

2016-17 Annual Assessment Report

The 2016-17 Annual Assessment report was included within the 2018 Mission Fulfillment Workbook. These pages are taken from that document.

Indicator 2.1b Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes – innovative course-level items

Summary of course level assessment in Workforce Programs from Assessment Committee report on General Education Assessment:

Course level conclusions primarily were based on the assessment reports in two programs: Business/Accounting and Criminal Justice. In these two programs, we found there to be an active process of assessment taking place with the loop being closed as demonstrated below.

1. Accounting 201 is providing additional class time and revised assessment tools.
2. Business 201 is changing course delivery.
3. Criminal Justice 101 demonstrated validating the loop closing process by reassessing changes made based on previous assessments (i.e. a new textbook).

At the course level, systematic assessment and loop closing is taking place in a limited number of classes. The challenge remains to extend this process to each course and program with a follow up at the institutional level of the General Education Outcomes.

Good examples of course level assessment completed in 2016-17: Arts & Sciences

- Chemistry 121 – Instructor developed and implemented a “Cognitive Learning Module” to help students learn active learning approaches for learning chemistry. For two consecutive quarters after implementing, students’ Unit 2 test scores improved. The instructor is expanding implementation into other courses.
- Art 218 – Instructor moved a peer evaluation activity from Canvas to a classroom discussion. As a result, student writing for the activity was more specific than previously.
- Math 098 – Math department implemented a new video describing methods of factoring trinomials. After implementation, student test scores for factoring increased and the math department is focusing on teaching one specific method of factoring.
- Math 094, 098, 099 – In an effort to increase course completions, the math department is implementing a rigorous attendance policy, promoting campus resources to students, reaching out to students who exhibit at risk behaviors, aligning homework and exam content, and adding supplemental homework questions.

Workforce Education

- Criminal Justice 101 – A review of a project that uses a real, local case showed a correlation between students’ work on the project and students’ grade in the class. The instructor will next investigate how specific aspects of the project relate to program and general education outcomes.
- Nursing 110, 120, 130, 210, 220, 230 – A flipped model of instruction allows the instructors to use class time to reinforce concepts rather than introduce them, using strategies such as scenarios, group games, concept mapping and outlining. To help students acquire documentation skills, the department has added specific assignments to practice developing the skill.

Transitional Studies

- English 099 – Instructor evaluated student writing samples using a common rubric. Evidence of critical reading and interpretation as well as evidence of revision were two areas that needed improvement. Based on the results, the master course outline was updated and clearer expectations were given to associate faculty about teaching writing.

Indicator 2.2c General Education (Gen Ed) Assessment

During the 2016-2017 academic year, Big Bend Community College had a significant shift in assessment procedure. As part of that shift, department and program reports were reviewed and conclusions were drawn regarding the quality of the assessment and the institutional impact. Reports were divided based on the revised General Education Outcomes and were evaluated by the Assessment Team. Below are the results of the review.

General Education Outcome #1: “Students will be able to communicate clearly and effectively.” We reviewed assessment reports from four different disciplines, Chemistry, Developmental English, English, and Foreign Language. All reports addressed the specified Gen Ed outcome, but the manner and focus of each report was very different. Chemistry assessed Chemistry 105 students’ ability to show clarity of ideas and sound support of assertions; their students demonstrated proficiency in the first area but not in the second. Chemistry instructors plan to clarify assignment requirements and student expectations. Developmental English focused on English 099 classes, gathered writing samples from multiple classes, and assessed those samples for numerous facets of communication ability. As observed within the assessment, these students needed improvement in critical reading and interpretation, as well as evidence of revision. These results were used as a basis to revise the Master Course Outline and clarifying conversations among Developmental English faculty. English assessed English 101 students in their ability to show an understanding of MLA format using a standardized quiz; the sample size was small for the optional quiz, so the small data set yielded inconclusive results. While Developmental English and English had limited results this year, their assessment methods were greatly improved from previous years. Foreign Language assessed Spanish 121 students’ ability to write a unique paragraph in the target language. Ninety-five percent of students achieved the objective. With such a high proficiency, no changes were proposed and continued assessment of this area seems unnecessary.

Interpretation of this Gen Ed outcome is difficult with such a small sample of assessments in this area. With each discipline looking at different facets of communication, there is insufficient data to ascertain whether our students are communicating clearly and effectively across all disciplines and programs. Spanish students can write unique paragraphs in the Spanish language and Chemistry students can express themselves clearly. Those same Chemistry students need improvement on supporting assertions, and English 099 students need to improve critical reading and interpretation and evidence of revision. It is clear that larger sample sizes are needed that would be available if all sections of a course were assessed within a discipline and more disciplines were assessing this Gen Ed outcome.

General Education Outcomes #2 and #3: “Students will be able to reason mathematically” and “students will be able to solve problems by gathering, interpreting, combining and/or applying information from multiple sources,” respectively.

Not many departments look at Gen Ed outcome #2 (students will be able to reason mathematically). Math and Physics both assessed this outcome by looking at specific problem areas for students in their courses.

Both looked to provide more resources and change the method of instruction for these topics and found that further investigation is needed because of a skewed sample in winter 2017 due to weather conditions that impacted student attendance. Math made changes that might have impacted the results found in Physics.

