

The Community College of Baltimore County

GUIDE FOR

LEARNING OUTCOMES
ASSESSMENT &

CLASSROOM LEARNING
ASSESSMENT

2008



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Middle States Commission on Higher Education
Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Eligibility Requirements and Standards for Accreditation, 2007

The systematic assessment of student learning is essential to monitoring quality and providing the information that leads to improvement. Implemented effectively, the assessment of student learning will involve the shared commitment of students, administrators, and academic professionals. The assessment of student learning has the student as its primary focus of inquiry. It is related to the assessment of institutional effectiveness, which is important as a means to monitor and improve the environment provided for teaching and learning. Because the purpose for assessing student learning is to help students improve and to maintain academic quality, the assessment measures chosen should be those that provide the students, faculty, and others with information about student learning that is specific; address questions that faculty and the institution care about; and are useful for assessing and enhancing academic quality.

STANDARD 7 - Institutional Assessment

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 - General Education

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 and information literacy.

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.

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Introduction

The Community College of Baltimore County values learning and is committed to ensuring that its students grow as learners and develop a passion for life-long learning. Part of CCBC's strategic plan is to focus on quality education by ensuring state-of-the-art teaching. Evaluating the effectiveness of instruction is a faculty responsibility that is necessary for the improvement and verification of learning. The College is dedicated to providing faculty with substantial assistance in the development of learning outcomes assessment, program outcomes assessment, and classroom learning assessment processes and in the revision of instructional practices that may follow from outcomes assessment.

CCBC Assessment Mission Statement

As an accredited institution, The Community College of Baltimore County is committed to implementing a college-wide Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan that will produce clear evidence of student learning. The institution will guide and support learning facilitators in the systematic documentation of student learning and will disseminate such documentation to both the college community and the community at large.

CCBC Assessment Definition

Assessment is a purposeful, systematic, and collaborative process driven by the institution's desire to improve student learning. It is a deliberate course of action that defines expected student achievement in terms of learning outcomes and core competencies and measures actual student achievement using pre-determined internal standards and external benchmarks. The assessment process is learning centered and gathers information from a variety of sources to determine what students know, what students can do with what they know, and how well they do it. The goal of assessment is to transform the institution into one which creates the best conditions for learning, encourages best practices, and inspires creativity and innovation.

Learning Outcomes Assessment

Philosophy

Learning outcomes assessment is a natural and ongoing component of the instructional process. All members of the institution share responsibility for student learning during their tenure at the College. Continuous improvement of learning is a collective enterprise upon which the success of instructional units depends on the organized support and cooperation of others.

The process of assessing learning outcomes is a means to an end, that end being improved learning. As part of assuming the professional responsibility that goes with teaching, faculty identify, design, and implement specific learning outcomes assessments. The results, once analyzed, form the base for organized change that positively influences student learning.

Learning outcomes assessment is neither precise nor perfect, and its data are interpreted with that in mind. It is a way of thinking about quality that comes from the College's willingness to continually examine, question, and, as necessary, alter what it does as an educational institution.

In no instance are the results of learning outcomes assessment used in a punitive manner, neither in reference to students nor to personnel. The climate of cooperation and focused efforts to improve permeates the assessment process. Such an atmosphere relieves staff of fear and allows them to approach both instructional and program assessment with an open and creative mind.

Learning outcomes assessment provides feedback to faculty that allows them to strengthen and improve the educational process, which results in more appropriate, more extensive, and/or higher level learning.

Learning Outcomes Assessment Projects

History

CCBC implemented its Learning Outcomes Assessment Program for course-level assessment in 1999. To date, a great number of projects have been successfully completed. Executive summaries for learning outcomes assessment projects are posted on the CCBC web page.

Projects have been implemented to assess learning outcomes in a wide variety of courses and disciplines, including Developmental Math, English, and Reading; Chemistry; Biology; Astronomy; Calculus; College Algebra; Mortuary Science; Environmental Science; Accounting; Sociology; Psychology; Occupational Therapy; Lifetime Fitness and Wellness; Health; Nursing; Physician Assistant; Computer-Aided Design; Data Communications; Computer Information Systems; English as a Second Language; Music; Speech Communication; and English Composition. Over time, the College has moved gradually from supporting only individual faculty course projects to including a number of high-impact projects driven by faculty teams.

Faculty members who participate in outcomes assessment projects that are formally reviewed and approved receive compensation and material support.

Project Requirements

Course-Level Projects

A Learning Outcomes Assessment Project, as a plan for improving student learning at the course level, begins with measurable statements of what students are expected to know or be able to do upon completion of a course. At a minimum, a project is three semesters in length. One progress report and a final report are submitted as part of the project requirements. The College's Learning Outcomes Associate provides assistance, support, and guidance throughout all phases of an assessment project. The Learning Outcomes Associate assists in facilitating the timely completion of all project requirements.

The College supports both individual and high-impact courses. As the term suggests, high-impact projects have the potential to impact student learning for a very large number of students. High-impact course projects include all sections of a course and therefore require participation of a large number of both full- and part-time faculty. Because of the broad scope and complexity of these projects, implementation and completion require a great deal of planning and collaboration. Communication among project leaders during all phases of the project is essential.

Each project consists of five stages, which include a design component, an implementation component, data collection and analysis, development of course improvements, and reassessment.

Stage 1: *Designing and Proposing a Learning Outcomes Assessment Project*

- A. Faculty teams or individual faculty, working closely with the Learning Outcomes Assessment Associate, design an outcomes assessment project to assess learning related to course objectives that are of major importance to the course.
- B. Faculty present the project to other faculty in the discipline and elicit feedback.
- C. Faculty project participants meet to prepare the Learning Outcomes Assessment Request for Proposal and submit the proposal to the appropriate Academic Dean for approval. (*See Appendix A, LOA Request for Proposal.*)
- D. The Learning Outcomes Associate forwards the proposal to the Vice President of Instruction for signature.

Projects must include the following:

1. **Objectives.** The objectives to be measured by the project must be operationalized; i.e., the objectives must include a set of behaviors and activities to be performed that can be measured empirically. In most cases, these behaviors coincide with the common course objectives; but in some cases, a major portion of a course or program may be selected. For instance, if scientific reasoning is a significant expectation of the course, the project might focus on this behavior. The number of objectives to be measured by the project should not be so large that the project results have no explanatory value.
2. **Method.** An appropriate method is selected for collecting data that measure the identified learning outcomes.
3. **External Validation.** External validation is included in the project plan, both when selecting the instrument and analyzing the results. Faculty can measure where students are in reference to stated competencies and can also determine whether the levels attained are comparable to other groups of similar students. This comparability may be determined by different techniques, but having an external reference provides a measure of validity for learning outcomes.

Benchmarking of some type should be included to the degree possible. This may be determined by comparing the performance of CCBC students to other college students on normed tests, comparing CCBC students to criterion-referenced measures, analyzing CCBC students using inside or outside experts, or other appropriate methods determined by the faculty member or faculty team. Other CCBC campuses cannot be used for external validation.

