



# **2016 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Reports Volume 2**

**February 2017**

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.  
Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford  
Lt. Governor

# **Maryland Higher Education Commission**

Anwer Hasan, Chairman

Sandra L. Jimenez, Vice-Chair

Vivian S. Boyd

Joseph DeMattos, Jr.

John Holaday

Russell V. Kelley

Peri J. Kelsey, Student Commissioner

Ian MacFarlane

Donna M. Mitchell

Joel Packer

Rizwan A. Siddiqi

John W. Yaeger

**James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph.D.**  
**Secretary**

**2016 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Reports  
Table of Contents, Volume 2**

COMMUNITY COLLEGES .....	1
Allegany College of Maryland.....	2
Anne Arundel Community College .....	12
Baltimore City Community College .....	25
Carroll Community College.....	43
Cecil College.....	57
Chesapeake College .....	74
College of Southern Maryland.....	83
Community College of Baltimore County .....	96
Frederick Community College.....	111
Garrett College.....	120
Hagerstown Community College.....	131
Harford Community College .....	144
Howard Community College .....	159
Montgomery College .....	175
Prince George’s Community College .....	185
Wor-Wic Community College.....	202
PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS .....	212
Bowie State University .....	213
Coppin State University .....	228
Frostburg State University .....	241
Salisbury University.....	251
Towson University.....	262
University of Baltimore .....	272
University of Maryland, Baltimore.....	291
University of Maryland, Baltimore County .....	299
University of Maryland, College Park .....	313
University of Maryland, Eastern Shore .....	323
University of Maryland University College .....	352

Morgan State University .....	364
St. Mary's College of Maryland .....	377

## **COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

**Allegany College of Maryland**



## **Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016**

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

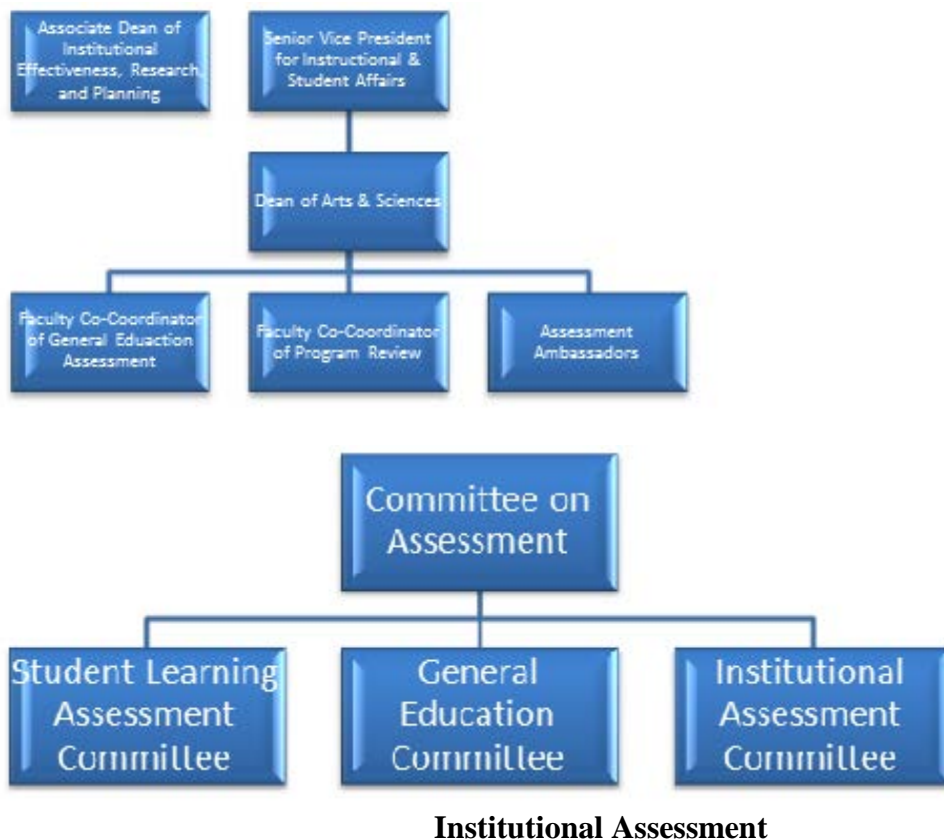
An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.

## Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

### Assessment Organization



Allegany College of Maryland is guided by its [Strategic Plan](#). The Strategic Plan is assessed annually by the Strategic Planning Council. This group uses the institutional [Annual Report Card](#) in conjunction with student learning outcomes assessment results, enrollment information, administrative unit assessment results, and other information to determine whether or not the Strategic Plan is progressing appropriately.

Each functional administrative unit of the College establishes goals based on the strategic priorities of the institution. The units assess the progress of those goals using appropriate assessment measures (for example, applicant conversion ratio for Admissions/Registration or retention/graduation rates for athletes in Athletics). A year-end report is completed by each administrative unit in June which is submitted to the Associate Dean of Institutional



Effectiveness, Research, and Planning. The Associate Dean meets with each unit to discuss improvements of process and assessment. The data are provided to the Strategic Planning Council for consideration related to the Strategic Plan.

Each administrative unit and academic program completes a comprehensive review according to the schedule outlined in the Institutional Effectiveness Plan. These reports allow each area of the College to internally evaluate their operations from a number of perspectives, including financial, personnel, space, curricular design, student success, and more. The reports are submitted to the Institutional Assessment Committee for administrative units and the Student Learning Assessment Committee for academic programs. Self-improvements are made by the units based on the data while the committees utilize the information to make recommendations to the President's staff as appropriate.

### **General Education Learning Assessment**

Allegany College of Maryland has seven general education learning outcomes that all students are expected to be proficient at by the time of graduation. They are:

- 1 – Written & Oral Communication
- 2 – Scientific & Quantitative Reasoning
- 3 – Critical Analysis & Reasoning
- 4 – Technological Competency
- 5 – Information Literacy
- 6 – Personal & Civic Responsibility
- 7 – Arts & Humanities Inquiry

These are assessed by the General Education Committee at least once every three years [on a set cycle](#). The institution has utilized student artifacts directly from classes to assess some of the general education learning outcomes as well as the Critical thinking Assessment Test (CAT) designed by Tennessee Tech being administered to graduating students.

The results of the general education learning assessments are collected and discussed by the General Education Assessment Committee, which makes recommendations based on the results to the Strategic Planning Council, President's Staff, and/or Instructional & Student Affairs as appropriate. Assessment of general education is primarily led by the faculty co-coordinator of general education.

### **Student Learning Assessment**

Each academic program at Allegany College of Maryland has program student learning outcomes that each graduating student is expected to be proficient in. These are each assessed on a regular basis; the timeline for each learning outcome is established by each program based on the frequency of scheduling for each course.

Each program utilizes a curriculum map to outline where each of its program student learning outcomes is delivered to students at the three levels: Introduced, Reinforced, and Proficiency. Programs finding deficiencies in the student learning outcomes assessment conducted in courses near point of graduation trace back to previous courses in the chain to assess where the issue may be.

All student learning assessment conducted at the institution incorporates the direct assessment of student artifacts in addition to supplemental assessments consisting of indirect assessments such as surveys to surveys, portfolios, or licensure examinations. This process is supported by two faculty co-coordinators who work with the Dean of Arts & Sciences as well as four assessment ambassadors representing different academic areas on campus.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed six pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

### **Student Learning Assessment Plan**

The student learning assessment coordinators established the Student Learning Assessment Plan (SLA- Plan 2012-2016), which was reviewed and approved by the Committee on assessment (COA), a special standing committee charged with reviewing student learning, institutional assessment, and program assessment data with the intent of providing feedback and/or making recommendations to enhance evidence-based decision-making at the College. The plan included detailed goals, timelines and targets related to plan progress for advancing student learning assessment at the institution. The plan contained 10 major goals and 24 targeted elements that were continually tracked on a progress timeline. 18 of the targets were completed over the four year period. The remaining 6 targets that were identified as a status as "ongoing" was placed on the new Student Learning Assessment Plan (2016-2020).

The (2016-2020) SLA Plan goals and priorities are aligned to the Strategic Plan of the College.

The SLA Plan has three distinct but inter-related processes:

- Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes (College- wide)
- Assessment of Program Student Learning Outcomes (Program Review)
- Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (Instructional Courses)

The SLA plan (2016-2020) requires that all programs develop a programmatic student learning assessment plan for each program.

Programmatic learning assessment plans are to identify how program learning goals, general education goals, and student learning outcomes will be assessed on a cyclic basis. As part of the general education goals assessment process, the committee on general education assessment developed a standardized set of rubrics that programs are encouraged to utilize when assessing general education goal proficiency within their courses and program. The following rubrics have been adopted by the College:

- [Written & Oral Communication Rubric](#)
- [Personal & Civic Responsibility Rubric](#)
- [Technological Competency Rubric](#)
- [Arts & Humanities Inquiry Rubric](#)

The SLA plan (2016-2020) institutes new syllabus standards relating to student learning outcomes (SLO's). The following are some of the highlights:

- The term SLO replaces the term objective.

- SLO's are to be aligned to assessments so that measurable data can be collected, reported and shared with students and faculty.
- Clear explanation of teaching strategies employed in the course.
- Clear explanation of evaluation methods and guidelines for course assignments.
- General education goals covered and assessed in the course.

The SLA plan (2016-2020) assessment ambassadors to help support and train faculty and programs in assessment related practices.

In the spring of 2016, 4 assessment ambassador positions were created and funded. The 4 ambassadors were faculty members who received a stipend of one credit each semester. The assessment ambassador program is intended to increase the culture of assessment across the institution by utilizing a faculty and staff driven model. SLA ambassadors serve as lead resource individuals that support and train faculty and staff in assessment practices and methodologies. Furthermore, they provide guidance to academic and student support programs in assessment reporting requirements and are expected to participate in assessment related trainings and workshops that enhance their knowledge of higher education accreditation standards relating to student learning assessment.

The SLA plan (2016-2020) course/faculty evaluation process includes targeted revisions to the administration of the process.

Starting in the fall 2016, all courses/faculty members will be evaluated each semester. Previously, faculty members were evaluated on a rotational basis that was linked to promotion, tenure and non-tenure. The implementation of course evaluations for all faculty each semester will provide the College with institutional data sets in which benchmarks for indicators of success can be established and monitored. The following institutional benchmarks related to faculty /course performance will be monitored and evaluated:

1. Organization
2. Presentation
3. Learning Environment
4. Evaluation/Feedback

Faculty and or programs that fail to meet set institutional benchmarks will be required to report action steps to the respective Dean on methods to improve less than optimal results.

The SLA plan (2016-2020) institutional student learning assessment report (ISLAR) will be compiled on an annual basis detailing summative analysis of from student learning assessment that resulted in programmatic or curricular changes at the College. The College has recently purchased TK-20 software and is in the implementation and training stages. This software will assist the Committee on Assessment (COA) in compiling data and constructing the annual report.

The SLA plan (2016-2020) full implementation of TK-20 software is targeted within the plan.

The Committee on Assessment (COA) is working with the Associate Dean of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning to develop a role out plan to train programs and units on the use and operation of the TK-20 assessment software platform. Training of COA members, the Associate Dean and other supportive personnel have been involved in the initial training sessions in the spring of 2016 and summer 2016. The cohort group is developing a training and implementation plan for the College. Full implantation of TK-20 is expected to occur over the 2017-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years. This software will centralize the collection of student learning assessment data and allow for a more responsive review and current status of the achievement of student learning outcomes across the institution. An example of this is the input of general education goals assessment data inputted into the system and based on the utilization of the adopted rubrics for general education goal assessment. Deficiencies in student learning outcomes will be identified sooner and interventions and discussion on how best to improve less than optimal results can occur more rapidly.

The SLA plan (2016-2020) increased training in assessment for faculty and staff.

Through collaboration with the Committee on Assessment (COA) and the Faculty Development Coordinators professional development training will be targeted at increasing the scope, knowledge, and practice of assessment. In the spring of 2016, the College conducted the first Assessment Day. This is planned to be an annual event each year and includes all College personnel.

Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

Allegany College of Maryland was placed on warning by Middle States for standards 2, 7, and 14 in June 2015 following its Self-Study in Spring 2015. The College submitted a [Monitoring Report](#) follow-up to Middle States on March 1, 2016 and received a small team visit in April 2016. The warning status was continued in June 2016 for standards 2 & 7. A second monitoring report will be submitted to Middle States on September 1, 2016 followed by a small team visit in early October 2016.

The failure by the institution to demonstrate compliance with three Middle States standards is attributed to:

- failure to recognize the changes necessary to meet the level of rigor specified by the Middle States standards as well as the heightened importance of assessment in the national conversation, resulting in a failure to emphasize this shift to the College community, including but not limited to, the senior administration and Board of Trustees,
- a corollary failure by the institution to dedicate sufficient resources to institutional effectiveness and/or student learning assessment,
- failure to decentralize the roles and responsibilities of effectiveness and awareness of Middle States requirements, and
- failure to prioritize assessment and assessment-related activities within the College's planning and actions.

To address the concerns outlined by the Middle States team, the College has taken the following steps:

1. Developed an Institutional Effectiveness Plan
2. Expanded the Institutional Research office into the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning (OIERP)
3. Established in the Dean of Arts & Sciences position responsibilities for oversight of student learning assessment
4. Created four assessment ambassador positions within faculty to provide professional development assistance and support to programs
5. Begun implementation of assessment management software (Tk20) to facilitate and sustain the assessment process into the long-term.
6. Provided multiple professional development opportunities for both faculty and staff
7. Expanded and formalized the charge to the Committee on Assessment

8. Established a Budget Advisory Committee to act on the results of assessments
9. Incorporated assessment reporting into the timeline for strategic planning
10. Established regular communications from the OIERP to the College community, president's staff, and Board of Trustees
11. Expanded the budget request process to be more deliberatively inclusive of assessment data in a formalized manner

In addition to the specific items addressed above, the College has been able to more deliberately and completely engage in the assessment processes from multiple angles while engaging stakeholders from across campus. The actions listed above have effectively improved the awareness of assessment and improved the culture of requiring decisions be founded in assessment data. This ensures the sustainability of assessment into the future and its continued application for planning, resource allocation, and program improvement.

**Anne Arundel Community College**





## Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.

## **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

The central mission of Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) is learning: AACC responds to the needs of our diverse community by offering high quality, affordable, accessible, and innovative lifelong learning opportunities. Accordingly, assessment activities are developed and implemented to support student learning as well as institutional progress toward meeting the goals of the College's strategic plans since 2011, Student Success 2020 (2013-2016) and Engagement Matters (2016 forward). In addition, AACC's assessment activities also bolster its participation, since 2010, in *Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count* (ATD). ATD is focused on creating a "culture of evidence" on community college campuses where data collection and analysis drive efforts to identify problems that prevent students from succeeding and develop programs to improve student retention, persistence, and completion. The following narrative describes the assessment policies and procedures that support this culture of evidence at AACC.

### **Institutional Assessment**

The institutional assessment process developed and implemented at AACC provides data and evidence that allow the College to "evaluate its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards." At AACC responsibility for institutional assessment is shared by three governance bodies: the Institutional Assessment Team (IAT), the Office of Planning, Research, and Institutional Assessment (PRIA), and the Strategic Planning Council (SPC). The IAT, a college-wide, cross-functional committee, works with functional area experts to revise and review key performance indicators (KPIs), set targets, and collect scoring data to produce AACC's annual KPI scorecard. In addition, the IAT reviews relevant institutional data as well as information from the surveys in which AACC participates. PRIA also supports data collection and reporting efforts by offering planning, institutional assessment and research services. Each year this data provides the basis for a comprehensive internal assessment, resulting in the Annual Institutional Assessment Report (AIAR) that examines 35 key performance indicators (KPIs). These results are then integrated into the College's planning process, directed by the Strategic Planning Council (SPC), to measure the progress toward achieving the plan's goals and objectives and make recommendations for further action to the College President. Departments and administrators use the AIAR and other commissioned studies to evaluate the effectiveness of various initiatives.

### **Learning Outcomes Assessment**

The Office of Learning Outcomes Assessment (LOA), staffed by a Director, facilitates and coordinates the assessment of student learning outcomes at the College. College leadership provides oversight and support for learning outcomes assessment. General oversight for LOA is provided by the Vice President and Associate Vice President for Learning. The Director of LOA works closely with the instructional deans and department chairs or directors to provide leadership and professional development for faculty engaged in the assessment process.

The Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee, a subset of the College's Teaching and Learning Committee is comprised of eight faculty, four staff, the Director of LOA, and a student

member who liaises with the Student Association. The LOA subcommittee advises the Office of LOA on matters related to assessment, promotes assessment strategies, provides training for peers, and periodically evaluates the assessment process at the College.

The Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee (EPC), chaired by the Associate Vice President for Learning and Vice-Chaired by a faculty member, plays a central role in shaping the curriculum at the College through its representative faculty membership. EPC processes ensure that learning outcomes for courses are set at the department level and that course offerings display appropriate academic content, coherence, and rigor. All new courses or programs, as part of any proposals seeking action for approval by the Academic Forum, must include the intended course-level learning outcomes when submitted through Curriculog.

The Learning College aims to integrate new faculty into the College community. In their first year, all new full-time faculty participate in the Learning College Orientation consisting of work sessions and presentations designed to ensure College inclusion and understanding of processes relevant to their success; to acquaint them with the College's strategic goals; and, most importantly, to create a community of colleagues around instructional and pedagogical issues. In addition, AACC has recently established a Teaching & Learning Center intended as a faculty resource for pedagogical best practices including learning outcomes assessment.

The Assessment Fellows program cultivates leadership to create, maintain, and support learning outcomes assessment processes at the course, program, and institution levels. Fellows are appointed by their School's Deans to serve as liaisons to the Director of LOA and work directly with faculty in their areas to support strategic directions described in the annual LOA plan. Fellows serve for a full academic year. During the Fall semester, Fellows meet for special workshops and training sessions, to share progress, and to discuss successes and challenges in one 2-hour meeting every three weeks. Fellows are also expected to independently devote 1-2 hours per week to supporting assessment efforts in their area. Moving in to Spring semester, ½ hour of the regular Assessment Fellows meeting is dedicated to mentoring of future Assessment Fellows.

Consistent with its mission and vision, AACC expects students to gain and demonstrate appropriate proficiency in 10 Core Competencies encompassing general education and essential life skills: Communications, Technology Fluency, Information Literacy, Personal Wellness, Self-Management, Scientific Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, Social and Civic Responsibility, Global Perspective, and Innovative and Critical Thinking. The College is committed to offering experiences that allow students to acquire, develop, and demonstrate growth in these competencies, thus strengthening the foundation for lifelong learning. Accordingly, all students completing an AACC degree program will have had an educational experience aligned with each of the 10 Core Competencies. With input and support from the Committee on Teaching and Learning's Subcommittee on Learning Outcomes Assessment, the Assessment Fellows, and LOA, all core competencies are systematically assessed for two years on a rotating basis. (See Appendix 1 for the FY15 Core Competency Assessment Plan.) Data collected during the first year are used to establish baselines and formulate plans for course- and program-level interventions that are implemented and assessed in the second year. At the conclusion of the second year, the Director of LOA meets with relevant personnel to discuss how the findings can

inform the creation and implementation of action plans to improve student performance in the Core Competencies.

Course-level assessment of student learning is conducted in all instructional units to enhance the learning experience of AACC's students and is documented and shared through an electronic database and the periodic *Let's Talk Assessment!* newsletter. Course-level assessments inform, are influenced by, and are documented in the annual and 4-year program review processes and are supported by the LOA. Course-level LOA projects embedded in the Learning College provide faculty and staff new to AACC the opportunity to improve their teaching and student learning through data-informed systematic assessment.

Programs of study, including credit degrees and certificates, undergo annual and 4-year comprehensive reviews. Program reviews are authored by department chairs in collaboration with faculty and staff and are informed by the Program Review Source Book, course-level assessment, and a program curriculum map when available. Reviews are submitted to the instructional dean and Vice President for Learning, respectively, who then work collaboratively with program faculty and chairs to develop action plans. Institutional Professional Development, in collaboration with the Director of Business and Education Partnerships, PRIA, and LOA provides professional development for program-level assessment.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

AACC's college community is committed to maintaining a learning-centered environment in which faculty and staff work actively to help students achieve their academic, professional, and personal enrichment goals; members of the community recognize that the assessment of student learning is vital to understanding and gauging the success of these efforts. Assessment of student learning is a key part of the College's strategic plan and assessment work is embedded into the institution's infrastructure. Assessment strategies are integrated into all facets of the College, including operations, professional development, and community outreach. In addition, the College has allocated the resources and support necessary to maintain concerted focus and emphasis on learning outcomes assessment.

### **Institutional Assessment**

In FY16, as part of an College-wide institutional effort to educational equity, a committee has been reviewing KPIs, both to reduce the overall number from 35 and to more explicitly tie the KPIs to equity, access, and student success.

### **Learning Outcomes Assessment at the Institution Level**

Since the 2011 SLOAR, AACC has maintained a strong program of institutional learning outcomes assessment using the following schedule to assess each of the College's Core Competencies on a regular basis.

	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Communication						
Technology Fluency						
Information Literacy						
Personal Wellness						
Self-Management						
Scientific Reasoning						
Quantitative Reasoning						
Social and Civic Responsibility						
Global Perspective						
Innovative and Critical Thinking						

These efforts, guided and supported by the office of LOA, the subcommittee on LOA, and the Assessment Fellows, identify specific target areas for improving student learning and success across the College and within each school. To promote the widespread distribution and use of data collected during these assessments, the office of LOA shares full reports and briefs with the College community.

While the stated purpose of assessing the Core Competencies has been to support improvements in College-wide student learning, a review of AACC’s LOA process indicated little evidence that instructional changes based on this data have been consistently assessed. In order to more effectively “close the assessment loop,” during FY17 the LOA will be working to implement course-/program-embedded assessments of the Core Competencies developed in FY16 .

In May 2012, the Office of LOA spearheaded an initiative to create and maintain a curriculum map of these Competencies for all active courses offered at AACC. Training and support were provided, and, as areas were mapped, results were reported in the LOA newsletter and communicated to instructional deans and to the Academic Council. Mapping was completed in Summer 2013 with 100 percent of all active courses in the College catalog aligned to the Core Competencies.

Currently, the LLC is reviewing the success rates of high-enrollment, low success courses as part of the 2016 Strategic Plan, Engagement Matters. Review of assessment data from these classes will aid in identifying those specific course outcomes that pose the greatest difficulty for students, thus allowing for targeted action plans to address course success as well as program completion rates. A related initiative involved the identification of “obstacle” or “critical” courses, defined as the specific courses where program non-completers are less successful than program completers.

### **Learning Outcomes Assessment at the Program Level**

Currently all credit programs are systematically and regularly reviewed through an annual program review and a more in-depth four year comprehensive program review. Although LOA was explicitly embedded into the program review process in 2008, the process underwent a major revision in 2012. Working collaboratively, the Vice President for Learning, Associate Vice President for Learning, Executive Director of Business Education Partnerships, Dean of PRIA, Council of Instructional Deans, Director of LOA, and faculty volunteers reviewed and revised the program review process and template for reporting. The revised template and associated overlay improved the program review process through enhanced review of program metrics provided by PRIA via the Program Review Source Book, curricular alignment with the College-wide Core Competencies, showcasing of LOA endeavors, and review of fiscal considerations.

A review of faculty feedback on the program review process indicated a need to streamline procedures and generate information more useful to programmatic planning. As such, staff from PRIA and the Office of Learning, in collaboration with LLC, have been developing a framework and rubric for a revised program review process.

Based on recommendations stemming from the College's 2014 Middle States Review, the Director of LOA, under the supervision of the AVP for Learning, is working with Deans, Directors, and faculty to develop a process for assessing student learning at the program level. Currently all programs have developed program-level student learning outcomes that will be aligned with course-level outcomes by Fall 17. Implementing the Middle States recommendations will involve reviewing and revising program-level student learning outcomes as needed, the identification of appropriate assessment measures, and the development of program-level curriculum maps illustrating the alignment between courses and program-level outcomes. In addition, a number of departments, while enrolling large numbers of students, are not responsible for a specific degree program. As such, these department faculty will be asked to develop student learning outcomes aligned with their courses without reference to a specific program. Upon completion of this work in Spring 2017, AACC will make available a complete set of program-level student learning outcomes via the College's website and/or the on-line catalog. A regular program of program-level assessment will then be implemented during FY18.

Currently, program-level LOA is especially strong for programs that receive specialized external accreditation. These accreditation processes require substantial annual review of curriculum, faculty, facilities, administration, student support services, and assessment. The College recognizes the value of these accreditations in assessment and continual improvement in order to ensure the quality of the programming. Where possible, the Director of LOA will work with these programs to coordinate internal assessment needs with external accreditation processes.

### **Learning Outcomes Assessment at the Course Level**

As a component of AACC's overall assessment activities, continuous assessment of student learning is conducted in many courses in all instructional units. In FY 12 an emphasis was placed on systematically documenting all current and past (2006-2012) course-level assessment endeavors. This information was aggregated and made available to faculty through the Course-Level Database.

In FY13 and 14, with the support of the Office of LOA and one full-time faculty member, all new full-time faculty and staff participating in the Learning College engaged in a one-year course-level assessment project which afforded an opportunity to experience LOA processes and generate data-informed improvement to learning. The projects and experiences were shared with the college community through the Learning College Showcase, Summer Institute 2013, *Let's Talk Assessment!* newsletter, and the Course-Level Database.

### **Assessment Fellows**

As noted in Part One, the Assessment Fellows program is an integral part of AACC's learning outcomes assessment model. Participation in the Fellows program fosters faculty involvement in the planning and implementation of learning outcomes strategies. Since the 2011 SLOAR, Assessment Fellows' responsibilities have included the following:

- Assisting their areas with using curriculum maps to enhance programs;
- Facilitating collection of course-level LOA information for inclusion in the Course-Level Database in support of the LOA Plan;
- Supporting the collection, dissemination, and use of the assessment results for Core Competencies;
- Serving as mentors for program reviews;
- Serving as liaisons to the Office of LOA for their area in sharing LOA progress and resources;
- Meeting with other Assessment Fellows to share progress and discuss successes and challenges;
- Contributing to communication efforts related to assessment (newsletter, intranet, internet, reports, professional development, etc.)
- Attending special workshops and training sessions specifically designed for Assessment Fellows; and
- Serving as a mentor for future Assessment Fellows.

**Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

The 2014 Middle States Commission on Higher Education Report for AACC included no requests for further action on Standards 7, 12, or 14.





## Appendix 1 Assessment Plan

Consistent with the institutional mission and vision, Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) expects students to gain and demonstrate appropriate proficiency in ten core competencies encompassing general education and essential life skills. The college is committed to offering experiences that allow students to acquire, develop and demonstrate growth in these competencies. The attainment of core competencies provides the foundation for lifelong learning.

The members of the Committee on Teaching and Learning's (CoTL) Subcommittee on Learning Outcomes Assessment (LOA) and the Assessment Fellows, in collaboration with the Director of LOA, will continue to guide and implement the college's systematic assessment of the core competencies in FY15 with information literacy and personal wellness in the second year, and self management and scientific reasoning in the first year of a two-year cycle.

*Information Literacy* – Recognizing when information is needed and locating, evaluating, and using information appropriately.

*Personal Wellness* – Demonstrating the use of strategies that promote holistic health and wellness.

*Self Management* – Displaying accountability and adaptability as a learner.

*Scientific Reasoning* – Applying logic and the scientific method to interpret observable evidence.

Year 1 will include baseline assessments and determination of strategies to enhance student learning. Year 2 will include communication of preliminary findings and reassessment of competencies. A more detailed timeline is provided in Appendix 1.

With the CoTL and Academic Forum's approval, the Subcommittee on LOA has set the following goals for FY15:

- Contribute to each issue of the *Let's Talk Assessment!* newsletter for AACC.
- Review data findings for communication, technology fluency, information literacy, and personal wellness and identify areas and strategies for improvement as needed.
- Review and select assessment tools and strategies for the assessment of scientific reasoning

and self management. The FY15 membership of the Subcommittee on LOA is as follows:

- Dr. Jason Barbour (Physical Science)
- Patricia Clarke (Surgical Technology)
- Haley Draper-Bowers (English and Communications)
- Dr. Nassim Ebrahimi (Learning Outcomes Assessment)
- Dr. Ricka Fine (Planning, Research and Institutional Assessment)
- Dr. Jaclyn Gambone (TEACH) – Chair
- Professor Lawrie Gardner (Business Administration)
- Heather Langley (Therapeutic Massage)

- Assistant Professor Lindsay McCulloch (Visual Arts)
- Beth Anne O'Reilly (Mathematics)
- Uzma Qureshi (Economics)
- Professor Kelly Sell (Computer Information Systems)
- Associate Professor Brandy Whitlock (Library)

The 2014-2015 Assessment Fellows are:

- Assistant Director Audra Butler (Continuing Education and Workforce Development)
- Assistant Director John Delozier (Continuing Education and Workforce Development)
- Associate Professor Marlow Henderson (Business and Law)
- Dr. Ruimin Hu (Science and Technology)
- Dr. Javanika Mody (Science and Technology)
- Assistant Professor Kevin Murphy (Liberal Arts)
- Dr. Matthew Patton (Liberal Arts)
- Assistant Professor Dawn Teeple (Health Sciences)
- Associate Professor Deborah Tolliver (Health Sciences)

Additional support will be solicited from the college community, particularly in areas heavily aligned with the core competencies under review.

### Methodology

Similar to data collection in spring 2014, for fall 2014 and spring 2015, students applying, by the deadline, to graduate with an associate degree in fall 2014 and spring 2015 as identified through the Registrar's office will be notified of their eligibility to participate and opportunity to "opt out." Of the remaining students, a random sample equaling 40% of the total will be selected. The Office of Learning Outcomes Assessment (LOA) will examine student schedules and the curriculum map to identify fall 2014 and spring 2015 courses to provide a sample of student work for scoring. Instructors of those target courses will be asked to send one sample of the target student's work to the Office of LOA, with the goal of receiving samples for at least 15% of the total number of AACC students applying, by the deadline, to graduate with an associate in the respective term. The Office of LOA will remove all student and instructor identifiers in preparation of scoring.

Library faculty have volunteered to score works with the revised rubric and assignment checklist (see Appendices 2 and 3) in January and May 2015. A sub-sample of the work will be scored by two separate evaluators to ensure reliability.

The data will be analyzed by the Office of LOA. Resulting reports will be drafted and shared with the Subcommittee on LOA, Learning Leadership Council (LLC), Assessment Fellows, and the college community emphasizing its use to improve learning for all AACC students.

### Assessment Tools

#### *Evaluation of assignment*

To better understand current assignment guidelines provided for students and to potentially inform future improvements, the Subcommittee on LOA and library faculty recommend continuing to evaluate assignments related to the samples of student work using a slightly revised checklist resulting from a FY11 Designs for Learning Grant project (see Appendix 2). The Designs for Learning Grant assignment checklist incorporates recommendations based on analysis of 481 student papers citing

3381 sources in 46 sections of ENG 112 and ENG 121 taught by 28 full and part-time faculty members during Fall Semester 2010 .

#### *Evaluation of student works*

After careful consideration of established assessment tools to measure information literacy from a variety of organizations and institutions, the proposed information literacy rubric was developed. The proposed revised rubric (see Appendix 3) is a combination of the University of Maryland University College's Graduate School Management and Technology's Information Literacy Rubric for Outcomes Assessment (3 row headings and respective cell descriptions, [http://deoracle.org/assets/categories/pedagogy/teaching\\_strategies/gs-rubrics/InformationLiteracy.pdf?PHPSESSID=3bca4a6dd8145e49e72fd7b0a6754d81](http://deoracle.org/assets/categories/pedagogy/teaching_strategies/gs-rubrics/InformationLiteracy.pdf?PHPSESSID=3bca4a6dd8145e49e72fd7b0a6754d81)), St. John's University Information Literacy Rubric (1 row heading, <http://www.stjohns.edu/media/3/b9bbbfe317724e3ca3c896ac00ff4eb3.pdf>), and, consistent with assessment of communication rubric, Miami Dade College's Information Literacy rubric (column headings; [http://www.mdc.edu/learningoutcomes/assessment\\_outcomesRubric.aspx](http://www.mdc.edu/learningoutcomes/assessment_outcomesRubric.aspx)). After the spring 2014 scoring session, the library faculty revised the rubric to enhance reliability and usability of the tool. The Committee on Teaching and Learning's Subcommittee on LOA recommends using the proposed information literacy rubric for scoring of student works (see Appendix 3).

#### *Evaluation of faculty and staff understanding and use of information literacy*

To better understand faculty understanding of information literacy, integration of the core competency into the course, and use of existing resources, the faculty and staff that submit a sample of student work will be asked to complete a brief survey (see Appendix 4). The results will help guide future dialogue and improvements to the learning environment.

### **Assessment of the Personal Wellness Core Competency – Phases 2 and 3**

#### Methodology

Similar to data collection in spring 2014, students applying, by the deadline, to graduate with an associate degree in fall 2014 and spring 2015 will be identified through the Registrar's office and will be notified of their eligibility to participate and opportunity to "opt out." The Office of Learning Outcomes Assessment (LOA) will send an email to the remaining students with a link to an electronic survey asking for volunteers to participate. The survey will be open for at least one month at the end of the semester, with reminders sent periodically.

The data will be analyzed by the Office of LOA. Resulting reports will be drafted and shared with the Subcommittee on LOA, LLC, Assessment Fellows, and the college community emphasizing its use to improve learning for all AACC students.

#### Assessment Tool

After careful consideration of established personal wellness theories and assessment tools from a variety of organizations and institutions, the self-assessment tool was developed. The proposed tool (see Appendix 5 or [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/personal\\_wellness\\_sp14](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/personal_wellness_sp14)) is a customized version of Lutheran Social Services of Michigan's Personal Wellness Assessment survey (see Appendix 6). Students will reflect on how often they engage in specific behaviors related to personal wellness domains and AACC's impact on these behaviors. The Committee on Teaching and Learning's Subcommittee on LOA recommends continuing the use of the personal wellness self-assessment (see Appendix 5 or [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/personal\\_wellness\\_sp14](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/personal_wellness_sp14)).

### **Assessment of the Self Management Core Competency – Phase 1**

### Proposed Methodology

The subcommittee proposes working with the Office of Planning, Research, and Institutional Assessment (PRIA) to use data from past 3 years (spring 2010, 2012, and 2014) and upcoming data (spring 2016) from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to explore students' levels of self management. CCSSE is administered once every two years to a random sampling of course sections. The exploration of existing data allows the college to explore self-reported self management skills and other associated groupings (number of credits, demographic information) or use of resources.

### Proposed Assessment Tool

The CCSSE is a well-established tool that AACC is required by the state to administer biannually in the spring (see Appendix 7). This survey contains questions that could reflect students' self-management skills. The Subcommittee on LOA is working to identify specific questions and demographic variables for analysis by PRIA. The Committee on Teaching and Learning's Subcommittee on LOA recommends the use of CCSSE to explore self management.

## **Assessment of the Scientific Reasoning Core Competency – Phase 1**

### Proposed Methodology

Similar to data collection for the assessments of communication and information literacy, students applying, by the deadline, to graduate with an associate degree in spring and fall 2015 and spring 2016 as identified through the Registrar's office will be notified of their eligibility to participate and opportunity to "opt out." Of the remaining students, a random sample equaling 40% of the total will be selected. The Office of Learning Outcomes Assessment (LOA) will examine student schedules and the curriculum map to identify ideal spring and fall 2015 and spring 2016 courses, respectively, to provide a sample of student work for scoring. Instructors of those target courses will be asked to send one sample of the target student's work to the Office of LOA, with the goal of receiving samples for at least 15% of the total number of AACC students applying, by the deadline, to graduate with an associate degree in the respective term. Detailed guidelines will be provided soliciting appropriate student samples for evaluation. The Office of LOA will remove all student and instructor identifiers in preparation of scoring.

Scoring will take place in May 2015 and May 2016. To recruit faculty from all instructional units, faculty providing student work, subcommittee members, Assessment Fellows, and all other college faculty and staff will be asked to volunteer. Evaluators will be trained on the assessment tool and then asked to score student work. A sub-sample of the work will be scored by two separate evaluators to ensure reliability.

The data will be analyzed by the Office of LOA. Resulting reports will be drafted and shared with the Subcommittee on LOA, LLC, Assessment Fellows, and the college community emphasizing its use to improve learning for all AACC students.

### Proposed Assessment Tool

After careful consideration of established scientific reasoning tests [e.g. Madison Assessment, Group Assessment of Logical Thinking (GALT)] and rubrics from a variety of organizations and institutions (i.e., Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, Montgomery College, Mesaland Community College, etc.), the scientific reasoning rubric was developed by the subcommittee. The Committee on Teaching and Learning's Subcommittee on LOA recommends the use of the scientific reasoning rubric for scoring of student works (see Appendix 8).

**Baltimore City Community College**



## Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.

## **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

### **Overview**

Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) is committed to the assessment of student learning in academic programs and credit courses. Student learning outcomes data are used to inform academic decisions to improve student learning. These data-informed decisions range from course realignment to course and program revisions to extensive revision of developmental education. The collaborative effort from all units at the College in the assessment of student learning outcomes promotes excellence in teaching and learning by assessing all elements of the educational process that directly support the College's mission and vision statements

### **Organizational Structure and Institutional Leadership**

BCCC is committed to evaluating the effectiveness of its processes, programs, and initiatives in supporting the College mission and accreditation. The newly formed Accreditation Monitoring Council, Strategic Planning Council, and the reconstituted College-Wide Assessment Council (CWAC) are examples of the institution's commitment to ensuring effective institutional assessment.

### **Assessment: Strategic Plan Progress Report**

The ability to closely monitor progress is a key for institutional assessment and effectiveness. The College is implementing the systematic assessment and communication of progress based on the biannual completion of measures, the KPIs, in a mid-year update and an annual report. In an effort to ease the communication and use of the KPIs for decision making, College-Wide Assessment Council (CWAC) assisted in the creation of a KPI Scorecard. The mid-year update of the KPIs was presented at a President's Staff meeting in early February 2016 and during the open session portion of the BCCC Board of Trustees' meeting on February 23, 2016. Feedback from the Trustees was reviewed which led to further refinements to the KPI scorecard.

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) has reinstated a newly formatted Strategic Plan Progress Report to align KPI with each of the 19 Board-approved Strategic Plan Objectives. In some cases, the measures came from existing Critical Success Factors (CSF); in others, new appropriate measures were developed by OIR and President's Staff to address the objectives in Goals 3 and 4. Additional measures have been developed to assess new strategies and action steps developed in fall 2014. These measures are now the CSFs. Former CSFs not captured in the KPIs or the measures for the strategies and action steps will still be tracked by OIR for use by appropriate divisions or departments. The ability to closely monitor progress toward achieving goals not only advances the institution in the context of its mission but serves as a key tool for institutional assessment and effectiveness. Beginning with the August 2015 Community Forum, President's Staff members presented KPIs to the College community and continues to inform the Board of Trustees about outcomes at critical times (See Table 1 in the Appendix).

In addition, the College administers the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) every two or three years to inform the Strategic Plan's KPIs and CSFs, and the PAR for the State. The well-established tool assists in identifying areas for program and service improvement for students. The administration of the survey is underway. Results are reviewed and discussed by the Strategic Planning Council (SPC), Accreditation Monitoring Council (AMC), CWAC, and other College units.

CWAC has been realigned to fully integrate the use, understanding, and communication of KPIs and other measures from the component institutional plans, divisional plans, PAR, and unit-level tactical plans. The new mission of CWAC is to engage the College community in establishing appropriate measures to monitor progress, and ensure alignment of all divisional plan measures. CWAC members, from across all divisions are responsible for:

- improving the College community's understanding of the KPIs and related measures from the component and divisional plans;
- designing and implementing strategies to engage the College community in setting and reviewing the progress of the KPIs and related measures from the component and divisional plans; and
- supporting the work of the SPC in providing measure recommendations and monitoring the progress of the KPIs and related measures from the component and divisional plans.

In academic year 2015 – 2016, CWAC established a Canvas site to be used as a resource for the Council. A survey of members was administered in fall 2015 regarding members' knowledge of planning and assessment at BCCC. Questions focused on knowledge related to accessibility to the Strategic Plan; the component institutional plans and their measures; alignment of the plans; use of assessment information to inform decisions in the respective areas; and existing planning and assessment resources at the College. The work of CWAC throughout the spring of 2016 focused on review of the KPI Scorecard, professional development based on the survey results, and reviewing action plans and measures utilized in the Strategic Enrollment Management and Retention Plan.

#### **Assessment: Student Learning Outcomes Report**

All of BCCC's academic programs have implemented the assessment process since spring 2012. Since outcomes assessment is an iterative process, all of the programs are currently somewhere within the four-semester process of Planning, Pilot, Implementation, or Reporting Phase. Every phase requires documents to be submitted to the Office of Assessment for review and evaluation. The Office of Assessment tracks the progress of every program to ensure it moves through the process of review and revision. In addition, the course assessment process, including data from the assessment of general education courses is documented in the Office of Assessment. Academic decisions are made by the Deans, Associate Deans, and faculty within the respective academic departments.

#### **Assessment: Faculty Committees**

The Faculty Senate formally adopted a standing committee on Student Learning Outcomes in Fall of 2014, removing the ad hoc nature of the committee and standardizing reporting through the Faculty Senate. The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Committee was charged with assessing and updating the 2011 BCCC Practice Guide for Student Learning Outcomes Assessment. Following the initial assessment process, the committee determined that the 2011 assessment handbook was cumbersome (entitled the *Comprehensive Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Practical Guide*. Hereafter referred to as the *Practical Guide*), contained too many forms/documents, was not unique to the College, and needed to be revised based on review and feedback from other College stakeholders. Recommendations created by the committee are being vetted through Faculty Senate and academic departments.

Program Review and Evaluation Committee (PREC) is completing Cycle IV to review academic degree and certificate programs. Under the leadership of the current PREC Chair, feedback was sought related to process and procedural concerns that could impact adhering to the five-year-cycle timeline (See Table 2 in the Appendix). Feedback from PREC Reviewers indicated the need to clarify and streamline communication and documentation in to avoid unnecessary delays throughout the process (See Diagram 1 in the Appendix). This also led to the following improvements in Cycle IV in the 2015 – 2016 academic year.

The Curriculum and Instruction Committee (CIC) reviews and approves both course and program proposals from academic departments. Thus, when the faculty and departments determine the need to add or delete a course as a result of the program assessment process, these changes are approved by the CIC and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (SEC). The SEC directed the CIC to phase in a reaffirmation policy for courses and programs; whereas, no course or program will be allowed to continue without periodic review.

General Education/Core Competencies committee is led by a faculty member jointly appointed by the Faculty Senate and VPAA as the College's General Education Coordinator. Assessment of the College's General Education program through our Core Competencies is ongoing following a five-year cycle established in the Fall of 2011, with the adoption of the *Practical Guide*. The eight competencies have completed a four-semester process of first Planning, then Piloting, Implementation and Reporting on student learning outcomes.



## Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

### Overview

BCCC's evidence-based outcomes assessment stems from a collaborative process from all academic units that informs decision-making throughout academic programs. The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) process, through its commitment to building a Culture of Assessment, promotes excellence in teaching and learning by assessing all elements of the educational process.

A Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Task Force was created in 2011 to develop a comprehensive SLOA process. The Task Force created a process along with the *Practical Guide*. The process for on-going development, monitoring, and use of student learning outcomes at the program and course levels are outlined in the *Practical Guide*. The assessment model is a backward design planning process that involves mapping program outcomes to the course level (See Diagram 2 in the Appendix). The outcomes assessment process occurs over a five-year cycle. All academic programs and credit courses are currently participating in the five-year cycle (Academic Year 2012-2017) (See Table 3 in the Appendix). Since outcomes assessment is an iterative process, all of the academic programs and credit courses are currently within the four-step process: (1) planning, (2) implementation, (3) analysis, and (4) reporting phases. Where, every phase requires that assessment information be submitted to the Office of Assessment for review and evaluation. Through periodic reviews, systematic data collections, and use of the assessment information, this process improves BCCC's students' learning, performance, and development.

Further, all general education courses have been aligned with the eight core institutional competencies and also assessed in five-year cycle (See Table 4 in the Appendix). Faculty in each discipline formed Faculty Assessment Teams (FATs) and have worked to develop, pilot, and evaluate a rubric for the collection of data to assess the achievement of each core competency. The College's also used evidence related to course learning outcome alignments to program goals to: (1) revise program goals, (2) delete courses, and (3) add new courses.

### Program Level Outcomes

Program Coordinators worked to develop program learning outcomes in conjunction with faculty assessment teams and advisory boards. As a result of that work, there are now measurable student learning outcomes for academic programs. Since spring 2012, course measurable student learning outcomes are aligned with program goals. This ensures the assessment process integrates course level assessment with program level assessment. Additionally, all courses are reflected in the five-year assessment plan to meet academic program goals.

### Course Level Outcomes

Measurable outcomes are established for all BCCC's courses. Some courses are in the process of deletion or were identified as an independent study for which outcomes are established in accordance with the topic of study. For example, some academic degree programs make adjustments based on the alignment of measurable outcomes with the program goals.

### Integrating Course Level Assessment with Program Level Assessment

BCCC recognizes that course-level assessment is only one component in using outcomes assessment to improve instruction and student success. Therefore, the College is now emphasizing the integration of course-level assessment with program-level assessment. Program goals and outcomes have been established and course outcomes are derived from the program level.

### "Teaching-Learning-Data Use" Circle

The SLOA process drives a dynamic three-step “teaching-learning-evidence use” circle: (a) establish learning goals, (b) engage in learning opportunities, and (c) use data to inform decisions. Learning goals in programs, coupled with measurable student learning outcomes are used as a framework to develop course content. Learning opportunities evolve as students participate in various activities and receive assessment feedback through multiple measurement instruments. Data use allows program-level discussions, influences academic decisions, adjusts instructional arrangements, and frames student and institutional goals.

Faculty across the College continues demonstrating data-driven decisions. The data from the SLOA process and interviews with Program Coordinators indicate that BCCC faculty currently makes informed decision in four general areas: (1) program modifications, (2) course content and sequencing, (3) measurement adjustments, and (4) student performance increase. This is detailed in Table 5.

Program Modification	Course Content	Measurement Adjustment	Student Performance
Devise plans to improve the success in the program (Biotechnology)	Modify topics covered in lecture/lab courses (Computer Aided Drafting and Design)	More visits to construction sites and reviews of the tests materials (Construction Supervision)	How students apply knowledge and process information (Art Transfer)
Adjust program competencies (Early Childhood Education)	Additional use of audio-visual resources (Construction Supervision)	Adjust rubrics for each assignment (Early Childhood Education)	Support students’ weaker areas (Engineering Transfer and Robotics Technology and Surgical Technology)
Review enrollment numbers, pass rates, transfer rates, and graduation rates (Engineering Transfer and Robotics Technology)	Course improvements and modifications (Engineering Transfer and Robotics Technology)	Conduct standardized final exam (English, Languages, and Humanities)	Improve teaching skills in gaining objectives (English, Languages, and Humanities)
Review program learning goals and objectives (English, Languages, and Humanities)	Re-visit the outcomes and some sections of the subject matter (Science Transfer)	Include writing prompts and develop rubrics (English, Languages, and Humanities)	Reflect on instructional strategies to contribute student success (Math Transfer)
Adjust program goals and review pass rates (Office Administration)	Modify instructional methodology and instructional unit sequencing (Theater Transfer)	Embedded questions in exams, reflective essays, and case vignettes scenarios (Allied Human Services)	Suggest peer assistance and schedule evening meetings to assist students (Teacher Education)
Modify teaching methods, review objectives and goals to reach targeted learning outcomes (Psychology)	Influence instructional methods, support materials, and content sequencing (Nursing and Respiratory Care)	Embedded questions in quizzes and tests; Pre- and post-test method (Science Transfer)	Re-evaluate student learning styles (Physical Therapist Assistant)
Review enrollments (Teacher Education)	Re-evaluate the content and instruction (Physical Therapist Assistant)	Redesign essay assignment (Theater Transfer)	<i>(No data available)</i>
<i>(No data available)</i>	Adjust syllabi and assignments (Legal Assistant)	Influence testing structure and content volume per test (Nursing)	<i>(No data available)</i>
<i>(No data available)</i>	Adjust lecture materials and time (Health Information Technology)	<i>(No data available)</i>	<i>(No data available)</i>

In the first area, program modifications qualify as reviewing program data (learning goals, objectives, student learning outcomes, student grades, enrollment numbers, and pass rates) to improve the success in the program. In the second area, course content and sequencing incorporates modifying course topics, adjusting curriculum, and improving instruction. In the third area, adapting measurement tools includes but is not limited to revising content per assessment, revising the measurement timeline, or re-writing an indicator. In the fourth area, employ enhancements to increase student performance. Those enhancements include more support to students, providing flexible services (e.g., evening/weekend tutoring sessions, lab tutors, embedded tutors, and online tutorial services) that meet student needs.

### SLOA Academic Decisions

In addition to the SLOA reports, interviews were conducted with Academic Affairs program coordinators in Academic Year 2013-2014. Responses from 24 program coordinators were analyzed to determine how programs used student learning outcomes to inform decisions. Initial findings speak to BCCC's data-driven Assessment Plan: (a) standard documentation and archiving (b) content alignment influences, and (c) "teaching-learning-data use" circle.

### **Learning Outcomes Examples in Academic Areas**

The following paragraphs provide additional details, showing how BCCC faculty makes informed decisions based on the use of student learning outcomes data. The outcomes have informed some adjustments of program goals, deletions of course activities, and changes with student measurement methods.

#### **Mathematics**

The mathematics transfer program follows the assessment matrix closely using the assessment instruments written by the mathematics faculty. The MAT 140, 141 and 210 assessment data was collected analyzed and reported in TracDat in 2015-2016. For the outcomes that did not meet the benchmark (70% of the students demonstrate mastery at 70% level or above), the mathematics faculty assessment team discussed and agreed on a learning improvement plan that include: (1) remind the students that they will be tested on the student learning outcomes on the final exam and (2) provide regular reviews (in the form of quizzes, worksheets or home assignments) that includes the student learning outcome questions to help students strengthen their understanding of the materials and to retain the information. Data collected at the end of the current semester will be used for the follow up report in Fall 2016 for these calculus courses. MAT 211 was in the implementation phase in Spring 2016 and will be reported out in TracDat in Fall 2016. MAT 212 will be in implementation and reporting phases in the 2016-2017 academic year. Where, MAT 212 are now offered in hybrid mode. Due to College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act (CCRCCA) of 2013, the mathematics transfer program made the following changes to its curriculum: (1) MAT 222 was deleted and replaced with MAT 219; and (2) CSC 120 was deleted and replaced with MAT 107. These changes will be assessed in the next assessment cycle.

#### **Engineering Transfer**

The SLOs, benchmarks, assessment instruments, and scoring aligns with the respective program goals. Several changes have been made in recent years in the Engineering Transfer Program. In fall 2013, a new calculus book and online software was selected and will be used in the calculus courses based on the SLOA data from previous academic years. Also, MAT 140 (Calculus I) and MAT 141 (Calculus II) are now offered online and in the traditional classroom setting at the discretion of the Math & Engineering department. The Math & Engineering department has also started offering sections of MAT 140 and MAT 141 at BioPark based on the registration data and student input. The Calculus courses are currently in the planning and piloting phases of the five year assessment cycle. Data collection and analyses were scheduled for the 2015-2016 academic year. This data should reveal the effectiveness of changes, related to Program Goal I. A new Physics lab instructor was hired in 2011, which relates to Program Goal II. Data was collected for the physics courses in the 2014-2015 academic year. In Spring 2013, Web based, interactive simulation modules were introduced into EGN 201 and the syllabus for EGN 101 was revised to include designing, simulating, and testing a robot as additional student learning outcomes. Also, a new Engineering professor was hired prior to the fall 2013 semester and started teaching EGN 101. A new edition of the engineering textbook was adopted in the 2014-2015 academic year that included updated homework problems. These changes relate to Program Goal III. The engineering faculty was awarded a grant from National Science Foundation (NSF) that supports exploring different teaching methods to improve student success in developmental math courses for students with STEM majors. The goal is provide students with a strong foundation in algebra to better prepare students for Calculus. These changes influence student performance. For example, students' scores from EGN 102 (Program Goal III-B) and EGN 201 (Program Goal III-C) have thus increased; in EGN 102, 80% of the students in 2011 and 92% of the students in 2012 scored 70% or higher on the assessment instrument. Also, in EGN 201, 77% of the students in 2011 and 83% of the students in 2012 scored 70% or higher on the assessment instrument. However, the rate dropped (58% of the students) in 2013, which was the semester when the web-based, interactive simulation modules were introduced. It was determined that data would be monitored in future semesters to see if the drop was an anomaly or if it is related to changes in the classroom because the sample sizes reflected a small percentage of the student population. The EGN 201 students also failed to meet the benchmark in 2014.

#### **Robotics/Mechatronics Technology**

The Robotics Technology Program was created in the 2009-2010 academic year as a part of a NSF Advanced Technological Education grant. In 2011-2012 the program was modified by replacing RBT 102 with TEL 100. This change was made to keep the technology in the program up to date with industry standards. In 2013-2014, the program was modified again to include mechatronics, which prompted a name change to Robotics/Mechatronics Technology. This change was also made to keep the technology in the program up to date with the industry standards. Additionally, the College hired a new full time faculty member to teach the robotics/mechatronics courses. In Spring 2016, an articulation agreement is drafted with Capitol College.

### **Biotechnology**

The Biotechnology AAS program is scheduled to complete the SLOA 5-year cycle in academic year 2016-2017. Courses being assessed include: (1) BTC 103 (Special Topics in Biotechnology I), (2) BTC 104 (Special Topics in Biotechnology II), (3) BTC 105 (Techniques & Instrumentation for Biotechnology), (4) BIO 102 (Principles of Biology), (5) BIO 199 (Individual Study in Biology), and (6) BIO 212 (Microbiology). Three of the six courses that have been assessed and the remaining 3 are undergoing assessment.

BIO 102 (Principles of Biology), all benchmark criteria were achieved. 70% of the students in the BIO 102 Lecture component obtained a score of 70% or higher on the biotechnology related embedded questions. Assessment evaluations were completed with a random sample of 8 out of 15 classes (n=166/251 students). 75% (n= 126/166) scored 70% or higher in each assessment tool. The benchmark was met. BIO 102 also has a laboratory component (BIO 102L) and the Student Learning Outcome Assessment Plan (SLOAP) evaluation of BIO 102L met the standard of 70% of the students obtaining 7 points or higher on a scale of 10 for each assessment tool. This was assessed by a random sample of 5 out of 15 classes (n=109/251) selected for assessment, where 77% (n= 84/109) scored 70% or higher on quizzes. The benchmark was met, and 73% (n=79/109) scored 70% or higher in lab reports. A cyber education (Cyber-Ed) module was also assessed with the standard of 70% of students will score 20/20 in four Cyber-Ed module-based computer assignments or 70% of students will get 70% or higher in four web resource based activities. The data met these benchmarks with 76% (n= 126/166) of students scoring 20/20 in computer assignments and 70% (n=116/166) of the students scoring 70% or higher in web resource based activities. No Learning Improvement Plans were needed.

BIO 199 (Individual Study in Biology), assessments were based on student presentation of their research work summarizing their internship. In Fall 2015, 100% students (N=8) achieved 70% or more. The average score of these presentations was 93.4%. This internship course is one of the last requirements of the program where students are placed in internship sites at University of Maryland and biotech companies. The result implies that students were professionally as well as scientifically prepared as they completed their internships. We would like to increase the bench mark criteria to 80% or more for the next cycle of assessment.

BIO 212 (Microbiology), the SLOAR to evaluate comprehensive understanding of the principles and practices of biotechnology were evaluated on embedded questions on the Fall 2014 final examination. A total of 173 students were assessed for two Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). In SLO1, benchmark criteria was 70% of students will correctly answer 4 out of 5 embedded questions. 121 of 173 (70%) students successfully answered 4/5 questions and the bench mark criteria was met. In SLO 2, benchmark criteria was 70% of students will correctly answer 4 out of 5 embedded questions in final exam. 108 of 173 (63%) students successfully answered 4/5 questions. Learning Implementation Plan (LIP) was implemented in Fall 2014 and to be reassessed in Spring 2015. Students were assigned Learnsmart questions related to the learning outcome. Students were given worksheets to reinforce the material. This resulted in an overall improvement of 6% towards meeting the benchmark criteria.

### **Computer Aided Drafting and Design (CADD)**

Every semester CADD faculty assessed three outcomes for each course. Based on outcome assessments used to improve teaching and learning the CADD program hired graduate students as tutors to assist students who were behind with course their activities. The program also continued to provide prescriptive tutoring to students to work on drawing projects. Tutor schedules and open lab hours were changed to align with classroom times.

The program purchased new SolidWorks software to improve teaching and learning of 3D modeling in CADD. Additionally, the purchase of a 3D printer helped students visualize the concept of printing 3D models in CADD. As a result some changes in the average score for the three course outcomes are: (1) CADD 101 in fall 2012 95%

students scored 70% or higher, 96% in spring 2013 and fall 2013 to 99% in spring 2014, (2) CADD 112 94% in spring 2013 to 95% in spring 2014, (3) CADD 140 97% in fall 2012 to 100% in fall 2013.

### **Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA)**

The rigor of the first year PTA curriculum can be challenging for students. The faculty continues to utilize supplemental instruction offered during open lab four days per week to allow additional practice with didactic material. Students also meet with faculty during week seven to review their grades, study habits, and their adjustment to the school and life balance necessary to be successful in the program. As a result, a review of spring semester preparedness noted that in years 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2016, all enrolled students successfully passed their spring coursework. One student enrolled in the 2015 spring semester was unsuccessful. However, for the years, 2005 through 2009, an average of 1-2 students did not successfully pass spring PTA coursework.

First-year spring courses have increased review sessions prior to exams to promote comprehension of information in Medical Lectures and less memorization. The exams include more short answer and case study questions to allow students to provide detailed responses. For 2015, 100% of the students achieved the benchmark of 75% on all exams.

Second-year courses have increased mock patient scenarios using videos, simulated patients, and clinical decision-making activities to prepare students for full time affiliations. Success is evidenced by improved grades and comments on the students' clinical performance evaluations related to professionalism, safety, documentation, communication, and treatment planning. Clinical faculty have indicated that the students were able to document most basic data independently and requested confirmation with more complex patients/clients. These efforts combined with offering more practice board exams and preparation, the PTA program has continued to have 100% pass rate on licensing exam since 2012.

### **Dental Hygiene**

The Dental Hygiene Program faculty have completed student learning outcomes assessment in all courses within the program. The following results have been through the efforts of several years of assessment starting in 2010. There have been teaching strategies implemented in each course such as group clicker review sessions, clinical competencies, and final examination reviews. Since the data show that retention tends to be better after students make it past the first semester. These efforts were employed to address the first semester failure rate. There are times when students leave for personal reasons, but these results reflect student failure in course evaluative measures. During the 2014-2015 academic year, the Dental Hygiene Program has achieved its goal of retaining at least 80% in the first semester.

### **Nursing**

For several semesters prior to Fall 2011, the retention rates in NUR 122 were at an unacceptable level. During the 2014-2015 academic year, four unit exams and a comprehensive exam were given. The course faculty noted that exam two was extremely difficult for most students and upon review of the exam data, it was determined that part of the problem was the volume of content on this test. The decision was made to divide this exam into two parts with resulting improvement. In another effort to boost retention, the content on each exam was decreased by having five exams and a comprehensive. Scores on most exams improved with the exception of exam five. As a result, this test was divided into two parts to further decrease exam content. With that change, retention rates improved over the baseline year (the 2014-2015 academic year). In addition, students had access to prescriptive tutoring due to grant-funded tutoring (Who Will Care Grant) for first-year students.

In Fall 2010, the pass rate for NUR 120 [with four unit exams] was less than 75%. Five unit exams were added at that time, but faculty noticed that it had lower (52-75%) pass rate because of the volume of material on this exam. In Spring of 2013, the National Council changed the test plan for State Boards of nursing and the exams became more challenging. As a result, the department stopped dividing unit exams.

### **Political Science**

As BCCC addresses the core competency of social responsibility and personal development, political science courses are essential. Prior to the decision by the former college administration to delete several academic programs, there were five courses offered in political science. Currently, there are two courses offered each semester.

However, PS 102 (State and Local Government) , has not been offered for several semesters due to low enrollment. The FAT for Political Science met and discussed various ways to awaken students' social responsibility and political engagement. Assessment of PS 101 (American Government), revealed that less than 87% (<22) of the 24 students did not score above 70% in the oral presentation component of the course assessment. More than 70% of the students had some or great difficulty communicating and verbalizing the traits of a well-educated individual in their oral presentation. They could not clearly and competently articulate the traits of a well-educated individual and how these traits helped them to cultivate a sense of personal responsibility and social accountability.

Evaluation of students' writings and essays revealed that they have good ideas and understand what it means to be socially responsible, but they struggle with how to articulate these ideas in ways that are coherent and relatable. To this end, students are referred to prescriptive tutoring and are directed to other writing resources such as instructor's writing samples to help improve their writing and articulation. To further strengthen students' writing skills, the instructor continues to administer essay-style pre and post-test examinations and writing exercises that help students to think critically and analytically about complex political problems in the communities in which they live. Additionally, students are encouraged to practice more group-speaking among their friends and peers to gain confidence with oral and public presentation.

### **General Education/ Institutional Student Learning Outcomes**

When the *Practical Guide* was adopted in 2011, a process was included for assessing our core competencies. The College established eight competencies which are outcomes within our General Education courses. At the time of adoption, each general education course was categorized to one or more of the outcomes. The courses were then included in a schedule matrix which would ensure that all eight outcomes would be assessed within the five year period. Results of the assessments would be shared with the newly founded College-Wide Assessment Council (CWAC).

The initial process relied on Faculty Assessment Team (FAT) members volunteering to lead the assessment efforts each year. This has since been replaced with the creation of a new faculty appointment of General Education (GE) Coordinator. Working with faculty within each cycle of the assessment, it is the GE Coordinator's responsibility to make sure the assessments are completed on time and that the results are reviewed for potential improvements. In addition to being shared and presented at the CWAC, results are now shared through the Faculty Senate reporting system and are summarized in the General Education Coordinator's year end report to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

The College is currently mid-cycle for our fourth of five cycles of assessment. As the largest cycle with 33 instructors participating, and the only cycle to cross over disciplines, it has benefitted from knowledge gained from the previous three cycles. Grading rubrics have been revised data collection rubrics have been adopted the from Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) standards.

Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

#### **Recent Accreditation Activities**

The 2011 visiting team from the MSCHE found the College out of compliance with Standard 14 and placed the College on probation, ordered an immediate liaison guidance visit to discuss expectations. A monitoring report was compiled to address Middle States standards 4, 6, and 14, to be followed by a small team visit. In June 2012, the MSCHE found BCCC in compliance with Standards 4, 6, and 14 and removed the College from probation but requested a monitoring report that outlined progress with Standard 14 by December 1, 2012. The MSCHE accepted the monitoring report in March, 2013. The College then completed its Self Study for 2012-2013. In June 2014, after the Self-Study site visit, the MSCHE warned the institution that its accreditation may be in jeopardy because of insufficient evidence of compliance with Standards 2, 3, 6, and 7. As of June 2015, the MSCHE accepted the February 2015 monitoring report and removed the warning status indicating the institution is now in compliance with Standards 2, 3, 6, and 7 and to reaffirm accreditation. A follow-up monitoring report is due on September 1, 2016 addressing Standards 2, 3, and 7, per MSCHE standard 6 does not need to be addressed in this upcoming submission.

#### **Recent Accomplishments**

In Fall 2015, the College adopted a new assessment tracking software, Nuventine TracDat. TracDat offers greater flexibility with tracking documentation than the previous assessment software solution (Xitracs). TracDat is now implemented in all academic programs and credit courses in the Division of Academic Affairs. The BCCC's Student Learning Outcomes establish the framework to integrate the process between outcomes, assessments, and reporting. Currently, the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA), the Office of Assessment, academic program coordinators, discipline liaisons, faculty committee chairs, academic Deans and Associate Deans can generate SLOA reports and curriculum maps from TracDat. The data from these reports provide a variance of evidence that able to drive and inform academic decisions.

Currently, the College is updating all Course Syllabi for credit courses in the Division of Academic Affairs. Whereas, all Student Learning Outcomes will be reviewed, updated, and documented in the revised Course Syllabi. Additionally, the updated SLOs and assessment methods will be recorded in TracDat and assessed within the five year cycle of assessment.

Also, assessments of the College's General Education program are reflected in the College's Core Competencies following the five year schedule established in the Fall of 2011, in the *Practical Guide*. The *Practical Guide* outlined eight competencies that are incorporated in the four-semester process of Planning, Piloting, Implementation and Reporting of student learning outcomes. As of June 2016, the following core competencies have been assessed and reported: Information and Computer Literacy, Personal and Social Responsibilities, Numerical Reasoning and Arts, and Aesthetic Awareness. The assessment is supported by an active and engaged General Education/Core Competencies committee sanctioned by the College's Faculty Senate. The committee is led by a faculty member jointly appointed by the Faculty Senate and VPAA; appointed as the College's General Education Coordinator. The General Education program is in Cycle IV of the assessment process (Reading Comprehension and Critical Thinking), the program will pilot automation of the assessment process through the Canvas Learning Management System measuring level outcomes with rubrics that link course assignments with courses assessments.

### **Assessment: Strategic Planning Processes**

BCCC laid the groundwork for assessment processes based on the alignment of the 2013 – 2018 Strategic Plan by incorporating institutional plans. The Facilities Master Plan (FMP) was updated and submitted in accordance with State guidelines based on recent data. The Strategic Plan assessment process continued in accordance with the established timeline. Benchmarking processes are underway through the use of an external survey and the Performance Accountability Report (PAR) process, in accordance with MHEC requirements.

BCCC is committed to evaluating the effectiveness of its processes, programs, and initiatives in supporting the College mission and accreditation. The newly formed Accreditation Monitoring Council, Strategic Planning Council, and the reconstituted College-Wide Assessment Council (CWAC) are examples of the institution's commitment to ensuring effective institutional assessment. Systematic reviews of academic and non-academic programs are vital to facilitating student success (Strategic Plan: Goal 1). Assessment of existing services and relationships are important for building new partnerships (Strategic Plan: Goal 2). Evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and services are a vital component to institutional sustainability (Strategic Plan: Goal 3). Data gathered from program evaluations and surveys of students and staff help drive technology priorities (Strategic Plan: Goal 4).

The President's Staff and the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) assumed the role of a Strategic Planning Council to align strategic planning priorities and initiatives in the context of institutional effectiveness and to ensure that the institution effectively accomplishes its mission through goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps that align with the FY 2013 – 2018 Strategic Plan. The OIR staff assisted in determining appropriate measures for each strategy to establish annual assessment of the Strategic Plan. The Board of Trustees will be updated every March and September regarding progress towards accomplishing the goals that began with the March 2015 Board of Trustees meeting.

### **Assessment: Component Institutional Plans Assessment**

As discussed in Standard 2, the Academic Master Plan (AMP), Strategic Enrollment Management and Retention (SEMR) Plan, the Integrated Facilities Master Plan, and the Technology Plan, have been updated and are explicitly aligned with the FY 2013 - 2018 Strategic Plan and connected to the budget. Each of the component institutional plans have assessment measures that will address the progress the College is making towards achieving the goals set forth in the respective plans. A timeline was established to assess the plans as listed in the Calendar of Periodic Deadlines.

### **Assessment: Academic Master Plan**

The 2014 - 2017 Academic Master Plan (AMP) is an updated version of the original 2012 - 2017 plan. The 2014 AMP was revised to include previous goals: Goal 1: Academic Success and Goal 2: Effective Operations. But also added three new goals: Goal 3: Physical Learning Environment, Goal 4: Effective Technology, and Goal 5: Revenue which align with the Strategic Plan and institutional mission. This scaffolding facilitates a detailed understanding of the Academic Master Plan, its use by the College community, and how it integrates with existing planning processes and documents. Phase I of the AMP process is complete. Phase I included the development of missions for all units and alignment of unit goals with the AMP and Strategic Plan. The planning process for the AMP update has two phases. Phase II involved the creation of unit plan strategies and measures. This work began in January 2015 and concluded in May 2015 with full ratification by the Faculty Senate. Phase II created a plan for assessing progress towards goal accomplishment. The template used in the AMP follows the format used for the measures of the Strategic Plan objectives, strategies, and action steps. Assessment of AMP measures will occur annually at the conclusion of each academic year by Academic Affairs. Results of the AMP assessment will be shared annually during the College Community Forum and at Academic Affairs division meetings. The results from the annual assessment will provide data for adjustments and information decisions as appropriately. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will provide updates regarding the status of AMP goals to the Faculty Senate President and the CWAC during monthly meetings as appropriate. It has been shared throughout the entire Academic Affairs division.

### **Assessment: Strategic Enrollment Management and Retention Plan**

The Strategic Enrollment Management and Retention (SEMR) Plan is aligned with Academic Master Plan and is supported by the remaining component institutional plans (Integrated Facilities Master Plan and Technology Plan).



Assessment measures have been incorporated into the Plan and a timeline has been established to conduct mid-year and annual assessment reviews.

**Assessment: Integrated Facilities Master Plan**

The current Facilities Master Plan (FMP) format was developed after a period of internal assessment and strategic planning in 2014 and 2015. While previous versions were developed with the use of outside consultants, Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) elected to take an extensive look at the previous versions and compile a more streamlined FMP document. The current Facilities Master Plan (FMP) 2016-2025 was developed after a period of internal assessment and planning in 2014 and 2015. Assessing the outcomes of the goals stated within the Integrated Facilities Master Plan begins with the customer service help desk. An electronic work order system has been implemented to record and track facilities related service requests. The system allows monitoring of areas where the same concerns are generated repeatedly. Related service calls can be identified and physical or programmatic adjustments can be made to strengthen customer service. Daily inspections occur in all physical plant locations and in random classroom inspections. Deficiencies are recorded and reported back to maintenance supervision. The College's staff development tracking system allows facilities personnel to be appropriately trained to identify these deficiencies as well as maintain a record of training hours provided. As the scope of services or deficiencies grows in terms of dollar value and square footage, projects are created.

**Assessment: Technology Plan**

The Technology Plan is assessed each year to determine which projects will be adopted and funded (or funding requested) for the appropriate fiscal year. The funded projects become the basis for the BCCC Technology Tactical Plan which details implementation. Highlights from the ERP timeline, were shared with the College community at the Community Forum in January 2015.

**Closing Comments**

Baltimore City Community College has made progress towards achieving and sustaining compliance with Standards 2, 3, and 7 of the Middle States Characteristics of Excellence, while Standards 12 and 14 have been in compliance since June 2012. As the centerpiece, institutional effectiveness has become structurally embodied within the institution with a newly adopted strategic planning process. Accordingly, the AMP is the foundation for connecting component institutional plans to the Strategic Plan. To ensure effectiveness, the Strategic Plan and component institutional plans include assessment measures and processes for budget and resource alignment with Strategic Plan goals.

## Appendix

**Table 1. Timeline for Monitoring Progress of Key Performance Indicators**

July	Final report presented to President’s Staff.
August	Final report presented to College Community at Community Forum.
September	CWAC meets.
October	CWAC meets. CWAC provides progress reports to SPC and AMC*. Final report presented to Board of Trustees.
November	CWAC meets. CWAC provides progress reports to SPC and AMC*.
December	Data is compiled for mid-year KPI update
January	Data is compiled for mid-year KPI update
February	CWAC reviews mid-year KPI update. CWAC provides progress reports to SPC and AMC*.
March	CWAC meets and finalizes mid-year KPI update. CWAC provides progress reports to SPC and AMC*. Present mid-year KPI update to Board of Trustees
April	CWAC meets. CWAC provides progress reports to SPC and AMC*.
May	CWAC meets. CWAC provides progress reports to SPC and AMC*.
June	Data is compiled for Annual Report

*\*Note: CWAC may also provide updates to other committees, councils, or shared governance bodies as needed (e.g. SEMRC, SEC, SGA, etc.)*

**Table 2. BCCC Program Review and Evaluation Cycle**

## Academic Program Review Cycle 2012 - 2017

Cycle I: 2012 - 13	Cycle II: 2013 - 14	Cycle III: 2014 - 15	Cycle IV: 2015 - 16	Cycle V: 2016 - 17
Dental Hygiene	Engineering Transfer	Accounting	*Addiction Counseling <i>(moved from Cycle V)</i>	Arts and Sciences Transfer: Art
Health Information Technology	Robotics Technology/ Mechatronics	Biotechnology <i>(moved from Cycle II since the Coordinator was not available in the summer)</i>	*Allied Human Services <i>(moved from Cycle V)</i>	*Arts and Sciences Transfer: Mathematics <i>(moved from Cycle II)</i>
Legal Assistant		Business Administration Transfer	*Early Childhood Education <i>(moved from Cycle V)</i>	Arts and Sciences Transfer: Music
Nursing		Business – includes Management and Marketing	Office Administration <i>(moved from Cycle V)</i>	*Arts and Sciences Transfer: Psychology <i>(moved from Cycle II)</i>
Physical Therapist Assistant		Computer Information Systems	Fashion Design	*Arts and Sciences Transfer: Science <i>(moved from Cycle II)</i>
Respiratory Care		Computer Aided Drafting and Design	Law Enforcement and Correctional Administration	*Arts and Sciences Transfer: Theater
Surgical Technologist		Construction Supervision	*Mental Health Services <i>(moved from Cycle V)</i>	*General Studies Transfer <i>(moved from Cycle II)</i>
Teacher Education Transfer			Special Education Assistant Certificate	

Updated: 2-6-15

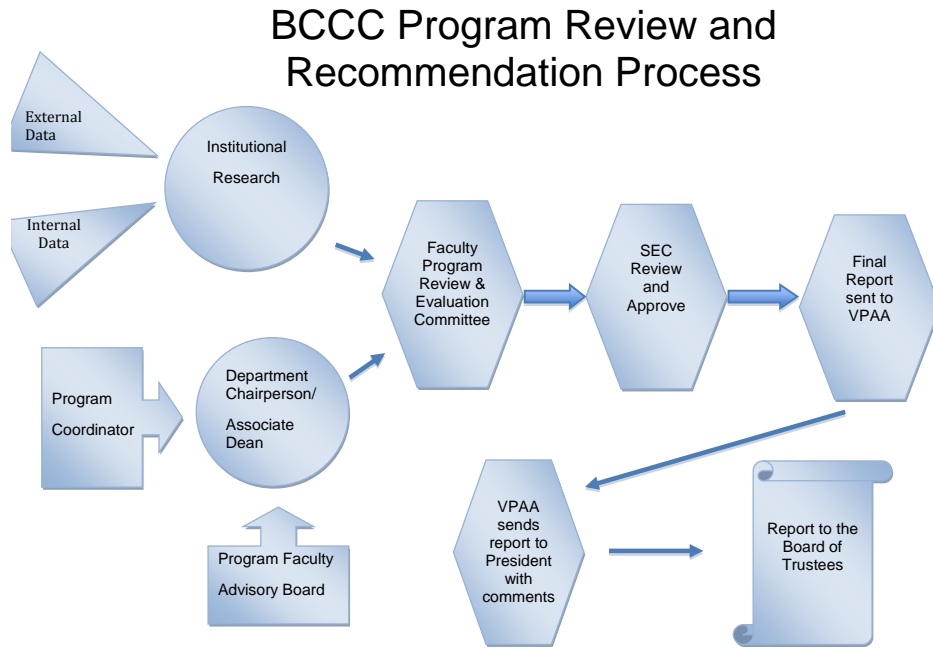
Table 3:  
*Five-Year Program Outcomes Assessment Cycle*

YEAR	ACTIVITIES	DOCUMENTATION
<i>Planning</i> Year 1 2012-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a program plan with the support of the Director of Curriculum and Assessment that includes the program mission and vision, program goals, program assessment measures and criteria for success, and a curriculum map and program student learning outcome assessment plan.</li> <li>• The plan will include relevant recommendations and revisions from the previous Analysis and Reporting Phase.</li> <li>• Alignment of course syllabi with the Faculty Assessment Team.</li> <li>• Development of a data collection process with the Office of Institutional Research.</li> </ul>	Program Curriculum Map and Program Outcome Assessment Plan submitted by the Program Coordinator and Faculty Assessment Team to the Dean, Associate Dean, CWAC, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, and VPAA.
<i>Pilot, Implementation</i> Year 2-4 2012-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of student learning outcomes assessment across all courses in the program.</li> <li>• Faculty members gather data at the course level.</li> <li>• Results are provided to the Program Coordinator for on-going analysis.</li> </ul>	Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Report submitted by the Program Coordinator and the Faculty Assessment Team to the Dean, Associate Dean, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, and VPAA
<i>Analysis and Reporting</i> Year 5 2016-2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisions and modifications to program mission, vision, goals, and outcomes are suggested based upon assessment data. (Revisions are incorporated into the year 1 planning cycle as the cycle repeats.)</li> <li>• Results are presented to the Program Review and Evaluation Committee for evaluation.</li> </ul>	Program Review and Evaluation Report submitted by the Program Coordinator and Department Dean, Associate Dean to PRE Committee, Vice President of Academic Affairs, President, and Board of Trustees

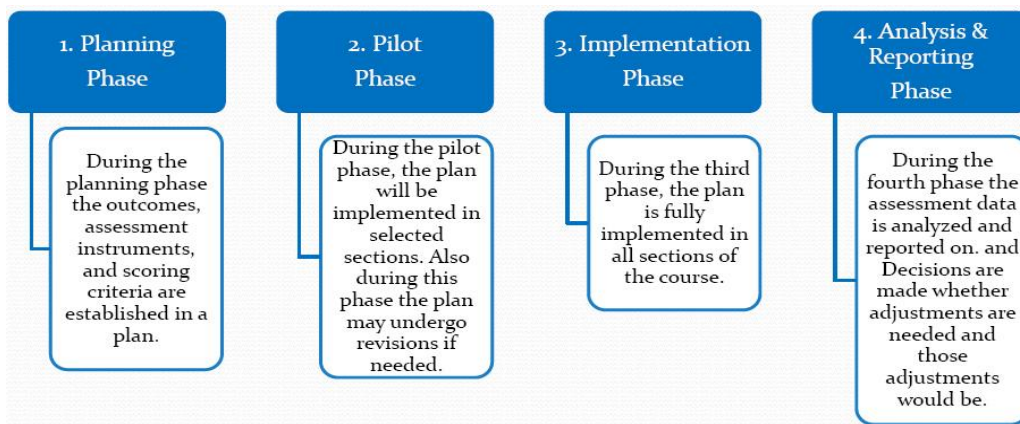
Table 4:  
*Institutional General Education Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Schedule*

Timeline	Year 1 <i>2012-2013</i>	Year 2 <i>2013-2014</i>	Year 3 <i>2014-2015</i>	Year 4 <i>2015-2016</i>	Year 5 <i>2016-2017</i>
Competency	Information and Computer Literacy	Personal Development and Social Responsibility	Numerical Analysis  Arts and Aesthetic Awareness	Critical Thinking  Deductive and Inferential Thinking	Multicultural Diversity  Oral and Written Communication

**Diagram 1. BCCC Program Review and Recommendation Process**



**Diagram 2. SLOA Process Activities**



**Carroll Community College**



## Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.



## **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

Since the 2011 team visit, the College has made a concerted effort to review its processes and provide additional data tools to further support the assessment process. The following measures include all the institutional measures of learning the College reviews on an annual basis. The results are reviewed first with the Planning and Advisory Council (PAC) for discussion before being presented to the Board of Directors for approval.

- #11 – Student Perception of Institutional Learning Support
- #12 – Student Satisfaction with Academic and Student Services
- #14 – Learning Beyond the Classroom
- #15 – Core Competency Proficiencies
- #16 – First Year Transfers in Good Standing
- #17 – Graduate Satisfaction with Transfer Preparation
- #18 – Baccalaureate Attainment Rate
- #20 – AAS/AT Graduate Employment
- #21 – Licensure Exam Pass Rate
- #26 – Developmental Course Pass Rates
- #28 – Successful Transition to Credit Courses
- #29 – Course Success Rate
- #30 – Fall/spring Retention Rate
- #31 – Graduate/Transfer Rate
- #32 – Associate Degree Completion
- #33 – Successful Persister Rate
- #35 – Program Goal Achievement
- #36 – Courses Meeting General Education Benchmarks
- #37 – Active/Collaborative Learning
- #38 – Student/Faculty Interaction
- #39 – Academic Challenges
- #40 – Student Effort

In an effort to focus on direct student learning measures, in 2012 the Executive Team added three indicators of learning from the program review process (#15, #35, and #36 above). This change gives additional stakeholder access to information about student learning, with greater opportunities for helpful feedback because PAC membership includes both faculty and staff representation.

The program review process at the College has always been an integral part of learning assessment. In the five years since the 2011 Self-Study, however, the College has enhanced the program review process by implementing an annual review of every program, culminating in a comprehensive review in the fifth year. Rather than writing a report every five years, program and department chairs and directors now annually monitor key measures of performance, such as enrollment, course success, and graduation rates, as well as report on the assessment of learning outcomes. This annual review of key performance indicators is now an integral part of the ongoing culture of the College rather than an episodic activity every five years. The five year reporting is scheduled so that all programs are evaluated within the five-year timeframe. \*A sample of the template is provided in the Appendix.

The College has now instituted an Assessment Day in June of each year. On that day, each program/department is given its annual data for review, which includes a review of learning outcomes. In the all-day meeting, the chair of each program/department discusses the results in light of what needs improvement. Over the summer, the analysis is completed. In August, programs/departments meet to review one more time before setting plans for the coming year.

In addition, one of the keys to many of the learning improvements has been the three-year assessment of General Education. The General Education Assessment Plan, written in 2010, detailed the process for a systematic review of the General Education program at the College. The General Education Committee formulated this three-year plan as a way to examine General Education, using the same guidelines for review as other academic programs. The plan mapped out a review cycle that included each of the seven General Education Learning Goals and their associated competencies.

To achieve this assessment, all faculty members volunteered to take part in either a design team (one for each learning goal) or an assessment team (one for each learning goal). The following components are part of the process:

- *Design teams:*
  - Review and revise learning goals: definitions and elements of each learning goal were researched and agreed upon.
  - Develop rubrics: assessment rubrics for each learning goal were created (based on existing VALUE rubric models). The College was recognized for its efforts in the publication \_\_\_\_\_.
- *Development of the Assessment Plan:*
  - Design the assessment cycle: using the Performance-Based Model created by Seybert and O'Hara, the Director of Learning Outcomes and Assessment developed a plan to collect student artifacts. Faculty-developed assessments were used so that additional work did not have to be done by faculty.
  - Create an assessment audit: faculty identified which learning goals were assessed as primary (i.e., the instructor measured at least one of the elements associated with a learning goal, and all sections of a course used the same assessment).
  - Collect artifacts: the LOA Director used a random selection process to identify 20% of the courses to provide artifacts. Two students from each course were also identified randomly to preserve the integrity of the selection process.

- *Scoring teams:*
  - Score the artifacts: teams worked in pairs to score the random samples of student artifacts using that goal's rubric.
- *Reporting of results:*
  - Share results: the Learning Outcomes Assessment Director collected and analyzed all of the results and presented them to the General Education Committee. Results were shared annually at faculty meetings. They also became part of the Institutional Effectiveness report (Appendix?), which was shared at PAC and with the Board of Trustees.

Based on the scoring results, Improvement Strategy Teams (IST) were created to develop instructional methods to improve learning. ISTs were piloted for both the Information Literacy and Critical Thinking Learning Goals. The student artifact scoring process was then repeated after the College implemented the improvement strategies identified by the ISTs.

Assessment of learning comes directly from the office of the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. After each program/department completes its analysis, the reports are sent directly to the VP for review. Results are then included in the Executive Team's planning for the coming year. The College has also established both a Learning Outcomes Committee and a General Education Committee, made up of faculty and Student Affairs staff. These committees provide input into improvement, based on information shared at monthly meetings.

The Appendix contains specific data results from the most recent report to the Board of Directors. A specific section has been identified for attention to assessment of learning, titled *Learning Outcomes Assessment and Program Evaluation*.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

### **Improvement Results**

The program review process, along with other forms of program-level assessment, have led to improvements such as the following:

- Through discussions in the Data Governance Committee, the College was able to create a better way to identify program goals for students enrolled at the College. As a result, program chairs and directors now link successful completion of outcomes to the appropriate number of students enrolled in the program, which enables them to accurately determine if the course outcomes are being met for their graduates.
- Also following data discussions in the Data Governance Committee, the College invested in a Business Objects reporting system that now enables the College to link to Clearinghouse data regarding transfer to four-year institutions. This will assist programs like Accounting in tracking student progress in upper-level courses in order to give greater assurance of course quality.
- Starting in 2014, the College began separately aggregating information about success in Distance Learning classes in annual program reviews. This change has enabled program chairs and directors to address any gaps in learning success that might be attributed specifically to the online learning environments.
- Using data gathered on a common assignment, Health faculty saw a need to change the assignment to include a journal exercise to better assess General Education Learning Goal 7, Personal Development.
- The Education program, through its review process, noted inconsistencies in the grades for a writing assignment. They met and used a norming process to improve their grading rubric.
- The College has added several courses to the curricula to support pathways and Areas of Study. For example, the Psychology program added PSYC235, Introduction to Helping and Counseling Skills, to teach skills that could be applied to broader fields of study, such as Education or Nursing, as well as for those students who want to major in Psychology.
- After examining enrollment data, the Business Administration program identified a problem with low enrollment in evening sections of their courses. They decided to add accelerated course programming at the request of working adults who were pursuing their degrees. They will be comparing success data in the coming year to determine what effect the acceleration might have on completion of both coursework and degrees.

- The Reading and English transition program instituted modular programming in an effort to improve student success. Analyzing two years of data, the program saw the following improvements:
  - increase in the number of students who start the sequence upon initial enrollment (among those students who need additional skill development in reading)
  - acceleration through the program for the lowest-level students (091), with 40 percent of them now completing the sequence in one term
  - increased retention for students in the last transitional sequence (099) from one semester to the next
  - parity in graduate rates between students who complete the sequence of transitional courses and those who do not test into reading at the college level
  - acceleration through the program for the highest-level students (099), who should have been able to complete the sequence in one term but often did not

Note: This program was nominated as a Bellwether finalist because of its work to improve results.

- Using data on student success, the Mathematics program determined that it needed to change the course materials for its transitional mathematics courses. The program is currently evaluating this decision and will be making additional suggestions for improvement as the results have not significantly increased student achievement of outcomes.
- The Computer Graphics program added a Mac computer lab, believing it would help students better achieve successful completion of learning outcomes, which it did. In their most recent program review, they determined a further need to change some of the outcomes in CGR 270 to continue improving results.
- The Education program, which includes Early Childhood, Elementary, Secondary, and Special Education programs, instituted a TEAM for Success program (Teacher Education Achievement and Matriculation) designed to support students in their completion goals. The program developed embedded advising strategies, workshops, and community and club activities, all designed to increase the connection between theory and practice. As a result, its students have a high rate of success. This model has been renamed the Living Classroom and was recognized as a Community College Innovation of the Year in 2013-2014 by the League for Innovation; the Education program was honored by being featured on the poster for that year's conference.
- The Education program also examined its course prerequisites for Early Childhood Education as part of its program review, resulting in a sound sequence of student preparedness in the core program courses for the AAT in Early Childhood Education/Early Childhood Special Education and for the AAS in Early Childhood Education. These courses are now in alignment with the Elementary Education degree program.
- The English program, through its 2011 portfolio evaluation, decided to develop essays across all sections that make use of the parts of an argument, emphasize the use of primary and secondary sources in support of arguments, and include reflections of writing ability so that students could become more proficient in their critical analyses. They continue to evaluate progress annually.
- As a result of the deliberations of the Instructional Strategy Team, which examined Information Literacy Skills, the library staff re-evaluated its process for teaching those

skills. Librarians developed research guides for students and resources for instructors to help improve pre-assessment of skills. The effectiveness of these changes was part of the improvement noted in the re-evaluation of Learning Goal 4, Information Literacy.

- The Sciences program continues to experience a high level of successful student outcomes through its continual review of curricula. One course has been redesigned to meet student needs for a non-lab course, and additional courses in Geosciences have been realigned to meet student outcomes. Several new science pathways have also been created to align AA degree recommendations in Arts and Sciences with lower-level science requirements at top transfer institutions.
- As a result of its examination of critical thinking skills, the Humanities program created a more structured measurement of student learning. Faculty members have contextualized course content so that any course in the discipline would support the improved critical thinking skills.
- The Nursing program responded to the National League for Nursing's Position Statement, which calls for "innovation in nursing education requiring a paradigm shift . . . curricula are required to be evidence-based, flexible, responsive to students' needs, collaborative, and integrated with technology" (NLN, 2003). In response, Dr. Nancy Perry led her faculty through a complete redesign of the nursing curricula, intended to strengthen the student experience and support continued student success in passing the boards. While the initial cohort was not as successful as anticipated (with an 84% pass rate), the courses were reviewed, and additional changes were made for improvement. The next cohort will be evaluated in June 2016.

Improvements in artifact assessment were noted for both Information Literacy and Critical Thinking as a result of actions taken by faculty, which were based on the Instructional Strategies Team (IST) recommendations. As additional follow up, Dr. Paul Hanstedt, a noted expert on critical thinking and engagement, was invited to campus for a faculty workshop. Faculty members are currently involved in revising critical thinking assessments and will be reporting on these results in June 2016.

With the cycle of assessment for all learning goals now complete, the General Education Committee has recommended the following:

- the focus on the Critical Thinking Learning Goal continue through faculty meetings, outside speaker engagements, and development sessions
- all learning goal rubrics be reviewed and revised as needed
- the multi-year assessment process be repeated in order to validate results, since there are no national benchmarks for comparison at this time
- a process be implemented to distinguish primary and secondary instruction and assessment
- all programs be included in the review of learning goals

The committee also suggested that the College consistently apply its definitions for learning outcomes, course or program objectives, and course or program goals, especially on syllabi. Now that the first cycle of General Education assessment has been completed, the College will

reexamine the outcomes, objectives, and goals as they appear on course syllabi and program descriptions.

The Student Affairs division also participates in the assessment of General Education Learning Goals—in two very vital ways. First, students are introduced to the Student Planning System as they enter the College for the first time. They learn how the software works, how to register for courses, and how to plan their academic futures. Evidence of this system’s success was confirmed by a 15% percent increase in priority registration for the first group of students using it (in Fall 2015). Second, students needing transitional coursework are now required to take Course Success as their first module. Here, they learn skills designed to improve studying and time management, as well as address personal development learning goals.

Most recently, in June, the Student Affairs directors embarked on a process to develop an improved reporting structure that will include both administrative and learning assessments.

Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

**Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

At this time, Carroll Community College has not received any actions that need correcting for the assessment of learning. In June, 2016 Carroll submitted its five year periodic review. Comments from the review will not be available until November, 2016.

Carroll’s Annual Program Review document has the following sections completed annually by each program. The results are compiled and aggregated for the annual report to the Board of Trustees. Every five years, the program completes an comprehensive analysis and makes revisions to its goals based on the results.

**I. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND/OR COMPETENCIES**

a. Program learning goals. List all goals identified in the five-year plan.

<u>Benchmark</u> (Specific indicators/measures that the students should obtain)	<u>Assessment Tools</u> (List all assessment tools that will evaluate the outcome and measure selected)	<u>Results/Evidence</u> (Include specific data such as percentages to show benchmark/measure has been met)	<u>Analysis /Improvements</u> (If benchmark was met, how will the measure continue; or if the benchmark was not met, what strategies will be implemented.)
<b>Year 1: Learning Outcome :</b> Write in number of the outcome and its description			
<b>Year 2: Learning Outcome :</b>			
<b>Year 3: Learning Outcome :</b>			
<b>Year 4: Learning Outcome :</b>			
<b>Year 5: Learning Outcome :</b>			

\*Include overall results of assessment measures listed such as assignments, common essay rubric, grading rubric, or other measure lists.

b. General Education student learning goals. List all goals identified by the Gen. Ed. Review for analysis.