Seven departments, ranging from humanities to sciences, analyzed Gen Ed outcome 3 (students will be able to solve problems by gathering, interpreting, combining and/or applying information from multiple sources) in some of their courses. There were a variety of assessments ranging from research papers to lab reports to specific problems on exams. In general, we found that the assessments covered all of the components of the outcome: gathering, interpreting, combining, and applying information.

We found that some of the assessments had very clear meaning and details, but others were less clear and lacked specific data, an explanation of the process, and how they would close the loop. We found ourselves asking “What tools were being used to assess this?” and could not find supporting data to show the detail of the process. The assessment tools were listed, but not always explained in the narrative. For example, the tool was a lab assignment, but there was no indication of what part of the lab or what specific information was used in the assessment. Part of this is due to the fact that our prior understanding of the assessment process was built more around benchmarks and less about learning outcomes. Fundamentally, there seemed to be a disconnect between what was assessed in courses and the purpose of the assessment report. In general, we can see an improvement from the 2015/16 reports to the 2016/17 reports. Now that the process is clearer, we are working towards a more cohesive, campus-wide approach to reporting assessment and how to use the results (closing the loop).

What we have interpreted from looking over these reports is that, while many departments were looking at Gen Ed outcomes #2 and #3, many reported on departmental/program changes and how those changes impacted student success across their curriculum. We do not know how this fits into the assessment process because of the way they were reported – they seem to assess learning, but the reports do not fit into a specific Gen Ed outcome. These assessments seem important and speak to the idea that sometimes closing the loop means improving the method we use to make assessments. There are many departments and classes that are assessing the same outcomes and it could be beneficial to have more formal conversations about student success across multiple disciplines. This leads us to believe that there is a need for more communication between departments and programs that could be better facilitated by the institution. Time is a factor, not only to have the conversations, but also to implement ideas.

General Education Outcome #4: “Students will be able to recognize or articulate personal/interpersonal aspects of, or connections between, diverse cultural, social, or political contexts.”

Three courses assessed this outcome in different ways. Two of the courses embedded the diversity assessment in parts of an assignment. While they both found that students reached a benchmark, there was very little information to evaluate the quality of the assessment and to draw conclusions regarding students’ preparedness related to this outcome. The third class provided no information to allow us to interpret results. We need more narrative and description of the assessment and how it directly ties to student learning at the General Education and Course Outcome levels. With the current narrative, one cannot determine the logical next steps.

We feel this is an important and relevant outcome that could specifically be tied to our diversity course requirement recently approved for the AAS (DTA). We are in the process of determining the criteria used to evaluate which courses would fit this requirement. Faculty who evaluate this outcome and believe that our General Education Diversity Requirement is relevant to their course could use their assessment to justify their course being selected as a diversity course. Their assessment could also be used to further validate

that their course is meeting the requirements. However, this can only be done with more a detailed assessment and possibly some standard assessment rubrics for this outcome.

General Education Outcome #5: “Students will be able to demonstrate teamwork, ethics, appropriate safety awareness and/or workplace specific skills.”

Workforce Education Assessment Summary

The following is an assessment summary for the Workforce Education programs at BBCC. This summary was based upon the submissions from each program in their annual assessment reports to the assessment committee. Reflected in this summary is the assessment committee’s effort to transition to the following three key indicators of outcome-based assessment: Gen Ed Outcomes, Program Outcomes, and Course Outcomes.

General Education Outcomes:

The primary Gen Ed outcome that Workforce Education programs support is outcome #5 (students will be able to demonstrate teamwork, ethics, appropriate safety awareness and/or workplace specific skills). All Workforce Education courses have this outcome in common, making it a valuable key indicator and assessment tool. In our review of each of the assessment reports against this outcome, the following three items were noted:

1. On a program level we were able to infer from the high level of success in the courses with certification testing that our students were meeting General Education/Related Instruction Outcome #5.
2. Certification testing is not an exclusive assessment tool shared by all programs in Workforce Education.
3. In the future, there needs to be a closer link between specific learning outcomes and Gen Ed Outcome #5.

Conclusion: The programs are making progress on linking course and program outcomes to a Gen Ed Outcome; however, it is incomplete at this time.

Program Outcomes:

On the program assessment level, three commonalities were found in the Nursing, Aviation, Aviation Maintenance Technology, and Medical Assistant reports.

1. We met or exceeded our goals for certifications.
2. There was no specific learning outcomes being addressed in these classes at a program level.
3. Closing the loop with assessment was very limited to non-existent, with the exception of Nursing.

Conclusion: Guided/Questions or a worksheet model of reports would help the assessment be more comprehensive and allow for a completion of the assessment loop at the program level.

Course Outcomes:

Course-level conclusions primarily were based on the assessment reports in two programs: Business/Accounting and Criminal Justice. In these, we found an active process of assessment taking place with the loop being closed, as demonstrated below.

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Workforce Education Assessment Conclusion:

This year marks a transition in the focus of the assessment committee's work with an emphasis on the three key outcome indicators: Gen Ed, Program and Course. The assessment summary of the Workforce Education programs reflects an attempt at standardization across various departments and disciplines on the campus. While the Workforce Education programs are diverse and the reports were only partially standardized during this transition, three conclusions were noted from this summary:

1. Programs with certification standards are meeting and exceeding their goals.
2. There is an overemphasis on arbitrary percentages of pass rates in certification that is not always clearly linked with meeting a specific learning outcome.
3. Assessment reports tend to be focused on strengths and could be better utilized to direct institutional planning if they validated areas needing improvement within courses and programs.

Indicator 2.2d Program Assessment

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