The AC and CAS are involved in several new initiatives for the upcoming academic year. You will find each of them explained in this newsletter.

Some of the initiatives were part of a long-term vision that began with the Cornerstone Project. They became more clearly identified and operationalized after several HCC representatives attended the Higher Learning Commission’s General Education Assessment Conference last February. HCC was represented by Sarah Diel-Hunt, Bethany Kriegsman, David Cook, Jon Laird, Jennifer Cherry, Jane Chapman, and Nick Schmitt.

The conference was essentially a brainstorming workshop supplemented with assessment presentations. After three days of discussing and sharing ideas and plans among ourselves and other academic institutions from all over the United States, it became clear to us that HCC is in pretty good shape when it comes to assessment practices. I was shocked to learn that some school representatives were planning to establish guidelines that would require all courses to have learning outcomes. Yikes! Well, everyone has to start somewhere, and we should all be thankful that HCC’s focus on assessment started, in part, at a retreat on a sunny Tuesday October 19, 1993 at Lake Bloomington. It was there that faculty and administrators took time to discuss and focus on educating the whole student. That eventually led to the development of HCC’s general education learning outcomes.

There was a period of time when HCC’s rapid growth and transition to a new campus slowed forward movement on some assessment goals. But not too long after getting settled into our new campus, we began hearing about the Cornerstone Project. That project was just what we needed to kick our assessment efforts into high gear. Now HCC is poised to take on the next phase of assessment. The new initiatives described below will further our commitment to providing a quality educational experience to our students - one that focuses on their development in the four cornerstones of critical thinking, problem solving, diversity, and communication, and our development as mindful and deliberate education professionals.

AC and CAS would like to remind you that our committee members come from all areas of the college, and therefore are serving as representatives for you. You are encouraged to contact committee members from your department if you ever have questions, feedback, or input about projects being coordinated by AC or CAS. A list of committee members can be found at the end of this document.

On behalf of AC and CAS, we wish you a productive and rewarding semester.

Nick Schmitt, AC Chair
What’s the difference between AC and CAS?

**ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE (AC)**

The AC maintains the College’s General Education Learning Outcomes (LOs). This may include collaborating with CAS to review learning outcome statements, updating master syllabus requirements, collecting and reviewing assessment data from courses and programs, and reviewing new or revised academic courses and programs.

The committee provides a forum for meaningful discussions of assessment via workshops, newsletters, etc.

The committee assists with the College’s academic assessment efforts. This may include working with departments on assessment issues, coordinating information with program reviews, providing assessment resources, coordinating assessment workshops, etc.

All AC documents/forms, such as the Assessment Form used by faculty, can now be found in their most up-to-date versions on the AC SharePoint site!

**CURRICULUM & ACADEMIC STANDARDS (CAS)**

The committee reviews, evaluates, and makes recommendations concerning curriculum, courses, programs, and academic policies and standards.

The committee discusses and analyzes academic matters related to student learning and approves courses, programs, and academic policies and standards that affect the college community. The committee also provides a forum to discuss new academic initiatives within the college.

CAS ensures that master syllabuses and academic programs are properly documented according to standards established by outside agencies, such as the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI).

All CAS documents/forms, such as the master syllabus template and course revision guidelines, can now be found in their most up-to-date versions on the CAS SharePoint site!

The lists above do not represent the entire scope of tasks and responsibilities for the committees. If you would like more information about either committee, you can check out their by-laws and work-related tasks on their respective SharePoint sites, or contact a representative from your area who is serving on the committee. A list of committee members can be found at the end of this document.
In an effort to make AC and CAS resources more accessible to our colleagues, both committees have created worksites in SharePoint. These sites are now the primary locations for all AC and CAS documents and forms, such as the current Assessment Form that instructors submit with their self-evaluations, the Master Syllabus Template, course/program revision processes, and more.

We believe that housing these documents only in SharePoint will reduce the problems that occur when documents are stored in multiple locations. You can be confident that the SharePoint location houses the most recent and revised documents and forms related to AC and CAS.