<u>Benchmark</u> (Specific indicators/measures that the students should obtain)	<u>Assessment Tools</u> (List all assessment tools that will evaluate the outcome and measure selected)	<u>Results/Evidence</u> (Include specific data such as percentages to show benchmark/measure has been met)	<u>Analysis /Improvements</u> (If benchmark was met, how will the measure continue; or if the benchmark was not met, what strategies will be implemented.)
Gen. Ed. Learning Goal 1: Information and Technology Literacy (could include recording cooperative projects done with library and media staff)			
Gen. Ed. Learning Goal 2: Communication			
Gen. Ed. Learning Goal 3: Global Awareness			



Gen. Ed. Learning Goal 4: Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning			
Gen. Ed. Learning Goal 5: Critical Thinking			
Gen. Ed. Learning Goal 6: Creativity			
Gen. Ed. Learning Goal 7: Personal Development			

**Reporting Data Taken From the 2015 Institutional Effectiveness Report to the Board of Trustees**

Carroll Community College has identified and had approved the following measures that are reported to the Board of Trustees, beginning in FY2011. The following excerpts have been taken from the FY2015 report:

<b>15 Core Competencies Proficiency</b>					
Percent of students scoring satisfactory or proficient across all dimensions of each core competency learning goal.					
<b>Benchmark TBD</b>	<b>FY2010</b>	<b>FY2011</b>	<b>FY2012</b>	<b>FY2013</b>	<b>FY2014 Improvement</b>
<b>Written Communication</b>					
		73%			
<b>v</b> = Achieved					
<b>Oral Communication</b>					
		70%			
<b>v</b> = Achieved					
<b>Creativity</b>					
				68%	
<b>v</b> = Achieved					
<b>Critical Thinking</b>					
			57%		+3%
<b>v</b> = Achieved					
<b>Global Awareness</b>					
		50%			
<b>v</b> = Achieved					

<b>Information and Technology Literacy</b>					
	65%				+6%
<b>√</b> = Achieved					
<b>Personal Development</b>					
				67%	
<b>√</b> = Achieved					
<b>Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning</b>					
			94%		
<b>√</b> = Achieved					

### Learning Outcomes Assessment and Program Evaluation

V. Ensure learning through ongoing assessment of student progress and achievement, and evaluation of the effectiveness of instructional programs and support services.

<b>26 Developmental Course Pass Rates</b>					
Percent of enrollees in Developmental English, Reading, and Mathematics earning grades C or above, reported separately for each discipline, fall terms.					
<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>
English = 70.0	76.1	75.4	69.4	70.0	73.2
<b>√</b> = Achieved	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>		<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>
Reading = 70.0	70.1	71.5	75.1	75.8	70.1
<b>√</b> = Achieved	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>
Math = 70.0	66.4	61.4	62.9	60.4	58.6
<b>√</b> = Achieved					

<b>27 Developmental Program Completion Rate</b>					
Percent of fall, first-time cohort needing developmental coursework who completed all recommended developmental courses within four years of entry; from MHEC Performance Accountability Report, Degree Progress Analysis.					
<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>2006 Cohort</b>	<b>2007 Cohort</b>	<b>2008 Cohort</b>	<b>2009 Cohort</b>	<b>2010 Cohort</b>
60.0	57.7	56.8	58.6	57.5	59.4

<b>√ = Achieved</b>					
<b>Cohort</b>	655	736	695	825	780

28 Successful Transition to Credit Courses					
Percent of fall students successfully completing a highest-level developmental course who attempt and pass a college-level course in the same discipline within one year. Reported for English (ENG-097) and mathematics (MAT-099).					
Benchmark 60%	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
English	58.4	64.0	62.3	54.5	58.9
<b>√ = Achieved</b>		<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>		
Math	56.1	58.3	60.5	61.5	63.5
<b>√ = Achieved</b>			<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>

29 Course Success Rate					
Percent of degree-credit course enrollees as of the official enrollment date who earn final course grades of C or above.					
Benchmark	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014
75.0	77.5	78.5	78.1	79.2	77.9
<b>√ = Achieved</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>

30 Fall-to-spring Retention Rates					
Percent of first-time fall cohort enrolling in subsequent spring term; reported separately for full-time and part-time students.					
Benchmark	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Full-time = 80.0	85.0	84.3	83.7	84.5	83.9
<b>√ = Achieved</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>
Part-time = 60.0	62.8	64.2	61.6	74.7	67.2
<b>√ = Achieved</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>

31 Graduation-Transfer Rate	
Percent of fall, first-time cohort attempting 18 hours during first two years, who graduated from Carroll or transferred, measured four years after entry; from MHEC Performance Accountability Report, Degree Progress Analysis.	

Benchmark	2006 Cohort	2007 Cohort	2008 Cohort	2009 Cohort	2010 Cohort
60.0	57.9	58.8	56.5	58.6	57.7
√ = Achieved					
<b>Statewide</b>	51.4	51.5	50.8	49.2	N/A

### 32 Associate Degree Completion Rate

Percent of fall, first-time cohort attempting 18 hours during first two years, who graduated from Carroll with an Associate Degree within four years.

Benchmark	2006 Cohort	2007 Cohort	2008 Cohort	2009 Cohort	2010 Cohort
35.0	31.2	29.4	34.4	37.7	36.6
√ = Achieved	√			√	√
<b>Cohort</b>	587	656	627	759	737

### 33 Successful-Persister Rate

Percent of fall, first-time cohort attempting 18 hours during first two years, who graduated, transferred, earned at least 30 credit hours with a cumulative grade point average  $\geq 2.0$ , or were still enrolled four years after entry.

Benchmark	2006 Cohort	2007 Cohort	2008 Cohort	2009 Cohort	2010 Cohort
80.0	75.1	79.3	76.4	76.4	73.1
√ = Achieved					
<b>Statewide</b>	71.9	73.7	71.4	69.3	N/A

**Cecil College**

## Cecil College 2016 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report

### **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

Assessment of both student learning and institutional effectiveness are evident in planning efforts throughout the College and are central to the College's culture. Assessment has served to strengthen and refine the institution's vision, mission, core values, and central learning outcomes by supporting the strategic planning effort. Results of assessment efforts are used to modify processes and subsequent actions taken to continually improve all facets of academic and administrative functions. Progress is ongoing to improve the learning environment, learning outcomes, and student completion, and enhance administrative practices as a result of the institution's assessment practices.

Institutional assessment at Cecil College is driven by the College's Strategic Plan and documented in the institutional Assessment Plan. The Assessment Plan documents and tracks work completed regarding (1) assessment of student learning outcomes and (2) administrative effectiveness. The assessment effort does not restrict how individual academic units, programs, or administrative divisions assess learning or effectiveness in their areas. Rather, divisional/departamental planning is integrated with the assessment planning effort. Through the implementation of subsidiary plans in each division, objectives germane to each area are measured, and results are reported to the College community and the Board of Trustees.

The College uses subsidiary plans to track progress of the actions aligned to each strategic initiative within the Strategic Plan. The actions and outcomes included in the plans are written at the tactical level and are updated annually or bi-annually. This approach to assessment has afforded the College the opportunity to develop comprehensive measures by which all institutional functions are quantitatively and/or qualitatively assessed and documented on a continuous cycle and are directly tied to the College's Mission and Strategic Plan.

The Assessment Plan encompasses student learning outcomes, student services effectiveness, and operational efficiency. Each division of the College has responsibility for one or more of the subsidiary plans in the following areas: Academic Programs, Assessment, Cultural Diversity, Distance Education, Human Resources, Safety & Security, Strategic Enrollment Management, and Information Technology. The Assessment Plan is organized under the leadership of the Academic Programs Division and is supported by a College-wide committee.

Established in 2010, the College Assessment Committee includes academic and student service administrators, as well as faculty and the Director of Institutional Research. The committee

reviews progress-to-goal for actions identified in the Assessment Plan and monitors that continuous improvement occurs based on the course assessment reports of student learning outcomes (SLOs). The group actively works to review annual assessment progress, report back to the faculty, and ensure that the review of SLOs are used to improve course content and delivery. During the period fall 2010 through spring 2014, 431 course level assessments were completed. Faculty members then document the action that they have taken in response to course assessment results in their annual reports.

SLOs are appropriately integrated at the institutional level via several avenues. To assess the overall effectiveness of the College and compare its performance with its peers, Cecil College participates in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) biannually and in the Community College Learning Assessment (CCLA). Cecil College's SLO assessment focuses on five General Education competency areas: written and oral communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy. At the institutional level, the College's Assessment Plan includes targeted actions, dates, person/office responsible, and progress toward the operational objectives. Student learning across the curriculum is measured by the SLOs for General Education. SLOs within each discipline are quantitatively and qualitatively documented through individual course assessments collected each semester. A sample course assessment report is included in the Appendix to this report.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

Institutional assessment at Cecil College is driven by the College's Strategic Plan and documented in the institutional Assessment Plan. In August 2015 the Board of Trustees approved the most recent iteration of the Strategic Plan (2015-2020). The plan was approved in tandem with a companion Implementation Plan to insure that annual progress is measured. Key performance indicators are reported to the College's Board of Trustees at the close of the fiscal year with documented outcomes in the areas of: 1. Academic achievement; 2. Dynamic learning environment; 3. Community alliances; and 4. Resource development. Each of these strategic priorities support students, student learning, or the learning environment, and progress is continuously assessed through both the strategic planning and institutional assessment processes.

The Assessment Plan monitors and documents (1) assessment of student learning outcomes and (2) administrative effectiveness. The assessment effort does not restrict how individual academic units, programs, or administrative divisions assess learning or effectiveness in their areas. Rather, divisional/departmental planning is integrated with the assessment planning effort. Through the implementation of subsidiary plans advanced within each division, objectives are measured and results are reported to the College community and Board of Trustees.

The College uses subsidiary plans to track progress of targeted actions and the alignment to each strategic initiative within the Strategic Plan. The actions and outcomes included in the plans are written at the tactical level and are updated annually or bi-annually. This approach to assessment has afforded the College the opportunity to develop comprehensive measures by which all institutional functions are quantitatively and/or qualitatively assessed on a continuous cycle and are directly tied to the College's Mission and Strategic Plan.

The Assessment Plan encompasses student learning outcomes, student services, and operational efficiency. Additionally, each division of the College has responsibility for one or more of the subsidiary plans in the following areas: Academic Programs, Assessment, Cultural Diversity, Distance Education, Human Resources, Safety & Security, Strategic Enrollment Management, and Technology.

SLOs are appropriately integrated at the institutional level via several avenues. To assess the overall effectiveness of the College and compare its performance with its academic peers, Cecil College participates in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) biannually and in the Community College Learning Assessment (CCLA). Cecil College's SLO Assessment focuses on five General Education competency areas: written and oral communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy. At the institutional level, the College's Assessment Plan includes SLO across the Curriculum and outlines targeted actions, dates, person/office responsible, and progress toward the operational objectives. Student learning



across the curriculum is measured by the expected SLOs for General Education. SLOs within each discipline are quantitatively and qualitatively documented through individual course assessments collected each semester.

## Assessment Results

The College has made significant progress in demonstrating effectiveness across the academic and administrative units. The following section provides highlights of results for actions that are identified in the Cecil College Assessment Plan.

## Student Learning Outcomes

The following priorities were identified in the planning process to advance effectiveness in the area of student learning outcomes.

As the only higher education venue in the county, Cecil College strives to promote access and high academic standards. Cecil students must demonstrate college-level proficiency in critical thinking, writing, oral communications, quantitative analysis, technology and information literacy, and awareness of ethics and cultural diversity through the general education requirements. Further, the College ensures that students (1) transfer easily and perform successfully at 4-year colleges and universities, (2) develop the skills needed to compete in today's workplace, and (3) gain experiences that are responsive to the needs of an emerging workforce. A sampling of institutional efforts to achieve learning outcomes across the curriculum is as follows:

- General Education Outcomes are embedded in all program majors. As of 2015, each program offered by Cecil College has been affirmed or revised. In response to the *College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act of 2013*, Cecil College has reviewed all programs, and has decreased the maximum number of credits required to 60. Exceptions to this limitation were approved for Nursing, Physical Therapist Assistant, Teaching, and Engineering degrees.
- Data collected through the Community College Learning Assessment (CCLA) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) provide effectiveness measures of General Education. The CCLA specifically measures: Performing a Task; Analytic Writing; Making-an-Argument; and Critiquing-an-Argument. Results are subsequently reviewed by the faculty, Academic Affairs Committee, and the College Management Team.
- Data from the State Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) for 2014 showed that after one year of attendance 92.6% of Cecil transfer students possessed a 2.0 or higher cumulative GPA, with a mean GPA of 3.04.

Cecil College strongly encourages the use of new, transformative approaches in the delivery and evaluation of instructional methods as well as faculty professional development models to facilitate student success in each program of study. Evidence of these approaches is established through the processes outlined in the program review process, and outcomes are reported in program review and courses assessment reports. This standard of practice was launched, in part,

in response to the 2010 Middle States Commission on Higher Education site-team recommendations. The items below highlight how the College responded to the specific recommendations.

- In spring 2012, a program review policy was established. The policy was reviewed by the Faculty Senate and approved by the College's Board of Trustees.
- A detailed Program Review Manual was developed and broadly distributed to establish consistent metrics and assist faculty members in completing program reviews and assessments in spring 2012.
- Rubrics for evaluating and assessing all certificate and degree programs have been developed and implemented. The rubrics provide clear and consistent student learning outcomes at the program level. All data is readily available on a shared storage server.
- Specific program level learning outcomes are documented for each program of study. Career program outcomes are aligned with current workplace competencies and/or certifications. Data showing outcomes are documented in each program review.

In 2012 a course assessment schedule was developed and implemented. Student learning outcomes within each course are assessed to ensure that each learner who enters the institution will acquire the fundamental skills and knowledge required in a specific subject area.

- The Cecil College Assessment Committee created a Course Assessment Rubric to establish consistency for reporting student learning outcomes and changes made in response to assessment results. The Course Assessment Rubric is based on guidelines published by the Middle States Association Commission on Higher Education. The Course Assessment Rubric is included in the Appendix to this report.
- The Assessment Committee provides feedback on course assessment reports to increase faculty understanding of correct application of the Course Assessment Rubric.
- The Assessment Committee established a policy which requires that all active courses be assessed every 36 months and active programs are reviewed every five years. During the period January 2011 to May 2016, faculty completed more than 621 individual course assessments and 51 program reviews.

Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

**Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

On November 19, 2015, Cecil College received one recommendation as a result of its Periodic Review Report submission:

*“The College does not appear to have articulated program-level learning outcomes as required by the last Visiting Team. Evidence of program-level outcomes beyond general education is not evident from the PRR nor from the College website.”*

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education requested a progress report, due October 1, 2016, documenting further development of the assessment of student learning outcomes at the program level (Standard 14).

At the time of the PRR, Cecil College’s Program Assessment Plan did require originators to:

- Provide a summary of the status of objectives outlined in the previous Program Review.
- Provide program objectives for the next five years.
- Provide a timetable for completion; identify required resources and identify any anticipated obstacles to completion of the objectives.

Of the 51 program reviews completed to date, 49 were in compliance with this requirement. However, we failed to capture the fact that 2 reviews did not comply with this requirement. Additionally, the objectives were located deep within the documents instead of being in the forefront. Lastly, program outcomes were not listed in the program description documents.

Accordingly, Cecil College set forth to standardize the format and location of program level student learning outcomes within its program reviews. As of March 2016, clear program outcomes, in a standardized format, have been established for every Cecil College Program and approved by the College’s Academic Affairs Committee. The Program Assessment Plan has also been updated to reflect these changes. A document listing program outcomes for each active program has been posted to Cecil College’s website.

Additionally, an addendum has been prepared for each previously completed program review. The addendums incorporate the updated outcomes as well as an assessment of those outcomes.

The process of posting the program outcomes on each program page on the College's website is ongoing. This part of the process is lengthy due to two factors that are beyond the College's control. First, Cecil College recently conducted a comprehensive review of all programs and reduced the credit hours required in the programs to be in compliance with the state's *College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act of 2013*. Thus, once approved by the Cecil College Academic Affairs Committee, these updates were submitted to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) for final approval. MHEC's responses have been slowed by the sheer volume of programs that were submitted in response to this change in the law. Secondly, the Maryland Higher Education Commission recently authorized areas of concentrations for Associate Degree programs. This has allowed us to reduce the number of degrees offered to a more reasonable level and will make student choices less complicated. Cecil College is submitting numerous revised degree programs with areas of concentration for MHEC approval. Once again, final MHEC approval will be slowed by the volume of transactions, from the sixteen community colleges in the state.

The next review cycle for Cecil College programs, was scheduled to begin again in 2018. However, given the significant number of program changes that have occurred over the past twenty-four months, the College has decided to begin the next program review cycle in fall 2016.

**Cecil College**

**Student Learning Outcomes Report 2016**

**Appendix**

## Course Assessment Report Example

Semester Spring 2016

Course # EGL 092.01 – Integrated Reading & Writing Level I Faculty Member Kathy Weiss

Desired Course Learning Outcomes	Indicators for Course Outcomes Assessment	Direct/Indirect Measures	Assessment Results	Use of Assessment Results
<p>5. Demonstrate knowledge of the basic elements of a sentence.</p> <p>(Supports General Education Outcomes A, B, C, D, and F)</p>	<p>5.1 Identify Subjects and Verbs</p> <p>5.2 Identify Main/independent clauses</p> <p>5.3 Identify dependent clauses</p> <p>5.4 identify and correct sentence fragments</p> <p>5.5 Identify and correct run-on sentences and comma splices</p>	<p>Class Discussion Practice</p> <p>Online Practice Quiz</p> <p>Apply to Sample Writing</p> <p>Apply to Own Writing</p>	<p>Fragments Quiz results: # = 13 Median = 55 <b>(average without no-shows = 64.5)</b></p> <p>100+ = 1 90-100 = 0 80-89 = 1 70-79 = 3 60-69 = 1 30-59 = 4 0 = 3</p> <p>Run-ons quiz results: #=13 Median = 73 <b>(average without no-shows = 79.62)</b></p> <p>100+ = 0 90-100 = 2 80-89 = 4 70-79 = 1 60-69 = 0 30-59 = 1 0 = 5</p>	<p>Similar practices will be utilized in future classes; however, we need more practice when applying in context and to students' own writing. Quiz results are somewhat skewed in that 3 students (fragments) and 5 students (run-ons) never made up the quiz (otherwise median scores would be higher).</p> <p>It is difficult to dissect one specific grammar problem from other grammar issues in students' own writing in terms of exactly how much is attributed or deducted from overall writing assignment grade. However, I might assign more sample student writing in which one grammar issue is isolated and students are graded specifically for that issue before applying to their own work.</p>

<b>Desired Course Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Indicators for Course Outcomes Assessment</b>	<b>Direct/Indirect Measures</b>	<b>Assessment Results</b>	<b>Use of Assessment Results</b>
<p>6. Demonstrate knowledge of common, fundamental grammatical errors.</p> <p>(Supports General Education Outcomes A, B, C, D, and F)</p>	<p>6.1 Identify and correct errors in subject-verb agreement</p> <p>6.2 Identify and correct unnecessary shifts in verb tense.</p>	<p>-Discussion</p> <p>-Exercises</p> <p>-Online game practice</p> <p>-Quiz</p> <p>-Apply to Sample Writing</p> <p>-Apply to Students' Own Writing</p>	<p>S/V Agreement Quiz: # = 13 (5 were no longer attending, 2 never made up quiz) Median = 75</p> <p>90-100 = 0 80-89 = 0 70-79 = 4 60-69 = 1 50-59 = 1 0 = 7</p> <p>Verb Tense Shifts Quiz: # = 8 Median = 64</p> <p>90 – 100 = 0 80-89 = 0 70-79 = 1 60-69 = 5 50-59 = 1 0 = 1</p>	<p>Will continue with exercises and quizzes, and applying to both sample writing and students' own writing. Will incorporate more practice in sample writing before students take quiz or apply to own writing.</p> <p>The Verb Tense Shifts Quiz was especially difficult for students; consequently, I will exchange the quiz for the exercises, adding context exercises and making them more intense, while easing the intensity of the quiz. It is more important that students apply to contextual writing, especially their own writing.</p>
<p>7. Demonstrate knowledge of English punctuation and capitalization.</p> <p>(Supports General Education Outcomes A, B, C, D, and F)</p>	<p>7.1 Demonstrate correct use of the period.</p> <p>7.2 Demonstrate correct use of the comma.</p> <p>7.4 Demonstrate correct use of the semi-colon</p> <p>7.5 Demonstrate correct capitalization.</p>	<p>-Discussion</p> <p>-Exercises</p> <p>-Online game practice</p> <p>-Quiz</p> <p>-Apply to Sample Writing</p> <p>-Apply to Students' Own Writing</p>	<p>Commas Quiz: # = 13 (4 did not take or make up quiz, skewing median results) Median is in upper B range</p> <p>90 – 100 = 4 80-89 = 1 70-79 = 1</p>	<p>Will use similar discussions, exercises, practices, quizzes, and application to writing in context. It is always difficult for students to make the transition to applying any grammatical concepts to their own writing, so I will incorporate more practice in applying to sample student writing, as well as their own writing. It may also be useful</p>

Desired Course Learning Outcomes	Indicators for Course Outcomes Assessment	Direct/Indirect Measures	Assessment Results	Use of Assessment Results
			60 – 69 = 1 50 – 59 = 1 30 – 59 = 1 0 = 4  Semi-colon and capitalization is incorporated in assessment of joining independent and dependent clauses, so is not directly dissectable from those results.	to give students short writing exercises geared toward incorporation of particular grammar and punctuation elements and have them immediately go back and edit their work, perhaps having them switch with a partner to double check for the issue at hand.
8. Demonstrate knowledge and use of the fundamental elements of a paragraph.  (Supports General Education Outcomes A, B, C, D, and F)	8.1 Identify and write topic sentences 8.2 Identify and utilize supporting details – both major and minor. 8.3 Identify and utilize closing sentences	-Class discussion of readings -Identify topic sentences and key points in sample paragraphs -Informal writing about readings (brainstorming) -Out of class Writing (outline including topic sentence, key points, concluding point) -Individual conferences on first draft -Workshop of 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft and 3 <sup>rd</sup> draft -Final Draft of a Paragraph	Description Paragraph results: 7 submitted: 90-100 = 0 80-89 = 4 70-79 = 2 60-69 = 0 50-59 = 1  Average: 78  Argument Paragraph results: 8 submitted: 90-100 = 0 80-89 = 4 70-79 = 3 60-69 = 1  Average = 78	Will continue providing sample paragraphs to have students identify topic sentences, key points, and concluding points. It is also effective to encourage students to generate ideas for their own writing by brainstorming, drafting, and outlining to emphasize the multi-stage, recursive process of writing, as well as modeling the key parts of a paragraph. The paragraph grades also reflect any grammar elements that were learned to date. I may want to incorporate more readings as launching points for responses by students.



<b>Desired Course Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Indicators for Course Outcomes Assessment</b>	<b>Direct/Indirect Measures</b>	<b>Assessment Results</b>	<b>Use of Assessment Results</b>
<p>9. Demonstrate knowledge and use of the fundamental elements of an essay.</p> <p>(Supports General Education Outcomes A, B, C, D, and F)</p>	<p>9.1 Identify and write thesis statements</p> <p>9.2 Employ narration and illustration techniques.</p> <p>9.3 Craft effective introductions.</p> <p>9.4 Craft effective conclusions</p>	<p>-Classroom Discussion of Reading</p> <p>-Students mark up and annotate essay for thesis/key points</p> <p>-Individual conferences with students on first draft</p> <p>-Workshop of 2<sup>nd</sup> draft</p> <p>-Final Draft</p>	<p>Summary-Response Essay Results:</p> <p>8 submitted:</p> <p>90-100 = 0</p> <p>80-89 = 4</p> <p>70-79 = 3</p> <p>60-69 = 1</p> <p>Average = 76</p>	<p>Will continue to have students mark up and annotate, conferences individually, and workshop drafts to emphasize importance of feedback and writing process. These average scores reflect the need for multi-level drafting and workshopping for these at-risk students, and should be continued and emphasized. This multi-paragraph essay incorporates summary writing and argumentation, which were learned as discrete skills earlier in the semester, and prove to be effective as stepping stones for this assignment, which incorporates many objectives.</p>
<p>10. Demonstrate knowledge of the elements of an effective summary.</p> <p>(Supports General Education Outcomes A, B, C, D, and F)</p>	<p>10.1 Identify the author and backgrounds of the text.</p> <p>10.2 Establish the main point.</p> <p>10.3 Distinguish major detail from minor example</p> <p>10.4 Organize supporting points</p> <p>10.5 Craft summaries using original language</p> <p>10.6 Use direct quotations sparingly.</p> <p>10.7 Avoid plagiarism.</p>	<p>-Annotate and markup reading to be summarized.</p> <p>-Discussion of Reading, Annotations: Main point and major key points</p> <p>-Individual conferences of 1<sup>st</sup> draft</p> <p>-Workshop of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> drafts</p> <p>-Final Draft</p>	<p>Summary Paragraph Final Draft Results:</p> <p>9 submitted:</p> <p>90-100 = 0</p> <p>80-89 = 4</p> <p>70-79 = 2</p> <p>60-69 = 3</p> <p>Average = 75.4</p>	<p>Will continue the practice of having students annotate and markup text identifying main point and major details, and then discussing together, since students need guidance and practice in this skill. Also effective are the individual conferences and workshops to provide feedback aligned with the assignment objectives. Without these checkpoints and feedback, student writing would be lacking.</p>

## ASSESSMENT REPORT RUBRIC

Faculty Member \_\_\_\_\_  
 Department \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_  
 Semester \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria	Meets Standards	Does Not Meet Standards	Rating & Comments
<b>Form/ Requirements</b>	Use of correct template. Semester and year identified. Appropriate number of outcomes addressed per course.	Correct template not used. Semester and year not identified. Insufficient number of outcomes addressed per course.	
<b>Outcomes and Indicators</b>	Correct terminology, measurable	Not measurable or not clear	

Criteria	Meets Standards	Does Not Meet Standards	Rating & Comments
<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<p>Uses direct assessment measures and may also include indirect assessment measures.</p> <p>Systematic and thorough collection of direct and indirect evidence of student learning, at multiple points in time and in various situations, using a variety of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods.</p>	Use of only indirect assessment measures	
<b>Assessment Results</b>	<p>Data reported.</p> <p>Correct use of statistics. Clear language indicating student learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Report does not include data. Student learning not specified.</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Terminology includes most, many, some, etc.</p>	
<b>Use of Assessment Results</b>	Clear designation of plan and/or teaching changes. Data is used to enhance student learning at the institutional, program, and course levels.	No designated plan or changes stated.	

## Example of Program Learning Outcomes

### AS Physical Sciences

As a result of completing program requirements for the AS Physical Science Program, students will:

- Develop skills in the areas of analytic thinking, problem solving, and understanding systems
- Apply the scientific method
- Apply the skills of scientific analysis to constructively analyze another's viewpoint
- Apply the concepts of single and multivariable calculus
- Use computer skills to communicate effectively, organize data, and research scientific principles
- Calculate physical quantities, for example: force, momentum, energy, displacement, velocity, acceleration, and density
- Identify the properties and the charge of some elements by using the periodic table
- Calculate values from the kinematic equations
- Calculate the location and magnification of real and virtual images

In addition, students who pursue a Geology Concentration in this program of study will:

- Recognize and explain the role of fundamental geologic principles, such as plate tectonic theory and deep time, in the interpretation of observed geologic phenomena
- Demonstrate knowledge of: physical and chemical properties of the lithosphere and hydrosphere (minerals, rocks, soils, and water); geologic time and earth history; and crustal materials and dynamics in the context of plate tectonics theory
- Interpret geologic processes using underlying chemical properties and physical laws
- Demonstrate competence in fundamental geological skills including: mineral, rock and soil identification; interpretation of topographic maps, geologic maps, and various forms of imagery; construction of geologic maps and cross sections; three-dimensional conceptualization; and collection of organized field and laboratory data

In addition, students who pursue a Meteorology Concentration in this program of study will:

- Identify important features of the atmosphere
- Explain the cause of seasonal and daily temperature variations and discuss their importance to the weather
- Identify conditions that lead to dew, frost, fog and clouds
- Recognize the processes that produce rain and snow as well as other forms of precipitation and describe how precipitation is measured
- Identify the forces that influence atmospheric motions aloft and at the surface
- Demonstrate an understanding of microscale and mesoscale wind systems and how they influence the environment
- Demonstrate an understanding of methods and procedures used in making weather forecasts

In addition, students who pursue an Ocean Studies Concentration in this program of study will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics of ocean basins and the role of plate tectonics in their formation
- Classify the types and sources of sediments that enter the ocean
- Identify the ways the ocean influences the long-term average state of the atmosphere
- Explain what causes the ocean to circulate and describe the patterns of ocean circulation
- Identify the basic components and structures of marine ecosystems and describe their sources of energy
- Explain how interactions between the ocean and the atmosphere impact world wide weather and short term climate variability

**Chesapeake College**

## **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

In an ongoing effort to improve, Chesapeake College has developed and implemented a comprehensive assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals. The Comprehensive Planning, Assessment and Budgeting Plan (CPABP) defines an interlocking set of assessment plans across the institution and demonstrates that those plans are grounded in the mission and Strategic Plan of the college. It describes academic assessment efforts led by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) and supported by the Academic and Enrollment Planning Council (AEPC), which has some oversight responsibilities regarding assessment. Four standing committees are each responsible for oversight of academic assessment within specific areas: Academic Programs and Curricula (APC), Academic Assessment Committee (AAC), Developmental Studies (DSC) and Distance Learning (DLC). The plan outlines how results are to be used in budget and planning decisions. The Academic Plan governs academic assessment. The college utilizes course-, program-, and institutional-level Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), and the same committees noted above oversee these assessment activities. To facilitate communication and transparency, working documents and finished reports are posted in Canvas, the college's learning management system.

### **Standard #7 –**

Chesapeake College's assessment process, guided by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness, provides college decision makers the opportunity to review and implement quality improvement initiatives related to planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal processes. The Comprehensive Planning, Assessment and Budgeting Plan lays out a system of integrated short- and long-term plans guided by and tied to the college's mission, vision, and Strategic Plan. Specifically, key performance indicators and outcome measures built on diverse types of information gathered through a variety of sources support the evaluation of the college's effective use of resources, institutional accountability and integrity, and student success. Formal and informal environmental scanning that is conducted seamlessly throughout the year provides a valuable foundation to make planning and budgeting decisions.

Non-academic institutional level assessment activities are conducted through the college's divisional and cross-divisional plans. Unit plans assign specific tasks and timelines. Development and execution of these plans is integrated, and actions are updated, completed, or discontinued depending upon institutional assessments, resources, and priorities. Individual performance goals are derived from these plans and are evaluated annually. Annual quantitative targets are established for each strategic plan key performance indicator and divisional/cross-divisional measurable outcome. Actual performance is compared to target values to determine success in "moving the needle" on the strategic plan and other divisional/cross-divisional goals. The evaluation of these metrics provides the basis for development of subsequent annual plans.

### **Standard #12 –**

Chesapeake College embraces a strong and integrated general education program designed to prepare students as independent, competent, and technologically proficient learners who share the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship. Assessment of general education learning outcomes is guided by the Office of Academic Assessment. General education program outcomes and institutional student learning outcomes are identical. As a result, students develop these skills in both their general education courses and throughout all other courses during their education at the college. The APC & AAC committees (two of the faculty standing committees) oversee the general education program.

In an effort to ensure all students address the various elements of general education and are assessed for their competency, courses within the General Education Core teach and annually assess four of the general education student learning outcomes (oral/written communication, critical thinking, information literacy, technology literacy) plus one additional outcome specific to course content (quantitative literacy, scientific reasoning, diverse perspectives or ethics). Mathematics courses add quantitative literacy, science courses add scientific reasoning, and social science and fine arts courses teach and assess their focus on diverse perspectives or ethics. This is known as the 4+1 formula, which is used by faculty to define the general education outcomes requirements in the courses they teach.

**Standard #14 –**

The process for assessing student learning outcomes at Chesapeake College is continuing, multi-layered, and appropriately supported. It is grounded in the mission and Strategic Plan of the college and focused on observable skills and measures of knowledge expected of students who complete courses and programs. Over the past five years, the college embraced a system of regular and frequent assessment of student learning outcomes at the course, program, and institution level. Assessment work now produces data that can be used by departments and divisions in making decisions aimed at improving instructional practices and wisely using resources. The entire academic assessment process of the college reflects back on the mission to provide educational opportunities for students.

Since 2011, the college's student learning outcomes assessment process has changed dramatically in scope and output. Faculty and administrators gave much thought and effort to improving assessment practices for SLOs at all levels, and the college provided strong support for this work. In 2011, the college hired an Assistant Director of Academic Assessment to improve and manage assessment activities and to provide assessment training and assistance to faculty. While this position was originally within the Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness (IRPE) office, in January 2014 it was redefined. The position, Director of Academic Assessment, now reports directly to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA). In addition, the college purchased assessment software, TracDat by Nuventive, to support and organize the collection, storage, analysis, and sharing of assessment data and related information.

Beginning in 2011, major changes were implemented in assessment processes at all three levels. All active courses were incorporated into the course assessment process over a period of three years. Faculty committees and the academic administration collaborated to produce and implement, over the past four years, a new process for assessing institution-level learning outcomes and to revise program-level assessment for increased rigor and more actionable results.



Since 2011, faculty participated each year in multiple training sessions on assessment topics during in-service and divisional meetings. The President of the college met with the Faculty Assembly on several occasions to discuss the importance of assessment efforts.

In January 2014, the newly hired Director of Academic Assessment received additional support for data entry through the reallocation of an existing support position. A continuing focus on and support for student learning outcomes assessment has resulted in tangible improvements in the regularity and inclusiveness of the process, as well as in the quantity, comprehensiveness and quality of the data collected.

### **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

Since 2011, Chesapeake College has developed robust, systematic, and informative institutional and academic assessment processes that have contributed to overall improved student satisfaction and learning. Institutional-, program-, and course-level assessment are integrated, iterative, and documented. SLOs are clearly articulated, and administrators, staff and faculty members have designed qualitative and quantitative assessment instruments that correlate with those outcomes. In support of the effort, the college has invested considerable time and resources including the creation of one and revision of another full-time staff position to assist with assessment, frequent training for staff/faculty, and purchase of TracDat software. These investments have yielded a considerable quantity of quality assessments that have contributed to evaluation and adjustment of institutional and teaching practices.

#### **Standard #7 –**

Since 2010, the College's Comprehensive Planning, Assessment and Budgeting Plan (CPABP) has provided an framework for assessment efforts. However, the processes identified in the document were ineffective for several reasons. The plan was too complex (82 pages) and specific in nature to allow for sustainable adherence to the plan, and its timing over the years ceased to align with institutional practices. Also, multiple plans were required from each division, and not all divisions adequately documented planning and assessment practices.

In light of these problems, the CPABP was updated in FY2014, completely revised in FY2015, and again updated in FY2016. The current, more practical plan lays out a system of integrated short and long-term plans guided by and tied to the college's strategic plan, mission, and vision (a shortcoming of the original version). Divisional and cross-divisional plans are now updated on a set periodic schedule (albeit with a different term length for each). One overarching difficulty in the old CPABP was the nomenclature of plans that produced confusion. There were plans, tactical plans, operational plans, and reports. Plans were labeled differently depending upon department and division. The new CPABP takes steps toward standardizing the college's planning structure, identifying and defining goals, strategies, actions and key performance indicators/measurable outcomes.

The CPABP now establishes an updated reporting structure with specific measurable outcomes for each plan, providing quantitative and qualitative data and helping close the loop for future planning. Information collected through formal and informal channels provides a foundation for prioritized planning and budget decisions. Development and execution of these plans is integrated, and actions are updated, completed, or discontinued depending upon institutional assessments, resources, and priorities. Cross sections of the college community, including the Board of Trustees, administrators, faculty and staff, are engaged in the planning process. Assessment results, as well as the plans they inform, are communicated openly.

A significant improvement for the latest strategic plan is the incorporation of specific measurable outcomes for each goal. Strategic plan goals are also assessed through division plans because vice presidents are required to align division plans with strategic plan initiatives. Subject matter experts, in conjunction with the office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness, developed terminal year plan target values for each outcome that reflected expected performance over the entire plan period. Additionally, annual targets, first established for FY2015, relate to expectations for the current year, based on annual action plans associated with the various goal strategies. The targets were compared against actual values to determine level of progress. Based on this review, the areas that were deemed deficient received additional focus in the FY2016 action plans. This process is now operationalized and will continue as an ongoing annual activity. Division plans also filter down to employees' personal performance goals. For example, currently half of vice presidents' performance assessments are tied to achievement of division goals, ensuring a link between strategic planning and operational outcomes.

**Standard #12 –**

Chesapeake College embraces a strong and integrated general education program designed to prepare students as independent, competent, and technologically proficient learners who share the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship. General education program outcomes and institutional student learning outcomes are identical. As a result, students develop these skills in both their general education courses and throughout their education at the college. The General Education Committee (one of the faculty standing committees) oversees the general education program.

In an effort to ensure all students address the various elements of general education and are assessed for their competency, courses within the General Education Core teach and annually assess four of the general education student learning outcomes (oral/written communication, critical thinking, information literacy, technology literacy) plus one additional outcome specific to course content (quantitative literacy, scientific reasoning, diverse perspectives, ethics). Mathematics courses add quantitative literacy, science courses add scientific reasoning, and social science and fine arts courses teach and assess their focus. This is known as the —4+1 formula which is used by faculty to define the general education outcomes requirements in the courses they teach. All other courses teach and assess two general education outcomes that best fit the course focus. Students view general education through the Limited Distribution Core structure. They select one or more courses within six categories. By completing those courses, students demonstrate proficiency in all seven general education outcomes.

Based on review by the 2015 Middle States Self-Study Team, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students and others, many concrete examples of effectiveness relative to the general education standard have been documented.

- To ensure the application of general education competencies, all programs at the college include a goal to “facilitate proficiency in content, knowledge, and skills for the college’s general education competencies.” Two standing faculty committees, The Academic Program and Curriculum (APC) and the Academic Assessment Committee (AAC) meet regularly to discuss items pertinent to general education as well as review courses, assessment results, policies and procedures.
- In support of the mission and to further underscore the application of competencies to the major programs, the college has adopted general education competencies as its institutional learning outcomes.
- The college’s general education goals include communication proficiency in oral and written English and the application of technology to learning which are taught as part of every course in the General Education Limited Distribution Core. Rubrics and signature assignments are utilized to identify areas needing improvement. The General Education Committee reviews new courses, rubrics, signature assignments and results to monitor student progress in these areas.
- The college requires general education goals in understanding and applying the scientific method and the analysis and interpretation of mathematical information. These competencies are delivered and assessed through approved mathematics and natural science courses listed as part of the Limited Distribution Core.
- The college was commended for a well-defined program in general education which also serves as institutional learning outcomes.
- The college was commended for its efforts in utilizing general education assessment results to improve curriculum. It is clear that analysis of the data is leading to specific action items aimed at improvement, such as an assignment in college algebra created to aid students to develop their mathematics vocabulary which in turn will help the students interpret and apply skills to word problems. Additional examples include the use of technology to reinforce concepts in Introduction to Statistics and the creation of a module in Anatomy and Physiology II on evaluating assumptions from a scientific and medical perspective.
- The college is currently engaged in a process of improving curriculum mapping and reconfiguring the TracDat software to facilitate better data collection and reporting.

#### **Standard #14 –**

Processes for conducting assessment of SLOs in credit programs are implemented on three levels (course, program, and institutional) and follow an established calendar and set guidelines. First is course-level assessment. Faculty choose one course SLO and one Gen Ed SLO every year following the prescribed course level assessment process. Since the majority of students do not complete a degree or certificate, course-level assessment is vital and a major focus of assessment at the institution. In consultation with the Director of Academic Assessment, faculty select assessment measures and targets. At the course-level, measures of SLOs provide direct evidence of student achievement and include a varied mix of quantitative and qualitative measures. Both full-time and adjunct faculty implement course-level assessment. Academic departments

examine and discuss course-level assessment results yearly to identify needed instructional changes. To continually improve outcomes, such changes are implemented, assessments are repeated, and results are re-examined each year. New instructional adjustments are made if indicated by the results and agreed to by the department; then, the cycle is repeated. Next is program-level assessment. Formal assessment of program-level SLOs, a key component of the program review process, involves both credit and continuing education and follows a rotating five-year cycle. Each program uses assessment methodology appropriate to its area. For example, the college's largest program, Liberal Arts and Sciences, employs three approaches: (1) mapping by faculty of program-level SLOs to course-level SLOs in all required courses; (2) a capstone course wherein student achievement of program-level SLOs is evaluated via major course assignments; and (3) analysis of transfer student success, as reported in the LAS program review. The mapping of SLOs between programs and courses demonstrates that program graduates – those who have mastered the SLOs in the courses comprising the program – have also achieved the program SLOs. The final level is institutional assessment. The college has chosen four of the general education student learning outcomes; oral/written communication, critical thinking, information literacy and technology literacy to also serve as our institutional competencies. Faculty follow the course-level assessment process and embed one of the four institutional competencies into their course SLO assessment. Once the assessment is completed, they report out separate results for the course SLO and the institutional competency.

Based on review by the 2015 Middle States Self-Study Team, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students and others, many concrete examples of effectiveness relative to the general education standard have been documented.

- Program revisions to meet EMS industry needs resulted in the combination of two courses, expansion from 16 to 20 courses, and a move to competency based, psychomotor learning. Test questions are mapped to the SLOs. SLOs are becoming more manageable. A class containing both clinical and instruction was separated to provide a clearer picture of student learning. Adoption of flipped classroom strategies provided additional time for student skills building and demonstration. For example: The airways exercise involved eight stations where students were filmed in their technique demonstrations; iPads were used for critical thinking and reflection of the exercise. Results were stronger than in previous cases. Additional discussion with the Advisory Board indicated a broader array of airways were required, especially in the pediatric area. Proper equipment will be available in the new Health Professions and Athletics Care Sciences Center. Airway simulators for newborn, infant, 2-4 year olds, 7 year olds, and adults will be upgraded as well.
- In English, faculty worked with Librarians and used Noodlebib software to develop a new learning module for students. As a result of incorporating this new module, many improved student outcomes were observed. (1) The ENG102 Research paper incorporated ethical use of resources and attributed improved student success on the final paper to the additional examples and modeling provided by the department. (2) Professional development for adjunct faculty assured a common understanding of rubric terms and results fell within an expected curve with fewer outliers.

- In History, the incorporation of general education outcomes into the teaching strategies of history faculty allows each faculty member to work with the student. History becomes the means to “get there.” Student success in the course has improved as writing assignments that were falling short of expected outcomes are now meeting the benchmark as students were directed to complete their assignments in the library, where additional support and tutoring was available.
- In mathematics, many substantive assessments were used to improve learning, including, but not limited to: (1) Math SLOs are comprised of the same four basic outcomes tailored to the subject. SLOs 1 or 2 focus on lower level outcomes while SLOs 3 or 4 focus on higher level outcomes. The incorporation of the system has aided course coordinators’ work with new faculty and adjuncts. Students proficiency has increased as the division demonstrates the linear nature of the field. In the final examination every question was mapped to the SLO/GE Arts program outcomes. (2) Math developed a mastery based Emporium model where all three developmental mathematics classes can be completed in one semester. Students in developmental courses are pre- and post-tested to track and demonstrate growth. (3) MAT113 did not transfer and required additional trigonometry and geometry to articulate; therefore, MAT114 was developed. (4) MAT204, Introduction to Statistics, linked objectives to SLOs, and developed common tests and final.
- In science, many substantive assessments were used to improve learning, including, but not limited to: (1) Assessments are reported out by course level. Science faculty identified nine ways to improve Chemistry and Biology, including physical changes in the classrooms. (2) CHM121 labs and text were outdated; faculty found students retained little of the course materials from the beginning to the end of the semester. Using the American Association for Advancement of Science standards, lab principles were reinstated, as was the collegial atmosphere found in most scientific environments. Students checked calculations, discussed strategies, and worked together in teams. The quality of the lab reports improved. Canvas (LMS) was used to provide the students with multiple attempts at concept and process mastery. Over one semester, only four students required a second attempt. The changes have allowed faculty to bring in much more complex concepts. One chemistry student commented, “I’ve learned to read the textbook.”

### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

#### **Middle States Action 2015:**

“To reaffirm accreditation. To commend the institution for the quality of the self-study process. To request a progress report due April 1, 2017 documenting the further implementation and communication of a comprehensive, organized, and sustained process for the assessment of student learning outcomes with evidence that results are used to improve teaching and learning (Standard 14). The Periodic Review Report is due June 1, 2020.”

**The Chesapeake College progress report will be submitted to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education April 1, 2017.**

**College of Southern Maryland**

# College of Southern Maryland Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

## **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

### **Institutional Assessment**

Assessment of effectiveness and success at the institutional level includes the tracking of the college's 53 institutional Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the Maryland Performance Accountability Program (MPAR) indicators, and data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), as well as annual financial audits.

The KPIs are the primary avenue for CSM to determine its progress in achieving its goals. The KPIs contain measures and benchmarks that assess the college's performance on each of the five institutional goals. Each KPI is assigned primarily to one college division to monitor through analysis of data and performance trends. The President's Council regularly reviews the KPIs and sets and revises benchmarks. The Board of Trustees receives and approves the KPI scorecard, as well as updates from senior executives, and discusses these at its two annual retreats.

Indicators of performance that are below benchmarks or best practice expectations are targeted for intervention. Progress is measured in three ways: in trend data, which is available for all KPIs, MPAR, and IPEDS data; in comparative data with other institutions, also provided in MPAR and IPEDS data; and in data supplied by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC). Data are also used from college surveys and focus groups on student satisfaction, non-returning students, employee performance and satisfaction, graduate performance and satisfaction, and community use and perceptions.

IPEDS provides national comparative data. When benchmarks are determined, they take into account "best-in-class" colleges and may be adjusted to recognize the unique characteristics of the region and college. When these data are not available, the college attempts to set benchmarks that are appropriate and competitive.

The college's commitment to assessment and continuous quality improvement has been recognized both regionally and nationally. These efforts were highlighted in the awarding of the Maryland Quality Award, Silver, through the Maryland Performance Excellence program, in 2007 and 2008.

### **Unit Assessment**

Each vice president works with his or her units to develop Unit Assessment Plans (UAPs). Teams comprised of employees developed their UAP in relation to the mission and purpose of their unit and its primary expected outcomes, as well as in relation to the college Strategic Plan. Using a modified Nichols grid, each defined unit (as specified by the division's senior officer) develops its assessment plan in accordance with the guidelines. After the division vice president approves each plan, it is sent to the College Assessment Team (CAT), which reviews the assessment plan from a more global or strategic level and provides feedback. The unit collects data between October and June. The UAP grid is complete once data are collected and analyzed and recommendations are determined.

As a result of the UAP review, units identify new initiatives, as well as resources needed in the upcoming budget cycle. Ongoing discussions with key stakeholders and partner organizations keep the plans and



their objectives relevant and the assessment data current. Recommendations for improvement become performance objectives for the next planning and budgeting cycle.

Senior leaders create a focus on assessment-based action in a variety of ways. Most importantly, CSM's QIP empowers employees to strive for excellence by engaging them in the development, implementation, and monitoring of their own UAP, along with process improvement practices that emerge as assessment continues and Process Identification, Analysis, Redesign, and Deployment (PARAD) teams develop and implement changes aimed at improving college operations. This approach has moved CSM from a "top-down" approach to assessment to a more balanced approach that encourages proposal and implementation of ideas and initiatives by employees at all levels of the institution, promoting employee ownership of and engagement in all college successes.

### **Academic Affairs Assessment**

The commitment to assessment in the Division of Academic Affairs is supported at all levels, through the development and use of Unit Assessment Plans (UAPs) and the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan (SLOAP, discussed in detail in CSM's 2014 MSCHE Self-Study, Standard 14). Assessment findings are consistently used to drive improvement and innovation. Teaching effectiveness is routinely measured. Faculty members receive student evaluations (currently through the IDEA system), both summative and formative; the results are reported to the faculty member and the division chair and are used for improving instruction, as well as to reinforce current practice. The evaluation results are one factor considered in an instructor's bid for promotion or tenure. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) results indicate CSM students perceive a better than normal emphasis on general education coursework, and graduate follow-up surveys demonstrate high levels of satisfaction with job and transfer preparation, as well as with general education. Other data used for academic assessment include pass rates for online and face-to-face classes, results from program reviews, as well as division- and college-wide results on student-reported achievement on outcomes from the IDEA surveys.

CSM's program monitoring processes have resulted in many examples of program improvements and new programs. In a multi-year effort, the college identified Core Learning Areas (CLAs) related to General Education; these CLAs have been adopted by specific programs and courses and are being assessed to determine whether students have achieved the outcome demanded by that CLA. As programs undertake the process of program review, these CLAs are being consistently reviewed to determine their inclusion in the curriculum at the course and program levels.

One comprehensive example of the use of data to generate changes in a program is the recent and ongoing Math Redesign effort. The Math Redesign program was developed in response to strategic initiatives to increase both retention and degree success rates at CSM. An analysis of data pinpointed mathematics as one of the major bottlenecks in preventing students from reaching their goals. The problem centered primarily on students who, as a result of not passing mathematics at the developmental level, leave the college without achieving their academic goals.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed six pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

### **Institutional Assessment Activities**

As suggested previously, assessment has become ingrained in the college's culture. College leadership has recognized the need for systematic assessment and has led the way in implementing it through the Quality Improvement Process (QIP). Each college division actively promotes and supports the development and deployment of UAPs. College divisions incorporate a review of institutional KPIs and their own UAPs into annual retreats or planning meetings. Assessment had become a prominent feature during college-wide faculty meetings before the last decennial report and it continues to be. Faculty members have been actively engaged in the development of not only Student Learning Outcomes Assessment processes, but also institutional and unit assessment processes.

In addition to the KPIs, the college also uses a wide variety of other assessment tools and activities to measure and benchmark its performance. The college participates in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey, and the Community College Graduate Follow-up Survey, in order to assess student, employee, and community satisfaction with college services and programs. The college also administers several large-scale institutional surveys—including the bi-annual Student Satisfaction Survey and the Employee Satisfaction Survey—in order to assess and analyze performance on an ongoing basis.

A good example of how the college uses these tool and activities to drive improvement can be seen in its use of the nationally administered CCSSE survey. CCSSE provides information about effective educational practice in community colleges and assists institutions in using that information to promote improvements in student learning and persistence. Every other year, CSM credit students participate in this survey, the results of which are shared with many campus groups, including the President's Council, the Strategic Enrollment Management Council, and the Division of Academic Affairs. A CCSSE Task Force was formed in spring 2011 to review and make recommendations on the 2010 CCSSE data sets related to student engagement. The Task Force compiled and analyzed CCSSE results and made a number of recommendations, which were forwarded to appropriate divisions and committees; as a result, many were incorporated into both the Institutional and Unit Strategic Plans. The review of CCSSE data has been ongoing since that time.

Another development that demonstrates the culture of assessment at CSM is the formation of an African-American Student Success Initiative Committee, through the Institutional Equity and Diversity Office, to address an achievement deficit gap in African-American graduation and transfer rates. The college reviewed data (e.g., IPEDS and KPIs) and noted a downward trend in graduation-transfer rates for African-American students. The committee also reviewed the CCSSE results that noted differences in African-American student engagement and use of support services. As a result of this analysis, the African-American Student Success Initiative Committee was formed in 2012. The committee's first charge was to conduct a review of institutional data, in an effort to determine any unique differences in demographic data, enrollment patterns, financial aid, academic achievement, perceptions on campus, between African-American students and all students, that might result in varying student success rates. The committee held student focus groups at three campuses to identify any challenges or barriers that may hinder the success of African-American students. It incorporated themes that emerged from the focus groups, reviewed best practices for student engagement and success, and made recommendations, one of which was a mentoring program that has since been developed and was implemented in fall 2013. The results of this have not been as robust as the college might like, and other initiatives, including a

nationally branded “Posse Program” were begun in AY2016. The results of this are not yet determined, but recommendations for improvement are incorporated in upcoming ISPs, USPs, and in the college’s Cultural Diversity Plan.

### **Academic Affairs Assessment Activities**

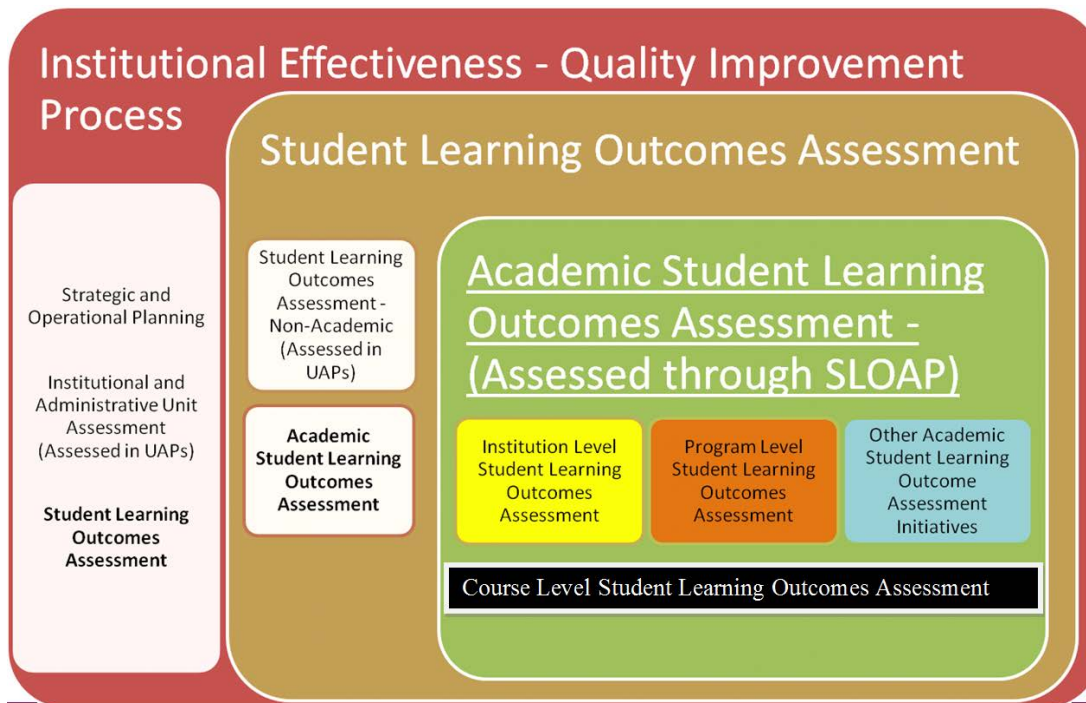
Since 2011, CSM has undertaken a number of initiatives to improve student learning and build a culture of systematic assessment within Academic Affairs. For example:

- In order to promote the importance of assessment, an office was created within Academic Affairs. This office was added based on the recommendations from a faculty driven SLOA task force and the support of administration. A coordinator position was created to assist with day to day assessment activities. The academic planning and assessment office works exclusively in the academic division and allows academics to focus on student learning and assessment.
- In 2013, Academic Affairs adopted the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan (SLOAP).
- In 2013, CSM received a Title III Student Success and Goal Completion grant. Funds were used from that grant to hire two support staff for the assessment office. Upon completion of the grant, it is intended that the 2 staff members remain as CSM employees in the assessment office within Academic Affairs.
- In 2014, the Program Review process was completely redesigned and relaunched.
- In 2015, the Coordinator position became a Director level position and reports directly to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The Director is responsible for Planning and Assessment for Academic Affairs thus ensuring that assessments are completed and the information is shared at the planning level and allows the combination of long term and short term planning in one office for a cohesive, all-inclusive view of assessment. The Director also works collaboratively with the Planning, Institutional Effectiveness and Research (PIER) department.
- In 2015, CSM established the Academic Learning and Assessment Committee. The committee is comprised of faculty members, each of whom represent an academic division, and is chaired by the Director of Academic Planning and Assessment. This committee is responsible for planning, mentoring, training, monitoring academic programs and recommending improvements at CSM.
- In 2015, CSM purchased new assessment software, Tk20, which will provide CSM with the information to assess divisions at all levels of the institution in measuring and improving student learning and outcomes. CSM’s use of Tk20 will also facilitate continuous improvement of academic and support services, and accumulate, generate and disseminate institutional information to support the assessment of student learning. Installation has been complete and testing will resume once the new learning management system is implemented in Fall 2016.

### **Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan**

In April 2012, faculty representatives were brought together to form the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Task Force. Through the work of this task force, the College of Southern Maryland’s Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan was formally approved in January 2013. This plan considers ongoing assessment activities and gaps in assessment, as it provides a framework for ongoing and cyclical assessment, reflection, and adaptation. Most importantly, the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment activities clearly align with the overall strategy for assessing institutional effectiveness as illustrated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: SLOAP as Part of the Elements for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness**



### Academic Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Matrix

The student learning outcomes assessment framework is organized around three main elements: (1) Institution Level Outcomes Assessments; (2) Program Outcomes Assessment, and (3) Other Assessment Initiatives, including course-level assessments.

Each of these assessment cohorts has been designed with the overall assessment construct in mind, thereby fitting all of the pieces together to ensure an effective assessment of student learning, one that allows (a) time for analysis of data, (b) opportunities for faculty to propose changes, and (c) procedures for transparent communication of assessment results to the college community.

### Institution Level Assessment

At the institution level, several assessments are used to create a full picture:

- Transfer Student Report – This report provides data on the four-year transfer institutions our students choose following their studies at CSM. It is used to identify articulation and other academic partnership opportunities. In addition, it is used to ensure program alignment with transfer institutions. With the upcoming incorporation of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System, changes to this report are being discussed to provide more robust decision-making data.
- Articulation Reports – These are generated for the Tech Prep and Dual Enrollment Programs.

### Institution Level Assessment: Core Learning Area Assessments

In 2011, Core Learning Area (CLA) Committees were brought together to create clusters of related areas of learning that reflected national norms and current definitions typically being used to measure student outcomes. These committees were made up of teaching faculty as well as a division chair or program coordinator. In April 2012, the CLA committees were incorporated into the more broadly based Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Task Force, and the Task Force worked with the faculty to make final revisions to the CLA outcomes. Once implemented, results illustrated the number of intended outcomes was not feasible and that the committees lacked a range of disciplines. The Academic Planning and Assessment Committee worked through the Fall 2015 semester to reduce and combine the objectives to a manageable number. During the Spring 2015 Pre-Semester workshops, the committee conducted a work session with other faculty members to develop objectives for each category. During the upcoming year,

the committee – in conjunction with input from the entire faculty body will complete the process of incorporating CLAs with general education for clear, measurable outcomes moving forward.

### *Institution Level Assessment: Critical Thinking Project Initiative*

This past year, CSM faculty examined teaching Critical Thinking in the classroom. The parameters:

- Assess for critical thinking in one (or more) classes both fall and spring semester (preferably using an AAC&U rubric, but that's negotiable).
- Mark "analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view" as an ESSENTIAL outcome on the IDEA form for the class in which CT project is conducted (and agree to have the class evaluated in both fall and spring semesters).
- Make improvements to teaching critical thinking in chosen classes, and document that improvement between fall and spring.
- Share results of experience and assessments with faculty colleagues, including student perception on progress of relevant object for CT.
- Help draft a group report outlining the results of the project.
- Provide workshops on CT for a future faculty professional development opportunity.
- Include CT as an outcome in the master course outline if it is not already included (ensuring everyone who teaches that course is also teaching CT).

The report will be presented by the participating faculty to their peers during the Fall 2016 Pre-Semester Conference. Workshops will then be offered to faculty for professional development.

### **Program Outcome Assessment**

The Program Review process includes purposeful and useful data. The review of academic programs is conducted in a systematic manner [see Table 1] and used as part of planning and budgeting. For example: the Executive Summaries from Program Reviews completed since 2012 were shared with the Chairs during the Chairs' Retreat in July 2016. One of the objectives of the Chairs' Retreat is to discuss outcomes from the prior year and begin planning for the upcoming year. Each division that had undergone a Program Review incorporated findings in the Unit Assessment Plan, thus allowing the information and recommendations resulting from a Program Review to be used to effect necessary change. The Information from the Program Reviews is incorporated into Unit Assessment Plans and Unit Operating Plans and is related to DAA's Strategic Plan as well as the Institutional Strategic Plan [see Appendix A]. Appendix A reflects the cycle of assessment in Biological Sciences from courses, to program, to Division, to the Institution.

Program and Course Coordinators routinely assess data for ways to improve student learning. Improvements include: additional professional development (on campus or attending conferences or other trainings, updating materials and/or equipment, modifying curriculum, etc.).

Table 1. Example of Program Assessment Timeline

Degree Program	Degree Type	Lead	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
<b>Biological and Physical Sciences</b>														
Biological Sciences	AA	Melanie Osterhouse	Review	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review
Environmental Studies	AA	Tom Russ	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made
<b>Business and Technology</b>														
<i>Business Studies</i>														
Accounting	AAS	TBD	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring
Business Administration	AS	Athena Miklos	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made
Business Administration: Technical Management	AS	Athena Miklos	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made
Hospitality Management	AAS	TBD	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made
Management Development	AAS	Mary Beth Klinger	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review - never done	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made
<i>Industrial Studies</i>														
Construction Management Technology	AAS	TBD	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made
Electric Power Technician	AAS	Bob Gates/TBD	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made
Electric Wiring Technician	AAS	Bob Gates/TBD	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made
Engineering Technology	AAS	Bob Gates	Review	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review
Engineering Technology: Drafting	AAS	Bernice Brezina	Review	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review
Engineering Technology: Electronics	AAS	TBD	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made
Engineering Technology: Manufacturing	AAS	Bob Gates	Review	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review
Nuclear Engineering Technology: Instrumentation and Control	AAS	Bob Gates/TBD	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made
Nuclear Engineering Technology: Mechanical	AAS	Bob Gates/TBD	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made
Nuclear Engineering Technology: Electrical	AAS	Bob Gates/TBD	Data gathered Changes made	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made	Review	Data gathered Changes made	Monitoring	Data gathered Changes made

## **Course Level Assessment**

Curriculum Maps are submitted with each Program Review. The curriculum map allows for documentation of courses where program outcomes are assessed, introduced, emphasized and mastered. Course-base assessment methods, frequency of assessing each outcome and criteria are also included. Results from the assessments, corresponding actions and follow-up plans are document in the Program [see Appendix B].

In addition, once the new learning management system, Desire2Learn, is introduced in Fall 2016, we will integrate the Tk20 assessment software, which will provide CSM with the embedded results of course-based assessment activities. Tk20 will also enable faculty to review assignments using an integrated assessment tool.

## **Other Assessments of Student Learning**

Other assessments of student learning are taking place regularly, based on the mission and goals of the college. Students' own perceptions of learning are captured through the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction. Other academic areas that regularly report assessment results include co-curricular programs, distance learning, and developmental education. These assessments, which include both direct and indirect measures, are reported through the Division of Academic Affairs Unit Assessment Plans.

### ***IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction (Conducted beginning spring 2011)***

The college began using the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction to improve teaching and learning in spring 2011. Following the initial pilot of about fifty course sections, the program was expanded in fall 2011 to include about 120 sections and a variety of delivery methods. By fall 2012, more than three hundred sections per semester were conducting surveys, the results of which were communicated back to division chairs and course faculty.

The IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction system factors out extraneous circumstances and focuses on student-reported achievement of 12 specific objectives. These can be administered online or on paper. Research has shown there is no single, correct way to teach. As a result, the IDEA Center tailors each report to fit the instructor's selected learning objectives and offers recommendations for improvement based on a vast national database. In essence, IDEA builds in objectivity, while accommodating the creativity and artistry necessary to facilitate student learning. The IDEA Center serves as a foundation for allowing division chairs to work with faculty to improve learning outcomes. Chairs have all received training in how to help faculty find the resources through the IDEA POD Center that address specific areas for improvement. Additionally, the Division of Academic Affairs reviews the IDEA survey results, looking for examples of faculty who achieve high ratings in any area; these faculty are asked to share their techniques with their colleagues through a variety of training venues.

Results of IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction have been used in a variety of ways:

- To ensure curricular consistency. The nursing faculty ensured that the critical objectives being measured in all nursing courses were agreed upon by the nursing faculty. Similar alignment of objectives has since occurred in many other disciplines.
- To evaluate all new full-time faculty and all adjunct faculty, regardless of length of tenure.
- To assess student opinions of learning facilities. Results of this assessment were used as part of the evidence to justify improvements to facilities in the Fine Arts Center classrooms that were completed in summer 2013.
- To assess student opinions of technology resources available at CSM.

Appendix A: Biology Unit Assessment Planning Grid (Nichols Grid)

<p><b>Your Department's Mission Statement:</b></p> <p>The Division of Biological and Physical Sciences seeks to empower students in their personal academic and professional lives by expanding their knowledge of biological and physical sciences and enhancing their skills in using scientific approaches to knowledge. The divisional mission essentially addresses three needs by providing: Service to all academic divisions in the form of general education, knowledge, and skills; High quality content specialization aimed at transfer preparation; Support courses for all allied health programs. The division offers college-level and continuing education courses, stressing competency in reasoning, critical thinking, and knowledge of biological and physical science.</p>	<p><b>College of Southern Maryland</b></p> <p><b>Year:</b> 2015-2016      <b>Author:</b> Tom Russ</p>			<p><b>Division:</b> DAA</p> <p><b>Department:</b> BIO</p>	
	<p><b>Intended Departmental Outcomes:</b></p>	<p><b>Means of Assessment and Sources of Data:</b></p>	<p><b>Criteria for Success:</b></p>	<p><b>Summary of Data Collected:</b></p>	<p><b>Use of Results:</b></p>
	<p><b>Intended Departmental Outcome #1:</b></p> <p>Analyze faculty workload and duties to enhance divisional productivity and instructor resources</p> <p>(USP, Goal 4)</p>	<p>Faculty schedules</p> <p>Faculty Development Plans</p> <p>Division Report</p>	<p>Establish baseline and target improvements</p>	<p>Work has begun to ensure workloads and duties are equitable</p>	<p>Information gathered will be used for reorganization discussions and decisions</p>
	<p><b>Intended Departmental Outcome #2:</b></p> <p>Conduct Program Review for Biological Sciences</p> <p>(USP, Goal 4)</p>	<p>Completed Program Review</p>	<p>Program Review will be completed by the faculty member who will then present the Executive Summary to ALAC</p>	<p>See Appendix 1</p>	<p>Consider/implement program improvement recommendations.</p>



## Appendix A: Unit Assessment Planning Biology

Arts and Science: Biological Sciences (2015-2016)

**Problem:** Some CSM courses in the Biological Sciences Program do not align with University of Maryland College Park's Program

- CHE 1210L does not transfer - Should transfer to CHEM 272
- University of Maryland has changed the Physics requirement from PHY 121/122 to PHY 131/132 – CSM PHY 1010/L and 1020/L transfers to PHY 121/122 not PHY 131/132
- Principles of Biology III is not offered at CSM but is part of the first two years of the University of Maryland Biological Sciences Program

**Action Plan:** Cami Cooley will check the number of students that transfer to University of Maryland to see if enrollment would be adequate in order to create the needed classes. James Spence will check to see if the Engineering Physics (PHY 2200/L and PHY 2210/L at CSM) would fulfill the University of Maryland physics requirement or if a new course should be created.

Potential Outcomes based on transfer numbers and requirements:

- Changing CHE 1210L to meet University of Maryland standards
- Adding PHY 2200/L and 2210/L as an option to fulfill the physics requirement in the CSM Biological Sciences Program
- Creating Principles of Biology III

**Problem:** Biological Sciences has consistently had the highest teacher student ratio in the college with the current ratio being 28:1. One advantage of the community college is the small class sizes; therefore, to meet this expectation and to help with better student success, an increase in biology faculty is warranted.

**Action Plan:** The Leonardtown campus has only 1 full-time faculty member, compared with Prince Frederick that has 2 2/3 permanent faculty members.

- Increase the number of permanent faculty members at Leonardtown

**Problem:** The LaPlata campus has equipment that the other two campuses do not have and therefore, there is not an equal student experience across the college. Equipment is not in good working order, especially for the Principles of Biology laboratory.

**Action Plan:** Purchase equipment and replace broken equipment so that there is equity across the three campuses.

**Problem:** Students were dissatisfied with the online homework programs for both Chemistry and Math. Students suggested that the Chemistry Pearson Products and the MyMathLab should be replaced with more user-friendly software or that homework should not be done online. Students could not complete the Biological Sciences Program within the allotted two years due to required courses being offered at the same time. Students found that the staff advisors did not know program specific answers and thus resorted to not using advisors. Students suggested that genetics should be offered face to face due to the difficulty of the subject, the lack of face to face opportunities with the instructor, which was confirmed by the below expectation Student Learning Outcomes for this class.

### Action Plan:

- Replace or eliminate the online homework for Chemistry and Mathematics
- Course coordinators in Physics, Principles of Biology, and Chemistry need to prevent overlap in scheduling of required courses
- Program specific advisors are needed by increasing the number of faculty advisors
- Genetics lecture should be offered in the Distance Learning Rooms to allow for face-to-face interaction
  - o *This might be a solution for many courses where only one section is offered due to low enrollment, such as organic chemistry.*

**Miscellaneous Problems:** Some courses lack a master syllabus. While mentoring is available for new faculty, teaching a new course for the first time for established faculty does not result in an automatic mentor, leaving a faculty member feeling unprepared. James Spence has asked to make Calculus required for the Program in order to meet the degree requirements for many other Biological Sciences Programs, other than University of Maryland.

### Action Plan:

- All courses at the College of Southern Maryland should have a master syllabus. Biological Sciences Program requirements that currently lack a master syllabus include General Chemistry II/L, Statistics, and Physics I/L.
- Provide mentors for established faculty who are teaching a new course
- Add Calculus as a suggested option to fulfill the math requirement.

Appendix B. Example of Course Level Assessment

**Computer Science Program – Course Learning Assessment:**

1. Student Learning Outcomes for the Program: (what the students should be able to do)
  - o **SLO #3: Design and develop computer programs** using industry standard programming languages.
  - o **SLO #4: Implement** advanced computer **algorithms and data structures** in developing computer programs.
  
2. What assessment methods were used to measure student achievement of the SLOs? Both direct and indirect measures can be included. Examples of direct measures (certification exams, tests, portfolios, capstone projects, etc.) and indirect methods (graduate surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.) can be considered.
  - o 30 research papers with 30 directed discussions
  - o 30 applied concept quizzes
  - o 30 programming based assignments

Student Learning Outcome	Measures used to assess the SLOs	Expectation for satisfactory	Student performance ITS-2740
<b>Design and develop computer programs</b> using industry standard programming	30 research papers with 30 directed discussions 30 applied concept quizzes	Course grade C	__21__ Exceeded __6__ Met __7__ Not Met
<b>Implement</b> advanced computer <b>algorithms and data structures</b> in developing	30 research papers with 30 directed discussions 30 applied concept quizzes	Course grade C	__21__ Exceeded __6__ Met __7__ Not Met

	Analyze and solve problems in discrete mathematics and integral calculus	Analyze and solve complex computer problems	Design and develop computer programs using industry standard programming languages.	Implement advanced computer algorithms and data structures in developing computer	Demonstrate understanding of computer architecture and design
<b>How do students learn how to do this? What class work and assignments help them learn this?</b>	MTH coursework. Homework, projects, exam problem sets. MTH 1200, 1210, 2500.	CS coursework. Homework, projects, exam problem sets. ITS 2591, 2592, 2740	CS coursework. Homework, projects, exam problem sets. ITS 2591, 2592, 2740	CS coursework. Homework, projects, exam problem sets. ITS 2591, 2592, 2740	CS coursework. Homework, projects, exam problem sets. ITS 2591, 2592, 2740, 2750
<b>How will you assess how well your students have learned this?</b>	Problem based assessment	Problem based assessment	Problem based assessment	Problem based assessment	Problem based assessment
<b>What kind of benchmark or standard will you use to interpret this?</b>	Rubric	Rubric	Rubric	Rubric	Rubric
<b>When do you expect to begin collecting this information?</b>	2013 - 2014	2012 – 2013	2012 – 2013	2012 – 2013	2012 – 2013
<b>How often will you collect this assessment information? (You may want to include both formative and summative cycles. Please indicate the Academic Years in which the</b>	Annually	Annually	Annually	Annually	Annually

Adapted from Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide (L. Suskie, 2009, p. 315)

**Community College of Baltimore County**



## **Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016**

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.

## Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

Institutional leadership for the Community College of Baltimore County's assessment efforts is provided by the Dean of Instruction for Curriculum and Assessment, working in close collaboration with the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, especially the Director of Institutional Assessment. In addition, two full-time faculty members each receive twelve credits of reassigned time per year to serve as the Outcomes Associate (course and program-level assessment) and the General Education Assessment Teams (GREAT) Coordinator (general education assessment). Along with the chair of the Learning Outcomes Assessment Advisory Board and the academic deans, these four college leaders guide and support assessment initiatives at CCBC. Below are the links to the Guide for Learning Outcomes Assessment, now in its 4<sup>th</sup> edition, that provides an overview of assessment work at the college and the Assessment homepage:

[http://www.ccbcmd.edu/~media/CCBC/About%20CCBC/Accreditation/Learning%20Outcomes%20Assessment/PDFs/oa\\_booklet.ashx?la=en](http://www.ccbcmd.edu/~media/CCBC/About%20CCBC/Accreditation/Learning%20Outcomes%20Assessment/PDFs/oa_booklet.ashx?la=en)

<http://www.ccbcmd.edu/About-CCBC/Accreditation/Learning-Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>

The Learning Outcomes Assessment Advisory Board (LOAAB) serves as the primary, college-wide conduit of assessment activities that take place at the course, program, and institutional levels. This active group consists of members from each of CCBC's academic schools, Continuing Education, library services and student services, Middle States accreditation leaders, and distance learning. LOAAB is the mechanism for convening people from all areas of the college to have assessment conversations. It is a channel for sharing resources and data about teaching and learning. LOAAB advances the culture of assessment at CCBC and supports efforts to improve student learning by providing faculty development to promote the benefits of meaningful assessment to teaching and learning. Members provide school assessment updates. This past academic year more than 250 projects were reported as new/on-going.

LOAAB works with faculty and staff across the college to: (1) use CCBC's 5-stage assessment process to compare results before and after changes are put into place; (2) continue to secure support from key leaders such as academic deans for guiding assessment projects and using the data to make informed decisions and improve the teaching/learning process and revise curricula as needed; (3) compare results over time and across courses and disciplines; (4) involve faculty in all aspects of assessment; (5) use multiple measures and data when making important decisions; (6) communicate broadly; (7) align assessment with CCBC's culture and structures; (8) ensure that assessment results are never used in a punitive way; and (9) remind people that no one assessment is perfect and may not always provide clear or immediate answers. LOAAB members work collaboratively to develop action plans to address gaps and areas with potential for growth. Advice is garnered from internal experts and external consultants.

LOAAB has written job responsibilities for the co-chairs and member representatives.

Representatives take an active part in their area's assessment projects, initiate new projects, and keep current with the progress of those ongoing. At each LOAAB meeting, representatives report on their school or area's assessment initiatives and progress. LOAAB members are assessment advocates and facilitators in their disciplines.

After more than a decade of devoted effort using the results of assessment to inform the teaching/learning process and enhance student success, CCBC has a lot to celebrate. However, since

the goal of assessment is continuous review and reflection aimed at improvement, there is a never a time when we can be satisfied with what we have achieved in the past. CCBC joined the Achieving the Dream (ATD) network in 2009 and in 2012 was awarded “Leader College” status. Leader Colleges have shown three years of sustained improvement in student success and are expected to serve as mentors within the ATD community. In 2015, CCBC won the prestigious Leah Meyer Austin award for approaches that promote student success and result in significant, sustainable institutional improvement.

CCBC has been lauded for its work in assessment. During the most recent MSCHE decennial reaccreditation in 2012, the college received two commendations and an exemplary practice designation for its work in student learning outcomes assessment:

Standard 7 Institutional Assessment Commendation: The institution has implemented “a documented, organized, and sustained assessment process to evaluate and improve the total range of programs and services; achievement of institutional mission, goals, and plans; and compliance with accreditation standards”.

Standard 14 Assessment of Student Learning Commendation: The institution has implemented a “systematic, sustained [assessment process] that uses multiple qualitative and quantitative measures that maximizes the use of existing data”. There is an institutional culture for assessing institutional effectiveness and use of results.

Standard 14 Assessment of Student Learning Exemplary Practice: External evaluators validated many of CCBC’s locally developed assessment instruments, providing an additional measure of surety in their use.

CCBC won the Community College Future Assembly Bellwether Award for its Learning Outcomes Assessment program in 2008 and was recognized again by the Futures Assembly as a 2014 Legacy Award Finalist for continuing its outstanding work in assessment. CCBC received the Council for Higher Education Accreditation’s Award for Institutional Progress in Student Learning Outcomes in 2006, the first year that the award was bestowed. CCBC was the only community college to receive the award during that inaugural year. The college was also selected by the League for Innovation in the Community College as a Vanguard Learning College, primarily as a result of its work in learning outcomes and has been recognized by the League as a national leader in this area. The goal of assessment at CCBC is to ensure the best conditions for learning, encourage best practices, and inspire creativity and innovation. All members of the institution share responsibility for student learning; consequently, a climate of cooperation and focused efforts to improve permeates the assessment process. CCBC has participated in the Voluntary System of Accountability since 2012 and faculty and administrators have participated in AAC&U activities, such as the development and norming of the VALUE rubrics, and presented at NILOA conferences. We have incorporated the research and best practices recommended by these organizations to enhance CCBC’s assessment model and strategies to further improve and expand student learning.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

### **Use of Campus-level Student Learning Evidence**

All college units set measurable goals that are regularly assessed and reported, and then used to support institutional decisions; this is indicative of CCBC's culture of assessment. Broadly, the college's strategic plan drives the unit goals. In addition to the college-wide strategic plan, each of the four Vice Presidents also develops integrated three-year strategic plans that guide and support the work of their departments. Using a standard, college-wide template, all units develop annual goals to achieve the outcomes outlined in the strategic plans. A college-wide committee, the Institutional Planning, Assessment and Review Committee (INPARC), meets quarterly to ensure that all units are making progress toward achieving the annual goals and to share strategies and resources. All annual goals and accompanying annual assessment reports are posted on the college's intranet and compiled into a report that is submitted to the President. Assessment data determines resource needs, which are reviewed annually by Deans and Vice Presidents, and approved by the Board of Trustees. An example of a large scale assessment intervention that was implemented since 2011 can be found in our recent revisions to Common Course Outlines (CCO). As part of our decennial General Education (GE) review—a three-year process involving a literature review, a comparative analysis of all GE outcomes and assessment plans in Maryland two and four year institutions, meetings with transfer partners concerning student preparedness, and open fora with CCBC faculty—GE outcomes were revised and updated to reflect Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) essential learning outcomes and other 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. GE courses include multiple measurable objectives and course requirements aligned to each GE outcome. Most importantly, a Common Graded Assignment (CGA) and corresponding analytic rubric that assess the GE outcomes must be approved by the General Education Review Board (GERB) to earn GE designation. This process institutionalizes alignment between outcomes-objectives-assignments-rubrics.

Another example of a large scale intervention can be found in our Accelerated Learning Programs (ALP), a program for which CCBC is nationally recognized. CCBC's English ALP grew out of the assessment of students taking developmental writing courses, and assessment of student learning shaped the early program prior to the institution's investment in its large-scale implementation and adoption of the model in the Reading and Mathematics departments.

The Accelerated Learning Program allows students who place in the upper-level developmental writing course (ENGL 052) to enroll concurrently in ENGL 101 and embark on academic pathways more quickly toward completion. Students with an ENGL 052 placement enroll in a 10-student section of ENGL 052 and are mainstreamed into a section of ENGL 101, joining 10 college-ready students. Both courses are taught by the same instructor. Compared to traditional developmental writing approaches, ALP has doubled the student success rate, cut attrition in half, sped up student progress through the developmental sequence and established a cost-effective pathway as measured by the cost per successful student.



Since ALP began in 2007, CCBC has increased its number of graduates and the number of degrees awarded. The total number of associate degrees awarded during FY 2014 was 55 more than the benchmark established in 2010 at the start of the MHEC performance accountability cycle. An analysis of ALP student awards (degrees & certificates) received within 4 years of the cohort compared with students completing developmental writing courses and ENGL 101 sequentially reveals that Fall 2007-Fall 2014 ALP cohorts consistently earned a higher percentage of awards each year. As confirmation that ALP is enabling completion, of the Fall 2007 ALP cohort, 23.5% earned an award within 4 years, as compared to 9.9% of the Fall 2007 sequential developmental writing cohort. Increased degree completion may be attributed to ALP and related CCBC developmental education redesign to guide students more efficiently to complete.

ALP is one of the few innovative developmental education models that has consistently produced increased student success rates toward completion and demonstrated scalability. For FY17 and beyond, CCBC's ALP will feature a new fully-integrated reading and writing course (Academic Literacy/ACLT 053) paired with ENGL 101 instead of ENGL 052. This curricular redesign was necessary to bring ALP to full-scale, for in the original ALP model students with developmental reading placements were required to take a standalone reading course concurrently with ALP, totaling 10 credits and prohibiting most part-time students from taking ALP. This curricular change will also enable all students with upper-level developmental reading or writing placements to enroll in credit-bearing courses and embark on academic pathways from their first semester at CCBC.

CCBC regularly conducts assessment projects at the course, program, GE and institutional levels. The college has a full-time Director of Institutional Assessment who provides guidance, direction and support for all academic assessment initiatives. All assessment projects at CCBC follow the same five-stage model: 1) Design and propose a learning outcomes assessment project; 2) Implement the design and collect and analyze the data; 3) Redesign the course/program to improve student learning; 4) Implement course/program revisions and reassess student learning; 5) Analyze and report final results.

Use of specific assessment data is clearly embedded in our Learning Outcomes Assessment (LOA) assessment processes. During post-assessment semesters, Department faculty and Chairs, along with school Deans, meet with the Dean of Instruction for Curriculum and Assessment, the Director of Institutional Assessment and other assessment leaders to review learning outcomes data and assess strengths and weaknesses. The data review informs the development of targeted curricular and pedagogical interventions, including new or revised methods and materials (see Intervention Plan Report Template, below). Exit surveys inventory the assessment process and identify possible flaws in assessment tools. Team leaders codify intervention plans in reports published alongside the data outcomes on the college's intranet where they may be referenced and reviewed through the ongoing various stages in the assessment cycle. While the college's website contains summaries of completed course level projects and GE and institutional data outcome reports, the college's intranet contains numerous additional assessment resources, including model assignments, rubrics, and intervention plans. Learning Outcomes Assessment Advisory Board and General Education Review Board members as well as faculty promote model interventions through assessment events and college workshops. Each year the Learning Outcomes Assessment Advisory Board offers workshops to train faculty and staff on assessment-related topics.

Since 2004, a comprehensive annual report that summarizes college assessment activities and highlights completed projects is published by the Office of Instruction. This report is published both

in print and on the college intranet and website, and it is widely distributed among the college community. The link to the 271-page 2012-2013 report is below:

[http://www.ccbcmd.edu/~media/CCBC/About%20CCBC/Accreditation/Learning%20Outcomes%20Assessment/PDFs/LOA\\_annual\\_report.ashx](http://www.ccbcmd.edu/~media/CCBC/About%20CCBC/Accreditation/Learning%20Outcomes%20Assessment/PDFs/LOA_annual_report.ashx)

### **Data Outcomes Reports and Intervention Reports**

The office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation processes scoring results and publishes a Data Outcomes Report for every project, which is reviewed and discussed in a face-to-face meeting with course and discipline stakeholders. Based on these assessment outcomes, faculty teams, in consultation with department faculty and leadership, develop intervention plans formalized in Intervention Reports. From the start of formalized learning assessment at CCBC, almost two decades ago, assessment reports have been disseminated through assessment presentations. Presentations occur at department meetings, individual school retreats, and numerous college-wide attended events (e.g. CCBC's Annual Professional Development Day, the Teaching Learning Fair, Winter Adjunct Conference and Fall Focus). In addition, Stage 4 (Reassessment) assessment reports include questions to elicit discussions, which facilitate the on-going nature of this process.

### **Intervention Plan Report Template:**

- I. Current Data-summarize the data/outcomes of the most recent assessment.
- II. Previous Cycle's Intervention Strategy-summarize the intervention strategy plan and implementation and evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions in the context of the most recent data.
- III. Intervention Target Area and Rationale-identify the target area for intervention, including relevant Common Course Outline objectives, major topics, and General Education outcomes, and explain the rationale for this focus.
- IV. Intervention Strategy and Implementation Plan
- V. Intervention Goals and Expected Outcomes

### **Course-Level Assessment**

The course level assessment process utilizes externally-validated assessments that directly measure student learning at the course objective level. All assessment projects begin with the development of a Request for Proposal (RFP) and flow through the five stages of assessment. Throughout the process, faculty teams attempt to adhere as closely to basic research design as possible. The Planning, Research, and Evaluation Office conducts the data analyses and provides a detailed report at stages 2 and 4. This office also assists the process by providing methodological and technical support.

Prior to launching a project, a team of faculty leaders is selected by the academic dean to serve as the primary researchers for each project. In orientation meetings, the team leaders are fully briefed about LOA policies and procedures and begin framing the outcomes to be measured and the research design to be employed. Next, the faculty group selects or designs an assessment instrument, ensures external validation, and outlines a timeline for completion of each stage.

The LOA projects are very effective in informing the faculty teams and guiding interventions aimed at improving student success based on the results of the projects. See the Appendix to review one example of an executive summary of a course-level assessment project (Appendix A: CSIT 120: Diversity in a Technology Society). Executive summaries are available on the CCBC Learning

Outcomes Assessment webpage for all completed projects. These final reports are widely distributed so that lessons learned can be shared by other disciplines and departments.

### **General Education Assessment**

CCBC is now in its twelfth year of college-wide, full implementation of the General Education Assessment Teams (GREAT) projects for general education course assessment. General education (GE) assessment at CCBC has benefited from many recent changes. In the wake of the recent GE Program review and subsequent revisions to program outcome definitions, in the 2014-15 academic year, all GE courses submitted revised Common Course Outlines (CCOs) and Common Graded Assignments (CGAs) to the GE Review Board (GERB) for approval. CGAs are exemplar assignments worth a minimum of 10% of the course grade and scored using the analytic rubric by every faculty member. For example, in ENGL 101, College Composition I, all 171 sections offered in Fall 2015, (enrollment of 2,000+ students) completed the same assignment and were graded according to the same prescriptive rubric. Although only a representative sample of those assignments is scored by external, trained scorers, all faculty are trained in how to use the assignment to improve outcomes. Recent revisions to GE assessment support materials including a CGA template, re-scaled rubric, and rubric guide—emphasize the alignment of course objectives and assessments; this greatly assisted in the production of quality GE course applications. Each GE course is assessed on a rotating 3-year assessment cycle. This time allows each course's team to receive individualized assessment reports and presentations and to reflect, develop, and implement evidence-based changes to the course. Data is reported in the form of mean scores which are correlated to the analytic rubrics. The goal/benchmark is for students to achieve a score of 3 out of 4 on all GE outcomes. Each CGA/rubric must assess at least 4 of the 6 GE outcomes that every GE course must meet in order to be approved as a GE course. In addition to mean and mode scores, data reports also provide a wealth of other data to the faculty teams, including correlations to GPA, number of credits completed, and other demographic data. Scores from previous assessments are compared for a longitudinal look at student success over time. In addition, CCBC administers the Proficiency Profile, a nationally normed test of GE skills approximately every 4-5 years. See the Appendix for a sample GE rubric and data tables. (Appendix B: Excerpts from the BIOL 110 GREATS Assessment Report, Spring 2015).

### **Program Review**

In addition to course and GE assessment, degree and certificate programs are reviewed by examining and assessing the currency and relevancy of the curriculum, analyzing enrollment, course and program completion and other student performance data. This also includes reviewing related program information including articulation agreements, faculty credentials, inventories of instructional resources, course delivery strategies, relationships to Continuing Education, cooperative education and internship data and job opening and placement data. As a result of each review and the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis performed, strengths, challenges, and needs are identified. These are addressed in short-term goals and the long-term vision of the program. Program Review materials, including an analytic rubric that is used by the CCBC Program Review Committee members to evaluate each program review report, are posted on the college's internal website (SharePoint) and used as resources to support continuous enhancement to the process.

Each year LOAAB and the CCBC Program Review Committee select a **Program of the Year Award** winner based on the program review report meeting or exceeding the following six criteria:

- Demonstrated evidence of ongoing assessment of the program's and students' strengths and weaknesses.
- A Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Program Outcomes Assessment Project (POAP) that clearly outlines the plan for how the Coordinator will assess the stated program outcomes that is specific enough to enable an understanding of the learning outcomes of the program and the degree to which students are achieving those outcomes.
- Demonstrated evidence that advisory board meetings are held on a regular basis and that the feedback from advisory board members is employed to enhance the program.
- Demonstrated evidence that the program successfully prepares students for career and/or transfer.
- Thorough analysis of the program data and a plan for and/or evidence of having put measures into place to address areas that need attention.
- Overall quality and depth of the report and how the information will be used to improve the program.

This award was created to highlight and acknowledge the important work that takes place while examining the current strengths and progress towards the student learning outcomes of a CCBC program. The Program of Year Award winners have been: Legal Studies (2010-11); Automotive Technology (2011-12); Human Services (2012-13); Aviation Management (2013-2014) Occupational Safety and Health Technology (2014-2015) and Construction Management (2015-2016). A number of excellent program review reports are submitted each year to the CCBC Program Review Committee making this highly competitive.

### **Institutional Assessment**

In addition to all of the above assessment efforts, the office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (PRE) also supports: strategic planning and INPARC, course, program and institutional surveys, Achieving the Dream initiatives and annual reports, Pathways research, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), and other assessment related work at CCBC. The College has a long history of using data to identify and refine goals, to develop strategies for ensuring effective progress towards goals, and for developing metrics and measures that accurately and appropriately measure progress. PRE supports the College's efforts by managing and maintaining the institutional effectiveness indicator system. The Office serves as a resource for the interpretation of established benchmarks and provides assistance with the formation of appropriate interventions designed to increase student success and improved institutional performance. The Office also acts as a clearinghouse for quantitative and qualitative information helpful for improving student learning and services. Finally, the data and information produced by PRE is used to better understand and improve the institution.

### **Reflection and Growth/Improvement Plan**

CCBC understands the need for continuous improvement, with the goals of affirming elements that are going well, unearthing ones needing further attention, and making tangible plans to implement necessary changes. CCBC benefits from years of thoughtful engagement with assessment practices and policies. The response rate to a recent student survey was encouraging--students overwhelmingly reported that faculty are doing a good job of assessing both GE and Program Outcomes. At an institution the size of CCBC, we work very hard to ensure that our message reaches all stakeholders.

We have made great strides in using the Quality Matters criteria to improve our distance learning courses. An important and ongoing goal is to narrow the achievement gap between face-to-face and online learning success rates. The performance gap between face-to-face and online learning is frequently cited in national studies and is an area addressed by CCBC through its Quality Matters Initiatives. Our GE outcomes promote an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. We will further strengthen GE by converting more Common Graded Assignments (CGAs) into High Impact Practices and requiring signature work. The merger of GE with program-specific coursework in our Academic Pathways will further enhance faculty awareness of the value of the CGAs and the use of data to guide pedagogy and strengthen student learning.

### **High Impact Practices**

High Impact Practices (HIP) that have been proven nationally to have a positive impact on student success include Service Learning, Diversity/Global Learning, Common Intellectual Experiences, Learning Communities, Writing-Intensive Courses, Collaborative Assignments and Projects, and Undergraduate Research are being implemented. As part of our Academic Pathways work we are imbedding HIPs in our most highly enrolled courses, beginning with English 101 and Technology and Information Systems 101. The project proposal for these projects include the following: an explanation of how sustained student effort across a semester will be accomplished; the opportunities students will be given to form relationships with other students, faculty and staff; how frequent, rich feedback from both peers and faculty will be provided; the opportunities for students to test and apply what they are learning in new situations, especially related to their Pathway; and the opportunity to reflect on what students learned from the HIP assignment as well as the relationship of the assignment to their Pathway, major, or career goal and the people they are becoming.

In June 2016, CCBC was one of six colleges nationwide to be awarded a 2-year grant from Achieving the Dream and the Helmsley Foundation entitled Engaging Adjunct Faculty in the Student Success Movement. The grant seeks to build institutional capacity to better integrate and engage adjunct faculty members in the student success agenda and to understand and address the opportunities and challenges faced by colleges engaging part-time faculty. CCBC will utilize this grant to move forward with student success efforts to infuse High Impact Practices into highly-enrolled general education courses, and link these High Impact Practices to CCBC's Pathways initiatives. The grant funding will allow CCBC to set up teams of full-time and adjunct faculty who will develop materials and curricula to improve student outcomes in highly enrolled courses. In addition, grant funds will be used to increase adjunct faculty engagement at the college by providing centers for adjunct faculty work, and stipends to support faculty development for adjunct faculty at CCBC.