4. **Controls.** During the implementation of the project, important variables must be held constant so that outcomes will be reliable. For example, all sections and instructors participating in the project must implement it in the same manner. Sufficient sample size needs to be considered. In the case of high-impact course projects, the goal is to assess all sections of the course.

5. **Data Analysis.** The data gathered are analyzed to determine areas in need of improvement.
6. **Course Improvement.** Based on the data analysis, course revisions are designed and subsequently implemented.
7. **Reassessment.** Following one or two semesters of implementation of recommended improvements, a reassessment is conducted to determine the impact of the revisions.
8. **Replication.** If the results are not satisfactory, the improvement/assessment cycle is repeated immediately. If the results are satisfactory, the cycle can be repeated in three years.
9. **Dissemination.** The results of the Learning Outcomes Assessment Project will be shared with colleagues in the department and across the College. All research data and written materials associated with formally approved outcomes assessment projects are archived and made available for public use.

Stage 2: *Implementing the Design and Collecting and Analyzing the Data*

- A. The project is implemented, the approved assessment instrument is administered, and related data are collected and analyzed. Faculty collect a variety of demographic data to include (among other areas, depending on the nature of the project) data on race, gender, and age. Faculty will make every attempt to include data analysis that addresses minority performance versus non-minority performance, particularly in high-impact projects.

Stage 3: Redesigning the Course to Improve Student Learning

- A. Based on the data analysis, the faculty member or team designs course improvements and develops new course materials as necessary.
- B. The faculty member or team presents a one- to-three-page summary report of the data, results, and recommendations for course improvements, along with samples of any new materials, to the Learning Outcomes Assessment Associate.

Stage 4: Implementing Course Revisions and Reassessing Student Learning

- A. The faculty member(s) implements course improvements.
- B. The faculty member(s) re-administers the assessment instrument.
- C. Related data are collected again and analyzed.
- D. Course changes and reassessments are implemented multiple times until results yield improvement.

Stage 5: Final Analysis/Reporting Results

- A. Faculty, in collaboration with the Learning Outcomes Assessment Associate, submit a summary report of the results to the appropriate Academic Dean.
- B. The Outcomes Associate submits the report to the Vice President of Instruction.
- C. The final report is distributed to the college community.

Project Design

There are three levels of Learning Outcomes Assessment projects. **Level 1:** Assessment occurring in a single section of a course. **Level 2:** Assessment occurring in multiple sections of the same course in the same semester or in multiple semesters. **Level 3:** Assessment occurring in high-impact courses – those with high enrollment, including the adjunct and on-line sections of that course, on all campuses. All types of projects are expected to include all campuses where the course is taught, all faculty, and all sections. In the case of high-impact projects, all course sections, or an adequate sample, are included.

To initiate Level 1 or Level 2 projects, an individual instructor or team of instructors presents the idea to the appropriate Academic Dean. Level 3 projects are selected by the Academic Deans on an annual basis. The team works closely with the Learning Outcomes Assessment Associate to formulate a project design. Once approved by the appropriate academic dean and the Vice President of Instruction, the team informs other faculty members in the discipline of the project as early as possible.

Faculty members have the benefit of expert advisors during the design process. The Learning Outcomes Assessment Associate works with the faculty member or faculty team to develop the research design and to ensure that external validity and reliability are prioritized in choosing or developing the data collection tool. Additionally, the Planning, Research, and Evaluation Office provides support for data analysis, especially for statistical procedures with which faculty may not be familiar.

Different instruments and designs are appropriate for different projects. External validity of both instruments and results is an important consideration when designing the Learning Outcomes Assessment Project. The following is a sampling of the variety of design methods and instruments that may be used to measure student learning outcomes and examples of CCBC projects:

Portfolio assessment is a method of determining exit behaviors by compiling a collection of student work. Portfolios usually

span a set time frame and focus on any type of behavior that is demonstrable by virtue of a student product. Hence, such things as writing samples, art work, laboratory reports, student-authored computer programs, and employer evaluations may constitute a portfolio. Important elements of portfolio assessment include 1) evidence of learning acquired, 2) a set of criteria by which to judge the product, 3) a reasonable time frame over which to measure change, and 4) comparable skill levels of the evaluators.

Example: A Computer-Aided Design (CADD) professor at CCBC utilized portfolio assessment to measure his students' learning outcomes. The professor presented a subset of the National Occupational Skills Standards for CADD (standards developed by business leaders, educators, and labor leaders) to local industry professionals and a sample set of portfolios to be normed. The student products/outcomes received good reviews, and industry professionals offered some suggestions for learning improvement that are currently being implemented for next semester. The professor plans to replicate the study with other industry experts.

Standardized tests can be selected for an outcomes assessment project. A standardized test is one that has been developed by an outside group, usually a testing service or a professional group. The test has been reviewed for validity and reliability by experts in the field, has been field tested and piloted, and has established norms of performance. Elements that faculty consider in selecting a standardized test include 1) content validity in relationship to course outcomes; 2) credibility of the test developers; 3) a technical report that indicates test development processes, characteristics of the pilot group, and norms; and 4) the scoring process. It is desirable to select a test which has included community college students in its norming or reference group.

Example: Two CCBC psychology professors administered both the Introduction to Psychology CLEP test and their departmentally developed final exam as the final course

evaluation instrument. Findings showed that the departmental final exam grades were highly correlated with the standardized CLEP grades. The project revealed no differences in student achievement by demographic variables or by course section. This project gave the department confirmation that their instructional strategies are producing student learning at par with nationally normed standards.

External graders may be used as the primary project design validity check. In this process, actual measurement of the outcomes is performed by experts in the field who have no vested interest in the results of the project. External graders are most typically used when the product is of a more subjective nature, such as a creative work. Graders who are selected must meet the following criteria: 1) they are not directly involved with the students whose performance is being graded; 2) they have a common grading rubric from which to derive a grade; 3) they have been involved in a norming session with sample papers; 4) they are considered to possess an expert level of knowledge or skill in the area being assessed.

Example: Several CCBC faculty members have utilized external graders to assess student learning outcomes. One faculty member invited a professor at another college to evaluate speeches in Speech Communication classes throughout the College. English professors used outside consultants to assess student essays by providing a grading rubric to the consultant.

Pre-test, Post-test is a popular design possibility. A test is administered early in the course, before the instructional process has begun. A parallel test is given at the close of the learning experience. This design may be appropriate if previous knowledge about the content is likely—for example, if a prerequisite exists for the course or a similar course that would have been taken in high school.

When using this design, factors to consider include the following: 1) content reliability and validity are assured, 2)

the pre-test is administered before learning starts, 3) the post-test is a parallel form to the pre-test, 4) the post-test is administered at the end of the course or at a pre-determined time, and 5) the same procedures are used with both the pre-test and post-test.