In the past, members of AC and CAS developed a repository in Blackboard where important documents could be stored and accessed by interested parties. That site also included useful resources for faculty, such as sample assessment forms, promotion portfolios, and sabbatical proposals*. All of those resources have been also been moved to their respective sites in SharePoint. The Promotion and Evaluation Review Team (PERT) has its own site in SharePoint which will store the sample promotion portfolios. Sample assessment forms will be in the AC SharePoint site.

Because CAS and AC have both moved documents and forms to SharePoint, the Blackboard repository no longer is being used by either committee.

Anyone submitting a master syllabus for a new or revised course/program will notice that the initial feedback from AC and CAS is completed via email. This convenience is made possible by having AC and CAS members review and comment on the submitted syllabi in SharePoint. This approach to sharing feedback with course developers reduces the number of AC and CAS meetings that need to be attended by developers, and preserves more AC and CAS meeting time for discussion and planning related to other important matters. The guidelines for submitting new or revised courses or programs have recently been updated by CAS, and are located on the CAS SharePoint site.

*Sabbatical proposals and post sabbatical reports are currently available on the PUBLIC (Z:) drive by clicking on “index” and then “Sabbatical Leave, Faculty”.

Check Out These Online Assessment Resources

Internet Resources for Higher Education Outcomes Assessment
http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/archives/assmt/resource.htm

Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education
http://aalhe.org/
2. Critical Thinking 2 across the curriculum

If you are teaching a course with the Critical Thinking 2 (CT2) General Education Outcome, you will be part of an exciting new effort to gauge how well our students are achieving the CT2 outcome across the curriculum.

Part of the college-wide assessment plan, developed at the Higher Learning Commission General Education Assessment Conference, is to answer the question “How well are our students learning the Cornerstones across our curriculum and co-curriculum?” To answer that question, we will collect data related to student achievement. Rather than try to collect data on all general education outcomes, last year the Assessment Committee decided to focus efforts on the general education outcomes that occur most commonly across the curriculum and to focus on one of those outcomes per year. The AC chose to focus on CT2 this year because it is the most common General Education outcome assessed across the curriculum. This focused approach will promote meaningful discussions among colleagues about the variety of instructional activities that can address CT2, the skills needed to demonstrate proficiency of CT2, and how those skills can be assessed meaningfully.

What does this mean for you?

Anyone teaching a course with the CT2 outcome will complete an Assessment Form on this outcome. Only Tier 1 Adjunct Instructors are exempt from this process. The assessment form for instructors teaching courses with CT2 is a slightly modified version of the traditional assessment form. It includes a final page where instructors indicate the number of students who performed at a green, yellow, and red level. These levels are defined on the form. This form, along with the assignment used to assess it, should be sent to Nick Schmitt (LASS) for collection before the end of the Spring 2014 semester. During the summer of 2014, a committee will examine the assessment forms, compute achievement data, and examine the CT2 assignments. This process will provide insights into the variety of ways that CT2 is assessed, check the validity of our assessment tools, and draw conclusions from the achievement data to determine the overall achievement level of CT2 among the students. Findings of the committee will be shared at next fall’s Best Practices.

Never in the history of HCC have we examined student achievement in such a broad scope across the curriculum. How exciting!

Training and support

To prepare for this initiative, course coordinators have been invited to an orientation to the CT2 assessment process and forms. Coordinators will then be contacting instructors in their area to provide information about this initiative. In addition, Debra Gentry will be conducting training sessions in the Instructional Development Center (IDC) this semester for anyone who would like to discuss the process, the CT2 outcome, or their CT2 assignment. Keep your eyes open for emails or appointments from Debra regarding such.

“Assessment is essential not only to guide the development of individual students but also to monitor and continuously improve the quality of programs, inform prospective students and their parents, and provide evidence of accountability to those who pay our way.”