## **CSIT 120: Diversity in a Technological Society Learning Outcomes Assessment Executive Report**

**Submitted by Renuka Kumar**

### **1. Designing and Proposing a Learning Outcomes Assessment Project:**

**CSIT 120, Diversity in a Technological Society** explores the influences of technology on human diversity. Students are introduced to basic human relationship factors, international cultures, technologies, people with disabilities, human and data communications, artificial intelligence, computer security, and various individuals who have influenced technology.

The principal objective for this project was to ensure that students are meeting overall course objectives as outlined in the Common Course Outline for the course. The project also looked at opportunities to improve any weaknesses in student mastery of the learning objectives. Additional goals were to identify strengths and weaknesses within CSIT 120 and to capitalize on areas of success to recruit/retain students.

The assessment instrument was a 60 minute multiple choice test comprised of 50 questions delivered during final exam week through WebCT/Blackboard. The questions were linked to specific course objectives.

There were two content areas in the course that required assessment: (1) the diversity component of the course, and (2) the technology component of the course. Dr. Richard Bucher reviewed the Diversity component of the assessment. Dr. Bucher is the author of one of the textbooks that is being used in the CSIT 120 course. The technology component of the assessment was reviewed by a faculty member of the Towson University Computer Science Department.

### **2. Implementing the Design and Collecting Data:**

The CSIT 120 Learning Outcomes Assessment (LOA) project was conducted during the spring 2011 semester on all CCBC campuses. The assessment data was combined with other student information such as grades and demographics, to provide a comprehensive representation of the students.

Of the 288 students awarded grades for the course 55% were Caucasian/White, 29% were African-American/Black and 16% were from other racial/ethnic groups or unknown. The majority of the students were female (63%) and 37% were male.

Of the students completing the assessment, 98% successfully completed the course with a grade of A-D, and 2% received a grade of F. Seventy-nine percent (79%) of the students successfully completed the course with a grade of A-D as shown in Table 1 below. Online sections experienced a 70% success rate.

**Table 1**

Grades±	Catonsville (n=46)	Dundalk (n=20)	Essex (n=129)	Online (n=93)	All CINS 120 (N=288)
A-D	94%	75%	81%	70%	79% (228)
F	6%	20%	13%	18%	14% (41)
W	NA	5%	5%	10%	6% (16)

### 3. Redesigning the Course to Improve Student Learning:

Of the 50 questions on the assessment, students had problems with 6 (six) questions where more than 50% of the students answered the questions incorrectly. Four of the Common Course Outline objectives had mean correct scores less than 70%:

**Table 2**

Objective	Mean Score
#1. Describe the effects of technology on the changing cultural landscape	62%
#5. Demonstrate and use software designed to help people with disabilities	63%
#9. Describe emerging technologies	60%
#11. Identify people who have contributed to advances in technology	67%

Suggestions to improve performance on the next assessment included the following:

- Spend more class time reviewing objectives 1, 5, 9 and 11 of the Common Course Outline.
- Modify four questions on the assessment as the questions needed to be clearer for students to interpret.
- Use an assignment to review Objective 11.

### 4. Implementing Course Revisions and Reassessing Student Learning:

The second CSIT 120 Learning Outcomes Assessment (LOA) project was conducted during the spring 2012 semester on all CCBC campuses. The assessment data was combined with other student information such as grades and demographics, to provide a comprehensive representation of the students.

Of the 292 students awarded grades 158 (54%) were Caucasian/White, 90 (31%) were African-American/Black and 44 (15%) were from other racial/ethnic groups or unknown. The majority of the students were female (62%) and 38% were male.

Eight-five percent (85%) of the students successfully completed the course with a grade of A-D (Table 3) Online sections experienced a 77% success rate.

**Table 3**

<b>Grades±</b>	<b>Catonsville (n=47)</b>	<b>Dundalk (n=22)</b>	<b>Essex (n=127)</b>	<b>Online (n=96)</b>	<b>All CSIT 120 (N=292)</b>
A-D	94%	77%	89%	77%	85% (248)
F	4%	14%	6%	14%	9% (26)
W	2%	9%	5%	7%	5% (16)

## **5. Final Analysis and Results:**

Overall, students performed similarly on the 2011 and 2012 assessments, with mean scores of 72% and 74%, respectively. However, 2012 saw an increase in the number of students who successfully completed the course with a grade of A-D from 79% to 85%. Online sections experienced a 77% success rate in 2012 compared to 70% in 2011. The impact of the implemented interventions is clearly positive.

Students continued to have difficulty with five of the six specific questions that were identified in the 2011 report. Recommendations for the future include continuing to place more emphasis in class on the above outlined objectives, see Table 2. Instructors teaching the course will meet at the end of each semester to discuss progress and share best practices.



**Biology 110 (BIOL 110): Biology 1: Molecular and Cells**

Figure A6 depicts the Mean and Mode for BIOL 110. To interpret the Mean and Mode, the Rubric and CGA should be reviewed. For your convenience, the approved Rubric and CGA follow Figure A6 in Table A11 and A12, respectively. In Table A11 the Mean score has been highlighted in light blue within each General Education Competency (each row). Utilizing Figure A6 and the Rubric (Table A11); please see below for interpretation of the first General Education Competency – *Written and Oral Communication* – this interpretation can be used for each Competency.

For the General Education Competency – *Written and Oral Communication* – BIOL 110 students, scored a mean of 2.15 and the most common score given on that objective (mode) was a 2. This could be interpreted as;

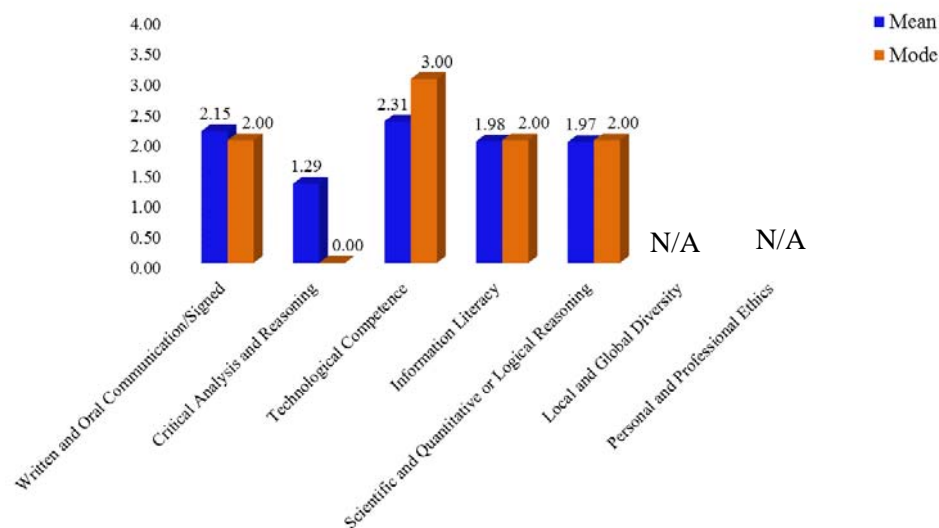
For the General Education Competency – *Written and Oral Communication* – BIOL 110 students, on average (mean), are earning a 2: *Developing/Approaches Expectations*, this indicates (according to the rubric):

- The paper does not identify all three hypotheses tested in the experiment OR the hypotheses are not written as predictions.
- The purpose of the experiment is not correctly stated.
- Writing contains errors in usage or mechanics that interfere with the meaning or understanding of the paper.
- The paper fails to follow 1 of the formatting requirements.

For the General Education Competency – *Written and Oral Communication* – BIOL 110 students, are most commonly earning a score of 2: *Developing/Approaches Expectations*, this indicates (according to the rubric):

- The paper does not identify all three hypotheses tested in the experiment OR the hypotheses are not written as predictions.
- The purpose of the experiment is not correctly stated.
- Writing contains errors in usage or mechanics that interfere with the meaning or understanding of the paper.
- The paper fails to follow 1 of the formatting requirements.

**Figure A6 – Biology 110 (BIOL 110): Biology 1: Molecular and Cells**



Notes: If less than half of the CGAs were graded for an objective within the course, that objective is denoted as “N/A”

**Table A11 – BIOL 110 Rubric**

General Education Competency	Related Assignment Requirement	4 Exemplary Exceeds Expectations	3 Accomplished Meets Expectations	2 Developing Approaches Expectations	1 Beginning Falls Below Expectations
<i>Written and Oral Communication</i>	Title Abstract Introduction Materials and Methods Results Discussion Literature Cited (Assignment specification contains information for formatting)	The three hypotheses are correctly written as predictions. The purpose of the experiment is clearly and accurately stated. Each section presents the required information in an insightful manner. All of the elements are clearly connected to the purpose and hypotheses for the paper. Writing is free of major errors in usage or mechanics. Minor errors that are present do not interfere with the meaning or understanding of the paper. Paper follows all formatting requirements.	The three hypotheses are correctly written as predictions. The purpose of the experiment is accurately stated. Each section contains the required information. Writing is free of major errors in usage or mechanics. Minor errors that are present do not interfere with the meaning or understanding of the paper. Paper follows all formatting requirements.	The paper does not identify all three hypotheses tested in the experiment OR the hypotheses are not written as predictions. The purpose of the experiment is not correctly stated. Writing contains errors in usage or mechanics that interfere with the meaning or understanding of the paper. The paper fails to follow 1 of the formatting requirements.	The paper does not identify all three hypotheses tested in the experiment AND the stated hypotheses are not written as predications. The purpose of the experiment is not correctly stated or stated at all. Writing contains errors in usage or mechanics that interfere with the meaning or understanding of the paper. The paper fails to follow 2 or more formatting requirements.
<i>Critical Analysis and Reasoning</i>	Discussion Section	A well-developed argument is presented for how this data could be significant to the chosen field of science. A strong correlation is made between the findings and their significance to the chosen field of science	Correlation is made between the findings and their significance to the chosen field of science.	Correlation between findings and their significance to the chosen field of science is made, but reasoning contains some scientific inaccuracies. Student may not identify a specific field of science to apply the findings to.	The reasoning behind why the findings could be significant to the chosen field of science is not logical. Student does not identify a specific field of science to apply the findings to.
<i>Information Literacy</i>	Literature Cited	Literature cited section exceeds the minimum number of required sources and all sources are credible. Source information is smoothly integrated and paraphrased in appropriate sections with limited use of direct quotes. Sources are cited properly using APA style citations . In-line citations are utilized in the body of the document correctly and adhere to APA style as well.	Literature cited section meets the minimum number required and all sources are credible. Source information is paraphrased in appropriate sections with limited use of direct quotes. Sources are cited properly using APA style citations . In-line citations are utilized in the body of the document correctly and adhere to APA style as well.	Literature cited section is missing one source or not all of the sources are credible. Source information is not smoothly integrated into sections. Relevance to the section it is in is difficult to discern. Sources are cited, but are not cited using APA style. In-line citations are not used correctly through the entire body of the paper.	Literature cited section is missing one or more sources AND not all of the sources are credible. Source information is not smoothly integrated into sections. Relevance to the section is difficult to discern. Direct quotes are excessively used. One or more sources is/are not documented either in the body of the paper or in the literature cited section.
<i>Technological Competence</i>	Results Section	Computer generated graphs are included in the paper and contain all required elements. Data in the graph is presented in a way that supports the understanding of the results section	Computer generated graphs are included and contain all required elements.	Computer generated graphs are included but are missing one required element	Computer generated graphs are included but are missing more than one required element AND/OR graph does not accurately reflect gathered data.
<i>Scientific, Quantitative or Logical Reasoning</i>	Results Section Discussion section	Clearly states how the data supports the three hypotheses stated in in the introduction. All of the gathered data is discussed, not just the pieces of data that directly supports the hypotheses. If the data did not support the hypotheses, then a rational explanation was presented.	Clearly states how the data supports the three hypotheses stated in the introduction. If the data did not support the hypotheses, then a rational explanation was presented.	The link between the data and how it supports the state hypotheses is weak. Some of the reasoning may be difficult to follow. If the data did not support the hypotheses, the explanation was not scientifically relevant.	Data is not linked to the stated hypotheses. If the data did not support the hypotheses no explanation was offered.

Note: The blue shading indicates the mean for that General Education Competency

**Frederick Community College**



**Maryland Higher Education Commission  
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016  
Frederick Community College**

**Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Assessment of student learning is now an essential part of the culture at Frederick Community College and a fundamental process for evaluating the mission of the College. The College follows the Middle States Commission on Higher Education five characteristics of assessment: (1) useful, (2) cost-effective, (3) reasonable, accurate, and truthful, (4) planned, and (5) organized, systematized, and sustainable. The College has a well-developed program for student learning assessment that functions at course, program, and institutional levels. These assessments are conducted according to program plans that specifically identify goals, assessment methods, and action plans. Additionally, student learning assessment is closely integrated into College-wide planning and assessment structures, and the documented results demonstrate assessment data that are used to improve teaching and learning. The College measures student achievement at the course level primarily through outcomes assessment projects completed by each academic department over a three-year cycle. At the program level, program managers complete academic program reviews on a five-year cycle. Institutional level assessment is done as part of the strategic planning process.

Course-Level Outcomes Assessment Cycle

Academic departments designate a high-enrollment general education course or courses that require general education competencies to undergo a three-year cycle of assessment (Standard 12 & Standard 14). FCC completed the first three-year assessment cycle in 2009 and was in the process of completing its second cycle of assessment when the 2011 SLOAR Report was submitted. Since that date, the College has completed a third cycle of course-level assessment. Additionally, the College is currently entering the third semester of its fourth cycle of assessment. During the third cycle, faculty assessed the critical thinking and oral/written communication skills of all nursing students, students' critical thinking and technological competence in all Digital Media Design courses, critical thinking and technological competence of Computer Information Systems students, critical thinking and oral/written communication skills of Introduction to Sociology students, critical thinking and oral/written communication skills of English Composition students, critical thinking and scientific reasoning skills of Microbiology students, and critical thinking and quantitative reasoning skills of Statistics students. The fourth three-year cycle of assessment is discussed further in Part Two.

Program Assessment

In Fall 2009, faculty experimented with methods of assessing programs in a way that was concise and rigorous. After a pilot phase, faculty recommended that FCC implement a more comprehensive, systematic program review process in Fall 2010. Over the past five years, every academic program was assessed by analyzing the program's student learning outcomes, evaluating the program based on quantitative performance measures, and conducting a rigorous self-study (Standard 14). Finally, once the self-study was completed the content areas hosted an external review visit and prepared a

final action plan. The action plans from the program reviews have been compiled into a database and ongoing follow-up ensures program managers are implementing the action items.

#### Additional Assessment Activities

FCC faculty have additionally worked on assessment projects outside of the three-year cycle. The Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research (OPAIR) enhanced resources available for all faculty and launched ongoing learning assessment in all Developmental Math (Quantitative Reasoning) and all Developmental Writing (Written and Oral Communication Competency) courses. Additionally, OPAIR continues to share rubrics on a newly designed intranet site, enhanced its newsletter, and coordinated a further enhanced annual Assessment Expo to share assessment results with faculty, students, administrators, and support staff. Currently, the College uses an online assessment web portal to accurately capture assessment data. The web portal has eased the collection of quantitative data for assessment of general education competencies; however, its lack of integration with the College information system limits collection. This issue will be further addressed in Part Three.

#### Institutional Effectiveness

Institutional effectiveness (Standard 7) is measured in many different areas at FCC. In 2010, the College developed its Institutional Effectiveness Policy and Procedure which was approved by the Board of Trustees. The policy specifically indicated that the College assess the effectiveness of the institution in multiple ways including the Strategic Planning and Tactical Planning process, and through annual reports, area assessments, and surveys. Although the College conducted a great deal of institutional assessment, the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research hopes to further systematize and formalize institutional assessment so that it is consistent among departments and teams.

#### Institutional Assessment Leadership

The College has a clearly defined leadership structure designed to maximize institutional support for assessment activities. The Senior Researcher of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness coaches faculty while designing their assessment projects and assists them with processing and analyzing assessment data while creating summary reports. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, AVP for Learning/Career Programs, and AVP for Learning/Arts and Sciences provide departmental guidance and oversight of course level assessment projects and program review. The Outcomes Assessment Council (consisting of 11 full-time faculty, the Senior Researcher of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness, the Executive Director of or for whatever it is Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, the AVP for Learning/Arts and Sciences, the AVP for Learning/Career Programs and the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs) meet monthly to discuss project status and results. The Program Review Support Team (consisting of OPAIR specialists, the AVP for Learning/Arts and Sciences, and the AVP for Learning/Career Programs) supports (is there another word you can use since you use support team right before?) individual program managers. Finally, the Special Assistant to the President for Institutional Effectiveness and OPAIR support departments and teams

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

in the development and implementation of institutional assessment tools.

During the three-year assessment cycle, the academic program review process, and the institutional effectiveness cycle, the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research

(OPAIR) often informally assesses itself for continuous improvement purposes. OPAIR has taken strides to further the evolution of assessment activities. OPAIR in coordination with College administration recently revised the Institutional Effectiveness Policy and Procedure to include a section for assessing (use another word here?) the assessment process. Specifically the office has committed itself to assess the effectiveness of its operations annually focusing on data collection, the efficiency, and accuracy of reporting to the internal and external constituencies based on a systematic review. The assessment model will be based on a SWOT analysis using rubrics during an office annual retreat. The results of the assessment will be used to improve operations of the office and specifically to improve assessment practices. The sections below detail improvements and changes made to the assessment activities since the 2011 SLOAR report.

### Course-Level Outcomes Assessment Cycle

As reported in the 2011 SLOAR report, academic departments designate a high-enrollment general education course or courses that require general education competencies to undergo a three-year cycle of assessment (Standard 12 & Standard 14). After the completion of the third three-year cycle of assessment, the Senior Researcher of/for Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness as well as the Executive Director of/for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness solicited feedback from the Outcomes Assessment Council members regarding the cycle. Participants felt that the current three-year model met their needs. After this meeting, participants also emphasized that they appreciated that the depth of assessment projects had been improved from one cycle to the next.

This informal assessment of the three-year cycle along with a more formal review of the College general education CORE and general studies program helped to shine a light on the fact that the College had thoroughly assessed many of the general education CORE competencies (specifically, oral/written communication, technological competence, scientific/quantitative reasoning, and critical thinking) required by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and the Maryland Higher Education Commission; however, there was a lack of assessment data for other general education CORE competencies identified by College faculty. This assessment was only further enhanced because the College had recently revised the general education CORE student learning outcomes. The College revised these outcomes as part of a summer grant project in which faculty met to discuss each of the student learning outcomes. Once this was completed, all new student learning outcomes were reviewed by the academic departments to ensure they were consistent with the topics covered in the departmental courses.

As part of the fourth three-year cycle of course level assessment, revisions have been made to further assess the General Education CORE by integrating all general education goals into the three-year course level assessment cycle. Therefore, each department selected an assignment from a discipline-appropriate, high-enrollment course and designed their projects to assess at minimum one of the four required MHEC competencies (scientific/quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, oral/written communication, and technological competence), and one of the other five general education CORE goals (social sciences, arts and humanities, health and wellness, cultural competence, and ethics). The following are the current assessment projects:

- Scientific reasoning and critical thinking skills of Surgical Technology students
- Critical thinking, oral/written communication, and educational and ethical values of Introduction to Business students.
- Critical thinking, arts & humanities knowledge, and cultural competence of Introduction to Drawing students.

- Critical thinking, oral/written communication, and cultural competence of English Composition and Literature students.
- Technological competence and quantitative reasoning competence of Foundations of Mathematics with Algebra students.
- Scientific reasoning and critical thinking competence of Anatomy and Physiology students.
- Social sciences knowledge, critical thinking, and oral/written communication of Introduction to Psychology students.
- Health and wellness knowledge and cultural competence of Nursing students.

Thus far, faculty have worked to develop their project or exam, develop an assessment plan, and collect initial pilot data for the assessment. In Fall 2016, each faculty outcomes assessment council representative will be completing their first full collection for the fourth three-year cycle assessments. All of these projects will demonstrate how the College and OPAIR continuously improve a systematic and sustainable three-year cycle of course level and general education CORE assessment. Additionally, the office will continue to enhance the depth of these assessment projects by identifying specific areas of focus for each department to assess (i.e. nursing simulation, linked courses, prerequisite analyses) and maximizing the number of records collected by both full-time and adjunct faculty in an effort to improve student learning and general education competency.

#### Program Assessment

The College is in the process of completing the final year of the five-year program review cycle. As of Fall 2016, all programs will have been fully reviewed as part of the initial cycle. In Fall 2016, the College will initiate another, new five-year program review cycle. The Senior Researcher of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness will prepare data sheets for all programs that are in schedule for initiating their second cycle of program review. Programs that were reviewed in year one (including: Accounting, Culinary Arts, Bioprocessing, Nursing, Nuclear Medicine, Respiratory Care, and Surgical Technology) will be reviewed beginning in Fall 2016. The College enhanced its program assessment and the first step of the process is to assess the projects that were developed in the first assessment cycle and revise it for improvement with more emphasis on students' competency surrounding program learning outcomes.

In addition to these updates, the College has also developed and implemented a program review process for Continuing Education and Workforce Development (CEWD). The CEWD program review process is modeled in a similar format to that of the Academic Program Review Process. The reviews comprise an in-depth self-study completed on a three-year cycle which includes:

- the introduction,
- assessment of program mission, goals, and objectives,
- assessment of program trends according to internal and external data,
- assessment of student course evaluations and program outcomes,
- assessment of program resources, support, and viability,
- and a summary of key findings and recommendations for the future.

Once the self-study is complete, an external reviewer will evaluate the program and the program manager will complete a final action plan. The action plans of all CEWD programs will be compiled into a database in order to track improvements or changes made to instruction and curriculum. The CEWD program review process is already underway with reviews being completed for Personal Enrichment, the Institute for Learning Retirement, Youth Programs, and Healthcare as part of FY 16.

The College will be reviewing Adult Education, Professional Licensure, Certification, & Vocational Training, Business and Technology, and Building Trades in FY 2017. Once these reviews are completed, the CEWD area will have reviewed the majority of its programs with only four more programs being reviewed in the upcoming FY 2018 (Business Solutions, ESL, and Emergency Management).

### Institutional Effectiveness

In 2014, the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research (OPAIR) reviewed its Institutional Effectiveness Policy and Procedure to update the language to be representative of the activities of the office. This updated procedure was later approved by the Board of Trustees. The policy specifies that the College assesses the effectiveness of the institution in multiple ways including the use of the Performance Accountability Report, the Strategic Planning and Team Planning process, and through annual reports, area assessments, and surveys. It also details the activities of the Office and how a department can request information when needed. In addition to this revision, the College also recently reviewed the policy and added a section to assess (use another word?) the assessment in an effort to ensure continuous improvement in terms of assessment and institutional effectiveness initiatives.

Since the date of these policy and procedure revisions, OPAIR has worked to ensure that there is systematic assessment of all areas of the College. With this in mind, OPAIR has also designed a Non-Academic Review Process. This process follows the same five-year cycle used during the Academic Program Review Process. The Non-Academic Review Self-Study includes:

- an introduction,
- a discussion of the relationship of the office to the team,
- program trends according to internal and external data,
- an assessment of services provided by the office,
- a discussion of program resources, support, and viability,
- and a summary of key findings and recommendations for the future.

Once the self-study is completed, offices will be asked to have it reviewed by external reviewers to solicit their feedback. Both the external review information and the self-study will be used to create action items to improve the operations or effectiveness of the office which was reviewed. These action items will be compiled in a database to see what improvements are made to College operations. The Non-Academic Review Process will begin in Fall 2016 with the Athletic Department, Bookstore, Center for Teaching and Learning, Testing Center, Financial Aid Department, Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research, Enrollment Management, and Disability Services (would move OPAIR to the end of the list so it's not confusing with the commas) undertaking a review in year one. The final year of the review process will be completed in 2020 which will also coincide with the completion of the College "FCC 2020" strategic plan.

In addition to the Non-Academic Review Process, the College has also made adjustments to the Strategic Planning process. The College previously operated using a three-year strategic plan with tactical and operational plans for departments and areas within the College. In 2015, the College transitioned to a five-year strategic plan with the development of "FCC 2020." This five year plan serves as the foundation of the College team plans which inform the development of office plans and also individual employee performance appraisals. In addition to the five-year strategic plan and the annual team plans, the Board of Trustees identified a few (do you know how many? "Few" sounds



informal) Annual Strategic Priorities, which inform the strategic plan goals, to be addressed each year. These goals are championed by the Strategic Advisory Team and with the leadership of the President. Once the tasks associated with these priorities are implemented, they are assessed to determine how effectively the Annual Strategic Priorities were addressed.

The continuation of the Academic Program Review Process, as well as the implementation of the Continuing Education and Workforce Development Program Review process, the Non-Academic Review Process, and the new Strategic Planning Process including Annual Strategic Priorities has helped the College to systematically review its effectiveness on a similar schedule and collection of assessment data from multiple departments using a consistent format. The current five-year structure of the Academic Program Review, Non-Academic Reviews, and Strategic Plans all coincide with the College accreditation process. The three-year course level assessment cycle and the CEWD program review processes meanwhile operate within the strategic planning and team planning cycles to demonstrate student learning and identify improvement to instruction and curriculum. The College works vehemently to continue to improve student learning, student support services, and operations as a whole. The continued advancement of each of these processes will only further allow the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research to align its work to ensure it is adequate, sustainable, achievable, cost-effective, and effective in demonstrating and improving student learning.

### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

During our recent Middle States reaccreditation visit from March 13-16, the College was found to be in compliance with all 14 standards of accreditation. This was later confirmed by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education on June 23, 2016 and the College reaccreditation was reaffirmed. Despite meeting all of the standards, the visiting team made recommendations for improvement. This section of the SLOAR report discusses the recommendations of the visiting team in regards to standards 7, 12, and 14.

#### Standard 7

In relation to standard 7, the visiting team found that the College appeared to be in compliance with the standard and that numerous metrics were evident in reports such as the 2014 and 2015 Institutional Effectiveness Report, the President's Annual Report to the Board, and the Maryland Higher Education Accountability Report. These reports indicated achievement of institutional mission, goals, and plans. The reviewer determined significant accomplishments were achieved in that the College assessment activities are widely shared, the College has a well-established department for collecting and presenting data, and a new Senior Researcher position was recently hired to work with Continuing Education and Workforce Development and respond to compliance reporting. Furthermore, the review team provided commendations to the College for its use of data

in the revision of the Student Success Alert and designation of funds to offset student financial hardship. These were both Strategic Annual Priorities associated with the College strategic plan.

Despite these accomplishments, the visiting team did provide recommendations for improvement to the College. Specifically, the team confirmed the College recommendation to continue with the second cycle of our five-year program review process and implement a systematic review process for evaluating non-academic areas of the College which was in development. Additionally, the team recommended that we streamline a documented, organized, assessment process to evaluate and improve the total range of programs and services; achievement of institutional mission, goals, and plans; and compliance with accreditation standards that is related to the work of assessed areas and of sufficient simplicity, practicality, detail, and ownership to be meaningful and sustainable.

The College has a template and schedule developed to systematically review non-academic areas. This newly developed assessment process, as mentioned above, will begin in Fall 2016 with the Athletic Department, Bookstore, Center for Teaching and Learning, Testing Center, Financial Aid Department, Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research, (add OPAIR to end?) Enrollment Management, and Disability Services completing a review. Additionally in Fall 2016, the College will be starting the second cycle of the five-year Academic Program Review Process. This process will begin with the same programs originally reviewed as part of the initial five-year program review cycle. Finally, the College is considering ways to streamline a documented, organized, assessment process to evaluate and improve the total range of programs and services; achievement of institutional mission, goals, and plans; and compliance with accreditation standards that is related to the work of assessed areas and of sufficient simplicity, practicality, detail, and ownership to be meaningful and sustainable. In order to accomplish this task, a committee will be formed to further determine how to increase the breath of assessment data collected and ensure that the process is more systematized, documented, organized, sufficient, simplistic, practical, and detailed. The committee will work to develop further strategies to address the recommendations made by the visiting team related to Standard 7 and to further enhance institutional effectiveness efforts.

#### Standard 12

In relation to standard 12, the visiting team found that the College appeared to be in compliance with the standard. Specifically related to assessment, the team concurred with a recommendation made by the College to expand assessment activities to further evaluate the College General Education goals. The College has made revisions to further assess the General Education CORE by integrating all general education goals into the three-year course level assessment cycle. In order to do this effectively, each department has chosen an assignment from a discipline-appropriate, high-enrollment course in the same way they had in past cycles. However, these assessments will measure at minimum one of the four required MHEC competencies (scientific/quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, oral/written communication, and technological competence), and one of the other five other general education CORE goals (social sciences, arts and humanities, health and wellness, cultural competence, and ethics). This new process was first implemented as part of the fourth three-year cycle which is entering its third year and the College will continue its work to expand the breath of the assessment moving forward.

#### Standard 14

Finally in regards to standard 14, the review team found that the College appeared to meet the standard. The review team found that both the document review and interviews provided evidence of

assessment and use of data in decision making. Furthermore, the team felt it will be important to streamline a documented, organized, assessment process to evaluate and improve the total range of programs and services; achievement of institutional mission, goals, and plans; and compliance with accreditation standards that is related to the work of assessed areas with sufficient simplicity, practicality, detail, and ownership to be meaningful and sustainable. The College received significant accomplishments in the implementation of the five-year program review process and the completion of the first cycle. Additionally, the College received significant accomplishments for the expanded depth of course-level assessment projects completed as part of the three-year course level assessment process.

The team had four recommendations for the institution in relation to Standard 14. Specifically, the team concurred with the College recommendation to increase adjunct faculty participation in course-level assessment, to streamline a documented, organized, assessment process to evaluate and improve the total range of programs, courses, and services; achievement of institutional mission, goals, and plans; and compliance with accreditation standards that is related to the work of the assessed areas and of sufficient simplicity, practicality, detail, and ownership to be meaningful and sustainable, to expand the assessment of student learning beyond the assessment of General Education outcomes to include assessment of course objectives and program outcomes and include the use of results in the five-year Academic Program Review, and that the College acquire and implement an assessment software package.

These recommendations are somewhat interrelated. The College continues to advance the collection of adjunct data as part of the three-year course level assessment process. Additionally, the department continues its work to expand the collection of assessment data outside of general education CORE outcomes and integrate additional assessment into the program review process. In an effort to build a more streamlined, documented, organized, assessment process to evaluate and improve the total range of programs, courses, and services; achievement of institutional mission, goals, and plans, and compliance with accreditation standards that is related to the work of the assessed areas the College needs to determine strategies to more efficiently collect additional assessment data. This is where the final recommendation of developing or acquiring and implementing an assessment software can help advance assessment. Once software capabilities have been further enhanced, the College will be able to collect additional assessment data and further assess College operations, academic programs, and student learning. Despite having some current software limitations, the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research continues to advance assessment efforts across campus and will convene a committee to address these four recommendations related to standard 14 moving forward.

**Garrett College**



## Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.

## Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

The establishment of measurable institutional, strategic, and unit-level goals which align with the institution's mission provides a coherent structure around which Garrett College organizes its institutional assessment process. Changes made to many of Garrett College's structures and processes, most notably its resource allocation and budgeting processes, coupled with the adoption of a comprehensive strategic plan have also created an organization and an environment in which data are being used widely and consistently to inform decision-making, drive improvements, and bring about institutional renewal. Modifications to the College's governance system have further assisted in this regard, as have improvements to the management information system that have enabled wider and easier access to data.

Assessment of institutional effectiveness for most functional areas and operations at Garrett College is accomplished largely through the framework provided by the strategic plan, annual operating plans, and unit-level institutional effectiveness plans. For example, for each of the objectives outlined in the strategic plan, there is a specified timeframe and one or more performance measures (or expected outcomes) that can be used to determine the extent to which that particular objective has been achieved. Each performance measure is normally referenced to either an internal or an external benchmark or target, as appropriate. Benchmarks are established based on analysis of trend lines and other internal data, or are drawn from external sources, e.g., comparative data gathered from the other Maryland community colleges. This same overall approach is essentially repeated in the annual operating plans and unit-level institutional effectiveness plans through the use of desired outcomes (measurable goals/objectives) and application of appropriate performance measures/indicators. Annual operating plans are prepared by each of the College's main functional areas: Academic Affairs; Administration, Finance, and Facilities; Continuing Education and Workforce Development; Institutional Development/Foundation; Enrollment Management; Human Resources; and Student Life. Institutional effectiveness plans are prepared by the individual units (or offices) within these areas.

Reports to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), such as the Performance Accountability Report, to the National Center for Education Statistics' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), to the Maryland Association of Community Colleges, and to the Maryland State Department of Education are the principal sources for the data used for institutional assessment. Other data sources include the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the National Community College Benchmarking Project, and internal surveys such as the Student Satisfaction Survey, Employee Survey, and Graduating Student Survey. Because institutional effectiveness and the assessment of student learning outcomes are integrally connected, results from assessment of student learning are also incorporated into the institutional assessment process as appropriate. The College also conducts comprehensive (formal) reviews on each of its academic programs, typically on a 3-5-year cycle, depending on the nature of the program. These formal program reviews (which should not be confused with annual program reviews) are an

important component within the larger context of institutional effectiveness and can be a significant factor affecting planning and resource allocation.

Garrett College assesses student learning at the institutional level (viz., general education) and the program level and the results from these assessments are reported and reviewed annually. While course level assessment is encouraged, it is not required, except for those courses that are included as part of the process either for assessing general education or for assessing student learning at the program level. Faculty and program directors are responsible for collecting learning outcomes assessment data, either on a semester or annual basis as appropriate, and for reviewing it annually. The College's Assessment Committee also performs several important functions in relation to the assessment of student learning, including evaluating the effectiveness of the College's learning assessment processes and recommending improvements and providing practical assistance to program directors and faculty members.

Student learning in general education is assessed in six core areas: (1) information literacy skills, (2) communication skills, (3) critical analysis and reasoning skills, (4) scientific literacy and quantitative reasoning skills, (5) information management skills, and (6) cultural and global perspective. These core areas incorporate the five competencies identified under Standard 12 (General Education) in MSCHE's "*Characteristics of Excellence*." Student learning in three of these areas, written communication, critical analysis and reasoning, and quantitative reasoning, is assessed using the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP), which is administered to all students who are degree seeking. Students' ability to apply information literacy skills is evaluated through the assessment component of an online program designed to develop information literacy. Other general education learning outcomes are being assessed at the course and/or program level, including information management skills, oral communication skills, and scientific literacy.

The College's process for assessing student learning at the program level has as its basis a set of specific student learning outcomes that have been identified for each degree or certificate program (what the College refers to as "academic and technical proficiency in the major"). The strategies used for assessing these outcomes vary widely by program and may include portfolios, exit exams, capstone projects (including presentations), standardized tests, attainment of industry-recognized certifications, performance on key learning outcomes from selected courses, etc. The types of strategies employed depend on the nature of the program and its particular learning outcomes.

The College's Dean of Instructional and Institutional Effectiveness, with assistance from the Institutional Research and Effectiveness Coordinator is responsible for direction of the College's planning and assessment functions as well as oversight of its institutional and student learning assessment program. The Dean is further supported in this role by the College's Assessment Committee. Assessment results are regularly reported to and reviewed by the faculty and program directors, area heads and managers, upper-level administration, and when appropriate, the Board of Trustees, and the results used for planning, decision-making, and institutional improvement, including the improvement of student learning.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

### **INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT**

Until beginning the series of widespread changes that were made starting in 2009 and following, Garrett College's history with respect to institutional assessment was characterized not so much by a failure to collect data as by a failure to use it. Two factors primarily contributed to this failure: (1) the College lacked a workable organizing structure through which useful data could be obtained and applied; (2) many of the College's structures and processes, such as a roll-over budgeting process, did not accommodate or encourage the application of data for decision-making or driving improvements. Moreover, an outmoded management information system made access to data difficult to all but a few users.

The problem of a lack of a workable organizing structure was resolved through adoption of a new set of institutional goals that are more closely aligned with the College's mission and which are measurable, thereby creating a foundation upon which an institutional assessment process could be based. At the same time, the College made a number of significant structural and procedural changes which have greatly facilitated its ability to use assessment data in order to inform decision-making, drive improvements, and bring about institutional renewal. The most notable of these changes include adoption of a zero-based budgeting process, creation of a new governance system and process, conversion to a new management information system (which was completed in 2009)<sup>1</sup>, and adoption of a much more comprehensive strategic planning process and plan template than the ones used previously. Prior to this, the College's strategic plans had been very narrowly focused in that they dealt only with initiatives that were to be funded with new money; they had little influence over the majority of the College's resource allocation decisions, which often were simply roll-over amounts from the previous year's budget. As a result, the College's FY2010-2013 Strategic Plan was unlike its previous plans in that it covered all facets of the College's operations, programs, and initiatives, and it was aligned with the College's new institutional goals which address six key areas of institutional performance: accessibility; student satisfaction and success; educational effectiveness; workforce development; community service; and effective use of financial, human, and physical resources. At the same time, the College established an institutional assessment process based on these same goals, many elements of which were embedded in the strategic plan itself.

With the approach of the next (FY2014-2016) planning cycle, the evolution of Garrett College's planning and assessment processes continued, which resulted in changes to the format and layout of the strategic plan as well as changes to the design and application of the College's annual operating plans, which serve as the vehicle through which the strategic plan is implemented. The layout of the strategic plan was changed to better facilitate the assessment process, and to make it easier to report

---

<sup>1</sup> However, that system has not proven to be entirely satisfactory, and, as a result, the College has just recently converted to a newer system which should improve and enhance end users' ability to access, manipulate, and analyze a broad array of data for use in planning, assessment, and decision-making.



and analyze progress and make plan modifications. The design of the annual operating plans was also changed to further accommodate and support institutional assessment by (1) establishing a more workable framework on which to base the institutional assessment process, (2) serving as an instrument for tracking and reporting progress with respect to implementation and completion of planned activities, (3) providing an accessible format for identification of next steps and/or presentation of results, and (4) presenting budget managers with the kind of information needed for more effective allocation of resources. As was mentioned earlier in Part One, annual operating plans are prepared by each major functional area within the College, and also by some individual units if appropriate. However, most individual offices or units within the functional areas will normally develop institutional effectiveness plans, which are much less involved than annual operating plans.

Thus, as was also mentioned in Part One, assessment of institutional effectiveness for each functional area and most operations at Garrett College is accomplished largely within the framework provided by the strategic plan, annual operating plans, and unit-level institutional effectiveness plans. A central feature of all of these plans is the fact that they not only contain measurable objectives (and/or desired outcomes), but that they also specify the performance measures that are to be used in order to assess the extent to which the objectives or desired outcomes have been achieved, and they also provide a mechanism for reporting and analyzing the results and based on that analysis, describing next steps. Performance measures are usually referenced to either an internal or an external benchmark or target, or baseline data, as appropriate.

Development, execution, review, assessment, and revision of the annual operating plan for each functional area is the responsibility of the leadership and staff from that area. However, coordination with other areas is often needed for initiatives that involve more than one functional area. Progress on implementation of the operating plans is monitored by the College's Dean of Instructional and Institutional Effectiveness and is also reviewed regularly by the College's Executive Council, which meets biweekly, and is periodically reported to the Board of Trustees. Unit-level institutional effectiveness plans are developed and implemented in-unit, with oversight from the area dean and the Dean of Instructional and Institutional Effectiveness. Results are reported and discussed periodically, as appropriate.

Assessment data from all sources is used routinely for planning, resource allocation, policy development, decision-making, and continual improvement. In addition to the more systematic assessment process described above, the College conducts other assessments on either a regular or an as-needed basis. As an example of the former, the data collection and analysis associated with preparation of the Performance Accountability Report (PAR) each year provides for a more global annual assessment of institutional effectiveness, specifically with regard to Quality and Effectiveness, Access and Affordability, Diversity, Student Centered Learning, and Economic Growth and Vitality. Results from the PAR are widely reviewed and discussed among faculty, staff, and the administration as well as the Board of Trustees. The use of assessment data as a basis for developing a comprehensive information technology replacement plan, for modifying and improving the College's governance structure and process, for evaluating the effectiveness of the College's marketing and student recruitment processes, and for evaluating the effectiveness of student intake practices, including the effectiveness of placement testing are examples of the latter.

The periodic review of academic programs is an important component within the larger context of institutional assessment and the overall evaluation of institutional effectiveness and can be a significant factor affecting planning and resource allocation. In 2009, the College adopted a formal

academic program review process using a standard template. Previously, academic programs were reviewed on an “as-needed” rather than periodic basis and the College lacked a formal academic program review process that could be applied consistently. However, due to several factors, including the College’s small size and remote location, this new review process proved to be difficult to implement, and so a different template, based on one being used by Genesee Community College in New York, was ultimately adopted and implemented. Program effectiveness is evaluated based on contribution to the College Mission and realization of institutional and strategic goals; appropriateness and currency of the curriculum; overall viability of the program based on enrollment, financial status; attainment by majors of program and general education learning outcomes; and completion of educational goals (degree, certificate, transfer-out, employment, etc.), among other factors. The first round of formal academic program reviews using the new template were completed in summer 2013.

Transparency of information is an important element in creating and maintaining a culture of assessment. Copies of the Strategic Plan, most recent Institutional Performance Accountability Report, and certain other planning and assessment documents are published on the College’s website, and, in the near future, the College expects to begin publishing an annual summary of key effectiveness indicators, many of which have not been heretofore shared with the external community. The College’s Office of Institutional Research also maintains an internal website that provides the college community with access to an extensive amount of assessment data and reports, and access to these will be further improved as the conversion to a new management information system is completed.

### **STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT**

Garrett College originally planned to develop and implement its student learning outcomes assessment process in three distinct phases: (1) general education (i.e., institutional) assessment, (2) program-level assessment, (3) course-level assessment. Accordingly, in fall 1997, the College began the process of developing a comprehensive student learning outcomes assessment plan, beginning with general education. This general education assessment plan, which was completed in fall 1998 and implemented in spring 1999, was designed to evaluate general education in relation to six core learning goals, three of which were to be assessed using the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP). By 2004, this initial plan had been modified to incorporate a total of eight institutional learning goals relating to students’ acquisition of (1) information literacy skills, (2) communication skills, (3) critical analysis and reasoning skills, (4) scientific literacy and quantitative reasoning skills, (5) information management skills, (6) a cultural and global perspective, (7) personal and interpersonal skills, and (8) academic and technical proficiency in the major, with the latter establishing the link between institutional-level and program-level assessment. The personal and interpersonal skills goal was subsequently eliminated, but is considered an important learning goal for some programs.

The College continues to use the CAAP to assess general education, specifically graduating students’ competency with respect to critical thinking/reading, writing, and mathematics. (The Science module of the CAAP is also administered to Math/Science majors as part of program-level assessment.) The results from the CAAP for the last six graduating classes (2010-2015) are shown in the following table.

#### **Results from the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency\***

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>Writing</b>	64%	72%	95%	46%	39%	38%
<b>Mathematics</b>	63%	48%	50%	44%	56%	66%
<b>Critical Thinking/ Reading</b>	58%	57%	73%	58%	49%	52%

\*Results show percentage of students scoring at or above the national mean.

Other means have been adopted for assessing those learning outcomes not covered by the CAAP. As was mentioned in Part One, students' ability to apply information literacy skills is evaluated through the assessment component of an online program designed to develop information literacy. Other general education learning outcomes are being assessed at the course and/or program level, including information management skills, oral communication skills, and scientific literacy. The College continues to work on strengthening its methods for assessing general education. For example, in addition to using results from the CAAP, the College now collects and evaluates, using a standardized rubric, samples of student writing gathered from a variety of courses in order to more thoroughly assess graduating students' writing ability and better identify those areas where improvement is needed, and similar approaches are being developed for assessing critical thinking and oral communication skills. Some preliminary work has also been done on developing a series of capstone projects that can be used for assessing scientific literacy, each tailored for application in a specific scientific discipline, e.g., biology, since there is no general education science requirement that students have in common. The College is also looking for a more effective way to assess students' attainment of a cultural and global perspective, particularly as it pertains to their understanding and acceptance of diversity.

In fall 2001, the College began development of a process for assessing student learning outcomes at the program-level. However, the subsequent publication of Middle States' "*Student Learning Assessment: Options and Resources*" in spring 2003 pointed to several deficiencies in the assessment model the College had adopted. Efforts were therefore directed toward developing and implementing an assessment process that was more in line with the Commission's expectations. As this work progressed, it became apparent that course-level assessment was going to need to be implemented either before or concurrently with program-level assessment since plans called for many programmatic learning outcomes to be assessed at the course-level. However, over the next several years, the College's efforts to develop a workable process were hampered by a series of changes in institutional and academic leadership, the latter in particular. Due to the lack of continuity and shifting priorities that accompanied these changes, the College was not successful in implementing a process for assessing program-level learning outcomes that was effective and sustainable until spring 2013. (A workable course-level assessment process had been established a year earlier in fall 2011.)

Working from program-level learning outcomes that had already been established for most of the College's programs (in 2004 -2005), faculty and program directors were instructed to develop comprehensive program-level assessment plans (i.e., plans that ensure that both program-specific and general education outcomes are being assessed) for each of the College's degree programs. They were also encouraged to adopt and implement the assessment strategies that were best suited to the particular character of each program. A variety of assessment strategies are currently being employed, including portfolios, exit exams, capstone projects (including written and oral presentations), standardized tests, performance on key learning outcomes from selected courses, results from industry-recognized certification exams, performance evaluations and competency checklists, etc. However, the College has adopted a standard format for reporting and reviewing programmatic learning assessment results. The annual program review process provides for the

assessment of the major curriculum as well as partial assessment of the attainment of general education learning outcomes by program majors.

Assessment and annual review of program-level learning outcomes for the College's programs in Math/Science transfer and Teacher Education transfer, and for its career programs in Natural Resources and Wildlife Technology and Adventure Sports Management began in spring 2013, and for its Business programs in spring 2014. The College's program in General Studies and areas of concentration in Liberal Arts, Fine and Performing Arts, and Social and Behavioral Sciences are being assessed and reviewed as part of general education. Assessment and annual review for the College's other transfer and career programs is currently in various stages of partial implementation, but the College expects that, with the exception of two newly added certificate programs, program-level assessment will be fully implemented for all programs by spring 2017.

As mentioned above, Garrett College implemented its current course-level assessment process in fall 2011, although the student learning outcomes on which it is based have been in place since 2006-2007. Individual faculty members review and record students' performance with respect to course learning outcomes and performance targets at the end of each semester, using a standard form. After assessment data have been collected for several semesters (typically three or more), the results are averaged and the faculty member prepares a written analysis of the data and a discussion of the strategies he or she will use to either improve or maintain student performance relative to the desired learning outcomes. Completed course assessment reports are submitted to department heads, the Assessment Committee, and the Dean of Instructional and Institutional Effectiveness, and are subsequently discussed in faculty assessment workshops. A different process is used for developmental courses where the assessment is based on test results (including results from diagnostic tests), pass rates, and students' success rates in successive developmental or college-level courses. It is important to note, however, that the College is now placing less emphasis on requiring course-level assessment, except in those cases where it is integrally connected to either general education or program-level assessment, and is focusing instead on strengthening its processes for assessing general education and ensuring that program-level assessment is fully implemented.

Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

With regard to accreditation actions, Garrett College submitted its Periodic Review Report to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) in June 2015. In response, at its session on November 19, 2015, the MSCHE acted:

“To accept the Periodic Review Report and to reaffirm accreditation. To request a monitoring report, due October 1, 2016, documenting further development and implementation of (1) a comprehensive, organized and sustained process to evaluate and improve the total range of programs and services and to inform planning, resource allocation and institutional renewal (Standard 7); ... and (3) an organized and sustained assessment process that provides direct evidence of the achievement of expected student learning outcomes for all programs, including outcomes for general education, with evidence that assessment results are used to improve teaching and learning at all levels of the curriculum (Standards 12 and 14).”

The Commission’s concerns, which triggered the request for a follow-up (monitoring) report, were not so much with the processes the College had in place for assessing institutional effectiveness and student learning, but more with the extent of the progress that had been made, as the wording in the Commission’s letter, “...documenting *further* development and implementation” indicates. In particular, the Commission had concerns about (1) the extent to which institutional assessment and effectiveness had been implemented at the unit- or individual office-level, hence the Commission’s letter’s wording, “...total range of programs and services;” (2) the extent to which the College had broadened and strengthened its process for assessing and evaluating general education; and (3) the extent to which the College had progressed with regard to fully implementing program-level learning assessment. Following is a summary of the actions the College has taken to address these concerns. sustainability of the College’s institutional assessment process

(1) *Assessing Institutional Effectiveness at the Unit-Level* - At the time of the Periodic Review Report, with regard to institutional assessment and institutional effectiveness, the College had focused most of its efforts of improving and refining these processes within the main functional areas of the institution, e.g., student affairs, administration and finance, etc.; the advising center and the library were the only individual units that had their own operating plans, mainly due to their relative size within the institution. However, the College has developed a format for unit-level institutional effectiveness plans (operating plans) and these unit-level plans will be aligned with the annual operating plan for their respective functional area. The College’s Dean of Instructional and Institutional Effectiveness will be meeting with functional area heads and unit-level

directors/coordinators throughout August to develop these unit-level institutional effectiveness plans. This work is expected to be completed and the plans fully implemented by the end of September (2016).

(2) *Expansion and Strengthening of General Education Assessment* - As was noted earlier in this report, the College has had some form of general education assessment in place since 1999; however, it has only been within the last two years or so that the College has begun to make a concentrated effort to improve and expand its process for assessing student learning in general education. At the time of the Periodic Review Report, this work was still in the early stages and so the Commission is interested in seeing further progress.

As an example of some of the work the College has done to strengthen its methods for assessing general education, for assessing writing, in addition to using results from the CAAP, the College now collects and evaluates, using a standardized rubric, samples of student writing gathered from a variety of courses in order to more thoroughly assess graduating students' writing ability and better identify those areas where improvement is needed. The College is now moving towards using this same type of course-embedded assessment for assessing other general education learning outcomes by collecting samples of student work and evaluating it using a standard rubric. Previously, the College relied heavily on more global forms of assessment for general education, such as the use of the CAAP for assessing writing for example, and in most cases, used only a single form of assessment, such as the CAAP. Other efforts to improve general education include the development of a series of capstone projects for use in assessing basic scientific literacy, as was reported earlier, and development of a survey instrument to be used for assessing students' acquisition of a cultural and global perspective that enables them to appreciate and accept diversity. The College has also reviewed and revised its specific general education learning outcomes and also revised and updated its general education assessment plan, which was last revised in 2006.

(3) *Full Implementation of Student Learning Assessment at the Program-Level* - At the time of the Periodic Review Report, the College had learning assessment data and annual program review reports for 2013 and 2014 and partial data for 2015 for its transfer programs in Math/Science and in Teacher Education, and for its career programs in Natural Resources and Wildlife Technology and in Adventure Sports Management, and it had learning assessment data and annual program review reports for 2014 and partial data for 2015 for its Business programs, but assessment plans were just being implemented or were still in the development stages for most of its other programs. The Commission's expectations are that by this point in time, program-level assessment should be in place for all programs, hence their interest in seeing further progress with respect to full implementation of program-level learning assessment. As was reported earlier in Part Two, assessment and annual review of the College's other transfer and career programs is progressing in stages, and assessment plans have been at least partially implemented for most of the programs that did not already have them. The College expects that program-level assessment and annual review will be in place for all programs by spring 2017.

**Hagerstown Community College**



## **Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016**

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.



## Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

Student learning outcomes assessment (SLOA) is a primary component of the institutional effectiveness model at Hagerstown Community College (HCC) and, as a result, faculty and staff have become more familiar with the importance of data analysis, accountability, and quality assurance. Additionally, the SLOA cycle at HCC is a continuous cycle of plan, do, assess, and adjust - developing outcomes, assessing the outcomes, and using the data obtained to improve student learning. The College's vision, mission, strategic goals, and annual institutional priorities serve as the foundation of HCC's integrated planning, assessment/evaluation, and budgeting system. Through its planning process, the College ensures efficient utilization of institutional resources and receives significant feedback related to planning, assessment and resource allocation activities. The achievement of strategic goals commences with unit planning meetings, which involve each area of the College. As each unit addresses strategic goals and action plans delineated in the 2018 strategic plan, the unit planning system improves effectiveness, efficiency, the teaching and learning process, enhances communication, contains costs, and redirects resources to support mission-based priorities that have strategic importance.

As the chief academic officer, the Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Student Services is responsible for the supervision, operation, evaluation, planning and implementation of academic programs and faculty, related professional development, and the development and implementation of student learning outcomes assessment at the course, program and institutional levels. In order to determine how the College can best direct its attention to achieving its strategic objectives, assessment results are also reviewed and discussed as part of the College's unit planning process. SLOA processes are also reviewed by the Academic Systems Specialist, faculty, division chairs/directors, the VPAASS, the College President and the Board of Trustees. During each of these stages, the processes are evaluated and modified to align with the needs of the College. Fulltime and adjunct faculty are engaged in SLOA, and professional development sessions and mentors for adjunct faculty ensure that curriculum changes based on assessment results are communicated to all faculty.

The process of institutional assessment is fluid. Assessment results are shared and analyzed during the unit planning process, the biannual colloquia, advisory committee meetings, and Board of Trustee meetings. Plans, budgets, resource allocations, and professional development are tied to the multiple surveys and measures of effectiveness that benchmark progress and direct units toward improving course content, student satisfaction and ultimately retention and completion. The coordination of assessment activities and strategic planning at HCC is a systematic, and extensive mechanism that guides the achievement of the College's goals and is an ongoing process that

facilitates efficient fiscal control, effective allocation of resources, and improved services to internal and external constituents.

HCC uses ten key institutional performance indicators (KPI) that are integrated into the College's strategic plan and its action plans. The documentation of the use of evaluation results closes the loop in the College's assessment and evaluation processes for academic and non-academic units of the College. Over 600 data measures that broadly demonstrate how well the College operates as an organization were developed to measure the ten KPI. The data measures are the foundation for institutional renewal, which is defined as the improvement and/or enhancement of effective teaching and learning, and educational and administrative support services. Assessment data is posted on the SLOA webpage of the HCC website and is available to all at <http://www.hagerstowncc.edu/academics/outcomes-assessment>.

The College's distributive model of general education assessment aligns all courses by discipline (e.g., science courses are assessed with science courses, etc.). Each program lists the general education courses specific to that program and each is part of the program's curriculum map. Each general education course, additionally, has the approved learning outcomes identified on its syllabus. Common general education learning outcomes are in place for all courses in each category. The data collected from these courses are analyzed each semester. A summary of the results, as well as a plan of action to "close the loop" are forwarded to the VPAASS each spring, and is posted to the SLOA webpage. Any changes to curriculum designed to enhance student success in achieving the general education outcomes are disseminated through divisions to faculty to be implemented in their courses. Student learning outcomes data is collected in all HCC courses each semester. The resulting data are used to modify and improve instructional design, courses, and/or programs to ensure students meet educational objectives. Course Outcomes Guides (COGs), (Appendix B), detail the student learning outcomes and common assessment tools for each course. Program Outcomes Guides (POGs), (Appendix C), detail the program learning outcomes and assessment measures. The lead faculty and division chairs/directors collaborate to develop expected course and program level outcomes. The faculty then administers the assessments and evaluates the results. The data is then collected, analyzed, and used to improve the methods of instruction to better strengthen the students learning (Appendix A).

The SLOA webpage documents the learning outcomes, assessment measures, validation methods, results, and follow-up for course outcomes assessment, general education assessment, and program outcomes assessment. Assessment of student learning outcomes is a component of the stated responsibilities of both full-time and adjunct faculty. For full-time faculty it is part of the annual evaluation and linked to guidelines for promotion and tenure. The amount of student learning, the content learned, and the level of academic rigor are directly linked to SLOA. Professional development training based on SLOA findings is held before the semester begins so that all faculty are informed of any changes to instruction or curriculum. The historical data contained on the COG is used by faculty to identify trends to determine what adjustments to their courses have been most successful in helping students achieve the course outcomes. Faculty members submit these reports to division chairs/directors who then submit them to the Office of Academic Affairs. The Office of Academic Affairs reviews and evaluates the SLOA documents.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

Outcomes assessment of student learning provides feedback to faculty members and professional staff for the purpose of improving academic programs, teaching and learning. The involvement and leadership of faculty as the content specialists is essential as they bring relevant experience, useful interventions and strategies for change, and expertise to the outcomes assessment process. It is through the analysis of student learning that Hagerstown Community College (HCC) improves learning in a systematic and effective manner. Assessment has fostered communication between full-time and adjunct faculty to help create uniformity across course sections.

In 2004, the College created the 2004-2012 SLOA Plan, which detailed the processes, skills, and tools that became the foundation to all outcome assessments at HCC. At that time, the College's assessment program was designed as a cyclical assessment cycle that started with establishing learning outcomes, then developing and validating assessment tools, conducting learning exercises, collecting and analyzing data, then using results to improve teaching (Appendix A). As outcomes results became available, they were analyzed at all levels to determine how the College could best direct its attention to achieving its strategic objectives. Assessment results were reviewed, analyzed and discussed as a part of the College's unit planning process. Additionally, analyses by groups such as the SLOA leadership team, academic officers and Academic Council, faculty and executive officers resulted in a revision of the Assessment model in 2014. The overall SLOA Plan was also revised and updated to reflect changes in college organization, to include new SLOA projects, and to make sure the expectations of the original plan were relevant and assigned appropriately.

The new Assessment model identified in the 2014 SLOA Plan includes additional data analysis and the formal reporting of the data to better help improve student learning (Appendix A). The new model incorporates multiple cycles of refinement to curriculum to improve the overall achievement of learning outcomes.

Faculty in every academic division developed student learning outcomes for courses and programs. Working in teams, they determined and sought external validation for assessment instruments and methods to measure achievement of outcomes. External validation of assessment results includes maintaining program certification, success in student licensure, successful hiring in the field, passing a capstone project, and student success levels at four year transfer schools. These assessment measures have not drastically changed in five years; however adherence and compliance expectations have become more rigorous, resulting in increased demands on faculty. In addition, academic divisions incorporate follow-up information on transfer and career program graduates into assessment reports and unit planning.

Over the past decade, HCC strengthened its culture of evidence and improvement via its integrated institutional effectiveness model that includes KPIs for non-academic and academic units,

along with SLOA data. The 2015 MSCHE evaluation team found that the College made significant progress in implementing its strategic plan, and implementation outcomes validated that the institution is fulfilling its mission and achieving key strategic goals. The final evaluation team report indicated that, “Analysis of performance indicators and ad hoc reports facilitates the allocation of resources and provides the foundation for improved services throughout the campus.

Unit planning is the impetus behind the cycle that keeps HCC on a continual cycle of improvement. Assessment results are shared and analyzed during the unit planning process, the biannual colloquia, advisory committee meetings, and Board of Trustee meetings. Plans, budgets, resource allocations, and professional development are tied to the multiple surveys and measures of effectiveness that benchmark progress and direct units toward improving course content, student satisfaction and ultimately retention and completion.

The institutional outcomes assessment processes provide for both extensive evaluation and assessment for various units, programs, and courses, and comprehensive review of institution-wide data and statistics. The coordination of assessment activities and strategic planning at HCC is a coordinated, systematic, and extensive mechanism that guides the achievement of the College’s goals and is an ongoing process that facilitates efficient fiscal control, effective allocation of resources, and improved services to internal and external constituents. Internal improvements and refinements based upon feedback from the self-study work group will be considered to strengthen the process. Further development of the institutional SLOA external validation procedures is in progress. The current process of surveying student perception of their exposure to the institutional student learning outcomes will evolve into measuring student learning in these outcomes.

SLOA is also a unit planning component for the VPAASS and the entire division of Academic Affairs. Finally, an annual progress report is presented to the President and Board of Trustees. During each of these stages, the processes are evaluated and modified to align with the needs of the College. Fulltime and adjunct faculty are engaged in SLOA, and professional development sessions and mentors for adjunct faculty ensure that curriculum changes based on assessment results are communicated to all faculty.

The College’s distributive model of general education assessment, which aligns all courses by discipline (e.g., science courses are assessed with science courses, etc.) is evolving into a cross-curricular model where all general education courses are assessed using the same assessment tool similar to what is currently being done in the diversity category. Anthropology, humanities, sociology, and literature courses are currently assessed using the same instrument in this category. Each program lists the general education courses specific to that program and each is part of the program’s curriculum map. Within the six general education categories, the MSCHE evaluation team affirmed that College has clearly measurable learning outcomes for each category that are broad enough to apply to all the courses within the category yet specific enough to provide a common foundation for assessment. A significant number of those outcomes are assessed through common course assessment activities developed by discipline faculty.

Over the last five years, the primary change that has occurred in the general education program is modifying the optional Interdisciplinary/Emerging Issues category for general education requirements. Since the early 1990s, that category was defined as Information Literacy. The Information Literacy requirement was instituted because many of students had been matriculating

without the necessary technology skills to be prepared for college work. Over the past half-decade, that situation changed. Students today are much more technologically prepared. It has become apparent that students need to be more cognizant of issues of globalization and human diversity. In 2013, the Information Literacy category was replaced with a Diversity category. Currently, seven courses have been identified that address this issue from different disciplines.

Course Outcomes Guides (COGs) detail the student learning outcomes and common assessment tools for each course. Program Outcomes Guides (POGs) detail the program learning outcomes and assessment measures. The SLOA website documents the learning outcomes, assessment measures, validation methods, results, and follow-up for course outcomes assessment, general education assessment, and program outcomes assessment.

Evidence of the emphasis on critical thinking and independent thought in support of the general education program goals can be found in the work HCC has done to strengthen assessment and the changes to curriculum and instructional design that have resulted from the study and interpretation of data collected at both the course and program level. HCC SLOA procedures require that course outcomes be developed for each course, including all courses that are classified as General Education. Student learning outcomes data is collected in all HCC courses each semester. Each course in the General Education program has its own unique outcomes to measure, and, in addition to those outcomes, general education outcomes for each category a specific course fits into are also measured. The outcomes for the six general education categories that comprise the General Education program at HCC are broad enough to span the breadth of the courses in that category, but specific enough to encompass the uniqueness of each category.

Faculty members recognize the importance of the SLOA process. Assessment of student learning outcomes is a component of the stated responsibilities of both full-time and adjunct faculty. For full-time faculty it is part of the annual evaluation and linked to guidelines for promotion and tenure. The amount of student learning, the content learned, and the level of academic rigor are directly linked to SLOA. Assessments are the same for full-time and part-time faculty. External validation of assessment results includes maintaining program certification, success in student licensure, successful hiring in the field, passing a capstone project, and student success levels at four year transfer schools. These assessment measures have not drastically changed in five years; however adherence and compliance expectations have become more rigorous, resulting in increased demands on faculty.

Data is being analyzed to determine student learning improvements. Preliminary data show students score better on the post-tests versus the pre-tests in developmental mathematics. The SLOA tracker database has been newly implemented. Faculty will be able to track changes that are made in the SLOA process using the database, and can make decisions to improve curriculum and instruction. The SLOA database is a relatively new process for the faculty, but they will be able to make informed decisions using it to improve student learning in academic programs, and making adjustments to non-instructional intervention like counseling.

Professional development training based on SLOA findings is held before the semester begins so that all faculty are informed of any changes to instruction or curriculum. During the spring semester of 2013 alone, there were 24 SLOA drop-in sessions offered in the Fletcher Faculty Development Center. These sessions were presented by various HCC full-time faculty members who

have experience and much knowledge to share about SLOA approaches and techniques. Training sessions and presentations of two to four hours are held for this purpose.

Academic assessment work is conducted at multiple levels. Student learning outcomes exist at the institutional, program, general education, and course level. Faculty members are responsible for all stages of the process. Data is collected in templates for COGs, POGs, and curriculum maps. Course-level data is analyzed by faculty, and is placed on the course outcomes guide for each course. The historical data contained on the COG is used by faculty to identify trends to determine what adjustments to their courses have been most successful in helping students achieve the course outcomes. Faculty members submit these reports to division chairs/directors who then submit them to the Office of Academic Affairs. The Office of Academic Affairs is ultimately responsible for reviewing and evaluating SLOA documents.

Course level data and general education outcomes data are collected and stored in databases. Similarly, general education outcomes data is summarized each semester, and this information is used by faculty at the course level to identify “gaps,” or deficiencies in teaching and learning in each section of each course. Where there are deficiencies, this information is used to affect changes to correct the situation. In some cases, a simple modification to instructional design is warranted. In other cases, the curriculum itself may require some changes. If the data shows that the deficiency is only occurring in a few sections of a course, those instructors would be expected to work with senior faculty mentors or the staff of the Fletcher Faculty Development Center to strengthen their ability to help students be more successful in achieving the outcome isolated as deficient in that section. At the program level, a curriculum matrix is used on each program outcome guide to aid in tracking where in the overall program curriculum each student should be expected to achieve each of the program outcomes. Where program outcomes data show that a significant number of students are not successfully meeting program outcomes, changes are made to the course, or, in some cases, another course may be designed to better meet these outcomes.

This data has also been used to enhance support services for students. In order to increase “time on task” toward proficiency in course, general education and program outcomes, HCC created the Learning Support Center (LSC), where faculty can place additional exercises designed to bolster a student’s success at achieving particular outcomes. This approach has been very successful. During the fall semester, over 100 full- and part-time faculty members used the LSC in some capacity to augment classroom instruction, thereby enhancing student learning.

The program outcomes guides (POGs), are stored in the foundation documents, on the outcomes assessment website, and at the division level. Program outcomes are available on the website for each program. Faculty members complete program outcomes guides, course outcomes guides for all courses they teach, and general education assessment reports. These are required each year in some divisions and each semester in others.

Course outcomes guides can be viewed on a shared website. These COGs contain course outcomes, assessment methods, as well as curriculum changes. Many of these COGs contain follow-up data that describe how the curriculum changes influenced learning. The completion and level of detail used to complete the COGs varies between faculty members. Not all divisions require the same amount of detail/data.

Full-time and some adjunct faculty regularly meet to analyze the data and decide what improvements need to be made to the curricula based on the data collected. For instance, in English and Humanities the full-time faculty revised the course outcomes and the rubric based on SLOA data. In Math and Science, faculty members have added on-line ancillary materials to improve student time on-task. Each academic program has outcomes set and faculty have developed matrices showing how each course in the program has outcomes that lead to the program outcome goals.

A SLOA guidebook, complete with templates and samples of master syllabi, COGs, POGs, and curriculum maps, timelines, and a glossary has been printed and shared with faculty. Staff from the VPAASS office has worked diligently to clear up all inconsistencies in SLOA document reporting. Today, a clear understanding exists among the faculty that they are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of SLOA documents; a timeline has been established for when SLOA documents are due; and clarification has been made regarding what is to be reported on the SLOA documents. Tremendous progress in the area of outcomes assessment has been made within the past three years. Additional refinements have been accomplished in the last 18 months.

In June 2015, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) reaffirmed accreditation for HCC. This action was the culmination of almost two years of work on the part of the college community, along with the Middle States evaluation team visit in April 2015. The College was found to be in compliance with all 14 MSCHE standards. Continuous data-driven assessment occurs in both academic and non-academic units and provides for formative review of established targets, as well as an overall institutional effectiveness. Assessment activities and key performance indicators (KPIs) align with the Middle States accreditation standards. Specifically, Standard 7 addresses institutional assessment, Standard 12 covers general education and Standard 14 addresses student learning outcomes assessment. The team confirmed that there is an integrated assessment plan for the assessment of student learning that links institutional, general education, program and course learning outcomes and assessment; allocates responsibilities for assessment activities; and sets the schedule for each of the assessment processes in the annual assessment cycle.

Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

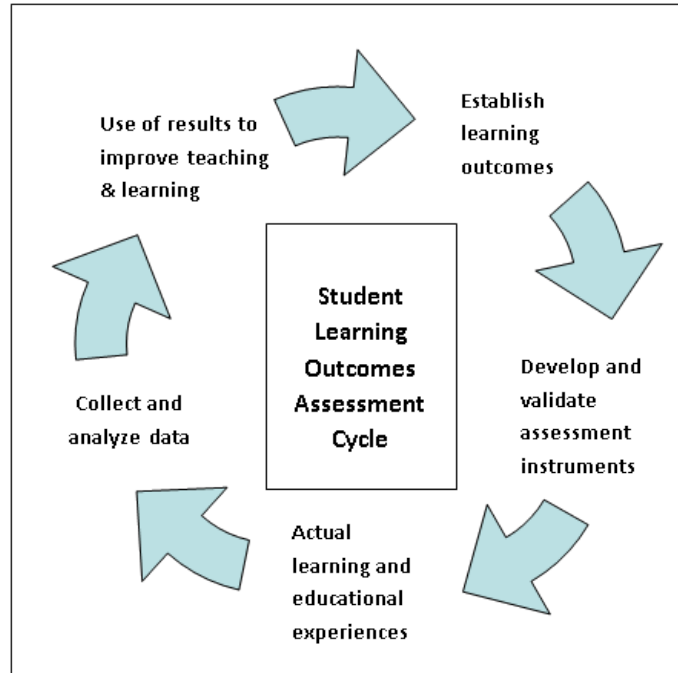
Not applicable

## Appendices

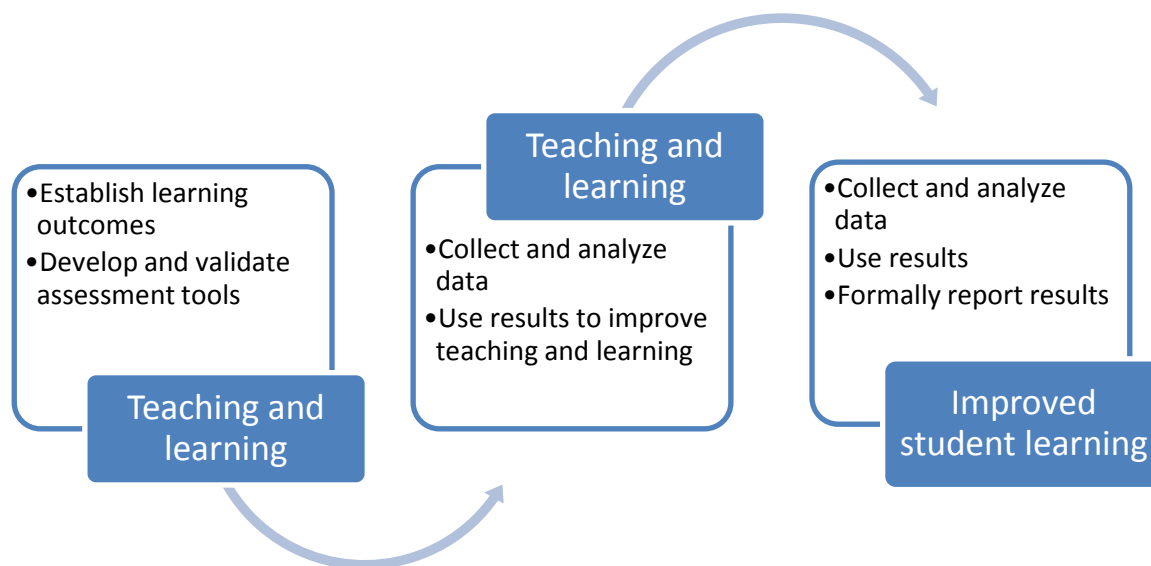


**Appendix A  
Evolution of HCC SLOA Model**

**2004 -2012 SLOA Plan Model:**



**Refined Model, 2014:**



**Appendix B  
Course Outcome Guide Template**

**Course Outcomes Guide (COG)**

**Directions:** Please complete this form to document your progress toward improving student learning. For each item, indicate your progress and your anticipated next steps. Thank you!

**Course Title:**

**Date:**

**Course Team:**

**Expected Learning Outcomes**

**Assessment** (How do or will students demonstrate achievement of each outcome? Please attach a copy of your assessment electronically.)

**Validation** (What methods have you used or will you use to validate your assessment?)

**Results** (What do your assessment data show? If you have not yet assessed student achievement of your learning outcomes, when is assessment planned?)

**Follow-up** (How have you used or how will you use the data to improve student learning?)

**Budget Justification** (What resources are necessary to improve student learning?)

## Appendix C

### Program Outcome Guide Template

<b>Program Outcomes Guide</b>
-------------------------------

**Directions:** Please complete this form to document your progress toward improving student learning. For each item, indicate your progress and your anticipated next steps. Thank you!

**Program Title:**

**Date:**

**Program Team:**

**Expected Learning Outcomes:**

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

**Assessment** (How do or will students demonstrate achievement of each outcome?)

**Validation** (What methods have you used or will you use to validate your assessment?)

**Results** (What do your assessment data show? If you have not yet assessed student achievement of your learning outcomes, when is assessment planned?)

**Follow-up** (How have you used or how will you use the data to improve student learning?)

**Budget Justification**

(What resources are necessary to improve student learning?)

**Harford Community College**



## Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.

## Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Harford Community College's assessment activities align with Middle States Standards 7, 12 and 14 and Harford Community College's Strategic Plan. These activities, the organizational structure, and institutional leadership for assessment activities are summarized below.

### **Institutional Assessment— MSCHE Standard Seven**

Harford Community College (HCC) strives to build a strong culture of sustained, measurable assessment.

HCC completes assessments on student learning outcomes and administrative/service unit outcomes annually or cyclically, as appropriate. This assessment process is intended to provide evidence of institutional effectiveness, which is dependent upon continuous improvement and monitoring of instruction and student learning, operational units, strategic planning, and resource allocation. This process is driven by the College's overall Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Plan.

### ***Strategic Plan Assessment***

For 2013-17, the College's Strategic Planning Committee was charged with developing a plan focused on student success and institutional performance to reflect nationwide efforts to change community college as outlined in "Reclaiming the American Dream," a 2012 report on the future of community colleges prepared by the American Association of Community Colleges. This plan is intended to guide the entire College, its divisions, and its resources toward the achievement of well-articulated goals. These goals define the areas where the College will focus over the next five years, and the strategies identify the ways goals will be achieved. The plan is an evolving, dynamic document that allows the College to react to opportunities as they arise and emphasizes a unified approach to institutional assessment.

### ***President's Cabinet Divisions***

While each division and unit approaches assessment of effectiveness in a manner relative to its unique operating roles and processes, the goal is to align all initiatives up to the higher goals and initiatives of the institution. Each division embarks upon the annual process of setting and prioritizing goals in a slightly different manner.

### ***Academic Affairs***

Evaluation of academic programs consists of the following four phases:

1. Initial Activities – developing a timeline and review team in consultation with the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VP for AA).
2. Analysis and reporting (reviewing data and requirements then drafting recommendations), review, dean's group, VP for AA. review, results implementation and follow-up.
3. Programs (including General Education, Information Literacy, and Distance Learning) are typically evaluated every three to five years on a planned cycle. All degree programs are continuously monitored by deans.
4. Programs subject to external accreditation are reviewed regularly, according to the external accreditation schedule. The Community Education and Training Division has numerous programs that must meet standards of outside, accrediting agencies.

### ***Operational Unit Assessment (Administrative/Service)***

Administrative and service units assess their work using a multi-step process model:

1. Define and establish measure(s) of effectiveness based on linkages to:
  - a. Mission, Vision, Values
  - b. Strategic Plan
  - c. Program Goals
  - d. External Requirements/Benchmarks

2. Identify unit outcome goals/indicators to be assessed and monitored.
  - a. Identify assessment criteria and procedures
  - b. Evaluate the results and develop appropriate actions/objectives
3. Specify the actions taken or strategies used to support accomplishment of unit goals.
4. Develop a follow-up process rooted in the use of key indicators to monitor and assess further action, develop plans, and make improvements.
5. Link to and identify budgetary needs and implications; apply findings to budgetary allocations.
6. Undertake a meta-assessment review, analyzing all assessment processes and making adjustments based on that review (currently being phased in.)

### **General Education Assessment – MSCHE Standard Twelve**

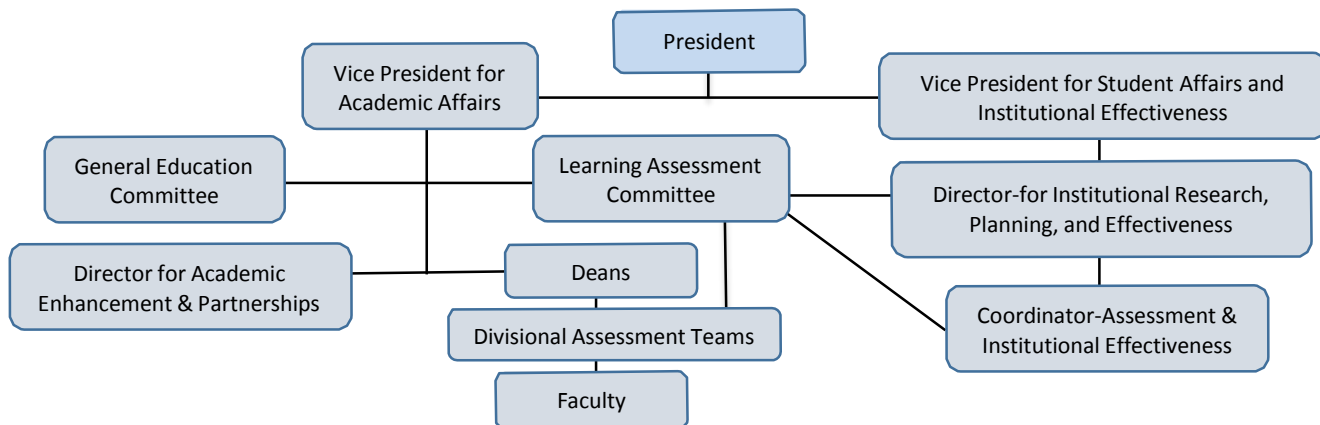
General Education (GE) assessment is the responsibility of the General Education Committee (GEC). GE goals were revised in 2011 to incorporate the institution’s eight Academic Outcomes. The GEC is charged with reviewing two of these outcomes each year, with all outcomes assessed at least once every four years. The GEC is also charged with verifying alignment of student learning objectives (SLOs) to GE goals. The GEC collaborates with academic deans, the Learning Assessment Committee (LAC), Curriculum Work Group (CWG) and the VP for AA in efforts of GE alignment, assessment, goals modification, and re-evaluation.

### **Student Learning Assessment— MSCHE Standard Fourteen**

Guided by the institution’s mission, strategic plan, program goals, and institutional effectiveness framework, learning assessment provides evidence of instructional effectiveness to improve teaching and learning. Student learning is assessed at the course and program level with oversight by Academic Affairs in collaboration with the LAC. Every October, academic divisions submit assessment action plans to the VP for AA and LAC for review and input on their contribution to effectiveness in teaching and learning. In collaboration with the LAC, a cycle of reporting and assessment is developed and monitored. LAC Chairs periodically meet with the VP for AA to update progress of monitoring these plans. An annual report is provided to academic division Deans and the VP for AA.

Assessment activities have been central to the on-going development and continued success of HCC’s academic programs. Every credit course has definable student outcomes linked to program, general education, and/or institutional goals. Through the assessment of these outcomes, classes and programs are regularly reviewed for effectiveness. The new assessment plan will emphasize implementation of assessment results to make improvements in student learning and re-assessment to measure the results of the course changes.

### **Organizational Structure and Institutional Leadership for Assessment Activities at HCC**



## Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities

In 2012, Harford Community College (HCC) underwent its Middle States accreditation, which resulted in no required actions and three recommendations. The self-study teams, however, produced 46 college-wide recommendations. Out of these processes, the need for a more unified assessment approach for the institution was identified and became an institution-wide objective. What follows is a summary of modifications and adjustments to institutional assessment activities since the self-study.

### *Strategic Plan*

Following both the Middle States accreditation and self-study processes, the institution embarked on creating a new Strategic Plan for 2013-2017 [Appendix I]. The implementation of this plan has fostered a new culture of assessment across the institution that is reflected in the College's assessment activities since 2011. A close look at the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan, which identified six strategic themes containing several major initiatives under each, revealed a struggle for symbiosis among the College's division initiatives. Thus, the Strategic Planning Committee was charged with developing a more targeted plan that would reflect nationwide efforts to change community college, as well as assert creativity and innovation from all units of the College. This charge resulted in a revised Strategic Plan that would lead the College in a more specific direction with a few overarching goals. The Committee identified initiatives and PAR metrics as ways to measure the success of the strategies. The committee also reviewed and revised the Mission, Vision, and Values statement to reflect the current state and future vision of the College and to respond to concerns regarding the previous statements.

The current Strategic Plan is goal driven with three goals and three to four strategies per goal. Each goal and strategy was written so results could be measured and effective completion could be assessed. Divisional and individual goals have been tied to the Strategic Plan goals and strategies wherever possible. This format provides a clearer focus and is intended to guide the entire College, its units, and its resources toward the achievement of well-articulated goals. These goals define the broad areas on which the College will focus, while the strategies identify the ways goals will be achieved.

### *Learning Assessment Committee (Strategic Plan (SP) Goal/Strategy 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.3)*

HCC's Learning Assessment Committee (LAC) has provided unified leadership to support faculty and others in the development of an effective assessment system that can be utilized easily for reassessment and implementation of assessment results. In 2013-2014, the LAC began an evaluation of the assessment process on campus. This evaluation included an inventory of all assessments conducted on campus by academic divisions and a collaborative discussion with the General Education Committee (GEC) regarding assessment of general education goals. The LAC found that the campus sought a more robust and data-driven process of assessment than currently existed. Subsequent to this evaluation, the committee began an 18-month redesign of the learning assessment framework on campus with an aggressive goal of creating a more measurable, sustained process of assessment based on actionable plans collectively developed by the faculty in each division, led by the division dean, and connected to the Strategic Plan.

In 2016, the College implemented an updated faculty-driven, common assessment plan which included a common cycle. Under the new framework, Academic Affairs required each division to submit an assessment action plan by program at the beginning of the fall semester to the LAC and VP for AA. The plan includes designation of measurable indicators with a specified intention of how the assessment will be used moving forward. The framework includes a meta-assessment process to review submitted plans based on an effectiveness model, providing feedback to the division deans and the VP for AA. In addition, the framework provides for each academic division to create a Divisional Assessment Team (DAT) to serve as a resource for faculty conducting assessment of student learning at the course level. The LAC also initiated a process of meta-assessment to provide feedback to faculty regarding assessment plan



adoption and outcomes measurement. As a result of one of three accreditation recommendations, the Academic Affairs committee undertook a careful review of course learning outcomes prior to posting the outcomes online.

Assessment activities have been central to the ongoing development and continued success of the academic programs at HCC. Every credit course has definable student outcomes linked to program, general education, and/or institutional goals. Through the assessment of these outcomes, classes and programs are regularly reviewed for effectiveness, with needed changes made when necessary. The new assessment plan emphasizes implementation of assessment results to make improvements in student learning and reassessment to measure the results of the course changes.

The new process of course assessment and follow-up is as follows:

1. Faculty members assess selected course outcomes each term, for an academic year, or over two or more academic years.
2. Results are reported to division deans either directly or through program assessment committees.
3. Results are used to affect change, when necessary, in the courses directly.
4. Aggregated results from several courses are used to review program goals and to affect changes to the program, when necessary, including specific investigation of student learning outcomes based on the accumulated assessment reports.
5. Each year, Academic Deans report division-wide results of these various assessments directly to the VP for AA.

In 2015-2016, the LAC's activities included production of an Assessment Handbook; development of a timeline for all academic assessment activities; collection of assessment materials in a centralized and accessible location; integration of a new assessment management system software (TK20); definition of the different assessment advisory roles of the LAC, the GEC, and Division representatives (DATs).

In 2016, the LAC produced the *Faculty Handbook for Academic Assessment at HCC*. The new assessment handbook outlines the academic assessment process for the College. It serves as a guidebook for returning faculty and deans, and an introduction to assessment goals and methods to new faculty.

The handbook outlines the process, timing, and roles of the participants in the assessment process. In addition, the handbook affirms the continuation of HCC's long-standing student learning assessment practice of using class-level outcomes as a basis of review by faculty and deans, as outlined above. The new handbook adds specific deadlines for each stage of the process.

The handbook establishes some basic criteria for academic assessment at HCC involving program assessment: all program goals will be assessed at least once every four years; faculty and deans define what goals are to be assessed and the timing of the assessment; different goals will be assessed annually, while simultaneously the previous year's goal(s) will be reassessed and changes implemented, when necessary; and three to five year cycled program reviews will continue to be an important component of the assessment cycle.

Beginning in 2016, the academic divisions and General Education Committee forwarded reports of program assessments to the LAC for comments and feedback. The committee will review these reports to ensure planned assessment activities are being followed and communicate to the campus at large on issues and trends identified through this process. The Assessment Handbook includes examples of forms, rubrics, MHEC guidelines, and other useful resources. All of this material will be available online to all pertinent users. [Appendix II, Appendix III, and Appendix IV]

***TK20 Implementation (SP Goal/Strategy 1.3, 2.3, 3.2, 3.3)***

It became clear that the assessment software in place (TracDat) was not adequate for the needs of the College. A search for better software started in 2013 and in 2015 the College approved TK20 as the new assessment management system. Starting with the fall 2015 term, TK20 began working with the campus to integrate the system, with the initial focus on using it in the academic areas. That process is ongoing. Faculty, deans and others involved in student learning assessment began using TK20 in 2016. TK20 serves as the conduit for assessment reports and data and is fully functional with the Blackboard course management system. TK20 provides more robust assessment information and facilitates better communication about assessment results across the campus than was possible with TracDat. HCC's adoption of TK20 also contributed to a systematic look at all course, program, and general education outcomes, and the ways they are mapped to each other and institutional goals. This process facilitated a timely review on effective assessment practices in all academic areas. The review demonstrated that the College had an effective student learning assessment system in place with some gaps and uncertainties identified for changes.

### ***General Education Assessment (SP Goal/Strategy 1.3)***

Since 2011 the GEC completed a process to review the alignment of general education definitions, goals, and courses. Within this process the College established eight General Education (GE) core requirements. This process began with a full review of all GE courses based on criteria developed by the committee. The criteria were also aligned with procedures outlined in the Curriculum Work Group manual for future modifications to GE courses or the development of new courses.

The LAC, in conjunction with the College Deans and the GEC, determined an assessment framework for general education. The framework includes a timetable for each GE goal to be reviewed by the GEC, a draft rubric for scoring GE goals across multiple disciplines, and draft criteria for feedback to the divisions, the LAC, and VP for AA. Although the College traditionally reviewed general education within their respective divisions and Dean's Group, the GEC began to review GE results in the 2015 – 2016 academic year. Continued refinement of this process is ongoing with the integration of Tk20 software to the College as its learning assessment management system.

### ***Academic Affairs (SP Goal/Strategy 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3)***

Academic assessment takes place at the course, program, and division level and is a collaborative effort between faculty, administrative, and support staff. At the division level, an Academic Affairs Strategic Plan (AASP) was created focusing the division's collective efforts in alignment with the goals of HCC's SP. The AASP includes objectives, action steps, baseline data, outcomes, targets, resources, timelines, and lead parties for each strategy. This ensures the quality of service and programs through self-analysis and peer review. These reviews lead to specific proposals, which, if enacted, help initiate improvements to the program. Typically, the process reveals the need for resources to meet the needs of students and the campus as a whole. Program reviews assess how effectively each program has achieved its stated objectives and offers suggestions to enhance such efforts. While identifying places for growth, the process also celebrates and recognizes achievements. Improvements are based on goals identified in the AASP and recommendations of the previous review.

HCC's program review process supports the goals of the AASP and documents student learning and overall effectiveness for each academic program, track or concentration. A 2015 review of the program review process was conducted and an analysis of enhancements to the process was determined based on faculty and administrative feedback. Expectations are for the plan to be implemented in the 2016– 17 academic year. One of the most significant modifications to the program review process will be a required yearly analysis of program data which will include recommendations based on that data for changes to programs. This analysis prior to the budget cycle will allow for better alignment with the budget process. Benefits to this approach include the alignment of yearly reports with the revised reaccreditation standards.

The College implemented an academic division realignment based on opportunities provided and an evaluation of resources and student learning. The realignment included the distribution of transitional

studies in basic reading and writing to the Humanities division, transitional math studies to the STEM division, and education to the BCAT division. The expectation is enhanced use of resources, better alignment and communication between transitional and sequential College-level courses, and greater accountability that will lead to increased student success.

***Math Redesign (SP Goal/Strategy 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.3)***

Faculty in the Transitional Mathematics (TM) program developed a redesigned curriculum in 2012. Based on program assessments, the objective of the redesigned program was to improve student success, completion and retention rates in TM courses. The assessment showed that students who missed a significant portion of class time were likely to be unsuccessful in the course. Faculty also noted students who had already possessed mastery of initial concepts developed poor attendance habits and subsequently were unsuccessful when more difficult and new material was introduced later in the semester. Furthermore, the assessment revealed that registration for successive courses among TM students was an issue impacting completion and retention. After attempts to incorporate various modes of instruction, like portfolios and MyMathLab, the decision was made to explore alternative delivery methods.

Following research of various transition studies models in place at local institutions, as well as models provided by the National Center for Academic Transformation, it was determined the most effective model for redesign would be the “replacement model.” Prior to 2012, TM courses were 15 weeks in length. Beginning in fall 2013, the 15-week approach was eliminated and the switch to a six-week, two-term format was implemented. The redesigned program offered students various opportunities for learning, succession, and completion that the previous curriculum did not offer. Such opportunities include reduced time to completion of transitional mathematics requirements; improved student attendance; refined placement into the TM sequence, enabling students to enter a course in which they have a mastery of prerequisite course material, but likely little working knowledge of the content of the course; tracks for students based upon program requirements; the implementation of in-class laboratories to reinforce and practice skills learned under the supervision of a teacher or tutor; successive classes in program linked during registration; and a library of faculty-developed materials available for students and instructors.

Following the implementation of the program redesign, the overall success rate of student that successfully complete TM courses at Harford Community College is higher than previous format. Two years of tracking these students (2013-2015) showed a significant increase in students successfully passing a general education math course.

***Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) (SP Goal/Strategy 1.1, 1.2, 1.3)***

As a way to improve student achievement, HCC’s Transitional Studies faculty for reading and writing became involved in the redesign movement. In 2014, HCC accepted a grant in partnership with the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) to pilot CCBC’s model for an Accelerated Learning Program (ALP). In 2014, HCC adopted the model and was mentored through best practices for ALP during a series of professional development opportunities offered by CCBC and the ALP creator.

The ALP assists in HCC’s completion initiative by accelerating the progression of writing skills and requirements for students in need of transitional writing courses. Students who placed in ENG 012 Basic Writing, a non-credit bearing course, concurrently enroll in ENG 101 with students who did not test into developmental writing. ALP students can still earn the required ENG 101 credits while receiving the help needed to produce college-level work. Early data show successful results. In the first year of the program, students who participated in the program passed the ENG 101 course at a higher rate than students who did not test into development English.

***Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) (SP Goal/Strategy 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2)***

STEM developed a division-wide assessment that pulls results from classes across several programs within the division. From 2013 to 2015, STEM faculty assessed the effectiveness of student understanding and application of the scientific method by collecting data from approximately 48 sections of classes designated as general education courses in biology, astronomy, chemistry, Earth science, and physics. More than 3,000 students were assessed with a common rubric. The process echoes the common practice of assessment at HCC. The first year (2013-2014) resulted in faculty developing assignments, projects, laboratories, and refined assessments around the scientific method. Year two of the assessment project (2014-2015) included the development of the common rubric and a fine-tuning of student assignments. While the division assessment continues, one result that has emerged suggests students need to be involved in actual research to become proficient in the application of the scientific method. The division has started to pursue opportunities to be able to embed actual research elements into their courses, such as the use of genomic and phenology research in biology courses.

In 2015, another major assessment project began that examines student computational skills in several math courses as related to program and general education goals. The initial assessment included 35 sections of four different math classes. Early results suggest the need for improved pedagogy, though these results will be tracked over several more semesters. One recommendation from the 2015 project was to implement more active-learning strategies in the courses with support through teacher training sessions for full-time and adjunct faculty.

***Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSS) (SP Goal/Strategy 1.3, 3.3)***

The assessment process in the BSS division since 2012 echoed the general direction of student assessment at HCC in the same period. From 2012 to 2014, the division focused on program and general education assessments through single course outcomes. Beginning in 2015, the BSS division dean and faculty adopted a unified assessment approach. Faculty mapped course outcomes with higher-level goals and linked rubric criteria with the outcomes at all levels. Assessment of individual course outcomes provide data for multiple program and general education goals simultaneously, providing more feedback for better analysis while also accelerating the cycles for assessing any one goal. This approach resulted in a more robust assessment of the student work within each program and across the division. This system is also aligned with effective utilization of TK20 assessment software.