Example: The faculty leader for a Health and Wellness (HLTH 101) high-impact course project used a pre-test/post-test design. She created a comprehensive pre-test which correlated with the common course objectives and utilized an external expert to validate the exam. The exam was given to all sections of HLTH 101 on all three campuses to discern what students know about health-related topics covered in the course. Students were also given the exam as a comprehensive final in order to measure their gain in knowledge and performance in the identified areas.

Cooperating with other community colleges in designing and administering an assessment is another design possibility. This design may be appropriate to use when other norming data are not available. In such instances, several other colleges are asked to participate in the project with their students so that comparisons can be made using an external reference group.

When using this design, factors to consider include 1) selecting one or more colleges that would provide a student body to be compared; 2) determining that the cooperating school(s) has comparable objectives for its courses and that there is agreement on these expected outcomes; 3) contacting college personnel who will serve as a point person for the project; and 4) working out the logistical tasks of the project, such as time of administration, conditions of testing, process for transmission of materials and data, and standards for sharing results.

Example: Students enrolled in Introduction to Criminal Justice will be administered a learning outcomes assessment instrument developed by the Maryland Criminal Justice Articulation Task Force (MCJATF). MCJATF is an

organization made up of criminal justice faculty from 2-year and 4-year colleges in Maryland. The instrument was developed over the course of three years after determining that a national exam did not meet the needs of the members on the task force. Each member of the task force had the opportunity to write, review, and edit the exam before the final version of the instrument was developed. The assessment instrument is a multiple choice exam consisting of 76 questions administered as both a pre-test and a post-test. This represents four questions from each of the course objectives.

It is clear that there is no one way to conduct an outcomes assessment project. In fact, various designs may be consolidated to achieve the best results. The most important aspects are that the method matches the objectives to be measured and the steps of the procedure are followed closely, taking every precaution to keep the data valid. Faculty, in consultation with the Learning Outcomes Associate, determine which design best meets the goals of the project. Each project is unique, and variations are made based on the factors that are important in particular situations.

Project Assistance

The College is committed to the Learning Outcomes Assessment Program and provides assistance in all phases of designing, implementing, and evaluating a project.

The Learning Outcomes Associate is the primary source of assistance for faculty members engaged in a Learning Outcomes Assessment Project. The Learning Outcomes Associate assists faculty with all phases of the project, from initial design to final reporting and is responsible for facilitating access to CCBC resources needed by faculty members. Following is a list of resources that are available to assist faculty in planning, implementing, and evaluating projects:

- ❖ Office of the Vice President of Instruction
- ❖ Learning Outcomes Associate
- ❖ Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation
- ❖ Testing Centers on each campus
- ❖ Faculty peer mentors

The College also provides faculty with the facilities and services needed to effectively assess learning outcomes and to implement assessment-based instructional innovations. Some of the facilities and services provided include:

- ❖ Computer resources to facilitate the collection, management, and analysis of assessment data
- ❖ Prerequisite screening to ensure that students in a course meet all entry requirements
- ❖ Accessibility to timely student learning and academic profiles
- ❖ Well-maintained classroom facilities and up-to-date equipment to ensure an optimal environment for learning and efficient use of class time

The following is a partial listing of the areas in which additional assistance is available:

- ❖ Project design
- ❖ Technical assistance for data collection, design, and analysis
- ❖ Information about external validation tools
- ❖ Project management
- ❖ Readers and graders for essays and portfolios
- ❖ Access to student records
- ❖ Access to external resources and existing data about the project
- ❖ Access to external agencies that provide support and validation of existing tools and tests
- ❖ Access to consultants or experts from other colleges
- ❖ Access to any CCBC or campus-based offices that may be able to provide assistance for the project

Approval Process

Each Learning Outcomes Assessment Project must be approved for funding by the appropriate Academic Dean. The project must be approved by all Academic Deans whose faculty will be involved in the project. The Vice President of Instruction, the Learning Outcomes Associate, and all participants must also sign off on the project proposal.

Faculty Compensation

Faculty members are compensated for engaging in the process of designing and implementing outcome measures and improving courses.

A description of the award categories for approved projects is as follows:

- A. After the formal project proposal is approved by the Vice President of Instruction, the first half of the total stipend will be awarded to the faculty member(s) for implementation of the project.

- B. If course revisions are required based on weaknesses identified through the baseline data collection and analysis, the faculty member or team is expected to implement changes and reassess. The second half of the stipend will be awarded upon reassessment and reporting.

Compensation schedules are altered for each fiscal year, depending on budget allocation.

Program Outcomes Assessment Projects

History

The previous section of this guide focuses on outcomes assessment as it relates to what students know or can do upon completion of a course. Since courses are building blocks to certificates or degrees, there is a need to verify that students can successfully retain, integrate, and apply outcomes derived from individual courses into a final set of comprehensive competencies that we would expect of program graduates. These broad outcomes are known as program outcomes, and they define what students know or will be able to do at the end of a program. With input from a variety of sources such as advisory committees, employer surveys, DACUM activities, four-year institutions, national or local skill standards, and focus groups, program coordinators are responsible for identifying a complete set of workplace-relevant program outcomes that must be clearly stated, specific in nature, and, most of all, measurable.

CCBC is involved in assessing a variety of different types of programs—the General Education Program, the Developmental Education Program, and Career and Transfer Programs. This section focuses on Career and Transfer Programs and the program review process that is utilized to conduct an in-depth, multi-dimensional study of these programs every five years. Program-level outcomes are emphasized as a tool to guide program changes and to improve and expand student learning. Typically, five to seven major outcomes are appropriate for a program. Program outcomes must be approved by the Vice President of Instruction, and a copy of the approved outcomes will be kept on file in that office.

In addition, the program review process includes an outcomes assessment project. Program coordinators may select from two different types of projects to assess their program goals. A Program Outcomes Assessment Project (POAP) can be used to assess program specific content and skills. A Core Competencies Assessment Project is more appropriate if the coordinator wants to focus on transferable skills including communication, problem-solving, global perspective and social responsibility, and independent learning and personal management (see Core Competencies Assessment Project section for detailed explanation.) A coordinator also has the option of completing both types of projects.

The data generated from the assessment project guide recommendations for programmatic change. If the data suggest significant changes, a supplemental program review report must be submitted. The College provides staff development to assist program coordinators in writing measurable program outcomes and in developing an assessment project.

Project Requirements

Specific program reviews are scheduled on a five-year revolving basis, giving program coordinators ample opportunity to revise program outcomes and to develop and implement a Program Outcomes Assessment Project. Course-level projects require a minimum of three semesters to collect data, analyze data and recommend changes, and reassess. Since program-level projects involve a similar assessment cycle, it may be necessary to begin collecting data prior to the actual program review. If this is not possible, a supplemental program review outcomes assessment report must be submitted within one year of the completion of the program review.

Each project consists of five major stages: a design component, an implementation component, data collection and analysis, development of program improvements, and reassessment.