3. Program Review Changes

If you have ever been involved in the five-year program review process at Heartland, you will appreciate the NEW program review document. Based on the college-wide assessment plan, developed in part from the Higher Learning Commission General Education Assessment Conference last spring, and with guidance from Sarah Diel-Hunt, CAS and AC Chairs worked on revising the program review document to make the process more in-line with AQIP Fundamental Questions. The document is available on the CAS SharePoint site (Six Fundamental Questions Template - Instructional Program Review).

The new program review document has a stronger emphasis on student learning and assessment, which should be very relevant and meaningful to disciplines and programs. Some questions will need to be addressed with supporting data, and the data is easily accessible. Thanks to Information Technology, data sets for all programs that are scheduled for review in this year will be available in SharePoint. There are about eight sets of data that typically can be used for program review, and that data is already calculated and available for immediate use. The data in each data set is computed from the past five years.

If you have a need for data that is not already computed, you can contact Sara Collins (Information Technology) or complete a data request form on the SharePoint site for Academic Program Review Support.

Completed program reviews are due to supervisors by the end of next summer.

4. Co-Curriculum Mapping

Another major initiative that will get under way soon, will include mapping the Cornerstone outcomes to Student Services, Academic Support, Student Success and Student Life. Considering that the Cornerstone outcomes are the foundation of the educational goals for our students, and employees in areas throughout the college have valuable interactions with students, it is important for us to recognize the valuable contributions we all make across the college to educate our students.

Soon, discussions will begin with departments and programs throughout the college to consider which outcomes are being addressed in the process of their work with students. Eventually, attempts will be made to map outcomes to various services and programs across the college, and to consider ways to document those outcomes.

Assessment Conferences

National
http://planning.iupui.edu/conferences/national/nationalconf.html
http://web.uri.edu/assessment/2012_conferences/
http://www.aacsb.edu/assessment/
http://www.aacu.org/meetings/generaleducation/gened2014/index.cfm
http://www.ccsso.org/ncsa.html

Local/State

Submitted by
Deb Gentry
Committee Representatives

Assessment Committee
- Chair: Nick Schmitt, LASS
- Vice Chair: Nikki Burrmann, STEM and Business
- Secretary: Darcy Gillan

Faculty Representatives
- Nikki Burrmann, STEM and Business
- Brad Thomas, STEM and Business
- Nancy Evans, STEM and Business
- Susan Carl, HHS
- Jane Miller, HHS
- Richard Seehuus, LASS
- Doug Salokar, LASS
- Anne Colloton, LASS
- Angela Carey, LASS
- Todd Kukla, LASS

Student Success
- Jill Brehmer, Coor. of Tutoring Services

Enrollment Services
- Syreeta Williams, Academic Advisor

CAS Chair
- Zach Petrea, LASS

Community and Corporate Ed
- Adrienne Tucker

Adult Education
- Tammy Truitt

Instructional Administration
- Bethany Kriegsman, Dean LASS
- Emily Olmetti, Assoc. Director of Reading Center

Ex-Officio
- Sarah Diel-Hunt, Assoc. VP for Academic Affairs
- David Cook, Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness
- Deb Gentry, Director of Instructional Dev. and Assessment

Curriculum and Academic Standards
- Chair: Zach Petrea, LASS
- Vice Chair: Phil Vandiver, STEM and Business
- Secretary: Lisa Sleevar

Faculty Representatives
- John Ernst, HFA
- John Hoekstra, STEM and Business
- Matt Lathrop, STEM and Business
- Phil Vandiver, STEM and Business
- Stacy Mann, LASS
- David Marshall, LASS
- Darlene Wills, HSS

Student Success
- Cindy Avery, Disability Support Services

Enrollment Services
- Syreeta Williams, Academic Advisor

Assessment Chair
- Nick Schmitt, LASS

Adult Education
- Kerry Urquizo, ESL

Instructional Administration
- Teri Saxton, Dean HHS
- Carol Hahn, Chair LASS

Ex-Officio
- Sarah Diel-Hunt, Assoc VP for Academic Affairs
- Deb Gentry, Director of Instructional Dev. and Assessment

At Large
- Sara Collins, Institutional Research
- Breezy Wells, STEM and Business
- Jean-Marie Taylor, Alternative Delivery