***Student Engagement, Retention, and Completion (SERC) (SP Goal/Strategy 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.3, 3.2)*** Faculty and staff collaborative efforts to support student retention and achievement, especially for at-risk students, has changed since the decennial evaluation. The College created the Student Engagement and Retention Committee (SERC) in 2012 with faculty and staff representatives from the Student Affairs division to analyze data, create new initiatives and support broad efforts to improve student engagement, retention and completion. This project led to the 2014 establishment of the College's My College Success Network (MCSN) to specifically improve retention and achievement by African-American students. MCSN provides strong academic support for engaged African-American students through regular meetings, opportunities to learn strategies for college success, tracking and support from new Academic Success coaches, and a designated Academic Advisor. Data collected by MCSN staff in 2015 showed promising results in retention and engagement. Based on finding of the 2012 SERC Committee, the College's faculty specialists in transitional English and math began to implement significant changes in HCC's transitional courses to prepare new students for college-level coursework and improve engagement, retention, and completion. Changes in the Transitional Studies programs have created more customized approaches and options for students needing this preparation. Transitional studies faculty has been able to continuously improve student outcomes through the analysis of data collected from transitional studies students. SERC Committee recommendations also assisted in the establishment of a HCC's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to enhance and support effective collaborative and innovative faculty efforts to improve student success for all HCC students.

***Division of Student Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness (SAIE) (SP Goal/Strategy 1.4, 2.3, 3.2)***

Student Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness (SAIE) has chosen to embark on a meta-assessment approach to effectiveness. Based on a clear set of criteria, each department under SAIE works within operating units to define effectiveness for their operations. Units then establish a baseline of overall effectiveness. To do so, unit staff are involved in defining what it means to be effective within their respective scope of work. Subsequent to the decennial evaluation, a status dashboard with effectiveness indicators was established for all units within SAIE. Each departmental unit formed a baseline by evaluating and scoring their effectiveness in several categories based on a rubric. From this, units developed an action plan establishing a clear pathway for improvement where employees can clearly identify their individual roles and contribution toward progress. Division leaders ensured that action plans were measurable and tied to furthering the goals of the institution. Plans are in place to conduct periodic assessments by each unit and report to the vice president for review and incorporation in division planning. Once per year, SAIE leaders will come together and hold an effectiveness workshop to review progress and initiatives aligned with improvement.

***Division of External Relations & Human Resources (ERHR) (SP Goal/Strategy 3.2, 3.3)***

In FY16, ERHR made the strategic decision to focus on data and let the results of data analysis drive decision making. Each director in the division now has a comprehensive dashboard which contains pertinent data and provides a visible snapshot of performance in certain areas and also assists with the decision making process. Beyond the internal dashboards, data analytics is relied on from external sources as well.

An example from the area of Human Resources is the analysis of benefits utilization and costs. Trends identified through the analysis of this data guides decisions the College makes related to benefits plan design and wellness initiatives. In FY15 ERHR staff recognized that college employees were using emergency rooms at a high rate for non-urgent issues. In response the College increased the emergency room co-pay while reducing the co-pay for a visit to an employee's physician. In the first year, the changes have helped the College realize a decrease in emergency room visits of 18%.

***Finance and Operations (FO) (SP Goal/Strategy 3.1)***

Evaluation of the institutions ongoing structural budget deficits by the FO division triggered a new approach for budgeting. In a change from bottom up budgeting, a combination of a top down approach and incremental tuition increases were adopted to maintain a balanced budget. Furthermore, in fiscal year 2015 an interactive budgeting model called Screech was introduced to the College Board of

Trustees. The budgeting model allows changes to key variables, such as enrollment levels, tuition rates and expenditure projections over a period of 10 fiscal years. The results of changes in the current budget development year can be seen immediately, as well as the effect over the next 10 years. In addition to the interactive budgeting model, Screech has evolved into a centralized source for various monthly/quarterly financial reports, historical charts and graphs, and the College's Facilities Master

Plan. Screech provides the latest financial position of the College and an unlimited amount of information for the Board of Trustees, College President and Vice Presidents in one central location. The integration of Screech with a top down budgeting approach allows for flexible, but prudent adjustments to programmatic goals and objectives for the upcoming fiscal year. This process allows budget managers to realign funds and reduce allocations as necessary. The intention of this process is to better align planning, assessment, and resource allocation.

## Appendix

### Appendix I

#### **Harford Community College 2013-2017 Strategic Plan**

#### **Goals and Strategies**

##### **Goal 1**

Recognizing the need for more students to achieve their goals, the College will pursue excellence in teaching, learning and assessment.

##### **Strategies**

- Eradicate attainment gaps based on income, race, gender and ethnicity.
- Develop new programs and enhance existing programs to reduce time to degree, increase student success, and promote goal completion.
- Assess, improve, and advance educational program design, content, and delivery.
- Strengthen the College's partnership with local schools to increase the readiness of high school graduates for college.

##### **Goal 2**

Acknowledging that HCC plays an important role in the region, the College will expand programming, events, and facilities that engage and enhance the community.

##### **Strategies**

- Provide educational programs and workforce development training to meet the needs and interests of the community.
- Use facilities and events, with particular attention to the APG Federal Credit Union Arena, to provide mutual benefit for the community and the College.
- Address - to the extent to which the College has influence - the recommendations of the Northeast Maryland Higher Education Task Force.

##### **Goal 3**

Understanding that the environment and the demands on higher education are changing rapidly, the College will develop resources and infrastructure required to meet future challenges.

##### **Strategies**

- Develop sufficient fiscal resources to carry out its mission, including the resources required to implement the Facilities Master Plan.
- Recruit and retain highly qualified, diverse employees.
- Identify and invest in technology that will increasingly support student success and employee productivity.

**Appendix II**

**SLO Mapping Form**

**Course Student Learning Objectives Mapping Date:**

Division \_\_\_\_\_

Program \_\_\_\_\_

Program Goals

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

**Course Information**

**Course Outcome Linked To:**

Course	Course Title	Student Learning Objective	Program Goal	General Education Goal	Other HCC Goal:

**Appendix III**

**LAC Program Audit Report Form**

	Linked to Program/ GE goals	Written in Measureable Terms	Used Direct & Indirect Assessment Measures	Assessment Population Defined	Assessment Plan Timeline is Clear	Results & Analysis Clearly Presented	Specific Plan for Improvements Described
Assessment 1							
Assessment 2							
Assessment 3							
Assessment 4							
Assessment 5							
Assessment 6							
Assessment 7							
Assessment 8							
Assessment 9							
Assessment 10							
Assessment 11							
Assessment 12							
Assessment 13							
Assessment 14							
Assessment 15							

Key: Y = Present      X = Not Present      N/A = Not Applicable/Not Needed



Summary Feedback

*Strengths:*

*Recommendations:*

Review date: \_\_\_\_\_

LAC Co-Chairs: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 4 - SLO Assessment Report**

Program Assessment Report	
Program	
Semester/Year	
Goal(s) Assessed (List all that apply - include the goal statement.)	
Type of Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> On-going <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up Reassessment
Courses Used for Assessment (List all courses and number of sections for each.)	
Aggregate Results (Data)	
Analysis	
1. What was learned from the assessments?	
2. How will the results be used? What actions will be taken as a result of these assessment results?	
3. What is the time frame for follow-up actions?	

**Howard Community College**



## **Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016**

### **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Since opening its doors in 1970, Howard Community College (HCC) has been committed to continuous improvement through data-informed decision-making. Assessment at HCC is valued and well-supported as evidenced by embedded, systematic, and sustainable processes connected to four strategic initiatives (see Appendix A), eight general education competencies, and well-developed program and course objectives for academic and co-curricular programs. Learning outcomes assessment at HCC is an institution-wide endeavor with leadership, guidance, and support from its board of trustees, president, vice presidents, the planning, research, and organizational development (PROD) team, division deans, faculty, staff, and students. The PROD team (see Appendix B) facilitates the assessment process at all stages (i.e., implementation, analysis, reporting, and discussion) across campus. Three employees are located in an office suite (Learning Outcomes Assessment (LOA) Office) to provide convenient access for the faculty. The size of the PROD staff reflects the college's commitment and support of quality assessment.

Assessment at HCC is guided by the overarching Institutional Effectiveness Plan that contains a specific Assessment of Student Learning Plan to monitor student learning in and out of the classroom. Formal assessment of student learning occurs at course, program, unit, and institutional levels and is tied to HCC's strategic goals and initiatives, general education goals and outcomes, unit core work, program goals, and course objectives. Full-time faculty members are engaged in assessment each year through annual teaching improvement projects (TIPs), promotion projects, or formal course and program reviews. Student services staff engage in a five-year unit review process and annual co-curricular programs reviews. All other administrative departments annually track vital signs based on a customized set of key performance indicators used to support decision-making regarding goal-setting, process improvements, and the allocation of resources.

Division deans and department chairs collaborate with the LOA office to maintain five-year review schedules for courses and programs. Each year, revisions to the schedule are suggested by the division deans and approved by the vice president of academic affairs (VPAA). A course or program review that contains a finished template, approved program outline, and supporting materials is sent through outlined approval processes and is internally available to faculty and staff. During review and approval processes, LOA works with faculty to ensure that assessments and proposed action plans are meaningful, useful, reasonable, and sustainable. All the 85 course reviews and 23 program reviews scheduled for 2014-2015 were completed with direct measures of student learning and presently, 19 of 26 program reviews and 96 of the 186 course reviews scheduled for 2015-2016 are complete.

Building from general education competencies reported in the 2011 SLOAR, HCC faculty reviewed the general education program and implemented a revised general education program in fall 2014.

The new program includes eight learning goals with related outcomes that align with standards set by Middle States and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC): creative process, critical thinking, global competency, oral and expressive communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, written communication, information literacy, and technological competency. Assessment of student learning of general education occurs at the course level and at the college level. At the college level, each goal is scheduled for review once every five years. For each general education goal, faculty co-chairs and representatives work along with LOA staff to create an assessment team that engages in a three-semester assessment process of development, implementation, analysis, and dissemination of results. The faculty decided that ethics, usually a general education goal, would be taught and assessed at the program level within specific disciplines. The first complete cycle of the newer general education program will be completed in 2019 by compiling assessment data and reports for all goals, action plans and progress reports, course assessment of general education goals, and feedback from faculty and staff.

To examine the contributions of the student support areas to student learning outside of the classroom, the associate vice presidents of enrollment management and student development and their directors partner with PROD's associate director of research and planning to maintain a five-year cycle of reviews for departments and programs. Unit reviews, such as assessing the Test Center, are conducted every five years. Program reviews, such as assessing the impact of our intrusive advising program, are conducted more frequently. The associate director works closely with directors to plan unit and program reviews by developing project timelines; consulting on core work documents (e.g., goals, outcomes, metrics and benchmarks); providing data; conducting assessment and evaluation projects; providing feedback on drafts of unit/program reviews; and ensuring that all facets of the review have been completed with appropriate supporting evidence. Post-review, action plan progress reports are completed by directors and results are used to update plans. Four of 10 unit reviews and 10 of 12 program reviews are scheduled for completion in summer 2016.

In addition to measures of student learning outcomes, HCC engages in various activities for assessing and reporting (externally and internally) institutional effectiveness results. The Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) is used to evaluate all credit courses via an online interface during the last four semester weeks. Recently moving to an online administration, this nationally normed assessment asks students to rate instructors and course content on selected-response items connected to specific objectives. Overall results are reviewed by the VPAA. A summary of the ratings are reviewed by the board of trustees as part of their key performance indicator system. Division deans and department chairs share division, discipline, and course data with their faculty to identify areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. Student engagement is evaluated using the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and HCC students have participated in the survey bi-annually since 2006. Items are aggregated into five major indicators of institutional effectiveness. Trend analyses (2006 – 2014) indicate improvements in two indicators. The Yearly Evaluation of Services by Students (YESS) has been administered annually at (HCC) since 1991 and is used to assess students' satisfaction with the quality of college services, instruction, campus climate and environment, and Student Life programs. HCC employees have anonymously completed the Quality Evaluation of Service Trends (QUEST) every fall semester since 1990. The results contribute to a self-assessment guided by the Baldrige Excellence Framework and for consideration of the *Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award*.

Since 2011, a more transparent document trail (portal and shared drives) for closing-the-loop on assessment activities was added to HCC's assessment processes. Faculty and staff routinely communicate and use assessment results for improving student learning, refining existing assessment processes, revising curriculum, and developing faculty development opportunities. For example,

action plan follow up reports are required for all course, program, unit, and general education reviews and build on faculty's dissemination of results. Faculty professional learning communities have focused on building assessment capacity within the institution, such as developing effective, valid, and reliable assessment tools. Assessment activities and results have also been externally disseminated in conference presentation, such as the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education 2016 conference. Lastly, the PROD team performs an annual evaluation of unit, program, and course review processes as part of the colleges continuous quality improvement efforts.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Howard Community College (HCC) faculty and staff have a strong commitment to assessment, continuous improvement, and data-informed decision making. All assessment endeavors impact the student experience in and out of the classroom. Since the 2011 SLOAR, HCC has continued to improve its institutional assessment activities. The president and her team annually review the HCC Institutional Effectiveness Plan.

### **2011 Institutional Assessment Activities Retained and Modified**

After a successful accreditation site visit in spring 2011, with a commendation for the self-study report and process, HCC retained and modified existing assessment activities such as faculty-designed teaching improvement projects and institutional surveys to remain meaningful, reliable, and valid.

***Teaching Improvement Projects.*** All full-time faculty complete a one-year teaching improvement project (TIP) in order to inform instructional and curriculum improvements. Since 2011, the TIP process has been modified to explicitly connect to HCC's institutional assessment, effectiveness, and strategic plans by requiring faculty to indicate how their project contributes to institutional-level assessment, divisional-level assessment, the HCC mission, or strategic plan. The last four years showed an increased focus on developing, piloting, and using direct measures of student learning. Some TIPs used direct measures to evaluate instructional techniques. A TIP designed by the associate dean of mathematics examined how more instruction via instructional videos improved student comprehension in precalculus II. Student performance on one unit exam increased from 58% (from the previous two semesters) to 81%. Based on this data, the associate dean decided to maintain these instructional tools in the course. Division deans are provided with TIP summaries for all faculty to aid annual evaluations. Faculty are encouraged to share projects during faculty professional development weeks and during the college's May Innovation Fair.

***Individual Development and Educational Assessment.*** As a nationally normed assessment created by Kansas State University, the Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) asks students to rate instructors and course content on selected-response items connected to specific objectives. Led by the associate VPAA, the teaching and learning services division has increased the amount of staff dedicated to supporting faculty with IDEA from one staff person in 2011 to three in 2015. Survey administration changed from a paper and pencil survey of select courses/sections to online survey of all courses beginning in 2015. The new online version has increased IDEA's use and understanding. For example, students can now access the survey via mobile devices, tablets, or computers. Faculty can now view individual results upon the immediate closing of the survey, compare individual results to other courses within the discipline and the institution, view data in multiple formats (e.g., numbers, graphs), consider students' motivation and perceptions of difficulty when interpreting results, and incorporate

IDEA data into formal course reviews. Faculty training workshops that focus on interpreting and using results occur regularly and on demand: during new faculty training, pre-semester faculty professional development weeks, and individual consultation with academic staff. Each semester, IDEA results are reviewed by the employee, their supervisor, and the VPAA. Institutional (aggregated) results are part of the board of trustees' key performance indicator system. From fall 2013 to fall 2015, HCC students' ratings were higher than the national average on the three standard categories: progress on relevant objectives, course excellence, and teacher excellence. In discussing results with faculty, division deans and department chairs in collaboration with LOA identify areas of strength and areas in need of improvement to develop a plan for improving teaching and learning.

***Community College Survey of Student Engagement.*** Student engagement at HCC, and other Maryland community colleges, is evaluated using the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The survey provides an opportunity to benchmark performance over time and in comparison to other participating community colleges in the nation ( $n = 350$  in 2014), similar-sized institutions ( $n = 141$  large community colleges), and Maryland community colleges ( $n = 14$ ). When asked, 37.5% of students rated their "...entire educational experience at this college" as "excellent"; ranking HCC first in the state. The items on the survey aggregate into five major indicators of institutional effectiveness. Trend analyses from 2006 to 2014 indicated improvement on active collaborative learning and student-faculty interaction benchmarks. Typically, HCC scores at or above average for all community colleges, large community colleges, and Maryland community colleges. For two indicators, academic challenge and student effort, the college received scores that were below scores for the three comparison groups. These areas for improvement presented leadership with an opportunity to develop new ways to communicate academic expectations and reinforce messages throughout students' time at the college. The college awaits the data from the spring 2016 collection of this survey to see the effectiveness of the changes.

***Yearly Evaluation of Services by Students.*** HCC has administered the locally developed Yearly Evaluation of Services by Students (YESS) survey annually since 1991. The YESS assesses student satisfaction with the quality of college services, instruction, campus climate and environment, and student life programs. Each spring semester, students in randomly selected course sections are asked to participate in the survey that faculty administer during class. In spring 2016, 89% of sections returned 1,065 useable surveys. YESS results are used for recognizing units that provide high quality service, monitoring and setting goals, focusing improvement activities, and allocating resources. At least 75% of respondents were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with overall quality of instruction and their major. At least 90% of respondents consistently indicated they would reenroll in HCC and would recommend the college to friends and relatives.

***Other Institutional Assessment and Reporting.*** HCC's dedication to fulfilling students' educational needs, assessment of student outcomes, and assessment of overall institutional effectiveness is evidenced in reporting results both externally and internally. The ***Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence*** helps HCC evaluate processes, their impact on results, and progress toward goals and objectives. Annually, trained Baldrige evaluators review HCC's self-assessment based on a set of criteria and provide detailed feedback of strengths and opportunities for improvement. This feedback is used to identify areas in need of improvement and inform operational and strategic planning. The ***Quality Evaluation of Service Trends***

(QUEST), another self-assessment, is an anonymous employee survey administered every fall semester since 1990. Using a five-point Likert scale (1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest), employees evaluate the quality of college services and the campus environment. Selected items from the survey are primary indicators of institutional effectiveness and vital sign measures. Results are used for managing performance, guiding planning, and recognizing deserving units and employees. Response rate for all employees was 68% in fall 2015. Employees consistently rate several items highly, indicating that HCC fosters a learning-centered culture where faculty and staff believe they can advocate for students and prioritizes student learning. Employees also indicate that work aligns with their personal values that support student success, graduation, and transfer.

As part of the *Maryland performance accountability reporting system*, student goal achievement is measured in surveys of graduates and non-returning students. In state-defined measures of student success, retention rates, and the graduation, transfer, and persistence rates of college-ready students, developmental completers, and developmental non-completers are analyzed with the use of National Student Clearinghouse subsequent enrollment and completion data. In alliance with state, national, and international licensing boards (e.g., Maryland Board of Nursing, National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians, Cardiovascular Credentialing International), HCC tracks and reports the success of students taking licensure examinations in preparation to enter the workforce. College administration reviews all reports and include plans for improvement in appropriate core work and/or strategic planning.

### **New Institutional Assessment Activities Since 2011**

New assessment structures and processes at HCC focus on incorporating even more direct measures of student learning that are systematic. These include scheduled program, course, and general education goal reviews within academic affairs and learning outcomes assessment within student services.

*Course and Program Review in Academic Affairs.* Division deans and department chairs collaborate with the LOA office to maintain five-year review schedules that are annually approved by the VPAA. A course or program review that contains a finished template, approved program outline, and designated artifacts is sent through outlined approval processes and are internally available to all faculty and staff. During review and approval processes, LOA works with faculty to ensure that assessments and proposed action plans are meaningful, useful, reasonable, and sustainable.

All of the 85 course reviews scheduled for 2014-2015 were completed and included mostly direct measures of student learning. For illustration, the introduction to ethics philosophy course review showed that 85% of students were able to “compare and contrast the implications of ethical theories that look to outcomes (teleological), those based on duty (deontological), and those rooted in Virtue Ethics – Ancient and Modern, Asian, traditional African, and Western.” Still, faculty revised exam prompts and rubrics to be more consistent with the course syllabus. The 2015-2016 reviews are being discussed this summer.

All of the 23 program reviews scheduled for 2014-2015 were completed. For illustration, faculty reviewing the life sciences program found an average score of 68% on exam items measuring students’ ability to “apply the appropriate processes in solving problems in the life science and be able to analyze, evaluate, justify and interpret the reasonableness of a solution.” Because student learning was below the 70% benchmark, faculty developed an action plan to customize



the general biology course and accompanying assessments for specific populations (e.g., majors and non-majors). The 26 program reviews for 2015-2016 are being audited this summer.

**General Education Review.** Building from the general education competencies reported in 2011, faculty interacted with outside experts, reviewed and implemented a revised general education program in fall 2014. Eight general learning goals and accompanying outcomes align with standards set by Middle States and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC):

1. *Creative process and humanistic inquiry:* Understand how the creative process and aesthetic and humanistic values inform human experience and expression over time.
2. *Critical thinking:* Analyze and evaluate information using evidence to make a rational decision or solve a problem.
3. *Global competency:* Understand the interconnectedness of global communities and systems.
4. *Oral and expressive communication:* Use oral and expressive communication effectively as a way of sharing ideas with others.
5. *Scientific and quantitative reasoning:* Apply scientific and mathematical concepts and reasoning to solve real-world and computational problems utilizing, interpreting, and evaluating data and information.
6. *Written communication:* Write clearly and effectively for a variety of audiences in order to learn, think, and communicate.
7. *Information literacy:* Know when there is a need for information and effectively find, evaluate, and use information ethically for academic success.
8. *Technological competency:* Select and apply technology to investigate, create, communicate, and complete tasks.

General education review occurs at course and college levels. To date, 284 courses align with the general education program and have provided 47 course-level reviews. For example, the history of India course assessment concluded that 88% to 100% of students met expectations for three global competency outcomes; however, only 50% met expectations for the outcome that required students to analyze “global events and issues and their interconnectedness from economic, political, environmental, aesthetic, social, or ethical perspectives.”

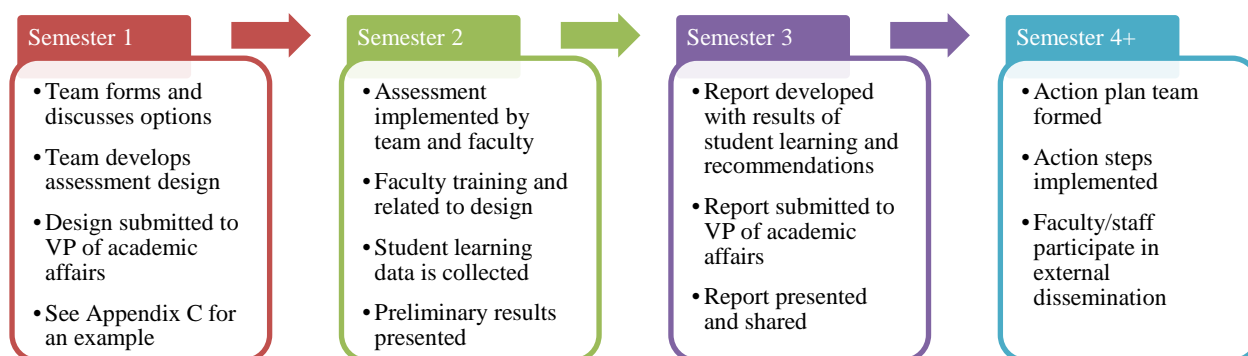
At the institutional level, each goal is scheduled for review every five years with a general education program review report completed at the end of each cycle (see Table 1).

*Table 1. General Education Goal Review Schedule*

	Cycle 1 (2014-2019)					Program Review Report	Cycle 2 (2019-2024)					Program Review Report
	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	
Creative Process and Humanistic Inquiry					X						X	
Critical Thinking		X					X					
Global Competency				X					X			
Oral and Expressive Communication			X					X				
Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning	X					X						

Written Communication			X						X			
Information Literacy	X						X					
Technological Competency		X						X				

Each college-level goal review is completed by a team of LOA staff and faculty during a three-semester assessment period (see Figure 1). To date, results for information literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, and critical thinking showed that the average HCC student met basic level outcomes, had mixed mastery for intermediate level outcomes, and did not meet advance level outcomes. For example, the institutional assessment of scientific and quantitative reasoning showed that 84% of students sampled met or exceeded the *communicate* outcome, 63% met or exceeded the *apply* outcome, and 54% met or exceeded the *analyze* outcome. Thus, faculty have developed recommendations for teaching general education competencies, clarifying outcomes underlying general education goals, and professional development topics. HCC faculty are currently engaged in the assessment process for the technological competency (semester 3) and oral and expressive communication (semester 2) general education goals.



**Figure 2. Depiction of the four-semester assessment process for general education each goal. The depiction includes closing the loop activities that occur during the fourth semester and beyond.**

When revising the general education program, faculty remained committed to teaching ethical reasoning while recognizing disciplinary differences in ethical theories and approaches. Accordingly, ethical reasoning is assessed within an academic program’s disciplinary framework and is typically defined as “Identify, understand, evaluate and apply ethical reasoning to problems, dilemmas and issues in...,” students’ ethical reasoning. For example, both life sciences and biotechnology programs rely on a biological framework assessed in a genetics course. Only 35% of students received 70% or higher on the ethics assignment. To address low student ethical reasoning, biology instructors plan to provide additional content of applied ethics, such as a lecture contrasting approaches to evaluating alternative actions.

**Program and Unit Review in Student Services.** Beginning in 2014-2015, unit and program reviews for the student services functional area are conducted every five years, with two directors doing so annually, and program reviews are conducted more frequently (see Appendix D). During interim years, directors complete action plan progress reports to keep their associate vice presidents and vice president apprised of progress towards implementing and executing plans established in the review.

Admission, advising, and transfer services and the athletics units were reviewed in 2014-2015. Four program reviews were also scheduled (i.e., Early Alert, reverse transfer, intrusive advising, and Freshman Focus) and unscheduled assessments of four other programs were completed (e.g., academic standing policy). For example, Howard PRIDE, a Black male success initiative, has demonstrated fall-to-spring retention rates at or above 84% since inception. These rates outpaced all Black males at HCC (retention = 66%) and Black males who were first-time to HCC (retention = 73%); however, percentage of students with at least a 2.0 fall GPA fluctuated (FY13 = 88%, FY14 = 59%). The Early Alert program, used to identify and to assist students exhibiting at-risk behaviors, has expanded use from 17 course sections (spring 2012) to 115 course sections (fall 2015). The program is assessed every semester to facilitate process improvement and track student outcomes. Professional development workshops were offered in 2014-2015 to help instructors integrate the program as part of their course management strategy. Results have shown that instructors are raising alerts earlier and notifying students about academic performance concerns prior to the withdrawal deadline. Completion and withdrawal rates have also improved for sections using the Early Alert program.

At the end of spring 2016, four of 10 units were reviewed with two other units preparing for upcoming review; 10 of the 12 programs will have completed reviews by summer 2016. PROD is currently working with two units to complete reviews (i.e., records registration and veterans affairs and academic support services) and two other units (i.e., financial aid services and student life) in preparation for reviews due in 2016-2017. Finally, program reviews (or action plan progress reports for review completed in FY15) are in various stages of development for 10 of the 12 programs this year and will be completed with PROD's guidance by summer/fall 2016. Unit and program review processes have allowed HCC to take stock of our current measures of student outcomes and implement action plans where necessary.

***Improving Closing-the-Loop Processes.*** Since 2011, HCC has standardized templates and processes for posting and sharing the results to close-the-loop on assessment. Faculty and staff routinely disseminate and use results for improving existing assessment processes, revising curriculum, and generating faculty development opportunities.

LOA and PROD offices perform annual evaluations of unit, program, and course reviews. Academic assessment audits are conducted using specific rubrics and submitted to the VPAA. The 2014-2015 pilot audit showed that course and program reviews were strong in selecting appropriate and direct measures of student learning and providing artifacts; however, reviews were weak in dissemination of results and providing action plan information. As a result, LOA implemented the following action steps for 2015-2016: Edit review templates to include an action plan table requiring more specific information, create checklists and FAQ documents as faculty self-help resources, and provide workshops on action plans, listing improvements, and benchmarking. An audit of student services assessments in 2014-2015 highlighted a need for some process improvements: Improve timeliness of review completion; encourage unit and program directors to work more cohesively with staff and leadership to facilitate the review and approval processes; positively reinforce directors for annually completing vital signs to support action plan progress reports; provide preliminary evaluation and feedback of unit and program reviews by a PROD staffer to improve quality of reviews; and change the deadline of action plan progress reports to the fall so that deliverables reflect most current metrics.

Templated action plan follow up reports are required for all course, program, unit, and general education reviews. Faculty and staff are instructed to “Explain how the action plan progressed by including how the progress or results were communicated within the division, unit, office, and/or college; how the action steps informed curriculum improvements or student learning; and how the results impacted the course (e.g., use of facilities, teaching strategies), program, or unit/office.” For example, action steps following the 2014-2015 institutional assessment of information literacy were mostly completed by May 2016. Based on a value-added assessment, students enrolled in the required college writing course demonstrated better information literacy after engaging in a semester of digital, interactive tutorials (see Figure 2). To maintain this growth in student learning, the assessment team recommended “The Library and Instructional Media should continue to refine and distribute interactive tutorials while developing strategies for continuously collecting assessment data across designated courses and programs.” See Appendix E for a visually depicted example.

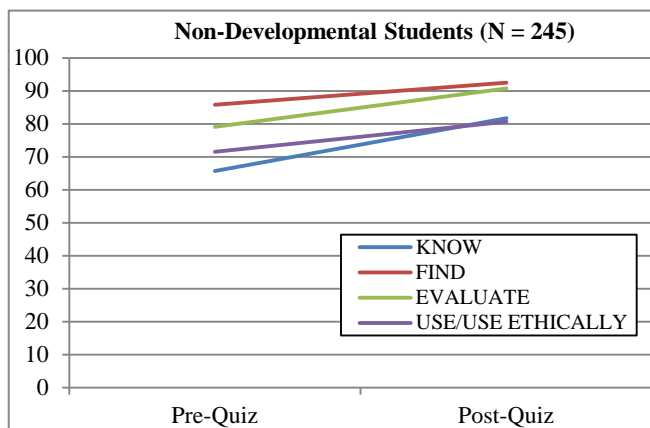


Figure 3. Value added assessment showing improvements in information literacy after a semester of interactive learning tutorials.

Amidst changes in assessment demands, structures, and processes, HCC faculty demonstrate the importance of continuous improvement and data-based decision making. For example, one science instructor engaged in multiple assessment cycles to improve learning in an introductory physical geology course. As a first step, 20 course objectives were evaluated based on students’ learning in hybrid, online, and face-to-face sections and degree of alignment with similar courses taught by transfer institutions. Student learning patterns confirmed the consolidation of course objectives and complete removal of three, resulting in eight revised course objectives. Using these 2010-2013 results, the science instructor explicitly aligned exam items to the revised objectives to facilitate assessment (e.g., sustainability, usefulness). As a 2014-2015 TIP, she showed learning patterns differed between students enrolled in hybrid sections and online sections of the introductory physical geology course. In a most recent 2015-2016 TIP, the instructor focused on better aligning course materials to objectives in an oceanography course. In doing so, she was able to conclude that students were strong in comprehending graphical data and relatively weak in calculating results based on graphs. HCC faculty value assessment and can systematically use results to support student learning and curriculum improvement.

Other closing the assessment loop activities include internal and external dissemination efforts and faculty-led development workshops. In 2014, HCC submitted the learning outcomes assessment of its pre-pharmacy program for a *Council for Higher Education Accreditation Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes*. Since 2011 select faculty professional learning communities have focused on building assessment capacity among the faculty and using assessment results to improve teaching and learning. These communities are facilitated twice a month by faculty throughout each academic year. The *Ready, Assess, Go!* (2015-2016) community aimed to help faculty and staff to appropriately engage in the process of developing effective, valid, and reliable assessment tools. The *Critical Thinking from Different Perspectives* (2016-2017) builds on the most recent institutional assessment of the critical

thinking general education goal. The faculty facilitators plan to provide information about critical thinking that can be immediately applied to classroom instruction and working with students. LOA office's presentation at the *Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education* 2016 conference focused on benefits and challenges of assessing students' critical thinking via essays, rubrics, and multiple choice questions.

### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

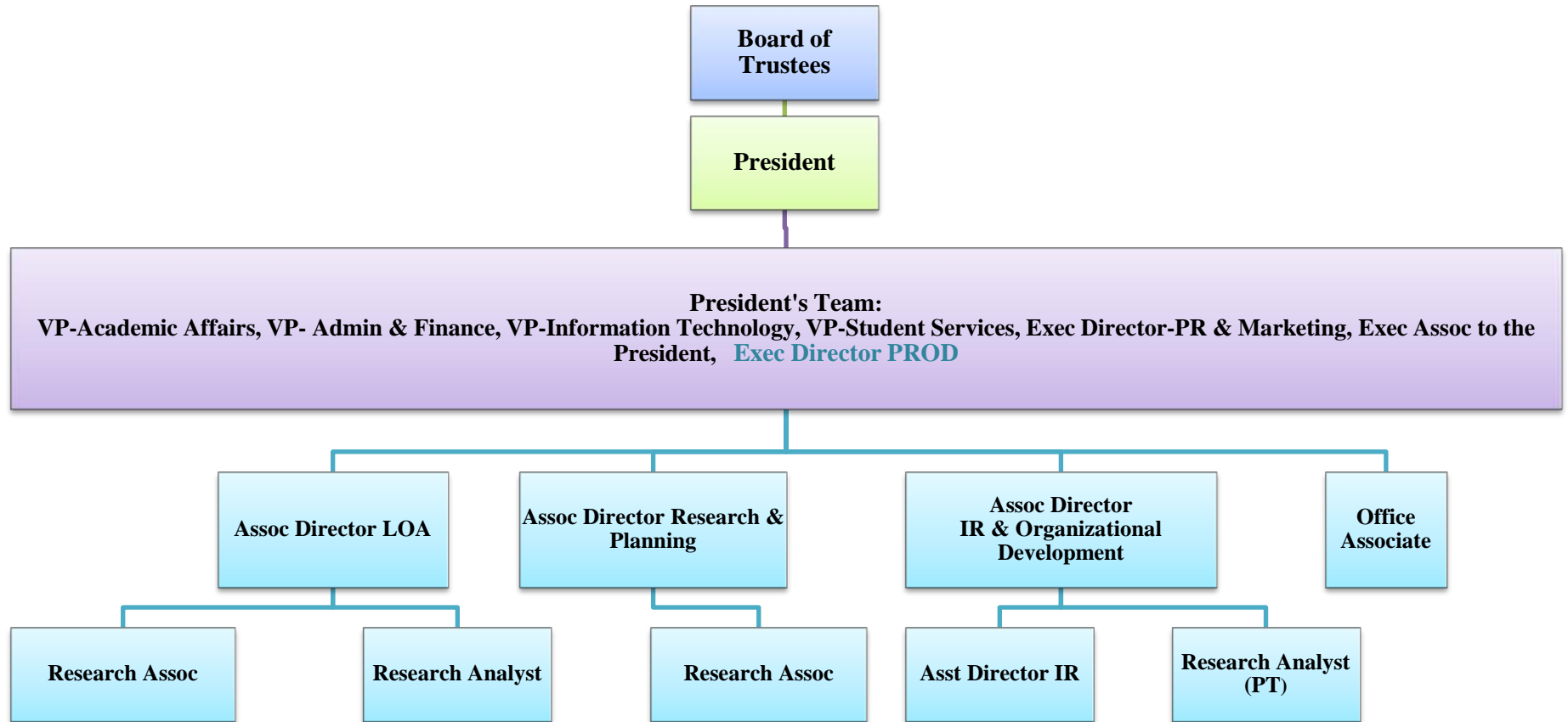
Not applicable: Howard Community College is in compliance with these standards.

## Part Four: Appendices

### Appendix A: Howard Community College's Strategic Goal #1 (From strategic plan)

<b>Strategic Goal #1. Student Success, Completion, and Lifelong Learning</b>		
	Lead	Action Plans for 2016
<b>1.1</b>	<b><i>Increase number of students graduating annually.</i></b>	
1.1A	VPAA VPSS	Develop, evaluate and revise program offerings (transfer and career) to meet the needs of students and the community, provide career opportunities (such as clinical placements, internships) for students and promote degree completion and transfer.
1.1B	VPAA VPSS	Increase student participation in high impact (e.g., service learning) academic and specialized student engagement experiences that promote student success and completion.
1.1C	VPSS	Support a TBA percentage increase in annual graduates by providing support services to include intrusive advising of students with 45 or more credits, promoting reverse transfer, and awarding Pathway Scholarships.
<b>1.2</b>	<b><i>Increase % of developmental completers, 4 years after entry to HCC, from 35.8% (fall 2003 cohort) to 45% (fall 2011 cohort).</i></b>	
1.2A	VPAA	Pilot requirement for developmental mathematics students to also enroll in First Year Experience course. Evaluate and expand by TBA English 121 Accelerated Learning Program. Implement and evaluate course redesign linked to revision of the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) definition of college-level mathematics.
1.2B	VPAA VPSS VPIT	Implement and evaluate College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act (CCCRA) requirement to include credit-bearing mathematics and English within the first 24 credit hours for first-time degree seeking students; allow certain developmental students to concurrently enroll in same-subject credit-bearing course; require students completing the developmental course sequence to immediately enroll in same-subject credit-bearing course the following semester.
1.2C	VPSS	Expand and improve HCC Early Alert Program processes to attain positive outcomes; establish course completion benchmarks and study program effectiveness.
1.2D	VPSS VPAA	Continue College Readiness program in English and mathematics with HCPSS.
<b>1.3</b>	<b><i>Increase student successful-persistence rate after 4 years for all students from 73.2% (fall 2003 cohort) to 80% (fall 2011 cohort). Close performance gaps as needed for Blacks, Asians, Hispanics.</i></b>	
1.3A	VPSS VPAA	Implement a Hispanic student success pilot program. Establish metrics to track, establish baseline, and identify benchmarks to evaluate the impact of the pilot's success in eliminating the achievement gap.
1.3B	VPSS VPAA	Increase Howard PRIDE participation by 30% over 3 years via upscaling the existing services. Continue to increase retention, academic standing, and transfer and graduation rates with a goal of matching the rates of all students.
<b>1.4</b>	<b><i>Increase student graduation and transfer rate after 4 years for all students from 51.9% (fall 2003 cohort) to 60% (fall 2011 cohort). Close performance gaps as needed for Blacks, Asians, Hispanics.</i></b>	
1.4A	VPSS VPAA	In targeted programs (Howard P.R.I.D.E, Silas Craft Collegians, Hispanic Student Success, Student Support Services, and Career Links) provide supportive services to increase the graduation and transfer rates and close performance gaps of Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics. Benchmarks will be established that align with college indicators and increased incrementally each year over a five-year period.
1.4B	VPAA	Continue the systematic evaluation plan for all academic programs.
1.4C	VPAA	Develop a plan for an undergraduate research program for STEM students.
1.4D	VPAA VPSS	Actively promote diversity in restricted enrollment programs.

**Appendix B: Learning Outcomes Assessment Leadership Organizational Chart**



## Appendix C: Technological Competency General Education Goal Assessment Design

### Technological Competency Assessment Design

Technological Competency Assessment Team, Learning Outcomes Assessment

October 2015

The technological competency (TC) assessment design was developed in fall 2015 by a team of 11 faculty members from BUCO, MATH, and SET. The team submitted the assessment described below to the Council for Curriculum Integrity (CCI) in October 2015 for approval by the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA). The design will be implemented beginning in January of 2016.

#### TC Assessment Team

Mike Long, Chair	Andrew Brown	Emily Francis	Frederic Lang
Gabriel Ayine	Danielle Brown	Cindy Garnsey	Rehana Yusuf
Anjula Batra	John Esenwa	David Hinton	

#### Supporting Faculty & Staff

Michelle Franz, eLearning	Susan Hellenbrand, LOA
---------------------------	------------------------

**Research Question:** What is the baseline technological competency related to using technology for communication and task completion that is demonstrated by HCC students enrolled in TC-designated general education courses?

**Sampling:** Using cluster sampling (Allen, 2006), students enrolled in MATH-138, MATH-141, and MATH-143 courses were selected as a representative sample of students in TC-designated courses. Of the 2,307 students graduating from HCC between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015, 65.2% or 1,505 completed one of the three courses since fall 2008. Fewer than 1% ( $N = 14$ ) of students concurrently completed more than one of the courses listed. Based on actual enrollment and completion information from spring of 2015, the estimated course section distribution results in a pool of 946 students (see Table 1).

Table 1: Summary of student pool distribution in spring 2015.

Course	Course Sections					Estimated Number of Students				
	Main Campus/F2F	Hybrid	Online	Laurel	Total	Main Campus/F2F	Hybrid	Online	Laurel	Total
MATH-138	18		3	3	24	317		33	21	371
MATH-141	17	2	1	1	21	295	18	11	5	329
MATH-143	13			3	16	237			9	246
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>946</b>

**Assessment:** Students learning of TC outcomes will be directly measured using projects embedded in each MATH course. Each project requires students to use technology to complete a course-specific task, such as to collect data, conduct data analyses, display data, or model equations. Although course specific, all projects culminate in a word processed technical report that requires students to include computer-generated graphs, appropriately formatted equations, and images from computer graphics programs, and to discuss the technology used in writing the report (e.g., Excel, Equation Editor, Paint, etc.).

**Analysis Plan:** Course instructors will serve as primary scorers of project reports as part of instructional activities during the spring 2016 semester. Prior to the spring semester, the TC assessment team will train instructors to score project reports using a rubric. The assessment team adapted portions of the TC general education rubric and kept the original goals (attached). The rubric includes the two TC outcomes scored on a 4-point scale. In collaboration with the director of eLearning, the team will design a hybrid rubric training model that includes a 2-hour face-to-face session during the January 2016 Faculty Professional Development Week followed by online training and recalibration sessions.

In order to measure consistency between scorers, 30% of randomly selected project reports will be scored a second time during the May 2016 Faculty Professional Development Week. Inter-rater reliability will be measured using Cohen's kappa (Landis & Koch, 1977). Frequency or percentage of students at each rubric level will be reported per outcome. Analyses will examine whether students TC performance differs based on key characteristics (e.g., demographic information, discipline, course, etc.). For predictive validity as an indication of curriculum alignment, regression analyses will examine whether students' technological competency as scored by the rubric statistically predicts their final course grade.

1

Modified: 10/29/2015

**Dissemination Plan:** Assessment results, interpretations, and recommendations will be disseminated to facilitate "closing the loop". During the report writing process, the TC assessment team will conduct faculty work sessions that explaining the available data and analyses to TC-course instructors and division faculty in order to elicit interpretations and recommendations for improvement from faculty stakeholders. Once the report is completed, it will be presented to the VPAA staff meeting and the CCI. The written report will be electronically available through the electronic holdings of the CCI and the Learning Outcomes Assessment (LOA) office. Possible venues for external dissemination include the MACC Summit on Completion, AAC&U's General Education and Assessment Conference, the annual conference for Association for Institutional Research, and MSCHE's Annual Conference, and *The Journal of General Education*.

**Timeline:** The institutional assessment of TC and accompanying report is scheduled to be completed by end of fall 2016.

Table 2: Timeline for 2015-2016 institutional assessment of technological competency.

Month	Activity Description	Faculty/Staff Groups
January 2016	Rubric training	TC Assessment Team, Course Instructors, LOA, eLearning
February 2016	Rubric training	TC Assessment Team, Course Instructors, LOA, eLearning
March 2016	Recalibration for rubric scoring	TC Assessment Team, Course Instructors, LOA, eLearning
April 2016	First rubric scoring due	TC Assessment Team, Course Instructors, LOA, eLearning
May 2016	Second rubric scoring due	TC Assessment Team, Course Instructors (selected), LOA, eLearning
June 2016	Statistical analysis	LOA, eLearning
July 2016	Statistical analysis	LOA
August 2016	Statistical analysis	LOA, TC Assessment Team
September 2016	Faculty work sessions	LOA, TC Assessment Team, Course Instructors, Division Faculty
October 2016	Faculty work sessions; Institutional assessment report development	LOA, TC Assessment Team, Course Instructors, Division Faculty
November 2016	Institutional assessment report development	LOA, TC Assessment Team, Course Instructors, eLearning
December 2016	Institutional Assessment Report and presentation due to CCI	LOA, TC Assessment Team

**Human/Fiscal Resources:** The human resources needed to implement the institutional assessment include TC assessment team faculty, director of eLearning, and LOA staff to design hybrid rubric training, collect student learning data, manage datasets, perform statistical analyses, and compose the institutional assessment report.

Course instructors in MATH-138, 141, and 143 will be asked to score project reports as part of course instruction. Additionally, instructors will participate in rubric training (6 hours) and re-calibration trainings (2-6 hours). Money will be set aside to pay part-time instructors for participation in rubric training. Some instructors will also be asked to participate in the second rubric scoring of the 30% of randomly selected student reports.

#### References

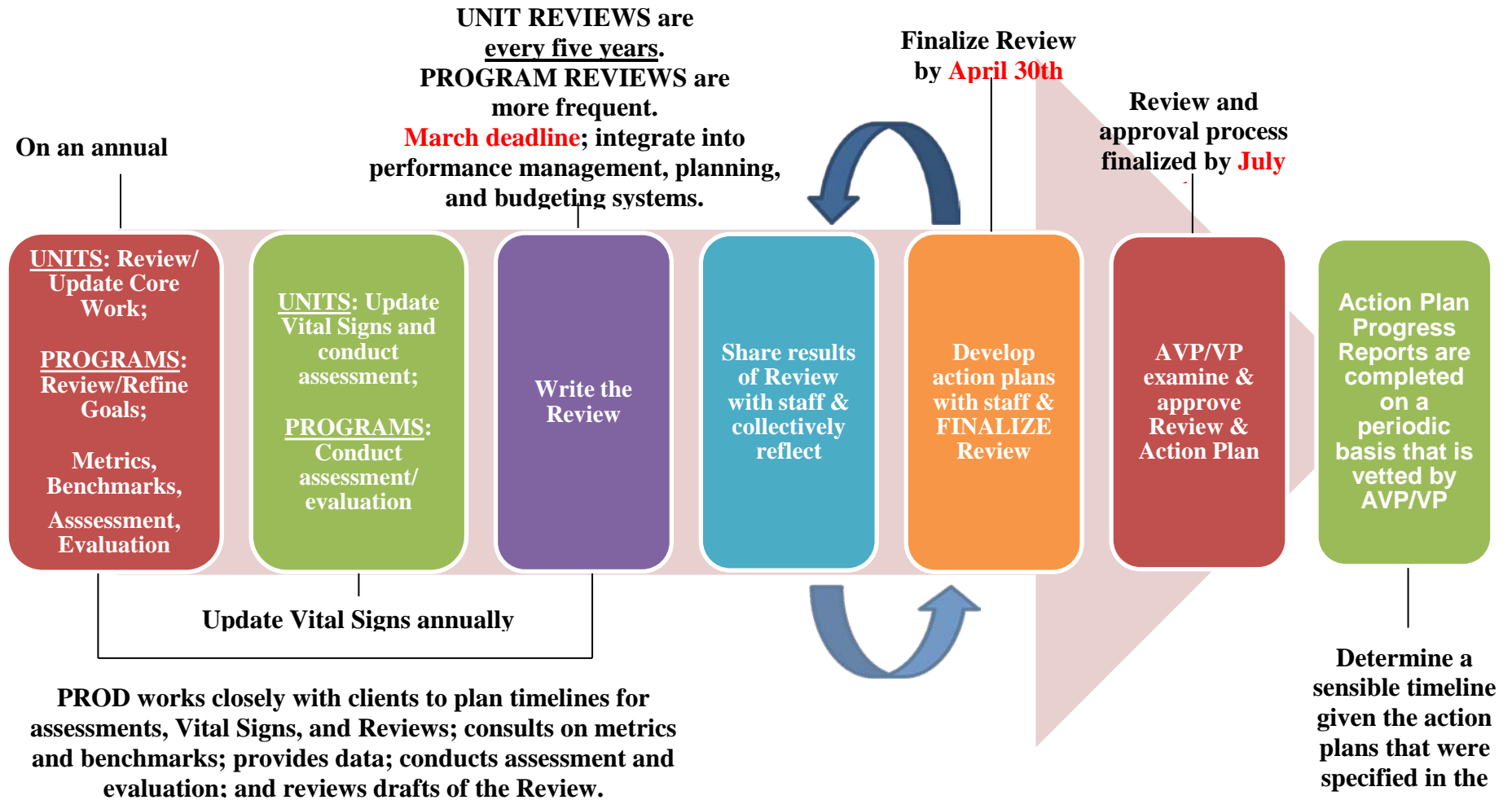
- Allen, M. J. (2006). *Assessing General Education Programs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Landis, R. & Koch, G. (1977). The measurement of observer agreement for categorical data. *Biometrics*, 33(1), 159-174.

2

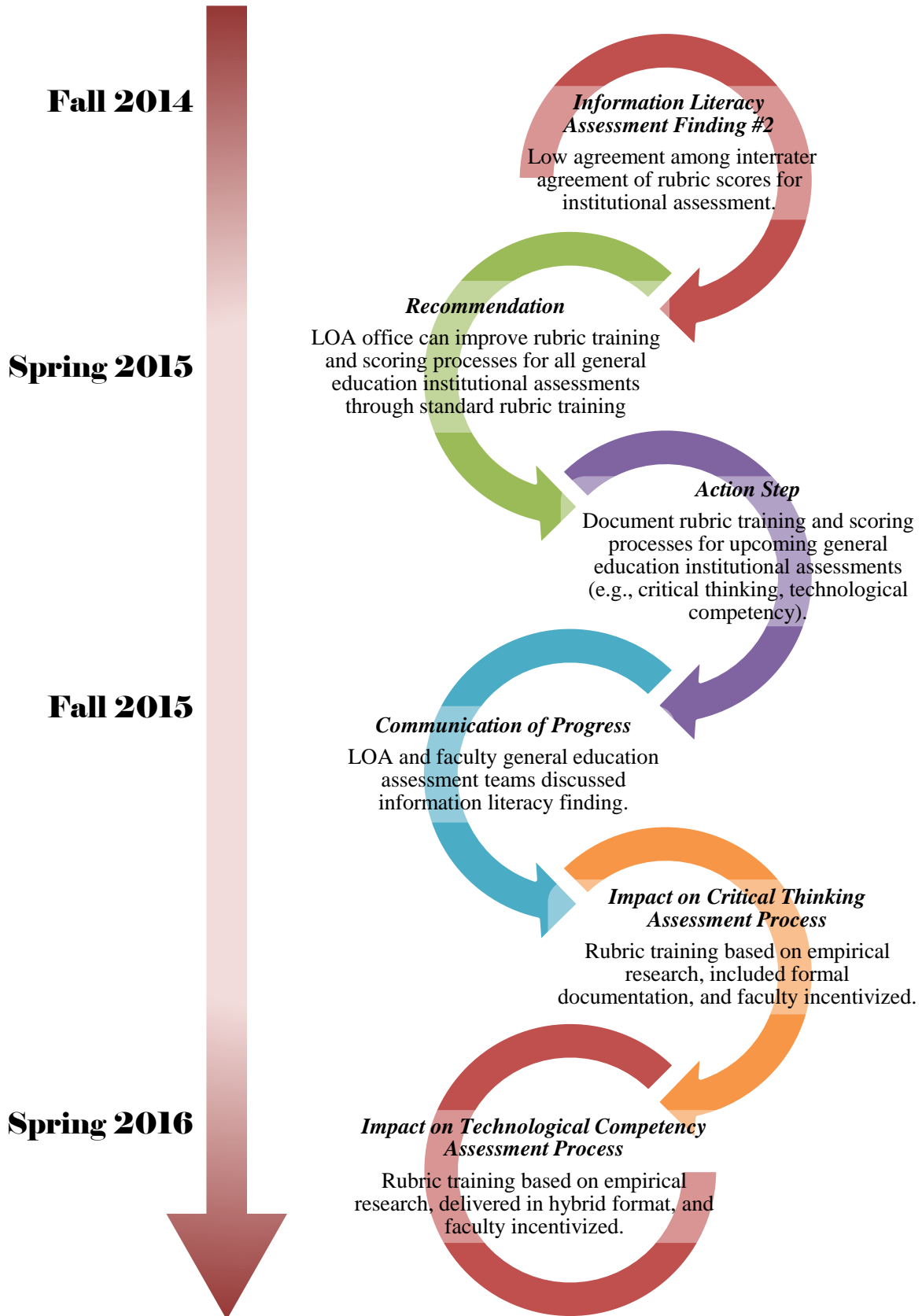
Modified: 10/29/2015



**Appendix D: Overview of the VPSS Unit/Program Review Process**



**Appendix E: Closing the Assessment Loop Activities Following General Education Goal Review**



**Montgomery College**



## Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.

## **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

### **Standard 7 – Institutional Assessment**

Institutional Assessment at Montgomery College is designed to evaluate the College from multiple perspectives. At the Presidential level, the college regularly examines the arrival, progression, and completion of its students through the "Score Card." As described on the President's website, "It provides actionable information to help the College assess and improve its programs focused on achievement and success for every student." Also, the college regularly assesses its progress on the college wide strategic plan.

Offices and academic areas are reviewed through the College Area Review (CAR) process, which began in 2002 reviewing all academic areas, special programs, WD&CE, and student services. For academic areas, the review process includes an examination of the program's curriculum, licensure and articulation agreements, advisory committee, resources efficiencies, and strengths and opportunities. In 2007, the process expanded to include all administrative units. Administrative units review goals, assess outcomes, and benchmark their services against similar functions at other organizations. For both academic and administrative areas, this report concludes with the development of recommendations to be implemented over the next five years.

Involvement in this process is widespread with various administrators, vice presidents and provosts, unit managers, unit directors, deans, faculty, and staff participating on a rotating basis. Academic program review reports are reviewed by the academic dean, CAR committee, respective Provost, and approved by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Administrative unit reports are reviewed by the appropriate leadership within the unit, the CAR committee, and finally approved by the appropriate Senior Vice President. The recommendations created through this process are tracked annually by the College Area Review Coordinator.

### **Standard 12 – General Education**

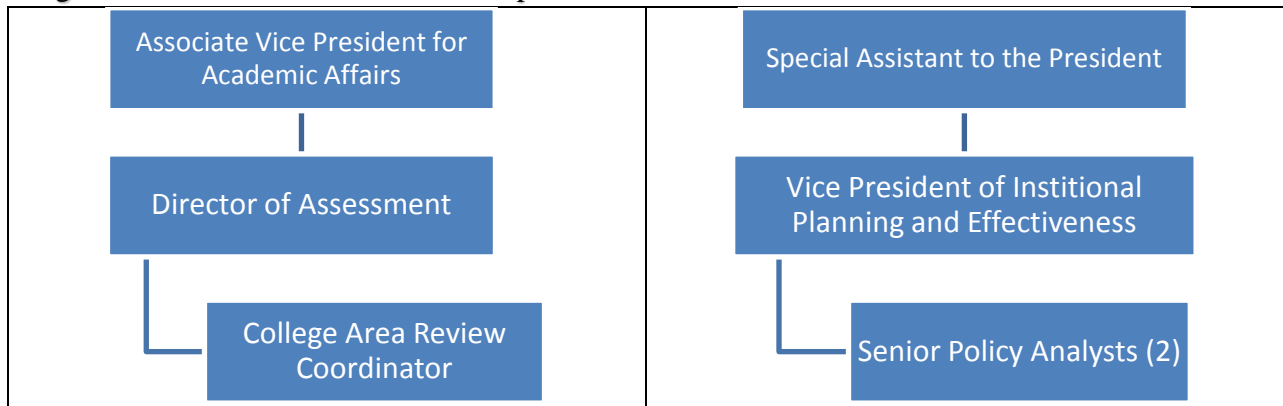
The current General Education program is comprised of five competencies, two areas of proficiency, and foundation areas. The competencies are 1) written and oral communication, 2) scientific and quantitative reasoning, 3) critical analysis and reasoning, 4) technology competencies, and 5) information literacy. The two areas of proficiency are arts and aesthetic awareness and personal and civic and social responsibility. Student learning outcomes assessment of general education competencies and proficiencies occurs annually with each year focusing on a specific distribution area (arts, humanities, behavioral and social services and natural sciences) or foundation component (English, health, mathematics and speech) area. Using previously developed assessment plans, faculty assess the general education courses using a common rubric developed by a collegewide assessment group an earlier date. After assessing

the courses, faculty review the results and develop plans for improving student learning using the results. This assessment process began in 2011.

**Standard 14 – Assessment of Student Learning**

Each academic program that awards a certificate or associates degree is assessed once every three years. In the assessment process, the program assesses at least three of its student learning outcomes. After completing the assessment, a report is produced and given to the Collegewide Assessment Team for review and feedback. The Collegewide Assessment Team is comprised of faculty representatives and a representative from the office of Institutional Research and Analysis, an instructional designer, and the assessment director.

**Organizational Structure for Leadership of Assessment Activities**



## Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, **detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure.** This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

Montgomery College assessment activities are guided by its mission and vision and its over-arching strategic plan known as the MC 2020. This strategic plan is anchored in the following themes: educational excellence, access, affordability, and success, economic development, community engagement, and assessment and institutional effectiveness. Within the Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness theme, there are two initiatives that relate to the focus of this report (student learning assessment): 1) assess and enhance the alignment of learning outcomes and program outcomes assessment with state and accrediting requirements and 2) enhance comprehensive program of assessment of student learning. The four changes in assessment activities described below align with the strategic initiatives and improve assessment at the college.

### 1. *Implementation of General Education Assessment*

Since 2011, the College has modified its General Education assessment process. The process has changed from assessing only highly enrolled courses taught on all three campuses to include all courses that have a General Education designation. Using the previously submitted assessment plan, faculty assess student attainment of General Education competencies using collegewide rubrics and embedded course assignments once every three years. After completing the assessment, faculty review the results and develop specific actions to improve student learning in their courses. For example, a chemistry course decided that a graphing component needed to be included in the laboratory component of the course. With an economics course, faculty planned to add additional opportunities for students to practice analyzing quantitative data. In addition to being used by individual courses, results from General Education assessment have been used by a college committee that examines student placement. Specifically, the committee reviewed assessment results by students' initial placement at the college to examine how they progressed after completing developmental courses. Also, the College Library uses Information Literacy results to examine student performance on Information Literacy and to see how to improve information literacy instruction provided by the library.

### 2. *Implementation of Student Learning Outcomes Program Assessment*

The college transitioned from course assessment to program assessment in 2012. Academic programs awarding an associate's degree or certificate assess their student learning outcomes once every three years. This is accomplished by each program developing and submitting an assessment plan that includes the measures to be assessed, copies of assessment instruments, and benchmarks for success. This plan is reviewed by the Collegewide Assessment Team, which gives feedback and suggestions for improvement. After the program receives the feedback, they collect their assessment data, review the results, and develop suggestions for improvement based on assessment results. The assessment report is turned into the Collegewide Assessment Team, which also gives feedback on the completed report. Many

of the planned actions based on assessment results have focused on eliminating the disconnect between the measures and the program's student learning outcomes. Other planned actions have been more specific such as incorporating reflection as part of a portfolio (Art), providing more specific examples of a technical concept (Computer Applications) or adding a new showing process (Dance). Several programs going through the process have concluded that they needed to modify or add program learning outcomes through the College's Curriculum Committee.

3. *Modification of College Area Review*

The College Area Review is a program review for both academic and administrative units. This process has changed since 2011 from a checklist to a self-study, narrative format. Some of the more recent changes to the CAR include academic units mapping their curriculum, benchmarking their program offerings and practices against similar programs, and obtaining student feedback regarding their experience in the program. The external reviewer was also reinstated as part of the review process. Inclusion of mapping learning outcomes to courses connects directly to assessment of student learning. Through the mapping process, programs can discover if they sufficiently addressed the learning outcomes within their courses. This is also used as a tool for creating the program assessment plan. By mapping the program's courses and student learning outcomes, programs can see where students would have the opportunity to be introduced to or master specific skills or information. This process has proven to be a valuable exercise. For example, this year one program decided that it needed to add a course requirement to insure that its majors would have the opportunity to acquire a student learning outcome.

The CAR culminates with the creation of recommendations for the next five years. The College Area Review Coordinator tracks the progress of those recommendations over a five period. CAR recommendations have documented the need for increased offerings of online courses and online educational resources, emphasized student learning outcomes, and highlighted greater use of technology for enhancements to teaching and learning. Annually, academic implemented recommendations are used to provide status for the Perkins Grant funding of career and technical programs.

4. *Hiring of the first Director of Assessment*

In 2014, the college hired its first Director of Assessment to lead and coordinate assessment. This role supervises the College Area Review Coordinator and assists with the work of the Collegewide Assessment Team. In addition to supervising the outcomes assessment and program review efforts, the director also focuses on being an advocate for the value of assessment.

Attached appendices:

- A. Sample newsletter from spring 2016
- B. Sample student learning outcomes program assessment report form



Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

**Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT REFLECTION FORM

Name of Program and Discipline :
Point of Contact(s) :
Dean :
Date:

### Section I: Assessment Progress from Previous Assessment

(N/A if this is your first Program Outcomes Assessment Reflection Form)

Student Learning Outcomes Assessed in Previous Cycle	Planned Improvements from Previous Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report	Update on Planned Actions <i>(Please indicate when, where, and how planned improvements were implemented)</i>

## Section II: Assessment Report – Current Assessment

### Student Learning Outcome:

<u>Origin of Assessment Measure</u>	<u>Methods of Assessment</u>	<u>Performance Standard</u>	<u>Analysis</u>
Please list any courses used for the assessment of the outcome or origin of assessment data if not from a course	Describe the type of assignment used. For example, did students write a paper or complete a test?	Define and explain acceptable level of student performance.	Present the findings of the analysis including the numbers participating and deemed acceptable.

**Discuss any strengths and opportunities for improvement based on the results from this outcome.**

--

<b>Based on assessment results for this outcome, what actions will be taken to improve student learning?</b>	<b>Who will be the contact person for each action?</b>
--	--




## WRAPPING UP THE ACADEMIC YEAR IN ASSESSMENT 2015-2016

Assessment at the College is ongoing, systematic, and inclusive. During this past academic year, faculty and staff in various academic programs and disciplines examined student learning in General Education or programs or evaluated their programs and certificates through the program review process. Here's summary information from their efforts:

<b>Program Assessment</b>	<b>General Education Assessment</b>	<b>Academic Program Review</b>
<i>9 programs assessed their program learning outcomes.</i>	<i>11 disciplines assessed student learning outcomes in over 40 courses.</i>	<i>34 programs and certificates and one WDCE non-credit program participated in the review process.</i>
<b>Top Themes from Action Plans:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide more opportunities for students to practice skills in the classroom</li> <li>• Revise assessment tools to better measure outcomes</li> <li>• Encourage students to use College resources such as the Writing, Reading, and Language Centers</li> </ul>		<b>Major Themes from Recommendations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement curricular changes by modifying or adding courses</li> <li>• Improve student advising and academic support</li> <li>• Increase online course offerings</li> <li>• Increase usage of online educational resources</li> </ul>

In addition to being used by the individual disciplines or programs for improvements, data from the assessment processes were shared to support college initiatives. Program review recommendations were used to inform the Perkins Grant Improvement Plan for career and technical education programs. General Education assessment results were shared with CAPDI to examine the differences in student performance based on initial college placement results. Also, the library explored General Education assessment results from the information literacy competency to inform their efforts with information literacy instruction.

Both assessment processes and the program review process were supported by their respective committees, which were comprised of representatives from across the College. The Collegewide Assessment Team met monthly to review and provide written feedback on General Education and Program Assessment reflection forms and assessment plans. The College Area Review Committee (program review) reviewed reports and recommendations for those areas participating in program review and submitted their comments to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs for further consideration. In addition, external peer reviewers submitted reports and recommendations for various programs participating in academic program review.

**Prince George's Community College**



## Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.

## Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Prince George's Community College (PGCC) has developed a comprehensive system to assess student learning that is organized, well documented, and has continued to improve since spring 2012. The system is founded on the existence of clear statements defining the skills, knowledge, and values that students are expected to acquire in their educational experiences at the College. These statements or learning outcomes, which are publicized in the College Catalog and in master course syllabi, establish well-defined, shared expectations for faculty, students, and the community. In doing so, the learning outcomes ensure consistency across the diversity of educational experiences offered at the College. They also provide the basis for measuring the quality of program and course offerings, as well as for developing targeted interventions for continuous improvement.

Prince George's Community College has identified three sets of learning outcomes for its students: course, program, and institutional learning outcomes. Course outcomes define the skills, knowledge, and values that students are expected to acquire upon completion of a course. Program outcomes specify the skills, knowledge, and values that students are expected to acquire upon completion of a program of study. The institutional learning outcomes encapsulate the foundational skills, knowledge, and values that every graduate of an associate's degree is expected to achieve. The College has identified six institutional learning outcomes, called the Student Core Competencies: 1. Communication, 2. Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning, 3. Critical Reasoning, 4. Information Literacy, 5. Culture, and 6. Ethics. The Student Core Competencies are specifically addressed in the General Education coursework and also appear throughout the curriculum at PGCC.

The hallmark of the assessment system at PGCC is the alignment of course outcomes to program outcomes and to the Student Core Competencies. As a result of these connections, every assignment, project, or activity completed in a program specific course is directly building the skills, knowledge, and values needed to be successful in that field of study. Similarly, every assignment, project, or activity completed in a General Education course—and in some program courses—contributes to developing the foundational skills, knowledge, and values expected from every graduate with an associate's degree. Appropriate connections from course outcomes to program outcomes and to the Student Core Competencies have been identified and mapped. Thus, the same evidence collected to measure the skills, knowledge, and values acquired in individual courses can be used to evaluate whether students in those courses are achieving specific program outcomes and the Student Core Competencies (see example of mapped connections - Appendix A).

Evidence of student learning is collected through embedded assessments that students have to complete as part of their regular coursework. These assessments, which are used in the calculation of student grades, are designed to provide direct demonstrations of students' skills, knowledge, and values. Frequently used assessments include multiple-choice exams, written assignments, artistic artifacts or performances, and clinical demonstrations. With the exception of multiple choice exams, assessments are evaluated and scored with the aid of rubrics (see

example of assessment rubric - Appendix B). All sections of the same course are required to use either the same assessment or variations of the same assessment. Data collected in the classroom are aggregated across sections and used to simultaneously measure student achievement of course outcomes, program outcomes, and the Student Core Competencies. These data are stored in an assessment management system, called Tk20, which provides multiple data reports easily accessible to faculty and administrators.

The Academic Affairs Assessment Committee (AAAC), primarily composed of faculty, is charged with overseeing the college-wide assessment process and evaluating the quality of assessment materials designed by department faculty. The AAAC is chaired by a full-time administrator, the Director of Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness, who works in the College's Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research (OPAIR). The Director communicates with deans, chairs, and faculty on upcoming assessment activities and helps coordinate professional development in assessment. Two Research Analysts assist the Director in maintaining the assessment management system (Tk20) and presenting assessment results to different audiences. The institutional leadership for assessment includes two additional layers, which help ensure effective communication and feedback: 1. the Assessment Coaches and Assistant Assessment Coaches; and 2. the Department Assessment Teams (DATs). The Coaches are faculty members with release time who assist with the design and deployment of assessment materials in each academic division, and provide assessment training to all faculty. The DATs are composed of two to three faculty members who coordinate data collection and the use of results within every department (see assessment organizational structure - Appendix C).

Prince George's Community College has a five-year cycle for completing the assessment of every program outcome and every Student Core Competency. Prior to the beginning of each cycle, faculty design an assessment plan for every program of study offered by their department. The assessment plan indicates which program outcome(s) will be assessed each semester along with the list of courses where those outcomes are addressed (see example of assessment plan - Appendix D). Whenever a department offers General Education courses such as English 1010, a second assessment plan is developed. This assessment plan lists one or more Student Core Competencies and the General Education courses where those Student Core Competencies are addressed. Thus, for example, the English Department has an assessment plan for addressing the English program outcomes and another one for addressing foundational skills such as communication and information literacy. Departments are expected to assess all courses in their assessment plan(s) during the five-year cycle.

For each course included in an assessment plan, faculty adhere to the following sequence: 1. Prior to assessing a course, faculty create assessment materials to measure student achievement of course outcomes and submit these materials for review to the Assessment Coaches and the AAAC; 2. The Assessment Coaches and the AAAC examine the materials to ensure that they are appropriately rigorous and reflect best practices for assessment; 3. Once the assessments are approved, faculty implement the assessment in the following semester. Data are then collected and entered into Tk20, allowing the College to store, track, analyze, and disseminate data to all stakeholders; 4. The semester following data collection, OPAIR analyzes the data and releases a



report of its findings; 5. Faculty discuss the findings and use preset performance criteria or benchmarks to determine whether an Action Plan needs to be developed to address any areas of concern; 6. When an Action Plan is needed, changes are implemented in the following semesters and the course is later reassessed (see Assessment Cycle - Appendix E).

The assessment data are publicly distributed every semester in the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR). An additional report showing student achievement of the Student Core Competencies is published every year. Assessment data are discussed within each department for course and program improvement, leading to changes in individual courses and in the content and structure of the curriculum. Furthermore, the data are also discussed by a General Education Taskforce, with representatives from the AAAC, charged with improving teaching and assessment of the Student Core Competencies. The College relies on a plethora of training guides, regular face-to-face training sessions, and a series of online assessment modules to ensure that all faculty are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to engage in the discussion and use of assessment findings.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

### **Process implementation**

The current assessment system at PGCC was first launched as a pilot in spring 2012. The 2011-2012 academic year was focused on finalizing the foundational elements of the system, including the completion of a curriculum mapping process, the acquisition and deployment of technology for storing and reporting student learning outcomes data, and the expansion of the organizational structure to support assessment. With these pieces in place, it was possible to pilot data collection with thirteen courses in the spring 2012 and implement the system more broadly the following fall.

Prior to launching the pilot, the Director of Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness guided the faculty in completing a curriculum-sequencing and mapping process, which had started the previous academic year. As part of this process, course sequences were identified for every associate's degree and certificate, delineating a clear progression in the student development of knowledge and skills. Furthermore, faculty completed a full review of the learning outcomes of each course and examined the broader purpose of that course within the curriculum. Every course was considered within the context of the academic program(s) it served and the institutional Student Core Competencies with which it connected. The end result of this mapping process was a tight alignment from course outcomes to program outcomes and to the Student Core Competencies. Consequently, course outcomes, program outcomes, and the Student Core Competencies could be assessed simultaneously.

Another key step in the implementation of the current assessment process was the purchase of an assessment management system for storing, tracking, and reporting assessment data in fall 2011. This system, called Tk20, allowed for the integration of data across different sections of the same course, and across different courses within the same program in order to measure student achievement of course and program learning outcomes. Furthermore, this system made it

possible to aggregate data from course embedded assessments in order to measure student achievement of the Student Course Competencies, the foundational skills, knowledge, and values that every graduate from an associate's degree should possess. With the aid of this system, faculty and administrators can easily access the data they need to improve individual courses and programs, while the College can readily meet its assessment reporting needs.

In order to facilitate ongoing changes in the curriculum, a streamlined process to review and adjust course and program outcomes was implemented through the Curriculum Committee. This expedited process opened the door to a continuous feedback and improvement loop: refining learning outcomes led to more accurate measurement of student learning, and vice versa, better data collection instruments and data analysis promoted further discussion and fine-tuning of learning outcomes. Over time, this process resulted in better alignment among the purpose of a course, the type of learning activities students were asked to engage in class and outside of the class, and how the effectiveness of those activities was measured.

An example of this process of continuous improvement can be found in Developmental English 0011. Faculty had decided to assess the course learning outcomes through a final exam that combined a multiple-choice component and a writing-based section. The assessment results for spring 2013 showed that students did poorly on the multiple choice section, which assessed students' ability to identify subjects, verbs, and correct forms of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs. Following the assessment, the Department determined that the root cause of poor student performance in the exam had to do with a lack of fit between the multiple choice part of the exam and the actual focus of class instruction. The course was designed as a writing course and most of the instruction was focused on teaching students how to write and apply their knowledge of sentence structure and grammar in writing, rather than how to identify whether parts of speech were used correctly. Discussing assessment results led the faculty to revise the course outcomes to better reflect the actual focus on writing instruction, while modifying the final exam to assess more accurately the quality of student writing.

To better support the work of continuous improvement at the department, division, and institutional levels, the organizational structure for assessment was modified and expanded in the summer of 2012. As part of the reorganization, two faculty members, called Assessment Coaches, were given release time in order to assist academic divisions with the creation and use of assessment materials and train faculty on assessment methods and best practices. The addition of the Assessment Coaches accelerated the implementation and expansion of the assessment system by encouraging greater faculty participation and familiarity with assessment. Thus, for example, the number of courses assessed jumped from 13 in spring 2012 to 38 in spring 2013, and to 44 in spring 2014, allowing for the collection of multiple measures of program learning outcomes and the Student Core Competencies.

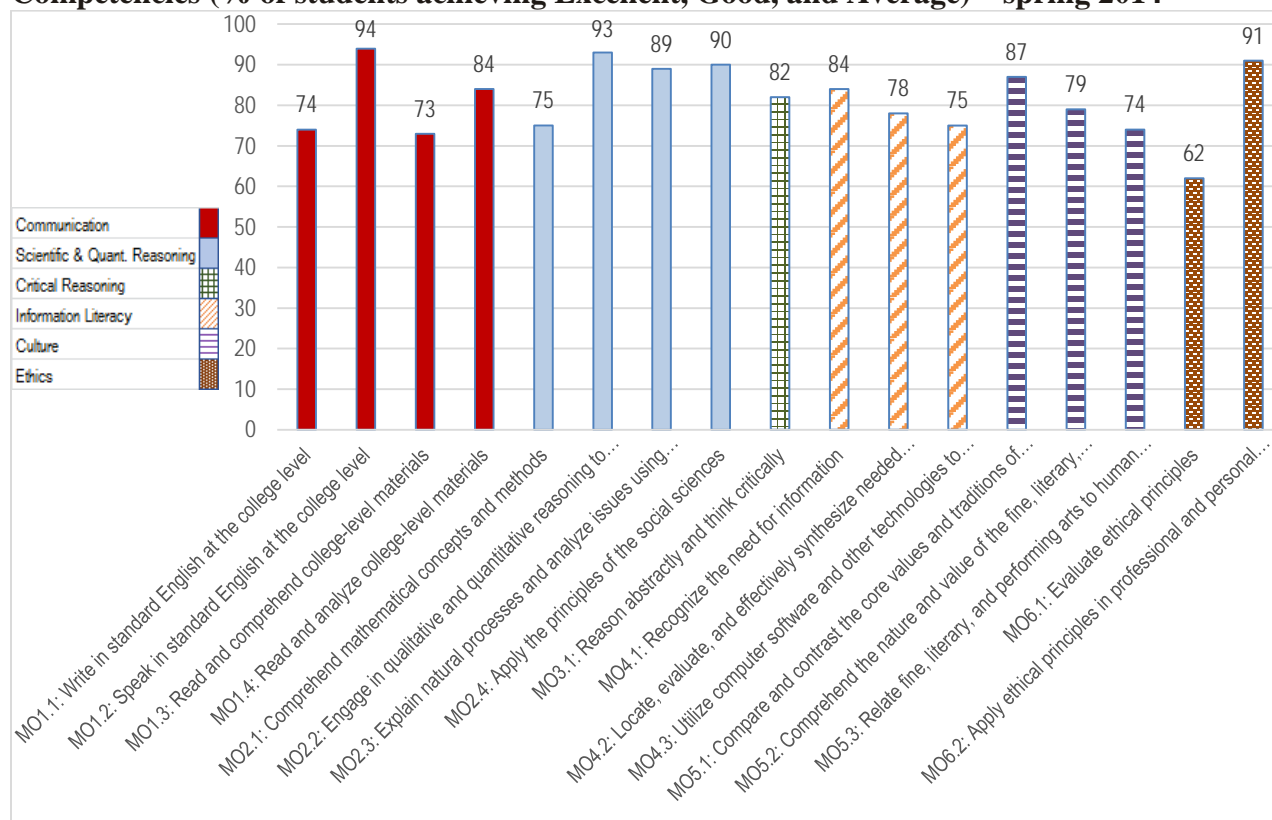
Since its inception, the current system to assess student learning has been tightly integrated into the institutional structure. For example, the Academic Affairs Assessment Committee (AAAC), which is responsible for overseeing the college-wide assessment process, is a standing committee of the Academic Council, the governing body for Academic Affairs. As such, two representatives from the AAAC—the Chair and a faculty member who serves as Vice-Chair—sit

at Academic Council and regularly update its members on the progress of assessment activities. Any proposed changes to the assessment system have to be vetted by the Council. Another example of integration of the assessment system into the institutional structure is its inclusion in the College's Strategic Plan. The 2011-2013 Strategic Plan listed the development of the College's system to assess student learning as one of the objectives to be accomplished by Academic Affairs, in connection with one of the College's Strategic Priorities. Given the presence of this objective in the Strategic Plan, strategic funds were allocated to support it, including funding for the acquisition and deployment of the College's assessment management system, Tk20.

### **Growth and continuous improvement**

As of spring 2016, eight semesters of data have been collected in addition to the pilot (fall 2012, spring 2013, fall 2013, spring 2014, fall 2014, spring 2015, fall 2015, and spring 2016). As such, the process has gone through an entire assessment cycle, with every program learning outcome assessed at least once and the six Student Core Competencies measured repeatedly in General Education courses and throughout the curriculum. In 2014, the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research created a "Report on the Student Core Competencies," which provided an overview of the foundational skills, knowledge, and values expected from every student who completes an associate's degree at the College. In order to facilitate measurement, each of the Student Core Competencies was broken up into more discrete skills, called measurable outcomes. The report presented the percentage of students achieving these measurable outcomes at the "Excellent," "Good," "Average," "Below Average," and "Unsatisfactory" levels. As the report shows, in all but one area 70% of students or higher were achieving at expected levels on the measurable outcomes associated with the Student Core Competencies (see Graph 1 below).

**Graph 1: Performance in Measurable Outcomes (MOs) related to the Student Core Competencies (% of students achieving Excellent, Good, and Average) – spring 2014**



Throughout the first assessment cycle (fall 2012 to spring 2016), over a third of the courses assessed each semester have been selected for closer examination followed by reassessment one year after the initial assessment. For example, faculty assessed History 1320 in spring 2015 and results showed that students struggled with course outcome 5, “Identify basic historical arguments in secondary sources.” Less than 56% achieved this outcome at the “Excellent” or “Good” levels. In fall 2015, the members of the Department Assessment Team, in consultation with the department chair and the faculty members who taught the course, created an Action Plan that focused on improving student performance on that particular course outcome. As part of the Action Plan, faculty members who were scheduled to teach the course in spring 2016 were asked to incorporate at least one “special teaching activity” that would provide students with focused practice on identifying historical arguments in secondary sources. Most of the faculty members incorporated changes in line with the request. When the course was reassessed in spring 2016, results showed that the percentage of students achieving course outcome 5 at the “Excellent” or “Good” levels increased to 66%.

Each semester, the Office of Planning Assessment and Institutional Research reports the results of every Action Plan implemented to improve student learning the previous semester. Results are published in a document called the Action Plan Success Report, which allows faculty to see if the changes introduced in their courses following the initial assessment produced the desired impact. The report is available to the entire PGCC community on the College’s intranet. See Table 1 below, which summarizes other examples of assessed courses, course outcomes needing improvements, corresponding action plans, and reassessment results.

**Table 1: Examples of Action Plan results for courses assessed in fall 2014 and reassessed in fall 2015**

Course	Course outcome(s) (COs) needing improvement	Action Plan	Action Plan results
RAD-1510: Patient Care and Education I	CO 2: Differentiate between the legal and ethical responsibilities of the radiographer.	Review assessment tool to allow students to verbalize differences listed in outcome; add essay questions to better assess outcome in place of multiple choice.	CO 2 increased 5%
RST-1531: Principles and Practices of Respiratory Therapy	CO 4: Identify indications and complications associated with the delivery of respiratory medications, chest physiotherapy and airway care to include airway devices and airway clearance.	After review of the multiple choice assessment, there were several questions related to this outcome which required modification because they were ambiguous. The plan also called for the incorporation of new teaching methods (flipping the classroom), with the aim of improving conceptual understanding.	CO 4 increased 14%
PSY-2070: Human Growth and Development	CO 1: Apply the concepts and major theoretical approaches to the study of life-span developmental psychology...  CO 2. Evaluate research methods used by developmental psychologists to study development...  CO 3. Distinguish the differences between the influence of heredity, environmental context, and culture on one's physical, cognitive, psychosocial and moral development.  CO 4. Explain issues related to development across the life span.  CO 5. Apply ethical psychological principles to issues related to development across the life span.  CO 6. Use information literacy skills to produce individual/group papers, projects and presentations.	Results from the initial assessment showed that the data skewed extremely high for every course outcome. This meant that the assessment was not accurately distinguishing between different levels of performance. When discussing the assessment results, faculty concluded that part of the problem was that the rubric had not been consistently applied across all sections of the course.  The goal of the Action Plan was to bring greater consistency to the manner in which the rubric was applied in order to produce more accurate and nuanced data. If the Action Plan was successful, the overall percentage of students performing at the "Excellent," "Good," or "Average" levels was expected to decrease, as there would be higher percentages of students performing at other levels. This would provide a more accurate representation of student performance, which would allow faculty to identify and address areas of concerns, while clarifying expectations for students.	CO 1 decreased 1%  CO 2 decreased 13%  CO 3 decreased 12%  CO 4 decreased 10%  CO 5 decreased 4%  CO 6 decreased 17%
DVE-0009: Fundamental Language Skills	1. Identify the subject and the verb(s) in a sentence.  2. Identify the parts of speech in a sentence.  3. Identify and use correct verb tense.	Revise the specific questions to match the level of difficulty with the level of instruction for which the course is designed. Rewording some of the questions would help the instructors clearly understand what the students have learned, and then plan instruction for specific areas of weakness.	CO 1 increased 25%  CO 2 increased 38%  CO 3 increased 7%

Although these Action Plans are focused on improving performance in the classroom, the clear alignment of course outcomes to program outcomes and to the Student Core Competencies mean that changes implemented at the course level can have a significantly broader impact. Beyond measuring student achievement every semester, the assessment system is aimed at capturing students' skill development over time and building a better understanding of how small changes in each course can lead to larger aggregate changes in learning at the program and institutional levels.

While aiming at improving teaching and learning, the assessment system has itself undergone a process of continuous improvement. The Director of Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness, in collaboration with staff in the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research, and the Assessment Coaches work continuously to improve assessment processes and address faculty and staff concerns. These incremental improvements are reflected in annual updates to the Assessment Handbook, which compiles the policies and procedures to conduct assessment of student learning at PGCC. Furthermore, the organizational structure has also evolved to ensure that faculty has the appropriate support to engage in the assessment process. These improvements have included additional investments by the College to increase the release time assigned to the Assessment Coaches and, most recently, the creation of a new layer of support for faculty, the Assistant Assessment Coaches (one per academic division). In addition, efforts have been made to fully incorporate every department in the assessment process, resulting in further integration of the assessment system into the institutional structure.

An example of such integration has been the incorporation of Developmental Math courses into the regular assessment process. When the College began implementing the institution-wide assessment process, the developmental math course sequence was going through a complete redesign. The redesign involved a shift in the mode of instruction from lecture-based and faculty-paced to computer-based and student-paced (self-pacing). This shift created challenges for assessment because it was difficult to decide which homework assignment, quiz, or test should be used to assess the course learning outcomes in courses where students controlled their own pace. Staff from the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research met with the Math Department Chair and a developmental math faculty member to find an appropriate solution.

To address the issue of self-pacing, each individual post-test was treated as a separate assessment. This made it possible to capture evidence of student learning for all students no matter which module they were on in the class. Given her higher level of access to the Math software platform used in the redesigned courses, the Math Department Chair took on the responsibility for compiling all the data and calculating the student performance for each course outcome. The files were then sent to the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research, which applied the correct format so that the college-wide assessment management system, Tk20, could process the data. With this method of assessment, it was possible to identify which math concepts students were becoming proficient at and which modules tended to cause a bottleneck for students and impede their progression and successful completion of the course. Starting in fall 2016, the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research will be

sharing the results with the developmental math faculty and assist them in developing Action Plans to improve the student learning in these courses and allow for faster transition into college-level courses. Since approximately 60% of incoming students at PGCC are placed every fall into Developmental Math—the percentage was 61% or 1,926 students in fall 2015—these changes have the potential of having a positive impact on thousands of students.

### **Evaluation and further change**

In spring 2015, as the College approached the end of its first assessment cycle, the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research collaborated with the Assessment Coaches in conducting a thorough evaluation of the assessment process itself. The evaluation was carried out in three stages. The first stage consisted of an online survey to examine faculty's views about their knowledge of assessment, their involvement in the process, the availability of support, and the impact of assessment. There were 142 survey respondents, 82% of whom were full-time faculty. The second stage focused on meetings with department chairs to discuss the resources needed to conduct assessment, their communication strategies around assessment policies and deadlines, and their approaches to facilitate the interpretation and use of data. Finally, the third stage included twelve in-depth interviews with faculty with different roles in the assessment process aimed at capturing their feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the assessment system. A special faculty taskforce was formed in spring 2016 to address the evaluation findings and develop recommendations for improving the assessment process.

The faculty taskforce, together with the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research, and the Assessment Coaches put forward three main recommendations, which were approved by the Academic Affairs Assessment Committee and the Academic Council in spring 2016. Implementation of these recommendations began in late spring 2016 and will continue through the 2016-2017 academic year. Overall, these changes will contribute to ensuring the sustainability of the assessment process by allowing departments to become more strategic in the use of time and resources devoted to assessment, while recognizing outstanding assessment work among the faculty.

The first and second recommendations centered on the timeline and the volume of assessment work. The first recommendation was to streamline department assessment plans with the goal of reducing the assessment load for departments, while increasing the available time and resources for introducing and measuring classroom improvements. In order to achieve this goal, the assessment cycle was extended from four to five years, which gives additional time to departments to assess every program outcome and the Student Core Competencies associated with their disciplinary fields. All departments have already revised their assessment plans in line with the new five-year cycle leading to a reduction in the number of courses to be assessed per semester. Furthermore, moving forward, departments are requested to set benchmarks for expected student performance in each course and use those benchmarks to evaluate the need for an Action Plan and immediate reassessment. The second recommendation was to introduce

greater flexibility in the creation and implementation of Action Plans. Departments may now take more than one semester to implement an Action Plan. This will allow departments to develop and implement larger-scale changes in their programs and courses before they are due for reassessment.

The third recommendation was made in response to the widely perceived need for stronger recognition of the time and effort contributed by faculty actively involved in shepherding the assessment process. The proposed changes included the introduction of annual assessment awards for outstanding commitment and excellence in assessment work. In addition, a clear path will be established for those who start in the position of Department Assessment Team member and might be interested in becoming future Assistant Assessment Coaches or Assessment Coaches. This will entail clarifying expectations in terms of professional development and increasing involvement in assessment work. Similarly, opportunities for further recognition will be available for faculty who attend the Academic Affairs Assessment Committee meetings and contribute as Peer Reviewers to the evaluation of the quality of assessment materials.



## Appendix A – Example of mapped connections

This is a section of the Master Course Syllabus for CJT 2570 – Police Management. The Master Course Syllabus includes a matrix showing two sets of mapped connections:

- How course outcomes are connected with program outcomes for the Criminal Justice program (CRJU.AAS).
- How course outcomes are connected to three Student Core Competencies: Communication, Critical Reasoning, and Information Literacy. To facilitate measurement, these Student Core Competencies are broken up into more discrete skills called measurable outcomes.

### **COURSE OUTCOMES:**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

Course Outcomes	Program Name: CRJU.AAS	Measurable Outcome	Planned Assessment
1 Analyze the foundations of law enforcement administration in the United States.	1	1.3, 1.4	Assignments, quizzes and exams
2 Discuss the theoretical and practical aspects of organization and leadership in law enforcement agencies.	3	1.4, 3.1	Assignments, analytical essay, quizzes and exams
3 Evaluate the management of law enforcement agencies, including communications, union relations and budgets.	3	4.1, 4.2	Assignments, quizzes and exams
4 Analyze organizational and legal issues within law enforcement agencies.	4	4.1, 4.2	Assignments, analytical essay, quizzes and exams

### **Program/Certificate Name: Criminal Justice (CRJU.AAS)**

#### **Program Outcomes:**

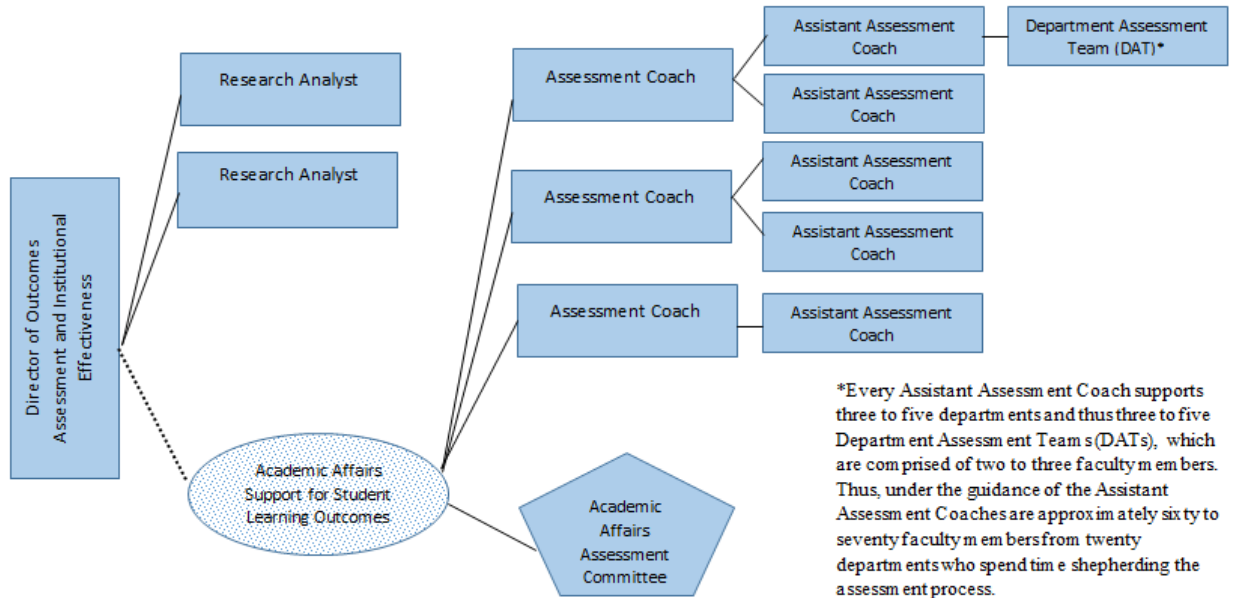
1. Categorize the history of the criminal justice, courts and corrections systems in the United States.
2. Analyze the United States criminal justice system, criminal laws and the rules of evidence.
3. Apply basic theories of police operations and community-oriented policing.
4. Apply the critical thinking skills needed for appropriate ethical decision-making in law enforcement-related fields.
5. Discuss the appropriate skills needed in communication, observation, investigation, evaluation and personal safety in law enforcement situations.
6. Analyze appropriate professional standards, ethics and leadership skills.