Stage 1: *Designing and Proposing a Program Outcomes Assessment Project*

- A. Program coordinators formulate and draft a project plan to assess learning related to approved major program outcomes.
- B. Program coordinators present the project plan to faculty in the program and elicit timely feedback.
- C. Project participants meet to prepare the Program Outcomes Assessment Request for Proposal and then submit the proposal to the appropriate Academic Dean for approval. (See Appendix B, POA Request for Proposal.)
- D. The Academic Dean forwards the proposal to the Vice President of Instruction for signature.

Projects must include the following:

1. **Objectives.** The outcomes to be measured by the project must be operationalized; i.e., the outcomes must include a set of behaviors and activities to be performed which can be measured empirically. In most cases, these behaviors coincide with higher level objectives from the common course outlines of upper level courses in the program.
2. **Method.** An appropriate method is selected for collecting data that assess the identified program outcomes.
3. **External Validation.** External validation is included in the project plan, both when selecting the instrument and analyzing the results. Faculty can measure where student learning is in reference to stated competencies and can also determine whether the levels attained are comparable to other groups of similar students. This comparability may be determined by different techniques, but having an external reference provides a measure of validity for program outcomes.

Benchmarking of some type should be included to the degree possible. This may be determined by comparing the performance of CCBC students to other college students on normed tests, comparing CCBC students to criterion-referenced measures, analyzing CCBC student performance using inside or outside experts, and other appropriate methods determined by the project leader. Other CCBC campuses cannot be used for external validation.

4. **Controls.** During the implementation of the project, important variables must be held constant so that outcomes will be reliable.
5. **Data Analysis.** The data gathered are analyzed to determine areas in need of improvement.
6. **Program Improvement.** Based on the data analysis, program revisions are designed and subsequently implemented.
7. **Reassessment.** Following one to two semesters of implementation of recommended revisions, a reassessment is conducted to determine the impact of the revisions.

8. **Replication.** If the results are not satisfactory, the improvement/assessment cycle must be repeated immediately. If the results are satisfactory, the cycle can be repeated in three to five years.
9. **Dissemination.** The results of the Program Outcomes Assessment Project are shared with colleagues in the department and across the College. All research data and written materials associated with formally approved outcomes assessment projects are archived in the office of the Vice President of Instruction. Support is provided by the office of the Vice President of Instruction and the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation.

Stage 2: *Implementing the Design and Collecting and Analyzing the Data*

The project is implemented, the approved assessment instrument is administered, and related data are collected and analyzed. The project leader collects a variety of demographic data to include (among other areas, depending on the nature of the project) data on race, gender, and age. Every attempt will be made to include data analysis that addresses minority performance versus non-minority performance.

Stage 3: *Redesigning the Program to Improve Student Learning*

- A. Based on the data analysis, the project leader, working with program faculty, identifies where in the program the improvements must occur and designs revisions to be implemented.
- B. The project leader presents a one- to three-page summary report of the data, results, and recommendations for course and/or program improvements, along with samples of any new materials, to the office of the Vice President of Instruction.

Stage 4: *Implementing Program Revisions and Reassessing Student Learning*

- A. The project leader meets with those program faculty members who will implement program improvements in identified courses.
- B. The project leader re-administers the assessment instrument. Related data are collected again and analyzed.
- C. Program changes and reassessments will be implemented multiple times until results yield the desired improvement.

Stage 5: *Final Analysis/Reporting Results*

- A. The project leader submits a summary report of the results to the appropriate Academic Dean.
- B. The Academic Dean submits the report to the Vice President of Instruction and distributes the report to faculty throughout the College.

Project Design

There are many techniques that can be used to assess program outcomes and a variety of appropriate points when assessment can occur. Assessment may be embedded in course assignments or activities or occur in a capstone course near the end of a program of study. Assessment can also take place in well-defined practicums, internships, or field experiences. In addition, some of the course-level outcomes assessment methods discussed in the previous section, such as portfolio assessment and standardized tests, can be modified and used at the program level. External validation of both instruments and results is an important consideration when designing the Program Outcomes Assessment Project.

Capstone courses are courses at the program completion level where course outcomes, in part or entirely, are the comprehensive major program outcomes. In such courses, instructors reinforce and integrate a combination of previously learned course outcomes or competencies and ask students to apply them in work-related tasks. Capstone courses are designed to enable students to review, evaluate, integrate, and synthesize information and skills gained from other courses in the program or major.

Skill development over multiple courses is a method that would be used when an assessment project is focused on skills that are progressive in nature. This method may be spread over several semesters or over the length of an academic program. This method is often appropriate when assessing skills in courses that have prerequisites or when assessing program-level skills that may take several semesters to master.

Internships, field, and clinical experiences are ideal for assessing program outcomes because students in these settings are being evaluated by external experts who can provide real-world feedback based on real-world standards. A field experience must be designed with the employer to include

increasingly complex objectives that link directly to the program outcomes.

Authentic assessment presents students with a real-life situation that engages them in a simulation of a problem that they must solve using knowledge and skills gained in earlier courses in the program. A single project can be structured to assess both mastery of course content and attainment of program goals. In this situation, an external consultant or an internal panel of experts would be used to judge students' work.

Portfolio assessment is an accumulation of work that students have produced in a program. Portfolios can assess the growth of skill development by comparing early work to work completed later in the program and then comparing the end product to established standards. An external consultant or an internal panel of experts would be used to judge students' portfolios.

Critiques are projects that students or teams of students present to a panel of experts who are asked to critique the work. The criteria for the critique must be based on the specific goals formulated for the project and must link to the program outcomes.

Certification exams are used in programs that link successful completion of a program to passing an external exam from a local or national certifying agency.

Project Assistance

The College is committed to Program Outcomes Assessment and Core Competencies Assessment projects and provides assistance in all phases of designing, implementing, and evaluating a project. Following is a list of resources that are available to assist faculty in planning, implementing, and evaluating projects:

- ❖ Office of the Vice President of Instruction
- ❖ Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation

- ❖ Testing Centers on each campus
- ❖ Staff development
- ❖ Faculty peer mentors
- ❖ Workshops

The following is a partial listing of the areas in which additional assistance is available:

- ❖ Project design
- ❖ Technical assistance for data collection, design, and analysis
- ❖ Information about external validation tools
- ❖ Project management
- ❖ Readers and graders for essays and portfolios
- ❖ Access to student records
- ❖ Access to external resources and existing data about the project
- ❖ Access to external agencies that provide support and validation of existing tools and tests
- ❖ Access to consultants or experts from other colleges
- ❖ Access to any CCBC or campus-based offices that may be able to provide assistance for the project

Approval Process

Each Program Outcomes Assessment Project and Core Competencies Assessment Project must be approved by the appropriate Academic Dean. The Vice President of Instruction must also sign off on the project proposal.

