Learning Retreat involving 23 participants including the President, Vice Presidents, Academic Deans, Department Chairs, Faculty SLC members, Teaching Learning Center Director, Director of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, FC Presidents and Student Learning Coordinator. The second key group is the SLC. This committee is a faculty senate committee and is comprised of department chairs and/or faculty representatives from each of the academic departments and each of the Academic Deans. The third group is the GERT, an ad hoc committee comprised of faculty members. Two faculty representatives (one from the Quad City Campus and one from the East Campus) are identified based on the general education categories representing each of the Strands of the General Education Core Curriculum. Finally, the last key group includes members of the Faculty Senates, particularly with respect to their oversight of the SLC and their direct involvement in conversations addressing the assessment of student learning.

**R:** The College recognizes the interconnectedness of the key institutional stakeholders that should be involved in this AP, in order for it to be successful. By recognizing the *conversations* that must be *aligned*, and all this entails, the AP Team has demonstrated a proactive and thoughtful approach to communicating with the college community. They should be commended for their foresight in anticipating some of the challenges involved in undertaking an initiative of this type. Their approach indicates the College's commitment to AQIP Category - 1 Helping Students Learn, as well as AQIP Categories 3, 4, 5, and 9, and the Principles of collaboration, involvement, learning, information and people found in high performing organizations.

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### 3. Next Steps

**A:** The Project will continue to focus on the recommendations generated from the Student Learning Retreat, supported by the SLC, and approved by FC. Those include:

1. Improve the resources for using the reporting tool (WEAVEonline)
2. Improve how the College community uses the feedback from the Student Learning Report.
3. Clarify the function of the SLC and implement ways to simplify processes for assessing student learning and work to advance the culture and purpose of outcomes assessment so that faculty identify assessment as integral to effective teaching and student learning.
4. Involve the GERT team in designing the 2011-2012 program-level General Education review planned for 2011-2012.
5. Provide monthly training and conversation opportunities for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of student learning,
6. Refine processes to integrate all facets of the assessment of student learning into the planned cycle for program-level review, including the utilization of WEAVEonline to track assessment projects and demonstrate feedback that underscores continuous quality improvement.

**R:** Although still early in the process of implementation, the steps indicated appear appropriate for the goals to be achieved. It might be useful to identify more specific objectives (that are SMART, i.e. Specific, Measurable, Action Oriented, Realistic and Time Framed to a year or less) for each aspect of the AP, in order to provide greater clarity and enhance the likelihood of success of this AP. This is consistent with a commitment to AQIP Category - 1 Helping Students Learn, as well as AQIP Categories 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9, and the Principles of collaboration, involvement, learning, information and people found in high performing organizations.

### 4. Resulting Effective Practices

**A:** Student learning retreat was generally well received. Sixty-three percent of those completing the evaluation form rated the Student Learning Retreat as a 5 - very useful. Thirty-two percent rated the retreat at level 4 - better than somewhat useful but not as highly ranked as very useful. All of the respondents recommended conducting a Student Learning retreat again, with most suggesting making this an annual event. Specific comments offered insight into what participants saw as most useful and suggestions for improvement. The ratings and comments both provide evidence of enhancing communication within and across disciplines regarding the assessment of student learning as well as increasing faculty involvement in assessment processes. The retreat provided a foundation for initiating changes to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of assessing student learning.

The prioritization conducted by the SLC was an important step to ensure that the investment of time made in the Student Learning retreat would be useful in creating direction for student learning outcomes assessment.

The questions developed for the GERT yielded important preliminary feedback that will assist the college in preparing for the General Education program review in 2012.

**R:** Since this Action Project is in its early stages of implementation, having been launched in March of this year, the College is making reasonable progress toward completion of the Project by 2012. The College is to be commended for making this commitment and beginning the journey of continuous improvement, as indicated in item 1 above, Project Accomplishments and Status. This is consistent with a commitment to AQIP Category - 1 Helping Students Learn, as well as AQIP Categories 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9, and the AQIP Principles of collaboration, involvement, learning, information and people found in high performing organizations.