## Appendix B – Example of assessment rubric

This is a rubric designed for the assessment of PAR 1510: Introduction to Law for the Paralegal. The rubric was used for assessing the course in spring 2016.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory	Course Outcomes
<b>Domain</b>						
Describe the roles, job duties, and career opportunities of paralegals within the American legal system	Points: - 24 - 25	Points: 21 - 22	Points: 18 - 19	Points: 16 - 17	Points: 13- 14	1
	All roles, duties and opportunities are described.	All but one role, duty or opportunity are described	Half of all roles, duties and opportunities are described.	Only one role, duty or opportunity is described.	No roles, duties or opportunities are described.	
Summarize the key principles of substantive and procedural law involved in the work of paralegals.	Points: 24 - 25	Points: 21- 22	Points: 18 - 19	Points: 16 - 17	Points: 13 - 14	2
	All relevant principles of substantive and procedural law are summarized	All but one relevant principle of substantive and procedural law are summarized.	Half of all relevant principles of substantive and procedural law are summarized.	Only one relevant principle of substantive or procedural law is summarized.	No relevant principles of substantive or procedural law are summarized.	
Describe the relationship between the American court system and the precedents derived from various primary and secondary sources of law.	Points: 24 - 25	Points: 21- 22	Points: 18 - 19	Points: 16-17	Points: 13 - 14	3
	All relationships between courts and precedents derived from primary and secondary sources of law are correctly described.	All but one relationship between courts and precedents derived from primary and secondary sources of law are correctly described.	Half of all relationships between courts and precedents derived from primary and secondary sources of law are correctly described.	Only one relationship between courts and precedents derived from primary and secondary sources of law is correctly described.	No relationships between courts and precedents derived from primary and secondary sources of law are described.	
Explain the elements of and ethical limitations upon the roles of paralegals in each stage of litigation as well as in transactional laws.	Points: 24- 25	Points: 21 - 22	Points: 18 - 19	Points: 16-17	Points: 13 - 14	4
	All relevant elements of and ethical limitations upon the roles of paralegals are explained	All but one of the relevant elements of and ethical limitations upon the roles of paralegals are explained.	Half of all relevant elements of and ethical limitations upon the roles of paralegals are explained.	Only one element of or ethical limitation upon the role of paralegals is explained.	No relevant elements of or ethical limitations upon the role of paralegals is explained.	

## Appendix C – Assessment organizational structure



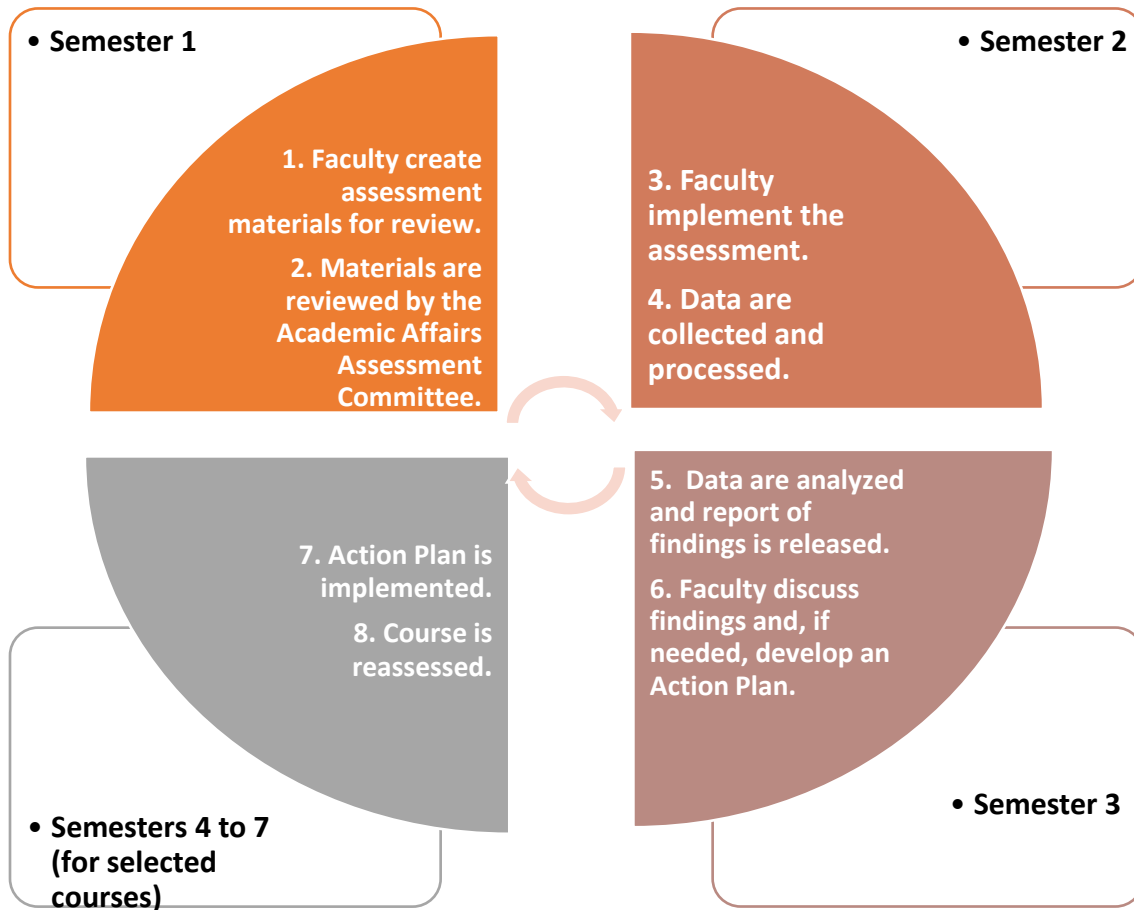
\*Every Assistant Assessment Coach supports three to five departments and thus three to five Department Assessment Teams (DATs), which are comprised of two to three faculty members. Thus, under the guidance of the Assistant Assessment Coaches are approximately sixty to seventy faculty members from twenty departments who spend time shepherding the assessment process.

## Appendix D – Example of assessment plan

This is a section of the assessment plan for the Medical Assisting program (MAS.AAS). Some semesters are left blank for potential reassessments.

Semester of Initial Assessment	Program Outcomes to be Assessed (include text and number)	Course(s)
Spring 2017		
Fall 2017	2.Utilize medical terminology as related to body functions; 3.Perform administrative functions in an outpatient setting; 5.Describe the implications of health law in the clinical setting;	MAS 2030-Pharmacology for Medical Assistants
Spring 2018	2.Utilize medical terminology as related to body functions; 4.Perform clinical functions/procedures in the outpatient setting; 6. Demonstrate the standards of care for the medical assisting profession.	MAS 2050-Clinical Procedures II
Fall 2018		
Spring 2019		
Fall 2019	1.Demonstrate professional and therapeutic communication skills; 3.Perform administrative functions in an outpatient setting; 5.Describe the implications of health law in the clinical setting;	MAS 2010-Administrative Medical Assisting
Spring 2020	1.Demonstrate professional and therapeutic communication skills; 2.Utilize medical terminology as related to body functions; 3.Perform administrative functions in an outpatient setting; 4.Perform clinical functions/procedures in the outpatient setting; 5.Describe the implications of health law in the clinical setting; 6. Demonstrate the standards of care for the medical assisting profession.	MAS 2040 Professional Seminar (Capstone)

## Appendix E – Assessment Cycle



Five-year cycle: This sequence represents the path each course goes through for all the courses needed to address program outcomes and the Student Core Competencies. During the five-year cycle, all program outcomes and the six Student Core Competencies are assessed at least once.

**Wor-Wic Community College**

## **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

### **Institutional Assessment**

Assessment is conducted at three levels of the College: institution (service departments, general education, and continuing education and workforce development division), academic program and course. Department heads, in consultation with their faculty, divisional dean and program advisory committees (PAC), are responsible for the assessment of academic programs. Course coordinators, in consultation with faculty who teach the courses (full- and part-time) and their department heads, are responsible for assessing the courses they coordinate. The senior vice president for academic affairs, the director of assessment and members of the assessment committee provide final oversight for program- and course-level assessment processes. To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of College processes, all assessment information is housed in the College's assessment management system, TracDat.

The Assessment Committee is comprised of the following individuals: four faculty representatives (two each from the occupational and the general education divisions); five administrative staff representatives [one each from student services, administrative services, continuing education and workforce development, the director of institutional research and planning (who is also a member of the institutional affairs division), and the director of the media center]; the director of assessment (chair); and the senior vice president for academic affairs (ex-officio). Faculty members hold a two year term with one faculty member from each division rotating off the Committee every year.

Wor-Wic's assessment process is evaluated by the director of assessment at the close of each annual and five-year comprehensive assessment cycle. Department, program and course reviews are evaluated by the director of assessment using rubrics created by the assessment committee. Results of the rubrics are shared with the assessment committee and the senior vice president for academic affairs to inform them of the state of assessment and to help identify deficiencies in the process that need to be addressed.

Results and decisions based on assessment are distributed to all employees through presentations at various employee meetings, articles in the employee newsletter and postings on the College website.

### **General Education**

Institutional assessment of General Education Objectives (GEOs) uses both direct and indirect methods. Currently, the primary direct methods are the Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) and the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP). Administration of the SAILS assessment was completed by the end of fiscal year 2016. SAILS

will be re-administered in fiscal year 2019. CAAP modules, Critical Thinking and Science and Reading and Writing will be administered in fiscal years 2017 and 2018 respectively.

Indirect measures of the GEOs consist of feedback from multiple surveys, both internally and commercially created. The college annually contacts graduates for their personal assessment of how well the College helped them to acquire general education skills. In addition, by permission of the graduates, their employers are also contacted annually for their assessment of their employees' general education skills.

At the program level, the primary means of assessment for six of the GEOs (1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7) are CAAP and SAILS, with results disaggregated by major. In addition, results on the final essay for ENG 101 are disaggregated by major and used as a means of assessment for two GEOs (1 and 7). This allows for the efficient use of one means of assessment to serve multiple purposes. Each program also has unique means of assessment embedded in program courses that measure the GEOs such as select comprehensive final exam results, rubrics to grade various assignments and evaluations from related field experience (RFE) courses. These assessments allow individual academic programs to draw some conclusions about their students' ability to demonstrate these skills, but they make comparisons to other programs difficult and the establishment of institutional benchmarks impossible.

At the course level, ENG 101 final essay (required by all students) and select results on a number of common comprehensive final exams and common scoring rubrics are also included. These include a persuasive speech scoring rubric in Fundamentals of Oral Communication (SPH 101) to measure GEO 9 (Demonstrate a command of oral communication that is accurate, ethical and audience-centered.); a course objective pass rate on the ENG 151 final exam to measure GEO 3 (Analyze and/or evaluate texts within and across disciplines.); a course objective pass rate on the Fundamentals of Biology (BIO 101) final exam to measure GEO 6 (Apply the process of scientific inquiry); and a course objective pass rate on Introduction to Sociology (SOC 101) final exam to measure GEO 5 (Identify the influences of a variety of cultural contexts on social interactions and demonstrate civic engagement with the College and local community).

In FY 2015, the College approved a revision of its general educational objectives (GEOs). This was a four-year project that began in 2010 to revise GEO language to be more student-centered and, with the identification of sub-skills, to further clarify expected student learning outcomes. In addition, the number of objectives increased from eight to nine. **The new GEOs are listed in Part II of this document under FY 2015.**

The General Education Assessment Committee is chaired by the director of assessment and consists of eight full-time faculty members (four each from the general education and occupational education divisions of the College).

### **Five-Year Comprehensive Reviews**

As part of Wor-Wic's assessment process, academic programs and service departments conduct a comprehensive review. In fiscal year 2017, the College's next cycle of five-year comprehensive reviews begin. The comprehensive review has been revised to include additional items for ease of organization and reporting, yet, a current profile of the department or program,



major changes and aspirations, budgetary needs and an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, etc. remain a central feature of the review process. Department goals, means of assessment and benchmarks are created and/or revised based on a review of data and other related information.

Department heads and directors are responsible for leading the review process with assistance from faculty workgroups and departmental employees and in consultation with the divisional dean or vice president. The appropriate dean or vice president reviews the report and provides written feedback.

### **Program and Course-Level Assessment**

Assessment reporting is conducted annually by service departments and academic programs. Program-level assessment cycles end June 30 each fiscal year and new action plans are developed July 1. At the program level, the direct means of assessment are primarily derived from course-embedded measures, such as the final examination pass rate by objective for courses related to the program learning goal. Final examinations are standardized for all course sections. In addition, occupational programs have a Related Field Experience (RFE) capstone course requirement and frequently use projects and employer or instructor evaluations of the students as means of assessment. Allied health programs use first-time licensure or certification examination pass rates. Analysis of program-level data might result in new or revised goals, means of assessment, benchmarks and action plans. Reports of the plan are created and submitted by department heads, departmental employees and faculty at the beginning of the fall semester to the appropriate dean or vice president for review.

At the course level, credit courses are assessed annually. Course coordinators collect final exam data at the end of the spring semester and discuss and analyze their results with other faculty who teach the course. Results are used to determine student achievement of the course objectives and guide curriculum and teaching revisions.

#### **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

Assessment of student learning is well-integrated into the institutional culture, as assessment is now embedded as routine practice at Wor-Wic. Relevant stakeholders in the assessment process are committed to the philosophy of continuous improvement and the use of assessment results to inform improvements, budgeting and planning.

### **Summary of Modifications and Adjustments to Assessment Plan/Activities since 2011 SLOAR Report**

#### **Fiscal Year 2012**

1. To increase employee awareness, assessment outcomes were presented to administrative council, faculty council and the student affairs division in 2012. A presentation of assessment outcomes was also incorporated into new employee orientation starting in the fall of 2012.
2. Fundamentals of Biology (BIO 101): Course objectives two, six, and seven did not meet the 70 percent pass rate benchmark. The course coordinator instituted an action plan to add more visual aids and active learning techniques to reinforce the concepts covered by these objectives and edit related final exam questions to ensure they appropriately measured the course objectives. The results from FY 2013 demonstrated that all three objectives improved. Objective two improved from 68 percent to 74 percent, objective six from 65 percent to 72 percent, and objective seven from 66 percent to 69 percent. The visual aids and active learning techniques were retained as a permanent part of the course.
3. Radiologic technology program students did not meet the 80 percent benchmark for L-spine and hip clinical tests, as only 69 percent of the students passed. The clinical instructors implemented an action plan to require practice simulations with students to better prepare them for the clinical exams. In the subsequent year, 97 percent of the students passed the L-spine and hip clinical tests, a remarkable improvement. The practice simulations were retained as a permanent program requirement.
4. The College started offering combined Basic Writing (ENG 096, upper-level developmental English) and Fundamentals of English I (ENG 101) courses in FY 2012. This decision was guided by data that indicated that students who were required to take developmental English courses often did not complete their program of study, impacting the College's success and retention rates. As a result, faculty who teach these courses collaborated to create the combined English 096/101 courses that allow students who need both courses to complete them in one semester rather than two.

### **Fiscal Year 2013**

1. Beginning FY 2013, the director of assessment became a signatory on the curriculum approval forms to ensure decisions about curricular modifications and additions including general education assessment considerations.
2. Results from the 2013 employee satisfaction survey showed an increase in assessment awareness, with 77 percent of employees agreeing that they were aware of students' performance on general education assessment.
3. Additional means of assessments or MOAs were included to measure GEOs 1, 3, 5, 6, and 7. These were:
  - a. Fundamentals of Oral Communication (SPH 101) – Persuasive Speech rubric results as a measure of GEO 1
  - b. Fundamentals of English II (ENG 151) – Final exam results as a measure of GEO 3
  - c. Introduction to Sociology (SOC 101) – Final exam results as a measure of GEO 5
  - d. Fundamentals of Biology (BIO 101) and Environmental Science (ENV 101) – Final exam results as a measure of GEO 6
  - e. Fundamentals of College Study (SDV 100) – Media Center Information Literacy Quiz as a measure of GEO 7

4. The response to assessment results for GEO 5 (Evaluate individual, societal, and cultural relationships) is another example of how the College used assessment results for improvement. The means of assessment is the pass rate on specific questions on the SDV 100 final exam that are tied to one of the course objectives (Identify and recognize the impact of diversity and globalization and their impact on personal and work relationships). The results of this measure have varied greatly since it was first used in FY 2009, sometimes meeting the benchmark but sometimes falling far short. The results in fall of 2012 were so low (33 percent) that immediate action was taken to try to improve the assessment tool by editing the final exam for both the content and the number of questions measuring the objective. In the spring of 2013, the pass rate improved to 74 percent.
5. Results for FY 2012 in Introduction to Early Childhood Education (EDU 101) showed none of the objectives of the course met the benchmark. The course coordinator implemented an action plan that included changing the course text and significantly revising the final exam. For FY 2013, the results improved as only one of seven objectives did not meet the benchmark. The new text and exam were adopted as permanent course changes.

## **Fiscal Year 2014**

1. The assessment committee approved additional revisions to the College's assessment plan. These revisions included additions to Section V: Assessing Assessment, edits to language for the budgeting section of the assessment plan, additional language for service departments and academic program areas, and courses. These revisions include: requiring written feedback from the deans and vice-presidents included in the college's assessment management system, requiring midyear progress reports for action plans that have reportable progress and a 70 percent minimum pass rate by objective at the academic course level. Related to budgeting, changes include a timeline for completion of annual assessment and the budgeting process, the use of Colleague for budget input and budget requests for new positions.
2. Revisions were made to the Five-Year Academic Program Review guidelines that included adding the percent of distant education courses, percent of students taught by full-time faculty, percent of credit hours taught by full-time faculty and grade distributions by 100 and 200 – level courses. Additional revisions included a section on credit hour and GEO compliance and the elimination of redundancies between sections.
3. Based on FY 2013 – 2014 College Algebra and Trigonometry (MTH 154) developmental math completers and college ready students data, the rate for developmental completers dropped 11 percentage points to 74 percent, while the rate for college-ready students increased by 7 percent to 91 percent. Moreover, the difference between the college-ready and developmental populations was the largest within a five-year period. MTH 154 and Intermediate Algebra (MTH 099) faculty addressed the disparity in the success of MTH 154 students when comparing developmental completers and college ready students. In MTH 099, the number of tests were reduced from six to three, requiring students to begin mastering and retaining larger amounts of content in preparation for a similar testing environment in MTH 154. The browser was also locked down during testing to ensure students were not able to seek assistance outside the

MyLabsPlus environment. Low value skill checks were incorporated into every class meeting to encourage attendance, increase student engagement with the material while also regularly assessing content mastery. Finally, MTH 154 instructors identified specific skill weaknesses, such as solving equations with fractions. These skills were specifically targeted in the MTH 099 curriculum beginning this fiscal year.

## **Fiscal Year 2015**

1. In FY 2010 the general education assessment committee began the task of revising the GEO language to be more student-centered and, with the identification of sub-skills, to further clarify expected student learning outcomes. The final revisions for nine general education objectives were approved in FY 2015 by a faculty vote. The revised GEO language, without sub-skills, are:
  - 1) Writing – Express ideas effectively through written text.
  - 2) Speaking – Demonstrate a command of oral communication that is accurate, ethical and audience-centered.
  - 3) Reading – Analyze and/or evaluate texts within and across disciplines.
  - 4) Critical Thinking – Apply critical analysis and reasoning skills to evaluate evidence and draw conclusions.
  - 5) Information Literacy – Access, evaluate, and appropriately use information and technology to accomplish tasks and communicate ideas.
  - 6) Quantitative Reasoning – Use and apply quantitative concepts and methods to calculate and interpret numerical problems.
  - 7) Scientific Reasoning – Apply the process of scientific inquiry and analysis.
  - 8) Diversity – Identify the influences of a variety of cultural contexts on social interactions and demonstrate civic engagement with the College and local community.
  - 9) Ethics – Recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings and consider the consequences of alternative actions.

Recognizing a need to better align with general education objectives, the General Studies department will similarly revise their goals to mirror the new GEOs in FY 2016.

2. One direct means of assessment for the newly revised GEO 1 (Express ideas through written text) is the rubric for the ENG 101 Final Essay. A trend developed with three rubric criteria that consistently did not meet the benchmark in FY 2012 and 2013. Course coordinators for ENG 101 developed formal action plans to improve results in both years. ENG 101 coordinators restructured lesson plans and assignments to improve student performance in specific areas of the writing assignment: refutation, in-text citations, and citation pages. Results from FY 2013 and FY 2014 showed that students still struggled in these areas. This led to a review of the rubric used to measure these skills. It was determined that the existing rubric descriptors were unclear and categories no longer reflected the modified learning outcomes. So an action plan was created to revise the rubric criteria by increasing the number of categories and providing better descriptions. Fiscal year 2015 results from the new rubric showed the benchmark had been met in all but one of the criterion, In-Text Citations. Course coordinators will introduce literacy activities that reinforce introduce skills and more complex sub-skills as well as expand the drafting requirement to all essays. Results from these interventions will continue to be analyzed to determine if the benchmark is met for FY 2016.
3. The College’s public website was revised to only include assessment-related content that is valuable to an external audience. Three items were revised and currently remain on the public

assessment web page: 1) the Assessment Plan, 2) the academic program learning outcomes, and 3) the general education assessment results. A statement of the purpose of assessment was written and posted to the public site. The Assessment Committee will revisit the topic of including additional assessment items to the public website such as dashboards, committee membership or info graphics in FY 2016. Assessment content that was moved to the College's internal Assessment Portal Page was populated with links to the College's final exam analysis tool and its assessment management system.

4. There were 42 action plans in TracDat with budget resource requests. This result represented an increase of 180 percent from the prior year. Efforts to educate employees on the value of including budget requests in TracDat have helped increase the number of action plans with a budget request. In addition, the relationship between assessment results and budgeting are further identified. The FY 2015 results also represented the first time the benchmark had been met. The director of assessment will continue to present at budget guideline meetings, and has included budget information in TracDat for directors to help employees include budget information in their assessment reports.

## **Fiscal Year 2016**

1. A second institutional means of assessment for the direct measurement of a general education objective was established. The Standard Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) replaced the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) for the general education assessment for FY 2016. This instrument is used to measure the revised information literacy GEO and its sub-skills. As of FY 2016, SAILS will continue to be used as an assessment of information literacy skills for graduating Wor-Wic students.
2. In August 2015, the Business Department began an annual report-out day in order to increase communication about assessment outcomes and possible actions towards improvement. Faculty, department heads and course coordinators meet as a department and each course coordinator reviews and discusses the course assessment results from the previous year and any action plans to address outcomes. The department discusses what can or may be tried to improve student outcomes at the course level for each course. There is also a review of the program assessment and an opportunity to suggest action plans to tie course results to program goals. As a result of this intra-department gathering and analysis of assessment outcomes, faculty members report (informally) feeling more encouraged to take assessment and learning outcomes results more seriously.
3. In the Education Transfer – Secondary program (TES), the benchmark for the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) reading and writing modules were partially met. The FY 2015 national means were 60 percent for reading and 61 percent for writing. However, the TES CAAP results were 57 percent in reading and 64 percent in writing, meeting the benchmark in writing and missing the benchmark in reading by approximately three percent. In FY 2016, the TES department developed and implemented common rubrics as well as deepened collaboration with the College's Writing Center and English course coordinator. As a result of this collaboration, EDU specific writing assignments were integrated into the several EDU courses. Results from this intervention will be monitored until the next CAAP reading and writing modules are administered in FY 2018.

4. In FY 2015, a Biology for Allied Health (BIO 099) portfolio rubric assessment and a rubric for formative in-class participation assessments were developed and deployed in the course. This course was developed to support learning skills and facilitate success of students needing Anatomy and Physiology I (BIO 202). As a result of the portfolio assessment, all objectives met or exceeded their benchmark of 70 percent in both FY 2015 and FY 2016. Additional modifications will be made on the participation rubric, to better encourage full participation and group learning experiences. Furthermore, the portfolio rubric's percent of total points will increase from 22 percent to 31 percent to more realistically reflect the value of the summative assessment tool.
5. The Anatomy and Physiology I (BIO 202) Written Assignment Rubric assessment results in FY 2015 showed all objectives met or exceeded the benchmark of 70 percent. However, the Math and Science department head and course coordinator discussed the inflated success rate with faculty at the course instructor meeting. It was felt that while one assessment goal was likely to be at or above 90 percent, it was not realistic that other assessment goals would also be that high. The department discussed how a student may earn a grade of "C" or above for the overall project, yet still fail to meet one or more established criteria since the whole assignment may include other graded elements not involved in the direct measure of a specific objective that was more related to specific course content. Individual instructors committed to modifying their individual written assignment and associated rubrics to more accurately capture the three specific components being evaluated.

As a result of the group analysis and modifications to the assessment rubric, FY 2016 results showed that once again all objectives met or exceeded the benchmark of 70 percent. However, results were lower than the previous four years in all categories. Yet, most importantly, there was an indication that the instructors' efforts to modify their individual assignment and associated rubrics to more accurately assess the three specific components were successful. This appears to have addressed the concerns last year about inflated success rate. This trend will continue to be monitored.

As demonstrated in this report, the College devotes a significant amount of time, effort and resources to the improvement of student learning. In fulfillment of one of its main goals of providing a quality education to help prepare students for transfer and entry into the local workforce of the service region, the College has a systematic process in place for learning assurance. It is generally successful with student learning, and constantly strives to improve learning in any area where assessment results require action towards improvement. Wor-Wic Community College has a culture of assessment that is well-integrated and comprehensive.

## APPENDIX A

### Institutional Leadership and Organizational Structure for Assessment

The institutional leadership and organizational structure of student learning assessment at all three levels of the College (institution, program, and course) is as follows:

Level	Institution	Program	Course
<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	SVPAA Director of Assessment General Education Assessment Committee	SVPAA Division Dean Department Head Program Faculty	SVPAA Division Dean Department Head Course Coordinator Course Faculty
<b>Learning Goals</b>	General Education Objectives	Program Learning Goals	Course Objectives
<b>Means of Assessment (MOA)</b>	Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) Modules Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) Course embedded	Course embedded CAAP results distributed by major SAILS results distributed by major	Final Exam Analysis Course embedded
<b>Benchmarks</b>	CAAP Module=College Mean > CAAP National Mean SAILS scores=College Mean >= Associates on at least four of eight SAILS skills sets Course embedded=Varies based on MOA	Course embedded=Varies based on MOA CAAP majors' mean >= either the WWCC mean or national mean for 2 year institutions SAILS majors' scores >=Associates on at least four of eight SAILS skills sets	Final Exam Analysis=70% pass rate by course objective Course embedded= Varies based on MOA

**PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS**



**Bowie State University**



## Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

### BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.

## **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

Since the 2011 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report, a number of changes in assessment practices have occurred at Bowie State University. These changes, within and outside of the University, have resulted in an increasing awareness across the entire campus community of the importance not only of evaluating the quality of the student educational experiences, but also of assessing student learning outcomes and the effectiveness of student support services. The University's transformation in this regard was driven by its mission, vision, and strategic plan.

Bowie State University's strategic plan serves as a road map to advance the University's mission of providing an excellent education for all students. Through its undergraduate and graduate programs, the University is focused primarily on enhancing the quality and value of its offerings to students, alumni, and the community. In addition, the University's Core Values of excellence, civility, integrity, diversity, and accountability provide the foundation for decision-making and for building a better University.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) Visiting Team came to Bowie in April 2011 for a decennial visit. MSCHE action in June 2011 reaffirmed accreditation and requested a monitoring report related to Standards 7, 12, 13 and 14. The monitoring report was accepted by MSCHE in November 2012. The Commission requested as part of its 2012 action, a progress report that documented further progress in the implementation of student learning outcomes assessment and improvement cycle (Standards 12 and 14). The progress report was accepted in June 2014 with no recommendations. The university submitted its MSCHE Periodic Review Report (PRR) in June 2016. The contents of this report are extracted from that document.

The accomplishments detailed in the PRR were achieved through the assessment structure that has been in place since 2012. Bowie State's structure for sustainable assessment includes the President and Cabinet, the University Student Learning Assessment Committee (USLAC), the General Education Committee (GEC), the assistant vice president for institutional effectiveness and the Office of Planning, Analysis and Accountability (OPAA), the assistant vice president for assessment and the Center for Academic Programs Assessment (CAPA), college-level assessment coordinators, and academic department-level assessment coordinators. The work of these groups document meeting our mission, the strategic plan goals and academic program learning outcomes.

Bowie State's institutional assessment (Standard 7) is defined by its mission and deployed through the strategic plan. The 2013-2018 Strategic Plan serves as the road map to advance the university's mission of providing quality education for all students. The university's strategic

plan goals align with the USM 2010-2020 five strategic themes as well as the goals contained in the Maryland Higher Education Commission's State Plan for Postsecondary Education. Each goal in the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan has associated metrics that are tracked annually and reviewed by the cabinet. Fifty metrics provide insight on strategic plan goal progress, 12 indicators assess the institution's core values and 11 metrics track progress on USM strategic goals. The Institutional Effectiveness Framework further guides institutional assessment. The Framework utilizes internal and external assessments to document achievement of its mission, vision and core values; demonstrate linkages between assessment, planning and budgeting; and monitor the strategic plan achievement.

The General Education Committee (GEC) and the Center for Academic Program Assessment (CAPA) are responsible for the assessment of general education (Standard 12). Over the past five years, a full complement of faculty from each college and general education discipline served on the GEC. The GEC established key goals including collecting and reviewing all general education syllabi for consistent student learning outcomes, mapping general education courses to competencies, reexamining the approach to general education assessment and reviewing the findings from standardized testing and indirect assessments in order to guide practice. The GEP assessment model focuses primarily on direct methods. Currently, direct assessment practices include the Collegiate Learning Assessment, two Educational Testing Services standardized assessments, the English Proficiency Exam, common graded assignments, and course redesign. Indirect methods such as grade distributions, course evaluations and national student engagement surveys, are reviewed to gather additional data on student performance, but are no longer the primary driving force behind assessment practice at the university.

The responsibility of direct academic program assessment (Standard 14) resides within academic departments. Direct assessment activities are supported by the University Student Learning Assessment Committee (USLAC), CAPA and college assessment staff members. Since the 2011 SLOAR report a number of actions have taken place to enhance and sustain academic program assessment:

- Hired the AVP for Assessment, three college-based assessment professionals and the appointment of programmatic assessment coordinators within all four colleges;
- Established assessment expectations through standardized annual reports and peer feedback processes;
- Published college portrait, including student learning outcomes, in the Voluntary System of Accountability AY 2014-2015;
- Established biennial best practices in assessment awards (AY 2012-2013; AY 2014-2015);
- Revised USM Academic Program Review Manual in spring 2016.

Bowie State has committed the resources and staff to its institutional priority of systematic and sustainable assessment, which provides the foundation for continuous improvement of student learning and student success. The current framework for systematic assessment allows various campus constituents to plan strategically and to make decisions based on assessment results.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

### ***Institutional Assessment Focused on Student Success (Standard 7)***

In addition to the activities described in Part One, the university has directed its efforts for institutional effectiveness to data and analyses intentionally focused on improving the student experience with the explicit goal of improving graduation rates over the last three years. Below is a summary of the targeted student success initiatives informed by data.

A number of activities in Bowie's *Closing the Achievement Gap Plan* are focused on the first two academic years. The Academic Advising Center (AAC) serves as a support system to foster the timely and successful completion of the baccalaureate degree for new students (including transfer students) through 60 credits. In 2013, the university supported a unit review of AAC to determine if the programs and services were meeting student needs. The review included an examination of the advising module in PeopleSoft, and a review of the implementation of Starfish. External grant funding supported a PeopleSoft advising review by an external consultant. Specific suggestions for AAC advising processes included advisor integration of PeopleSoft "what-if" scenarios and the Academic Planner into one-on-one advising sessions. The What-If report is a tool that allows students looking to change a major to simulate the changes and see how their overall requirements would be impacted. The Academic Planner encourages students to use the PeopleSoft feature to pre-select courses for future enrollment, even before they are scheduled for a term.

A complete evaluation of Starfish, Bowie State's early alert system, was undertaken by an internal cross-functional work team representing AAC, academic computing, faculty, OPAA and retention coordinators. The 2013 Starfish evaluation was undertaken to implement new product functionality and to encourage greater faculty usage. The work team completely overhauled AAC's usage of Starfish to include scheduling, kiosk services, advising notes and student follow-ups. The work team also internally rebranded the product to ICan and launched a student and faculty awareness campaign. Students are trained in Freshmen Seminar on how to use ICan to make AAC appointments and to understand how to respond to early alerts. Faculty were briefed during college meetings about linkages between Blackboard and ICan to support course-level early alerts. The AAC uses ICan to monitor individual student success, to monitor staff workloads and to track AAC usage. Empowering students to set up appointments to fit their schedule has decreased wait time and student complaints.

The *Closing the Achievement Gap Plan* also included an objective to hire college-level retention coordinators to assist in upper division student retention and completion. The retention coordinators collaborate with the academic departments to promote retention activities, work with students experiencing academic difficulties, analyze data to identify areas for improvement, offer professional development training, teach Freshmen Seminar sections, and work with the

Academic Advisement Center to promote a smooth transition to departmental advising. The retention coordinators, OPAA and AAC developed a set of data files and reports so that these offices could have data sets on student demographics and academic achievement levels. The data files also serve as a tracking mechanism for the retention coordinators throughout the semester and academic year.

Understanding why students succeed or fail at attaining the bachelor's degree is a crucial step in improving graduation rates. In AY 2014-2015, OPAA completed a logistic regression analysis to determine the importance of various factors in first-time student graduation success.

Understanding the nature of success among students allows the university to understand, where reasonable, which students to target for interventions. The analysis highlighted patterns of success common among many institutions of higher education including higher likelihood for graduation among females, those who remained full-time, living on campus the first year, accumulating at least 12 credits the first semester and being ready for college level math. The 2014 analysis was shared with the President's Cabinet and served as the impetus for the Provost to include targets in his AY 2014-2015 annual goals and objectives related to retention, progression, re-enrollment, and developmental math student success.

Bowie State's need for sustained predictive analytics coincided with an initiative by USM to support predictive analytics on campuses where cost prevented them from developing internal tools or contracting with external entities. In fall 2015, Bowie State and three other USM institutions signed an MOU with USM to participate in the Predictive Analytics Report (PAR) framework. Bowie State agreed to supply data to PAR, establish inter-institutional performance benchmarks for selected achievement gap subgroups and to establish benchmarks in key areas including percent of "toxic course mixes," interventions for watch-listed students, and sharing the availability of the PAR across campus. As of April 2016, Bowie State, with the assistance of a PeopleSoft consultant, has developed the PAR data extracts and is in the process of testing. It is anticipated that training on how to use the data will begin in fall 2016.

These and many other initiatives have resulted in an increased numbers of degrees awarded. The university conferred 20% more degrees in 2016 degrees than it did in 2012 (1,179 vs. 981). In 2016, Bowie State awarded 832 baccalaureate degrees - 4% more than 2015. Graduate degrees increased by 11%. This growth in 2016 degrees is due in part to increasing enrollments of new students and increases in graduation rates of first-time freshmen, new undergraduate transfer students and new graduate students.

### ***General Education Assessment - Direct Assessment Informing Practice (Standard 12)***

The General Education Committee determined that all GEP competencies would be assessed using external instruments: Collegiate Learning Assessment Plus (CLA+), the Proficiency Profile and iSkills. The CLA+ measures critical thinking and reasoning, problem solving and written communication. The Proficiency Profile assesses four core skill areas: critical thinking, reading, writing, and mathematics as a gauge of general education outcomes. The iSkills assessment measures a student's ability to think critically in a digital environment, to navigate, understand and evaluate a variety of research information through digital technology, and to demonstrate information literacy and technological competency. Funding for these assessments

is through Title III funds and will continue indefinitely for both freshmen and graduating seniors. The cycle is sustained every year through the testing schedule of freshmen (fall semester) and graduating seniors (spring semester) as provided in **Appendix A**.

#### *Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA+)*

In AY 2014-2015, Bowie State volunteered to participate in the Collegiate Learning Assessment Plus (CLA+) pilot study with the Council for Aid to Education. The assessment consists of two sections: 1) a performance task (PT) that presents students with a real-world situation that requires a purposeful written response where they address the issue, propose a solution to the problem and recommend a course of action to resolve a conflict by utilizing the documents provided in the online library; 2) selected-response questions (SRQ) that measure scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical reading and evaluation, and argument critique. Test scores indicate that students are performing at the mean and within the standard deviation for all similar institutions and that growth was as expected for the Bowie State cohort. The CLA+ results for both freshmen and senior cohorts were included in the Voluntary System of Accountability College Portrait report ([http://www.collegeportraits.org/MD/BSU/learning\\_outcomes](http://www.collegeportraits.org/MD/BSU/learning_outcomes)).

Two years of results for the CLA+ performance task rubric scores are shown in **Appendix B**. In the areas of analysis and problem solving, writing effectiveness and writing mechanics, freshmen and seniors scores are above 70% for both years, which shows that the majority of Bowie State students range consistently from “fair to advanced” on these criteria. The mastery levels demonstrate the value-added growth expected of students from their freshmen to senior year and show that Bowie State students are at the basic mastery of the skills measured by the CLA+ nationally. The SRQ scores show that Bowie State’s cohort mean scores are consistently between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentile nationally on the three criteria measured. Given the mean CLA+ performance of the university’s freshmen and the entering academic ability of these students, the value-added is what would be expected as compared to schools testing similar populations of students. Overall, the CLA+ scores demonstrate the expected growth for Bowie State students over the course of their academic careers. Although the scores are lower for seniors in AY 2015-2016, the national data is not yet available for comparison and interpretation. The initial results of the two-year CLA+ assessment triangulate and affirm the results of the other national standardized assessments such as the iSkills assessment and the Proficiency Profile where Bowie State students are at or above the expected mean for similar institutions.

#### *Proficiency Profile Assessment*

Multiple administrations of the Proficiency Profile provided Bowie State with data suggesting areas for improvement as well as national and state comparisons for its freshmen and seniors. The Proficiency Profile assessment is part of the Freshmen Seminar course (herein known as FRSE 101) common syllabus and is conducted every fall semester to maintain longitudinal data collection on general education core competencies. Seniors are tested in a variety of capstone courses during the spring semester. **Appendix C** chronicles the Proficiency Profile results from 2012-2015 for freshmen and seniors as compared to cohorts of students from other similar comprehensive master’s degree institutions.

For the 2012-2015 testing period, the Bowie State’s freshmen and senior cohorts overall mean scores were above comparable institutions’ group means. There was no significant difference in

the overall mean score for freshmen or seniors when analyzed by gender, race/ethnicity, or academic major. By reviewing both the skills sub-scores and the context-based sub-scores, the results show that both Bowie State cohorts are above or at the mean for all seven categories. Even though the results of the Proficiency Profile were positive when compared to similar institutions, the iSkills results for freshmen aligned more with classroom challenges expressed by faculty members and GEC committee members.

#### *iSkills Assessment*

The iSkills assessment measures freshmen and seniors' ability to navigate, critically evaluate and make sense of the wealth of information available through digital technology. The skill areas assessed with the iSkills instrument are directly aligned with the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) standards for information literacy and technological competency. Specifically, iSkills assessment measures information literacy through seven types of tasks: define, access, evaluate, manage, integrate, create and communicate information. The integration and creation tasks also allow the GEC to better understand critical thinking skills in relationship to information and technological competency.

The median score results are shown in **Appendix D** for Bowie State freshmen and seniors as compared to the national median scores. The iSkills results indicated that freshmen are consistently below the *median* all of the seven skill areas: *define, access, manage, integrate, create, and communicate*. The initial results are positive for the 2013-2015 senior cohort in that significant gains were made on four of the seven skill areas including access, evaluate, manage and communicate. The median scores for seniors on these four skill areas are the same for the national cohort.

#### ***Academic Program Assessment - Sustaining Multiple-Level Assessment Reporting (Standard 14)***

Three primary structures exist at Bowie State in order to support and sustain academic program assessment. At the national level, academic standards are established by the respective accrediting agencies and must be satisfactorily met by the academic program in order to be given reaccreditation status. At the system-level, the University System of Maryland (USM) requires academic program reviews every seven years in accordance with USM program review policies. And finally, each Bowie State academic program submits an annual assessment report to the Assistant Vice President for Assessment, which details program goals, student learning outcomes, data collection, assessment results and action plans that guide practice based on assessment findings. Multiple years of annual assessment reporting are summarized in the next section.

#### *BSU Annual Assessment Reports for Academic Programs*

Direct assessment of student learning occurs within the academic departments and is reported annually by departmental assessment coordinators using the Bowie State assessment report template. The annual assessment reports are reviewed by USLAC members and the AVP for Assessment using a common assessment rubric. To underscore the importance of academic assessment, each USLAC assessment coordinator is granted a one-course release per semester. This coordinator is charged with bringing together all assessment planning and reporting for his



or her department and is responsible for writing and submitting the annual assessment report on behalf of the department.

Every year since the self-study, annual assessment reporting has been completed with 100% of the academic programs submitting reports. For comparative purposes, four years of assessment report rubric results are provided in **Appendix E**. **Appendix E** demonstrates the systematic and sustainable assessment culture at Bowie State. The benchmark set for annual assessment reporting included college ratings at or above 70% within five years. Particular attention has been focused on the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), which included the hiring of an assessment coordinator (AC) for the college to improve general education course assessment.

Additional examples of how assessment results are being used to improve student learning outcomes have been extracted from the annual assessment reports recognized for best practices and are highlighted below:

#### *Examples of Assessment Results and Action Plans*

- Many of the program assessments have been revised to focus more on specific components that reflect student learning and acquisition as they relate to Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) standards. All of the evaluation rubrics for these assessments have been revised as well. The rubrics criteria help candidates to have a clear understanding of the content they will be assessed on. The revised rubrics provide specificity between and among the criteria as they relate to the actual assessments. Many of the previous criteria were very broad and aligned more with the conceptual framework outcomes, as opposed to content expectations.
- Provide history/government students with more comprehensive review materials for the final exam to improve pass rates.
- Implement common rubrics in the evaluation of student performance in creative writing courses.
- Improve writing by offering workshops on APA format and paper organization.

All in all, the pillars for the assessment of student learning outcomes in academic programs and in the general education program are actively guiding practice at the course, program, departmental and institutional level along with program accreditations and the University System of Maryland seven-year program reviews. This structure ensures a multi-pronged approach for systematic and sustainable assessment practices.

#### *USM Academic Program Reviews*

Bowie State had developed and approved an Academic Program Review Manual in AY 2011-2012. In AY 2012-2013, the academic programs scheduled for review utilized the manual for the first time to prepare their required USM reviews.

Preparation for program review begins with the Assistant Vice President for Assessment meeting with department chairs and faculty members to examine the expectations that include guiding principles, outcomes, timelines and responsibilities, external review standards, and a reporting template. These Q&A sessions typically occur two years in advance of the academic review due date in order to allow for a sufficient amount of time to conduct a quality internal and external

academic review. The Program Review Manual is accessible on the CAPA website under *Manuals & Forms* (<https://www.bowiestate.edu/academics-research/provost-and-vice-president-for-center-for-academic-programs-a/forms-guides-templates/>). A complete listing of all USM academic program reviews conducted between 2012-2015 is provided on the CAPA website as well.

#### *Nationally-Accredited Academic Programs*

Since AY 2011-2012, many of Bowie State's accredited programs received reaffirmation of accreditation for meeting satisfactory academic standards within their respective programs. A table of reaccredited programs is provided on the Center for Academic Program Assessment website (<https://www.bowiestate.edu/academics-research/provost-and-vice-president-for-center-for-academic-programs-a/accreditations/>). In fall 2012, the College of Education was reaccredited by NCATE. Following the NCATE reaccreditation, the COE submitted a total of seven reports for national recognition through Specialized Professional Associations (SPAs) in September 2013. As of spring 2014, five of the programs have now received full national recognition through 2019, and two of the programs were given conditions through 2016. Within the next few years, social work, counseling and business administration will go through the initial accreditation or reaccreditation process as well.

Based on four years of annual assessment reports, it is clear that assessment is driving practice at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Significant strides were made in establishing an assessment structure in English, history and government and fine and performing arts. Natural sciences and mathematics saw an increase in assessment activity but still need additional assessment structures to be put in place. Overall levels of performance at the college-level were promising with three of the colleges above a satisfactory level of 75%.

Since 2011, Bowie State has advanced its framework for sustainable assessment with multiple direct and indirect assessment practices at the institutional, program, and course levels. The framework developed provides a check-and-balance system among the campus constituents directly responsible for the systematic approach to campus-wide assessment. With the structure and sustainability of assessment practices firmly in place, the assessment data and results are guiding practice on multiple levels.

Moreover, the framework for sustainable assessment practices links the various campus entities and the assessment practices directly to the budget process. Institutional and programmatic data are shared to support academic and non-academic improvements.

Bowie State has committed the resources and staff to its institutional priority of systematic and sustainable assessment. Its current framework for systematic assessment allows various campus constituents to plan strategically and to make decisions based on assessment results. The systematic and sustainable assessment structures in place at Bowie State provide a solid foundation for continuous improvement of student learning and success.

Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

**Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

This section does not apply to Bowie State University. Bowie State submitted its PRR in June 2016. Its 2014 MSCHE progress report (Standards 12 and 14) was accepted and no further reporting was necessary until the PRR.

## APPENDICES

### *Appendix A GEP Assessment Schedule*

Assessment Instrument	Testing Cohort	Schedule			
iSkills	FRSE 101 students	Fall 2012 100 tested	Fall 2013 232 tested	Fall 2014 122 tested	Fall 2015 85 tested
Proficiency Profile	FRSE 101 students	Fall 2012 107 tested	Fall 2013 114 tested	Fall 2014 129 tested	Fall 2015 28 tested
Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA+)	FRSE 101 Students			Fall 2014 99 tested	Fall 2015 96 tested
iSkills	Graduating seniors	Spring 2013 52 tested	Spring 2014 27 tested	Spring 2015 3 tested	Spring 2016 <i>In progress</i>
Proficiency Profile	Graduating seniors	Spring 2013 47 tested	Spring 2014 86 tested	Spring 2015 61 tested	Spring 2016 <i>In progress</i>
Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA+)	Graduating seniors			Spring 2015 107 tested	Spring 2016 97 tested

## Appendix B

### CLA+ Results AY 2015 and AY 2016

<b>AY 2014-15 Performance Task</b>	<b>Analysis &amp; Problem Solving</b>	<b>Effective Writing</b>	<b>Writing Mechanics</b>
Freshmen	71%	81%	93%
Seniors	79%	87%	91%
<b>AY 2015-16 Performance Task</b>	<b>Analysis &amp; Problem Solving</b>	<b>Effective Writing</b>	<b>Writing Mechanics</b>
Freshmen	77%	79%	94%
Seniors	78%	82%	94%
<b>AY 2014-15 Mastery Levels</b>	<b>% Below Mastery Level</b>	<b>% Basic to Advanced Level</b>	<b>Overall Score</b>
Freshmen	48%	51%	981
Seniors	26%	74%	1033
<b>AY 2015-16 Mastery Levels</b>	<b>% Below Mastery Level</b>	<b>% Basic to Advanced Level</b>	<b>Overall Score</b>
Freshmen	46%	54%	991
Seniors	33%	67%	1013
<b>AY 2014-15 SRQ</b>	<b>BSU Freshmen Mean Score</b>	<b>25th Percentile Score</b>	<b>75th Percentile Score</b>
Scientific & Quantitative Reasoning	484	459	512
Critical Reading & Evaluation	459	404	493
Argument Critique	455	405	542
<b>AY 2015-16 SRQ Freshmen</b>	<b>BSU Freshmen Mean Score</b>	<b>25th Percentile Score</b>	<b>75th Percentile Score</b>
Scientific & Quantitative Reasoning	468	393	525
Critical Reading & Evaluation	454	404	501
Argument Critique	495	446	562
<b>AY 2014-15 SRQ Seniors</b>	<b>BSU Senior Mean Score</b>	<b>25th Percentile Score</b>	<b>75th Percentile Score</b>
Scientific & Quantitative Reasoning	497	426	551
Critical Reading & Evaluation	484	450	547
Argument Critique	500	446	581
<b>AY 2014-15 SRQ Seniors</b>	<b>BSU Senior Mean Score</b>	<b>25th Percentile Score</b>	<b>75th Percentile Score</b>
Scientific & Quantitative Reasoning	484	426	532
Critical Reading & Evaluation	473	405	548
Argument Critique	482	387	525

### Appendix C

#### 2012-2015 Proficiency Profile Results for Freshmen and Seniors

	Freshmen		Seniors	
	Comparison Group (N=17,485)	Bowie State University (N=345)	Comparison Group (N=30,000)	Bowie State University (N=153)
Overall Mean	429.90	431.50	431.90	431.96
Skills Sub-scores				
Critical Thinking	108.20	108.36	108.70	108.70
Reading	113.40	114.79	114.20	114.29
Writing	111.60	111.97	112.00	112.57
Mathematics	109.90	109.76	110.20	110.11
Context-based Sub-scores				
Humanities	111.60	111.85	112.30	112.98
Social Sciences	110.30	110.64	110.80	110.98
Natural Sciences	111.80	112.62	112.30	112.03

### Appendix D

#### 2012-2015 iSkills Median Scores for BSU Freshmen and Seniors

iSkills Literacy Skill Areas	Freshmen			Seniors		
	Comparison Group (N=3115)	BSU (N=416)	Difference	Comparison Group (N=3115)	BSU (N=76)	Difference
Define	63	55	-8	63	55	-8
Access	61	54	-7	61	61	0
Evaluate	62	57	-5	62	62	0
Manage	64	50	-14	64	64	0
Integrate	59	50	-9	59	50	-9
Create	57	49	-8	57	49	-8
Communicate	59	49	-10	59	59	0

**Appendix E**  
Assessment Report Rubric Summary AY 2012-2015

<b>Academic Program</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Biology, General	B	33%	33%	33%	67%	34%
Bioinformatics	B	33%	33%	33%	44%	11%
Communications Media	B	78%	83%	89%	94%	16%
Computer Science	B	89%	94%	94%	94%	5%
Computer Technology	B	89%	94%	94%	94%	5%
English	B	78%	78%	83%	89%	11%
Fine Arts	B	17%	44%	44%	67%	50%
History & Government	B	67%	67%	78%	100%	33%
Mathematics	B	44%	61%	67%	72%	28%
Science Education	B	22%	22%	22%	22%	0%
Theater Arts	B	78%	78%	83%	89%	11%
Visual Comm & Digital Media	B	78%	72%	83%	83%	5%
Applied & Comp. Mathematics	M	44%	28%	28%	61%	17%
Computer Science	M	78%	78%	78%	78%	0%
English	M	72%	72%	89%	89%	17%
Organizational Communications	M	83%	83%	94%	94%	11%
Computer Science	D	78%	78%	78%	78%	0%
<b>College of Arts and Sciences Mean</b>		<b>62%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>15%</b>
Business Administration	B	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
Business Administration	M	78%	78%	83%	83%	5%
Management Information Systems	M	78%	78%	78%	78%	0%
Public Administration	M	83%	83%	83%	89%	6%
<b>College of Business Mean</b>		<b>85%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>2%</b>
Early Childhood Education	B	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
Elementary Education	B	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
Sport Management	B	17%	33%	33%	67%	50%
Counseling Psychology	M	61%	61%	67%	83%	22%
Elementary Education	M	33%	44%	83%	94%	61%
Elem. & Secondary Sch Admin	M	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
Mental Health Counseling	M	61%	50%	83%	89%	28%
Reading Education	M	83%	83%	89%	94%	11%
School Counseling	M	100%	89%	100%	100%	0%
School Psychology	M	100%	100%	94%	100%	0%
Secondary Education	M	100%	94%	94%	100%	0%
Special Education	M	56%	67%	94%	94%	38%
Teaching (MAT)	M	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
Ed Leadership/Executive Fellows	D	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
<b>College of Education Mean</b>		<b>79%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>15%</b>
Child & Adolescent Studies	B	89%	89%	94%	100%	11%
Criminal Justice	B	50%	61%	78%	89%	39%
Nursing	B	78%	78%	78%	89%	11%
Psychology	B	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
Social Work	B	78%	94%	100%	100%	22%
Sociology	B	44%	56%	83%	89%	45%
Nursing	M	94%	89%	89%	94%	0%
Human Resource Development	M	61%	61%	72%	72%	11%
<b>College of Professional Studies Mean</b>		<b>74%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>% scoring 75%+</b>		<b>65%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>81%</b>	

**Coppin State University**



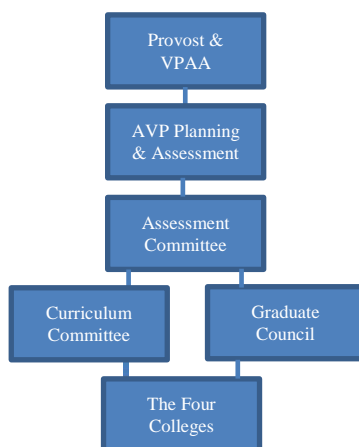
## Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

Coppin State University is preparing for its decennial review which is scheduled to occur in February 2018. Already, the University has met with its Commission liaison, formulated a timeline, and has charged workgroups to commence the self-study upon a favorable review from Middle States. Currently, the institution is preparing to show the Commission how it meets the new **seven Standards for Accreditation and Requirements for Affiliation**.

The current structure and institutional leadership for assessment includes assessment activities and reports that are produced at the college level using an Annual Report format, monitored and evaluated by the Curriculum Policy and Standards Committee and the Graduate Council, the Assessment Committee, and finally, reported to and approved by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. See figure 1 below:

**Figure 1: Organizational Structure and Institutional Leadership for Assessment**



Source: CSU-OPA, 2016

In responding to the request from the Maryland Higher Education Commission, Coppin is able to show that it continues to meet Standards 7, 12 and 14 of the former *Characteristics of Excellence* (known as the previous 14 Standards) as noted below:

### **The Standards from the *Characteristics of Excellence***

**Standard 7.** *The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.*

**Standard 12.** *The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.*

**Standard 14.** *Assessment of Student Learning Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other*

*appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.*

### **Activities of Assessment and Accountability**

Coppin State University's Student Learning Outcomes Assessment process provides both formative and summative feedback relative to student learning. **Each of the 53 academic programs offered by the university are evaluated on a cyclical basis and regularly reviewed.** This process is driven by internal and external processes. The Curriculum Policy and Standards Committee (undergraduate-level programs) and the Graduate Council (graduate-level programs) review all of its programs annually in conjunction with the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) and the Office of the Provost. As a result of the reviews, action plans are created and monitored for progress related to the program learning outcomes and their relation to the institutional learning outcomes. Each program whether it is a degree or certificate offering is subject to an annual review of learning outcomes data in addition to a seven-year self-study review externally by the USM of the program, to determine its effectiveness towards meeting the institution's stated mission and goals as well as any specialized accreditation.

The domains of assessment at the institutional level go beyond the traditional learning outcomes model to include assessment and evaluation of knowledge/skills acquired, values/beliefs transmitted, employment rates, performance on licensure and national exams, an assessment of departmental retention and graduation rates, and progression rates. Evaluation of the effectiveness of academic and support programs are also included to measure student performance along multiple and varied dimensions. For instance, student opinion and attitudinal information are gathered through various surveys and documents including faculty and course evaluations, program completer and graduation follow-up studies, and others such as the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

Assessment is also embedded in each course and in every aspect of teaching, student services and instructional support programs with a view to continuous quality improvement. Faculty, staff, and administrators at Coppin are committed to a culture of planning, research, assessment and accountability. In general, all units at CSU are engaged in some form of evaluation, planning, assessment, and development so that the University remains positioned to carry out its urban mission. CSU relies on a broad range of tools and resources to measure, evaluate, and assess educational outcomes. The University's Office of Planning and Assessment (OPA) facilitate, guide and coordinate the institution's strategic planning, research, and assessment efforts.

### **The Campus Assessment Model**

The goal of the University's assessment process is to encourage genuine self-improvement. Programs within the Department of Applied Psychology have undergone this process since 2004, when assessment in a more formal sense became popular within the State and was introduced to the broader university community. The University has an institutional assessment model that incorporates assessing student learning outcomes at the institution, program, and course levels. Both the institutional and program levels are informed by the strategic plan, which provides a useful blueprint for the future direction of the University. Assessment at CSU is anchored in the strategic goals of the *Coppin State University Strategic Plan 2013-2020*.

The four college deans in collaboration with department chairpersons, and the Division of Academic Affairs, and the Assessment Committee, led efforts to improve student learning assessment in their respective colleges and schools based on course and program level competencies. Each college has a process for addressing course level performance which includes the development of direct and indirect measures using a conceptual framework; such as, for the Schools of Education and Nursing. All units are required to submit an annual report to the Office of Academic Affairs.

### **Use of Technology to Assist with Assessment Efforts**

The School of Education utilizes TK-20 to access the campus' student information management system known as EagleLinks and the School of Nursing and College of Business, along with the rest of the university community use Blackboard Learn for Assessment. These systems collectively satisfy the reporting requirements related to the outcomes developed by the units in collaboration with accreditation requirements. Each of the systems provide a direct linkage to the institutional learning outcomes as well as help measure progress towards the university's mission.

### Course Level Assessment

Systematic review of curriculum structure, content, and outcomes is managed by the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC), Curriculum Policy and Standards Committee, Faculty Assessment Committee, and the General Education Task Force. These committees are responsible for content and assessment affecting the educational programs in the University. Ultimately, all actions and recommendations made by the committees are approved by the faculty. These committees are also responsible for reviewing course and programmatic assessment data to ensure that expected abilities and competencies are being met in each year of the specified program.

The General Education Task Force has been charged with assessing the course and program level performance of General Education at CSU, it has been very active in providing administrative oversight for documenting and evaluating assessment outcomes. For example, the Committee conducted a course syllabus audit to assess which of the approved competencies reported to the State of Maryland in its annual Student Learning Outcomes Report.

In summary, CSU has an institutional assessment model that incorporates assessing student learning outcomes at the institution, program, and course levels:

- How is institutional effectiveness assessed at CSU through the use of strategic goals and objectives?
- How are assessment data and results used to improve policy formation, budget and fiscal planning, curriculum and student development, and teaching and learning?

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

For the last five years, the University has focused on assessing all six of its institutional learning outcomes. When the GER Task Force began its work in 2010, primary emphasis was only on assessing *two* of the six outcomes in an effort to promulgate a culture of assessment. Listed below are the six institutional general learning outcomes (SLOs):

- Written and Oral Communication
- Analytical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Social and Self Awareness
- Reflective Practice
- Responsive Citizenship

Each academic department developed a series of matrices to assist faculty in identifying where CSU students were meeting or mastering General Education learning outcomes, revised rubrics to be used for appropriate grading within the capstone courses, adopted the institution's syllabus of record – which contained the six SLOs while providing space for departments to list their stated learning objectives aligned with those of the institution, and finally, developed plans of study to help students, advisors, and parents determine the correct sequence of courses needed for their program of study. A spillover affect occurred at the professional program level, causing them review the sequence of their course offerings and ensuring that undergraduate degrees did not exceed 120 credits needed for graduation.

### The Original Charge of the GER Task Force

- To serve as a review committee for the development of policies and procedures related to General Education Requirements (GERs);
- To respond as an advisory committee to various shared governance councils on matters pertaining to GERs;
- To assist academic departments in the sequencing of GERs according to the six (COMAR) categories;
- To ensure that 80% of GERs are satisfied before admittance to major academic programs;
- To review GERs to ensure alignment with measurable student learning outcomes;
- To identify a process for assessing student General Education competencies and learning outcomes; and
- To ensure that academic departments have a sequenced program of study by which GERs are identified and sequenced during the first and second year of study.

### **General Education Task Force Assignments**

In order to implement the General Education reform initiative at the University, the GER Taskforce met each week to discuss shared experiences and broader perceptions of reform. As a result of conversations during the time period beginning October, 2010, the initial GER survey was

distributed to each Taskforce member for further distribution within each academic department/unit. The purpose of the survey was to seek responses leading to determining if student learning outcomes should occur at the developmental, introductory, or mastery levels in each general education requirement. The survey set the stage for a rich discourse among faculty members across disciplines. The discussions centered on the relationships among broad demands of student learning, course objectives, and student learning as relevant to courses in the core curriculum and the major programs of study. Subsequently, the discussions generated by the GER Survey supported the request for a December, 2010, deadline for the completion of the General Education Matrix.

*The following narrative details the full assignment given to the faculty.*

- Assignment #1: Purpose: Develop a matrix to assist faculty in identifying where CSU students are learning and mastering the GE Learning Outcomes. The matrix helps to provide an overview of academic programs that have evidences of SLO performance. The matrix also identifies where the Learning Outcomes are introduced, developed, mastered, and assessed in the GE requirements.

Directions: Please identify the program or GE courses where students are specifically learning and demonstrating either introductory (I), developmental (D) or mastery (M) levels according to the General Education Learning Outcomes. Although Learning Outcomes might occur mostly in the first and second years, the full development of the learning may occur throughout the entire academic program.

- Assignment #2: Identify the GE Capstone Course to be used to assess the mastery level for each Student Learning Outcome.

Additionally, Assignment #2 required the Taskforce to identify capstone courses and assignments from the last three years (if possible) and indicate which of the SLOs were assessed. Grades are to be aggregated for each assignment and, a matrix developed to include all assignments collected.

Subsequent assignments in support of reforming General Education requirements were intended to also decrease time to degree completion. The last assignment requires further development of grading rubrics for anchor assignment in General Education courses, submission and discussion of syllabus of record for each general education course listed in the GER schedule, and submission of the Plan of Study for each of the undergraduate majors.

### **Outcomes of the General Education Reform Initiative**

This General Education reform effort led to the development of three training modules, a new syllabus of record, revised rubrics used to grade assignments, and a Plan of Study which captures both the 40 GERs, and a revised plan of study for every major. The Taskforce also used standardized formats and delivery schemes for the new General Education core curriculum to support student retention and graduation through the following practices:

- 1) Thirty of the forty GERs must be successfully completed in the first two years of study;
- 2) The GER reform must be driven and led by the faculty;

- 3) The GERs must have a syllabus of record;
- 4) The GERs must have grading rubrics for all assignments;
- 5) The GERs must be included in each academic Plan of Study;
- 6) The GERs must be sequenced with pre-determined grade satisfaction in ENG & MATH courses; and
- 7) The GERs must have on-going assessments of student learning using direct and indirect measures.

Three modules were developed to facilitate training and to add to the knowledge needed to understand the University's General Education reform process. The following description provides the content for each Module.

### **Module I - Understanding Guiding Principles of General Education**

- American Association for Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) – professional organization for General Education Core Development and Implementation,
- Middle States Accreditation Expectations for General Education,
- University System of Maryland (USM) Expectations for General Education,
- Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR),
- Institutional leverage for designing meaningful General Education experiences for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Students,
- Reformation of General Education at Coppin State University - “From the Past to the Present;”
- Timeline for Implementation at Coppin State University, and
- Redesign Program of Study with GE focus.

### **Module II - The General Education Journey at Coppin State University**

- General Education Taskforce composition and charge,
- Approval of Student Learning Outcomes and its match to Middle States Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs),
- Focus on two SLOs for the next three years and why; i.e., Written and Oral Communication/ Analytical Reasoning,
- Designing appropriate experiences, activities, and assignments to develop SLOs, and
- How to measure success of students' achievement of SLOs.

### **Module III - Measuring for Success**

- What are Rubrics and their use as effective measurement instruments,
- Types of Rubrics and appropriateness for specific content or SLOs,
- Designing Rubrics,
- Standardizing and institutionalizing rubrics for content and SLOs,
- Syllabus of Record as the approved document for all faculty,
- Sequencing of courses; and
- Plan of Study for each major to include the 40 GERS.

### **Progress Made but the Work Continues**

Again, substantial progress has been made with respect to assessment of learning outcomes and General Education. However, in the spirit of continuous improvement, the GER Task Force recommends the following:

After satisfying the assessment needs of General Education, the GER Task Force continued to meet with academic departments at the professional course level who had not fully integrated the SLO's into their assessment practices. A "parade" of departmental meetings occurred during AY 2013 and continued until 2015. While the SLOs of the institution were broadly accepted, some departments had begun a process of program review for low productivity programs. Acceptance of the SLOs helped propel academic units into transforming their courses as they began to realize that students were either not mastering certain content or learning objectives of their courses. Departments were not pleased with the outcomes of selected direct measures in their areas. As a result, only a handful of departments still need to finalize development of their learning objectives and the departmental and course levels.

### **Examples of Successful Assessment Models for the Institution**

#### College of Business

The College of Business recently reviewed and scaled back the number of program offerings as it began seeking accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). Eventually, accreditation was earned in the fall of 2015. Assessment practices already in progress informed the decisions of the College of Business. However, the application and preparation to meet standards articulated by ACBSP encouraged the College to enhance its assessment practices over the last two years.

The College has its own assessment committee responsible for assuring that measurable student learning is occurring in its program offerings. As it follows a Learning Outcomes Management Administration Cycle, the College looks at its data over a three-year period observing such measures as total degrees conferred, enrollment, graduation, and retention. Additionally, the average number of credits attempted, and compares the learning outcomes of Business with the rest of the University. The College of Business uses course rubrics to conduct direct assessment of the following Business SLOs:

- Critical Thinking
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Global Awareness
- Leadership
- Team Building
- Reflective Practice

Indirect measures are captured by reviewing the institutional level results of surveys such as the faculty course evaluations, senior exit survey, alumni survey, and BCSSE and NSSE survey results. A first time staff survey will be implemented in the fall of 2015.

As a result of the culture developed from the General Education experience and driven out of the desire to obtain specialized accreditation, the College of Business hired a consultant in 2012 to help develop curriculum maps and program goals. Assessment activities continued as rubric development occurred and was implemented in 2013 for all professional program level courses. The

College is now is a mode of continuous improvement and it will be visited by ACBSP on October 5, 2015.

### Academic Transformation

The Division of Academic Affairs embraced and encouraged the College of Business and other units to continue academic transformation activities which was at the time, a theme and priority of the University System of Maryland. Born out of the need to have multiple measures to assessment student learning at the professional program level, departments embarked on course redesign efforts to improve student learning, academic program delivery, and teaching and learning.

### Department of Applied Psychology and Rehabilitation Counseling

The B.S. in Psychology program decided to redesign one of its gateway courses when it was noted that students were only meeting 70% of learning competencies and many of them receiving failing grades. Since this was a gateway course into the major as well as a General Education elective, it was necessary that the program's outcomes be reviewed to determine if redesign was necessary. Preliminary results determined that a redesign was needed. There was a phenomena known as Course Drift (in academia) where course content varies by section in terms of chapters covered, delivery of material, learning objectives, students and student learning outcomes.

- There were also variations in the degree to which technology was incorporated into the traditional classroom (e.g., Tegrity lecture capture system, Blackboard course management, Clicker student response systems).
- Not all faculty were integrating the online ancillary materials which accompany the textbook; My Psychology Lab (MPL). Even among faculty who use MPL, its use varied greatly—as part of lecture (e.g., video clips), optional for students, or required assessments and activities as graded coursework.
- There were also too many course sections taught by adjunct faculty members. Only 2 of the 8 face-to-face sessions (25%) were currently taught by full-time faculty members. The two online sections are currently taught by a full-time faculty member.
- Lastly, there were poor student outcomes; too many D's, F's, and Withdrawals. Data from spring 2011 served as a baseline; All ABC grades were 67%; 13% earned a D. Thirty three (33%) of students earned grades of D, F, and W. This leads to course repetition for D (majors) or F (non-majors) grades.

Upon completion, the redesigned course was delivered during the fall 2014 semester and pass rates exceeded those from the previous course design and delivery methods. Results have also have been positive among faculty – teaching the same materials, using the same rubrics, and online course materials, including the syllabus of record. Unanticipated outcomes such as increased collegiality among adjunct faculty who often feel omitted from learning improvement processes.

### Integrated Learning Community Project

The College of Arts & Sciences and Education in conjunction with the School of Graduate Studies launched its first pilot integrated learning community during the fall 2015 semester. Driven out the results of student learning outcomes and out of the desire to capture multiple measures of assessment, the University embarked on a new learning community. The Integrated learning is another term for applied learning. Students have the opportunity to integrate and apply knowledge from various courses or discipline to solve real problems. These problems typically impact everyday living and



the well-being of our community. The exciting point is that real solutions will be developed while integrating knowledge from different disciplines (courses). It is expected that students will gain confidence in applying knowledge in a way that connects what is learned in the classroom to outside of the classroom, and better appreciate the value of teamwork in addressing concerns that affect daily living.

### School of Education

The School of Education provided training and professional development for its faculty using a day of each week called, “Faculty Fridays.” Training entailed guidance through updates to TK20. This was especially beneficial for new faculty to the School. The School has a comprehensive assessment system that collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the performance of candidates, the unit, and its programs. The unit’s assessment system is based on the conceptual framework and is aligned with state and national standards.

The assessment system is organized around Milestones: Milestone 1- 4 are developed around the initial program; Milestone 5- 8 are developed around the advanced programs. Each Milestone includes several key internal and external assessments for which candidates must demonstrate proficiency prior to moving to the next benchmark.

Significant progress has been made with respect to the Standards articulated by Middle States. The University commits to regular self-evaluation processes and invites external review and participation in its accountability processes. It is expected by the 2017-18 visit that the University will have exceeded its own expectations and goals described in its mission statement. We look forward to the Commission’s positive response to this progress report.

### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

The following summarizes recent accreditation requests by Middle States and the actions taken by the University to address the issues raised:

#### **Middle States Request: - November 21, 2013**

To accept the Periodic Review Report and to reaffirm accreditation. To request a progress report, due October 1, 2015, documenting further development and implementation of (1) a comprehensive enrollment management plan, including further steps to improve student retention, with the utilization of results in program planning and budgeting (Standard 8) and (2) systematic, sustained, and thorough use of multiple measures that include direct assessment of the achievement of learning goals in all programs including general education (Standard 12 and 14). The next evaluation visit is scheduled \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ 2017-18.

#### **Institutional Response:**

**Middle States accepted the report** on November 19, 2015, indicating the University had addressed its concerns related to Standards 3, 8, 12, and 14. The University worked with the USM Office to immediately address issues raised by the Maryland Office of Legislative Audits which noted repeat audit exceptions with some of its financial control systems and automation efforts. Furthermore, the institution provided a blueprint of a comprehensive set of enrollment management strategies by displaying college-level goals and strategies aimed not only at enrollment, but increasing retention and graduation rates.

Specific strategies included discussions on institutional programs such as the Summer Academic Success Academy (SASA), the Freshmen Male Initiative (FMI), the First-Year Experience (FYE/University College), the creation of a STEM Center within the new Science and Technology Building, and service-level programmatic strategies such as 90-hour credit audits of seniors.

Progress was also shared on the institution's progress related to assessment of student learning outcomes.

#### **Middle States Request: - December 18, 2013**

To request a supplemental information report, due January 15, 2014, addressing: (1) recent findings by the Maryland Office of Legislative Audits; and, (2) the institution's ongoing implementation of adequate institutional controls of financial, administrative, and auxiliary operations and rational and

consistent policies and procedures in place to determine allocation of assets (Standard 3). The next evaluation visit is scheduled for 2017-2018.

**Institutional Response:**

The institution submitted a letter at the request of the Commission regarding the recent audit findings by the Maryland Office of Legislative Audits. The findings were published by the Baltimore Sun and whenever regional institutions are in the public for audit exceptions, accrediting bodies as a professional courtesy, will contact the University to provide explanation. In this matter, the Maryland Office of Legislative Audits continued to identify repeat findings that were not addressed in previous audits by the University. As a result, the Commission requested a monitoring report, which was later accepted as having addressed Middle States concerns.

**Middle States Request: - March 6, 2014**

To document receipt of the supplemental information report noting that the report did not present evidence and analysis in a manner conducive to Commission review. **To request a monitoring report, due May 1, 2014**, addressing (1) recent findings by the Maryland Office of Legislative Audits; and, (2) the institution's ongoing implementation of adequate institutional controls to deal with financial, administrative, and auxiliary operations, and rational and consistent policies and procedures in place to determine allocation of assets (Standard 3). To remind the institution that a progress report is due October 1, 2015, documenting further development and implementation of (1) a comprehensive enrollment management plan, including further steps to improve student retention, with the utilization of results in program planning and budgeting (Standard 8) and (2) systematic, sustained, and thorough use of multiple measures that include direct assessment of the achievement of learning goals in all programs including general education (Standard 12 and 14). The next evaluation visit is scheduled for 2017-2018.

**Institutional Response:**

The institution provided a supplemental report that still required additional inquiry. As a result, Middle States requested a subsequent "Monitoring" report to be submitted on May 1, 2014. The institution appointed an interim Assistant Vice President for Planning and Assessment who then acquired copies of policies and practices, ensured they were well-documented and submitted a final report that was **accepted by the Commission on June 26, 2014**. The University was able to document through the Maryland Office of Legislative Audits that it had addressed the concerns of the Commission.

**The audit period in question covered a period from March 2012 to July 2015.** During that time, the audit yielded eight (8) discussion notes. The report yielded good news and denoted progress of the University in its efforts to take corrective actions to prevent future exceptions.

The university was already in a mode to address audit findings from the current period and is expected to have all of the notes addressed prior to the end of fall 2015 semester. Other corrective actions include and overall plan for the findings:

- **Key Leadership Changes:** Several key changes in leadership were been made to the university and have played an integral role in addressing audit concerns. The university recently received a new President, an interim Vice President for Administration and Finance, a Vice President for Enrollment Management, and a new Financial Aid Director in fiscal years 2014 and 2015.
- **Sustained Accountability:** The University formed a Corrective Action Group comprised of directors from each functional area identified with an audit finding. This new group meets monthly and discusses the specifics of each finding and functions as a “working group.” Each director receives support from one another as well as administration but remains responsible for addressing his or hers own finding. Each director is charged with providing an independent analysis of the issues surrounding the audit find and recommending and implementing appropriate measures to address the findings. This group monitors one another’s goals, timelines and progress on each of the corrective measures. Progress is reported to the Vice President for Administration and Finance and to the President.

**Middle States Request: - January 15, 2016**

To request a supplemental information report, due February 12, 2016, addressing the institution's voluntary withdrawal of program accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN).

**Institutional Response:**

The University submitted a supplemental report in the form of a letter, as requested by Middle States, explaining the rationale for withdrawing from ACEN.

Existing overlapping specialized accreditation cycles were inefficient to the operations of the School. In May 2015, ACEN was notified by the CSU President, Provost and CHP Dean of the plans not to seek reaffirmation with ACEN at the sunset of the institution’s current status. Later during the academic year (November 2015), CSU received written notification from CCNE that the baccalaureate degree program in nursing and the post graduate APRN certificate program received ten year accreditation. Correspondence from the institution also indicated that while Coppin had reaped benefits over the years from the specialized accreditation, that it was more appropriate for the Nursing programs to have one designation which maintains standards in the institution meets.

Additionally, while CSU’s nursing programs are able to maintain strong programs, there was still a strain on the human and financial resources within the University and within the Helene Fuld School of Nursing. As a result, nursing faculty determined that the engagement in multiple nursing accreditation process-especially during the same calendar year was not warranted.

**Frostburg State University**

## **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

### **Organizational Structure and Institutional Leadership for Assessment Activities**

With the support of the Office of Assessment and Institutional Research, the Office of the Provost directs student learning assessment at the institutional level at Frostburg State University (FSU). The President and the Executive Council provide leadership for Institutional Effectiveness (IE) assessment activities.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Institutional effectiveness at FSU is designed to support and facilitate the university's strategic plan, which was most recently updated in 2011. Frostburg is committed to achieving its mission through a planning and assessment process that evaluates progress toward meeting its strategic goals and complying with accreditation at the institutional, programmatic, and student learning levels. More specifically, the university endeavors to meet Middle States Standard 7 through a documented, organized, and sustained assessment process that provides an opportunity for improvement of programs and services. This process, in turn, provides evidence that assessment is taking place at institutional and the programmatic levels; not only on the academic side but also within divisions of the University such as student programming. Evidence of strategic planning based on assessment results is housed in CampusLabs' *Compliance Assist*, a web-based tool for documenting, tracking, and reporting unit assessment efforts.

The University has made a significant investment in institutional assessment by partnering with Campus Labs to implement a software platform that houses much of the institution's assessment efforts. The essential services delivered by this tool help build an evidence-based culture of assessment. Campus Labs provides a uniform reporting solution that allows for the collection of multiple measures throughout the institution in support of all assessment efforts.

Formed in 2010, The President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness (PACIE) has served as a consultative body to the Executive Committee. In the fall of 2015, the executive committee, based on annual reports of PACIE, determined a need to improve the process of continuous improvement and assessment. As a result, a new draft Institutional Effectiveness Plan has been developed, and input will be provided by the campus community in the fall of 2016.

The objectives of the Institutional Effectiveness Plan are to:

- Guide the University in developing institutional assessment activities to best measure effectiveness in meeting the mission, goals, and priorities

- Assist the University in identifying priorities for improvement
- Serve as a guide for analysis, decision making, and allocation of resources.

The draft Institutional Effectiveness Plan also will provide academic departments and administrative units with the consistent procedures and guidelines for setting goals, assessing and reporting progress, and using reported data for improving and enhancing the institution's programs and services. Advancing FSU through institutional assessment is important for all current members of the university community, but also includes prospective students, parents, employers, and taxpayers. The University demonstrates accountability through external agencies, including the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the Maryland Higher Education Commission, the University System of Maryland, as well as other federal and state entities and outside accrediting bodies.

### **Assessment of Student Learning**

Frostburg State University has an institutionalized process of assessing student learning outcomes in its majors through outside accrediting bodies for the Colleges of Business and Education and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' Assessment Council. Also, regular program reviews ensure that student learning outcomes are reviewed on a regular basis.

The Student Learning Assessment Advisory Group (SLAAG) is tasked with finding ways to improve student learning and the process of assessment of student learning. As part of its charge, SLAAG maintains a common language of assessment throughout the institution. It also reviews existing assessment practices and measures, monitors their effectiveness, and suggests modifications as appropriate. As mentioned above, the University has invested in Campus Labs to facilitate student learning assessment, as well as program goals, action priorities, and program review. The University has made considerable progress in institutional assessment since the 2006 Self-Study, although the leadership and the community certainly recognize that continuous improvement and refining the institutional assessment process to inform strategic planning is a priority for the institution. Frostburg's new President recently announced that a new strategic planning process will begin in fall 2016 and will be directed by the New Ad Hoc University Council.

### **General Education Assessment**

Through collaborative decision making involving the Faculty Senate, Academic Affairs, and the University Undergraduate Curriculum Requirements Committee (UUCR), the General Education Program (GEP) has been linked to the University's mission and MHEC and COMAR state-mandated parameters and requirements. The GEP consists of a minimum of 40 credit hours and is required of all students. General education requirements are clearly and accurately described in the undergraduate catalog. The Core Skills of the GEP (Composition, Advanced Writing, and Mathematics) provide opportunities for students to gain a level of fluency in the seven skills identified by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. These skills apply to coursework in a major of study. The Undergraduate Education Initiative (UEI), which helped to create the University's current General Education Program, lists seven core skills that apply to all major coursework.

## Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

### Campus Labs

Evidence of strategic planning based on assessment results is housed in CampusLabs' *Compliance Assist*, a web-based tool for documenting, tracking, and reporting unit assessment efforts. The *Compliance Assist* program is widely used for strategic planning across the divisions and in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) for student learning outcomes assessment, with most of the programs housed in CLAS filling out their Program Learning Goals there. The Colleges of Business and Education use Campus Labs' *Compliance Assist* to track their Program Learning Goals and rubric data for the Assurance of Learning report for the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International). The College of Education uses *Task Stream* to track student-level progress and uses output reports as assessment artifacts within Campus Labs' *Compliance Assist*.

### Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness

In 2011, based on its new mission statement and strategic plan, the University submitted revised Performance Accountability Report/Managing For Results (PAR/MFR) goals for review by the University System of Maryland and appropriate state agencies, which upon approval by the University's President and the Executive Committee, became the six goals that framed the current institutional outcomes established as measures of institutional achievement and performance. As the strategic plan was updated each year, the differing iterations of the strategic plan, mission, and vision since reviews started in 2010 were made available on the FSU website and thus demonstrate the strategic planning process.

Since 2010, the President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness (PACIE) has reviewed the University's strategic plan, mission, and goals annually to identify key priorities, including experiential education, student quality and persistence, facilities, and graduate preparation. Additionally, PACIE has helped to establish a reporting model so that all major divisions of the University are included in reviews of the strategic plan. This involves the expectation that data will be reported annually and effectiveness assessed by planning units.

The PACIE cycle includes an annual review and updating of the strategic planning process and of the strategic plan itself. Reporters and responsible units were identified for each action priority according to a process guided by the Strategic Plan Template, which includes the data sets and assessments used by each respective unit. During the previous two fall semesters, identified reporters and responsible teams attended monthly PACIE meetings to present the Mid-Year Progress Reports, which were collected into a single document to record advancement of action priorities. In addition to the progress on action priorities, the full Mid-Year Progress Report



includes setting benchmarks, targets, tactics, resources concerns, and data to be collected. The Vice Presidents were invited to PACIE to discuss division-level initiatives for Institutional Effectiveness and assessments.

Final Reports generally are submitted in Campus Labs' *Compliance Assist* by June 1 of every year and posted on the PACIE website. These reports were reviewed and compiled by the Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Accreditation and a member of the AIR office, then sent for review by the President and his Executive Committee. The report generated by the Executive Committee review is intended to provide input that is shared at the Summer Strategic Planning Retreats to inform the writing and design of the next year's strategic plan. The President's Executive Committee meets regularly on a bi-weekly basis and is ultimately responsible for planning and making the decisions that will frame institutional operations.

Over the last several years of PACIE reporting, it became clear that the council turned into a clearinghouse for reporting rather than a true advisory body. While many units came on board with strategic plans and action priorities, the relevancy of information being gathered hindered the ability of PACIE to offer effective recommendations for strategic planning at the University level. With a new President hired in May 2016, there will be a new strategic plan developed starting in fall 2016, with a more focused effort to engage the entire campus community within the process and to set targeted action priorities for the coming years.

### **Sustaining an Institutional Culture of Assessment**

Creating a culture of assessment across the institution has been an ongoing endeavor at Frostburg since its 2006 Middle States Self-Study. Parallel with the efforts associated with the creation of this assessment culture, a more intensified effort to sustain that culture of assessment across campus became a priority of the institution to develop procedures to ensure that results and data are being used to encourage continuous improvement. Creating PACIE and acquiring Campus Labs has helped with this process.

Since the 2011 MSCHE Periodic Review Report, the University has developed additional assessment policies and procedures and has improved the use of assessment results to help fulfill the mission and goals, as well as to facilitate the outcomes of academic and administrative and educational support departments/units.

Examples of successful use of assessment practices exist throughout the University. The College of Education and the College of Business, because of accreditation, are good examples, and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) has demonstrated significant progress given that all programs in CLAS are now assessing student learning outcomes. Athletics, the Academic Success Network, the Office of Student Wellness, Brady Health Center, and the Counseling Center, among others, show that FSU has an active culture of assessment.

Responsibility for guidance and support of ongoing assessment of academic programs, non-academic programs, and student learning outcomes is assumed by the Office of Assessment and Institutional Research. Responsibility for gathering data and conducting the actual assessment

within academic departments and non-academic units rests internally within those departments and units, in consultation with deans and supervisors.

### **Periodic Academic Program Review**

Under guidelines and policies in the Program Review Process Guide, Frostburg's Periodic Program Reviews (PPRs) serve as the foundation for assessment initiatives through the identification of program priorities, so that reviews focus on program quality, student learning outcomes, and alumni and employer satisfaction. The PPR process requires academic departments to assess the learning outcomes of their students and to evaluate the relationship between their programs and the mission of the University. They must report on student and faculty profiles, the service and professional development activities of faculty, and the adequacy of library holdings and facilities. Similarly, they must evaluate the program's course of study and curricular materials. Moreover, an evaluation must be made of student technology fluency and the application of information technology to instruction (e.g., the web enhancement of instructional materials, the deployment of online courses, and the use of interactive video).

Reviews must also include an evaluation of student learning outcomes about educational objectives, using departmental, institutional, or common indicators of student performance (Praxis, LSAT, GRE, portfolio, internship, field experience, etc.). The experiences and views of graduates, as ascertained by the Frostburg State University Alumni Survey, are also carefully evaluated. Also, the final product from external reviewers should be a report that explicitly identifies program strengths and weaknesses and suggests recommendations for program improvement.

### **Student Learning Assessment**

#### The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Over the past eight years, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has made significant progress in implementing a program of student learning assessment. Each of the undergraduate major programs within CLAS has developed learning goals that link to the University's Institutional Learning Goals. Programs have also designed and implemented student learning outcomes assessment plans, which are reviewed by at least one member of the CLAS Assessment Council. All program plans and assessment updates are then uploaded into *Compliance Assist*. Thirty-two of the 34 programs have uploaded assessment updates within the past two years into *Compliance Assist*, which collects closing the loop data relating to how programs are using results to make changes.

The CLAS Assessment Council reviews programs in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to ensure that student learning outcomes assessment is used to improve learning, pedagogy, and curricula. The College of Business documents the closing of the loop through its Assurance of Learning (AoL) report every five years as part of its accreditation process. The report is generated by the coordinator of the AoL Program and an AoL committee. In the College of Education, the Unit Assessment System is based on collaboration with the professional community. Program coordinators in the college assemble the evidence of performance and

program outcomes. In concert with departmental and program committees, the Office of Unit Assessment develops strategies to gather evidence on candidate performance. As mentioned earlier, assessment of student learning for major programs is also part of the Periodic Program Review process.

In the spring of 2015, the Senior Research Analyst for the AIR Office, the Chair of the CLAS Assessment Council, and an Associate Dean for CLAS reviewed all of the plans and assessment updates for the major programs in CLAS as well as reviews by CLAS Assessment Council members. They then completed Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes Process Rubrics for the 34 programs as well as a comprehensive report for the University's Student Learning Assessment Advisory Group (SLAAG). As part of the "assessment of assessment" process, CLAS department chairs and undergraduate program coordinators completed an Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes Process Rubric for their major programs to identify student learning outcomes assessment strengths and weaknesses, as well as improvements that need to be made in their courses, curricula, and assessment processes. This process is an important part of closing the loop and demonstrating institutional improvement.

### The College of Business

The College of Business maintains a comprehensive assessment program that links the mission of the college to the University's mission. Using both direct and indirect assessment methods, the AoL coordinator evaluates student achievement toward learning goals. Direct assessment tools include tests and a variety of course-embedded tasks and activities, with much of the embedded assessment work accomplished within capstone courses in both the bachelor's degree program and the MBA program. Embedded assessment collects information about student performance and learning that is built into course teaching-learning processes and activities and is most often reflective of knowledge acquisition and its application.

In 2005, the College of Business earned its initial extended AACSB accreditation and has earned the accreditation status of continuous improvement in 2010 and 2015. The fundamental components of the assessment program are the learning goals for the bachelor's and MBA degree programs. With a change in leadership, the summer and fall of 2011 involved an in-depth, internal audit and programmatic review, which sparked changes within the AoL program.

- *Improved Rigor in the Development of an AoL Plan and AoL Management System:* The prior system lacked internal validity to a degree that made it difficult to draw meaningful conclusions about the efficacy of the pedagogical interventions; i.e., no conclusive mechanism determined whether teaching and learning practices impacted educational outcomes. The college opted for considerably more rigor and launched several initiatives to close the existing gaps.
- *Curriculum-Driven Assurance of Learning:* In 2010, the college launched a comprehensive survey to three key stakeholders - faculty, students, and alumni - to better understand stakeholder concerns regarding the efficacy of professional development courses. The survey was discussed at an AACSB Assessment Seminar in 2013 and received positive feedback as an external "event" aimed to inform curricula and

assessment activities. Significant curricula and AoL programmatic changes occurred based on this survey feedback.

### College of Education

When the NCATE Board of Examiners visited Frostburg State University in spring 2015, they identified Areas for Improvement (AFIs) which included the need for the College of Education to develop an assessment system which would collect data, provide a means to continuously evaluate data, and then use the data to demonstrate candidate competence and provide a means to improve the performance of candidates and the unit. The Dean called upon the Associate Dean to convene a College of Education Assessment Committee with representation across the university to address the AFIs. The Action Plan developed by the Committee includes the strategies identified to achieve the goals set to meet each AFI, along with the timeline for completion, and the resources needed. The College of Education Assessment Planning Committee minutes provides an overview of the stakeholders involved and the decision-making process followed to develop and implement an assessment system. The NCATE Steering Committee minutes reflect the work of this committee to make sure that all of the resources necessary were available to implement this significant change in the College of Education. The Unit Data analysis artifact provides evidence of the Unit's regularly scheduled meetings to collect and analyze data and then to use that data to inform program improvement. The minutes and agendas of this artifact align to the Data Flow table of the College of Education Assessment System.

### **General Education Assessment**

General Education requirements are based on Code of Maryland (COMAR) regulations. The last examination of General Education, the Undergraduate Education Initiative, took place in 2004. A committee was formed in fall 2015 to review the General Education Program, and General Education assessment continues to be a University priority. In spring 2016, faculty began to develop a matrix aligning the University General Education Learning Goals and the Basic Skills identified by the Middle States with the classes in the General Education curriculum. The Student Learning Assessment Advisory Group will guide the development of the matrix and assist departments in developing rubrics based on the VALUE rubrics of the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Outcomes assessment data will be gathered by departments and used for curricular changes, and the Student Learning Assessment Advisory Group will receive reports, view assessments, and suggest changes as necessary. Recommended programmatic changes and bringing all General Education courses on board with assessment likely will be a multi-year process.

A new plan for General Education Program (GEP) assessment is being developed by the Office of the Provost with the assistance of the Offices of Assessment and Institutional Research. With faculty participation, this plan will be refined so that a comprehensive and ongoing assessment of the General Education Program can be implemented systematically across the GEP. The plan includes the following activities:

- Assessing student learning outcomes in courses in the GEP Program within a reasonable timeframe to be determined.
- Assessing student engagement through the administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) every three years. Additionally, some student engagement measures developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (VALUE rubrics) will be integrated into this assessment.

### **Assessment of General Education Outcomes**

General Education Program assessment follows guidelines and goals that are consistent with identified student learning outcomes in general education subject/skill areas and are usually completed by evaluating samples of student performance using a rubric system. Integral to its design, a program of general education must have its set of learning goals that support institutional goals and ongoing assessment. The recommendations set forth in the report of the Undergraduate Education Initiative (UEI) established a set of outcomes-oriented learning goals that serve as the foundation for assessment of student learning in general education and reference both the curricular expectations of MHEC and the institutional learning goals.

From 2010 to 2012, the Assistant Dean of CLAS completed the GEP/Core Skills Assessment to ensure that FSU is providing all students with opportunities for skill enhancement as defined by institutional, MHEC, BOR, and the Middle States guidelines. The process also mapped out the interrelationships between institutional, programmatic, and unit-level and course learning goals. The report documented mechanisms for assessing student achievement of learning outcomes; the translation of intentions into documentable realities; and an organized and systematic format for the collection and reporting of information. These annual reports contained excerpts from the sponsoring department's reviewer, references to documents that were part of the course portfolio, and evaluation by the Assistant Dean. Reports were produced in 2010, 2011, and 2012.

The Student Learning Assessment Advisory Group (SLAAG) - which includes representation from all colleges, the Office of the Provost, and the Office of Assessment and Institutional Research - discussed a plan to assign the assessment of each learning goal to an academic department and will be reviewing assessment artifacts in fall 2016. The University has joined with other USM schools in conversations sponsored by the Kirwan Center for Academic Transformation, whereby discussions of best practices can take place across the System. Additionally, a General Education Review Committee, made up of faculty and staff, has begun to reexamine the GEP. A proposal for assessing GEP courses using a model based on the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) VALUE rubrics is also under discussion.

Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

**Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

The Middle States Evaluation Team completed a site visit in March 2016. Following this visit, the MSCHE issued a warning at their session June 23, 2016, stating the following:

To warn the institution that its accreditation may be in jeopardy because of insufficient evidence that the institution is currently in compliance with Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment), and Standard 12 (General Education). To note that the institution remains accredited while on warning. To request a monitoring report, due March 1, 2017, documenting evidence that the institution has achieved and can sustain compliance with Standards 7 and 12, including but not limited to evidence of the development and implementation of (1) a documented, organized, and sustained institutional effectiveness assessment process, with evidence that assessment information is used to improve programs, services, and processes and is shared and discussed with appropriate constituents (Standard 7) and (2) assessment of general education outcomes with evidence that assessment results are utilized for curricular improvement (Standard 12). A small team visit will follow submission of the monitoring report. To direct a prompt liaison guidance visit to discuss Commission expectations. The date of the next accreditation review will be established when accreditation is reaffirmed.

Regarding Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment), FSU has begun working on further documentation of efforts to 1) assess the effectiveness of our institutional operations; 2) improve operations where the University has found a need for improvement, and 3) communicate these efforts to all constituencies on campus. At the time of the evaluation team visit, FSU was at the height of its transition in senior leadership, with some interim appointments, including the President, which to an extent hampered initial plans for addressing this Standard.

Concerning Standard 12 (General Education), Dr. Evan Offstein, Professor of Management, has agreed to work with the Provost's Office and lead the faculty this upcoming year to address the need for a routine and sustainable process of assessing and improving general education learning outcomes. Dr. Offstein's experience with the establishment of a well-designed assessment program in the College of Business will serve the University well in this effort. Frostburg has been collecting information on student learning outcomes and will include evidence of how these data are informing the faculty as they enhance the general education experience at FSU.