Core Competencies Assessment Project

A second program review assessment option is a Core Competencies Assessment Project. In 2003, CCBC identified four institutional core competencies– Communication, Problem Solving, Global Perspective and Social Responsibility, and Independent Learning and Personal Management – that will serve as measurable benchmarks for student learning and outcomes assessment. These competencies will help students develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviors to be successful as intentional learners; to be productive as workers; and to be thoughtful, engaged citizens and will be evidenced throughout students’ learning experiences at CCBC.

All courses outside the General Education curriculum will include activities that encourage the development of one or more of the indicated abilities associated with each core competency. A variety of assessment tools can be used to gather evidence of student achievement in the learning activities where students will be developing these competencies. Program coordinators will examine content in selected non-General Education courses within the program and will use a course analysis form to determine the extent to which the four core competencies are included and assessed within the program.

Project Requirements

A project leader must be identified by September of the year prior to when the program review is due. As with other LOA projects, the selected project leader will receive a stipend that will be paid in two installments: the first after the project proposal is approved by the academic dean, and the second upon submission of the final report to the LOAAB.

The chairs and members of the Learning Outcomes Assessment Advisory Board (LOAAB) will provide training and guidance throughout the project. Steps 1-4 below should be completed by the end of the fall semester.

1. Prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) that outlines a timeline for the project. Secure approval from the academic dean, LOAAB chairs, and the Vice President of Instruction
 - a. Serve as a professional development representative to your division/school.
 - b. Report progress to your division/school and department chair and academic dean throughout the year.
2. Meet with full-time and adjunct members of the department or program who teach the non-general education courses to explain the four core competencies.
3. Complete the CCBC Course Analysis Form (CAF) for each course and return it to LOAAB.
4. Collect and label materials that the full-time and adjunct members of the department use to assess any or all of the four competencies.
5. Using the CAF, note any competencies that are not sufficiently assessed within the sequence of courses included in the project.
6. Meet with the department head/department to discuss whether any competencies that are not sufficiently assessed need to be assessed more carefully. If necessary, develop a solution for the latter problem.
7. Create a binder that includes materials that illustrate how the department assesses any or all of the four competencies for each course.
8. Attend the March/April LOAAB meeting to share progress to date.
9. Share the communication section of the report with the English and Speech departments and others within the college as appropriate (Summer/August).
10. Meet with LOAAB to evaluate the above process (Summer/August).
11. **The project must be completed by June 15 and submitted with the program review.**

Proposals must include a project description that briefly describes the project and explains how it will strengthen and improve student learning. Proposer must indicate which courses, sections (with enrollment figures), and faculty members will be involved in the project and the rationale for selecting these courses as well as the strategies to communicate and report progress with project faculty and administrators. The project must be organized into a binder

and include a copy of all of the Common Course Outlines, Course Analysis Forms, and assessment instruments that are collected.

Project Assistance

The College will support any justified resources necessary to conduct the project. Resources must be clearly identified in the project proposal. The Assistant to the Vice President of Instruction and LOAAB representatives are available to provide support throughout the project.

Approval Process

Each Core Competencies Assessment Project must be signed by the Vice President of Instruction and by the co-chairs of the Learning Outcomes Assessment Advisory Board.

CCBC Core Competencies

1. Communication

Definition: *ability to use reading, writing, oral, or signed communication skills to organize, express, and absorb ideas and information in interpersonal, group, organizational, and presentational settings*

Abilities:

Students will be able to:

- a. Read, retain, restate, and apply ideas for a variety of purposes, to include: informing, persuading, enjoying, and appreciating.
- b. Write clearly, concisely, and accurately in a variety of contexts and formats.
- c. Speak clearly, concisely, and accurately in a variety of contexts and formats.
- d. Demonstrate active listening skills.

2. Problem Solving

Definition: *ability to think critically and to solve problems using data, analysis, interpretation, and reasoning skills*

Abilities:

Students will be able to:

- a. Demonstrate observation skills.
- b. Identify a problem to be solved, a task to be performed, or a decision to be made.
- c. Determine the nature and extent of needed information.
- d. Access information effectively and efficiently.
- e. Evaluate information sources and content.
- f. Make connections and draw inferences.
- g. Identify criteria appropriate for evaluation of a process, solution, or decision.
- h. Formulate alternative processes, solutions, or decisions and potential consequences.
- i. Select an appropriate process, solution, or decision.

3. Global Perspective and Social Responsibility

Definition: *ability to understand and interpret events and issues within a global perspective; ability to demonstrate ethical and cultural awareness and to foster an appreciation of diversity through appropriate and effective modes of social interaction*

Abilities:

Students will be able to:

- a. Express an understanding of the interconnections and interactions between and among people and systems (political, economic, social, and natural) and of the necessity of balancing human needs with the limitations of world resources.
- b. Gain knowledge of and experience with people in their own and other cultures, past and present, and how they live, think, communicate, and view the world.
- c. Describe the impact of the global economy on life, work, and opportunities.
- d. Recognize the commonality of human experience across culture.
- e. Recognize the influence of diverse cultural perspectives on human thought and behavior.
- f. Define personal responsibility in a given circumstance.
- g. Demonstrate respect for the rights, views, and work of others.
- h. Recognize their responsibility to personal, social, professional, educational, and natural environments and make informed decisions based on that responsibility.
- i. Display behavior consistent with the ethical standards within a discipline or profession.

4. Independent Learning and Personal Management

Definition: *ability to set individual goals and devise strategies for educational, personal, and professional development in a changing world*

Abilities:

Students will be able to:

- a. Appreciate the value and importance of inquiry and the learning process in the classroom and their personal and professional lives.
- b. Set goals and devise strategies for educational, personal, and professional development in a changing world, consistent with their abilities and circumstances.
- c. Utilize computers and related technology to increase task efficiency.
- d. Recognize their own self-worth, strengths, weaknesses, and potential for growth.
- e. Recognize their own biases and values.
- f. Demonstrate the ability to give and receive constructive feedback.
- g. Behave appropriately in a variety of situations, circumstances, and roles.
- h. Recognize conflict and use conflict resolution skills when appropriate.

Student Services Assessment Projects

In order for student affairs programs to be effective, it is essential that they be based on sound research and systematic inquiry that asks what students are learning from student services and programs. Student affairs must use the data derived from the statistically-based documentation to evaluate and enhance its offerings.

For nearly 10 years, Student Affairs' professional organizations and accrediting associations have underscored the need for Student Affairs practitioners to assess their programs, activities, and services. In *The Student Learning Imperative: Implications for Student Affairs* (1996) of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), the Student Affairs profession is urged "to participate in institution-wide efforts to assess the student learning" that occurs in intentionally designed environments, services and programs on campus" (p. 5). The National Association of Student Personnel Administrator's (NASPA) report *Good Practice in Student Affairs* (1998) supports ACPA's contention that Student Affairs must engage in assessment by stating that good practice in Student Affairs "uses systematic inquiry to improve student and institutional performance," (p. 1). In *Learning Reconsidered*, a 2004 report of NASPA and ACPA, student affairs practitioners are advised to not only participate but lead broad efforts to assess student learning, as a means for student affairs to participate more fully in the learning enterprise and to more clearly support the institutions overall educational goals. This report also recommends that Student Affairs assessment focus on student learning rather than on student satisfaction, in order for practitioners to document how students learn and what they know.