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### 5. Project Challenges

**A:** Shifting the culture from one that primarily identifies assessment as mandatory reporting activities to one that embraces assessment of student learning as integral to effective teaching and learning is no small task. Steps initiated thus far have been productive in initiating in-depth conversations. Challenges center on the fact that relationships among stakeholders are complex and sometimes work at cross-purposes. To further develop those relationships plans include a standing Student Learning Agenda item of all Instructional Service Council meetings, continue conversational and in-service activities and revitalize Faculty Senates annual charges to the SLC, integrate ongoing assessment of student learning into established cycles of program-level review and maximize the use of WEAVEonline for tracking feedback from assessment of student learning activities and projects.

**R:** It is clear the AP Team and the College recognize the importance of this initiative, as well as the opportunities and challenges it presents. By beginning with “critical conversations,” to increase awareness and build commitment, the College is more likely to succeed. There will be numerous setbacks, missteps, delays, and challenges in trying to change the culture of the organization, to one where student assessment is recognized and embraced “as integral to effective teaching and learning...” Changing organizational culture is difficult and takes, on average, 5 – 15 years. The College is to be commended for making this commitment and beginning the journey of culture change, continuous improvement and a commitment to quality. This undertaking and commitment to AQIP Category - 1 Helping Students Learn, as well as AQIP Categories 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9, and the AQIP Principles of collaboration, involvement, leadership, foresight, learning, information and people found in high performing organizations.

### 1. Project Accomplishments and Status

**A:** Several Student Learning Committee (SLC) subcommittees are focused on identifying tools to assess and document learning outcomes at the department level, general education and career and technical program levels.

To improve the use of the Student Learning Report and engage faculty, the General Education Review Team (GERT) is investigating general education standardized tests and will conduct the general education program level review slated for 2011-2012. A new Career and Technical Education Review Team (CERT) is examining tools for developing program outcomes and assessment in career and technical programs.

At its October meeting the SLC clarified its function developing this statement: "The function of the Student Learning Committee is to provide leadership for the assessment of student learning."

To provide monthly training and conversation opportunities for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of student learning an assessment conference was promoted, a dictionary of student learning assessment terminology was completed, student learning website was revised and the new dean, after meeting with department chairs identified the following themes: develop and implement an "Office of Student Learning" Website, develop and implement a Quad Cities Assessment Group, develop and implement Conversation Days for Fall 2011.

**R:** This is an important Action Project. With this project, you are clearly linking college practices with Category One – Helping Students Learn but there are also strong associations with Categories Seven – Measuring Effectiveness, Eight – Planning Continuous Improvement, and Nine – Building Collaborative Relationships. In addition, this project demonstrates your commitment to the Higher Learning Commission's Criterion Three – Student Learning and Effective Teaching. Congratulations for taking on such an important and challenging action project!

You are progressing well on the project. New structures have been developed (CERT) to determine student learning outcomes and to identify assessment tools. In addition, you are involving key stakeholders in the project (program faculty) at its very early stages of implementation.

### 2. Institution Involvement

**A:** This project involves leadership at every level. The inaugural Student Learning Retreat involved 23 members, including the President, vice presidents, academic deans, department chairs, faculty, and other administrators, including the Teaching Learning Center Director and administrators for effectiveness and planning. Faculty members have been and will continue to be active in venues such as the interdisciplinary Student Learning Committee (SLC), the General Education Review Team and the Career Education Review Team subcommittees. Any faculty member may participate in "Conversation Days" with Dr. Rivera, Dean of Student Learning, who also participates in the SLC. Student Learning Committee members are charged to report on concerns, ideas, etc. from their Department to the SL Committee and to report on developments in the SL Committee to their Department.