**Salisbury University**

## Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

### Standard 7

Faculty, staff, administration and students have been engaged in assessment and institutional effectiveness activities through General Education, as a part of academic programming and within administrative departments. There is a clear commitment to accomplishing the goals set forth in the [SU 2014-2018 Strategic Plan](#). Since 2014, the University has taken great strides to develop the Strategic Planning and Budgeting System (SPBS) to assist the Executive Staff and administrative units in identifying strategic initiatives, linking these initiatives to the *Strategic Plan*, identifying necessary resources and implementation leaders, and tracking progress toward successful execution.

The Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee (SPBC), with representation from the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Student Government Association, all members of the Executive Staff and key administrative leaders, is charged with reviewing the University's *Strategic Plan* and ensuring the relevancy of institutional goals and that continuous progress is being made. In collaboration with the Office of the Provost, the interim Vice President of Administration and Finance, and the Special Assistant to the President for Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, the SPBC provides oversight for the Strategic Planning and Budgeting System (SPBS). The SPBS was developed directly from challenges the University faced when tracking and reporting progress toward the *2009-2013 Strategic Plan* goals. Previously, Vice Presidents would survey their direct reports annually to find out which *Strategic Plan* goals they had worked on and what progress had been made. The variety in reporting methods made it challenging and time-consuming to compile a comprehensive progress update (see [Salisbury University 2009-2013 Strategic Plan - 2010 Update](#) and [Salisbury University 2009-2013 Strategic Plan - Final Update](#) for examples of previous updates). While the final product was used to inform resource allocation and strategic initiatives in the upcoming fiscal year, the University was in need of a more efficient and transparent process.

The Executive Staff will identify an annual process for campus offices to update their progress toward accomplishing strategic initiatives identified in the SPBS and for budget allocation requests and decisions. Progress will be measured using key performance indicators and data deemed to be an appropriate measure of growth.

Several strategies are used to assess the effectiveness of the range of programs, services and administrative units at SU. Many of the planning processes routinely conducted (e.g., Enrollment Management, Facilities, Information Technology, Student Affairs, etc.) involve collaboration across campus. Two of the main annual evaluations of institutional effectiveness, as measured by the State and the University System of Maryland (USM), are the [Performance Accountability Report](#) and the [Dashboard Indicators](#).



Annually, the USM prepares a standard list of [Dashboard Indicators](#) (DBIs) for each USM campus. These DBIs allow the Board of Regents (BOR) to examine progress made by each campus toward achieving the goals identified in the [University System of Maryland Strategic Plan 2010-2020](#). As SU's *Strategic Plan* has been linked to the USM strategic goals (see Chapter 6), the DBIs are also a good tool for SU to use to assess our progress toward accomplishing institutional goals. The data reported in the DBIs includes indicators related to facilities renewal, space utilization, enrollment, financial aid, student success, economic development, fiscal responsibility and faculty.

Additionally, SU utilizes the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and Department of Budget and Management (DBM) [Performance Accountability Report](#) (PAR) as a metric of institutional effectiveness. In the PAR, each institution describes its mission, accountability goals, objectives and performance measures/assessments. Additionally, universities must describe their cost-containment efforts and link these efforts to actual dollars saved. Throughout the PAR, there is evidence of intentional strategies developed to achieve the goals outlined in the *2013-2017 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education* and SU's *Strategic Plan*. Much like the DBIs, SU must review its goals, objectives and performance measures annually for the PAR and provide data to demonstrate progress toward achieving those goals.

#### **Standards 12 and 14**

SU has intentionally worked toward creating a culture of assessment among faculty, staff and students and to create a sustainable, useful, cost-effective, accurate, planned and organized assessment process. In fact, during its 2016 Self-Study, SU's Middle States visiting team commended the institution on creating a culture of assessment campus-wide. SU created an elected Faculty Senate Assessment Committee, developed a revision of the [Academic Program Review](#) (APR) process with an emphasis on student learning assessment and completed a comprehensive review of the Student Learning Goals (SLGs) and the alignment of those goals with the General Education curriculum. Additionally, a comprehensive General Education assessment timeline was developed and adopted (see Appendix A). To date, the University has successfully collected data according to the General Education assessment timeline.

The University Academic Assessment Committee (UAAC) has been an official Faculty Senate committee since academic year 2007-2008. The Faculty Senate Bylaws articulate the primary responsibilities of the UAAC:

“The UAAC shall serve as both an advisory and an assessment coordination body on all matters related to academic assessment at Salisbury University as a whole. The UAAC shall make recommendations to the Faculty Senate concerning the development and implementation of assessment options relevant to instruction and learning outcomes. The UAAC shall concern itself with the development, implementation and evolution of a comprehensive academic outcomes assessment plan.”

One of the most time-consuming duties of the UAAC is to articulate a coherent plan for ongoing assessment of the General Education curriculum, described in greater detail in the General Education Assessment section below. The UAAC provides updates to the Faculty Senate regarding assessment efforts, results and plans on a semester basis. The Faculty Senate provides feedback and endorsements of the committee's works.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

In addition to the UAAC and Faculty Senate involvement in assessment activities, faculty across campus participated in several assessment workshops and retreats (see the [Assessment Diagram](#)). Similarly, the Special Assistant to the President for Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment routinely meets with faculty at all-faculty meetings organized by each school Dean.

### **Standard 7**

#### ***Development of the Strategic Planning and Budgeting System***

In 2014, the Associate Provost and the Special Assistant to the President for Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment began working with the Web Development Office to create an online system to improve the efficiency of requesting, reviewing and approving funding for initiatives related to the University's *Strategic Plan*. The resulting Strategic Planning and Budgeting System (SPBS) can be viewed by all faculty, staff and students. To ensure the relevance of initiatives being entered into the SPBS, a select set of campus offices, listed in the SPBS, are provided access to add and modify *Strategic Plan* initiatives. These offices use the SPBS to input strategic initiatives relevant to their unit, link the initiative(s) to the pertinent *Strategic Plan* goal(s), identify key performance success indicators, map out projected milestones and associated personnel, and estimate budget costs. This information can then be used by the Executive Staff to assist with budget decisions. Additionally, key offices use the SPBS on an annual basis to update their progress by inputting actual milestones accomplished and costs.

### **Standards 12 and 14**

A visual depiction of the assessment accomplishments, particularly in the area of general education, that have occurred at SU can be found on the [Assessment Diagram](#). Some of the major accomplishments since 2011 include:

- 2011 - General Education data collection began;
- 2013 - UAAC recommends exploring additional methods of General Education data collection to improve the validity and reliability of assessment scores;
- 2014 - A review of standardized instruments was conducted to find assessments linked to SU's General Education Student Learning Outcomes; and
- 2015 - SU holds its inaugural GULL (Gaining Understanding as a Lifelong Learner) Week assessment.

#### ***Development of an Institution-wide Assessment Week***

Since the original approval of the course-embedded assessment pilot in 2010, the University regularly evaluates the effectiveness of the General Education assessment model it uses. The model has continued to evolve and improve to meet the needs of the University. The foundation of the course-embedded assessment was based on the alignment of the General Education

Student Learning Goals and Outcomes with the General Education curriculum. During SU's 2011 PRR, the Commission commended the University's efforts to align the General Education curriculum with its student learning goals and outcomes. In fall 2011, SU began collecting assessment data according to the aforementioned General Education assessment plan timeline. Through the course-embedded assessment model, the University has collected data on many of the General Education student learning goals. The collection of data at the course-level, including first-time and transfer students, has been useful in assessing student writing, interpersonal communication, critical thinking and information literacy. But, it has presented challenges to the collection of valid and reliable data on quantitative literacy, speaking, and biological and physical sciences. These challenges and opportunities have led the UARA office and the UAAC to re-imagine methods for collecting General Education data.

#### *GULL Week*

During 2013-14, the UAAC shared concerns about the course-embedded assessment with the Faculty Senate and provided additional suggestions for collecting data in its annual update report. In these reports, the UAAC recommended incorporating the use of an assessment window to collect General Education assessment data outside of General Education courses. The UAAC and UARA moved forward with this recommendation and in fall 2014 began planning a General Education assessment event known as Gaining Understanding as a Lifelong Learner (GULL) Week. GULL Week is a weeklong assessment window where students have the opportunity to show what they know and demonstrate their proficiency in various General Education areas. To encourage student participation, UARA staff met with numerous student and faculty groups to promote the importance of student participation. As GULL Week was not mandatory, faculty and student buy-in were especially important. A previous standardized assessment effort at SU resulted in very low student participation. In April 2005, a sample of juniors and seniors took the Educational Testing Service's Academic Profile test to evaluate critical analysis and reasoning and quantitative reasoning. A total of 121 students participated and were provided with a \$20 gift certificate to the SU Bookstore for their contribution. For the spring 2015 GULL Week assessment, the UARA office garnered faculty and student interest through promotion, communication, and competition. The communication strategy emphasized participation as a way to demonstrate school spirit and give back to the campus. An SU student designed a GULL Week t-shirt that all participating students received after completing their assessment session. Faculty and students were told that the information gathered during GULL Week would be used to better understand the skills that students develop during their time at SU. In addition, the results would be used to enhance SU's General Education program. To further increase school spirit and create a healthy sense of competition, the School (i.e., Fulton, Henson, Perdue or Seidel) that had the highest percentage of its majors participating would be recognized as the GULL Week Champions. The Champions would be awarded a banner and trophy as well as a school photo with Sammy the Sea Gull.

During spring 2015, General Education skills in civilization, contemporary global issues, health and wellness, math, science, social and behavioral science, and visual and performing arts were assessed during GULL Week. The skills selected for the spring 2015 assessment were based on the current General Education Curriculum Alignment, Assessment Timeline and Action Plan and the need to re-assess math and science skills to improve the validity and reliability of test scores. General Education assessment reports for Quantitative Literacy and Biological and Physical Sciences provided data in support of a reassessment. To ensure that the assessment instruments

being selected were properly aligned with the General Education student learning outcomes, multiple levels of review were performed. Assessment professionals within UARA provided the first level of review and comparison of the test blueprints with SU's student learning outcomes. Next, faculty experts were invited to review the assessment instruments within their own disciplines and provide feedback.

Thanks to the promotional efforts, a large cohort of faculty offered students extra credit for their participation in the spring 2015 GULL Week assessment. Additionally, the residence halls, Greek Life and other student groups held their own competitions, spurring increased interest and participation in GULL Week. As a result, 845 undergraduate students, 11% of the undergraduate student population, voluntarily participated in the spring 2015 GULL Week. Nearly 27% of GULL Week participants were admitted to SU as transfer students with the remainder of the sample starting at SU as freshmen. Participating students selected a testing session (60-75 minutes) that was convenient for them and without prior knowledge of the assessment instruments being administered. The success of the spring 2015 GULL Week assessment has resulted in a replication of GULL Week for fall 2015 and spring 2016.

During fall 2015, SU assessed social responsibility, humane values, intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, aesthetic values, second culture, interdependence among disciplines and information literacy. A total of 1,359 undergraduate students, more than 17% of all undergraduates, participated in the fall 2015 GULL Week assessment. During spring 2016, SU utilized GULL week to assess critical thinking, interpersonal communication and student satisfaction. A total of 1,179 undergraduate students, nearly 16% of all undergraduates, participated in the spring 2016 GULL Week assessment. GULL Week will continue this fall 2016 with the fourth widespread data collection.

### ***Review and Planned Re-imagining of the General Education Curriculum***

The assessment of our General Education student learning outcomes revealed that our current program may not allow students to achieve the learning goals at the level we would expect. Recognizing that it was time to engage in a campus-wide analysis of General Education, the Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs consulted with the Faculty Senate and in fall 2014 called for the creation of a steering committee to examine the program and to assess whether it should be changed. A [General Education Review](#) Committee was formed and began what is expected to be a two-year process to study best practices at peer institutions and to make recommendations for SU.

The composition of the General Education Review team reflects the importance of shared governance and the faculty's role as leaders in curriculum development, and is modeled in many ways after the MSCHE accreditation effort. A steering committee with representatives from faculty in all four schools is co-chaired by a member of the faculty and the Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs. The review team also includes five working groups of faculty: Assessment, Student Learning Outcomes, Innovation in General Education, Communication, and Policies. The Steering Committee asked for volunteers to join the working groups, and 34 faculty stepped forward. This level of faculty involvement demonstrates their strong interest in General Education and also the University's commitment to having educational curricula designed, maintained and updated by highly qualified professionals.

During summer and fall 2015, the Review team conducted surveys with alumni, students and faculty to determine perceptions of the importance of a variety of General Education skills. The committee received responses from 417 alumni, 330 faculty and 1,361 students. One consistent finding across all three surveys was the importance of personal and professional integrity as a component of higher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The survey results were shared with the Faculty Senate and various other groups during the fall 2015 semester. The General Education Review team will utilize the results to make General Education student learning goal recommendations to the faculty. The General Education Review team plans to present a white paper detailing all the work of the committee thus far during fall 2016. The document contains 10 points of consensus believed necessary to build a successful general education program at SU. A successful general education program at SU must:

- provide a distinctive SU experience for all undergraduate students, including transfers, native freshmen, and those with and without previously earned credit.
- be an experience larger than the sum of its parts, embracing the developmental progress and intellectual growth of our students throughout the duration of their undergraduate careers.
- connect with the challenges and opportunities of the contemporary world that our students will take up as individuals, professionals, and citizens.
- guarantee an alignment of the University mission statement with program principles, learning goals, and outcomes.
- clearly articulate and effectively communicate its purpose and significance.
- work with certain givens, such as compliance with the Code of Maryland (COMAR), which requires that undergraduates take courses across a range of disciplines.
- recognize that “thematic” and “distributional” approaches co-exist among peer institutions, particularly among USM institutions.
- correspond closely to what our faculty colleagues across the United States have identified as critical to the undergraduate experience such as those identified by the Liberal Education, America’s Promise (LEAP) project of the American Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).
- include regular maintenance, review, and assessment to ensure that it remains a living, breathing, and vital experience for the SU community.
- take into account feedback from faculty, students, and alumni.

We are confident that seeing this process through to completion will inspire and invigorate our community and that the result will be both powerful for and popular with students. We are equally confident that this process carries great potential for faculty: for professional development and renewal, in opportunities for new collaborations, and through an increased sense of intellectual community.

### ***Increased Financial Support for Assessment***

The administration has been supportive of assessment efforts and has highlighted related goals in the *2009-2013* and *2014-2018 Strategic Plans*. Based on the growing assessment efforts and growing data requirements, the Office of University Analysis, Reporting and Assessment (UARA) was granted two additional positions (i.e., Assessment Coordinator and Data Management Specialist) to support these efforts. The Provost’s Office provided financial support

for General Education assessment efforts by funding four separate rating sessions during the course-embedded assessment. Through these rating sessions, the University trained faculty on how to use and apply University-developed rubrics to assess reading, writing, critical thinking, information literacy and second language or culture skills. The Provost's Office also provided funding for a graduate assistant (GA) in the UARA Office for academic year 2012-13. The GA assisted with data collection and analysis for the interpersonal communication, listening and speaking General Education goals. Additionally, based on a recommendation from the UAAC and UARA, the Provost's Office provided course release time for a faculty member to serve as a faculty assessment fellow. More recently, UARA was provided with a separate budget to fund GULL Week and other assessment initiatives.

**Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

SU has no pending Middle States actions. This section does not need to be completed.

## Appendix A General Education Assessment Plan

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS- General Education student learning goals.	TIMELINE				
SKILLS	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1. <b>Critical Thinking</b> - Acquire abilities to engage in independent and creative thinking and solve problems effectively.			X		
2. <b>Command of Language</b> - Acquire abilities to communicate effectively—including reading, writing, listening and speaking. (36 Outcomes to 10 Outcomes)					
2a. Reading (12 Outcomes to 2 Outcomes)	X				
2b. Writing (22 Outcomes to 4 Outcomes)	X				
2c. Speaking (4 Outcomes to 3 Outcomes)		X			
2d. Listening (3 Outcomes to 1 Outcome)		X			
3. <b>Quantitative Literacy</b> - Acquire abilities to reason mathematically. (3 Outcomes to 4 Outcomes)	X				
4. <b>Information Literacy</b> - Acquire abilities to use libraries, computer applications and emerging technologies. (21 Outcomes to 6 Outcomes)					
4a. Use of Libraries (10 Outcomes to 2 Outcomes)			X		
4b. Use of computer applications and emerging technologies (11 Outcomes to 4 Outcomes)			X		
5. <b>Interpersonal Communication</b> - Acquire abilities to relate to and work effectively with diverse groups of people. (4 Outcomes to 1 Outcome)		X			

KNOWLEDGE	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
<b>1. Breadth of Knowledge</b> (37 Outcomes to Outcomes 25)					
1a. Visual and Performing Arts (2 Outcomes to 2 Outcomes)				X	
1b. Literature (4 Outcomes to 3 Outcomes)				X	
1c. Civilization (6 Outcomes to 5 Outcomes)				X	
1d. Contemporary Global Issues (11 Outcomes to 5 Outcomes)				X	
1e. Second Language or Culture (4 Outcomes)			X		
1f. Mathematics (3 Outcomes to 2 Outcomes)	X				
1g. Social and Behavioral Sciences (5 Outcomes to 3 Outcomes)				X	
1h. Biological and Physical Sciences (6 Outcomes to 5 Outcomes)		X			
<b>2. Interdependence among Disciplines</b> (9 Outcomes to 1 Outcome)					X



<b>DISPOSITIONS</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
<b>1. Social Responsibility</b> <i>(4 Outcomes to 2 Outcomes)</i>					<b>X</b>
<b>2. Humane Values</b> <i>(2 Outcomes to 1 Outcome)</i>					<b>X</b>
<b>3. Intellectual Curiosity</b> <i>(5 Outcomes to 2 Outcomes)</i>					<b>X</b>
<b>4. Aesthetic Values</b> <i>(1 Outcome to 1 Outcome)</i>					<b>X</b>
<b>5. Wellness</b> <i>(3 Outcomes to 1 Outcome)</i>					<b>X</b>

**Towson University**

## Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

Student learning includes the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personal development attained through curricular, co-curricular, and out-of-class learning experiences. The institutional level learning outcomes of Towson University include the following:

- Information literacy and technological competency
- Effective communication
- Critical analysis and reasoning
- Specialized knowledge in defined fields
- Working in multifaceted work environments
- Local and global citizenship and leadership

In AY 2011-2012, the University Core Curriculum (UCC) was introduced, which replaced the previous General Education program. The UCC is designed to provide students with different approaches to learning, different disciplinary frameworks for analysis, and different perspectives on issues and beliefs. The requirements of the UCC align with the university's mission and reflect current assumptions about 21st century learning goals for undergraduate education. In 2012 (and updated in 2014) all programs were required to show how their program-specific student learning outcomes related to institutional outcomes. UCC (i.e., general education) outcomes have also been mapped to the institutional level learning outcomes at the category and course levels. In addition, student learning outcomes have been embedded in a number of key materials and web pages, including course syllabi and the *Undergraduate* and *Graduate Catalogs*.

**Organization of Assessment:** Assessment activities at Towson University are organized on both a centralized and decentralized basis. The Office of Academic Assessment within the Division of Academic Affairs coordinates Towson University's assessment processes focusing on student learning outcomes. Assessment of student learning occurs at the course, program (including UCC) and institutional levels and encompasses academic and co-curricular activities. Intermediate to the central administration and individual units (e.g., departments, colleges and other administrative units) is the University Assessment Council and its subcommittees which provide guidance, structure, and support for the assessment of student learning throughout the institution. Its members serve as consultants and advisors on assessment to colleagues and represent respective college councils and other constituent groups on matters of assessment policy and practice. The Core Curriculum Reporting Committee oversees UCC course approval and recertification processes, both of which rely on assessment procedures.

**Overview of Student Learning Assessment:** Assessment of program and UCC learning outcomes serve as the central elements of assessment reporting on student learning (i.e., corresponding to Middle States Standards 12 & 14). Assessment of student learning outcomes takes place in two related processes focusing at the program and course levels: assessment of academic program student learning outcomes, and assessment of UCC (general education) outcomes. These assessment processes include a planning phase with the development of an

assessment plan/overview and a reporting/improvement phase with the development of an assessment report for each identified outcome. Assessment occurs over an extended period of time.

**Program Reviews:** The University System of Maryland requires a program review by external reviewers for all academic degree programs every seven years. The 7-Year Program Review process consists of an internal self-study of each program within the context of the discipline as a whole and the department in which it resides. Each review typically includes a self-study, feedback from an external reviewer, and a comprehensive plan for improvement. The primary goal of the academic program review is to evaluate the quality of undergraduate and graduate programs within the context of departmental structures. These reviews provide an informed overview of the strengths, problems, and needs of academic departments. The assessment processes are decentralized in nature as the identification of outcomes, assessment measures, targeted performance and the schedule of assessment activities are local decisions with approval occurring within the organizational unit. At least two measures must be identified for each outcome (one must be a direct measure). Reporting occurs annually for at least one outcome per year as long as the assessment schedule allows for two data collections minimum for each measure during the 7-year assessment cycle. The annual reporting process includes a peer review critique at the end of the reporting cycle in a Program Assessment Day. All programs participate in Program Assessment Day except for those that are involved in developing self-studies for the 7-Year Program Review process.

**Review of University Core Curriculum:** The UCC comprises 14 categories, each with a series of unique student learning objectives. While common learning outcomes have been identified for each UCC category, the assessment processes are decentralized since the assessment measures, targeted performance and the schedule of assessment activities are local decisions with approval occurring within the department or college. At least two measures must be identified for each outcome (one must be a direct measure). Reporting occurs annually for at least one outcome per year as long as the assessment schedule allows for at least two data collections for each measure during the 7-year assessment/recertification cycle. These cycles are rotated so that all courses in two UCC categories have a peer review critique during a Core Curriculum Assessment Day that occurs at the end of their assigned reporting cycle. Annual assessment data and the peer review serve as key criteria for determining whether individual courses remain certified for their assigned UCC category.

**Institutional Level Assessment:** The University submits reports to the Maryland Department of Budget and Management (DBM) for the annual *Managing for Results (MFR)* accountability process, as well as the Maryland Higher Education Commission's (MHEC) Performance Accountability reporting system. The benchmarks included in these reports serve as institutional level benchmarks for assessment purposes. These benchmarks are divided into three categories: Peer Performance (which includes 13 benchmarks), Managing for Results (that includes 16 benchmarks), and Dashboard Indicators (that comprise 21 benchmarks). This level of assessment corresponds primarily with Middle States Standard 7.

**Unit Level Assessment:** All academic programs participate in an extensive review every seven years. Administrative units, including academic colleges and departments, participate in annual unit level assessment activities. The assessment process is decentralized in nature as the identification of objectives and outcomes, assessment measures, targeted performance and the schedule of assessment activities is a local decision with approval occurring within the

organizational unit. A minimum number of outcomes and objectives must be identified for review during that assessment cycle. At least two measures must be identified for each outcome (one must be a direct measure). Reporting occurs annually for at least one outcome per year as long as the assessment schedule allows for at least two data collections for each measure during the assessment cycle. The annual reporting process includes a peer review critique at the end of the reporting cycle during a campus-wide Unit Level Assessment Day. The ratings generated by this process, along with qualitative feedback, are designed to give users a sense of where they are in the development of a robust assessment process and assure that assessment units demonstrate continuous improvement in student learning and/or planning. Assessment Day is also an important opportunity to share experiences and examine assessment processes across the campus. Elements of unit level assessment address Middle States Standard 7 as well as Standard 14.

### **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed six pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

Since the 2011 Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) decennial visit Towson University has enhanced three interrelated areas during the past five years (i.e., strategic planning, assessment, and the organizational infrastructure designed to address enrollment growth). These efforts have been continued during multiple key leadership transitions.

In 2012, Towson University updated its mission statement and revised the institution's strategic plan, *TU2020*. The strategic plan identified priorities that represent Towson's existing and emerging strengths and framed the institution's growth into the future. Towson University's mission statement was reexamined in 2014 in response to a request from the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to have institutions examine their mission statements and in light of an update to the state master plan, *Maryland Ready*. The revision process involved the entire campus resulting in an updated mission statement that more clearly focuses on student learning, with specific institutional goals and student learning outcomes being articulated in separate sections highlighting their importance. At the same time, a refinement of the strategic plan resulted in a consolidation of priorities from ten to eight areas.

All programs were asked to demonstrate how their program specific student learning outcomes were aligned with the institutional outcomes articulated in 2012 plan. The mapping process was updated in fall 2014 to reflect the changes in the language of the learning outcomes. In addition, general education outcomes (referred to at Towson University as the University Core) have also been mapped to the institutional level learning outcomes at the category and course levels. Student learning outcomes have been embedded in a number of key materials and web pages, including the *Undergraduate* and *Graduate Catalogs*., where program specific learning outcomes were added effective fall 2015.

**Culture of Assessment:** As part of Towson University's most recent decennial review process,

which culminated in 2011, our MSCHE *Self-Study* identified nine recommendations that focused on assessment activities. These recommendations were categorized further by mission and student learning. Three recommendations focused on assessment as it relates to Towson University’s mission. These included:

<b>Culture of Assessment - Mission Focus</b>
That Towson University includes in its mission statement a student-learning focus that establishes assessable <del>learning goals across the curriculum and co-curricular offerings</del> .
That Towson University makes student learning outcomes explicit in admissions and marketing materials in print as well as on the website.
That Towson University identifies university-wide student learning outcomes that link the University Core <del>learning outcomes to those of majors and minors</del> .

Six recommendations focused on enhancing the culture of assessment related to student learning.

<b>Culture of Assessment - Student Learning</b>
That in the new strategic plan, Towson University articulates the learning outcomes embedded in the previous strategic plan into assessable outcomes that measure student learning and engagement across all units and divisions of the university.
That Towson University creates consistency across colleges, departments, the University Curriculum Committee, and the Faculty Handbook regarding the protocols for articulating and communicating student learning outcomes and the assessment of student learning in courses and programs.
That Towson University expands the opportunities for students to engage in experiential academic learning, with specified measureable outcomes that are tracked and assessed, as part of its core commitment to civic
That Towson University develops guidelines and practices geared toward improving transfer student satisfaction, GPA, and graduation rates, and by implementing the proposed advising specifically targeted for
That Towson University assesses the preparedness of all transfer students for college-level work using multiple assessment modalities.
That Towson University assesses the effectiveness of developmental courses measured against students’ GPAs, retention, and time to graduation as part of a long-range plan to enhance student learning for underprepared <del>students</del> .

As noted above, the revised Towson University mission statement now includes specific learning outcomes. These outcomes are addressed via program and course level assessment processes at the institution. The first priority of the reviewed strategic plan (*TU2020*) focused on high level institutional goals designed to further address student learning.

Towson University’s culture of assessment is evident across all divisions and units, and documents the institution’s success in the use and sharing of data. Whether the exchanges occur within one of the several assessment committees, peer review, assessment day, or in our documentation tool, *Compliance Assist*, these activities show cross-divisional activities and decision making in a way not evident before. The campus has been heavily involved in developing a culture of assessment at all levels where there is not only ownership, but integration of annual data, surveys, evaluations and reporting processes. We are still determining how to reward involvement in assessment leadership roles and/or best practices in terms of faculty promotion and tenure.

**Academic Excellence & Student Success:** Towson University’s top priority, academic excellence and student success, is dependent on the teaching and mentorship of faculty.

Academic innovation through academic transformation and course redesign are central to enabling student success. We are committed to the continuous improvement of programming, curricular and co-curricular offerings to ensure students have outstanding educational experiences and opportunities.

- *Assess and strengthen academic programs to ensure students develop Towson University's Learning Outcomes.*
- Review and evaluate curriculum to ensure challenging content that addresses workforce and geographic demands.
- Include diverse perspectives across the curriculum.
- Support students and faculty in their quest for focused international experiences and through the inclusion of global awareness in the curriculum.
- *Respond to student needs to strengthen student satisfaction and success.*
- Identify and respond to students' needs and promote access and availability of services, resources and technology.
- Develop innovative approaches to provide student support.
- Support the Library's role in academic support, student development and campus life.
- Improve recruitment, marketing and outreach to make Towson University a first choice institution for an increasing percentage of student
- *Optimize retention and time to graduation for all students.*
- Strengthen student advising.
- Implement an early warning system to assist students throughout their academic career.
- *Provide support programs for student populations with non-traditional needs.*
- Identify and address needs of non-traditional students.
- Support transfer student transition through model programs focusing on orientation and advising.

Strategic planning initiatives are monitored as part of the Towson University institutional effectiveness process. The first complete cycle of data collection took place in 2014. An annual report summarizing these efforts is now prepared each year in June.

The focus on student learning has provided the institution with additional opportunities to articulate student learning outcomes. As noted In Part 1 above, the Towson University mission includes six campus-wide learning outcomes. The mission statement also summarizes institutional objectives that are expanded upon via the strategic planning process, as well as the unit and program assessment processes. The relationships between these various processes as well as the need to ensure consistent articulation of institutional expectations require a common understanding of these expectations and creating consistent use of terminology in articulating student learning outcomes.

Several initiatives began in 2011 regarding codification of various policies and procedures and creating more efficiency and access to information sources for the campus community. Key documents were consolidated and placed on the Faculty Resources web page. This repository includes documentation of the curricular approval processes (both internal and external), and contains a glossary of key terms associated with curricular development. The *Faculty Handbook* was updated and formatted as an electronic document and added to the *Faculty Resources* repository. As a part of that process, the syllabus template was revised to include student learning outcomes. Courses meeting general education requirements (referred to at Towson University as the University Core) are required to include the category-based learning outcomes.

The learning outcomes of the University Core are now displayed on the university's website.

Since 2015, the *Undergraduate Catalog* includes the six institutional learning outcomes in the mission statement, the goals and outcomes of the University Core, and the student learning outcomes for each program. The *Graduate Catalog* includes the six institutional learning outcomes in the mission statement as well as the student learning outcomes for each program.

**Overview of Student Learning Assessment:** Assessment of program and UCC learning outcomes serve as the central elements of assessment reporting on student learning (i.e., corresponding to Middle States Standards 12 & 14). Assessment of student learning outcomes takes place in two related processes focusing at the program and course levels: assessment of academic program student learning outcomes, and assessment of UCC (general education) outcomes. These assessment processes include a planning phase with the development of an assessment plan/overview and a reporting/improvement phase with the development of an assessment report for each identified outcome. Assessment occurs over an extended period of time. Prior to 2014, program and course learning outcomes were reviewed and approved as a part of the assessment process, instead of the curricular processes. In an effort to create a more authentic assessment process that links curriculum and assessment, approval of assessment outcomes and assessment plans was embedded in departmental and college level curricular approval processes.

Assessment of program and UCC learning outcomes serve as the central elements of assessment reporting on student learning. Prior to 2014, program and course learning outcomes were reviewed and approved as a part of the assessment process, instead of the curricular processes. In an effort to create a more authentic assessment process that links curriculum and assessment, approval of assessment outcomes and assessment plans was embedded in departmental and college level curricular approval processes. The complete list of program learning outcomes appears in the catalogs.

The decennial review self-study process resulted in several recommendations pertaining to the need for additional assessment analysis. One of the recommendations focused on assessing the effectiveness of developmental courses to ensure their effectiveness. Towson University only offers two developmental courses in math. Prior to spring 2014, students were placed in these courses based on SAT scores. An in-house placement test was developed and piloted in spring 2014 and campus-wide use began in fall 2014. The Institutional Research Office and the Department of Mathematics are conducting an evaluation of student success in next level courses to determine the effectiveness of the test for the department.

Another of the institutional priorities articulated in the Strategic Plan (*TU2020*) focused on identifying increased opportunities for internship and experiential learning, including those that focus on civic engagement. The ability to monitor increases in the opportunities for this type of experience required the creation of a new coding field in the *PeopleSoft* enterprise system to capture the number of experiences available to students. This change was added in 2015 and the first year of data should be available in summer 2016. In addition, two questions were added to the Survey of Graduating Seniors beginning in spring 2014 to capture self-reported data on student involvement in internship/experiential learning opportunities. Assessment of this priority also occurs on an annual basis through the unit and program assessment processes.

Towson University's achievement in civic engagement activities is exhibited through receipt of the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification in 2015. Towson University intentionally applies a strategy to promote division, college and departmental level engagement, allowing each



to implement initiatives and policies aligned with their goals. In support of the institutional mission, the university has multiple offices, staff, resources and structures responsible for community engagement. The Office of Civic Engagement and Leadership was established in 2012 to engage students in the campus and greater community, formalizing initiatives that began in 2008. Through service learning, political engagement activities, environmental initiatives and other events designed to raise awareness about current events and world issues, Towson University students are encouraged to be active participants in their local, regional and global communities. The Director of Civic Engagement and Leadership and a Service Learning Coordinator serve as staff support to civic engagement initiatives. Assessment of these activities occurs on an annual basis through the unit and program assessment processes.

Two of the *Self-Study* recommendations focused on assessment activities as they relate to transfer populations. One of the recommendations related to the institution's ability to assess the preparedness of all transfer students for college-level work using multiple assessment modalities. Further examination of the recommendation and narrative in the *Self-Study* indicated the focus of concern is international transfer populations. Towson University continues to use multiple methodologies to assess college readiness for this population. In addition, students, for whom English is a second language, are assessed in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and math.

The second transfer recommendation focused on overall satisfaction of transfer students. A *Transfer Student Needs and Perceptions* survey instrument was developed to assess the experiences and needs of incoming transfer students to better align programs and services. At the conclusion of each day of the Transfer Program Part I, participating students evaluate their day. Data from each day is shared with the associate deans in the colleges to facilitate improvements as needed.

Towson University also began participating in the Student Achievement Measure (SAM) project in 2013 to track student movement across postsecondary institutions to provide a more complete picture of undergraduate student progress and completion within the higher education system.

To summarize, in a relatively short period of time, Towson University has made considerable progress in instilling a campus-wide culture of assessment that is evident across all divisions and units. These assessment activities allow us to document the institution's success in achieving student learning outcomes and use this data to guide a process of continuous improvement. Through the efforts within individual units, and the coordinated exchanges which occur within assessment committees, peer reviews, and assessment days, these activities show cross-divisional activities and decision making in a way not evident before. The campus has been heavily involved in developing a culture of assessment at all levels where there is not only ownership, but integration of annual data, surveys, evaluations and reporting processes.

Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

Towson University's most recent decennial review process culminated in 2011 following a period of extensive review and reflection. The *Self-Study* identified two key issues to which the institution needed to pay particular attention: 1) the absence of university-wide student learning goals, and 2) the lack of an integrated university-wide assessment plan that holds every division/department accountable.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) visiting team identified a single recommendation requiring follow-up action as a result of review of the *Self-Study* and subsequent discussions during the site visit in spring 2010. As a result of a complex substantive change request requiring additional documentation, the decision to reaffirm accreditation was delayed until November 17, 2011, pending submission of a supplemental report on off-campus offerings. At that time, MSCHE accepted the supplemental materials and reaffirmed Towson University's accreditation status. An additional monitoring report, which related specifically to the recommendation identified by the visiting team, due March 1, 2013, was requested. TU was instructed to provide evidence of (1) steps taken to promote an institution-wide culture of assessment with adequate support, collaboration, and resources; (2) the further implementation of an organized and sustainable assessment process to evaluate the extent to which all units achieve stated goals; and (3) evidence that assessment information is used to improve and gain efficiencies in programs, services, and processes (Standard 7). This monitoring report was accepted by MSCHE in June 2013 and no additional reporting was required.

**Culture of Assessment:** As noted in Part 2, multiple recommendations focused on assessment activities, including three recommendations pertaining to assessment as it relates to Towson University's mission and six that relate to assessment of student learning. The former have been addressed through the revisions to the mission statement, strategic planning, mapping of program and UCC learning outcomes to institutional outcomes, publication of student learning outcomes in Undergraduate and Graduate catalogs, on web pages, and a number of other key materials effective fall 2015 and earlier. (Details provided in Part 2 above.)

The latter six recommendations from the *Self-Study* focused on enhancing the culture of assessment related to assessment of student learning. As noted earlier in Parts 1 & 2, assessment of program and UCC learning outcomes serve as the central elements of assessment reporting on student learning and since 2015 have been embedded in departmental and college level curricular approval processes. Extensive annual and periodic (corresponding to seven-year program and UCC course recertification processes) assessment activities now take place.

The decennial review self-study process also resulted in several recommendations pertaining to the need for additional assessment analysis relative to developmental courses; internships, experiential learning, and civic engagement; and transfer populations. Changes to assessment procedures relating to these areas have been addressed in Part 2.

**University of Baltimore**

**University of Baltimore 2016 MHEC Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report**  
**Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

<b>Institutional Effectiveness Assessment (MSCHE Standard 7)</b>	<b>General Education Program Learning Outcomes Assessment (MSCHE Standard 12)</b>	<b>Academic Program Learning Outcomes Assessment (MSCHE Standard 14)</b>	<b>Nonacademic Unit Learning Outcomes Assessment (MSCHE Standard 14)</b>
<p><b>Academic Unit Effectiveness.</b> Prior to AY 2014, unit chairpersons provided their deans with their units' prioritized needs and goals for the following AY, some of which might be incorporated into college and institutional plans. Processes for setting needs and goals varied considerably across units and colleges, as did the extent to which previous years' need and goal attainments were assessed. Beginning spring 2014, this process was formalized and standardized across academic units, so that academic unit effectiveness could be assessed with greater consistency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Unit Chairpersons and faculty</b> determine up to six measurable goals, each connected explicitly to the unit's mission statement, that are to be pursued during the next 3 AYs.</li> <li>• <b>Chairpersons and faculty</b> establish strategies to achieve each goal, methods and persons responsible for the assessing of strategy effectiveness, acceptable targets, and prioritized goal achievement timelines.</li> <li>• <b>Chairpersons</b> enter reports of the previous AY's efforts to achieve one or more unit goals into the University's TASKSTREAM database (see Assessment Management Software in Part Two of this report) by October 15.</li> <li>• <b>Unit Deans</b> review completed academic unit effectiveness reports for evidence that may assist in programmatic, staffing, facilities, and other areas of planning.</li> </ul>	<p>General Education (GE) student learning outcome (SLO) assessment is conducted by <b>members of the General Education Council (GEC)</b>, a standing committee of the University Faculty Senate (UFS). UB's current GE SLO Assessment Plan* was established by the GEC in 2013 to address a newly adopted, 40-credit, competency-based general education model derived from AAC&amp;U's LEAP learning outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of student learning occurs for each of 9 competency areas addressed in a broad range of classes at both lower and upper levels of the undergraduate curriculum.</li> <li>• The plan also accounts for course-specific learning outcomes assessment in the First-Year/Sophomore Program as well as in each academic program's capstone course.</li> <li>• Rubrics are identified for each competency area and course-specific learning outcome to evaluate student performance at designated levels, or checkpoints, in the general education curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>Student learning artifacts obtained from a signature assignment in all Sophomore Seminar or capstone classes may be used to assess students' performance in any of the competency areas. In AY 2015, for example, members of the GEC assessed Written Communication by reviewing signature assignment critical review papers from all sophomore seminar sections using a</p>	<p>Academic program-level SLO assessment currently includes five interrelated elements. Effective AY 2014, information pertinent to each element is entered by <b>program directors</b> into the university's TASKSTREAM data base:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Program faculty</b> identify up to six SLOs, derived from and consistent with published program, academic unit, and UB missions, to be attained by all students who complete the program.</li> <li>• <b>Program directors</b> map via TASKSTREAM which SLOs address which of the seven Institutional Learning Goals (see Appendix A) approved by the UB Faculty Senate to direct all instructional and experiential efforts provided to UB students.</li> <li>• <b>Program directors</b> implement a timeline (generally across 3 years) within which students' attainments of each program SLO will be assessed at least once. Timelines include which SLO(s) will be assessed during which semester, potential assessment methods and rubrics, acceptable and ideal targets for attainment of each SLO, etc.</li> <li>• <b>Program directors and faculty</b> conduct annual assessments, including collection of learning artifacts (see Appendix B for examples), their evaluations according to selected rubrics, and analyses of assessment results. All annual SLO assessments are completed by the end of that AY (generally</li> </ul>	<p>In 2015, <b>directors and staff</b> of 11 Student Affairs (SA) and 2 Enrollment Management (EM) units (see Appendix C) identified student learning outcomes central to their missions. The Office of the Provost provided workshops throughout 2015 to inform these units of MSCHE expectations and to guide them through the same process of SLO assessment planning expected of academic programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constructing SLOs consistent with unit missions;</li> <li>• Identifying/designing and implementing learning opportunities intended to facilitate students' acquisition of those SLOs;</li> <li>• Identifying direct and indirect assessment measures that should provide actionable evidence of student learning (see Appendix C);</li> <li>• Developing 3-year plans for unit SLO assessments.</li> </ul> <p>Implementation by <b>directors and staff</b> of nonacademic unit SLO assessment plans began fall 2015; reports of results from AY 2015-2016 assessments will be submitted via TASKSTREAM to the <b>Assistant Provost for Institutional Research</b> for review and approval in fall 2016.</p> <p>Assuring sustainability of nonacademic unit SLO assessments is the responsibility of the <b>Vice President for Student Affairs</b>.</p>

<p>Assuring sustainability of academic unit effectiveness assessments is the responsibility of <b>the Dean of each college/school</b>.</p> <p><b>Nonacademic Unit Effectiveness.</b> Nonacademic unit effectiveness is assessed annually, and long-term effectiveness of each unit is reviewed every 5 years. The 5-year review parallels the methods used in academic program review and discipline-specific accreditations</p> <p><b>Annual Assessment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Directors and members</b> of each of the University's nonacademic units set performance objectives at the start of each AY that align with the University's and the unit's missions and strategic plans.</li> <li>• At the end of the AY, each <b>director</b> reports via TASKSTREAM the units' success at meeting its annual goals, noting impediments to success, and making recommendations to achieve continuous improvement. The annual year in review is used to set performance objectives and targets for the upcoming year and to establish budget priorities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Five-Year Unit Review:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonacademic unit directors and members engage in self-study every 5<sup>th</sup> year to produce a report detailing the unit's mission, goals, objectives and performance across that interval, and how these relate to the achieving of the institution's mission and goals. In instances where these reviews align with extant external benchmarking data, the internal assessment will leverage such</li> </ul>	<p>developmental written communication rubric. That same year, the GEC also assessed Oral Communication by reviewing oral reports from a capstone course for history majors using an oral communication developmental rubric.</p> <p>These and other hands-on assessment experiences have proven to be valuable faculty development exercises that have helped new GEC members to establish, organize, and apply assessment rubrics, and to offer constructive responses needs revealed in the GE program.</p> <p>Assuring sustainability of General Education program SLO assessments is the responsibility of the <b>General Education Council</b>, and, by its authority, the collective membership of the <b>University Faculty Senate</b>.</p> <p>*See Part Two of this report for discussion of the newly revised UB General Education process, to take effect fall 2016.</p>	<p>31 May).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the beginning of each AY, <b>program directors and faculty</b> convene to discuss the previous year's assessment results, determine appropriate actions, and set targets demonstrating whether actions have intended effects. All details of this process are <b>reported by the program director</b> via TASKSTREAM no later than 15 October.</li> <li>• Assessment reports are reviewed by the <b>Assistant Provost for Student Assessment, Advising, and Retention</b>.</li> </ul> <p>Assuring sustainability of academic program SLO assessments is the responsibility of <b>each college/school's associate dean</b>.</p>	
--	---	--	--

<p>information to the extent feasible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the 5-Year Review is staggered, with approximately five to six units assessed per year, beginning with AY 2015-2016. The complete review cycle will be established once there is agreement to the appropriate grouping of administrative units.</li> </ul> <p>Assuring sustainability of nonacademic unit annual and 5-year reviews is the responsibility of the <b>Vice President for Student Affairs</b>.</p>			
---	--	--	--

**University of Baltimore**  
**2016 MHEC Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report**  
**Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

A series of structural and personnel changes has transpired over the previous 6 years, initially impeding but more recently facilitating the development of a comprehensive, informed, and responsive culture of assessment at the University of Baltimore. In addition to and concurrent with the most recent of these structural and personnel changes, several processes and policies have been implemented or strengthened to promote more useful assessments of student learning and/or more effective teaching practices.

**Structural and Personnel Changes:**

- **(2010) Retirement of Director of the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)**, removal of student learning outcomes assessment oversight from CELT responsibilities, and subsequent dissolution of the University Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee that had been chaired by CELT Director. All SLO assessment oversight responsibilities transferred to Associate Provost Beverly Schneller.
- **(2012) Reorganization and move of Office of Institutional Research (IR)** from Academic Affairs (AA) to Administration & Finance, reducing contact between IR and AA, and also reducing availability of IR resources for active participation in assessment activities.
- **(Spring 2013) Resignation of Associate Provost Schneller** to take new position at another institution.
- **(Fall 2013) Appointment of new Associate Provost for Academic Affairs**, Dr. Catherine Andersen, charged among other duties “to provide professional support in the areas of assessment, continuous improvement, and program evaluation to all four UB schools and colleges.”
- **(Spring 2014) Retirement of long-time University President Robert Bogomolny.**
- **(Fall 2014) Appointment of new University President Kurt L. Schmoke.**
- **(Fall 2014) Creation of Role of Assessment Fellow by Dr. Andersen.** Assessment Fellows are senior faculty members and staff well versed in learning outcomes assessment, selected by Associate Deans within the Yale Gordon College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), Merrick School of Business (MSB), and College of Public Affairs (CPA), and by then Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, to support assessment activities overseen by those administrators.
- **(Fall 2014) Establishing of the UB Core Assessment Team (CAT)**, chaired by Dr. Andersen and comprising CAS, MSB, CPA, and Law School Assoc. Deans and Assessment Fellows, the Assoc. Director of Langsdale Library, the VP for Student Affairs, and Assessment Fellows representing Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and the Office of the Provost; CAT charged with managing assessment activities in all UB programs and units with student learning outcome components of their missions.
- **(January 2015 – July 2016) Appointment of Dr. John Bates as Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness**, a temporary position serving under Associate Provost Andersen, with the primary



charge to oversee, provide training for, and review learning outcomes assessment planning, implementation, and reporting across all UB academic programs and co-curricular activities.

- **(Spring 2016) Appointment of Dr. Darlene Smith to the newly retitled position of Executive Vice President and Provost**, and subsequent retitling of Dr. Catherine Andersen as Vice Provost for Academic Affairs.
- **(Spring 2016) Return of Office of Institutional Research to Academic Affairs**, with the charge to support assessment activities with emphasis on providing evidence of student success through the analysis of student outcomes. This includes the fielding of student assessment surveys and the interpretation of results, as well as providing detailed support of retention, attrition, and graduation rates at the level of the academic program and student cohort.
- **(July 2016) Reorganization of the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost to include an Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Academic Quality (IEPAQ)**, directed by the Vice Provost Andersen, and with membership including three newly created positions (Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Affairs, Assistant Provost for Student Assessment, Advising, and Retention, and Assistant Provost for Institutional Research) as well as research and administrative support staff. A significant component of IEPAQ's mission is "to provide leadership and assistance to academic and administrative units in their continuing efforts to improve student learning outcomes and institutional efficiency and effectiveness by means of evidence-based planning and decision making."

#### **Policy and Process Changes and Additions:**

- **Enhanced Professional Development.** In response to frequent requests, numerous assessment-directed professional development opportunities have been made available to administrators, faculty, and staff charged with but insufficiently trained in learning assessment. The Office of the Provost hosted a series of workshops during fall 2014 on topics including writing learning outcomes, indirect/direct assessments, and curriculum mapping. During fall 2015, additional workshops were offered on topics including ways to use institutional research data to enhance academic assessments, how to write PeopleSoft queries to obtain data relevant to program/unit effectiveness, how to construct rubrics for the scoring of student learning artifacts, and dos and don'ts for reliable, valid survey construction.

UB's annual Teaching and Learning Day, sponsored by the Bank of America Center for Excellence in Learning, Teaching, and Technology (CELTT), has provided sessions on assessment aimed at faculty from all disciplines/divisions, with topics including Ready or Not: Rubrics, Learning Goals, and Assessment (2012); Pixels, Not Papers: Creating and Assessing Digital Assignments (2013); Measuring Undergraduates' Information Literacy Skills: A Baseline Study (2014); and Mind the Gap: Measuring Student Success (2014). Several CELTT cohorts also have included the development of assessment materials. For instance,

participants in the spring 2015 Writing in the Disciplines cohort each developed or refined a rubric for a signature writing assignment. CELTT hosted a series of Institutional Effectiveness workshops with staff from Enrollment Management (spring 2015) on topics including student learning outcomes, building assessment plans, and closing the loop. Finally, the University Writing Program

provides professional development in assessment for faculty teaching General Education writing courses and holds several assessment days each year.

- **Institutional Effectiveness Webpage.** Beginning summer 2015, an *Institutional Effectiveness* webpage was established on the UB website, “providing the University community with data and analyses to inform planning, to guide decision-making, to improve student learning and to advance UB's efforts to achieve its mission and goals.” The main webpage now offers links to additional pages addressing UB’s MSCHE reaccreditation process; institutional research surveys, reports, and results; institutional planning and related unit effectiveness reports; and assessments of student learning outcomes. Collectively, these pages serve as a central source of information on all UB assessment-related processes and policies.
- **Assessment Handbook.** Prior to 2015, assessment processes were implemented inconsistently across campus, and were characterized by differing formats, timeframes, and compliance expectations across academic units. In fall 2015, a *University of Baltimore Assessment Handbook* was developed by personnel within the Office of the Provost to address these inconsistencies and to provide definitive guidance to faculty and staff in their conducting of assessment activities. The *Handbook*, which is accessible via the *Institutional Effectiveness* webpage, includes general information about assessment, as well as policies regarding the process, structure and timelines for assessment at UB. Reference to the *Handbook* should ensure that all units are following the same timelines and compliance requirements.
- **Assessment Management Software: TASKSTREAM.** Beginning in spring 2014, in accordance with Middle States Commission on Higher Education standards for assessment, the University of Baltimore purchased and implemented TASKSTREAM, an assessment-specific database software application that has been demonstrated to facilitate accreditation, assessment, planning, and quality improvement processes for many other academic institutions. At UB, TASKSTREAM is used primarily by academic program directors, chairpersons, Deans, and nonacademic unit heads to collect, manage, and report information for each of the following elements of student learning outcomes assessment for every academic program and learning-oriented administrative unit for every academic year: unit/program mission; goals; learning outcomes; assessment measures and achievement targets; and assessment findings and action plans. Various institutional and system assessment, audit, and other reports also are generated via TASKSTREAM. Access to TASKSTREAM is provided at a variety of personnel levels, but requires both a password and an ID that are specific to the University of Baltimore.

### Future Components of Assessment at UB

University of Baltimore faculty, staff, and administrators recognize that assessment of learning should be a comprehensive and dynamic process that informs both an evolving pedagogy and the improvement of assessment activities, themselves. Consequently, several new elements of learning assessment at UB are anticipated in the immediate future.

- **Newly Organized Assessment Teams.** Beginning fall 2016, assessment responsibilities of IEPAQ will be achieved in collaboration with two administrative groups, together replacing the current Core Assessment Team: the Academic Core Assessment Team (ACAT) and the Administrative Unit Core Assessment Team (ADCAT), representing those domains of the

University. ACAT and ADCAT membership, responsibilities, and assessment cycles are presented in Appendix D.

- **Revised General Education SLOs and Assessment Process.** Smooth implementation of the competency-based 2013 framework for General Education at UB was significantly hindered by unclear lines of responsibility, lack of a central program home, and some pockets of resistance to a UB general education core, not to mention complex and often unmeasurable competency learning outcomes. Consequently, GE SLO assessment has been inconsistent across competencies. Recommendations for improvements to the GE curriculum and framework emerged from a GEC summer 2015 retreat, leading to a renewed focus from the Provost's office on tasking personnel and resources to operate general education (Fall 2015).

In response both to problems noted above and to anticipated, new Maryland Higher Education Commission standards for general education, a faculty-led General Education Task Force was established by the Provost during the spring 2016 semester to recommend renovations of the GE competencies, learning outcomes, and curriculum. Largely as a result of GE Task Force recommendations, UB will begin in fall 2016 to implement a revised and simplified GE program and assessment plan. The new GE curriculum will include five domains (Arts & Humanities, Social & Behavioral Sciences, Biological & Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and English Composition), comprising a total of 12 SLOs. This will be in contrast to the current GE curriculum that includes nine domains and 56 SLOs. Not only will the simplified program be more accommodating to transfer students and more understandable to students in general, but its effectiveness will be much easier to assess, and responses to any program deficiencies in the achieving of targeted student learning outcomes will be more timely.

Responsibilities for GE course certification as well as the scheduling and conducting of GE SLO assessments will continue to reside within the General Education Council.

- **Revised/Clarified UB Graduation Requirement (GR) SLOs and Assessment Process.** In addition to changes noted above in the GE curriculum, the General Education Task Force recommended some revision and clarification of University of Baltimore undergraduate graduation requirements, themselves, and their assessment process. With one exception, graduation requirements, in contrast to GE requirements, will be SLO based, rather than course based, and may be met by students transferring in courses that match GR SLOs, or by taking courses in their majors that pursue those SLOs. Beginning AY 2016-2017, University of Baltimore GRs will include demonstrations of appropriate SLOs in four competency areas: Technology Fluency; Information Literacy; Global Awareness and Diverse Perspectives; and Oral Communication. A previously required Sophomore Seminar experience will be eliminated, and a Capstone Course experience will continue to be required in every academic major.

Graduation requirement SLOs will be established and communicated to the UB community by the GEC in consultation with subject matter experts. Courses that address GR SLOs will be submitted by various academic programs to the GEC for certification as providing those learning outcomes. The GEC also will establish an assessment schedule for GR SLOs, and will be responsible for

conducting those assessments.

- **Law School Learning Outcomes Assessment.** In compliance with new American Bar Association accreditation standards, in AY 2015-2016 the faculty of the UB School of Law developed its first set of learning outcomes for the JD program, LL.M and M.S. in Tax programs, LL.M in the Laws of the United States program, as well as for its Certificate program in Estate Planning. All programs have input these SLOs into the TASKSTREAM system and are in the process of developing assessment plans. The School of Law is on track to file a complete SLO assessment plan for the JD program by the end of AY 2015-2016; SLO assessment plans for the LL.M. in Tax and the Laws of the United States, as well as for the certificate program in Estate Planning, should be forthcoming shortly thereafter. Collection of learning artifacts for the assessment of at least one of the JD program-level SLOs will begin during fall 2016. Assessment of at least one of the SLOs for the other School of Law programs is expected to begin during AY 2016-2017.
- **Periodic Syllabus Audit.** All courses offered by the University of Baltimore are expected to achieve sets of SLOs that were established by the faculty when those courses were approved by their respective curriculum committees, and syllabi for every section of every course are expected to include those SLOs. An audit conducted by the Office of the Provost of syllabi obtained from all fall 2014 and spring 2015 courses offered by the University (excluding the School of Law) revealed overall compliance with the latter expectation of 73%. This compliance rate increased to 81% in fall 2015 and to 85% in spring 2016 syllabus audits across all YGCAS, MSB, and CPA course sections. Effective fall 2016, UB will institute a new and comprehensive policy detailing required content for syllabi provided to students for any academic course. This policy is provided in Appendix E. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Academic Quality will conduct audits of random samples of UB course syllabi during the spring semester of every other year, beginning spring 2017, to insure that syllabus content policies, especially those pertaining to the providing of course-level student learning outcomes, are being followed in every section of all UB courses.
- **6-year Learning Assessment Summary.** Beginning AY 2020-21, a 6-year Learning Assessment Summary requirement will be phased in for every academic program. In consultation with faculty, program directors will review SLO assessment activities, results, conclusions, action plans, and their effects across the previous two 3-year assessment cycles, and will report a summary of the program's overall effectiveness at the meeting of its own student learning goals. So that the Learning Assessment Summary can provide a meaningful and useful context for the 7-year Program Self-Study and System Review, the phasing in of this requirement will be coordinated so that submission of each program's Summary to IEPAQ will be due by 31 May of the academic year immediately prior to that in which the 7-year Review is to be conducted.

**University of Baltimore**  
**2016 MHEC Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report**  
**Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to**  
**Standards 7, 12, or 14**

In their 2012 analysis of the University's 2011 PRR, Middle States Commission on Higher Education reviewers Dr. Mark J. Prus and Dr. Karen McIntyre recommended that the University provide a Progress Report to MSCHE in October 2014 on UB's results from ongoing assessments of student learning outcomes in all its programs, most particularly in the General Education program and related undergraduate entities, providing evidence that assessment results are used to improve teaching and learning (Standards 12 and 14). Actions taken by the University corresponding to this recommendation are summarized below.

**Standard 12 - General Education**

Established by the University Faculty Senate (UFS) in 2011, the General Education Council (GEC) has achieved a great deal, especially during the past 3 years. In AY 2013, the General Education (GE) Program was redesigned as a competencies-based model still consistent with Code of Maryland (COMAR). Activities related to the redesign included

- Creation of new competency labels to organize the GE curriculum;
- Mapping all previously approved GE courses to new competency areas;
- Revision of existing GE SLOs and creation of new SLOs to address new competency areas;
- Revision of process and paperwork for recertification of existing GE courses and approval of new GE courses under new competency areas;
- Creation of Sophomore Seminar with signature common read program;
- Requirement of capstone course to be implemented in all UB undergraduate majors;
- Drafting of new GE competency area SLO assessment plan; and
- Initial assessment of upper-division GE writing competency.

Further development of GE processes and initiatives by the GEC during AY 2014 included

- Authoring a General Education Mission statement;
- Appointment of a member of the teaching faculty as Director of General Education, with course release time;
- Creation of a student-oriented General Education website and provision of clearer guidance for advisors regarding ways to satisfy GE requirements;
- Review of GE course syllabi and mapping of GE SLOs to University of Baltimore Learning Goals;
- Development of an enhanced set of common goals for capstone courses, approved by the University Faculty Senate, to add more rigor and continuity across the entirety of each student's undergraduate experience;
- Finalizing the design of the Sophomore Seminar, identifying faculty, and providing training to offer seven sections for fall 2014 (All sections of this course included a common syllabus with student learning outcomes, learning opportunities, and embedded assessment activities, and was to be used as a pilot for all GE courses); and
- Creating a credit-bearing WRIT 100 GE course to replace noncredit-bearing developmental courses DVRW 090 and 095.

As noted in Part Two of this report, smooth implementation during AYs 2014 and 2015 of the competency-based framework for General Education established in AY 2013 was significantly hindered

by unclear lines of responsibility, lack of a central program home, and some pockets of resistance to a UB general education core, not to mention complex and often unmeasurable competency learning outcomes. In response both to these problems and to anticipated, new MHEC standards for general education, a faculty-led General Education Task Force was established by the Provost during the spring 2016 semester to recommend renovations of the GE competencies, learning outcomes, and curriculum. Largely as a result of GE Task Force recommendations, UB will begin in fall 2016 to implement a revised and simplified GE program and assessment plan (see Part Two of this report for more detail), the schedule for which is provided below.

**General Education Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Schedule  
Fall 2015 – Fall 2019  
(Revised draft of May 25, 2016)**

New/Revised General Education Domain	Assessment Completed	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017	Spring 2018	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Fall 2019
Arts & Humanities		X				X		
Social & Behavioral Sciences			X				X	
Biological & Physical Sciences				X				X
Mathematics		X				X		
English Composition	Fall 2015				X			

**Standard 14- Assessment of Student Learning**

In their 2012 report, the 2011 MSCHE PRR reviewers suggested that “a formal mechanism be put in place to further the culture of assessment with specific strategies such as development of measurable student learning outcomes, curriculum mapping, and methods to collect and analyze student work to improve teaching and learning.” Primarily under the leadership of the Office of the Provost, multiple actions have been taken since receipt of that report to implement the reviewers’ suggestions:

- An organized academic program SLO assessment process and plan has been developed that includes guidelines and timelines at the institution and program level;
- An *Assessment Handbook* and several assessment-specific webpages have been developed to provide all faculty and staff with consistent, coherent, and concise guidelines and timelines, as well as concrete examples of each of the components of SLO assessment, from program mission statements to course-embedded evidence of program effectiveness to action-planning and closing the assessment loop;
- A new assessment-management software system, TASKSTREAM (see Part Two of this report for more details), has been implemented, by means of which each of the elements of SLO assessment may be

collected, managed, and reported for every academic program and learning-oriented administrative unit for every academic year;

- A core assessment team (CAT) with representatives (fellows) from each school/college has been established to oversee and facilitate SLO assessments within academic programs, as well as to meet regularly to discuss assessment issues, challenges, and successes;
- CAT members have been provided with professional development in assessment-related areas in the forms of group workshops, assessment conference attendance, and one-to-one Q&A and training sessions with in-house assessment experts;
- CAT members have provided targeted feedback to their own faculty and staff to assist them in the development and evaluation of all of the requisite components of useful, meaningful student learning assessment;
- Professional development workshops have been made available to all UB faculty and staff involved in the delivery of student learning; and
- Program- and course-based assessment projects have been organized and supported to collect and evaluate direct evidence of student learning.

Although the goal informing these actions was for all missions, learning outcomes, assessment plans, reports, and action plans to be input into the TASKSTREAM database during the summer of 2014, it quickly became clear that the quality of some program efforts was not optimal, and that the variety of ways in which data were reported made it difficult to track assessment efforts. Therefore, faculty, department chairs, program directors, deans, and administrators met regularly during AY 2014 – 2015 to discuss assessment plans and efforts to implement them with guidance from the CAT, and assessment fellows systematically have reviewed assessment reports and have recommended strategies for their improvement. Presently, as results of these meetings, all 50 UB academic programs have faculty-developed mission statements, measurable student learning outcomes, and curriculum maps, and have implemented 3- or 5-year assessment cycles; nearly all have entered evidence into TASKSTREAM of using assessment for improvement in teaching and student learning.

A variety of university-wide and college-level efforts have resulted in additions to the workshops provided by the CAT that are intended to sustain the infrastructure summarized above for the assessment of student learning outcomes and to provide the tools for faculty and staff to use this evidence to achieve improved outcomes. Most noteworthy among these efforts has been the transformation in 2012 of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, created in 2007 on the recommendation of that year's MSCHE reaccreditation review, into The Bank of America Center for Excellence in Learning, Teaching, and Technology (CELTT). CELTT serves as the locus for faculty members and staff to engage in issues of significance with respect to the achieving of meaningful student learning; it shares and promotes evidence-based, best teaching practices, thereby enhancing the climate of teaching and learning at UB.

One of CELTT's signature events is the annual Fall Teaching & Learning Day, which had its third iteration during AY 2015 - 2016. In addition, CELTT has supported faculty cohorts organized to investigate specific methods of enhancing teaching and learning. *Student Course Performance and Learning Behaviors* and *Community Based Learning* are two recent examples of such cohort investigations especially relevant to MSCHE assessment concerns. Other assessment-focused activities sponsored by CELTT in the past 2 years include *Effective Teaching in a Larger Classroom*, *Aligning Learning Activities with Course-Level Outcomes*, *Using Rubrics to Advance Program-Level Assessment*, *Writing across the Curriculum*, *Making Sense of*

*Institutional Survey Data, Reliable Survey Construction, and PeopleSoft Query-Writing for Program Assessment.*

Since 2012, despite significant changes in leadership, personnel, and institutional structure, assessment of student learning at UB has become increasingly systematic, standardized, and integrated across academic and non-academic units. Faculty and staff directly responsible for student learning, collectively, are the university's greatest resource for building the assessment process, closing the assessment loop, and fostering a healthy and widespread culture of assessment.



**Appendix A**  
**University of Baltimore Learning Goals**  
**(Adopted 13 April 2011 by University Faculty Senate)**

Students at the University of Baltimore will

1. Apply strategies that enhance professional and personal competence.

Outcomes: This set of skills is demonstrated by the ability to:

- a. Recognize the implications of their financial and economic decisions.
- b. Work in teams while filling different roles.
- c. Use digital technology to communicate and investigate.
- d. Find and judge the credibility of different sources of information.

2. Connect knowledge with choices and actions that engage others in diverse local and global communities.

Outcomes: This set of skills is demonstrated by the ability to:

- a. Make informed choices regarding conflicting situations in their personal and public lives and to foresee the consequences of these choices.
- b. Recognize the importance of civic engagement in their personal lives and society.
- c. Reflect on how one's own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities.
- d. Articulate the interconnectedness of global, regional, local and personal interests.

3. Acquire knowledge about models of ethical behavior and understand its implications in the development of personal and professional relationships.

Outcomes: this set of skills is demonstrated by the ability to:

- a. Make well-reasoned choices regarding conflicting situations in their personal and public lives and to foresee the consequences of these choices.
- b. Give well supported reasons for deciding on right moral conduct in an interdependent group.
- c. Apply an ethical decision-making process to social, workplace, and personal dilemmas.

4. Communicate effectively in various media.

Outcomes: This set of skills is demonstrated by the ability to:

- a. Express ideas and facts to others effectively in a variety of written, oral, and visual formats.
- b. Communicate in one-on-one and group settings.
- c. Make efficient use of information resources and technology for personal and professional communication
- d. Comprehend, interpret and analyze texts.

5. Think critically and creatively to solve problems and adapt to new environments.

Outcomes: This skill is demonstrated by the ability of students to:

- a. Generate and explore new questions.
- b. Analyze complex issues and make informed decisions
- c. Synthesize information to arrive at reasoned conclusions
- d. Evaluate the logic, validity and relevance of data

6. Gather and evaluate information using scientific, quantitative, humanistic and aesthetic methods.

Outcomes: This set of skills is demonstrated by the ability to:

- a. Apply the scientific method to solve relevant problems
- b. Use mathematical concepts and techniques that can be applied to other disciplines.
- c. Use knowledge of humanities in various personal and professional situations.
- d. Engage with and appreciate aesthetic perspectives

7. Develop an integrated and specialized knowledge and skills base.

Outcomes: This set of skills is demonstrated by the ability to:

- a. Acquire substantial knowledge and understanding of at least one field of study (intellectual depth)
- b. Compare and contrast approaches to knowledge in different disciplines (intellectual breadth)
- c. Modify one's approach to an issue or problem based on the contexts and requirements of particular situations (adaptability).

**Appendix B**

Direct Evidence Type	Programs Using	Indirect Evidence Type	Programs Using
Term paper/project (n=15)	HIST, JPLA, <b>CIDG, IID</b> , EVSHE, <b>IDIA</b> , ENGL, INTA, <b>PUBD</b> , CNCM, CSCE, <b>MCPM, CRJU</b> , HSER, <b>CNCM</b>	Student self-rating (n=4)	<b>APPL, CPCS, SDE, PUBD</b>
Capstone paper/project (n=15)	HIST, AIT, <b>IID</b> , CDMP, SDE, DICOM, <b>PUBD</b> , <b>HSAD, NPSE</b> , BSBA, ISTM, REED, <b>HSAD, PUAD</b> , <b>GAHS</b>	Affinity diagramming (n=3)	<b>CDMP, IDIA, CIDIA</b>
Course quiz/exam (n=14)	<b>APPL, LEST</b> , FMATH, HSMG, <b>MCPM</b> , BSBA, ISTM, REED, <b>MBA, ABAS</b> , <b>MSBF, CRJU, FSCS, NMSE</b>	Community feedback/survey (n=2)	<b>CIDG, IDIA</b>
Course assignment (n=14)	FMATH, HSMG, CSCE, <b>GAHS, MCPM, HSAD</b> , ISTM, REED, <b>MBA, ABAS</b> , <b>MSBF, CRJU, INST, CSCE</b>	Final grade distribution (n=2)	AIT, FMATH
Case analysis (n=7)	<b>APPL, LEST</b> , BSBA, <b>MBA</b> , <b>ABAS, MSBF, FSCS</b>	Peer feedback/survey (n=1)	<b>CIDG</b>
Oral presentation (n=6)	IDIS, HSMG, <b>MCPM</b> , BSBA, ISTM, REED	Student satisfaction survey (n=1)	<b>CPCS</b>
Professional action plan (n=4)	<b>APPL, CIDG, IDIA, CIDIA</b>	Client feedback/survey (n=1)	<b>CIDIA</b>
Instructor/supervisor observation/evaluation (n=4)	<b>APPL, CPCS, FSCS, HSMG</b>	Discussion forum (n=1)	HSMG
Nationally standardized exam (n=3)	<b>APPL</b> , PSYC, BSBA		
Group project (n=2)	<b>MBA, CNCM</b>		
Executive summary (n=2)	BSBA, ISTM,		
Professional portfolio (n=2)	IDIS, <b>INTD</b>		
Object identification (n=2)	EVSHE, FSCS		
Peer observation/evaluation (n=2)	BSBA, ISBA		
Pre/Post-testing (n=1)	PSYC		
Reflective journal (n=1)	HSMG		
Original text creation/production (n=1)	<b>CWPA</b>		

**Academic  
Program  
SLO  
Assessment  
Evidence Types  
(Graduate  
Programs in  
Boldface  
)**

**Appendix C**  
**Nonacademic Units with Co-curricular SLO Assessment Plans;**  
**Related Assessment Evidence Types**

<b>Student Affairs Units</b>	<b>Direct Evidence Types</b>	<b>Indirect Evidence Types</b>
Achievement and Learning Center	Interview/conversation/oral presentation Written response Observed behavior	
Bob Parsons Veterans Center	Interview/conversation/oral presentation Mentor evaluation Observed behavior	Client feedback
Campus Recreation and Wellness	Mentor evaluation Pre/post-test	Self-assessment Pre/post-survey
Career and Professional Development Center	Interview/conversation/oral presentation Written response Professional portfolio	
Center for Educational Access	Post-test	Self-assessment
Counseling Center	Pre/post-test Clinical evaluation	Self-assessment
Diversity and Culture Center	Interview/conversation/oral presentation Written response	Self-assessment
Office of Community Life and Dean of Students	Interview/conversation/oral presentation Written response	
Rosenberg Center for Student Involvement	Interview/conversation/oral presentation Written response Mentor evaluation	Self-assessment Client feedback
Student Ambassadors Program	Mentor evaluation	Self-assessment
Student Center	Mentor evaluation	Self-assessment
<b>Enrollment Management Units</b>	<b>Direct Evidence Types</b>	<b>Indirect Evidence Types</b>
Office of Admissions	Observed behavior Post-test	Client feedback
Office of Financial Aid Services	Written response Observed behavior	

**Appendix D**  
**Assessment Teams Under Auspices of UB Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Academic Quality**  
**(Effective 1 July 2016)**

**Academic Core Assessment Team**

**Membership**

Assistant Provost for Student Assessment, Advising and Retention (Co-Chair)  
Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Affairs (Co-chair)  
College of Public Affairs Associate Dean\*  
Merrick School of Business Associate Dean\*  
Yale Gordon College of Arts and Sciences Associate Dean\*  
School of Law Associate Dean\*  
General Education Council Chair  
University Faculty Senate Representative  
\*(Associate Deans may appoint Assessment Liaisons who may represent them at ACAT meetings as needed)

**Primary ACAT Responsibilities**

Curricular SLO Assessment Plan Oversight  
Unit Effectiveness Plan Oversight  
School/Program Accreditation Oversight  
School/Program Academic Advising Assessment

**Academic Assessment Cycles**

Curricular SLO Assessment Report Approval  
Academic Unit Effectiveness Report Approval

**Administrative Unit Core Assessment Team**

**Membership**

Assistant Provost for Institutional Research (Chair)  
Vice President for Student Affairs  
Associate Director of Langsdale Library  
Vice President for Administration and Finance  
Executive Director of University Relations  
Vice President for Technology and CIO  
University Staff Senate Representative  
\*(Administrative unit officers above may appoint Assessment Liaisons who may represent them at ADCAT meetings as needed)

**Primary ADCAT Responsibilities**

Co-Curricular SLO Assessment Plan Oversight  
Administrative Unit Effectiveness Plan Oversight  
Administrative Unit Accreditation Oversight

**Administrative Assessment Cycles**

Co-curricular SLO Assessment Report Approval  
Admin. Unit Effectiveness Report Approval

**Appendix E**  
**Policy Regarding Course Syllabus Requirements**  
**(Proposed for Implementation 1 July 2016)**

**1. Purpose**

A syllabus is essentially a course contract and a key element in the assessment of student learning and the integrity of degrees. This policy provides guidance on articulating course expectations in a timely way and in a manner relatively consistent across different offerings of an individual course, while ensuring individual faculty have appropriate discretion with the syllabus. The policy calls for a searchable syllabus repository that students and faculty may use, and it describes additional resources to be provided to faculty to assist them in disseminating information to facilitate student success and to help meet university requirements from various oversight bodies.

**2. Syllabus Availability**

For each section of each course offered at UB, a syllabus will be available to students and to the appropriate Office of the Dean, to the attention of the associate dean, no later than the first day of classes in a term in which the course is offered. In the case of a late assignment to teach a course, some material on the syllabus may be labeled as tentative where appropriate.

Associate deans shall be responsible for determining if syllabi are complete and current.

**3. Syllabus Repository**

It is the responsibility of each associate dean to ensure that course syllabi in their school/college for each term are electronically uploaded to the Syllabus Repository within two weeks of the start of classes.

In the case of a late assignment to teach a course, a faculty member may modify as appropriate the information provided on the course syllabus uploaded to the Syllabus Repository.

The Syllabus Repository will be electronically available for viewing and searching by enrolled UB students, active adjunct faculty members, and full- and part-time faculty members, as well as UB administrators.

**4. Syllabi and Student Learning Outcomes**

Each time a course is offered, the syllabus must include the student learning outcomes approved for that course by program faculty; these are on the course definition document.

If the course meets a general education requirement, the learning outcomes associated with that general education requirement must also be on the syllabus. The same is true for the learning outcomes for First-Year Seminar and Learning Communities or other program and graduation-requirement learning outcomes, as appropriate. Note: If a course is intended to satisfy more than one of these sets of learning outcomes, each set should be labeled separately for the sake of clarity.

An individual faculty member may choose to add one or more measurable, course-specific learning outcomes to those approved by program faculty for his/her offering of the course.

**5. Resources for Syllabi**

- a. The Office of the Provost will provide a syllabus template that will be available electronically (e.g., on Sakai, on the Office of the Provost website under Faculty Affairs) that can serve as a checklist of required content for individual syllabi in the Yale Gordon College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Public Affairs, and the Merrick School of Business. Required content includes, but is not limited to, official course name and abbreviation (e.g.,

ENGL 232), catalog course description, credit hours offered, grading policy, student learning outcomes, required texts, and methods of assessment.

- b. The Office of the Provost will provide a resources addendum for courses that is aimed particularly at the students the Yale Gordon College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Public Affairs, and the Merrick School of Business. This addendum will include, but not be limited to, updated information for the academic year related to accommodations for students with special needs, academic support services, technology services, counseling, and student life.
- c. The material referenced in (b) and (c) here will include items required of the University by various federal and state regulations and by regional accreditation, as well as items useful for facilitating student retention and success.

**University of Maryland, Baltimore**

**University of Maryland, Baltimore**  
**2016 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report**  
**July 29, 2016**

**Introduction**

The University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) is Maryland’s public health, law, and human services university. UMB is a leading U.S institution for graduate and professional education and a thriving academic health center combining cutting-edge biomedical research and exceptional clinical care. The University enrolls 6,329 students in six nationally ranked professional schools and an interdisciplinary Graduate School. UMB offers three bachelor’s programs and thirty-seven doctoral and master’s programs, as well as seven post-baccalaureate certificates and three certificates of advanced study.

Approximately 14% of UMB’s enrollment consists of undergraduate students, and all are upper division. There is no general education coursework or common courses for the three undergraduate programs at UMB. The University’s undergraduate degree programs, along with their corresponding accrediting agencies, are depicted in the table below.

**Undergraduate Programs and Accrediting Agencies**

<b>Program</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Accrediting Agency</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
<i><b>BS, Dental Hygiene</b></i>	Dentistry	Commission on Dental Accreditation	Accredited	2018
<i><b>BS, Medical and Research Technology</b></i>	Medicine	National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences	Accredited	2026
<i><b>BS, Nursing</b></i>	Nursing	Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education	Accredited	2024

**Culture of Assessment and Improvement**

UMB prides itself on the success of its graduates and alumni. In each program and school the institutional mission and vision is reflected. The University articulates its mission-driven definitions of success for learners by publishing learner outcomes that are measured by a variety of assessments, each designed to evaluate professionalism, knowledge, skill acquisition, and the achievement of expectations. The institution supports an innovative culture of assessment; in graduate level education UMB has moved away from memorization and simple “drill and grill” assessment methodology. Instead, it has developed a robust culture of formative and summative assessment embracing the use of rubrics to evaluate writing, projects, and presentations. UMB uses portfolios to examine advancement toward publication, research grant acquisition, and scholarly contribution. Simulation and Standardized Patient resources are used to create environments for rich authentic assessments where UMB can teach and test its students’ preparedness to work in teams, meet the challenges of a complex health care environment, while protecting individual safety and the well-being of the patients they will serve.

To summarize, student learning assessment at UMB focuses on specific learning outcomes derived from each program’s accrediting body. These outcomes are assessed at multiple levels, and the University uses these data to ensure continuing student success. This is a



distinctive feature of the University’s approach to assessment that has resulted in a regular and rich culture of self-appraisal across the institution.

**Evolution of Assessment at UMB**

All of UMB’s professional schools are accredited, most rank nationally, and its students are successful in gaining employment, postgraduate admission to residency, funding of research, and publication of scholarly work. In addition to Middle States accreditation, most programs at UMB participate in their own self-study processes as part of their national professional organizations. Each school develops outcomes assessment measures and collects information and feedback relevant to their specialty accrediting body. This process assures that UMB’s graduates in professional programs are imparted with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for the next stage of their training and/or employment.

President Jay Perman has regular performance meetings with the deans of each school in which they discuss student performance. Additionally, the Office of Institutional Research and Accountability (OIRA) reports student performance to USM in its Managing for Results report. The University also produces specialized reports, such as the UMB Achievement Gap Report, which examines the difference in graduation rates in the BSN program between minority and white students and between African-American and white students.

In April of 2016 UMB was visited by an evaluation team representing the Middle States Commission on Higher Education for the purpose of conducting a regularly scheduled accreditation review. Based on the team’s report, in June 2016 the commission reaffirmed accreditation and commended UMB for the quality of the self-study process and report. There were no follow-up actions or recommendations. However, there were two suggestions related to Standard 7 and Standard 14 as shown below.

Middle States Standard	2016 Site Visit Team Suggestion
<b>Standard 7 – Institutional Assessment</b>	The team suggests that UMB periodically evaluate the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of its institutional assessment processes
<b>Standard 14 – Assessment of Student Learning</b>	The team suggests that UMB have the Associate Deans for Academic Affairs regularly address assessment during their monthly meetings or through the development of an assessment subcommittee to address and share assessment best practices and tools

To address these suggestions the Office of Institutional Research and Accountability has convened monthly meetings of assessment personnel from each of the schools to discuss best practices regarding faculty and course evaluations, student surveys, and student learning outcomes assessment. Based on these findings, UMB’s Chief Accountability Officer will develop policies establishing minimum expectations for assessment activities and outcomes to be supported by programs within each of the professional schools. A central Office of Assessment may also be established to provide ongoing support for assessment activities across the University.

The remainder of this report details student learning assessment activities within each of the three individual undergraduate programs.

***Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene***  
**Student Learning Outcomes**

- Provide education in a broader perspective

- Develop future leaders and educators in dental hygiene and the dental profession in general
- Provide quality comprehensive and ethical dental hygiene care to individuals of all means and backgrounds
- Possess the capabilities to provide ethical, evidence-based, state-of-the-art care in a dynamic health care environment
- Contribute to the growth, development, and professionalism of dental hygiene as espoused in the American Dental Hygienists' Association Code of Ethics through personal professional development and lifelong learning
- Promote optimal oral health and its relationship to general health among diverse population groups
- Utilize a pragmatic process of care protocol when offering health care programs or services to individual and diverse population groups while facilitating access to care and services
- Develop high-level technological skills for use in professional, clinical, and didactic environments

### **Processes and Methods for Student Learning Outcome Assessment**

The School of Dentistry has robust student learning outcome assessment that leads to course and curriculum improvement. Every course is reviewed in alternative years. Departments assume primary responsibility for these reviews. Each course review takes into consideration student evaluations, course director reflections, advances in science, advances in educational technologies, and peer review. After departmental review, and if revisions are proposed, course directors consult with the associate dean of academic affairs, the director of instructional evaluation, and the Predoctoral Curriculum committee regarding the need for proposals to eliminate, reduce, add, or re-sequence curriculum content; to familiarize students with new technologies; and/or to add evidence-based treatment modalities.

School of Dentistry faculty have a central role in the assessment of student learning outcomes. The faculty carefully monitor the performance of dental hygiene students in the didactic, laboratory, and clinical components of the educational program at student progression committee meetings. Members of the Dental Hygiene progression committee review all dental hygiene student performance. The committee meets six times annually to assess student performance in courses (internal assessments) as well as performance against standardized tests. The final curriculum meeting for students in their junior year (first year of the UMB Dental Hygiene program) in 2010 revealed that the course outline for DHYG Prevention and Control I needed some tightening. It was decided that students had to achieve a grade of 75% in each of the three main areas of the course, in order to complete the course successfully. More stringent guidelines were also established regarding unfinished competencies, as students had been advancing to their senior year with these incomplete requirements.

Student evaluations of faculty members and their courses also provide direction for course enhancement and faculty improvement. The program director meets with each faculty for the annual goal setting meeting to review these evaluations at the end of the academic year, when the evaluative data are analyzed and compiled by the Office of Instructional Evaluation. Multiple outcomes measures both internal and external to the Dental Hygiene program are used to determine the degree to which the stated goals are being met. The outcomes data are examined on an ongoing basis, and generally they indicate that the goals are being met. Where the data indicate a need for action, based on board scores, student evaluation of courses, graduate surveys, etc., the faculty review them, determine a plan and implement

change in response to the data. The program director meets with all faculty for performance reviews but issues are dealt with as they arise.

External examinations are also used as a basis for assessing student learning outcomes. The National Board Examination is a benchmark of student didactic learning, content knowledge and clinical judgment as measured through objective questions and case-based examples. National Board score averages over time have remained fairly constant. The scores typically are close to the national mean. Since 2004, there has been a 100% pass rate four times and scores well into the nineties the other three years. For scores below the national average, the program director meets with course coordinators responsible for that content to consider course revision involving teaching methods, evaluation mechanisms, or assigned learning activities.

For example, due to the Dental Hygiene program director and faculty dissatisfaction with the quality of the course in Periodontics and the student board scores in this area, it was decided that a single faculty member teach the course rather than utilize multiple instructors. Since this change occurred in 2007, students achieved higher scores in Periodontics, rated the class much higher than previously, and were more satisfied with the course. Student input is used and obtained through course evaluation surveys and student class meetings that are attended by the Dental Hygiene faculty class advisor and/or program director who then reports to the entire faculty.

## ***Bachelor of Science in Medical and Research Technology***

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

- Produce high-quality and timely work to support value-added laboratory services
- Develop technical skills to organize time, materials, and equipment to perform procedures efficiently
- Apply knowledge of testing principles and limitations to basic troubleshooting
- Apply adequate knowledge of technology involved in the clinical laboratory
- Evaluate published literature as it applies to the profession
- Analyze procedures using sound judgment before attempting to undertake them, requesting assistance when necessary
- Actively participate in performing assigned duties with attention to accuracy and cost efficiency

### **Processes and Methods for Student Learning Outcome Assessment**

Coursework is designed around a combination of lecture, small group, seminar discussion, laboratory exercise, and where indicated, clinical and practical experience. In addition to didactic instruction, the Medical and Research Technology program emphasizes clinical skill acquisition. Students have robust opportunities for research.

Assessment of course-level student learning outcomes is managed by pertinent faculty committees. Performance of current students, in both UMB coursework and national examinations is compared to that of prior cohorts of students. There is an extensive of soliciting, analyzing, and utilizing student feedback for program and course improvement. Formal assessment is supplemented with focus groups of students from individual sections and courses, meetings of class officers with the dean, and active student representation on all education committees. Aside from changes within the curricula and courses being initiated by direct student feedback, faculty and national educational groups also drive student learning outcomes improvement.

### **Illustration of Course Level Assessment and Improvement**

In the Medical Research and Technology degree program, the department annually reviews Board of Certification scores, both students overall pass rate and the mean of student content sub-scores. If sub-scores fall below the national mean, the content area is given to Advisory Board members for review and recommendation for change. For example, the sub-score for “Proteins and Other Nitrogen Containing Compounds” was slightly below the national average. This content is addressed in Clinical Chemistry (MEDT 452), which is a senior-level course that presents in-depth information relating to the pathophysiology of commonly measured analytes in the clinical chemistry laboratory. Recommendations for improvements were made and the modified content was delivered in MEDT 452 Clinical Chemistry in fall 2014. Examples of content change include:

- CK-MB. Total CK and myoglobin should be mentioned in context of medical lab science for historical reasons and to give a full picture of cardiac markers – perhaps a timeline addressing cardiac marker advances
- As an MI marker, LDH has replace CK-MB, which has been replaced by cTnT
- Content in the BNP/NP-pro BNP section should be expanded and supplemented with additional detail and application
- Add free light chain as endpoint for Amyloidosis
- Add a section on Qualitative IgG, IgM, IgA measurement such as nephelometry and free (serum & urine) light chain measurements
- Add limitations of eGFR

The 2014 sub-score in “Proteins and Other Nitrogen Containing Compounds” before the content changes was 424 and the national mean was 511. After the improvements to the course were made, the 2015 sub-score was 514, compared to a national mean of 512. Clearly, the course improvements lead to quantifiable improvement in student learning and performance.

## ***Bachelor of Science in Nursing***

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

- Combine theoretical knowledge from the sciences, humanities, and nursing as a foundation to professional nursing practice that focuses on health promotion and prevention of disease for individuals, families, communities, and populations.
- Use the nursing process to manage care for individuals, families, communities, and populations integrating physical, psychological, social, cultural, spiritual, and environmental considerations. Integrate competencies in leadership, quality improvement, and patient safety to improve health and promote interdisciplinary care.
- Use the research process through translation of evidence-based findings to advance professional nursing and the delivery of health care.
- Incorporate information management and patient care technology in the delivery of quality patient-centered care.
- Integrate knowledge of health care policy from social, economic, political, legislative, and professional perspectives to influence the delivery of care to individuals, families, communities, and populations.
- Employ inter-professional communication and collaboration to ensure safe, quality care across the lifespan.
- Use principles of ethics, legal responsibility, and accountability to guide professional nursing practices across the lifespan and across the health care continuum.

- Accept personal accountability for lifelong learning, professional growth, and commitment to the advancement of the profession.

### **Processes and Methods for Student Learning Outcome Assessment**

The School of Nursing has a master evaluation plan that provides the overarching process for program evaluation, and collects data from students and faculty using the following instruments:

- Course Evaluation
- Faculty Evaluation
- Clinical Instructor evaluation
- Preceptor evaluation
- Program Assessment Questionnaire

Students complete online end of semester course evaluation and faculty evaluation questionnaires for each course taken. These data are reviewed by course faculty and under the direction of the course director, course revisions are made as needed. Course and faculty evaluations are monitored each semester by the chair of the department responsible for the particular course. Course evaluations, but not faculty evaluations are shared with the Assistant Dean of the BSN program, and communication between the respective department chairs and the assistant dean regarding course and teaching quality assure timely detection and correction of course or teaching problems. To evaluate courses, the course directors complete annual reports and submit to the Entry-Level Curriculum Committee for review. Courses are also reviewed whenever the course director proposes changes to course objectives or evaluation criteria.

Student course evaluations are also reviewed regularly by faculty members to enhance courses and refine curricula. For example, student course evaluations in 2011 reported redundant materials and content overload in some courses. Students were also concerned about the difficulty in managing three clinical courses in the third semester. The concerns were also expressed by students at a town hall meeting with the dean. A curriculum revision task force was convened to address these concerns. Student focus groups and interviews with key faculty members were carried out for additional feedback. As a result, a new plan of study was developed and courses were mapped for content to assure alignment with clinical experiences. The revised plan of study no included no more than two clinical courses per semester.

Faculty members conduct evaluations of student performance at regular intervals throughout the semester. Performance in didactic courses is evaluated using multiple choice tests, short quizzes, scholarly papers, case studies, discussion board postings, simulation activities, and class participation. Multiple choice tests throughout the program are structured to include a proportion of higher level application and analysis questions to acclimate students to this type of test question in preparation for the NCLEX-RN licensing exam. Evaluation methods are documents in the syllabi for each course and communicated in advance through Blackboard and during the first class. Program outcomes are clearly communicated on the School of Nursing website. Policies are disseminated to all incoming students during orientation and students are held accountable for all policies in the student handbook.

Standardized testing across the curriculum was implemented in 2000 to benchmark to students in similar programs, and as of 2014 has been administered by Kaplan, Inc. Administered at the end of specific clinical courses, and based upon individual student

performance, if necessary, a remediation plan is developed to support student performance. Aggregate data from these tests also are used to evaluate and inform curricular changes.

In courses with clinical components, clinical performance is evaluated on a pass/fail basis. Clinical evaluation tools that establish standards and promote consistency in student evaluation are provided to clinical instructors and preceptors and are included in student course packets. The clinical evaluations vary for each course based on the population focus of the course and the course objectives. If a student demonstrates unsatisfactory clinical performance, the clinical instructor contacts the course director immediately, and the student is provided with opportunities to improve performance. Student clinical remediation frequently involves simulation experiences, culminating in a demonstration by the student that satisfactory performance is assured when the student returns to the clinical setting.

Students evaluate the clinical instructor and clinical site at the end of each semester. The clinical course director or their designee makes site visits to all clinical sites at least once per semester and remains in contact with clinical instructors.

Students have “precepted” experiences in their final semester, and the student’s preceptor provides input into the student’s final clinical evaluation; however the assigned faculty member is ultimately responsible for students’ clinical evaluation. At the end of the experience, students complete an evaluation of the preceptor and the site that is submitted to the course faculty member. The clinical faculty member makes site visits at least once per semester to interact with the student and preceptor in the practice setting. The clinical faculty member completes a site visit form that gathers information used to evaluate the student, the preceptor, and the clinical site. These forms are used to identify problems with a site or preceptor that need to be addressed and to determine the appropriateness of continued use of a site or preceptor.

### **Illustration of Course-Level Assessment and Improvement**

The School of Nursing routinely makes course-level improvements based on student learning outcome assessment. For example, a Bachelor of Science course titled Fundamentals of Nursing in the Context of Older Adults (NURS 317) was recently reviewed. The course introduces students to the application of clinical practice in the development of cognitive, psychomotor, communication, and therapeutic skills necessary to address common needs and responses of older adults across the health care continuum. In the course, students have the opportunity to practice their psychomotor, assessment, and therapeutic communication skills in the simulation laboratory as well as in a variety of clinical environments with older adults.

In fall 2014 students noted on the course evaluation questionnaires that they felt there was a “disconnect” between the simulation laboratory and didactic portions of the course. During the winter break of 2015, revisions were made to better align and sequence didactic material with skills practices in the laboratory. The course director also increased direct involvement in the laboratory and clinical components of the course. Additionally, student quizzes were modified to include laboratory and didactic questions, decreasing knowledge-based questions, and increasing application-based questions. Qualitative results of student evaluations of the course in spring of 2016 indicated improvement. Students were specifically positive about the quizzes and their value to students in preparing for midterm and final examinations.

**University of Maryland, Baltimore County**



Maryland Higher Education Commission  
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.



## Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution’s activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

**Executive Summary:** In 2009 UMBC crafted an assessment plan that focuses on student learning outcomes at multiple levels and requires academic and academic-support offices to implement assessment plans aligned to the mission and institutional-level learning outcomes (see Appendix). Under the plan, faculty and staff create and apply authentic assessments and systematically share and discuss the results with departments, deans, senior leadership, the Provost, and the General Education and Assessment Committees. First, we explore UMBC’s assessment activities thematically to highlight how we continue to create a culture of assessment by improving the original processes, applying what we have learned to extend these processes, and connecting curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities. Second, we examine institutional-level interventions and catalog UMBC’s continuity mechanisms. These mechanisms are designed to foster connection across assessment cycles within programs, and integrate learning data so faculty and staff can analyze and apply it more usefully to continuous improvement.

**Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities.** A summary of UMBC assessment activities appears below, supported by examples of how UMBC’s assessments emphasize continuous improvement, extends what we have learned about assessment to new areas, and integrates curricular and co-curricular learning.

*Continuous Improvement:* Since 2009, UMBC programs have increasingly used assessment results to improve student learning—by spring 2015, on average 88% of all academic departments were using learning data to create interventions, increasing from only 41% in 2009. In 2012-14, UMBC programs increased direct measure use to 88% from 79% in 2009.<sup>1</sup> In 2015 61% of programs applied direct evidence to interventions compared to 31% in 2009 and 34% in 2012-14.