CCBC student affairs has written a plan in collaboration with the Maryland State Community College Vice Presidents and Deans of Student Services LOA project, which was initiated in 2003. CCBC student affairs professionals are implementing LOA projects in a number of critical functions. The goals of CCBC's plan is to shift the focus of assessment from student satisfaction of services to student learning of core indicators; to assist staff to learn how to

design, implement, and analyze learning outcomes projects; to assist staff to improve student services and programs based on learning outcomes analysis; and to create benchmarks for comparison of findings from other comparable institutions.

CCBC's plan focuses on the prime core indicator of developing the student as a self-directed learner. The self-directed learner is defined as a student who will:

- ❖ Define a need or problem and employ effective decision-making to resolve it
- ❖ Plan ahead/set goals
- ❖ Acquire knowledge
- ❖ Use available resources
- ❖ Seek assistance from appropriate people/experts
- ❖ Apply critical analysis to consider options
- ❖ Evaluate decisions

Student Affairs at CCBC works in consultation with the Learning Outcomes Assessment Advisory Board (LOAAB) to create outcomes projects. Currently, LOA projects are being developed, implemented, and refined in the following functional

Student Affairs areas:

- ❖ Academic Advising
- ❖ Student Life
- ❖ Testing Centers
- ❖ Registration
- ❖ Financial Aid
- ❖ Athletics
- ❖ Admissions
- ❖ Career Services
- ❖ Tutoring

Developmental Education Assessment

One hallmark of an exemplary developmental education program is an ongoing formative/summative evaluation process. As referenced in the certification process of the National Association of Developmental Education, this process should begin with a qualitative self-evaluation of every aspect of the program. Data gathering should include three levels of information—primary, secondary, and tertiary. The primary level includes the numbers of students assessed, placed, and enrolled in developmental courses as well as the numbers of students who take advantage of certain services. The secondary level includes course pass rates and pre-test/post-test score gains. The tertiary level includes examination of global indicators, including success in the next sequential course, retention, and GPA.

Assessing the progress of developmental students presents unique challenges. First, many students in the developmental courses, especially Reading, have learning disabilities, both identified and undiagnosed. Thus, often they suffer from test anxiety and are not good test-takers. Timed testing presents even more anxiety. Second, the developmental student is often an adult who has been out of school for many years and is not used to the format of today's tests or is a traditional student who is not prepared for college level work. Because of these challenges, outcomes assessment should not be done using only traditional standardized tests. Untimed testing is preferable, or at least timing should be such that most students will finish the test. Finally, assessment should not be based on one test score alone. Instructors might need to use a variety of creative means to assess students' progress.

Outcomes assessment of developmental students should be both quantitative and qualitative. Tests alone are not sufficient to evaluate successful completion of course outcomes. In "Improving Developmental Education through Formative Evaluation," a presentation at the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE) 2000 conference in Biloxi, Mississippi, Boylan, Bonham, and Bliss recommended the following student academic performance criteria for research on course evaluation:

- a. Gain scores from pre-test to post-test,

- b. Grades in remedial/developmental courses,
- c. student completion rates for remedial/developmental courses,
- d. Number of attempts required for students to pass remedial/developmental courses,
- e. Grades in follow-up courses,
- f. Cumulative grade point averages,
- g. Number of terms participating students are retained, and
- h. Overall student retention rates at the end of 3 years for community colleges.

Also, student satisfaction with courses and attitudes toward learning are important measures of success or failure in meeting course objectives. Attitudes can be measured with surveys or questionnaires or through student focus groups where students freely express their opinions.

Boylan, Bliss, and Bonham recommend systematic, ongoing evaluation as a means to change and improve the developmental program. Faculty should not wait for the “call from above” to evaluate the success of their courses but should engage in ongoing collection of demographic data, academic scores, and attitudes toward the program.

CCBC has begun the cycle of learning outcomes assessment for its entire Developmental Education Program. Faculty and staff from the Program have participated in the NADE self-evaluation process. Primary and secondary levels of evidence of participation and achievement of developmental students are available in the developmental education annual reports. To further address the secondary level, Learning Outcomes Assessment Projects have been conducted for ENGL 052, RDGN 051, RDNG 052, MATH 082 and MATH 083. To address the tertiary level of assessment, global outcomes such as progress in the next course and retention have been determined.

CCBC was recently awarded NADE certification at the distinguished level for its developmental coursework programs.

General Education Assessment

A new General Education Program became effective in the Fall 2001 semester. The General Education Program goals are listed below:

1. Introduce students to the fundamental principles, concepts, vocabulary, and methods essential for the acquisition of knowledge and skills basic to the field of study;
2. Prepare students to communicate effectively using written and oral or signed communication skills;
3. Provide a variety of learning experiences that encourage students, independently and in collaboration with others, to use those fundamental principles and methods to acquire, analyze, and use information for purposes of inquiry, critical thinking, problem solving, and creative expression in a diverse environment;
4. Prepare students to adapt to change, including the increasing integration of information technology in all fields of knowledge and expression;
5. Provide students with the knowledge and skills to understand themselves and others from various cultural, social, aesthetic, political, and environmental perspectives; and
6. Provide the experiences that will allow students to become independent learners, the skills to analyze their strengths and weaknesses as learners, and the knowledge to accomplish the tasks involved in learning.
7. Use appropriate assessment tool(s) to demonstrate the degree to which students have achieved the objectives of the course.

In order to document student learning in the General Education Program and to gather evidence related to the overall effectiveness of this program, the General Education Review Board designed a comprehensive assessment plan that includes internal and external measures.

Internal Measures

Common Graded Assignments (CGAs) are criterion-referenced assessments designed by teams of faculty representing each General Education discipline. The discipline teams have become known as **GREATs**, which stands for **GeneRal Education Assessment Teams**. The GREATs determine which course-embedded assignments are most appropriate for assessing the General Education program goals. These Common Graded Assignments are incorporated into all of the General Education courses being assessed each semester. An accompanying 6-point analytic rubric is also developed for each CGA. A random sample of the assignments are scored by trained faculty after the semester has concluded. The feedback from these assignments provides valuable information about the degree to which students are achieving the General Education Program goals. As with all assessment projects the data are reviewed and faculty determine appropriate interventions to improve student learning. Every General Education course is assessed at least once every three years. The first round of data collection is used to collect baseline data, and the subsequent assessment data is used to determine the effectiveness of the interventions. This formative assessment process provides ongoing information about student performance and opportunities for improvement.

External Measures

The General Education Review Board is currently reviewing norm-referenced, standardized tests to determine which is most appropriate for assessing students' General Education skills. Administration of a standardized test is tentatively scheduled for fall 2008. Two tests that are being considered are the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) and Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP). The Academic Profile, a standardized assessment instrument that assessed college-level reading, writing, critical thinking, and use of mathematical data in

the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences, was the test that was administered in 2001 and 2004. The Academic Profile is no longer in print.

