

Beyond Course Assessment: Institutional, General Education, and Program Outcomes

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Purposes for Assessment

On two occasions I have been asked, "Pray, Mr. Babbage, if you put into the machine wrong figures, will the right answers come out?"... I am not able rightly to apprehend the kind of confusion of ideas that could provoke such a question. ~Charles Babbage

- How do we design good, data-driven assessment projects? (Assessment-for-Compliance)
- How do we develop assessment that leads to faculty conversation and improvement? (Assessment-for-Improvement)

What is the National Context?

- *The vast majority of institutions have statements of learning for all undergraduate students and growing numbers have aligned learning throughout the institution.*
- Alignment of learning outcomes throughout the institution has increased since the 2013 survey, with 82% of respondents confirming their institution has established learning outcomes for all students.
- Half of all respondents reported that all of their programs have defined learning outcomes that also align with shared institution-wide statements of learning.
- Institutional respondents from ACCJC accreditation region were more likely than those from any other region to indicate that all programs had learning outcomes and that they align (81%)

What is the National Context?

- *Assessment continues to be driven by both compliance and improvement, with an emphasis on equity.*
- *Institution-level assessment results are regularly used for compliance and improvement purposes, addressing accreditation and external accountability demands along with internal improvement efforts.*
- *Institutions are trending towards greater use of authentic measures of student learning,*

Program Assessment

- In 2016, the COS Writing Center was designated as a hybrid unit in Program Review—both Academic and Student Services.
- The Center offers a Tutoring Certificate Program, with tutor training and related courses, manages an ENGL support course (an open entry/exit writing lab support course), and provides tutoring support as part of the District's broader student support services.
- The Program Review designation was an opportunity to review and align these various goals

Program Assessment

Purpose Statement	The purpose of the Writing Center at College of the Sequoias is to provide high-quality peer writing support to all students. The goal of this support is to create empowered, confident writers who feel confident navigating diverse writing tasks.		
Outcome Area	Individual Outcomes	Current Assessment Plan	Cycle
Writing Center Service Area Outcomes (SAOs)	Student Awareness: Students will be aware of the services available at the Writing Center.	The Research Department included awareness of the Writing Center services to the Student Support Survey 2017. This will create a baseline for future assessment.	Odd Years, Fall
	Tutor Professionalization: Writing Center tutors will earn a Certificate of Writing Consultancy.	We will compare the proportion of tutors who apply for a certificate in 2016 to those who applied in 2015. We hope to see a 10% increase in the proportion of tutors who apply for a certificate.	
	Faculty & Staff Relations: The Writing Center will receive student referrals from faculty and staff both inside and outside of the Language Arts Division.	We will compare the number of referring faculty in 2016 to the number of referring faculty in 2015. We hope to increase the number of referring faculty from the English unit by 10% and outside the English unit by 25%.	
	Student Demand: The Writing Center will provide services during times and at places where we can meet the demands of the most students.	We will monitor usage data at all three campuses and online and student survey data to adjust schedules and hours.	
Writing Consultancy Certificate Program Outcomes (POs)	Writing Experience: Students will demonstrate proficiency in a variety of modalities of composition.	We will collect a portfolio from students who complete the certificate and assess the outcomes based on the portfolio.	Even Years, Fall
	Concern Prioritization: Students will identify, prioritize, and address higher- and lower-order writing concerns.		
	Pedagogy: Students will guide writers toward next steps in drafting and revising in accordance with best practices in Writing Center and Composition pedagogy.		
User Student Learning Outcomes (English 400 SLOs)	Students will improve their writing ability by drafting, revising, or polishing writing with a tutor.	We will use student course completion, success, and grade data to measure this outcome. We will use additional qualitative data from our post-session client report forms and student satisfaction surveys to round out this assessment.	All Years, Fall