**Table 1:** UMBC’s assessment activities from 2009 to 2014 are summarized from standardized reporting mechanisms (Biennial Assessment Reports and APRs) established in implementing the 2009 Assessment Plan. Spring 2015 data are from 2015 Closing-the-Loop Reports.

Colleges	Proposing Changes Based on Assessment	Using Direct Measures	Proposing Changes from Direct
<i>AY 2009 and 2010</i>			
CAHSS (21)	48%	61%	43%
CNMS (4)	25%	100%	25%
COEIT (4)	50%	75%	25%
<i>AY 2012 to 2014</i>			
CAHSS (21)	81%	90%	52%
CNMS (4)	50%	100%	25%
COEIT (4)	25%	75%	25%
Erickson School (1)	100%	100%	100%
<i>Spring 2015</i>			
CAHSS (21)	90%	62% <sup>2</sup>	57%
CNMS (4)	100%	100%	50%
COEIT (4)	75%	75%	75%

These data illustrate how UMBC has sustained assessment continuity for nearly a decade with systematic attention to using the results to improve student learning. The data also emphasize UMBC’s commitment to closing the loop at multiple levels. For example, in 2012 the UMBC Assessment Committee approved the General Education Committee

recommendations to increase direct measures across the curriculum and connect general education and program assessments—these recommendations were embedded systematically and supported with training, as discussed in section 2 below. Further, they were actualized within the programs, documented in subsequent reports, and revisited at the 2014 Council of Deans’ meeting.<sup>3</sup> In particular, the 2014-15 Academic Program Review (APR) cohort self-studies addressed these recommendations as part of their continuous improvement efforts; a closer look at one example, Media and Communications Studies (MCS), illustrates these efforts.

In 2014-15, direct measures of MCS capstone projects revealed a learning gap: students struggled to critically engage source materials. They created MCS 101: Media Literacy, a course designed to foster student learning in information literacy, critical thinking, and communication and technology skills. In particular, a weekly critical analysis assignment provided students with deliberate practice in integrating assigned readings with critical analysis. Students received regular rubric feedback to improve the next week’s post. The results indicate that students gained these skills and that MCS 101 has been a successful intervention. For example, in Fall 2015, 22% of 37 students demonstrated citation proficiency in post 1—by post 9, 97% of students were proficient. Most students were able to proficiently integrate the readings with new ideas: 78% showed this skill proficiently in the first post, and 94% did so by the 9th post. Further, as MCS faculty shared how they used curriculum mapping and direct measures to continuously improve student learning, they inspired other faculty, thereby helping to extend UMBC learning assessment into new areas.<sup>4</sup>

*Extending Learning Assessment:* UMBC captures narrative aggregations of learning assessment activities in each college in its Biennial Assessment reports. At the Fall 2014 Council of Deans discussion of these reports, the Deans recommended giving more attention to graduate-level assessment. Graduate Program Directors and their Dean have been working with the Faculty Development Center (FDC) to build learning assessment processes to foster continuous improvement in graduate student learning. A series of workshops with the Human-Centered Computing faculty and insights from Systems Engineering faculty resulted in templates designed to help faculty craft useful assessment plans; map the curriculum; measure student learning at key milestones like proposals, theses, dissertations, and defenses; and gather the results systematically for evidence-based applications. In the History program, thesis proposal measures indicated curricular gaps in research design skills and faculty intervened by bolstering these skills in earlier courses. These insights were used to enrich the templates. In spring 2016, faculty from the English MA and the Computer Science MS and Ph.D. programs customized these templates to meet their needs, and began to explore action research questions about student learning. In response to the Assessment Committee’s call to share UMBC’s assessment exemplars, Systems Engineering, Geography and Environmental Systems, and Sociology created a panel presentation to share their examples at the 2015 Provost’s Teaching and Learning Symposium.<sup>5</sup>

*Co-Curricular Integration:* Additionally, UMBC has extended assessment work into co-curricular learning: Student Affairs engages in robust assessment activities, and Enrollment Management has developed staff skills in this area.<sup>6</sup> The Division of Undergraduate Academic Affairs exemplifies these efforts: collaboration across curricular and co-curricular programs designed to support the whole student has revealed common ground across the seven units (<http://uaa.umbc.edu/>). The division’s first APR in 2012-13 sketched plans to train faculty and staff in learning assessment, called for university-level support in staff development, and recommended creation of an assessment committee. Assessment training

began in 2013, an assessment specialist joined the FDC in 2015, and the committee was implemented in 2016. As a result of these interventions, all seven of the units have crafted learning assessment plans that include student learning outcomes aligned to the Functional Competencies, curriculum maps, direct and indirect measures, and systematized reporting for collaborative applications. In addition to demonstrating how the division helps students to achieve the Functional Competencies, these efforts have yielded insights about affective learning outcomes, particularly resilience and integrative learning. Thus, the division has uncovered implicit student learning outcomes, made them explicit, and devised tools for measuring and improving both affective and cognitive student learning.<sup>7</sup> For example, direct assessments (faculty evaluation of students) from the 2015-16 Undergraduate Research Awards program suggest that the program resulted in students' cognitive and affective growth. For example, 82% of students always or usually demonstrated skills in written communication during the project; 80% of students always or usually demonstrated critical thinking and reasoning skills; 81% of students always or usually showed skills in information literacy and 90% of students always or usually demonstrated resilience. As a whole, the division has demonstrated the importance of both curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities in helping students to gain both cognitive and affective capacities.

## Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

**Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities.** As discussed in the 2011 SLOAR report, UMBC successfully implemented its assessment plan in 2009 (included as Appendix). Since 2009 UMBC has provided continued attention to streamlining the process and building resources to help faculty sustain and improve the process<sup>8</sup>. UMBC leaders realize that embedding assessment into regular practices is vital for meaningful “evidence-based continuous improvement” (Ewell, 2009, p. 16). Additionally, provosts across the country posit professional development as a cornerstone of effective assessment processes (Hutchings, 2010, p. 9; Kuh, et. al., 2014, p. 11). Therefore, the Provost's Office has implemented continuity mechanisms, tools and practices that embed assessment work in everyday processes and foster continuity across cycles and programs. A continuous, evolving process has allowed us to craft meaningful interventions that respond to evidence of student learning. UMBC has implemented two paths to creating continuity mechanisms: processes and professional development.

*Processes*—At UMBC, “we believe that process is an important factor in creating cultural change,” (Hrabowski, Suess, and Fritz, 2011, p. 16). The UMBC Assessment Plan delineates a faculty-driven plan that promotes disciplinary flexibility and values subject-matter expertise. This grassroots model requires leaders' consistent communications about the value of learning assessment. To help faculty move beyond planning for assessment and apply learning data to improving student learning, the Provost's Office has systematized institutional-level assessment to ensure that best practices are embedded in standard operating procedures. The Assessment Committee and Council of Deans have meetings to discuss student learning at the institutional level, which are replicated at the program and course levels. In addition, the Academic Program Review and course approval processes require systematic reflection on student learning and reporting that demonstrates how programs close the loop and then re-measure the results.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, guided by Assessment Committee recommendations, the Deans have created committees to systematize assessment data integration at the college and division levels, and Chairs crafted department-level committees to foster connected assessments across programs.<sup>10</sup>

Since the 2011 SLOAR Report, UMBC has refined a series of process-oriented continuity mechanisms that promote the evolution of assessment activities:

1. The 2015 Strategic Plan identifies assessment as the primary engine driving University improvement and embeds assessment processes into the plan and implementation by matching every objective with measures of success. The plan emphasizes the importance of connecting goals, strategies, and objectives to measures of success. As UMBC implements the strategic plan, division and units will have multiple opportunities to further integrate their assessment plans with the strategic plan. Additionally, one of the implementation goals is to create a formalized communication plan to share assessment results and ensure continuity.
2. The Academic Program Review (APR) process ensures that programs are reviewing assessment plans, results, and applications every seven years with a three-year follow-up report. Additionally, it helps programs to analyze how General Education courses contribute

to both program and institutional learning outcomes. This analysis closes the loop on the Assessment Committee's 2010 recommendation to integrate general education and program assessments.

- The APR requires a summary of the direct assessment of the program's student learning outcomes, including general education courses.
  - In addition, programs summarize their direct and indirect general education course assessment data and provide an APR-concurrent sample to the General Education Committee (GEC).
  - Programs are also required to submit for review general education courses that have not been reviewed by the GEC in the three years prior to the APR. (Courses not submitted concurrently with the APR are then submitted as part of the Year Three Report process.). Part of the resubmission process includes a review of the plan for assessing students' achievement of the functional competency(ies) addressed in the course.
  - New guidelines for Academic Program Review were published on April 15, 2015. The new guidelines embed learning assessment activities into the process more systematically. For example, external reviewers are asked to comment on assessment information in the APR specifically. APR orientation includes consultations with Faculty Development Center staff (see details below) about assessment expectations and processes.
  - New guidelines for the Post-Academic Program Review process published on July 25, 2013, offer a template designed to capture how programs will implement recommendations from the APR, including an action plan.
  -
3. The General Education assessment process is connected to APR but also independent, enabling UMBC faculty to see how well students are learning across disciplines and within their majors. As of March 11, 2011, changes to the General Education Program Application included requirements for direct measures of student learning (See Instructions for Submitting a Course for GEP Approval, updated on Nov 12, 2012, <http://my.umbc.edu/groups/gec/files/4355>). Plans for assessment of courses using direct measures must be included and are reviewed by the General Education Committee.
  4. In Spring 2015, the Provost's Office implemented a Closing-the-Loop template designed to elicit details about how programs apply learning assessment data to create improvements. This template was created in response to Fall 2014 Council of Deans' recommendations to develop such a tool to foster discussions across colleges. The template requests that programs share their learning outcomes aligned to the Functional Competencies along with comparable student learning data via percentages and averages. It models continuous improvement by asking programs to identify substantial changes to their programs and share evidence from the assessment. The discussion of evidence includes the recommendation that resulted from analyzing the results, the intervention that was implemented, and follow-up results.
  5. In response to recommendations from the APR for the Division of Undergraduate Academic Affairs in 2014, the University established a new position beginning January 2015, the Assistant Director for Assessment. The Assistant Director resides within the Faculty Development Center and works with faculty, staff, and units across campus to improve assessment practices and use of data. Since 2015, total faculty and staff consultations on assessment have increased by 50% from approximately 120 across 12 units to more than 180 across 40 separate units or divisions.
  6. At the college and program levels, continuity mechanisms have been added to ensure that the process is meaningful and useful:
    - The Dean of the College of Natural and Mathematical Sciences (CNMS) instituted the college-wide CNMS Student Learning Assessment Advisory Committee (SLAAC) to help all departments in the college implement effective assessment measures and common reporting templates for assessing student learning outcomes. Additionally, the departments have established assessment committees to support faculty in assessing the learning of students in their classes.

- The leadership of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (CAHSS) revised the assessment reporting process within the college to refine the faculty's planning and measuring efforts by incorporating additional time to reflect on and apply results.
- In the College of Engineering and Information Technology, the Department of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering established an Assessment Committee in response to feedback from the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) in 2010.
- Student Affairs has established the Student Affairs Assessment and Research Committee to analyze learning in co-curricular activities. (<http://www.umbc.edu/saf/staff/saarc.php>).
- Undergraduate Academic Affairs created an assessment committee to integrate the work being carried out across the division.

Another practice/process that aids in the continuity of assessment work is the use of curriculum mapping. National data suggest that UMBC stands out for the extent of our curriculum mapping work, which has been actively promoted by the University's academic leadership. About 90 percent of UMBC programs have implicitly or explicitly aligned the program-level learning outcomes to the institutional competencies. In contrast, only 27 percent of doctoral universities and only 42 percent across all institutional classifications report successful program-to-institutional outcomes alignment (Kuh, Jankowski, Ikenberry & Kinzie, 2014, p. 8.). In 2015, UMBC did an institutional-level mapping of the General Education Program, which documents students' access to the Functional Competencies. In addition, UMBC programs have used curriculum mapping to identify and fix gaps in student learning as shown in the following examples:

- Media and Communications Studies faculty analyzed curriculum through writing assignments measured with rubrics in an introductory class and in the capstone class. The exercise showed that students lacked the historical awareness necessary to contextualize texts and apply key theoretical concepts to their interpretation. In response, the department added a 100-level course in media literacy skills along with courses in the political economy of media industries to enhance these skills and better prepare students for the capstone. Subsequent rubric measures (discussed in more detail in section 1) suggest that the intervention successfully contributed to student learning.
- The English Language Institute (ELI) engaged in a series of curriculum mapping workshops. Working backwards from the student learning objectives of English 110 (a course for English-language learners), the ELI revised the program's beginning-level focus on sentence development to challenge students earlier to develop paragraphs and essays, and allow for more practice and feedback. Faculty also created a series of integrated reading and writing assignments across other courses and levels.
- Faculty members for Human-Centered Computing, a graduate program in Information Systems, analyzed their program with curriculum mapping, pinpointing core courses, electives, and pertinent courses from other programs. The faculty then built an assignment library for each stage of student learning.
- The Honors College mapped a curriculum that lays out a series of high-impact instructional practices from an introductory forum and living-learning community designed to foster cohort cohesion through applied learning and co-curricular experiences to honors sections of courses and upper-level seminars. To ensure that students begin with a strong foundation, faculty measured student learning in the Honors Forum, a 100-level core course, using a rubric linked to the course, program, and institutional learning outcomes. Across five assignments with 399 total papers assessed, 62% of students scored a check plus (the highest level of achievement), and another 32% met the benchmark for using critical thinking to respond to the prompt. Additionally, 83% showed skills in creating a unified argument, and 88% demonstrated good writing skills. Therefore, the data suggest that Honors Forum students are demonstrating foundational skills needed for success throughout the program.

*Professional Development*—As reported in assessment literature, faculty often struggle with learning assessment goals, processes, and applications without training and guidance

(Hutchings, 2011, p. 38). Therefore, the Provost's Office has invested resources in the Faculty Development Center (FDC), allowing UMBC to offer a range of development opportunities, including the Provost's Teaching and Learning Symposium, regular programs on learning assessment, materials and resources, and consultations with individuals and programs. Additionally, the Provost's Office has integrated this support in the Academic Program Review process. As documented in the FDC Annual Report, faculty have participated extensively in learning assessment training opportunities, including one-on-one consultations and workshops designed for specific audiences and needs.

APR Support. While the original APR Guidelines offered guidance to help programs analyze how they have applied their assessment findings, it became clear from department self studies that some departments needed more direction and support for this part of the review process. In consultation with the FDC, in 2012-14, the University created professional development support to address this issue:

- A new appendix in the APR Guidelines for departments now provides expanded guidance on the assessment process.
- The Director of the FDC now reviews the assessment section of draft APR reports.
- The Director of the FDC and the department assessment coordinator now join the initial conversations with department chairs about the APR process.
- External reviewers now specifically review and evaluate the assessment section of APR reports.
- Discussion of student learning outcomes assessment is now part of post-review reports and the third-year update.

Programs Supported by Consultations and Workshops. In addition to offering a range of programs for faculty development, in 2015 the second annual Provost's Teaching and Learning Symposium focused on learning assessment. The program featured exemplars from across the campus, demonstrating curriculum mapping, rubric development, graduate learning assessment, and how to apply direct measure results. Regular FDC programming included sessions to help faculty clarify learning outcomes, refine assignments, measure the outcomes, and apply the data. The FDC also support faculty and staff in individual and program consultations and workshops.

Since our 2011 SLOAR report, UMBC has continued to refine our institutional processes and expand professional development support to contribute to a culture of assessment—one that uses direct and indirect measures of student learning to plan and implement more effective interventions for student success.

## References

- Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) (2016, January 19). *Recent Trends in General Education Design, Learning Outcomes, and Teaching Approaches: Key Findings from a Survey Among Administrators at AAC&U Member Institutions*. Hart Research Associates. Washington, DC: Author.
- Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) (2016, February 17). *Trends in Learning Outcomes Assessment: Key Findings from a Survey Among Administrators at AAC&U Member Institutions*. Hart Research Associates. Washington, DC: Author.
- Ewell, P. T. (2009). *Assessment, Accountability, and Improvement: Revisiting the Tension*. NILOA Occasional Paper, Number 1. Urbana, IL: National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.
- Hrabowski III, F.A., Suess, J., & Fritz, J. (2011). Assessment and analytics in institutional transformation. *EDUCAUSE Review*, 46(5), 15-28.  
<http://www.educause.edu/ero/article/assessment-and-analytics-institutional-transformation>

- Hutchings, P. (2010). *Opening doors to faculty involvement in assessment*. NILOA Occasional Paper, Number 4. Urbana, IL: National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.
- Kuh, G. D., Ikenberry, S. O., Jankowski, N., Cain, T. R., Hutchings, P., & Kinzie, J. (2015). *Using evidence of student learning to improve higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Kuh, G. D., Jankowski, N., Ikenberry, S. O., & Kinzie, J. (2014). *Knowing what students know and can do: The current state of student learning outcomes assessment in U.S. colleges and universities*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois and Indiana University, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA).
- Singer, J., & Bridget Zimmerman. (2012). "Evaluating a Summer Undergraduate Research Program: measuring Student Outcomes and Program Impact." *CUR Quarterly*, 32(3), 40-47.
- Snyder, D., & Harrison, J. M. (2016, February 11). *Using rubrics to measure learning at multiple levels: Social media reading reflections: Utilizing Facebook in the classroom*. Presented at the Conference on Higher Education Pedagogy, Center for Instructional Development and Education Research, Blacksburg, VA.

## Endnotes

1. Including the Erickson School raises direct measure use to 91%.
2. There appears to be a 29% decline in direct measures in spring 2015, primarily in CAHSS; however, the 2015 Closing-the-Loop reports captured results for only part of spring semester 2015. From spring 2015 to spring 2016, FDC staff collaborated with CAHSS faculty to implement direct measures in 62 consultations and 14 unit discussions involving 17 of the 21 CAHSS departments. As a result, CAHSS faculty created or modified about 20 rubrics and 6 programs discussed and/or reviewed templates or examples of rubrics or other direct measures.
3. See Report to the Provost on Summary of Progress in APR, Program-Level, and GEP Assessment Processes Since 2012.
4. See <http://fdc.umbc.edu/programs/workshops/provosts-teaching-and-learning-symposium/>
5. Details about data collected appear in UMBC's MSCHE Self-Study, on the FDC website as part of the Provost's Teaching and Learning Symposium presentations, and in the APRs and developing assessment materials for each program. Direct measure data from Sociology's MA program is also available in the 2015 Closing-the-Loop Reports.
6. See <http://www.umbc.edu/saf/staff/saarc.php> for information about the Student Affairs Assessment and Research Committee
7. See <http://fdc.umbc.edu/programs/workshops/provosts-teaching-and-learning-symposium/> for links to presentations from the 2015 Provost's Teaching and Learning Symposium, including a video from the Applied Learning Experiences panel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6om9wKDEI-Q>, where faculty shared Affective Functional Competencies. Faculty and staff from UAA identified these competencies in their learning outcomes and began to implement plans to measure and apply the results. Likewise, UMBC's Grand Challenge Scholars program has begun to assess affective learning outcomes, see <http://gcsp.umbc.edu/> and <http://gcsp.umbc.edu/curriculum/learning-objectives>.
8. Assessment Plan Documents are available in Blackboard: [https://blackboard.umbc.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=\\_13572\\_1&content\\_id=\\_628276\\_1&mode=reset](https://blackboard.umbc.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_13572_1&content_id=_628276_1&mode=reset)
9. See Report to the Provost on Summary of Progress in APR, Program-Level, and GEP Assessment Processes Since 2012 <http://provost.umbc.edu/files/2016/04/Report-to-the-Provost-on-Summary-of-Progress-in-Assessment-2.pdf>
10. See Report to the Provost on Summary of Progress in APR, Program-Level, and GEP Assessment Processes Since 2012 <http://provost.umbc.edu/files/2016/04/Report-to-the-Provost-on-Summary-of-Progress-in-Assessment-2.pdf>



**APPENDIX**  
**UMBC ASSESSMENT PLAN**  
**April 27, 2009**

- I. Principles for UMBC Assessment Plan
  - A. UMBC uses assessment results to improve student learning and to advance the institution.
  - B. Student learning outcomes are an essential component of the assessment of institutional effectiveness.
  - C. The UMBC Assessment Plan applies to all academic and administrative units and divisions to ensure institutional improvement.
  - D. The UMBC Assessment Plan applies to all academic degree programs, both undergraduate and graduate.
  - E. Departments' Academic Program assessments are to be coordinated with their Academic Program Review schedule whenever practical and appropriate.
  - F. The UMBC Assessment Plan is an evolving document that will change with time.
  - G. Department chairs, faculty, and others who are involved with student learning will be offered professional development opportunities to develop expertise in assessment.
  - H. UMBC is committed to building its assessment capacity, and will provide sufficient financial and staffing resources to carry out its assessment responsibilities.
  
- II. Responsibilities and Process for Developing and Implementing UMBC Assessment Plan and Student Learning Outcomes goals
  - A. UMBC's Assessment Plan will consist of plans from each college and school, the general education assessment plan, and the assessment plans of academic support units and administrative divisions.
  - B. The Provost, with the support of the deans and vice presidents, is responsible for monitoring and ensuring implementation of UMBC's Assessment Plan, including use of the assessment results to ensure institutional improvement.
  - C. The Assessment Committee, composed of faculty and staff and chaired by the Provost, will provide advice to the Provost and campus. It will serve as a forum for discussion and review of the plans' implementation and continuing development and institutional progress in assessment.
  - D. The General Education Committee will be responsible for monitoring general education assessment and the use of assessment data to help direct the improvement of the general education program.
  - E. The university's undergraduate student learning outcomes goals will be its general education competencies as approved by the Faculty Senate.
  - F. Each general education course must be reviewed and approved by General Education Committee which will ensure that each course contains explicit student learning outcome goals.
  - G. Assessment of general education student learning outcomes will be the assessment of key general education courses. First Year Seminar assessment

activity for seminars with a general education designation, and one general education course per department, biennially, beginning fall 2008.

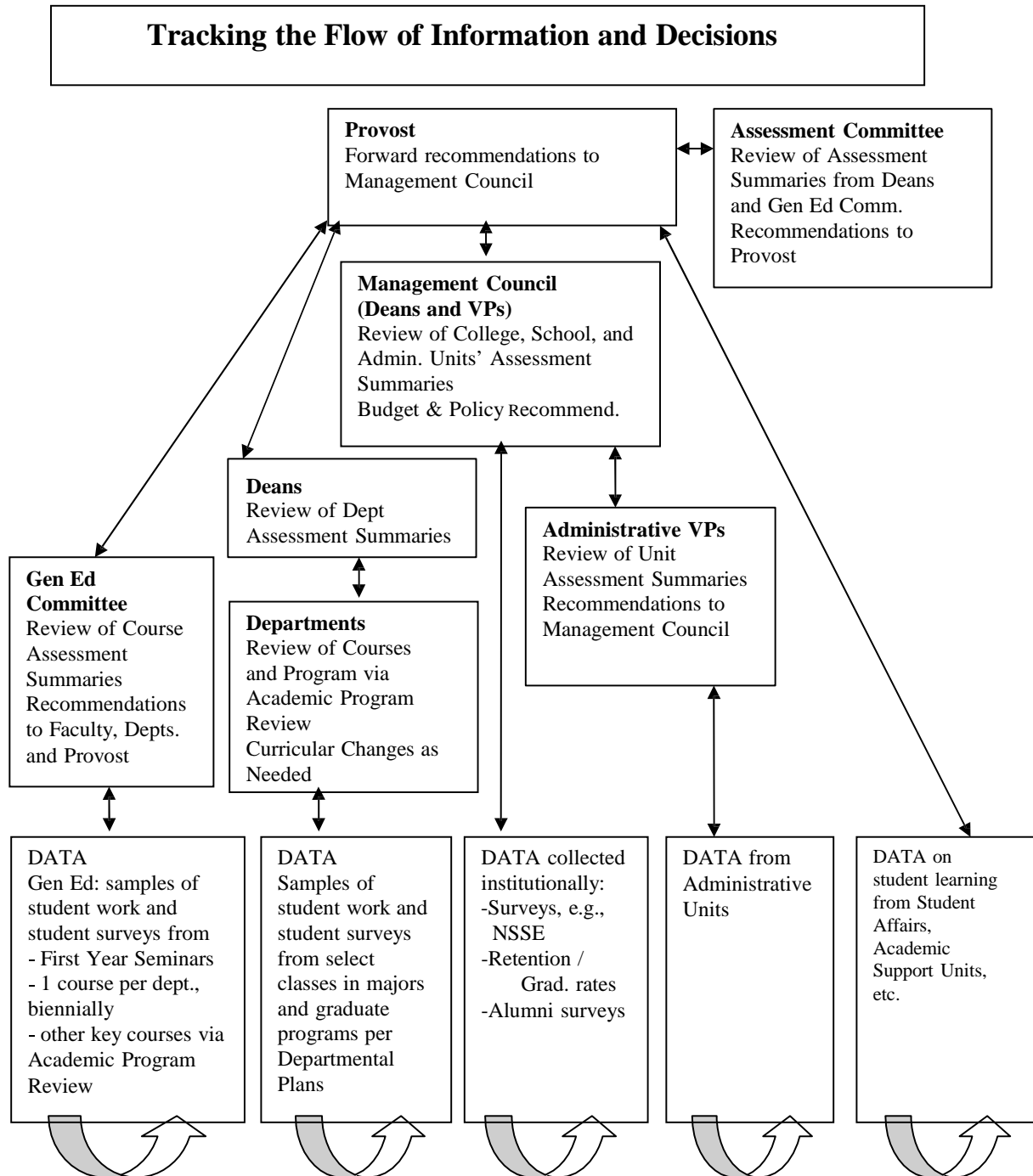
*Program Level*

- H. Department Chairs and Graduate Program Directors are responsible for developing appropriate assessment plans for their respective academic degree programs.
- I. Student learning outcome goals at the course level shall support program-level student learning outcome goals which shall be consistent with the university's student learning outcome goals.
- J. Assessment plans of departments and graduate programs are submitted to their respective deans who review and forward the plans to the Provost's office for approval.
- K. Plans developed within each college and school will be the College and School Assessment Plans. Deans will be responsible for monitoring and ensuring implementation of their College and School Assessment Plans as part of the Academic Program Review process. They will also monitor the use of assessment results to ensure academic program improvement.
- L. The Graduate Dean and Graduate Council will be responsible for monitoring graduate program assessments and the use of assessment data to improve graduate programs.

*Administrative Divisions and Academic Support Units*

- M. Academic support units will submit plans, addressing student learning outcome goals where appropriate, to the Provost for approval
- N. Administrative Vice Presidents will submit plans to Deans and Vice Presidents Council for review and discussion
- O. Academic support units directors and administrative vice presidents will seek to identify a common set of goals and shared priorities (to improve effectiveness, efficiency, and student learning) which academic support units and administrative divisions can help achieve.

Figure 1



### Endnotes

1. Including the Erickson School raises direct measure use to 91%.
2. There appears to be a 29% decline in direct measures in spring 2015, primarily in CAHSS; however, the 2015 Closing-the-Loop reports captured results for only part of spring semester 2015. From spring 2015 to spring 2016, FDC staff collaborated with CAHSS faculty to implement direct measures in 62 consultations and 14 unit discussions involving 17 of the 21 CAHSS departments. As a result, CAHSS faculty created or modified about 20 rubrics and 6 programs discussed and/or reviewed templates or examples of rubrics or other direct measures.
3. See Report to the Provost on Summary of Progress in APR, Program-Level, and GEP Assessment Processes Since 2012.
4. See <http://fdc.umbc.edu/programs/workshops/provosts-teaching-and-learning-symposium/>
5. Details about data collected appear in UMBC's MSCHE Self-Study, on the FDC website as part of the Provost's Teaching and Learning Symposium presentations, and in the APRs and developing assessment materials for each program. Direct measure data from Sociology's MA program is also available in the 2015 Closing-the-Loop Reports.
6. See <http://www.umbc.edu/saf/staff/saarc.php> for information about the Student Affairs Assessment and Research Committee
7. See <http://fdc.umbc.edu/programs/workshops/provosts-teaching-and-learning-symposium/> for links to presentations from the 2015 Provost's Teaching and Learning Symposium, including a video from the Applied Learning Experiences panel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6om9wKDEI-Q>, where faculty shared Affective Functional Competencies. Faculty and staff from UAA identified these competencies in their learning outcomes and began to implement plans to measure and apply the results. Likewise, UMBC's Grand Challenge Scholars program has begun to assess affective learning outcomes, see <http://gcsp.umbc.edu/> and <http://gcsp.umbc.edu/curriculum/learning-objectives>.
8. Assessment Plan Documents are available in Blackboard: [https://blackboard.umbc.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id= 13572\\_1&content\\_id= 628276\\_1&mode=reset](https://blackboard.umbc.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id= 13572_1&content_id= 628276_1&mode=reset)
9. See Report to the Provost on Summary of Progress in APR, Program-Level, and GEP Assessment Processes Since 2012 <http://provost.umbc.edu/files/2016/04/Report-to-the-Provost-on-Summary-of-Progress-in-Assessment-2.pdf>
10. See Report to the Provost on Summary of Progress in APR, Program-Level, and GEP Assessment Processes Since 2012 <http://provost.umbc.edu/files/2016/04/Report-to-the-Provost-on-Summary-of-Progress-in-Assessment-2.pdf>

**University of Maryland, College Park**



**Maryland Higher Education Commission**  
**Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR)**  
**2016**

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.

## University of Maryland, College Park

### **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

### **Institutional Assessment**

At the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP), assessment practices have become embedded in the institutional culture and have led to the following: periodic review and revision of plans with regard to improving student learning; establishment of a cyclical review process; establishment of structural processes for informing the campus with regard to assessment results; and the incorporation of assessment results in short-term and long-term campus planning.

The University has clearly stated educational goals for undergraduates that are interrelated with one another, with relevant educational experiences, and with the institution's mission. Institution level goals include those related to critical reasoning and research, written and oral communication, science and quantitative reasoning, information literacy skills and technology fluency that are interrelated with those for the academic programs, the libraries, general education, living learning programs, and the courses in new campus wide initiatives such as the First-Year Innovation and Research Experience (FIRE), Fearless Ideas courses, and course redesign efforts. Nearly every undergraduate academic degree program has outcomes dealing with effective oral and written communication as well as critical reasoning and research skills.

Learning outcomes and assessment plans are required for proposals of all new academic programs. Additionally, learning outcomes are required for all proposals to create or modify courses, along with the option to catalog and categorize the outcomes to aid in future assessment efforts.

### **General Education**

The General Education program launched in fall 2012 is grounded in learning outcomes that were developed by faculty and are interrelated to institutional goals. The learning outcomes define the expectations for the program and for the General Education courses.

- General Education assessment is being implemented at the institutional level with guidance from the General Education Assessment Planning Team. The Dean for Undergraduate Studies leads this team and works closely with the General Education faculty boards.
- Sixtyseven faculty with relevant expertise, along with the dean and senior staff from the Office of Undergraduate Studies (UGST), worked as 12 faculty boards to generate outcomes for the 12 course categories.
- Faculty Boards critically and collaboratively review course applications and the syllabi of proposed courses to ensure that outcomes are addressed and can be assessed. The Undergraduate Studies online application site facilitates faculty board

work, requires information about how learning outcomes will be addressed, ensures involvement of department chairs and deans, and supplies a record of the course review process.

- Faculty are not required to include the General Education learning outcomes in course syllabi, yet many faculty choose to do so. Undergraduate Studies encourages faculty to discuss the learning outcomes with students.

A more detailed description of General Education is presented in Part II of this report.

### **Assessment of Student Learning**

The assessment of student learning in academic programs is coordinated through the Provost's Commission on Learning Outcomes Assessment, established in 2003. Charged by the Provost to work with all campus units as they develop learning outcomes and to establish a new standard for assessment at the University of Maryland, the Commission is chaired by the Associate Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Studies and consists of three interacting groups of faculty and administrators:

1. The Planning Team establishes the agenda for and oversees the work of the entire Commission, and is comprised of leadership in Undergraduate Studies and Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment.
2. The Deans' Steering Committee, comprised of six college deans, serves as an advisory board for the Planning Team and meets as needed to discuss and decide policy issues.
3. The College Coordinators serve as liaisons between the planning team and their respective deans and colleges. Each college designates one or two faculty members or academic administrators to serve as coordinators.

A more detailed description of the assessment of student learning through the Provost's Commission on Learning Outcomes Assessment is presented in Part II of this report.

### **Part I Conclusion**

Overall, the University considers and uses assessment results to improve educational effectiveness of its degree and general education programs. These include changes to improve student learning, revise academic programs, support professional development, improve planning and budgeting, inform constituents, and improve key indicators of student success.

The materials shared in Part II of this document will exemplify this campuswide and embedded process. Due to the size of the institution, and the freedom each program has to state its programs' goals and objectives based on disciplinary needs, the assessment of student learning resides mostly at the program level.



## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help

At UMCP, assessment of academic programs has become embedded in the institutional culture and has led to the following: periodic review and revision of plans with regard to improving student learning; establishment of a cyclical review process; establishment of structural processes for informing the campus about assessment results; and the incorporation of assessment results in short-term and long-term campus planning. The University uses assessment to reveal and continuously improve educational effectiveness widely and systematically across campus. Since 2005, when all programs developed learning outcomes, efforts have moved from developing learning outcomes to refining assessment tools and using evidence from assessments to improve teaching and learning. For many programs learning outcomes assessment is now used to drive change: faculty routinely strive to close the gap between assessment findings and actions that impact learning. Assessment has evolved substantially from simply stating goals and now involves centralized processes by which all programs conduct and report on learning outcome assessments.

### **Provost's Commission on Learning Outcomes Assessment**

The assessment of undergraduate and graduate programs is led by the Provost's Commission on Learning Outcomes Assessment, established in 2003. As of 2011, assessment of undergraduate programs has been directed by the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment in Undergraduate Programs, chaired by the Dean for Undergraduate Studies. The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment in Graduate Programs is chaired by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Undergraduate programs complete annual assessments, with each learning outcome evaluated at least once in a four-year cycle. Programs report findings each fall in summary form following a template structure and are informed by a "best practices" guide and rubric, both of which are regularly reviewed and revised to continually improve our assessment process. Assessment summary reports for each college are collected by the College Coordinator (college representative to the Provost's Commission on Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee), who works to promote high standards through support and guidance to programs and with continuous improvement practices.

The assessment of student learning has been an institutionwide collaborative process focused on learning outcomes at course and program levels. Through this process, each undergraduate major and graduate program at the University has developed learning outcomes and assessment plans. The following paragraphs summarize highlights of this process:

- Faculty in each degree program established program learning outcomes and the assessment methods that would be used to measure them. Each program reviews at least one learning outcome every year and reviews them all within a four-year cycle.
- Each fall, College Coordinators submit assessment results and subsequent curricular actions and changes on behalf of their deans to the Provost via the Commission.
- The College Coordinators act as peer reviewers at the institutional level and use rubrics to review and provide peer feedback for each program. These reviews are conducted on behalf of the Provost. At the conclusion of each year, the Chair submits a summary

report that includes each set of program feedback, which the Provost subsequently shares with each Dean.

- At the conclusion of the four-year cycle (the most recent cycle ended in spring 2015 and was reported in fall 2015), each Coordinator summarizes assessment of student learning process in their college and provides analysis of how it could be improved.
- The cycle will continue during this academic year (fall 2016) as programs comment on changes made to their assessment processes and curriculum based on past feedback from the Commission, their assessment work from the last academic year (fall 2015-spring 2016), and their plans for the upcoming academic year. The peer review of those documents by the College Coordinators will continue.

Assessment protocols for undergraduate programs have evolved in past years. The current norm is criterion-based assessment, in which faculty review student work according to defined criteria to reveal specific areas in need of improvement. Rubrics are often used to articulate criteria and standards for direct review of student work. Faculty in academic departments have been engaged in developing the rubrics, including those used in all General Education courses, the edTPA Teacher Performance Assessment rubrics that are used at UMCP and nationally, and rubrics developed for specific university programs such as the rubric for Public Health Sciences assessment. Some programs use student performance on exams for program assessment, linking questions to specific learning outcomes and reporting student data in relation to performance on particular questions. For example, the College of Education employs the PRAXIS exam to assess outcomes related to core knowledge, and the Department of Psychology employs a department-developed assessment exam to measure program outcomes. Program assessment often involves evaluation of student learning in particular key courses, such as capstone courses, where course goals relate to program goals.

Each year the groups associated with the Provost's Commission on Learning Outcomes Assessment at the undergraduate and the graduate levels review assessments ongoing in undergraduate and graduate programs. Student learning outcomes assessments for undergraduate programs are reviewed by the college coordinators group, which is chaired by the Dean for Undergraduate Studies. Working in subgroups, the coordinators use a rubric to rate each aspect of assessment, as presented in summary reports. Feedback to programs has resulted in consistent program and assessment improvement and more sophisticated reports that include rubrics, sample assessment prompts, tests, and essay questions. In 2014, a system was established to upload reports to an ELMS community site, facilitating sharing of information and ease of access to previous years' reports and coordinator reviews. This allowed coordinators to review program reform motivated by prior assessment findings. Each year the college coordinators increase the rigor of the review and refine the report template and rubric to support continued improvement of the assessment process.

## **General Education**

General Education at the University of Maryland serves to unite the intellectual and creative goals that we have for our students and define the University of Maryland education. The General Education program has the following goals for all students: develop the skills necessary

to succeed in academic careers and in professional lives; strengthen knowledge in major areas of study; broaden knowledge of civilizations past and present; establish the ability to thrive both intellectually and materially and to support themselves, their families, and their communities; define the ethical imperatives necessary to create a just society.

An assessment of the former program for general education (the CORE program) led to the development of the new General Education requirements. Examples of findings from the review of CORE included lack of highly effective oral communication skills among students and lack of exposure of students to applied disciplines like business and engineering. These findings led directly to the determination of the new General Education categories of Oral Communication and Scholarship in Practice.

The new General Education requirements were launched in 2012 with characteristics aimed at educational effectiveness:

- Implementation and monitoring by the Office of Undergraduate Studies with direct involvement of the dean and senior staff.
- Significant faculty engagement in the development of learning outcomes, course selection, course design, assessment, course reform, and definition of new course categories.
- Support for faculty engagement efforts through professional development initiatives and recognition efforts, including a newly founded General Education teaching award.
- A funding model to sustain the offering of Fundamental Studies courses and to encourage development of innovative courses in the I Series category.
- Widely disseminated policies to govern the transition from CORE to General Education, including attention to transfer students.
- Critical assessment of seats at each stage of implementation.
- A website that promotes the distinctive characteristics of the program to prospective students and that serves as a resource to faculty, advisors, administrators, and matriculated students.
- The transformation of over 1,275 courses according to the General Education learning outcomes.
- Development of an assessment approach that provides valuable information for faculty and administration. Data from assessments are already impacting the General Education courses.

The design of General Education assessment procedures was also informed by an assessment project. A spring 2012 survey of I-Series faculty members (34 faculty participating) revealed that 97 percent of respondents used the ELMS learning management system in their courses, and 60 percent used rubrics as part of their grading process. Further, as part of academic program assessment happening across the University, faculty used rubrics to articulate expectations for students and to assess student work. To facilitate this process, Undergraduate Studies then designed an assessment approach that employed rubrics available in ELMS.

General Education assessment is being implemented at the institution level with guidance from the General Education Assessment Planning Team. The Dean for Undergraduate Studies leads this team and works closely with the General Education faculty boards. Findings are reported annually in the Provost's Commission on Learning Outcomes Assessment Annual Report.

General Education assessment engages faculty in learning outcomes assessment at the course level. Faculty teaching General Education courses review student work using the General Education rubrics

(which were designed by the faculty), report findings using the UMCP learning management system (ELMS), review data that are collected and saved in the learning management system, and use the data to inform course revisions. The Office of Undergraduate Studies hosts faculty workshops for discussion of the assessment process (instructions for assessment) and findings, including the use of rubrics and the development of shared norms to assess the General Education learning outcomes for each category of the General Education program.

For the oral communication, professional writing, and academic writing categories, rubric use sessions include activities for faculty to normalize their use of the rubric to the review of student work. Other categories include a diversity of courses, disciplines, and student activities, and so normalizing is not possible. In these categories faculty interpret rubrics in the context most useful to their course. Faculty report their findings and curriculum reform efforts in end of semester reflection surveys. The Office of Undergraduate Studies collects data from the learning management system and surveys for reports to faculty boards and to the General Education Assessment Planning Team.

The I Series student survey was developed for this unique category of General Education courses that connects general education to contemporary issues. These courses were informed by a 2007-2012 program, the Marquee courses in Science and Technology. The Marquee Faculty found value in a survey that collected student comments about course learning outcomes. Students in I Series courses receive this survey, and data are reported to faculty and included in an annual report to the Provost. Although not a direct assessment of student work, faculty find these student responses valuable for course reform.

### **Professional Schools**

Professional schools have begun to leverage the work they complete for university assessments for re-accreditation and vice versa. The Phillip Merrill College of Journalism uses the annual assessment reports it completes for the University as the cornerstone for its every-six-year reaccreditation report, adding to the data it reviews annually on classroom learning outcomes with surveys of graduating seniors, student portfolio reviews by professionals, ratings of on-the-job work provided by internship supervisors, and occasional surveys of alumni on job placements. The A. James Clark School of Engineering reports the value of the annual learning outcomes assessments in preparing for accreditation reports. The College of Education engages faculty in reflection of learning outcomes assessments that are completed each year for accreditation. Faculty select the finding they consider most important and report these in the campus learning outcomes assessment reports. The Robert H. Smith School of Business is in the process of redesigning learning outcomes assessment to take greater advantage of work completed for reaccreditation.

### **New Curricular Initiatives**

Additional evidence of the University's commitment to assessment is the grounding of new curricular initiatives to learning outcomes. This can be seen in two universitywide programs that were launched in 2013. The First Year Innovation & Research Experience (FIRE) is composed of courses that engage students in research/learning research skills to meet General Education outcomes as well as UMCP goals for increased academic success of first-year students. Fearless Ideas Courses, launched by the Academy of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (AIE), are based in learning outcomes to train students to use "design thinking" and "lean startup" strategies to address real-world problems

## Living Learning Programs

Living learning programs (LLPs) provide curricular and cocurricular experiences to approximately half of the freshman class. Program goals align with the 2008 Strategic Plan goals, which seek to attract talented undergraduate applicants, build inclusive communities within the broader campus, and encourage students to learn from each other. Some LLPs also directly address elements of the mission related to community engagement (e.g., Beyond the Classroom) or global leadership (e.g., Global Communities). As a result of reporting guidelines established in 2009 and revised in 2014 and 2015, all living learning programs state the value of the program for students by articulating a mission, goals, and learning outcomes. Carillon Communities, which launched in 2014, is grounded in learning outcomes and features these on its website. The majority of courses in the living learning program curricula satisfy General Education requirements. As such, the programs embrace the General Education outcomes and serve to promote these among the participating students.

The assessment of living learning programs is reviewed by the Provost's Committee on Living Learning and Other Special Programs, which was established in 2009. Guidelines for annual assessment reports were developed at that time and revised in 2011, when the Committee adopted a standardized annual report template and process. Feedback to the programs has been summarized and communicated annually in letters from the Dean for Undergraduate Studies that are sent to the Provost, the sponsoring college dean, and each program director. In 2015, the Provost's committee recognized that annually reviewing all 31 programs at once made it difficult to offer meaningful feedback and recommended moving to staggered, in-depth reviews on a four-year cycle. The Office of Undergraduate Studies has been working with program directors during spring and summer 2016 to revise and implement a new in-depth review process.

## CoCurricular Programs

Cocurricular programs within the Division of Student Affairs are designed to meet educational goals. Learning outcomes within the division are specific to goals of the various departments but collectively relate to the division's mission to prepare students for the realities of living and thriving in an increasingly diverse, global society. These programs integrate in and out of classroom learning experiences and help students build their capacities as leaders and citizens.

Prior to 2009, individual reports were presented on the division's website. Starting in 2012, all departments shifted to including learning outcomes activities as part of an annual assessment summary report submitted to a divisional committee. Currently the Student Affairs learning outcomes webpage is under revision and, as such, the individual outcomes are not available publicly

Student Affairs maps learning outcome assessment to *Learning Reconsidered II*, a framework of learning domains that has been adopted across the student affairs profession. Since FY12, departments submit to the Student Affairs Assessment and Learning Outcomes Group (SAALOG) *Annual Assessment Summary Reports* that include: (a) learning outcomes assessment activities conducted during the past year, (b) classification using *Learning Reconsidered II* categories, and (c) highlights of how assessments were used to inform practice. Additionally, starting in FY14, the annual report to the vice president's office includes an assessment section calling for new or innovative learning outcome and/or assessment initiatives—emphasizing this as a divisional priority.

## Part II Conclusion

The University of Maryland is proud of our progress in the establishment and assessment of student

learning outcomes and in the way that the importance of student learning has been integrated into the fabric of university processes. We will continue to develop in this capacity, and we look forward to accomplishing even more before the next report is written.

Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

**Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, noncompliance actions, and affirming actions with followup reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

N/A

**University of Maryland, Eastern Shore**



## Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

### University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES)

#### **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

#### **Introduction**

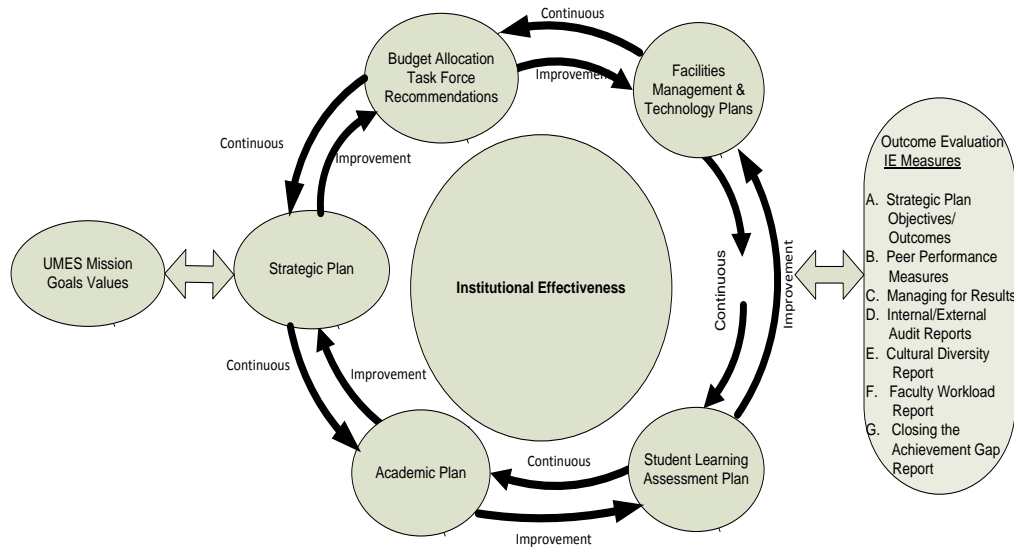
Part one of this report provides an overview and analysis of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore's (UMES) assessment process based on institutional assessment (Standard 7), General Education assessment (Standard 12), and assessment of student learning (Standard 14) as they relate to Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Assessment at UMES is a systematic, proactive, data/informed and collaborative process. This process occurs at different levels--course, program, department, school or institutional level. Direct and indirect measures used include strategic operational plan outcomes, student learning, and discipline specific accreditation outcome measures.

#### **Summary of Assessment Activities**

UMES utilizes an Institutional Effectiveness Management Model for implementing and monitoring outcomes of its activities for supporting and enhancing institutional effectiveness (see Figure 1). This process is grounded in shared governance to ensure buy-in from and implementation by the University community. The process is also a tool for guiding implementation and evaluation of the overall effectiveness of UMES in fulfilling its mission by effective and efficient use of technology, fiscal, and human resources to support the educational enterprise. Designed as a continuous cycle of planning, implementation, and evaluation, the model comprises five key components - Strategic Plan, and four related plans (i. e. Academic Plan, Budget Allocation Plan, Facilities & Technology Plans, and Student Learning Assessment Plan). This process assures the systematic and intentional approach to meeting accountability requirements of both the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and MHEC, as well as continuous improvement needs of UMES.



**Figure 1: UMES Institutional Effectiveness Management Model**



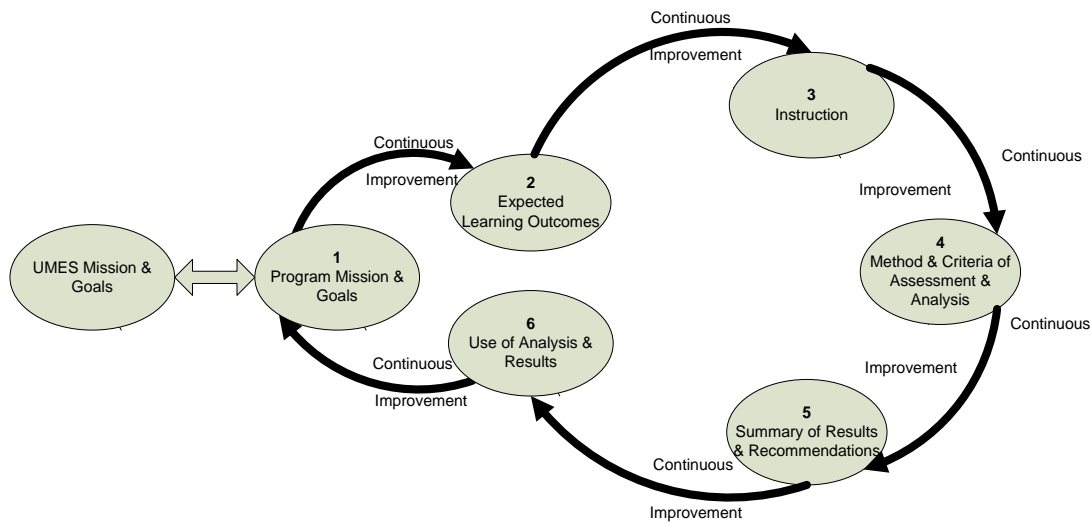
UMES continues to utilize the Annual Strategic Operational Plan (ASOP) approach for implementing the 2011-2016 Strategic Plan. At the beginning of the academic year each division/operational unit develops strategic SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable Realistic and Time-bound) objectives. The Strategic Plan and Assessment Review Committee comprising division leaders, chairs of Senate and Faculty Assembly and Student Government Association president review proposed SMART objectives and monitor outcomes at mid-year, and end of the academic year. Examples of ASOP outcomes are provided in Appendix A. In addition, accountability reports such as Faculty Workload, Managing for Results, Peer Performance Measures, Closing the Achievement Gap, Cultural Diversity and Dashboard Indicators provide examples of additional/complimentary indicators/outcomes for assessing institutional effectiveness.

Examples of SMART objectives of annual strategic operational plan outcomes for Academic Year 2013-2014 of 2011-2016 Strategic Plan include (1) increasing 4th year retention rate (fall 2011 cohort) from 47% (fall 2010 cohort) to 49%. The actual rate achieved was 50%, exceeding the target outcome by 1%; (2) maintaining 3<sup>rd</sup> year retention rate (fall 2012 cohort) at 55% (fall 2011 cohort). The rate achieved was 55% and thus the target was achieved; (3) increasing 6 years graduation rate for African American Students from 32% (fall 2007 cohort) to 34% (fall 2008 cohort). The actual rate achieved was 37%, thus exceeding the target; (4) increasing the number of Bachelor's Degree completers to 528 (AY 2013-2014) from 514 (AY 2012-2013). The actual number of bachelor's degrees awarded in AY 2013-2014 was 585, exceeding the target by 10.8%; (5) increasing First-time, Full-time cohort enrollment from 604 (fall 2012 cohort) to 700 (fall 2013 cohort). The actual First-time, Full-time enrollment cohort for fall 2013 was 756, exceeding the target by 8%; (6) increasing the number of redesigned courses from 7 in AY 2012-2013 to 11 in AY 2013-2014. The actual number of redesigned course in AY 2013-2014 was 13, surpassing the target by 18.2%; and (7) Increase Private Giving from \$895,525

(AY 2012-2013) to \$1.5 million (AY 2013-2014). The actual total amount raised in AY 2013-2014 was \$1,718,637, exceeding the target by 14.6%.

As an integral part of the Institutional Effectiveness Management Model, the assessment plan for Student Learning, is given special focus at UMES. The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Process (SLOAP – Figure 2) originally developed in 2005 and updated in 2014 and 2015, is a comprehensive process whose overarching goal is to support the continuous improvement of student learning at the institutional level (i.e., MSCHE Standard 12: General Education and MSCHE Standard 14: assessment of General Education competencies) and program (i.e., MSCHE Standard 14: assessment of student learning in majors/disciplines).

**Figure 2: UMES Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Process**



Assessment plans for student learning in each of the 60 majors (38 undergraduate, 14 graduate and 8 graduate) are designed by faculty of respective academic departments, using guidelines developed by the Assessment Council. The Assessment Council’s membership includes all department chairs and the Director of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment is the Chair, while the Vice Provost /Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs is co-chair. The General Education Committee (GenEd Committee) comprises faculty from academic departments, and up to 2014 was chaired by the Associate Vice president for Academic Affairs, but is now chaired by a faculty member from the Department of English and Modern Languages.

The focus of this report is on General Education and essential skills including written and oral communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological Competency and Information Literacy. Since the 2011 SLOAR and Periodic Review Reports to MHEC and MSCHE, UMES has continued to (1) review requirements by Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and University System of Maryland (USM), matching requirements to the UMES GenEd curriculum area sequence; (2) update/enhance the definition of GenEd student-learning competencies and outcomes; (3) map GenEd courses to GenEd competencies (see Appendix B: Mapping of General Education Requirements and Competencies); and (4) monitor, review, and disseminate GenEd competency assessment results to its internal and external stakeholders. All undergraduate students at UMES are required to complete a common body of course work that promotes a comprehensive educational base to

support student choices of majors. Academic advisors from respective academic departments help students make appropriate course selections for both majors and supporting GenEd courses. For example, Business majors are required to take MATH 109 and English majors must take ENGL101 (Basic Composition), ENGL 102 (Basic Composition II), and ENGL 203 (Fundamentals of Contemporary Speech) before they are permitted to take upper level English courses.

## **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

### **Assessment of General Education Competencies**

Since 2008 the General Education (GenEd) Committee has been engaged in a collaborative process of updating the General Education curriculum and enhancing the assessment of General Education competencies as defined by both MHEC and MSCHE. The following GenEd activities are worth noting: (1) in February 2010, information on GenEd guidelines from MHEC was provided to the Faculty Assembly; (2) GenEd update and assessment data were shared with the deans and directors during the August 2010 deans' and directors' meeting; (3) GenEd update and assessment data were provided during the fall 2010 faculty opening activities to all faculty, deans, department chairs, and directors. Significant outcomes of this process included the following:

- a. The GenEd committee decided to maintain the current MHEC mandated curriculum areas that would assist community college students in terms of transferability and assist all students in fulfilling the GenEd requirements of the State.
- b. After the GenEd student learning outcomes were modified, each department chairperson was asked to verify that the approved student learning outcomes were integrated into the GenEd courses for which they had ownership.
- c. Some courses were removed from the GenEd sequence that did not meet the revised student learning outcomes for that curriculum area (see Appendix C).
- d. The process required the re-examination of all course syllabi. Upon review it was determined that, in some instances, part-time faculty had modified or removed the approved student learning outcomes from the syllabus. This discovery prompted the development of guidelines and procedures to ensure that part-time faculty are aware of their roles and responsibility in GenEd.
- e. An outgrowth of this review process was the development of Adjunct Faculty Guidelines (see Appendix D) for part-time faculty that can be accessed on the UMES Academic Affairs website.

- f. Each department was encouraged to create a senior capstone course, which would infuse and assess written/oral communication and critical thinking. A critical thinking workshop was conducted by Alverno College, a national leader in assessment to assist the university in establishing developmental levels for critical thinking.
- g. 2010-2011: The UMES General Education Committee reviewed materials from the statewide conference, created the learning outcomes for the developmental levels of critical thinking, and began to assist departments with methods of assessment and embedding critical thinking outcomes. The Alverno College rubrics were introduced through developmental workshops, and the results of the first MAPP (renamed the ETS Proficiency Profile) were analyzed.

(4) 2011-2012: The UMES General Education Committee was given the charge to create a method of assessment for oral communication skills in the ENGL 203: Fundamentals of Contemporary Speech course, required for all students in GenEd Area I. ETS testing and collection of data continued with emphasis in the Senior Capstone courses to prepare for the exam. The IC<sup>3</sup> test was implemented to assess Technology and Information Literacy; this test was administered to all students enrolled in ENGL 101: Basic Composition I; (5) 2012-2013: Implementation of critical thinking assessments continued, and proposals were submitted to the UMES General Education Committee for review to add courses to the GenEd curriculum. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plans (SLOAP), included specific courses for infusion of critical thinking and alignment of department program goals to the six UMES GenEd competencies; and (6) 2014-2016: The UMES General Education Committee is engaged in a review of other general education models and theoretical literature as it continues to design and restructure the General Education curriculum at UMES, with a goal to move away from a menu-driven approach and toward a set group of GenEd courses that fulfill the liberal arts mission of a strong GenEd program and provide a strong foundation for courses in the majors. Each of a much smaller group of courses will be aligned to one of the established program competencies, and each competency has been or will be linked to a direct assessment implemented or created for it.

### **Assessment of Competencies**

UMES uses the following operational definitions for the competencies of General Education based on the MHEC requirements and MSCHE Standards 12 and 14:

1. Written and Oral Communication. The ability to prepare essays, other written assignments and spoken presentations that demonstrate clarity, coherence, and organization.
2. Critical Analysis and Reasoning. The ability to demonstrate in writing and speaking how to use logic and balanced thinking; formulation of solutions to problems by objective consideration of all possible alternatives; demonstrate recognition of importance of ethics.
3. Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning. *The* ability to identify and apply basic scientific principles to enhance understanding of the universe; to assign and use numbers, read and analyze numerical data, create models, draw inferences and support conclusions.
4. Technological Competency. Ability to use computer hardware, software, services to manage and deliver information.

5. *Information Literacy*. The provision of a framework which enables students to identify, retrieve, evaluate, and use information effectively and efficiently (includes social, legal, and economic issues); students acquire skills necessary to succeed in academic and professional arenas.

#### Assessment of Written and Oral Communication Competency

The English Proficiency Examination (EPE), using the WritePlacer Plus tool developed by the College Board continues to be a tool of choice for Written Communication for UMES. During the 2011-2015 academic years, 3,528 out of 3,808 students (92.6%) who took the test performed at the proficiency level of seven and above on the 8 point scale, with a proficiency cut off score of five. This was strong performance by students and it was decided no change was needed. Meanwhile, UMES has established a Writing Center to provide additional services to students who need extra help with the written communication competency. The WritePlacer is a high stakes exam because every student is required to take and pass it to graduate.

Oral Communication is assessed across the entire University using student portfolio presentations that are based on student work from core course ENGL 203, offered by the Department of English and Modern Languages. Student portfolio presentations are scored by a panel of instructors responsible for the course, using an oral communication rubric (i.e., 1=Beginning, 2=Developing, 3=Competent, and 4=Accomplished). Based on data collected and analyzed between spring 2011 and spring 2015 out of 2,320 students assessed, 1,844 (79.5%) were accomplished or competent, representing strong performance by students.

#### Assessment of Critical Analysis and Reasoning; and Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning Competencies

As already indicated, the General Education Committee selected the ETS Proficiency Profile tool for assessing Critical Thinking and Reasoning, and Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning competences. Prior to full scale implementation of the ETS test, a pilot test of the tool was performed on both freshmen and senior students and the sequence of course offerings for students preparing for the assessment were updated and an additional course of Philosophy, which provides instruction in Logic, was developed and implemented.

ETS Profile assessment data collected for 2011-2014 indicate that the performance of freshmen at UMES is comparable to that of reporting UMES peer institutions across the U. S. (see Tables 1 and 2). On the other hand, inter-institutional comparison assessment results for senior indicate that UMES senior student performance is less competitive with peer institutions across the nation (see Table 2).

**Table1: UMES Freshmen and Inter-Institutional ETS Profile Comparative Test Results 2011-2014**

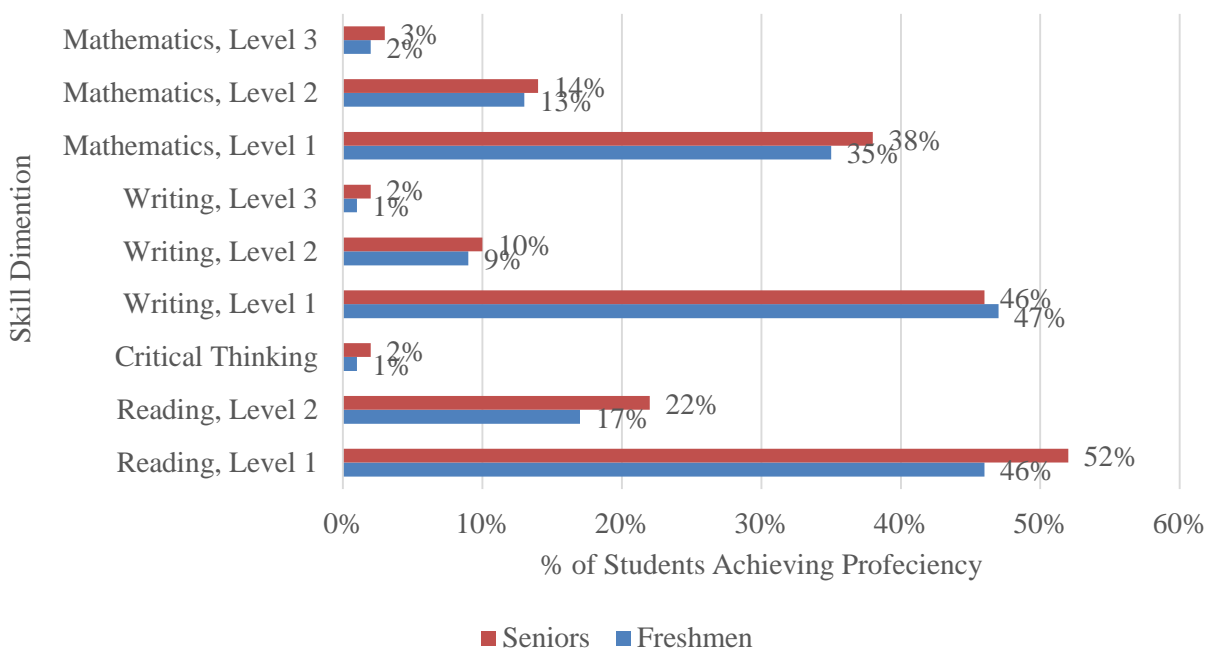
<b>Test Score Category</b>	<b>Possible Score Range</b>	<b>UMES Mean Score</b>	<b>Average Across Institutional Group Results</b>
Total Score	400-500	433.03	437.00
Critical Thinking	100-130	108.77	109.92
Reading	100-130	114.58	115.65
Writing	100-130	112.25	113.00
Mathematics	100-130	110.63	111.90

**Table 2: UMES Seniors and Inter-Institutional ETS Profile Comparative Test Results 2011-2014**

Test Score Category	Possible Score Range	UMES Mean Score	Average Across Institutional Group Results
Total Score	400-500	434.39	447.89
Critical Thinking	100-130	108.79	112.75
Reading	100-130	115.60	118.98
Writing	100-130	112.33	114.86
Mathematics	100-130	110.88	114.31

Further analysis of the ETS Profile results to determine value added between freshman and senior UMES students in student performance shows a small percent performance change. As shown in Figure 3 UMES seniors show little growth in three competencies compared to freshmen. In addition, UMES seniors perform at a level below the inter-institutional comparison sample. Consequently, the General Education Committee has suggested that senior student performance on the ETS Profile needs to be enhanced to ensure that graduating seniors have sufficient key transferable knowledge and skills during their time at UMES and at graduation.

**Figure 3: UMES % Senior/Freshman Proficient Comparison on ETS Profile**



## Technological Competency

Information Technology at UMES involves the use of computer hardware, software, services, and supporting infrastructure in the rapidly changing world of information technology. Graduates are expected to possess the ability to apply information technology to their work and personal lives. At UMES, students develop competence in basic aspects of information technology, including the ability to operate a personal computer effectively, particularly the use of software for word processing, spreadsheet/graphics, database, PowerPoint, and the Internet. The overarching outcome pertaining to this competency is effective utilization of technology in the analysis, and communication of ideas; and the management, organization, and examination of information. Specific Student Learning Outcomes include students will be able to (1) describe the essential components of a computer system and distinguish between system and software usage; (2) define and identify the basic components of a database; (3) identify and define basic internet terminology and activities; (4) demonstrate the ability to utilize Microsoft Word to create and edit documents, author reports and newsletters, merge documents, and create tables and charts; (5) demonstrate their knowledge and skills to utilize Microsoft Excel to create and edit spreadsheets, manage large notebooks, and create and print graphs; (6) create a simple database using Microsoft Access; (7) use Microsoft Outlook to send, organize, compose, edit, and merge messages; and (8) use Internet Explorer and a variety of search services to locate and evaluate resources.

Assessment of technological competency occurs at the freshman level mainly in two courses – BUED 212 (Computer Concepts) and CDSP 120/121 - Introduction to Computing, offered by the Departments of Business Management and Accounting, and Math and Computer Science, respectively. BUED 212 introduces students to electronic information processing. Emphasis in this course is placed on various computer concepts and applications. Contemporary computer software for word processing, spreadsheets, and databases relevant to business and industry are explored.

A survey of UMES entering freshman students with respect to their prior and current usage of computer technology shows that while the student usage of MS Word and Email are strong, there is less usage of other applications (Excel, MS Access, Desktop Publishing, and PowerPoint). Consequently, the two courses used to provide technological competencies (BUED 212 and CDSP 120/121) have been redesigned to emphasize Excel, MS Access, Desktop Publishing, and PowerPoint.

### *IC<sup>3</sup> Fast Track Assessment*

IC<sup>3</sup>/GS3 Fast Track is an assessment examination that provides a quick overview of individual students' Digital Literacy skills. The IC<sup>3</sup>/GS3 Fast Track assessment is certified and based on the globally recognized IC<sup>3</sup> standard. There are 75 questions comprising the assessment. These questions are divided into three components: Computing Fundamentals, Key Applications, and Living Online. The assessment test uniquely pulls from a bank of questions, randomizing questions for each testing session. IC<sup>3</sup>/GS3 Fast Track is programmed and timed for universal standard. Candidates have 60 minutes to complete the assessment. IC<sup>3</sup>/GS3 Fast Track provides features that allow the testing center to:

- Assess student digital literacy in a one-hour performance-based test;
- Track individual and school-wide digital literacy with custom reporting;
- Measure student digital literacy against the globally recognized Certiport IC<sup>3</sup>/GS3 Fast Track standard; and
- Lay a foundation for addressing accreditation requirements for student digital literacy.

The IC3/GS3 Fast Track assessment tool does not provide a pass or fail score. It reports the candidates overall performance indicating the number of questions answered correctly by component. With this information, the institution determines their individual cut score. Because of the nature of the assessment, there is reporting available that will allow administrators to review outcome of exams based on the number of correct or incorrect answers for each student. The assessment also provides many summary or detail reports to enable administrators to track students' progress for each of the objectives, i.e., Computing Fundamentals, Key Applications and Living Online. To ensure that UMES students meet the technological competency required by MSCHE and to provide an objective and external validation of Student Learning Outcome, the University uses Microsoft Professional Certification and/or IC<sup>3</sup> Track to assess technological competency. To achieve that purpose, the University created a Title III funded initiative entitled "Developing a Microsoft Center for Student Technology Competency and Certification" (MCSTCC) with the following goals:

- Goal 1: Provide Opportunity for five UMES faculty and staff to be trained and certified by Microsoft as Microsoft Certified Trainers.
- Goal 2: Provide a Center for preparing students to: (a) take Microsoft examination to be certified as Microsoft Office Specialist, and/or (b) IC<sup>3</sup> Track exam to meet the technological competency requirement.
- Goal 3: Provide External Professional Validity for meeting Technological Competency required by MHEC and Middle States Higher Education Commission.

*Microsoft Office Specialist Exam Results*

Microsoft Office Specialist exams are performance-based, which means each is conducted within a "live" Microsoft Office program. Using the actual program, exam candidates are asked to perform a series of tasks to clearly demonstrate their skills. At the UMES Center, we chose the MeasureUp software for students to use as a practice-testing environment prior to taking the Microsoft exam. The software enables students to prepare for the test by providing: exam-like questions that match software objectives, answers with detailed explanations and references, and personal study mode, score report and certification mode with benchmarking.

*Microsoft Office Specialist Exam*

Between AY 2011-2012 and AY 2014-2015, 2,447 students from BEUD 212/213 classes 486 took the Microsoft Office Specialist exam. Out of the students who took the test (see table 3), 433 (89.1%) passed the exam and were certified by Microsoft. This outstanding performance also enables students to have a credential that is needed in the workplace. UMES plans to continue promoting the certification exam, and require students to take the test as part of the General Education competency assessment. Based on the assessment results in Table 3, UMES has concluded that it is effectively meeting the technological competency needs of its students at graduation. In addition, UMES is also providing students opportunities for certification so that they are ready for employment.

**Table 3: UMES Student Microsoft Testing Report AY 2013-2014**

---

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Number of Students Receiving Training</b>	<b>Number of Students Taking The Test</b>	<b>MOS Word</b>	<b>MOS PowerPoint</b>	<b>MOS Excel</b>	<b>Total</b>
2011-2012	402	60	20	20	8	48
2012-2013	579	122	50	55	2	107



2013-2014	669	145	40	70	15	125
2014-2015	797	159	37	101	15	153
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,447</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>433</b>

### Information Literacy

The University Library Services offer a non-credit bearing course on information literacy. The course is offered to students at all levels. Library faculty members offering the course use an indirect measure to assess student learning outcomes (i.e., a library instruction evaluation form that is completed by students). This tool assess the quality of instruction/instructional strategies by library faculty members and students' level of competency in searching and retrieving resources online and library book stacks. It also assesses student competency in use of library resources for effectively accomplishing their projects and other academic/professional assignments. In AY 2013-2014, the results of the survey indicated that a majority of students (95%) strongly or very strongly agreed that library faculty presented materials in a clear and understandable manner and similarly, a majority (93%) strongly agreed or agreed that the information provided in their information literacy class would be very helpful for their research projects. This is a very positive indirect measure outcome for information literacy (see Appendix E: FDL Information Literacy 2014-2015 Class Evaluation).

### Assessment of General Education Competencies in Majors

In addition to being assessed in the General Education core curriculum, the five competencies are also assessed in majors. For example, the assessment of Environmental Science Independent Study (i.e., Chemistry 498) final paper included a component on critical thinking and reasoning in AY 2013-2014. All three senior students assessed in this major scored a three or higher on a five-point rubric scoring scheme. In Mathematics, one of the expected student learning outcomes is that "students will demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate mathematics orally and in a written form. Only two of four students met or exceeded expectations in proof writing for the Bachelor of Mathematics degree. Consequently, the Department of Math and Computer Science has decided to emphasize writing more in modern algebra, number theory, real and complex analysis. Similarly, in Human Ecology graduates in the Fashion and Merchandizing concentration were assessed on clarity, organization, and grammar. Using a five-point rubric, 91% of the 22 final students achieved a competent or higher assessment. Since the standard set was 80 % proficient and above, no further action was needed by the Human Ecology department.

### Using NSSE Results as an Indirect Measure of Assessment of General Education

UMES also uses the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) as an indirect measure for assessing General Education competencies. Results of AY 2014 and 2015 were used to measure how first-year students and seniors perceived their gains in competencies of written and oral communication, critical analysis and reasoning, scientific and quantitative reasoning, and diversity. Using a four-point scale (i.e., 1=Very little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, and 4=Very much), about 7 out of 10 seniors indicated making gains "quite a bit" or "very much" in their competencies at UMES in written communication, oral communication, critical analysis and reasoning, scientific and quantitative reasoning and understanding (i.e., diversity) people of other backgrounds/diversity both in AY 2014 and AY 2015, while first-year students indicated

making similar gains only in written communication, and critical analysis and reasoning. Six out of 10 first-year students indicated gains in oral communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning and understanding people of other backgrounds/diversity (see Table 4) during the same period. In either case seniors were more positive than first-year students about their experiences concerning the five General Education competencies assessed in the two academic years, confirming value added from first-year to senior year gains as a result of students' experiences at UMES.

**Table 4: Using NSSE Results as Indirect Measure of Assessment**

NSSE Perceived Gains	UMES Education Competency	Percent Responding "Very Much" or "Quite a Bit"			
		AY 2014		AY 2015	
		First Year	Senior	First Year	Senior
Writing clearly and effectively	Written Communication	70%	74%	69%	68%
Speaking clearly and effectively	Oral Communication	64%	71%	64%	69%
Thinking critically and analytically	Critical Analysis and Reasoning	69%	73%	69%	77%
Analyzing numerical and statistical information	Scientific and quantitative reasoning	60%	64%	53%	66%
Understanding people of other backgrounds	Diversity	56%	67%	57%	71%

ETS Profile results for General Education show that UMES freshman student performance is comparable to across institutional group averages. However, a comparison of the performance of freshmen and seniors shows that the performance of these two groups is identical, suggesting little growth for senior students in Critical thinking, Writing and Mathematics. Further analysis of these results has led the General Education Committee to the conclusion that seniors need incentive to exert effort on the test.

In conclusion, the University's services in operational areas and academic and professional programs are intentionally designed, implemented and systematically assessed to produce high quality scholars and professionals by providing a strong academic foundation for continuous improvement and student success. In cases where assessment results show that performance falls short of the target, UMES uses such results to have positive outcomes. For example, UMES is reassessing its use of the ETS Profile for assessing critical thinking, written and oral, scientific and quantitative competencies in light of the fact that assessment results for 2011-2014 have shown very little value added for seniors whose average scores also compare less favorably with other seniors nationally.

### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

UMES had its decennial reaffirmation of accreditation evaluation in April 2016 and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education decided to reaffirm its accreditation for meeting all the 14 standards including standards 7, 12, and 14 with no recommendation. The Commission further commended UMES **for the quality of the self-study process and report.**

## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A: UMES 2013-2014 ANNUAL STRATEGI OPERATIONAL PLAN/PROGRESS REPORT STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION FORM**

Indicator/Objective	Objective Target	Outcome			Changes Planned, Implemented, or Underway
		Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
Maintain Current Accreditations of 28 Programs	28		<b>28</b>		
Increase STEAM Enrollment (Fall 2014) from 1120 (Fall 2013)	1204	<b>1118</b>			A coordinator for Agriculture Department was hired in July 2013 to recruit more students.
Increase 3rd Year Retention Rate (Fall 2011 Cohort) from 47% (Fall 2010 Cohort)	49%			<b>50%</b>	
Maintain 2nd Year Retention Rate (Fall 2012 Cohort) as 55% (Fall 2011 Cohort)	55%		<b>55%</b>		
Increase 4 Year Graduation Rate (Fall 2010 Cohort) from 14% (Fall 2009 Cohort)	19%	<b>15%</b>			The University implemented a policy to encourage students to take 15 credit hours per semester.
Increase 6 Year Graduation Rate of African American Students (Fall 2008 Cohort) from 32% (Fall 2007 Cohort)	34%			<b>37%</b>	
Increase 6 Year Graduation Rate of African American Male Students (Fall 2008 Cohort) from 23% (Fall 2007 Cohort)	25%			<b>29%</b>	
Increase 6 Year Graduation Rate of Low income (Pell) Students from 29% (Fall 2007 Cohort)	34%			<b>36%</b>	
Increase Number of Bachelor's Degree Completers (AY 2013-2014) from 514 (AY 2012-2013)	528			<b>585</b>	
Increase Transfer Students Enrollment (AY 2013-2014) from 205 (AY 2012-2013)	250	<b>186</b>			
Increase First-time Full-time Cohort Enrollment (AY 2013-2014) from 604 (AY 2012-2013)	700			<b>756</b>	
Increase Online Course Offering (AY 2013-2014) from 65 (AY 2012-2013)	70			<b>105</b>	
Increase Redesigned Courses (AY 2013-2014) from 7 (AY 2012-2013)	11			<b>13</b>	
Increase Success Rate for Students Enrolled in Developmental Mathematics (AY 2013-2014) from 57% (AY 2012-2013)	62%		<b>62%</b>		
Increase Private Giving (AY 2013-2014) from \$895,525 (AY 2012-2013)	\$1.5 M			<b>\$1,718,637</b>	
Increase Alumni Giving Rate (AY 2013-2014) from 3.8% (AY 2012-2013)	5.3%		<b>5.3%</b>		Division of Institutional Advancement will focus on alumni of the last decade.

**APPENDIX B: MAPPING OF GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS AND COMEPTENCIES**

<p><b>General Education Curriculum Areas</b></p> <p><b>Total = 40-43 credits</b></p>	<p><b>MS Competency #1</b> <i>Written and Oral Communication</i></p> <p><i>(ability to prepare essays, other written assignments and spoken presentations that demonstrate clarity, coherence, and organization)</i></p>	<p><b>MS Competency #2</b> <i>Critical Analysis and Reasoning</i></p> <p><i>(ability to demonstrate in writing and speaking to use logic and balanced thinking; formulation of solutions to problems by objective consideration of all possible alternatives; demonstrate recognition of importance of ethics)</i></p>	<p><b>MS Competency #3</b> <i>Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning</i></p> <p><i>(ability to identify and apply basic scientific principles to enhance understanding of our universe; to assign and use numbers, read and analyze numerical data, create models, draw inferences and support conclusions)</i></p>	<p><b>MS Competency #4</b> <i>Technological Literacy</i></p> <p><i>(ability to use hardware, software, services to manage and deliver information.</i></p>	<p><b>MS Competency #5</b> <i>Information Literacy</i></p> <p><i>(defined as the provision of a framework which enables students to identify, retrieve, evaluate, and use information effectively and efficiently (includes social, legal and economic issues; students acquire skills necessary to succeed in academic and professional arenas)</i></p>
<p><b>I. Arts and Humanities (9 credits)</b></p>					
<p>ENG 203 plus one course in each of 2 disciplines</p>	X	X		X	X
<p>Discipline A: Arts 101</p>		X			
<p>Discipline B: History</p>					
<p><b>II. Curriculum area (Social Sciences)</b></p>	<p><i>Written and Oral Communication</i></p>	<p><i>Critical Analysis and Reasoning</i></p>	<p><i>Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning</i></p>	<p><i>Technological Literacy</i></p>	<p><i>Information Literacy</i></p>
<p>HIST 101</p>	X	X		X	X

PSYC 200	X	X		X	X
SOCI101	X	X		X	X
POLI 200	X	X		X	X
HIST 201	X	X		X	X

<b>III. Curriculum Areas (Biological Phys Sciences)</b>	<i>Written and Oral Communication</i>	<i>Critical Analysis and Reasoning</i>	<i>Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning</i>	<i>Technological Literacy</i>	<i>Information Literacy</i>
ENVS 101		X			X
BIOL 101		X	X		X
BIOL 103		X	X		X

<b>IV. Curriculum (Math)</b>	<i>Written and Oral Communication</i>	<i>Critical Analysis and Reasoning</i>	<i>Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning</i>	<i>Technological Literacy</i>	<i>Information Literacy</i>
Math 102	X	X	X	X	X
Math 109	X	X	X	X	X

<b>V. Curriculum Area (Languages)</b>	<i>Written and Oral Communication</i>	<i>Critical Analysis and Reasoning</i>	<i>Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning</i>	<i>Technological Literacy</i>	<i>Information Literacy</i>
ENGL 101	X	X		X	X
ENGL 102	X	X		X	X
ENGL 305/310	X	X		X	X
<b>VI. Curriculum Area (Emerging Issues)</b>	<i>Written and Oral Communication</i>	<i>Critical Analysis and Reasoning</i>	<i>Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning</i>	<i>Technological Literacy</i>	<i>Information Literacy</i>
GNST 100	X	X			X

**Appendix C: Structure and Delivery of General Education Courses**

Curriculum Area	School of Agriculture and Natural Sciences	School of Arts and Professions	School of Business and technology	School of Pharmacy and Health Professions
<b>Area I</b> Arts & Humanities	- Fine Arts - Social Science - English & Modern Languages	- Fine Arts - Social Science - English & Modern Languages - Education	- Fine Arts - Social Science - English & Modern Languages	Fine Arts - Social Science - English & Modern Languages
<b>Area II</b> Social & Behavioral Science	- Agriculture - Education - Social Science	- Agriculture - Education - Social Science - Human Ecology	- Education - Social Science - Criminal Justice - Human Ecology	- Social Science - Criminal Justice - Human Ecology - Education
<b>Area III</b> Biology and Physical Science	- Natural Sciences	- Natural Sciences	- Natural Sciences - Agriculture	- Natural Sciences
<b>Area IV</b> Mathematics	- Mathematics & Computer Science	- Mathematics & Computer Science	- Mathematics & Computer Science	- Mathematics & Computer Science
<b>Area V</b> English Composition	- English & Modern Languages	- English & Modern Languages	- English & Modern Languages	- English & Modern Languages
<b>Area VI</b> Emerging Issues	- Exercise Science - Physical Education - Agriculture - Human Ecology - Business Mgt., & Accounting - Mathematics & Computer Science - Natural Sciences	- Exercise Science - Physical Education - Criminal Justice (GNST 100) - Education - Human Ecology - English & Modern Languages - Business, Mgt., & Accounting	- Business, Mgt., & Accounting - Exercise Science - Physical Education - Social Science - English & Modern Languages - Hospitality & Tourism Management	- Exercise Science - Physical Education - Criminal Justice (GNST 100) - Education - Human Ecology - English & Modern Languages - Business, Mgt., & Accounting

### General Education Courses

The University's General Education (GenEd) courses are adequately structured and delivered through the following six curriculum areas: (I) Arts and Humanities, (II) Social and Behavioral Sciences, (III) Biological and Physical Sciences, (IV) Mathematics, (V) English Composition, and (VI) Emerging Issues (see Table VII.1). The GenEd program, developed and reviewed by the faculty, is purposeful, coherent, engaging and rigorous. Apart from providing the foundational transferable knowledge and skills needed to be successful in students' majors, General Education provides students a balanced educational curriculum for lifelong learning.



Every program specifies in detail its general education requirements without which students cannot graduate.

The process of mapping has ensured that general education competencies are matched with relevant courses, and this has resulted in the adjustment or deletion of some courses and inclusion of new courses for three of the six GenEd curriculum areas. For example:

1. Curriculum Area I, Discipline B History: four upper-level history courses were removed (HIST 333, HIST 334, HIST 341 & HIST 360), and three lower-level courses were added (HIST 101, HIST 102, & PHIL 201). One course was added in Discipline C Language: ASLS 203. Additional changes to Curriculum Area I, Discipline D Literature: five courses upper-level English courses were removed (ENGL 215, ENGL 218, ENGL 328, ENGL 329, & ENGL 401).

2. Curriculum Area II, Discipline A Social Sciences: two courses were removed (HIST 111H & HIST 112H), and four courses were added (HIST 102/H, HIST 201, HIST 202, & PHIL 201). Additional changes in Curriculum II, Discipline B Behavioral Science: four courses Human Ecology were removed (HUEC 361, HUEC 280, SOWK 200, & SOWK 200H).

3. In Curriculum Area VI: two courses were removed (ENGL 412 & ENGL 413) and, in addition to the First-Year Experience (FYE) course (GNST 100) that was already in this area, each academic department developed its own FYE course that included six common goals contained in the original GNST 100 course. This requirement made it possible for students to change their major without penalty of having to repeat this course in their major.

## **Appendix D: Adjunct Faculty Guidelines**

### **UMES POLICY ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF ADJUNCT FACULTY**

(Approved by the President February \_\_, 2013)

#### **I. PURPOSE**

This policy outlines procedures to govern practices at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (“University”) related to search processes, appointments, contracts, and conditions of employment for adjunct faculty. The goal of the policy is to assure a high quality of instruction by individuals with appropriate credentials and experience to provide a set of baseline procedures that will lead to continuous improvement in the status of adjunct faculty at the University.

#### **II. APPLICABILITY**

A. Adjunct Faculty. This policy applies only to adjunct faculty, defined as faculty members of the University who are:

1. Employed to provide instructional services;
2. Neither tenured nor eligible for tenure; and
3. Appointed to teach specific courses and compensated on a course-by-course basis.

#### **III. CATEGORIES OF ADJUNCT FACULTY**

For the purposes of this policy, adjunct faculty shall be designated as one of the following:

A. Adjunct Faculty I: All adjunct faculty, except those faculty members who meet the criteria for design by the University as Adjunct Faculty II;

B. Adjunct Faculty II: Adjunct faculty members are determined by the University to have a consistent record of high-quality instruction. UMES shall consider granting Adjunct Faculty II status to adjunct faculty members who meet the following criteria:

1. After establishing a record of teaching at least three years at the University and a total of 12 courses of three credits or more;
2. Supported by a series of high-level performance evaluations over the course of at least twelve full semester courses at the University; and
3. Upon written request by the faculty member to the department chair. The department chair and dean will provide a written recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs on the granting of Adjunct II status.

#### IV. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF ADJUNCT FACULTY

A. Credentials. The University shall develop written standards for the academic degrees or professional certifications and professional experience required for appointment as adjunct faculty. Doctoral/terminal degree is preferred; however, Master's and Bachelor's degree will be considered depending on the program. Federal Aviation Administration Certification is required to teach Aviation Ground School courses.

B. Selection Procedures. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will assure that each department has in place written procedures for selecting adjunct faculty. These procedures shall include verification of credentials by the UMES Employment Manager and shall reflect the commitment of the University and the University System of Maryland to equal opportunity and affirmative action.

#### V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS

A. Support for Teaching. The University shall provide each adjunct faculty member with the support it determines to be necessary for the execution of the appointee's duties, which may include access through the University's website or electronic resources, including the following:

1. Information on the department's policies, requirements, and goals for each course, along with access to examples of past course syllabi (if available);
2. Official schedule of classes, including academic calendar and time frames of class meetings;
3. Assistance in the selection of textbook(s) for the course(s) and ancillaries for the text(s), if these are not already available;
4. A University email account along with access to on-campus computer facilities; and
5. For adjunct faculty teaching face-to-face classes on campus:
  - a) Telephone or other voice access, as appropriate;
  - b) Necessary office supplies;
  - c) Copying services for course materials; and
  - d) Appropriate space for meeting with students during scheduled office hours.

B. Professional Development. Professional development opportunities for adjunct faculty shall be supported to the extent feasible, and may include invitations to departmental, school, University and external faculty development events.

C. Performance Evaluation. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will assure that each department has in place written procedures for evaluating adjunct faculty performance on a semester basis.

1. Departments shall evaluate the teaching of adjunct faculty members in a manner that identifies high-level performance, according to departmental standards.
2. Evaluations shall be kept on record in a personnel file and shall be consulted when decisions about promotion, compensation, and any subsequent contract are made.

## VI. APPOINTMENT AND ASSIGNMENT

### A. Appointment of Adjunct Faculty Members

1. Contracts/Letters of Appointment. Each adjunct faculty member, including both Adjunct Faculty I and Adjunct Faculty II, shall be provided a written contract or formal letter of appointment prior to the beginning of the assignment, which includes:

- a) Position title,
- b) Contract term,
- c) Per-course compensation,
- d) Description of the assignment,
- e) Institution benefits, if any,
- f) Performance evaluation policies and procedures
- g) Explanation of the implications of the cancellation of a course before its start date.

### 2. Provisions for Adjunct Faculty II

a) After designation as Adjunct Faculty II at the University, a faculty member:

1) Shall receive a compensation increment of at least 10% of the minimum, annual per-course compensation for adjunct faculty at the University, consistent with State and USM budget policies.

2) Shall be given priority consideration to the extent operationally feasible among adjunct faculty for future teaching assignments in the subjects for which the faculty member has had consistent instructional experience at the University.

3) May be eligible for longer term appointments that assure the faculty member assignment to a fixed number of classes during the term of the appointment.

b) The designation of a faculty member as Adjunct Faculty II will not prevent the faculty member from competition for or selection into a position as salaried PTNTT or other faculty.

3. Teaching assignments. The appointing department shall provide adjunct faculty with reasonable and adequate notice of projected teaching assignments prior to the start of classes.

a) The University has the goal of providing such notice forty-five (45) days before the class start date to the extent feasible. Nothing in this section shall prevent a department from making an adjunct faculty teaching appointment on short notice based on changed circumstances in class enrollments, the availability of resources, or other factors.

b) If a class enrollment is seven (7) or more students, the adjunct faculty member will receive full compensation. However, for fewer than seven (7) students enrolled, the adjunct faculty member has the choice of a pro-rata salary per student.

c) If the University cancels a fall or spring class to which an adjunct faculty member has been assigned less than 30 days before the class start date, and has been unable to offer the faculty member re-assignment to a comparable class, the University shall compensate the faculty member 10% of the payment amount specified in the contract or appointment letter for that class.

B. Notice of policies and procedures. Upon signing a contract or otherwise accepting an appointment the adjunct faculty member will receive electronic access to the University's

Faculty Handbook, Adjunct Faculty Resource Guide, and Frequently Asked Questions, as well as USM policies, including those policies explaining the benefits for which the adjunct faculty member may be eligible.

## VII. COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

A. Compensation. Every effort should be made to make adjunct faculty compensation professionally appropriate and competitive to the extent allowed by available fiscal resources. Higher compensation may be available based on discipline demand or based on location.

B. Benefits for Adjunct Faculty. The University may provide designated institutional benefits to adjunct faculty, in either or both of the Adjunct Faculty I or Adjunct Faculty II categories, at the discretion of the President.

C. Sabbatical and Terminal Leave. Adjunct faculty members are ineligible for sabbatical leave or terminal leave, regardless of length of service.

## VIII. DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS

A. Grievance Procedure. With the exception of those policies and procedures that relate to the appointment, rank and tenure of tenured and tenure-track faculty. Adjunct Faculty shall follow the UMES Faculty Grievance Policy.

B. Process Related to the Termination of Adjunct Faculty. All Adjunct Faculty members shall have the opportunity for an informal hearing at the level of the appropriate dean's office before termination of an appointment within the term of the faculty member's contract. The University may remove the Adjunct Faculty member from the classroom, while continuing to pay the faculty member, pending the outcome of the hearing.

C. Subsequent Appointments. The decision whether to re-appoint an adjunct faculty member after the term of the faculty member's contract remains within the discretion of the University:

1. Consistent with Section VI.A.2; and
2. Provided that the decision was not made for unlawful reasons or in retaliation for the faculty member's exercise of grievance rights or shared governance activities.

## IX. PARTICIPATION IN THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY

A. Integration into University Life. Adjunct faculty members shall be invited, to the extent feasible, to participate in the scholarly, intellectual, academic, and social life of the department, school, and University.

B. Communication with Administration. The University shall provide opportunities for Adjunct Faculty to communicate their concerns to campus administration, provide advice in the development and implementation of policies and procedures related to Adjunct Faculty, and otherwise participate fully in shared governance.

1. The University shall provide opportunities for adjunct faculty to communicate their concerns to campus administration, provide advice in the development and implementation of policies and procedures related to adjunct faculty, and otherwise participate fully in shared governance through the Faculty Assembly. Provisions regarding the Faculty Assembly are available in the UMES Faculty Handbook.

2. Adjunct Faculty may elect a representative to meet with the Vice President for Academic Affairs twice a year, in the fall and spring semesters.

3. The University will facilitate the formation and operation of an adjunct advisory committee, to be comprised of adjunct faculty members who will represent the interests of the University's Adjunct Faculty.

a. The committee may be part of an existing shared governance body or a distinct advisory group formed for the purpose of addressing the interests of Adjunct Faculty.

b. Members will have the option of engaging an external representative in their discussions with administration, as described in paragraph 4, below.