**R:** It is evident that you are working for the successful implementation of this project by ensuring that key stakeholder groups and college committees are involved in the process. "Conversations Days" are an effective strategy for gathering input in a setting or venue that is safe but also collegial. You should also be commended for having a mechanism for "concerns, ideas...and developments" to flow up and down the communication levels at the college.

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### 3. Next Steps

**A:** Student Learning Committee and sub-committee members involved with this project will review findings from the past year and instigate items for action in order to meet all AQIP project goals. BHC Student Learning committee and subcommittee members will begin developing a direction for AQIP project two and close out project one.

During the Fall 2011 semester, the SLC will receive the recommendations for the use of Community College General Education focused standardized tests to assess the learning outcomes of the General Education program. This committee will inform Departments of these recommendations and forward recommendations to the Faculty Senates.

During the Fall 2011 semester, the SLC will receive the recommendations from the CERT for promoting and improving the assessment of Career and Technical programs. This committee will inform Departments of these recommendations and will forward these recommendations to the Faculty Senates.

By Fall 2011 an "Office of Student Learning" website will be launched which will provide resources and information available to the entire college community.

Conversation Days on Student Learning have been planned and are scheduled in the Employee Learning Center Calendar. Feedback and outcomes will be collected and posted in the "Office of Student Learning" website.

**R:** Your "Next Steps" are clearly structured around existing committees but has also established substantive goals for the new CERT team (Career and Technical Education Review Team). Hat's off to you for embracing continuous improvement practices through processes that ensure the communication of information and key decisions to key stakeholder and governance groups.

### 4. Resulting Effective Practices

**A:** As the front-line in student learning, our faculty members are integral in providing feedback and leadership for the success of this project; therefore, faculty/Dean "Conversation Days" are a positive step in engaging teachers in strengthening processes and expanding tools for student learning. Additionally, the use of third-party accreditation continues to reinforce our career and technical education programs and unquestionably align them with the skill sets and knowledge needed by regional employers.

**R:** High performing institutions embrace collaboration, involvement, and learning. Your focus on faculty involvement in this action project and also linking the assessment of career and technical education programs to skill standards in the field demonstrates your commitment to the success of this project. All of the above are effective practices and integrate relationship-building and collaboration into the project planning (Category Nine – Building Collaborative Relationships).

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### 5. Project Challenges

**A:** Student learning and success are the foundations of our mission, and assessing our success in delivering on that mission cuts across all departments of the college, from top to bottom, administrator to student. The project's size and scope, advancing the *culture, purpose, and process* of student learning outcomes assessment, is daunting, and at times the parameters are ambiguous. We also recognize a need for department specific training, and instituting this training will require a large commitment of resources. For this aspect and all aspects of this project, we will need continued financial support from our institution.

**R:** It is clear that you understand the scope and significance of this action project. You understand that valuing faculty involvement and integrating the proper assessment tools in the assessment of student learning comes with a cost for professional development. As your progress with this project, you may be able to find nearby peer institutions that could share best practices with you concerning student learning assessment at the department, program, and/or course level. In addition, the Innovation Exchange on the HLC web site may also be of some benefit to you as well. Both of these strategies could provide affordable staff development opportunities.

### 1. Project Accomplishments and Status

**A:** In the past year the AQIP Action Project Team consisting of the Student Learning Committee, (SLC), chose and administered the ETS Proficiency Profile of students' general education skills as a pilot general education assessment. This nationally standardized test of general education outcomes provided specific data to assess student proficiency levels. This data is currently under review by the SLC subcommittee, General Education Review Team, (GERT). GERT plans to analyze the results of the testing, determine applicability to current assessment models at the program and College levels, and make a recommendation to the SLC as to effectiveness, reporting methods and extent, continuance and/or frequency of future testing. With the culmination of recommendations by the GERT analysis in Fall 2012, the pilot test year will be complete.

The formation of the Career and Technical Education Review Team, (CERT), supported efforts at communication and review of general education outcomes, resources, and general assessment methods for career and technical programs at the College. This committee was formed as an ad hoc committee of the SLC to strengthen support for programs not represented by GERT. CERT met over the course of the year to evaluate program areas and presented findings and recommendations to the SLC. It was recommended that: the CERT committee continues as an ad hoc committee pending faculty senate approval. What does the statement in yellow mean? As part of its charge to identify current resources for assessment for career and technical education programs, the committee acknowledged the role and benefit of secondary accreditation agencies specific to program areas. These agencies typically require specific assessment methodologies that inform student program outcomes and general education skill sets. Based on this finding the committee recommended that CERT and the College advocate for program specific accreditation where appropriate and feasible. To this end, CERT will initiate an inventory of current program areas that require licensing tests, engage with industry specific examinations/requirements, and are accredited by program specific agencies and/or any combination of these. In addition, CERT will make a recommendation as to program areas likely to benefit from program specific accreditation in the future.

With the launch of the Office of Student Learning website (<http://elc.bhc.edu/learn/student-learning/>) efforts at communication and sharing assessment information, techniques and best practices have highlighted a commitment to student learning. This broad-based and informative web-site is a solid additional effort to strengthen the learning community. Visitors to this site can easily access common questions regarding assessment as well as resources, best practices and contact personnel to assist with any level of student assessment. As with any new web-based initiative, updating will require continual support with resources and personnel.

"Conversation Days" on student learning continue to promote available resources, outreach, feedback, and instruction to College personnel. "Conversation Days" were initiated by invitation to employees across campus in 2008 – 2010. This cross-section of faculty and staff were given the opportunity to participate in multiple venues, days and times. From 2010 – 2012 targeted forums were directed by the Dean of Student Learning to monitor efforts across campus and program disciplines regarding student learning. These provided an opportunity for dialogue regarding assessment in a monthly-unstructured forum, (lunch). This not only bolstered genuine interest in student learning but also still helps the College work towards finding a common shared vision. Initially as a directed effort at outreach, this program is now likely to continue in some fashion to promote and inform the student learning web-site and maintain a "learning" dialogue with all constituents of the College.

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**R:** BHC is concluding a valuable Action Project that has achieved the college's goal of advancing the culture, purpose, and process of student learning outcomes assessment. Recognizing the role that external accrediting agencies can play in BHC's assessment processes is a good example of the college's collaborative approach. In addition to the CERT making recommendations to internal constituents, the team might recommend that program areas considering external accreditation engage in conversations with external stakeholders, such as employers and transfer institutions, to ensure that external accrediting agencies are valued.

The Office of Student Learning Website has the potential to move assessment forward. The site has very good information about student learning. However, BHC might consider updates to the site that could make it easier for faculty and other site visitors to find information about assessment.

The "conversation days" events are a good example of establishing an ongoing process, and the targeted forums also demonstrate BHC's commitment to developing a sustainable assessment process. It will be important for the college to document these efforts, especially the analysis of the success of the initiatives and any changes that result.

BHC has demonstrated the important characteristic of focus through its approach to this important project. BHC recognized a gap and has taken specific steps to improve.

## 2. Institution Involvement

**A:** This Action Project involved people from across campus at different levels and various capacities. A strength of this effort is that it was directed to embody the "spirit" of student learning as a College-wide responsibility. To this end, all constituents were truly involved.

The Dean of Student Learning worked closely with all committee members of the SLC, CERT, and GERT, to provide resources and act as an administrative liaison for the ETS testing. The Dean, along with department Chairs, worked to facilitate and champion "Conversation Days" and participated in the SLC. Chairs additionally worked within Department program areas sharing information and acting as student learning advocates. The SLC, which is comprised of faculty and staff from across campus, clearly shouldered a strong measure of effort both as the originator of student learning conversation, recommendations, resources, and vision. The SLC invited and selected additional members from across campus to serve on both CERT and GERT. Individual faculty working on their own and within program areas, represent the front-line efforts to engage with genuine student learning initiatives. With faculty advocates connecting at various levels and in various capacities, the people of this Action Project wore many hats.