Program Assessment

Outcome Area	Individual Outcomes	Current Assessment Plan	Cycle
Tutor Training Course Student Learning Outcomes (English 123 SLOs)	Prioritizing Feedback: Students will identify higher-order concerns in a piece of writing; rank those concerns in order of priority, accounting for the writer's progress through the writing process; and propose multiple options for possible "next steps" in revising.	End-of-semester Portfolios will be collected from all students each semester. Each assessment cycle will thus include four semesters' worth of portfolios for each course.	Odd Years, Spring
	Providing Strategies: Students will define higher-order writing concerns in accessible language and explain effective strategies and techniques for addressing those concerns.		
	Identifying Pedagogy: Students will describe a consultant's priorities and approach, and identify the theoretical and pedagogical influences on the consultant, in a recorded or observed writing consultation.		
Tutor Training Course Student Learning Outcomes (English 124 SLOs)	Identifying Lower-Order Concerns: students will identify lower-order concerns in a piece of writing, including patterns of grammatical error, distinguishing between errors and mistakes.	End-of-semester Portfolios will be collected from all students each semester. Each assessment cycle will thus include four semesters' worth of portfolios for each course.	Even Years, Spring
	Providing Strategies: Students will define lower-order writing concerns in accessible language, and explain strategies and techniques effective in helping the writer address the patterns underlying those concerns.		
	Critiquing: Students will critique a consultant's priorities and methods, identifying and evaluating key theoretical, pedagogical, and rhetorical features in the consultant's approach, in a recorded or observed writing consultation.		

Program Assessment

- How do we design good, data-driven assessment projects? (Assessment-for-Compliance)
 - Student success data is collected for service area outcomes (certificate completion rates, number of faculty referrals, center usage data).
 - Large-N survey data on student awareness of center resources, satisfaction, etc. is collected through a biennial District survey.

Program Assessment

- How do we develop assessment that leads to faculty conversation and improvement? (Assessment-for-Improvement)
 - Writing Center held an informal discussion with the five faculty members who referred students to the center most often to discuss center outcomes
 - They also met with students enrolled in the certificate program to discuss barriers to completion
 - Portfolios of work in the tutor training courses will be collected annually, creating a body of work to be assessed using rubric scoring every three years

Pause for Discussion

- How do your programs use data?
 - Can Program Review provide a space to combine outcomes assessment and student success data in useful ways? What are the barriers? What might successful implementation look like?
- How do we define academic programs? How might we do that in more productive ways (Outcomes for Guided Pathways/Meta-Majors/Areas of Study)?
- What spaces are available for faculty to discuss programs? What do those discussions look like? How can we support good work?

ILO Assessment

- COS has five Institutional Learning Outcomes, and the O&A Committee developed a five-year cycle for assessment.
- In 2016 – 2017, the committee designed and conducted a two-part assessment of our Research & Decision Making ILO
 - The committee designed and included two survey items for each of the five ILOs in our Student Support Services Survey. These items will be included in each survey, which is distributed to students every two years.
 - We also solicited research work from a sample of students, and scored this work using a rubric designed & tested by the O&A committee.

ILO Assessment Design

2016 – 2017: Research and Decision Making

Students will locate and evaluate information, including diverse perspectives, to make informed and ethical decisions.

Survey Items:

- I can use information from the research resources available at COS to complete my assignments
- I consider multiple perspectives when evaluating information.

Criteria	Meets: 3	Developing: 2	Evidence Not Present: 1	Not Addressed: 0
Locate Information Score: _____	The artifact includes information from a variety of sources appropriate to the relevant genre, discipline, and/or audience.	The artifact includes information from limited or similar research sources; sources are not always appropriate to the relevant genre, discipline, and/or audience.	The artifact includes information from few or no identifiable sources. Sources selected are inappropriate.	This artifact does not include any identifiable sources.
Evaluate Information Score: _____	Information from sources is accompanied by enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are contextualized or questioned.	Information from sources is accompanied by some interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts may be contextualized but are taken mostly as fact.	Information is presented with little to no evaluation or interpretation. Viewpoints of experts are accepted without question or context.	This artifact does not include any identifiable sources.
Use Information to Make Informed Decisions Score: _____	Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information to successfully achieve a clear purpose.	Communicates and organizes information in support of a purpose. Information may not be fully synthesized.	Communicates information, but information is fragmented and/or may be misquoted or misapplied. Purpose is unclear.	The artifact does not include any identifiable purpose.
Use Information to Make Ethical Decisions Score: _____	Defines a clear purpose relevant to ethical decision making and appropriate to audience, genre, or discipline. Information is clearly and ethically referenced through citations or other discipline-appropriate methods.	Defines a purpose that is relevant to audience, genre or discipline. Information may lack some clear references or citations.	Defines a purpose that is unclear, unethical, inappropriate or not supported by evidence. Information presented lacks appropriate references or citations.	The artifact does not include any identifiable purpose.