4. Adjunct Faculty may elect to engage an external representative, which may be a labor organization, to assist them in "meet and confer" discussions with administration over issues of concern, including compensation, benefits and terms of employment.

a. The University will give serious consideration to the information, views and suggestions gained from the meet and confer process in any relevant policy decisions regarding adjunct faculty. Agreements reached during the process that are amenable to formalization as policy may be adopted as such through appropriate decisional processes of the University; the President retains final authority over all such decisions.

b. The Chancellor, in consultation with the Presidents, shall develop principles and guidelines for organization of the meet and confer process at USM institutions.

i. Principles underlying the meet and confer process must include appropriate legal parameters, requirements for fairness and adequate representation, respect for the fundamental elements of higher education shared governance, and administrative feasibility.

ii. Guidelines will address the processes by which Adjunct Faculty will determine whether to engage a representative, the selection of a representative, access to information, and minimum requirements for meet and confer meetings. Communications between Adjunct Faculty and the University administration are based upon the free and candid expression of views. The presence of a meet and confer process at the University in which Adjunct Faculty engage a representative organization does not limit or constrain the role, function or processes of University shared governance. Shared governance bodies and other groups of Adjunct Faculty remain free to confer with administrators regarding matters of concern to those groups, and Adjunct Faculty members may participate in University shared governance bodies, consistent with University policies.

C. Reimbursement of Expenses. In recognition that Adjunct Faculty are compensated only for course-by-course instructional services, each campus shall provide reimbursement for travel and other reasonable expenses, consistent with University System of Maryland and University travel policies, to each Adjunct Faculty member who serves on the University's adjunct advisory committee or other shared governance group.

UMES Senate Approved: February 12, 2013

## **Appendix E: Frederic Douglass Information Literacy 2014-2015 Class Evaluation**

EVALUATION SUMMARY, August 2015

### **Background**

This is an evaluation summary of the Information Literacy classes that were conducted by the Frederick Douglass Faculty Librarians during the 2014-15 Academic year. There were six faculty librarians that provided Information Literacy classes which utilized four hundred and forty-three students. The four hundred and forty-three students are represented from different academic disciplines and they completed the class evaluation forms after attending the classes. One hundred and twenty-five of the participants were freshman, 42 were sophomore, 54 were senior and 18 were graduate students. Five faculty/staff members also evaluated the Information Literacy sessions, while 22 participants were categorized as “other” perhaps because they did not declare their class levels on the evaluation forms. Closed-ended questions were used to collect data on a five-point Likert Scale for questions that elicited the librarians’ presentation abilities. The major findings of the evaluation were that the majority of the students were happy with the way librarians presented the class. However, the majority of participants were not confident in utilizing library resources soon after the Information Literacy class presentations. Data for the evaluation was presented in tables and narrative.

### **Analysis**

The evaluation report is based on feedback from 343 participants who took part in Information Literacy classes. The evaluation focused on three areas of the Information Literacy class presentations which included participants’ ratings of the librarian presenters, participants’ confidence levels in library resource utilization after the presentation and participants’ ratings on the instructional delivery. The participants’ overall ratings of the presentations were also provided. Five questions were constructed to determine the participants’ ratings of the librarian presenters. On whether the librarian presented the materials in a clear and understandable manner, 68% of the respondents strongly agreed, 27% agreed; while 3% disagreed. There was no significant variance on the participants’ ratings on the first question compared to the other three questions that rated the librarians’ effectiveness, organization and clarity of presentations; relationship between amount of material covered and time allotted; and the helpfulness of the information provided in the session to participants’ research projects.

The first four questions that rated the librarians’ ability to present had an overall average



rating of 4.6 on the 5-point Likert Scale; and this provides a strong indicator of the excellent work that librarians are doing in delivering effective information literacy instruction to UMES students. However, an average rating of 2.6 on the five-point Likert Scale on whether the librarians provided helpful handouts during their presentation suggests that more work has to be done to ensure that handouts given to students exceed their expectations. Additionally, the question on whether librarians encouraged class participation provides a significant cause for concern. Although the overall average rating of 4.2 on the 5-point Likert Scale may appear to represent a positive development, the combined total of 4% of the participants who strongly disagree and 11% who disagree with the librarians' ability to encourage class participation represents a significant number to warrant a review on the librarians' classroom behavior. The challenge was that some students did not want to log on to the computers during the instructional delivery, and thus became disengaged when practical demonstrations were required.

The purpose of asking the participants' confidence levels in resource utilization was to ensure that participants were able to independently use the library resources, which essentially was the main purpose of the Information Literacy program. This area provided a disturbing disconnect between its low ratings and the high ratings on the first area that rated the librarian's ability to present. Questions that were asked to determine participants' confidence levels in resource utilization included their ability to search the online catalog, searching for online articles, retrieving books from the stacks, checking online catalog for items on reserves and ability to use information learned to complete the tasks. The percentage ratings dropped to a range of between 35% and 56% for participants who were very confident; and to a range of between 10% and 23% for those who were confident. A range of between 21% and 48% did not respond to these questions. It can be inferred that the participants' unwillingness to respond to questions about their confidence level was a show of no self-confidence in their ability to independently utilize library resources. However, the low levels of confidence can also be attributed to the fact that they would not have had enough time to try to independently do the searches by the end of the classes. The librarians may need to provide follow-up sessions a week after to test the participants' abilities to utilize library resources after information literacy classes.

The librarian presenters' instructional delivery was determined by the participants' ratings on the pace of the sessions. The fact that 8 in every 10 participants found the pace of the sessions as just right showed that the majority of students were generally satisfied with the pace of the instructional deliveries. The 8% of participants who rated the pace of instructional delivery as too slow and the 3% who rated them as too fast were considered as two outliers that were irreconcilable. Unfortunately, there is no meaning that could be attributed to the 7% who rated the pace as boring, and in the future, the evaluation instrument will be improved to ensure that it measures what it is supported to measure.

While there was room for improvement, the participants' overall ratings of the Information Literacy sessions where 45% rated them as excellent, with the equivalent percentage rating them as good and another 9% of participants rating them as average reflected positive steps towards ensuring that students have the necessary skills to navigate resources in the library. However, the 343 participants who took Information Literacy classes represented only approximately 10% of the student population. More attention should be turned towards the recruitment of more students to participate in Information Literacy classes as part of preparing them for their academic success as well as life-long learning.

### Summary

The three main areas of the Information Literacy instructional class presentations that were evaluated included participants' ratings of the librarian presenters, participants' confidence levels in library resource utilization after the presentation and participants' ratings on the instructional delivery. Data collected show high ratings for librarians during their class presentations. However, the same data show low ratings for participants' confidence levels when it came to independently utilize library resources soon after completing Information Literacy classes. The majority of participants were satisfied with the pace of instructional delivery during the Information Literacy classes.

### Descriptive Analysis of the Information Literacy Participants' Ratings of Class Sessions

<b>Table 1: Analysis of Participants' Ratings of Librarian Presenter</b>							
	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD(%)	N/A (%)	NAr(%)	AR
Questions:							
Librarian presented the materials in a clear and understandable manner	68	27	3	0	0	1	4.6
The Librarian was effective, well organized, and gave a clear presentation	67	26	6	0	1	0	4.6
The amount of material covered was suited to the time allotted	70	23	5	1	1	0	4.6
The information provided in this session will be very helpful for my research project	71	22	5	1	0	1	4.6
The Librarian provided helpful handouts	37	11	9	1	4	38	2.6
The Librarian encouraged the class to participate	59	21	11	4	3	3	4.2
<b>Table 2: Analysis of Participants' Confidence Levels in Resource Utilization</b>							
	VC (%)	C (%)	NC (%)			NAr (%)	
Searching the online catalog to find a book	56	23	1			21	2.1
Searching the periodical to find an article online	53	21	1			25	2
Retrieving a book from the stacks	42	20	2			36	1.7
Using the Library Catalog to see if your instructor has an	35	16	2			48	1.4

item on Reserve							
Using what I learned in this session to find information I need to complete my project	42	10	0			48	1.5
<b>Table 3: Analysis of Participants' Rating of Instructional Delivery</b>							
	JR(%)	TS (%)	TF (%)	B (%)		NAr (%)	
The pace of the session was	80	8	3	7		2	4.6
<b>Table 4: Analysis of Participants' Overall Rating</b>							
	E (%)	G (%)	Avg. (%)	F (%)	P (%)		
<b>Overall I rate this session</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>4.4</b>
Strongly Agree (SA=5), Agree (A=4), Disagree (D=3), Strongly Disagree (SD=2), Not Applicable (N/A=1), No Answer(NAr), Average Rating (AR)							
Very Confident (VC=3), Confident (C=2), Not Confident (NC=1)							
Just Right (JR=5), Too Slow (TS=4), Too fast (TF=3) Boring (B=2), No Answer (NAr=1)							
Excellent (E=5), Good (G=4), Average (Avg.=3), Fair (F=2), Poor (P=1)							

N =343

**University of Maryland University College**

## Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

### Leadership for Institutional Assessment

UMUC's organizational structure and lines of authority facilitate decision-making and accountability for improvements at unit and institutional levels, as well as individual responsibility. The President is supported by the Executive Committee (EC), comprising the Provost and Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs; Senior Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management; Senior Vice President, Communications; Senior Vice President, Global Military Operations; Senior Vice President and Chief Business Officer; and Senior Vice President for Analytics, Planning, and Technology. EC meets regularly with the President and assists with development and implementation of the strategic direction for the university, provides direct support and advice to the President, and has input on and influence over key decisions and issues of importance to UMUC. The extended leadership team consists of the President's Cabinet, an advisory body whose members share information with the President and each other on key projects and initiatives taking place across the university. The Cabinet meets regularly and provides a forum for communication of critical information and updates. It includes the members of the Executive Committee and many of their direct reports who are leaders at the Vice Presidential level, and it represents a variety of departments and divisions across the university. The roughly 25 members of the President's Cabinet include a wide representation of university leadership such as the Ombudsman and Vice President, Diversity Programs; Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School; Vice Provost and Dean of The Undergraduate School; Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer; Vice Provost, Learner and Faculty Experience; and Vice Presidents of Institutional Advancement, Marketing, and Student Advising and Retention.

In addition to alignment with the State Plan for Postsecondary Education, the Executive Committee and Cabinet consider how well initiatives align with UMUC's mission and strategic priorities. Long-term plans for major departments also align, defining direction and specific responsibilities based on the strategic goals and values as translated into unit, department, and individual outcomes. UMUC leverages project and portfolio management methodology through the Enterprise Project Management Office (PMO), which plays a significant role in tracking initiatives that are approved as appropriate to the mission and priorities. This ensures that the organization successfully completes initiatives, mitigates the risk of failure, coordinates across units, and uses standardized processes and tools. With the Project Management Office, Executive Committee, Cabinet and other guiding groups, the university has established a regular meeting cadence—daily, weekly, monthly, term-based, and annual—to review data, develop action plans, and assess the impact of previous initiatives in light of strategic goals and priorities.

### Leadership for Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

UMUC supports a rigorous, carefully planned, and comprehensive program of learning outcomes assessment. UMUC's [\*Institutional Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes\*](#) defines the conceptual framework for institution-wide student learning outcomes, and describes the process for their assessment at the program, school and university levels. An institution-wide Assessment Steering Committee (ASC), which includes the associate deans, representative faculty, and assessment administrators from each school, and the associate vice provost for Accreditation, Compliance and Reporting, coordinate and advise on the assessment of student learning outcomes. The ASC and responsible parties in each school ensure that appropriate processes and reporting are in place, assessment information is shared and acted on, and exemplary assessment practices are disseminated and followed.

Institution-wide Student Learning Expectations (SLEs) in written communication, technology fluency, information literacy, critical thinking, and discipline-specific knowledge are assessed and reported. In The Undergraduate School (TUS), four additional SLEs are also embedded and assessed: quantitative reasoning, scientific literacy, historical and cultural perspectives, and ethics; the SLEs collectively encompass the general education areas identified by the Middle States Commission for Higher Education *Characteristics of Excellence*. The SLEs are also translated into competencies at school and program levels, embedded throughout graduate and undergraduate curricula, and assessed appropriately. Assessments are created and administered by appropriate faculty. Both schools map the SLEs to curriculum and related assessments, creating annual plans and timetables to assess student competency at appropriate places in the curriculum and with appropriate tools. The Program Chairs work with the assessment administrator in each school to design and validate tools as well as to analyze the results.

Each school has designed and implemented effective structures, training, and processes for assessment; these vary according to the needs and nature of the unit, but are consistently based on learning-outcomes assessment principles and best practices. The Graduate School (TGS) shares an SLE assessment across programs, using a common activity to evaluate student learning, alternating administration between a beginning-level and a concluding course. TUS conducts course embedded assessment, both in General Education and in major-specific coursework across programs. The ETS Proficiency Profile (EPP) is also used for institution-level assessment of writing, quantitative skills, and critical thinking. The SLEs for discipline-specific knowledge are especially important for programmatic currency and relevance. Both schools define learning outcomes and activities with the input of employers, professional associations, and industry experts to ensure that program curricula prepare students for work in their fields of study. As part of the process for curriculum development and evaluation of program outcomes, the faculty work with specialists and subject matter experts to confirm that assessment practices and curricula focus on current workplace competencies.

Results from learning outcomes assessment activities are used in both schools to improve curricula and support within their respective programs. Program Chairs regularly review assessment results after each term and, when appropriate, engage faculty in conversations about current student performance as it relates to course and program outcomes. Program Chairs are able to hold discussions to gain feedback for improvement of curricula and are able to incorporate faculty feedback throughout the year and, when needed, make responsive changes to curriculum. The schools' assessment administrators assist in reviewing the results and developing action plans.

## Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution’s assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution’s infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

### Modifications and Adjustments to Institutional Assessment

The alignment of goals and initiatives necessitates ongoing data collection, monitoring and assessment. Moreover, because UMUC operates in a dynamic segment of higher education, the university must adjust course and adapt its plans and structures more frequently than many traditional institutions. UMUC has cultivated a systematic and evidence-driven approach to institutional assessment and effectiveness to support timeliness in closing the feedback loop and agility in course correcting when necessary. Since 2011 UMUC has established an Office of Analytics, Planning and Technology and invested in a sophisticated data infrastructure to support decision-making. This third-generation data warehouse (Hercules) contains a wealth of detail from throughout the university—including financial, student applications, enrollment, marketing, course/faculty, and learning management system (LMS) activity data. It supports analysis on key metrics of interest to the state—such as enrollment trends, degrees awarded, and retention rates—as well as key metrics of interest related to the university’s strategic plan and initiatives. The combination of expertise and technology resources in the Office of Analytics (now known as HelioCampus) deliver to the institution analytics capabilities that buttress a robust system of assessment and continuous improvement.

Essential to the use of data is transparency and access for key stakeholders and users. To facilitate data-driven decision-making, UMUC has built a suite of “dashboards” of administrative and academic information, organized and disseminated in a visually accessible format. For example, the Executive Dashboard for unit heads combines enrollment, financial, and student success metrics as well as marketing analytics that track spending, applications, enrollments, and conversion rates for new students. Academic Program Dashboards for Program Chairs and Deans, such as those examples provided in Figures 1 and 2 below, help to monitor enrollment trends, student outcomes, and faculty performance for each school and program.

Figure 1: Academic Program Dashboard – Course Completion Trends

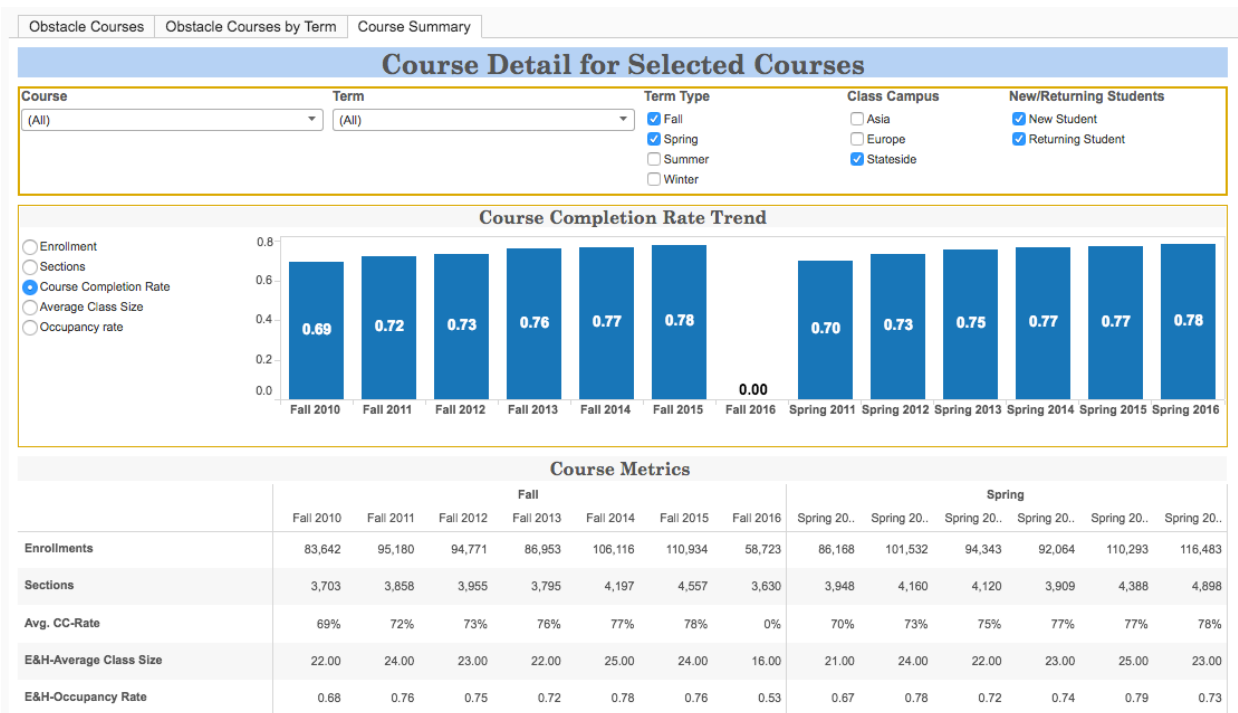
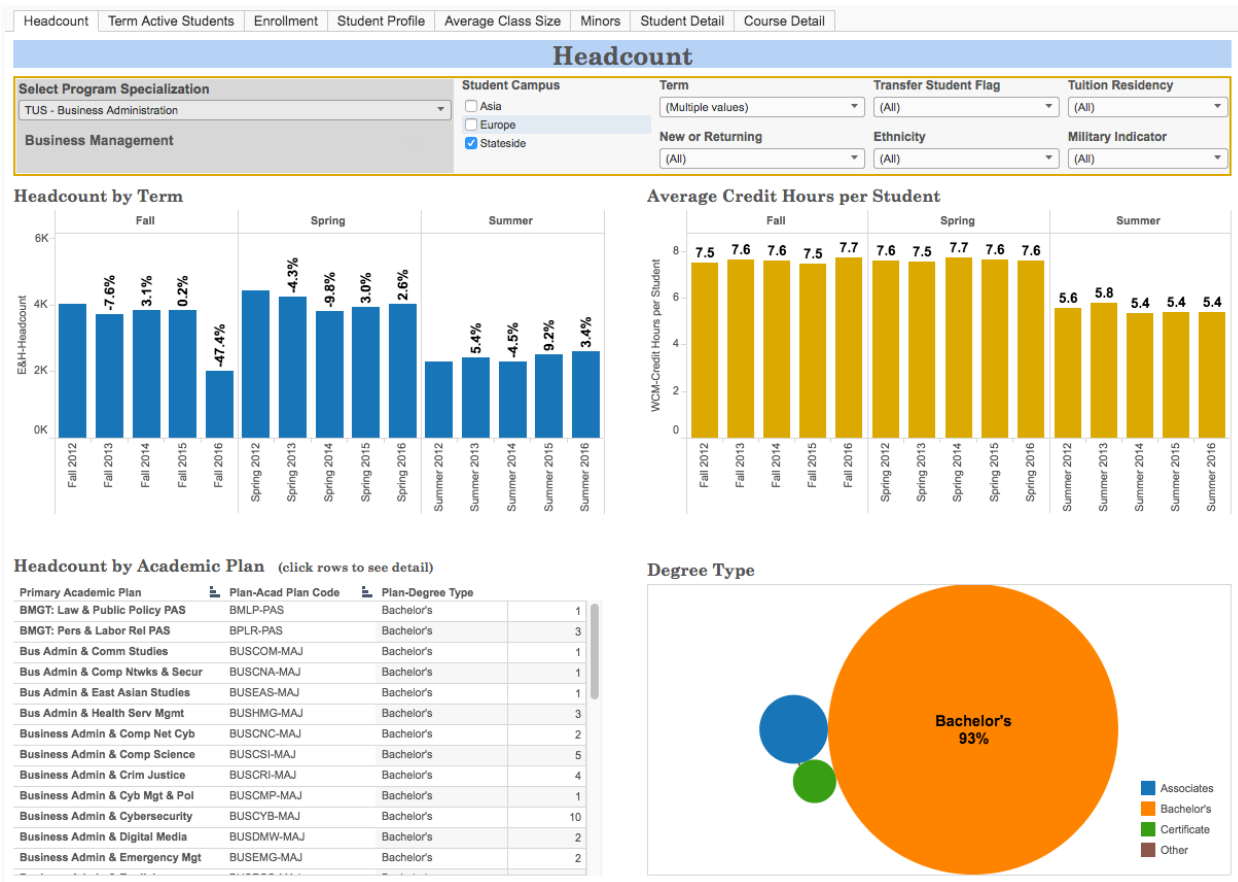


Figure 2: Academic Program Dashboard – Program Enrollment Trends



These broad data analytics capabilities assist the university in managing and monitoring not only institutional performance and financial viability, but also the effectiveness of student success efforts. The university's multi-year financial forecast considers macro factors affecting the industry, as well as internal initiatives to improve effectiveness and efficiency, and UMUC tracks enrollments very closely to ensure they are in alignment with the fiscal budget. The dashboards dedicated to student recruitment and retention allow for even deeper analysis. Together, these elements provide multiple and varied measures by which to evaluate and improve institutional activities, planning, and resource allocation, supporting both continuous and cyclical monitoring of institutional effectiveness and efficiency at UMUC. Each unit of the university concentrates on the metrics most meaningful for its goals as well as the overall measures that affect the enterprise as a whole.

Appendix A provides examples of how UMUC leverages the collecting, monitoring and assessment of data to support and inform multiple strategic goals and initiatives.

UMUC is exploring the use of various adaptive learning platforms in an effort to determine their effect on student achievement and course completion and whether there is a difference in student success in adaptive learning and the traditional approach. Rather than being forced to learn at the average speed of the class, technologically-supported assessment and adaptive learning tools can personalize learning by adapting activities and resources based on dynamic information about the learner such that each student could take the time necessary to learn and the tools can adapt to students' individual needs with data collected in real time about their ability levels. For some, this means a shorter time to completion; for others, an extended time to fill in holes in learning.

UMUC is researching what content is best suited to adaptive learning, when in the student lifecycle it is most effective, and how much adaptive learning is necessary. Pilots are being conducted that include the use of tools in different models, ranging from one assignment to selected weeks in a course, a full course, or supplemental content.



This includes examining the domains in which adaptive learning is most effective, re-enrollment in adaptive learning courses, longer-term impact on retention and time to degree completion, as well as relationships between student achievement and variables such as student time spent in the tool and final course grades, level of faculty engagement in the tool and final course grades, and/or correlating response time effort with quiz and homework grades.

### **Examples of Assessment Integration Across the Institution**

Institutional improvements arise from this continuous collection and analysis of assessment data. The following examples demonstrate how the analysis of data led to improvements in the student experience from outreach and recruitment through the lifecycle. The resulting changes affected work processes, technological support, and academic policies.

- In partnership with Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM), the Office of Analytics, Planning, and Technology developed models to improve collection and analysis of applicant data. The Lead to Application Score model scores and categorizes leads (prospective students) based on their likelihood of applying to UMUC, using variables captured on the lead forms (e.g., program of interest, how they heard of UMUC, whether they are military) as well as marketing campaign attributes and census data for socioeconomic variables. The Application to Success model similarly scores and categorizes applicants based on their probability of enrolling and successfully completing their first term at the university. Data include those from the Lead to Application Score model, plus additional data from the application (e.g., prior academic work, residency and payment method, high school and test scores) and census data. With this modeling approach, the university will be able to develop specialized support for students with specific needs. At present, the approach is being used primarily to prioritize student calls and measure the relative “quality” of the applications in terms of predicted success.
- In 2014, Student Enrollment Management (SEM) created an “onboarding” initiative in response to internal research about challenges faced by new UMUC students. The process synthesized data from multiple sources to identify organizing principles for new student initiatives (UMUC, Onboarding Program Recommendations, 2015). The data included qualitative analysis and input from internal student support units, the survey of priorities for online learners, and an environmental scan. The resulting “Get Started” website for all students in their first semester at UMUC, includes contacts, checklists, deadlines, information on how to access UMUC’s online resources, a tutorial on LEO (the online learning management system), and best academic practices of successful students. The site has further evolved based on feedback from students (undergraduate, graduate, and military) in online focus groups.
- When analysis revealed that 50 percent of applicants did not finish the online form in one attempt, and 33 percent of those who started the application did not finish at all, research was initiated to examine and address the issues. It was found that degrees, tuition, costs, and flexibility were the most important questions for prospective students. In light of that, the website was revamped in Spring 2015 with greater focus on these student concerns, more self-service functionality to assist in decision-making, more personalized messaging throughout the application and enrollment process, and facilitation of higher-value advising sessions (UMUC, Prospect Website and eApp Project Background). The new website design includes microsites that simplify access by grouping information around related academic programs (e.g., business, cybersecurity), as well as a site for military prospects. The sites include comprehensive academic program information such as career prospects, faculty profiles, student perspectives, and intended program outcomes.
- Student satisfaction surveys conducted by Institutional Research join trend records in the service center as regular sources of information used to inform staff training. They led recently to more detailed assessment of “pain points” for students and ways that student service structures could be reformed. Specifically, the assessments identified priorities for improving advising and the student experience, including knowledge-base integration, alignment across departments, and support for student self-service. The resulting adoption of Salesforce as the client management tool for all student support departments has improved issues of alignment and knowledge based, in addition to adoption of ongoing assessments of student interactions with the service center to support continuous quality improvement.

- When analysis of student success data showed that those who registered late for classes had a significantly lower probability of success, UMUC changed its late registration and drop deadlines. That change contributed to improved completion and retention rates.
- Tracking of registration patterns also improved scheduling stateside, leading to fewer late class cancellations (with the positive corollary of savings in fees paid to faculty members whose courses are canceled less than one month before the start of the course). Work continues on longer-term scheduling strategies.
- UMUC established a relationship with Civitas Learning to develop predictive models to identify at-risk students. Through a series of pilots, UMUC was able to achieve a statistically significant increase in undergraduate course-completion rates. Ongoing efforts are focused on scoring applicants' likelihood of succeeding at UMUC in order to understand the variables that influence student persistence and retention and build multiple pathways on entering the university.
- The university is also a member of the Predictive Analytics Reporting (PAR) Framework. Work with PAR focuses on establishing common data definitions to be used for predictive modeling, creating informative benchmarks for key metrics across established peer groups, and developing a student success matrix to inventory, organize, and conceptualize supports aimed at improving student outcomes. Once validated, UMUC will use the benchmarks in Academic program Dashboards to provide additional context for program performance and student outcomes. The matrix is also being used to categorize and evaluate ongoing intervention strategies.
- In late 2010, UMUC received a \$1.2 million grant from the Kresge Foundation to measure and improve student success. The grant funded the development of a database that integrates student information across institutions to generate statistical models to predict student success and, subsequently, to design interventions to help close the achievement gap for underserved adult students in Maryland, specifically those who pursue a bachelor's degree after community college. UMUC and its community college partners implemented a three-stage process to extract and analyze student data from each school, create evidence-based approaches to maximize student success, and develop and disseminate the results. The grant also enabled UMUC and its partners to develop an integrated database system to build predictive models that will yield replicable practices to increase student persistence and graduation rates.

### **Modifications and Adjustments to Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**

UMUC's approach to student learning outcomes assessment continues to evolve and expand, drawing on best practices, emerging ideas, and the engagement and investment of faculty in meaningful assessment and application. As a means of ensuring quality instruction across degree programs, UMUC has instituted systematic instruction across the curriculum in a set of institution, School, program and course-wide competency areas. Detailed examples of curricular changes resulting from student learning outcomes assessment are available as Appendix B. The examples provided below illustrate how UMUC continues to learn from, improve and invest in the assessment process itself.

- Both The Undergraduate School and The Graduate School have adopted and employed assessment management software (Taskstream and Tk20) to support assessment planning, implementation, analysis and feedback processes. Assessment administrators in each school utilize these tools with the Deans, Vice Deans, Program Chairs and faculty to record, track, analyze, disseminate and employ assessment findings. These tools are employed in real time throughout the assessment cycle and produce on-demand reports—ranging from curriculum maps to assessment plans and findings, to rubric and program evaluation summaries—to support both internal and external assessment planning and reporting needs.
- UMUC maintains an up-to-date Outcomes Assessment space on the internal social networking site, “ENGAGE,” to keep all institutional constituents and stakeholders informed and connected to resources.

The [\*Institutional Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes\*](#) is available not only on ENGAGE, but also to the public through UMUC's [website](#).

- UMUC has increased faculty involvement in the design of “closing the loop” actions and program improvements. In 2013 the Graduate School undertook a Rubric Norming and Scoring Project to develop a combined rubric for assessing four school-wide student learning expectations and calibrate faculty application of the rubric (“norming”). Forty-five adjunct faculty from various disciplines participated as raters, testing applicability of the rubric and inter-rater reliability. This project not only served to engage a diverse group of faculty, but also provided critical information to the Graduate School to inform continued refinement of a common assessment rubric and the effective training and preparation faculty in the application of a common rubric.
- The Undergraduate School (TUS) has refined assessment plans to gain more information to improve student learning. Specifically this has occurred through the open learning initiative partnership with Carnegie Mellon University, continued refinement of assessment plans, and through the development of course competency guides. In partnership with the Carnegie Mellon University, UMUC integrated learning technologies within the digital course environment to track student engagement and learning. In high enrollment courses, learning activities were designed for students to apply skills and knowledge. Detailed learning information from these activities and assessments were evaluated. Through this detailed learning data, course resources and learning activities were refined to improve student learning. TUS assessment plans at the program and course level were refined and course competency guides were developed. Program chairs worked with faculty to review course assessment plans to identify how specific competencies are addressed, the level addressed (i.e. introduced, reinforced, or emphasized), and assessed (i.e. tests, rubrics) within the course. General Education curricula maps were updated and refined. With the adaption of a new learning management system, the further refinement of assessment plans allowed for an improved sequencing of learning outcomes and improved quality of learning for the UMUC undergraduate student.
- Building on the success of UMUC’s SEGUE program (described in the institution’s 2011 student learning outcomes assessment report), in 2014-2015 The Undergraduate School (TUS) undertook the Straightline Path Project. Assessment of the curricular pathways to degree completion across programs revealed that while the programs were strong, students could follow numerous curricular paths in pursuit of a single degree—choosing, for example, from six or more required courses to fulfill a single requirement. This openness, while intended to accommodate transfer students, could confuse rather than enable students, and made it more difficult to determine student competency at the end of the program. Additionally, the very large course catalog made it more complicated and resource-intensive to ensure excellence across the curriculum. The Straightline Path Project determined the best path for each degree program, as identified by program chairs and other faculty with subject matter expertise. Students now have a clearer route to graduation (although still with enough electives to accommodate transfer credit) and can be more confident that they have achieved the required competencies for their degrees. The project has also reduced the undergraduate course inventory by over a third, freeing resources to manage and improve all courses.

Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011.

**Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

Not applicable.

	Examples of Metrics	Initiative 1: Single Global Operational Model	Initiative 2: Improving Student Administrative Experience	Initiative 3: Transforming Core Learning Model	Initiative 4: Diversifying the Revenue Portfolio	Initiative 5: Maintaining the University Infrastructure
<b>Goal 1: Student Success</b>	Retention/graduation rates		X	X		
	Time to degree		X	X		
	Alumni engagement		X	X		
	Rate of student employment		X	X		
	Course completion rates	X	X	X		
	Withdrawal rates	X	X	X		
	Average GPA			X		
<b>Goal 2: Quality Education</b>	Learning outcomes assessment results	X		X		
	Academic program reviews	X	X	X		
	Credits received in transfer and experiential learning	X	X	X		
	Course evaluations	X		X		
	Library holdings			X		X
<b>Goal 3: Responsible Stewardship</b>	Audits	X			X	X
	Budget projections and financial statements	X			X	X
	Tuition and fees	X			X	X
	Strategic Projects reports	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Goal 4: Enrollment Growth</b>	Enrollments overall and by subsets of students	X		X	X	
	Enrollments by delivery method and location	X			X	
	Number of credits taken per student			X	X	X
	Inquiries, conversion to leads, conversion to enrollment	X	X		X	X
	Lead scores		X		X	X
<b>Goal 5: Excellent Student Experience</b>	Student complaints	X	X			X
	Turnaround time on inquires	X	X			X
	Student and alumni surveys	X	X	X		
	Advising and call center logs					X
<b>Goal 6: Organizational</b>	Employee engagement survey	X				X

Capability	Technology conversion timelines	X	X	X		X
------------	---------------------------------	---	---	---	--	---

- In IFSM 201 (the general education course for technology fluency), assessment based on a common final exam whose items are aligned to course learning outcomes found low performance scores on questions related to security-related outcomes. As a result, a new learning module was developed that focused on security issues. The common exam again provides the measure for success for the new content, relative to those outcomes.
- In the MBA program, the common C2 assessment for institution-level outcomes that the only competency for which students were not meeting the goal was Written Communication, Sources (identification and use). Under the resulting action plan, a list of pre-approved sources was posted and students were required to submit papers to Turnitin.com.
- HRMN 406 is an assessment point for the undergraduate Human Resource Management program outcome related to training, development, and total rewards programs. Assessment results revealed weak student performance on evaluation skills. After revision of course materials, the assessment found greater weakness on “implementation” than “evaluation,” suggesting that students needed more guidance on applying evaluation principles to real-world organizations. As a result, HRMN 406 was redesigned as an application course with a performance-based assessment approach based on a student needs analysis. Evaluation of student performance on the needs analysis in the redesigned course is being conducted in 2015-2016.
- Performance data on candidates for the graduate education degrees (MAT and MEd) helped lead to the decision to conduct annual norming sessions with faculty from both programs. The sessions, held virtually, review faculty grading of two common assignments using the same rubric. Summaries of the grading data inform faculty discussions to support peer exchange, common rubric interpretations and expectations, and consistent assessment.
- LIBS 150, the general education course for information literacy, had used a common final exam to assess student competency and performance. Over the past decade, the psychometrics of the exam have been regularly evaluated, producing several revisions in curriculum and assignments to strength-en student guidance in areas of identified weakness. Finding that an automated exam provides only limited information on student competencies, faculty added an additional assessment: a research log evaluated by a rubric. More recently, in 2014, the learning outcome in LIBS 150 was deconstructed into five competencies, and all assessments redesigned to reflect balance among them, ensuring that each competency is addressed more meaningfully. The sequence of quizzes in the course was revised so that each of the first four competencies is evaluated by two quizzes. The research log was also revised to sharpen the focus on these competencies, and points were redistributed to give appropriate weight to each. For both semesters following the Fall 2014 implementation of these changes, the number of students not successfully completing the course (withdrawing or failing) fell approximately 2 percent (nearly 200 students) compared with the previous year.
- The 2014-2015 APR summary for the undergraduate Computing and Information Science program noted assessment results showing acceptable demonstration of knowledge in the areas of programming and testing, but lower performance in security-threat reduction and emerging technologies—both increasingly important areas in the field. Because of those findings over the years and the program review, more focus was placed on those areas, and the program was redesigned as a major in Software Development and Security.

**Morgan State University**





## Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

Prepared by Dr. Solomon Alao, Assistant Vice President for Outcome Assessment and Program Review

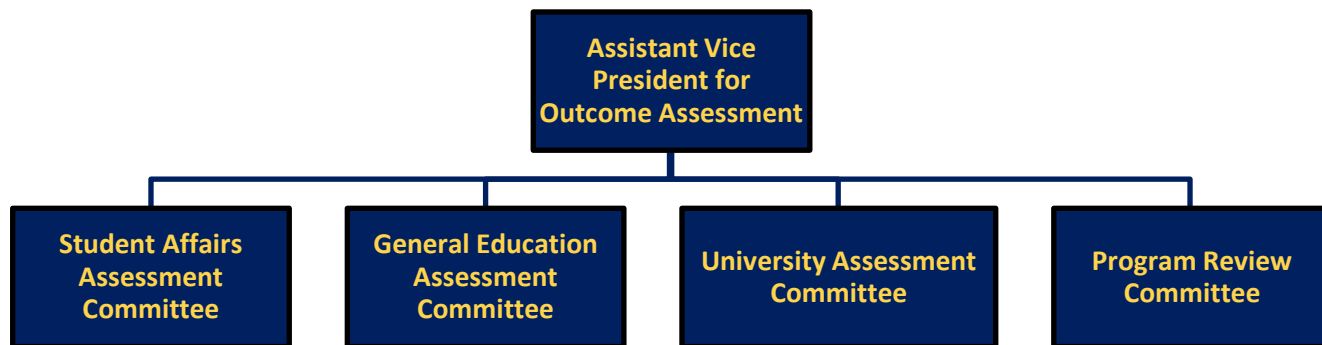
### Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help

#### Structure and Leadership of the Comprehensive Assessment Plan (CAP)

The Comprehensive Assessment Plan (CAP) provides a structure for and guidance of all assessment activities across campus. These activities include assessment of the student experience, assessment of institutional effectiveness, and assessment of programs, units and processes. Assessment of the student experience takes place within Academic and Student Affairs through annual department assessment plans and reports, through standardized and locally-developed testing, and through participation in nationally-normed and locally-developed satisfaction and engagement surveys. Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness occurs quarterly and annually within a balanced scorecard model, in response to state and federal reporting requirements, and is aligned to the strategic planning process. Assessment of programs, units and processes takes place within the Annual Program Review format and occurs on a cyclical basis according to a standardized scheduled and identified institutional needs. Data are collected, maintained, analyzed and disseminated for use in improvement and decision making campus-wide (academic and non-academic units).

Assessment at Morgan State University supports the strategic mission of the institution by overseeing the *evaluation* of student learning on campus, facilitating the *interpretation* of data collected through these evaluations, and leading the *application* of assessment results to decision making, continuous quality improvement, and excellence in the student experience. This is accomplished through the Office of Assessment in collaboration with academic and non-academic units campus-wide, under the Office of the Provost, Division of Academic Affairs:



**Figure 1: Leadership Structure for the CAP**

The Assistant Vice President for Outcome Assessment directs assessment activities across campus, including the administration of the Comprehensive Assessment Plan, and continuous improvement work with: (1) the Student Affairs Assessment Committee; (2) the General Education Assessment Committee; (3) the University Assessment Committee; and (4) the Program Review Committee. All work is focused on the **evaluation** of student learning, the **interpretation** of data collected through these evaluations, and the **application** of assessment results to improvement. These three components comprise the comprehensive assessment process at Morgan, as described below.

### ***Evaluation***

The Office of Assessment collaborate with the Student Learning Assessment Committee, the Vice Presidents, the Deans, Faculty, Students, and Staff to examine the student experience at Morgan University, to identify areas of excellence and to focus on opportunities for improvement. This work is accomplished through multiple assessment methods including standardized testing, an annual cycle of undergraduate and graduate program assessment, program review, surveys, course evaluations, accreditation requirements, and special assessment projects.

### ***Interpretation***

The focus is on understanding and analyzing the results of our campus wide assessment. Working with members of the campus community, The Office of Assessment facilitates analysis and interpretation of data and supports the work of the campus in understanding the student experience at Morgan. Assessment Office staff are available to provide guidance in developing, implementing, collecting, and understanding the results from assessment projects. Serving as a clearinghouse for campus assessment tools and data, the Office incorporates external benchmarks and internal norms to ensure timely, accurate, and data supported interpretation of assessment results.

### ***Application***

Closing the loop on assessment means utilizing the results and findings to further improve the student experience at Morgan. Assessment results are only as good as the extent to which they are useful and utilized. The Office of Assessment works with members of the campus community to maximize the utilization of assessment data within the context that the data were originally collected to address. The time and resources required to collect useful assessment

information are justified by the application of these data to continually improve the student experience at Morgan. Assessment results are collected, analyzed and then utilized. The Office of Assessment serves to guide and support the implementation of assessment plans and programs and to facilitate the application of data for improvement within these programs, driven by the objectives and outcomes for institution-wide assessment at Morgan. In summary, the Office of Assessment in collaboration with academic and non-academic units promotes excellence of the student experience through a campus culture of self-evaluation and improvement across the institution by:

- Developing a systematic and sustainable process of institution-wide assessment;
- Using national, state, and locally developed assessment measures and benchmarks;
- Ensuring compliance with Middle States, MHEC and professional accreditation standards for excellence;
- Implementing academic assessment, program review, and assessment of the student experience;
- Supporting data-based decision making and improvement;
- Modeling best practice research methods and analyses;
- Conducting assessment training and workshops; and
- Serving as a general resource across campus for assessment activities and training and as an internal evaluator for sponsored and non-sponsored research.

### **Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities**

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed **six** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

#### **Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes**

Written and Oral Communication, Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning, Critical Analysis and Reasoning, and Technological are the four competency areas identified for the General Education Program. Outcomes for the competency areas were reported in the SLOAR report in 2011. Assessment of competencies occurs at the institutional level, by student cohort and year, and by department, program and course. A variety of direct and indirect methods are used to assess the competencies. These methods include national standardized tests and surveys, campus-based proficiency exams, and department level and course-based assessment.

#### ***National Tests/Examinations***

Since 2011, students at Morgan participated in the following Standardized Tests and testing programs: (1) the Accuplacer; (2) the Collegiate Learning Assessments; and (3) the iSkills. All first time, full time students, at entry to Morgan, are required to complete the Accuplacer to determine appropriate placement in freshmen level English and Mathematics courses. Placement test scores are not only used to place students in appropriate first year courses; the scores are used to inform understanding of student competency in core areas upon entry and to identify core

areas for increased academic support. Data from Accuplacer for the past five years (N = 4,125) show that majority of first time full time students enter the university with deficiencies in *Written Communication and Quantitative Reasoning*. About 65% percent of incoming freshmen test into one or more developmental courses.

In AY 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015, freshmen and senior students from Morgan participated in the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). The CLA is administered to entering freshmen and graduating seniors to demonstrate proficiency in skill levels. For the past four years, majority of the students (N = 300) who participated in the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) performed at the basic mastery level for *Written Communication*. No significant difference was observed between the performance of freshmen and senior students. For the past four years, majority of the students (N = 300) who participated in the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) performed at the basic mastery level for *Critical-Thinking*. CLA data indicated that first-time full-time freshmen students at Morgan are proficient in scientific reasoning.

iSkills test measures applied *Information and Communication Technology (ICT) literacy skills* through a range of real-world tasks. The tests are aligned with standards of the Association of Colleges & Research Libraries (ACRL). iSkills data for the past 3 years (N = 200) showed that:

- 30% of the students performed at the proficient level on the dimensions of ICT (define, access, evaluate, manage, integrate, create, and communicate);
- 68% are marginally proficient; and
- 2% are not proficient.

### ***National Surveys***

Morgan has participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) since 2003. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is designed to obtain, on an annual basis, information from scores of colleges and universities nationwide about student participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development. The NSSE is administered to entering freshmen and graduating seniors and offers the opportunity to benchmark student scores against national comparisons. In AY 2012 and 2015, freshmen and senior students from MSU participated in the NSSE. Morgan also uses online survey and assessment system (Student-Voice and Survey-Monkey) to collect student, faculty and staff feedback on satisfaction, engagement, and perceptions.

Results of 2015 administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) provided feedback from 123 freshmen and 179 senior students across student engagement items related to *Oral and Written Communication*: 65% of the freshmen and 78% of the seniors reported that MSU emphasized the use of learning support services (tutoring, writing center, etc.); 84% of the freshmen and 89% of the seniors reported that they identified key information from reading assignments; 73% of the freshmen and 80% of the seniors reported that they summarized what they learned in class or from course materials.

*Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning*: 54% of freshmen and 65% of seniors reported that they reached conclusions based on their own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.); 47% of freshmen and 62% of seniors reported that they used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.); and 40% of freshmen and 52% of seniors reported that they evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information. *Critical and Analytic Reasoning*: 66% of freshmen and 72% of seniors reported that they connected their learning to societal problems or issues; 78% of freshmen and 85% of seniors reported that they applied facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations; 79% of freshmen and 85% of seniors reported that they analyzed an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts.

*Information Literacy*: 73% of the freshmen and 84% of the seniors reported that they evaluated a point of view, decision, or information source; 65% of freshmen and 79% of seniors reported that they

formulated a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information; and 40% of freshmen and 52% of seniors evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information. Additional indirect evidence of student proficiency in technology is illustrated by student responses to the technology and information items on the LibQual survey. The LibQual survey is a national standardized instrument aligned to the ACRL standards for technology and information literacy and was designed to collect feedback from Library users on the impact of resources and services on their research, and that asks students to respond to items across a wide variety of knowledge and experience. Results of LibQual survey conducted show that students at MSU understand what technology is required to complete their work (i.e., access to resources on and off campus): (1) they can evaluate the effectiveness of the technology (i.e., quality of printed materials); and (2) they are aware of what should be available (i.e., more discipline specific electronic journals).

### ***Proficiency Examinations***

During the past 5 years, students at Morgan (N = 6590) participated in the *Writing and Speech Proficiency Examinations*. The Junior Writing Proficiency Examination (JWPE) is required of all Morgan students once they complete four-courses of freshmen English-humanities sequence, and the Speech Proficiency Examination is required of all students at the end of the sophomore year. Both are capstone experiences that assess students' proficiency in written and oral communication, respectively. Data for the past ten years indicate that 70% of students at Morgan passed the writing proficiency examination the first time. The three-year first time pass rate of students who utilized the writing center is 75%. This is 5% higher than the 70% first time trend average. Data suggests that the writing center can be used to improve the writing skills of students at Morgan. Fifteen (15-Year) data from the Department of English and Language Arts indicate that 95% of the students pass the Speech Proficiency Examination the first time.

### ***Course-Based Assessment***

Course-based Assessment are an important component of annual assessment reports. The reports require departments to identify learning outcomes for their students, to develop and administer assessment methods to determine student learning on these outcomes, and to apply the findings to improving student learning within the program and department. Course-based assessment such as papers, oral presentations, essays, or department developed are scored with a rubric and/or rating scales and enable departments and programs to determine the level of performance on valued outcomes.

*Written and Oral Communication:* All departments reported challenges with student writing varying from minor to extensive. Fifteen percent (20%) of departments reported excellence in oral presentation skills, 35% reported strong oral presentation skills, 45% reported good oral presentation skills, and 22% reported weak skills. During the past 5 years, several STEM related departments (Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Engineering) piloted and used major field tests from the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to assess *Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning*. Data from ETS indicate that more than 70% of the students from Morgan performed at the proficient level on measures of scientific and quantitative reasoning.

About 75% of the departments (e.g., Philosophy and Religious Studies, Social-Work, Chemistry, Mathematics, Engineering, etc.) included *Critical Thinking Outcomes* in their outcome assessment plan. In addition to the general education framework, most departments and programs reported that they utilized internship and clinical experiences with accomplished practitioners to develop and improve critical thinking skills. Assessment methods include and are not limited to: portfolios, research projects, productions, and journals. Those projects are scored by a panel of experts with rating scales and analytic rubric. In general, all departments reported challenges with critical thinking from minor to extensive. The Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies designed a pedagogical intervention with high-impact practices (i.e., learning community) to develop and improve the critical thinking skills of students in PHIL 109, a general education course for all majors. The pre-and post-test study measured student

learning using a 25-question assessment tool that was divided into three sections of critical thinking: square of opposition (5), conversion and obversion (5), and syllogisms (15). The test consisted of true/false and multiple choice questions. For the past four years, there was a significant difference between pre and posttest scores. An average of 300 students per year (2011-2014) participated in the study. Pedagogical intervention with high impact practices can be used to improve the critical thinking skills of students at Morgan.

Departments with accreditation requirements to improve critical thinking skills such as, Architecture; Teacher Education and Professional Development; Social Work; Electrical and Computing Engineering; Accounting and Finance; Business Administration; Nutritional Science; and Nursing reported that their capstone projects improved the critical thinking skills of their junior and senior students. More than 70% of the students reported by the aforementioned department or programs performed at the proficiency level on measures of critical thinking skills. Course-based assessment also supports evidence of student proficiency in the *Technological Competency*. Three general education courses: Information system (INNS 141), Computer Science (COSC 110), and computer courses identified by the disciplines are designed to improve ICT skills. The 5-year course success rate (N = 2882) for INNS 141 is 70%. The 5-year course success rate (N = 567) for COSC 110 is 85%. A study is on the way to discern the course success rates of technological courses identified by the disciplines. The iSkills and course success rates suggests that students are proficient on this competency.

***Interventions and Assessment Work in Progress***

Data on learning outcomes are shared with the following stakeholders: students, staff, faculty, administrators, and the board. For the past three years, the Vice President for Outcome Assessment and the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts shared the data on learning outcomes and progress report on the general education program during board meetings in fall and spring semesters of AY 2012-2015. During the same period, data and progress report was shared during the: (1) General Education Committee meetings; (2) University Assessment Committee meetings; (3) University Council; (3) College/School-wide meetings by the College of Liberal Arts and the School of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences; and (4) Deans Council meetings. Examples of successful interventions and assessment work in progress associated with the competency areas are listed below.

<b>Competency Areas</b>	<b>Interventions and Assessment Work in Progress</b>
<b>Written and Oral Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interdisciplinary Project funded by the Southern Education Foundation (fall 2013-present)</li> <li>▪ Tutoring/Mentoring (ongoing)</li> <li>▪ Redesign of English 101 and 102 (fall 2015-present)</li> <li>▪ The Writing Center (Fall 13-Present)</li> <li>▪ Analysis of Course Success Rates is underway</li> <li>▪ Development of Signature Assignments (in-progress)</li> </ul>
<b>Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Redesign of Biology 101 and 102 (2013-present)</li> <li>▪ Redesign of Mathematics Courses: MATH 106 (Developmental Mathematics), MATH 109 (Standard college level) and MATH 113 (major required mathematics) (2013-present)</li> <li>▪ Campus-Wide Initiative to Improve Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning (2014-present): 23 million dollars grant from NIH</li> <li>▪ Analysis of Course Success Rates is underway</li> <li>▪ Development of Signature Assignments (in-progress)</li> </ul>
<b>Critical Analysis and Reasoning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use of Structure Research (2011-present)</li> <li>▪ Use of high impact practices (2011-present)</li> <li>▪ Use of School-Wide Initiatives on Critical Thinking (2013-present)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Analysis of Course Success Rates is underway</li> <li>▪ Development of Signature Assignments (in-progress)</li> </ul>
<b>Technological</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use of Classroom Response Systems (2011-present)</li> <li>▪ Use of Electronic Portfolio (2011-present)</li> <li>▪ Use of Flipped Classroom Strategy (2013-present)</li> <li>▪ Redesign of Major Courses (2013-present)</li> <li>▪ Use of Professional Development Activities by the Director of Library Services (2011-present)</li> <li>▪ Analysis of Course Success Rates is underway</li> <li>▪ Development of Signature Assignments (in-progress)</li> </ul>

### **Assessment Plans, Annual Reports, and Program Reviews**

Assessment Plans for student learning outcomes, Annual Reports by the Colleges/Schools, and the Program Review conducted by departments are also utilized to document progress on student learning outcomes at Morgan State University. The four step framework aligned with requirements of state and accreditation agencies (e.g., MHEC and MSCHE) utilized for each of the aforementioned assessment processes are: (1) Defining clearly articulated goals in accordance with institutional mission and strategic goals; (2) Implementing strategies to achieve those goals; (3) Assessing achievement of those goals; and (4) Using the results of those assessments to improve programs and services and inform planning and resource allocation decisions.

#### ***Assessment Plans for Student Learning Outcomes at the Program Level***

In 2011, undergraduate programs were required to submit outcome assessment plan for student learning outcomes. In AY 2015, all programs at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels were required to submit an assessment plan for student learning outcomes. The new requirement is in accordance with recommendations from the Middle State Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). As of May 2016, 82% of the programs at Morgan submitted their plans for a review by members of the University Assessment Committee. The target is 100%. The remaining 18% are working on their assessment plans, and are required to submit the plans by the end of September, 2016. All of the submitted plans include the elements listed below.

- ✓ Mission of the program
- ✓ Identification of learning outcomes
- ✓ Opportunities for meeting the outcomes
- ✓ Assessment methods for meeting each outcome
- ✓ Use of results for adjusting/improving the program

Assessment plans are also submitted by the non-academic units in Student Affairs. In summary, MSU now require every program at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels to submit an assessment plan for student learning outcomes and corresponding assessment report on an annual basis. Annual assessment reports are submitted to the Assessment Committee for review in January or June of each academic year. A feedback template is utilized to generate a scorecard with numeric and comments shared with each program by the Assistant Vice President for Outcome Assessment and Program Review. When needed a program of study is required to develop an action plan to correct area(s) for improvement. The implementation of the plan is monitored by the AVP and members of the assessment committee.

### ***Annual Reports***

At the end of the academic year, each department is required to submit an annual report in accordance with the mission and strategic goals of the university. The dean and/or assistant deans compile the reports to complete an annual report for their college/schools. The reports at the department and college/school levels contain information on outcome assessments and strategies for developing and improving outcomes related to the competency-areas. Individual Annual Reports submitted by each faculty is utilized to understand efforts by members of the faculty to develop and improve learning outcomes associated with the competency areas.

### ***Program Review***

In fall 2015, Morgan updated its Periodic Program Review Process and allocated resources to improve the process campus-wide. The purpose of program review is to: (1) assure that students complete a high quality professional, graduate, and undergraduate programs in accordance with strategic goals (i.e., student success) of the university; and (2) identify opportunities for continuous improvement of all programs in the academic and non-academic units. Elements of quality include and are not limited to: *Student Learning Outcomes; Curricular Effectiveness/Opportunity to Achieve Outcomes; Technology Skills Acquired in the Program, Post-Graduation Skills and Competitiveness; and/or Resources.* Assessment at the program review level varies across the university. Programs with national accreditation standards follow their program review cycle (5-7 years). Program review cycle for programs without external accrediting process is 5 years in accordance with the strategic planning process.

*New Academic Program (traditional and online)* are in accordance with standards of Morgan State University and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Before submitting the program folio to MHEC, the folio must first be approved by the Deans Council and the Board of Regents. Major elements of the folio include and not limited to: Rationale and Need for Program; Objectives; Courses; Student Learning Outcomes; Resources; Partnerships; etc. Each online course is in accordance with Quality Matters standards and rubrics. Quality Matters (QM) is a faculty-centered, peer review process that is designed to certify the quality of online courses and online components. QM has received national recognition for its peer-based approach to quality assurance and continuous improvement in online education. Examples of new academic programs approve by MHEC in the past three years are listed in the table on page 8.

<b>Name of the Program</b>	<b>Date of Approval by MHEC</b>
Master of Social Work - Online Program	7/1/2016
Post Baccalaureate Program in Sustainable Urban Communities	2/19/2016
The M.Ed. in Community College Administration and Instruction	2/19/2016
Substantial Mod: MBA Online Program	2/19/2016
BS Degree in Multi-Platform Production	1/8/2014
PhD Degree in Transportation & Urban Infrastructure System	1/8/2014
BS Degree in Strategic Communication	2/21/2014
BS/MS Degree in Arch & Env. Design/MS City & Regional Planning (3+2)	9/30/2013
BS Degree in Multimedia Journalism	12/6/2013

### ***Budget and Resources for Outcome Assessment***



The university is strongly committed to allocating resources to student learning outcomes campus-wide.

Examples of activities in support of the outcome assessment process since 2011 are listed below:

1. In spring of 2016, the university created an annual and recurring budget for program review.
2. Annual and recurring budget was created in fall 2015 to support annual participation in the Collegiate Learning Assessment, iSkills, and the National Survey of Student Engagement.
3. On June 3, 2013, the university hired a Vice President for Outcome Assessment to provide leadership to the Office of Assessment in Academic Affairs.
4. Funds were available for professional development opportunities sponsored by MSCHE, state and national conferences on the issue of outcome assessment and program review.
5. On June 10, 2013, the university hired a support staff to assist the VP for Outcome Assessment.
6. In addition, the campus-wide assessment committee and the General Education Committee (GEC) also supported the work and initiatives of the Office of Assessment.

In summary, the information provided in this section was utilized to summarize modifications and adjustments to the institutional assessment plan and activities since 2011. We believe in a continuous assessment process. Since 2011, Morgan State University is more committed to the assessment process and has allocated resources (human and fiscal) to ensuring that assessment is more integrated into the institution's infrastructure. Assessment at Morgan has grown from an informal system of grading and evaluating, to a comprehensive, systematic and sustainable process to ask and answer intentional, probing and painstakingly honest questions about student learning on campus. Integrated fully into the culture and structure of the campus, the impact of assessment on teaching and learning in all areas of campus continues to grow.

### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

#### **Periodic Review Related Report**

In 2008, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) re-accredited Morgan State University for its strong commitment to accreditation and discipline specific standards. In 2013, the university completed its Periodic Review Report (PRR) process. The PRR is submitted five years after an institution's decennial self-study and team visit. The PRR is intended to achieve the following goals: (1) help institutions gauge their progress in achieving their own goals and objectives; (2) enable the Commission to assess the current status, as well as the future prospects, of institutions, within the framework of the Commission's accreditation standards; and (3) fulfill the Commission's accountability to the public, the academic community at large, and its member institutions. Upon completion of the Periodic Review Report (PRR) in August 2013, the reviewers made three recommendations for continuous improvement related to standards 7, 12, and 14. A progress report on the recommendations was reviewed and accepted by the

Middle States in fall 2015. This next section of this report will be utilized to summarize progress on each recommendation.

***Progress on Recommendation No. 1***

*The reviewers recommend that in assessing student learning outcomes, Morgan State base its assessment on student learning within degree types within programs (BA, MA, PhD, etc.) rather than at the department level.*

In 2011, undergraduate programs were required to submit outcome assessment plan for student learning outcomes. In AY 2015, all programs at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels were required to submit an assessment plan for student learning outcomes. A department with five different programs was required to submit a plan for each program in the unit. As of May 2016, 82% of the programs at Morgan submitted their plans for a review by members of the University Assessment Committee. The remaining 18% are working on their assessment plans, and are required to submit the plans by the end of September, 2016. The target is 100%.

In summary, MSU now require every program at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels to submit an assessment plan for student learning outcomes and corresponding assessment report on an annual basis. The assessment report requires each program to identify learning outcomes for their students, to develop and administer assessment methods to determine student learning on these outcomes, and to apply the findings to improving student learning within the program. Annual assessment reports are submitted to the Assessment Committee for review in January or June of each academic year. A feedback template is utilized to generate a scorecard with numeric and comments shared with each program by the Assistant Vice President for Outcome Assessment and Program Review. When needed a program of study is required to develop an action plan to correct area(s) for improvement(s). The implementation of the plan is monitored by the AVP and members of the assessment committee.

***Progress Recommendation No. 2***

*The peer reviewers observe that Morgan's PRR does not present evidence that the Comprehensive Assessment Plan (CAP) has been fully implemented, particularly with regard to student learning outcomes. This is presumably because it was just adopted in fall 2012. As a consequence, they recommend that the university implement the revised CAP.*

The revised Comprehensive Assessment Plan (CAP) adopted in fall 2012 provides a structure for and guidance of all assessment activities across campus. These activities include assessment of the student experience, assessment of institutional effectiveness, and assessment of programs, units and processes. Data are collected, maintained, analyzed and disseminated for use in improvement and decision making campus-wide (academic and non-academic units).

***Comprehensive Assessment Plan (CAP) and Student Learning Outcomes***

Written and Oral Communication, Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning, Critical Analysis and Reasoning, and Technological are the four competency areas identified for the *General Education Program*. Assessment of competencies occurs at the institutional level, by student cohort and year, and by department, program and course. A variety of direct and indirect methods are used to assess the competencies. These methods include national standardized tests and surveys, campus-based proficiency exams, and department level and course-based assessment.

Since 2011, students at Morgan participated in the following Standardized Tests and testing programs: (1) the Accuplacer; (2) the Collegiate Learning Assessments; and (3) the iSkills. In AY 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015, freshmen and senior students from Morgan participated in the

Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). Morgan has participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) since 2003. In AY 2012 and 2015, freshmen and senior students from MSU participated in the NSSE. During the past 5 years, students at Morgan (N = 6590) participated in the Writing and Speech Proficiency Examinations. Course-based assessments administered on a semester basis such as papers, research projects, oral presentations, essays enable departments and programs to determine level of performance on valued outcomes.

Morgan now require every program at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels to submit an *Assessment Plan for Student Learning Outcomes* and corresponding assessment reports on an annual basis. The assessment report requires each program to identify learning outcomes for their students, to develop and administer assessment methods to determine student learning on these outcomes, and to apply the findings to improving student learning within the program. The overall submission rate for assessment plans submitted at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels submitted in fall 2015 and spring 2016 is 82%. The remaining 18% are working on their assessment plans, and are required to submit the plans by the end of September, 2016. The target is 100%. The first wave of data on the submitted plans will be summarized in spring 17. Rate of submission by degree levels are: Baccalaureate 87%; Post-Baccalaureate Certificate 50%; Masters 91%; and Doctoral 71%.

At the end of the academic year, each department is required to submit *Annual Reports* in accordance with the mission and strategic goals of the university. The reports at the department and college/school levels contain information on outcome assessments and strategies for developing and improving outcomes related to the competency-areas and other value outcomes (e.g., problem solving, decision making, dispositions, high impact practices). Programs with national accreditation standards follow their *Program Review Cycle* (5-7 years). Program review cycle for programs without external accrediting process is 5 years in accordance with the strategic planning process.

*New Academic Program (traditional and online)* are in accordance with standards of Morgan State University and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Before submitting the program folio to MHEC, the folio must first be approved by the Deans Council and the Board of Regents. Each online course is in accordance with Quality Matters standards and rubrics. Quality Matters (QM) is a faculty-centered, peer review process that is designed to certify the quality of online courses and online components. Data on learning outcomes are shared with the following stakeholders: students, staff, faculty, administrators, and the board. From AY 2013 to the present, analyses of data have led to several interventions such as course redesign (campus-wide); tutoring and mentoring; interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary projects; and technological for improving learning outcomes at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels.

### ***Recommendation No. 3***

*The reviewers recommend that the university revisit its current strategic plan in light of the university's financial resources, facilities, policies and procedures, and bring the two more in line with each other. This effort may involve adjusting goals, or providing more specific evidence for how current goals will be met.*

Progress has been made in ensuring that the university possess financial resources, facilities, policies and procedures to ensure effective and efficient implementation of its strategic goals. In addition, a process is in place to discuss key performance indicators of the strategic plan (dashboard and performance accountability report), and use of assessment data for adjustments when needed. Study on operational efficiencies conducted by an external agency (ATTAIN in

AY 2013-2013) suggest that the institution possess the resources (fiscal and human, infrastructure, policies) to implement the strategic goals.

As a means of helping to ensure that funding is distributed consistent with the campus plan as well as other priorities, a Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) was formed in spring 2011. The President and Vice Presidents in consultation with the BAC make adjustments to ensure the University operates within available resources while minimizing any negative impact on instructional and academic-support services. In addition, the Division of Finance and Management (DFM) collaborate with all division campus-wide to ensure that the university possess the resources to implement initiatives outlined in the strategic plan.

**St. Mary's College of Maryland**



## Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2016

**Instructions:** Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. All institutions must complete Part One and Part Two. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2011. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed eight pages. Up to five pages of appendices may also be included.

An additional Part Three of this report template should only be completed by those Maryland institutions that have received a request for further action from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to **Standards 7, 12, or 14** since 2011. Completing this section would add another three pages to the institutional submission, for a total of 11 pages (in addition to the appendices).

Institutions are strongly encouraged to use materials from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete Parts One and Two of their SLOAR submission; citing directly from the report is encouraged. Institutions completing Part Three of the Report should use content from the appropriate Middle States reports including monitoring reports and progress letters.

## **Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities**

Provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part One should highlight your institution's activities that align with **Middle States Standards 7, 12, and 14**. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to **two** pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this Summary.

St. Mary's College of Maryland is undergoing an extensive overhaul of its student learning assessment processes in response to Middle States action. Part Two of this document describes the specific actions taken and the resulting assessment infrastructure put into place. Part Three of this document describes a historical synopsis of how the College came to a state resulting from the Middle States findings. Parts Two and Three provide the most up-to-date and accurate representation of student learning assessment aligned with Middle States Standards 12 and 14. Part One, therefore, will exclusively focus on existing institutional effectiveness assessment aligned with Middle States Standard 7.

### **Institutional Assessment**

The College provides annual reports regarding its goals and objectives to both the Maryland Department of Budget and Management (DBM; Managing for Results report) and MHEC (Performance Accountability Report). These reports provide a broad picture of institutional effectiveness, analyzing performance on academic rigor, retention and graduation rates, student and faculty/staff diversity, student accessibility, and post-College success of graduates. The goals and objectives are evaluated annually to ensure alignment with the mission of the College and, most recently, with the 2016-19 College Strategic Plan adopted in May 2016.

The College has met most of its goals and objectives in recent years. For example, according to the most recent statewide data available (MHEC 2016 Data Book), the six-year graduation rate for St. Mary's students (86.8%) is the highest in the state among public four-year institutions. As recently pointed out by the 2015 Middle States review team, there is "...ample evidence of St. Mary's effectiveness as an institution in meeting its mission and goals."

The College regularly evaluates its resource allocation by systematically collecting and reviewing data to assess the need for, and impact of, resource planning and allocation decisions. There are a wide variety of assessment opportunities including annual reporting requirements to the various state agencies (e.g., DBM) that monitor the College, the management of institutional strategic planning, accreditation reporting, departmental program reviews, and individual department proposals for resources. All of these opportunities provide context for achieving goals and providing the appropriate guidance to modify resource allocation. The College also reflects on its honors college mission through the annual budget analysis that all academic department chairs undergo.

The comprehensive approaches to institutional effectiveness outlined above are accomplished through collaboration between the Vice President for Business and Finance and the Provost/Dean

of Faculty. Additional responsible offices for assessing institutional effectiveness are situated within each of these divisions; selected examples are described below.

The ***Office of Planning and Facilities*** routinely reviews data from a variety of sources -- academic room utilization rates, library gate counts, event attendance numbers, and residence hall occupancy rates, for example -- to assess the need for, and impact of, its planning and allocation measures. The Office works collaboratively with faculty and staff to maintain a campus-wide master planning process that includes a space needs analysis. The College also gathers faculty input about facilities through the COACHE survey, last administered in Fall 2011 and planned for re-administration in Spring 2017.

The ***Office of Information Technology*** (OIT) utilizes a variety of performance instruments to gather data on how resources address support for the College's strategic goals. In 2011, OIT solicited feedback regarding the quality of information technology services on campus. In a summary report OIT identified twelve areas for improvement in delivery of information technology services based upon survey responses. All twelve recommendations have since been implemented.

The ***Office of Human Resources*** performs salary surveys and comparisons/benchmarks based on peer and national data in order to provide guidance to the Vice President for Business and Finance, the President, and the Board of Trustees about salary decisions.

The ***Library and Media Center*** submits data to two national surveys of academic libraries (NCES Academic Libraries Survey and the Association of College & Research Libraries Academic Libraries Trends and Statistics Survey). These surveys provide the library with data that can be compared to previous years and with the opportunity to create peer groups for benchmarking.

The ***Office of the Provost*** also gathers annual feedback from students on academic, residential, athletic, and study spaces on campus through a senior exit survey, and gathers feedback from alumni at 1, 5, and 10 years after graduation regarding the impact of St. Mary's College on their continuing education and/or career endeavors. In addition, every three years, two national surveys of student engagement are administered to current St. Mary's College students. Entering students are asked about their expectations and preparedness for college via the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) in their first fall semester, and first-year and senior students are asked to report on their respective academic experiences and attitudes by completing the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in the spring. Administering these surveys on a three-year cycle allows for direct comparison of cohorts (e.g. the same students will complete the BCSSE, and the NSSE as both first-year students and seniors). Results of the exit, alumni, and BCSSE/NSSE surveys are analyzed and disseminated throughout the college community.



## Part Two: Evolution of Assessment Activities

Provide concrete examples to summarize modifications and adjustments to your institution's assessment plan and/or activities since 2011, detailing how assessment has been integrated into the institution's infrastructure. This section should not exceed six pages. Institutions are welcome to use content from their most recent Self Study Report or Periodic Review Report as submitted to the Middle States Commission for Higher Education to help complete this section.

Since the last Assessment Report submitted in 2011, the College has made important improvements in its assessment of student learning, albeit with variability among individual academic programs. All academic programs (majors) have articulated student learning outcomes and established at least preliminary assessment plans, with variability in the depth and detail of these plans. Several departments made substantial progress in their assessment processes, and a few of these are highlighted below.

***Economics Department:*** Students' command of existing economic knowledge after the introductory course was assessed by including a set of common multiple choice questions in the final exam across all sections of that course (ECON101). The results led the department to conclude that students exit the introductory course without the sound foundation in basic skills that are expected of majors. This led to a curriculum change which has been implemented, replacing the one-semester introductory course with a two-semester introductory sequence (ECON102 + ECON103).

***Biology Department:*** One learning outcome infused throughout the major is that students be able to explore and critically assess biological scientific literature. To assess this, 16 students were tracked from Principles of Biology 1 through their senior capstone project and samples of their writings were collected. These samples were scored by biology faculty and Writing Center collaborators based upon a developed rubric. The results indicated that students in upper division courses demonstrated some deficiencies in their familiarity with scientific literature, but that SMP students were found to appropriately assess and cite literature. Based on these results, the department implemented a curriculum change to increase the emphasis on primary literature during the year-long introductory course sequence (Principles of Biology 1 workshop and Principles of Biology 2 lab).

***Psychology Department:*** To assess the learning outcome of "ability to understand and apply the scientific method," the department has administered a statistics/research methods exit exam to all majors in the last several graduating classes. Departmental review and discussion of the results led to the conclusion that student learning and long-term retention might be improved if a laboratory were added to at least one of the two courses in statistics and research methods. Despite departmental support, this decision has not yet been implemented for two reasons. (1) A curriculum with substantial changes involving new courses and a new structure has only been in place for three years. This curriculum had required multiple new courses with concomitant increased course preparation loads for faculty and the timing of the addition of yet another course change was therefore not propitious. (2) With substantial change in faculty as a result of retirements and leaves of absence, insufficient faculty resources were also seen as a factor.

While these examples are solid evidence of effective student learning assessment, they remain restricted to the individual departments. Hence, beginning in January 2016, St. Mary's College of Maryland has implemented an extensive overhaul of our undergraduate student learning assessment infrastructure. The overhaul includes the establishment and implementation of an assessment framework across all undergraduate student learning. The framework builds on national assessment literature, the work of organizations like the *Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U)*, and the prior assessment work at St. Mary's College like that described above. The framework is a local rendition of a nationally vetted approach that embeds student learning outcomes within a set of hierarchical taxonomies of learning. The framework is designed to facilitate meaningful documentation, analysis, and evaluation of student learning across all learning experiences at St. Mary's College.

### **The St. Mary's College Student Learning Assessment Framework**

The framework overlays the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of understanding onto the St. Mary's desired student learning outcomes (which are based on the *AAC&U Liberal Education and America's Promise 2007* report). The framework captures the knowledge, skills, and values to be learned by St. Mary's students based on the mission of St. Mary's College.

For each domain of understanding, the framework includes developmental levels of understanding based on Bloom's revised taxonomies (e.g., Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create). Student learning outcomes are defined through a layered approach. At the top layer, the faculty of the institution defines institutional undergraduate student learning outcomes by specifying the broad domains of understanding and levels of learning desired within each. Within the umbrella of these institutional learning outcomes, the faculty of each program defines the program-level student learning outcomes by articulating where the program contributes to the institutional goals. Of course, each program may also articulate its own learning outcomes within the framework in addition to the institutional learning outcomes met within the program. Finally, specific student learning outcomes are defined for each learning experience (e.g., course) consistent with the program-level and institution-level outcomes and utilizing the taxonomies of the framework.

## St. Mary's College Student Learning Outcomes

St. Mary's College has identified institutional learning outcomes that stem from the institutional mission and which form the foundation for all student learning at the College (see below).

At the completion of the <b>baccalaureate degree</b> , all students will...		
<u>K-I.</u>	<u>Knowledge of Human Culture &amp; the Physical and Natural World (Breadth)</u>	...demonstrate <i>understanding (comprehension of and ability to explain basic ideas and concepts)</i> within each of the following dimensions of knowledge. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. international languages and cultures</li> <li>b. cultural perspectives</li> <li>c. humanistic foundations</li> <li>d. the arts</li> <li>e. social sciences</li> <li>f. mathematics</li> <li>g. natural sciences</li> </ul>
<u>K-II.</u>	<u>Knowledge of Human Culture &amp; the Physical and Natural World (Depth)</u>	...demonstrate <i>evaluation (judging and justifying an opinion or decision) or creation (produce novel thoughts, ideas, processes, or products)</i> in at least one dimension of knowledge from above.
<u>S-I.</u>	<u>Intellectual and Practical Skills</u>	...demonstrate <i>precision (independent, reliable execution)</i> of each of the following skills. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. problem solving</li> <li>b. critical thinking</li> <li>c. oral communication</li> <li>d. written communication</li> <li>e. information literacy</li> </ul>
<u>V-I.</u>	<u>Personal and Social Responsibility</u>	...demonstrate that they <i>value (associate values with experiences, and express value judgments)</i> each of the following dimensions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. civic and global engagement</li> <li>b. lifelong learning</li> <li>c. environmental stewardship</li> </ul>

The institutional learning outcomes articulate the expectations of what all graduates should know and be able to do upon completion of a baccalaureate program at St. Mary's College of Maryland. Following the hierarchical framework described earlier, each institutional learning outcome articulates a domain of understanding, one or more dimensions within that domain, and a desired level of learning within those dimensions.

Each course-level and program-level student learning outcome designates a dimension of understanding (and therefore a domain of understanding), a desired level of learning from the applicable learning taxonomy, an appropriate action verb, and a specific object of learning. The resulting lattice of outcomes relates each specific, individual learning outcome to the more abstract concepts used in the program-level and institutional-level learning outcomes, allowing for the meaningful aggregation of disparate, concrete student learning experiences. The following figure illustrates the mapping of program-level learning outcomes to the institutional-level learning outcomes presented earlier (partial illustration only). Each row of the figure indicates the learning outcomes for each program and how they align with the institutional learning outcomes shown across the columns.

	The Arts	Cultural Perspectives	Humanistic Foundations	International Languages	Natural Science	Mathematics	Social Science	Oral Communication	Written Communication	Prof So
INSTITUTIONAL SLOs →	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	PRECISION	PRECISION	PREC
ANTH							APPLY	ARTICULATION	PRECISION	
ART	CREATE							ARTICULATION	ARTICULATION	
ARTH	UNDERSTAND	ANALYZE	EVALUATE					PRECISION	PRECISION	PREC
ASIA		EVALUATE		APPLY						
BIOC					CREATE			ARTICULATION	ARTICULATION	PREC
BIOL					APPLY			ARTICULATION	ARTICULATION	
CHEM					CREATE			ARTICULATION	ARTICULATION	PREC
CORE	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	IMITATION	MANIPULATION	
COSC						APPLY		PRECISION	PRECISION	MANIP
ECON							CREATE	PRECISION	PRECISION	PREC
ENGL	CREATE							PRECISION	ARTICULATION	
ENST_POL			UNDERSTAND		UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	ARTICULATION	ARTICULATION	
ENST_HUM			UNDERSTAND		UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	ARTICULATION	ARTICULATION	
ENST_SCI			UNDERSTAND		UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	UNDERSTAND	ARTICULATION	ARTICULATION	
TFMS_FILM	CREATE								ARTICULATION	
HIST		UNDERSTAND	CREATE					PRECISION		
ILC_CH		EVALUATE		APPLY						

Likewise, the student learning outcomes for each course in a program are mapped to the program-level learning outcomes as shown below (again, partial illustration only). Gray rows represent courses for which specific learning outcomes have not yet been articulated within the framework. The other highlighted rows indicate required courses within the program.

Program →	BIOL									
	The Arts	Cultural Perspectives	Humanistic Foundations	International Languages	Natural Science	Mathematics	Social Science	Oral Communication	Written Communication	Pro So
Program SLOs →					APPLY			ARTICULATION	ARTICULATION	
BIOL105					APPLY			MANIPULATION		
BIOL105L					UNDERSTAND			MANIPULATION	PRECISION	MANIF
BIOL106					APPLY			IMITATION		
BIOL106L					UNDERSTAND	APPLY		PRECISION	PRECISION	MANIF
BIOL270					UNDERSTAND			PRECISION		
BIOL270L					APPLY			PRECISION	PRECISION	
BIOL271					APPLY					
BIOL271L									PRECISION	PRE
BIOL303					APPLY					ARTIC
BIOL305					ANALYZE				ARTICULATION	
BIOL311					ANALYZE			PRECISION	PRECISION	ARTIC
BIOL313					APPLY			PRECISION	PRECISION	ARTIC
BIOL316		REMEMBER			UNDERSTAND			PRECISION	PRECISION	ARTIC
BIOL330					APPLY					ARTIC
BIOL359										
BIOL360					CREATE			ARTICULATION	ARTICULATION	
BIOL380										
BIOL384										
BIOL387										
BIOL400					EVALUATE			NATURALIZATION	NATURALIZATION	ARTIC
BIOL401					APPLY				ARTICULATION	
BIOL418					CREATE			ARTICULATION	ARTICULATION	

The curricular maps illustrated above help to identify (and rectify) unintended disconnects between student learning outcomes at the course-, program-, and institutional-levels.

### Assessment Design and Implementation

St. Mary's College's graduation requirements ensure every student will complete the Core Curriculum (General Education program, Standard 12) and at least one major program, both of which include capstone experiences.

#### *Knowledge of Human Culture and the World*

The Core Curriculum is responsible for providing students with the opportunity to satisfy a breadth-of-knowledge outcome (K-I), while each major program is responsible for a depth-of-knowledge outcome (K-II). Breadth of knowledge is developed and assessed through coursework aligned with the *Liberal Arts Approaches to Understanding the World* requirement of the Core Curriculum. The requirement calls for at least one course from each of the knowledge areas listed in the institutional student learning outcomes.

### *Intellectual and Practical Skills*

Fulfillment of the intellectual and practical skills student learning outcome (S-I) is shared between the Core Curriculum and the major programs. The Core Curriculum provides learning opportunities for the foundational skills (the *imitation* level for problem solving, oral communication, and information literacy; the *manipulation* level for critical thinking and written communication), which are developed and assessed within CORE 101/301 (Liberal Arts Seminars). However, more advanced achievement at the *precision* level across all intellectual and practical skills is delegated to each major program, and specifically assessed in major capstone experiences. This structure is in keeping with our mission to introduce and practice these liberal arts skills in the Core Curriculum, and continue to develop and refine them throughout the major.

### *Personal and Social Responsibility Values*

The Core Curriculum is responsible for providing students with the opportunity to satisfy the personal and social responsibility outcome (V-I). The CORE 101/301 course is responsible for the development and assessment of foundational learning of a value system, while advanced learning is developed and assessed with the *Experiencing Liberal Arts in the World (ELAW)* experience<sup>2</sup>. The ELAW requirement calls for students to apply their liberal arts background in the “real world” through appropriate internships, service learning, study abroad, or other approved experiences.

### **Assessment Measures**

All student learning is assessed using direct assessment measures. The assessment instruments are specific to each learning experience but are aligned with the framework’s learning taxonomies. Assessment of the Core Curriculum and capstone experiences follows a standardized College-wide format. Program-level assessment is delegated to each individual program but must connect with institutional learning outcomes assessment.

For skills and values, the AAC&U VALUE rubrics are used in assessing student performance. Performance against the VALUE rubrics is categorized under the framework’s learning taxonomies. Within the knowledge domain, discipline-specific rubrics are used but those rubrics are again aligned with the framework’s knowledge taxonomy.

---

<sup>2</sup> It is worth noting that the curricular mapping process described earlier has identified a disconnect between the curricular expectations of the ELAW requirement and its implementation. St. Mary’s College is working to rectify this disconnect by modifying the expectations of ELAW experiences.

### **Assessment Cycle**

St. Mary's College follows a six-semester assessment cycle during which all student learning outcomes are assessed at least once. The assessment cycle is structured to provide maximum flexibility to programs while still ensuring the coverage of all institutional learning outcomes.

Skills and values are assessed using the AAC&U VALUE rubrics following a consistent College-wide cycle. The knowledge outcomes are assessed in two ways. The breadth requirement is assessed following a consistent College-wide cycle; for example, all Core Curriculum courses that satisfy the Natural Science breadth outcome are assessed in the first year of the cycle and so on. The common schedule allows synergy and collaboration between faculty working toward the same institutional outcome.

On the other hand, the depth requirement is assessed according to each program's assessment cycle. Each program will establish a six-semester cycle for program-level outcomes that is consistent with the breadth cycle and that provides the necessary depth assessment within the six-semester window.

### **Dissemination and Use of Assessment Evidence**

Evidence of student learning is collected and analyzed annually by the Office of Institutional Research before being returned to the faculty for evaluation and use. The faculty of each program is given an analysis packet to guide and inform their reflection. The analysis packet includes the student-by-student assessment results for each assessment instrument broken down according to the applicable evaluation rubric. Each student receives a summative evaluation as to whether or not they satisfied the learning outcome. Summary statistics are provided and overall student performance is compared against faculty-established thresholds of expected performance.

The analysis packet also includes high-level summary analytics for each course in the program as well as for the program as a whole. Student performance within each course is summarized through mode statistics on each facet of evaluation and the overall percentages of students judged to have satisfied the course-level outcomes are presented (example below).



Threshold Achievement Matrix										
Program-->	ART									
Threshold -->	80%									
	The Arts						Cultural Perspectives			
	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze
Experience 1		90%	45%							
Experience 2	30%	10%								
Experience 3					60%			30%		
Experience 4										
Experience 5					25%					
Experience 6										
Experience 7										
Experience 8										
Experience 9						83%				
Experience 10										
Experience 11										

The matrix uses the program’s experiences as rows and the taxonomy of learning outcomes as columns. Each cell contains the percentage of students from the experience that satisfied the outcome. A continuous three-color scale (red, yellow, green) is used to visualize each cell’s value, highlighting those experiences that appear to be failing to fulfill their expected curricular role.

Faculty reflect on the analyses and the raw student performance data to propose curricular changes designed to improve student learning. Faculty document each such curricular change using a standard reporting template which records the evidence of student learning and the analysis motivating the curricular change. The Office of Institutional Research collects and archives the completed reports and posts them for access by any interested stakeholders. The Office also prepares summary reports for the Board of Trustees, President, Provost, and other executive leaders.



### **Part Three: Summary of Actions Issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education tied to Standards 7, 12, or 14**

**This section is mandatory for institutions required by Middle States to take further action tied to their most recent accreditation activities in relation to Standards 7, 12, and/or 14.** These actions include procedural actions, non-compliance actions, and affirming actions with follow-up reporting. In the section below, provide a brief summary of the circumstances tied to the action(s) issued by Middle States and the steps taken by the institution to address concerns raised. This section should be no longer than **three** pages. Institutions should use materials from such items as monitoring reports, progress letters, or supplemental information forms to complete this section.

At its session on March 3, 2016, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education placed St. Mary's College of Maryland on warning that its accreditation may be in jeopardy because of insufficient evidence that the institution is currently in compliance with Standard 14 (Assessment of Student Learning). The Commission requires a monitoring report due March 1, 2017, that provides evidence that the institution has achieved and can sustain compliance with Standard 14.

The review team articulated four requirements to bring St. Mary's College into compliance with Standard 14. These requirements are listed below, with brief indications *in italics* of how St. Mary's College is addressing each.

- The College must use assessment results to inform improvement in teaching and learning. Results of its student learning outcomes assessment must be shared with internal and external publics to provide information and clarity regarding the benefits of a liberal arts education in a public honors college. *Plans for utilizing assessment results, and disseminating them to internal and external audiences, are detailed below.*
- The College must provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff regarding the assessment of student learning outcomes in order to carry out meaningful assessments of its curricular and co-curricular offerings. *Multiple professional development and training opportunities have already been offered and/or are in the planning stages. Support will continue to be offered throughout the coming academic year and beyond.*
- Faculty must include student learning outcomes in all syllabi; staff must also provide student learning outcomes in all assessment plans for programs and services. These student learning outcomes must be mapped to departmental, divisional and institutional mission statements. *Course-, program-, and institutional-learning outcomes have been established for all curricular offerings in the 2016-17 academic year, and mapping between these levels is currently ongoing. Faculty will list student learning outcomes on all syllabi. Similar initiatives are underway for staff and administrative programs.*
- A cycle of assessment must be established for all programs, administrative and academic, so that assessment results can be used to improve student learning. *A cycle of assessment within the curriculum has been established and data collection will begin in Fall 2016, as described below.*

Based on the January 2016 report of the visiting team, even before receiving final action from the Commission, leadership at St. Mary's College began the process of revitalizing student learning assessment at the College. President Jordan immediately secured the assistance of a higher education consultant with extensive Middle States experience to assist in plotting an appropriate path forward. To ensure continuity of leadership, President Jordan negotiated for the incoming Provost to engage with the College during the months prior to his July 1 start at the College. President Jordan also negotiated for the Provost to arrive on campus as a contractual employee, three months prior to taking over the Provost Office, to focus on student learning assessment activities at the College.

On January 19, 2016, President Jordan called a meeting of the Faculty where she shared the anticipated upcoming warning from the Commission. At the meeting, Incoming-Provost Wick was introduced to the Faculty. Wick announced the planned formation of a Rapid Action Taskforce on Assessment to develop a skeletal framework for student learning assessment moving forward. All members of the Faculty were encouraged to participate directly or indirectly in the work of the Taskforce. Faculty Senate President Wesley Jordan solicited faculty representation on the Taskforce which also included representation from Student Affairs and the student body. The Taskforce was constituted and charged with recommending an overall student learning assessment framework by February 26, 2016.

Parallel with the work of the Taskforce, the College hosted a visit by representatives of the Wabash Center for Inquiry. During their four-day visit (January 26, 2016 – January 29, 2016), the representatives met with College leaders, the Taskforce, and various departments/programs to assess the current state of student learning assessment at the College and to recommend an appropriate path forward.

On March 1, 2016, the Taskforce presented to the Faculty the proposed assessment framework and a plan/timeline for producing the Middle States monitoring report. After discussion, the Faculty Senate approved the framework and plan for moving forward.

As per the approved plan, Provost Wick hosted an Assessment Workshop on April 8, 2016, providing faculty and staff with professional development on the framework, writing assessable student learning outcomes, and the overall assessment process. The workshop was attended by approximately 70 faculty/staff members and was recorded for viewing by those unable to attend. At the workshop, Provost Wick announced that all academic programs would be asked to submit student learning outcomes for all 2016-2017 courses by May 25, 2016. Provost Wick also announced the formation of an Assessment Implementation Team to lead the assessment process.

Faculty Senate President Wesley Jordan solicited faculty membership for the Team which also included Student Affairs representatives. The Team was charged with designing and executing the day-to-day student learning assessment processes to be used in implementing the approved student learning assessment framework including the articulation of initial versions of institution-level student learning outcomes, assessment rubrics, and so forth. The Assessment Implementation Team began its work on April 22, 2016, and soon thereafter released preliminary versions of the institution-level student learning outcomes to guide the faculty's development of their course-level learning outcomes.

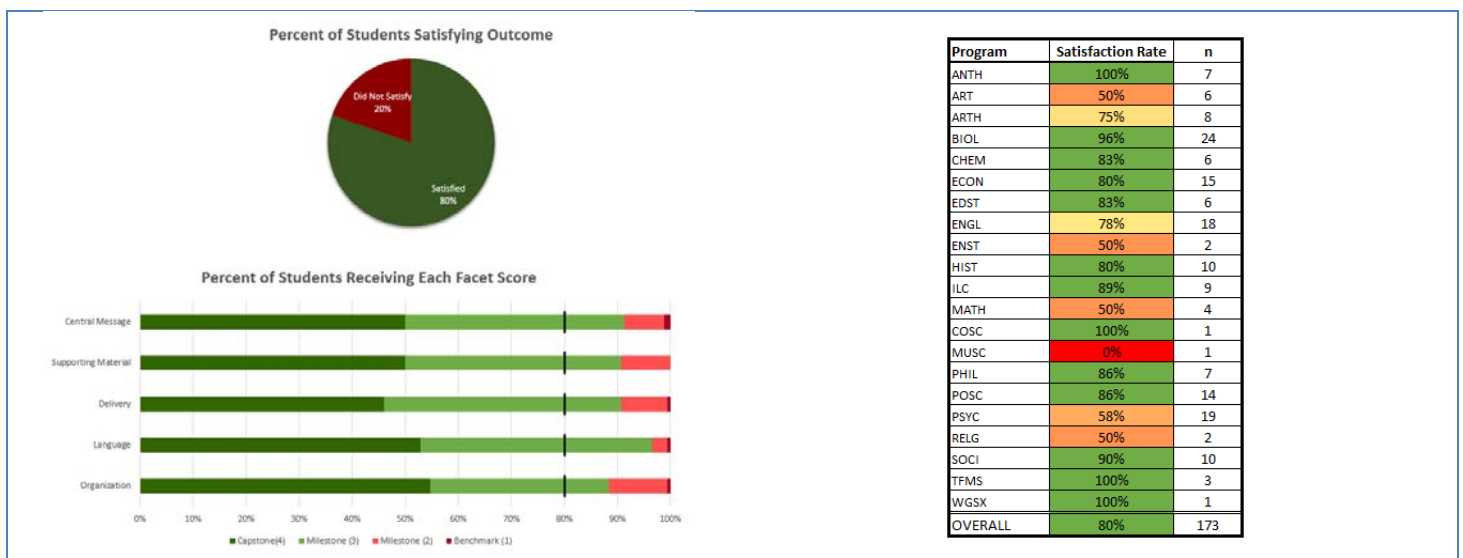
In addition, the Team asked all academic programs to submit revised program-level learning outcomes in alignment with the newly established framework of institution-level outcomes. In preparation, representatives from the Team attended the Middle States Commission on Higher Education symposium on Creating and Selecting Assessment Tools held in Philadelphia on May 20, 2016. The Team shared draft student learning outcomes for each program from those in the catalog but translated them into the taxonomies of the framework. The Team also hosted several "open office hours" sessions to assist faculty with writing both course-level and program-level outcomes. As of this writing, all programs have submitted program-level student learning

outcomes and 96.5% (136/141) of faculty have defined course-level outcomes for all 2016-2017 courses.

During the second week of May 2016, the Team asked faculty to collect evidence of student learning of oral communication skills. Faculty were given the AAC&U VALUE Oral Communication rubric and asked to assess student performance during the presentations of St. Mary's Projects, a year-long capstone experience undertaken by roughly half of St. Mary's College's graduating seniors. Faculty assessed each student's oral communication skills along all five facets of the VALUE rubric. Student performance was collected centrally with the Office of Institutional Research.

During June, the Office of Institutional Research, working in collaboration with members of the Implementation Team, created curriculum maps for each individual program as well as the College as a whole. Each curriculum map was analyzed for gaps and for consistency with the framework and the broader institution-level learning outcomes. In August 2016, each academic program will receive analysis packets containing the developed curriculum map and a reflective essay based on the Team's analysis of the map.

Analysis packets will also include the submitted evidence of student learning of oral communication at both the College-wide and departmental levels. The following diagrams summarize the overall analysis across all 172 students assessed. The results clearly indicate that College is meeting its objective of having at least 80% of all students satisfying the oral communication outcome. The results also highlight specific programs with room for improvement.



Also during July 2016, the Implementation Team is drafting a complete Student Learning Assessment Handbook to codify the newly-developed assessment processes. The Handbook includes a description of the overall framework, the proposed institution-level and Core Curriculum learning outcomes, as well as the annual timeline for assessment including the responsible offices.

Starting in August 2016, and continuing throughout the academic year, professional development workshops will be held on key assessment topics of direct (and timely) relevance to the faculty.

In addition, during the 2016-2017 academic year, faculty will be asked to...

- Reflect on the oral communication assessment data and document what, if any, changes will be made as a result at the program level.
- Revise as appropriate the draft curricular maps referenced earlier and submit any changes.
- Update all course syllabi to list the applicable course-level learning outcomes.
- Establish a cycle of assessment of program-level outcomes within major programs, to complement the institution-wide assessment cycle.
- Develop assessment instruments and associated evaluation rubrics for collecting student learning data.
- Use these assessment instruments, as well as the AAC&U VALUE rubrics, to collect student learning data and evaluate performance.
- Reflect on assessment data and document what, if any, changes will be made as a result.