**R:** BHC demonstrated several characteristics of high performance organizations in the approach it took to implement this Action Project; the traits of involvement and foresight are the most prominent. This project is correctly placed under the AQIP category *Helping Students Learn* but it also falls into the categories of *Planning Continuous Improvement* and *Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholder s' Needs*. BHC correctly states that the student learning is a college-wide responsibility.

It might be beneficial for BHC to consider ways to continue to involve non-academic departments in the ongoing assessment processes. Oftentimes, assessment is seen as the sole responsibility of faculty and academic departments, and it is important for all areas of a college to embrace the spirit of continuous improvement that a good assessment system provides.

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### 3. Next Steps

**A:** With the analysis and the following recommendations regarding the ETS testing, this Action Project will be closed and a new more focused project recommended by the end of the Fall 2012 term (December 2012). It is anticipated that a new project will be developed in concert with the various entities involved in the current project. With substantial change in administrative personnel, it is likely that a new iteration of the “Conversation Days” aspect will be the highlighted project for consideration. As people change and the student assessment efforts mature, it makes sense to consider a cycle of communication to revisit and refresh ideas, processes, and results, in a changing milieu.

**R:** BHC has identified a reasonable series of next steps for this Action Project. Agile organizations adapt to changing conditions, and BHC's recognition that administrative personnel changes will require a renewed emphasis on communication demonstrates that BHC is an agile organization. Establishing processes is especially important when personnel are changing; it is important that an institution retain its institutional memory when key people leave.

Creating a more focused project, based on the learning that occurred from this project, also demonstrates that BHC is developing as a learning organization.

### 4. Resulting Effective Practices

**A:** The CERT sub-committee was clearly of tremendous benefit in recognizing an opportunity to examine the career and technical programs at the College. In addition to connecting with a large segment of the College, it remains likely that strong relevant information, processes, and models will develop to inform the College community at large. Not only does this serve to expand student learning initiatives, but also represents a College foundational belief in connecting with learners. With clear industry success in assessment within career and technical programs, it is hoped that useful models may be identified for general education and transfer programs as well.

As noted, the “Conversation Days” initially proved critical in laying a foundation to communicate and frame issues surrounding student learning. In some regard, this surpasses an “effective practice” and will likely be revisited in an action project to transform it into a College “best practice”. This multi-purposed result not only serves to bolster student learning, but is in clear alignment with the College vision and core values of connecting with learners, faculty, and with responsible outreach.

**R:** The college indicates that a primary effective practice resulting from this project happened when the CERT subcommittee worked with career-technical education programs, and that the Conversation Days were a critical part of moving the college forward in its assessment conversation. BHC also states that improving student learning is at the core of this effort. BHC might consider making sure that these efforts are documented in a way that allows new administrators and employees to clearly understand the process BHC went through to get to this point so that the college can continue to move forward.

Using the results of an important initiative to create a more focused and improved initiative is a hallmark of a high performance organization; BHC has demonstrated that trait in its approach to this project.

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### 5. Project Challenges

**A:** With substantial, even dramatic, change in administrative personnel, there is potential for a disconnect with current initiatives, direction, and vision. However, with this Action Project at a mature and final stage, it is likely that momentum will not be lost. It is hoped that the clear successes will point to strength in facing opportunities. It is further hoped that new personnel will infuse new ideas and resources to strengthen student learning at the College. With an anticipated revision and expansion of the “Conversation Days” as an Action Project, at a critical time of change for the College, these new people and resources will turn a true challenge in continuity into an opportunity for real development and growth. With continuing efforts at outreach and a campus-wide investment in student learning, this time of change is viewed as a time of growth.

The ETS testing remains not so much a challenge as it is an unknown. It is possible that the data will highlight a challenge in results if not process. It is also possible that it could become a “best practice” and indicate strength in program outcomes. Either culmination will indicate a process willing to seek hard-data to inform and document student success and continuous quality improvement.