External measures to assess the General Education Program also include such items as the Graduate Follow-up Survey, surveys of students who do not graduate, the Employer Feedback Survey, and a variety of transfer measures obtained from public four-year institutions where many CCBC students transfer. These tools provide feedback regarding student satisfaction with the General Education program.

Classroom Learning Assessment and Classroom Assessment Techniques

Philosophy

Outcomes assessment typically involves a formal research project that is large scale, collaborative, and public. Classroom assessment, by contrast, involves informal techniques that allow an individual instructor to generate periodic feedback from students while a course is ongoing. The purpose of classroom assessment is to facilitate a dialog between teacher and students that enables both to contribute to the improvement of learning. Mutual feedback enables the instructor to identify learning problems and enables students to develop awareness of the instructor's objectives as well as their own learning styles. Informed by the indications of classroom assessment, the instructor can make immediate adjustments to improve learning.

The instructor has sole authority over the interpretation and dissemination of classroom assessment results. The purpose of classroom assessment is to improve learning and not to evaluate instructors.

Classroom learning assessment seeks to improve the learning process by helping faculty find out what students are learning and how well they are learning it. Classroom assessment is a process that requires systematic inquiry and provides intellectual challenge—two powerful resources of motivation, growth, and renewal for faculty.

While classroom learning assessment is a deliberate process, projects are less formal in design than Learning Outcomes Assessment Projects. Faculty members decide what to assess, how to assess, and how to respond to the information gained through the assessment within their classrooms.

Project Design

The Classroom Assessment Cycle has three parts: planning, implementing, and responding. Planning takes the form of choosing a class in which to try a classroom assessment project, determining the learning objective to be assessed, and choosing an appropriate technique to assess that objective. Implementation involves teaching to the chosen objective, collecting feedback using the chosen technique, and analyzing that feedback. Responding requires interpreting the results, communicating with the students, and responding with adjustments to improve learning.

Classroom assessment projects assess a variety of teaching and learning goals. Projects can vary in scope and complexity, depending upon the classroom situation being evaluated and the assessment technique chosen to initiate the evaluation. Cross and Angelo in their book *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers* provide step-by-step instruction in how to use Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs) to collect data on student learning in order to improve it. They include 50 different CATs along with guidance in how to select the correct CAT for different learning situations.

All faculty are strongly encouraged to conduct classroom-level assessment projects. No formal proposal or approval is required. Faculty may wish to report on their projects, the changes they have made to instruction, and the subsequent improvement in student learning that has been achieved, in their annual professional summaries.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

*LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PROJECTS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL*

APPENDIX B

*PROGRAM OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PROJECTS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL*

APPENDIX C

*CORE COMPETENCIES ASSESSMENT PROJECTS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL*

APPENDIX D

*INSTRUCTIONAL RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING GENERAL EDUCATION
ENGLISH 102-COLLEGE COMPOSITION II*

Appendix A

LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PROJECTS

(AY – 20xx COHORT)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The Learning Outcomes Assessment Advisory Board invites faculty to submit a Learning Outcomes Assessment Project proposal directed toward improving student learning. Faculty may seek the assistance of the Learning Outcomes Assessment Associate and consult the CCBC *Guide for Learning Outcomes Assessment and Classroom Learning Assessment* for more detailed instructions on developing, implementing, and evaluating an outcomes assessment project.

As a first step, the faculty member (or faculty team) discusses the basic project with the appropriate Academic Dean and gains preliminary approval of the project. Once preliminary approval is given, the faculty member develops the full proposal in conjunction with the Learning Outcomes Assessment Associate using the format listed below. Proposals are restricted to no more than three pages and must be submitted for final approval to the Learning Outcomes Associate and the Academic Dean. Completed proposals should be submitted to no later than May 15, 20xx for best consideration.

Project Description:

Indicate which course(s) will be involved in the study and if this is a high-impact course. Briefly describe the project and explain how it will improve student learning.

Project Objectives:

List and describe the specific learning outcomes to be measured as part of the project.

Methodology:

Describe the design method and instrument(s) that will be used to collect data to measure the learning outcomes identified.

External Validation:

Describe the efforts that will be implemented to ensure external validation.

Timeline:

State the timeline for each of the stages in the project: (1) Designing and Proposing a Learning Outcomes Assessment Project, (2) Implementing the Design and Collecting and Analyzing the Data (Progress Report to Learning Outcomes Assessment Associate), (3) Redesigning the Course to Improve Student Learning, (4) Implementing Course Revisions and Reassessing Student Learning, and (5) Final Analysis and Reporting Results. The maximum time for completion of all stages in the project is 2 ½ years.

<u>Stage</u>	<u>Timeline (mo/yr – mo/yr)</u>
1	_____
2	_____
3	_____
4	_____
5	_____

Project Needs:

List and justify all the resources necessary to conduct the project. Identify the faculty who will participate in the project and the scope of their roles and responsibilities. Categories of needs include staff assistance, consumables, etc.

Faculty Participants/Roles: _____

Consultant Fees: _____

Test Fees: _____

Other Costs (explain): _____

Signatures:

Learning Outcomes

Associate: _____ Date: _____

Academic Dean: _____ Date: _____

Assistant to the Vice President

of Instruction: _____ Date: _____

Vice President

of Instruction: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX B

PROGRAM OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PROJECTS (2006-2007 Cohort)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The Learning Outcomes Assessment Advisory Board invites program coordinators to submit a Program Outcomes Assessment Project proposal. The data generated from the assessment project will guide recommendations for programmatic change to improve and expand student learning. Faculty should consult the CCBC *Guide for Learning Outcomes Assessment and Classroom Learning Assessment* for more detailed instructions on developing, implementing, and evaluating outcomes assessment projects.

As a first step, the program coordinator formulates and drafts a project plan to assess learning related to the approved major program outcomes. The coordinator then presents the project plan to faculty in the program and elicits feedback. Project participants meet to complete the Request for Proposal and submit the Proposal to their Academic Dean for preliminary approval of the project. Proposals are restricted to no more than three pages and must be submitted to the Vice President of Instruction for final approval.

Project Description:

Indicate which program will be involved in the study. Briefly describe the project and explain how it will improve student learning.

Project Objectives:

List the specific program outcome(s) to be measured as part of the project.

- 1.
- 2.

- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Methodology:

Describe the design method and instrument(s) that will be used to collect data to measure the program outcomes.

External Validation:

Describe the efforts that will be implemented to ensure external validation.

Timeline:

State the timeline for each of the stages in the project: (1) Designing and Proposing a Program Outcomes Assessment Project, (2) Implementing the Design and Collecting and Analyzing Data, (3) Developing Program Improvements, (4) Implementing Program Revisions and Reassessing Student Learning, and (5) Final Analysis and Reporting Results. The maximum time for completion of all stages in the project is 2 ½ years.

<u>Stage</u>	<u>Timeline (mo/yr – mo/yr)</u>
1	_____
2	_____
3	_____
4	_____
5	_____

Project Needs:

List and justify all the resources necessary to conduct the project. Identify the faculty who will participate in the project and the scope

of their roles and responsibilities. Categories of needs include staff assistance, consumables, etc.

Faculty Participants/Roles: _____
Consultant Fees: _____
Test Fees: _____
Other Costs (explain): _____

Signatures:

Program Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

Academic Dean: _____ Date: _____

Assistant to the Vice President
of Instruction: _____ Date: _____

Vice President
of Instruction: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C

Core Competencies Assessment Projects

Request for Proposal

As the next stage in CCBC's Outcomes Assessment Program, the college will look at the assessment of CCBC Core Competencies **in non-general education courses**. We are looking for faculty from departments or programs who will help us determine the degree to which the non-general education courses in that department or program include and assess the four core competencies (Communication, Problem Solving, Global Perspective and Social Responsibility, and Independent Learning and Personal Management.)

A project leader must be identified by September of the year prior to when the program review is due. As with other LOA projects, the selected project leader will receive a stipend that will be paid in two installments: the first after the project proposal is approved by the academic dean, and the second upon submission of the final report to the LOAAB. If you would like to serve as a Core Competencies Assessment Project Leader, contact the Assistant to the Vice President of Instruction by September 15.

The chairs and members of the Learning Outcomes Assessment Advisory Board (LOAAB) will provide training and guidance throughout the project. Steps 1-4 below should be completed by the end of the fall semester.

Project Requirements

1. Prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) that outlines a timeline for the project. Secure approval from the academic dean, LOAAB chairs, and the Vice President of Instruction
 - a. Serve as a professional development representative to your division/school.

- b. Report progress to your division/school and department chair and academic dean throughout the year.
2. Meet with full-time and adjunct members of the department or program who teach the non-general education courses to explain the four core competencies.
3. Complete the CCBC Course Analysis Form (CAF) for each course and return it to LOAAB.
4. Collect and label materials that the full-time and adjunct members of the department use to assess any or all of the four competencies.
5. Using the CAF, note any competencies that are not sufficiently assessed within the sequence of courses included in the project.
6. Meet with the department head/department to discuss whether any competencies that are not sufficiently assessed need to be assessed more carefully. If necessary, develop a solution for the latter problem.
7. Create a binder that includes materials that illustrate how the department assesses any or all of the four competencies for each course.
8. Attend the March/April LOAAB meeting to share progress to date.
9. Share the communication section of the report with the English and Speech departments and others within the college as appropriate (Summer/August).
10. Meet with LOAAB to evaluate the above process (Summer/August).
11. **The project must be completed by June 15 and submitted with the program review.**

Proposals must include:

Project Description

Briefly describe the project and explain how it will strengthen and improve student learning. Indicate which courses, sections (with enrollment figures), and faculty members will be involved in the project and the rationale for selecting these courses. Briefly

explain the strategies you will use to communicate and report progress with project faculty and administrators and how you will serve as a professional development representative to your division/school.

Include a copy of all of the Common Course Outlines, Course Analysis Forms, and assessment instruments that are collected for the project in a binder. Organize the binder by course, core competency, or both.

Timeline:

State the timeline for each of the steps in the project. The timeline begins the academic year (AY) prior to the submission of the program review.

<u>Step</u>	<u>Timeline (AY)</u>
1. Complete RFP; secure signatures	end of September
2. Meet with faculty by	end of October
3. Complete CAFs/send them to LOAAB	end of November
4. Collect and label assessment materials	December
5. Meet with LOAAB Chairs	January
6. Create binder	January - March
7. Meet with LOAAB	March/April
8. Identify competencies not assessed	end of April
9. Meet with LOAAB chairs	May
10. Meet with department/develop plan	end of May
11. Share completed binder with LOAAB	June 15
12. Share materials with English/Speech depts.	Summer
13. Meet with LOAAB to evaluate process	Summer

Project Needs:

List and justify any resources necessary to conduct the project.

Signatures:

Learning Outcomes

Associate: _____ Date: _____

Academic Dean: _____ Date: _____

Assistant to the Vice President

of Instruction: _____ Date: _____

Vice President

of Instruction: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D
English 102 Rubric for Assessing General Education

Gen. Ed. Criteria	6	5	4	3	2	1
Content Knowledge and/or skills	Well-developed analysis with an abundance of supportive information.	Well-developed analysis with sufficient supportive information.	Analysis with some supportive information.	Underdeveloped analysis with some supportive information.	Underdeveloped analysis with limited supportive information.	Poor analysis with no supportive information.
Written, Oral, and/or Signed Communication Skills	Clear thesis, very well organized, excellent usage, no major grammatical errors, few minor errors.	Clear thesis, well organized, good usage, 1-2 major errors, few minor errors.	Evident thesis, organized, good usage, 3-4 major errors, some minor errors.	Unclear thesis, problematic organization, 3-4 major errors, significant usage problems.	Thesis not evident, poorly organized, 5-6 major errors, major usage problems.	No thesis, incoherent structure, more than 6 major errors, major usage problems.
Critical Thinking Skills	Ideas are thoughtful and insightful and are presented in a logical manner that is easy to follow.	Ideas are somewhat thoughtful and insightful and are presented in a logical manner that is easy to follow.	Ideas show little depth or development but are presented in a logical manner with slight difficulty following the topic and conclusion.	Ideas show no depth or development and are presented in an order that is difficult to follow.	Ideas show no depth or development and are not in a logical order.	Ideas are not clear information doesn't support the topic or conclusion.

Gen. Ed. Criteria	6	5	4	3	2	1
Technology as a Learning Tool	Uses the required number of electronic sources; sources are recent, credible and relevant.	Uses less than the required number of electronic sources; sources are recent, credible and relevant.	May have used the required number of sources, but sources are somewhat questionable or irrelevant.	Uses less than required number of electronic sources and sources are not credible or relevant.	Uses no relevant or credible electronic sources.	Uses no sources at all.
Cultural Appreciation	Includes numerous social/historical/political factors as relevant support of analysis.	Includes some social/historical/political factors as relevant support of analysis.	Includes some relevant social/historical/political factors in essay.	Includes few relevant social/historical/political factors in essay.	Includes few social/historical/political factors in essay.	No discussion of social/historical/political context.
Independent Learning Skills	Shows excellent evidence of understanding assignment, following directions, and of using learning resources internal and external to the course.	Shows good evidence of understanding assignment, following directions, and of using learning resources internal and external to the course.	Shows adequate evidence of understanding assignment, following directions, and of using learning resources internal and external to the course.	Shows fair evidence of understanding assignment, following directions, and of using learning resources internal and external to the course.	Shows little evidence of understanding assignment, following directions, and of using learning resources internal and external to the course.	Shows no evidence of understanding assignment didn't follow directions no use of learning resources.