

Title	Advance culture, purpose and process of student learning outcomes assessment.	Status	ACTIVE
Category 1-Helping Students Learn		Updated	09-13-2011
Timeline		Reviewed	09-18-2011
Planned Project Kickoff	03-01-2010	Created	05-11-2010
Target Completion	12-15-2011	Last Modified	11-07-2011

Project Accomplishments and Status

BLACK HAWK COLLEGE: 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.

AQIP REVIEWER: 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.

Institution Involvement

BLACK HAWK COLLEGE: 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.

AQIP REVIEWER: 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.

Next Steps

BLACK HAWK COLLEGE: 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 also 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.

AQIP REVIEWER: 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.

Resulting Effective Practices

BLACK HAWK COLLEGE: 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,

AQIP REVIEWER: 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).

Project Challenges

BLACK HAWK COLLEGE: 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.

AQIP REVIEWER: 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.