**R:** BHC has identified important challenges the campus community must address as it moves forward with this assessment initiative. Documenting the results of this project, and documenting the college's analysis of those results and resulting effective practices will be important steps to take to minimize the loss of momentum as key personnel change. BHC is poised to embrace the results of ETS testing, and is ready to use the data to make improvements.

BHC is to be congratulated for initiating and successfully completing an important Action Project!

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## CLOSING THE PROJECT

1. What is the primary reason for closing this project?

Through the implementation and extensions of this project the primary goal of this action project has been met.

2. Describe *the past year's concrete accomplishments* by listing the outcome measures from original proposal and describe the past year's accomplishments and the current statuses of this Action Project. (*i.e.; meetings, data gathered and analyzed, plans made or implemented, changes in processes, and measured results.*) If you have not made much progress, explain why you think things are moving more slowly than planned.

The past year has been marked by extensive opportunities to build on the goal of this project. The goal to determine and implement strategies to communicate the purpose and process of assessing student learning outcomes has been addressed in a number of ways. A specific initiative included implementing College-wide conversation days on student learning assessment. Ongoing Student Learning Committee cycle reports, discussions, and recommendations have directly broadened the communication of student learning initiatives. Department Chairs and faculty have opportunities to discuss student learning assessment and receive training through respective department meetings, College-wide orientation days, training events and conversations at the College Teaching Learning Center, and in the Student Learning Committee, as well as a very informative Student Learning Retreat. Through these initiatives, the College has increased the awareness of student learning outcomes assessment and broadly implemented ongoing discussions, sharing, and promoting an inclusive culture of outcomes assessment. Upon the General Education Review Team's recommendation, general education criterion is now assessed through the ongoing use of the ETS testing. With a solid maturity from course-level assessment focus to program-level assessment the College has transitioned in a number of ways. The use of the general education grid and rubric will be revised to more broadly focus on and communicate program and degree-level outcomes assessment. The College has broadened student learning outcomes oversight from one academic Dean to four. Broadly representative group meetings of diverse College constituencies continue the conversation monthly at a minimum. All departmental Chairs are engaged in the conversation to champion efforts at this level. The use of WEAVE for all program review documentation continues to refine, broaden, and support efforts to document student learning initiatives. Minutes from the Student Learning Committee document student learning discussions, changes, and initiatives and Black Hawk College now has a culture that includes all College employees.

3. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

Efforts to be broadly inclusive with all College employees on this Action Project included specific meetings, retreats, and general outreach. Faculty orientation days, departmental directors meetings, departmental meetings, and action team meetings and initiatives were designed to broaden the involvement and outreach to all College employees at all College facilities.

4. Describe any effective practice(s) that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

Share practices (or processes, policies, procedures, or initiatives) that could be adopted or adapted at other institutions. AQIP is most interested in practices that would give value (better educational services, cost savings, improved morale, more satisfied stakeholders, etc.) to another institution if it copied your innovation

The practice that had the greatest impact for forward progress for the College was the Student Learning Retreat. While not necessarily an innovation, this event marked a concerted effort to involve many constituents in the conversation, encourage and share in outcomes assessment techniques and models, and grow a culture of genuine investment in outcomes assessment.

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5. What aspects of this project would you categorize as successful?

Maturing the Colleges understanding of outcomes assessment from course-level to program-level, and broadening involvement to an inclusive culture of outcomes assessment at the College are key indicators of a successful project.

6. What aspects of this project would you categorize as less than successful?

Recognizing that this project is considered successful, it must also be noted that communicating with the entire College and fostering a progression and refinement of assessment initiatives is a journey that will require on-going efforts. We now have the foundation to reach out to the entire College and partner in dialogue and action. An opportunity still exists to better document our actions and efforts. By further strengthening use of WEAVE, clarify reporting processes and personnel, and College-level reporting transparency to report student learning outcomes, communication and culture will be further strengthened.