ILO Assessment Design

- Students invited to participate were selected using stratified sampling from a larger group containing all COS students who had completed 30+ units.
- Selected students were contacted via email and Canvas invite to submit work.
- Participants were asked to “Please submit a sample of your work completed here at COS that shows your ability to do research. Ideally, the sample you submit should show your ability to complete research and make decisions based on that research.”
- In total we received 48 samples from 44 students. Each was double-blind scored by trained faculty raters using a rubric developed by the O&A committee.
- There were ~1900 respondents to the ILO items on the survey.

What We Found

- Direct assessment provided necessary context for survey results.
- Possible equity gaps in research opportunities for Hispanic students, but more data is necessary to draw conclusions.
 - The gap in success may be related to other known equity data in basic skills placement, basic skills completion, and units attempted. Students with 60+ units performed well, and most student samples submitted were from language arts and social science courses.
- Where students struggled, they struggled with source use—locating strong research and citing it in discipline-appropriate ways.
 - The O&A Committee worked with FEC to identify areas where students struggle and recommend faculty professional development opportunities in these areas.
 - Citation workshops were offered by the Library Resource Center for faculty (on teaching citation and available resources) and students (on source use and available resources)

What We Found



LRC CITATION WORKSHOP

“Love @ 1st Cite”

VISALIA, LRC 203	Friday, February 9 th , 1pm – 2pm
	Saturday, February 10 th , 11am – 12pm
	Monday, February 12 th , 10am – 11am
	Tuesday, February 13 th , 9am – 10am
	Wednesday, February 14 th , 12pm – 1pm
	Thursday, February 15 th , 2pm – 3pm
TULARE, A202	Tuesday, February 13 th , 10am – 11am
HANFORD, V105	Monday, February 12 th , 12pm – 1pm

Please RSVP to nicolesc@csu.edu or drop into a workshop

ILO Assessment

- How do we design good, data-driven assessment projects? (Assessment-for-Compliance)
 - Large-N survey results for each ILO provide a way to collect and disaggregate data campus-wide.
 - Survey results can inform smaller-scale direct assessment planning.
 - Student success data gives context to assessment results with smaller sample sizes.
 - Use of national instruments and other resources for validity (the VALUE Rubrics, CCSSE survey, etc).

ILO Assessment

- How do we develop assessment that leads to faculty conversation and improvement? (Assessment-for-Improvement)
 - Partnerships with campus stakeholders (like Faculty Enrichment or other professional development committees) create opportunities for interventions that are teacher-led.
 - Regular presentation and discussion of assessment results is embedded in governance and other structures.

What's Next

- Dialogue Days
 - Faculty in each division have regular discussions about assessment design and results. One instructional day is set aside each semester for this work, during which faculty may re-direct their courses. We continue to work on making sure these discussions focus on instruction and improvement, not “check-box” tasks.
- Collaboration with Faculty Enrichment Committee
 - FEC is revising committee bylaws to include outcomes assessment as a source of information for professional development topics. We hope to codify and ensure an ongoing relationship between our committees.

What's Next

- ILO Assessment of Civic Engagement
 - The O&A Committee is designing focus group assessment of civic engagement. Participant selection will be based in part on previously identified achievement gaps.
- General Education Assessment
 - Prior GE Assessment was focused on outcomes mapping. This year, the committee is following up by reviewing assessment results in key courses related to that work.

Pause for Discussion

- What, if any, large scale assessment efforts are happening on your campus? What efforts would you like to see happening?
- How do we move the conversation on institutional assessment out of the O&A committee? Share some practices that work!
- Where are the change-makers on your campus? The best places to get buy-in and move the conversation forward?
- What are the road-blocks on your campus? What do you need to help navigate them?

Further Information

Full Reports of our Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessments, along with Dialogue Day and other materials, are available on the COS O&A website:

<http://www.cos.edu/Academics/OA/Pages/ILO-Assessment-Reports.aspx>

Questions? Contact Me!

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References

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Jankowski, N. A., Timmer, J. D., Kinzie, J., & Kuh, G. D. (2018, January). *Assessment that matters: Trending toward practices that document authentic student learning*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois and Indiana University, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA).