



**Northwest Commission on College and University (NWCCU)
Annual Update for WSQA
Academic Year 2015-2016
Due November 15, 2016**

College Name: Big Bend Community College

Contact Person: Valerie Parton

Contact Phone: 509.793.2371

Contact email: valeriep@bigbend.edu

Accreditation recommendations to the College and year of recommendation

2012 Full-scale evaluation recommendation

1. The evaluators recommend that the college document enhancement of student learning achievement which is informed and guided by systematic assessment of student learning (4.B.2), that the college develop an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment that documents student achievement of identified course, program, and degree learning outcomes. (4.A.3)

Actions taken by the college to address recommendations, as summarized by Ryann Leonard, Assessment Chair

Fall 2016, BBCC took a new look at assessment. The following describes the process we are following:

Assessment at Big Bend Community College

What is the purpose? Assessment provides continuous instructional improvement. It needs to be meaningful and not simply a check box activity. When we assess an outcome it needs to be connected to a bigger question or initiative. Further, assessment data should give you meaningful data to make instructional decisions. Much of this assessment work you are doing already.

With assessment we can produce positive change for our students on campus. We need to address accreditation standards but if we are doing assessment for continuous instructional improvement then likely we are covering accreditation.

Type of Outcome	Definition of Student Learning Outcomes
Course Learning Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discrete skills or knowledge that a student will master while taking a specific college course. ■ A learning outcome is what the student will know or be able to do as a result of taking the course.
Program/Degree Learning Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Broad sets of skills or knowledge that students will be able to show or demonstrate as a result of taking a set of courses and/or completing a degree/credential. ■ These outcomes are broader, fewer, and perhaps more abstract than specific hands-on tasks that may be represented by individual course outcomes.
General Education/ Related Instruction Learning Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Overarching knowledge or skills that students will be able to show or demonstrate after taking BBCC courses in different areas. ■ These outcomes are broad, cross curricular, and embedded in the requirements of the degree. ■ AAS degrees and certificates of 45 credits or more include outcomes in the areas of Human Relations, Communication and Computation.

Assessment Committee Activity #1

We need to decide how we define program and degree outcomes. There are three options that seem to exist out there. Which do we feel is the best model for our campus? Do we need to adopt different models for different programs?

1. Program outcomes = Degree outcomes
2. Program outcomes → Degree outcomes
3. Degree outcomes → Program outcomes

Assessment Committee Activity #2

Should we have discussions with our colleagues about what they are doing in their courses? Would this provide us a value of being able to help student connect the dots between courses? Should we be connecting dots across disciplines? Would this help us learn where students commonly struggle?

Assessment Committee Activity #3 – Operationalizing Assessment and Improving Reporting Forms

- 1) Generate a question about student learning as it applies to one of their classes.
- 2) Identify the applicable learning outcome (could be at the course, program, gen. ed. level or cover two of them simultaneously).

- 3) Determine what assessment activity you will implement to answer their question.
- 4) State a desired outcome, predict the results, state a hypothesis.
- 5) Identify potential actions that you may take if the results are deemed positive or negative. (It is good to think ahead of time How they are going to use the data, start thinking of the So What question from the beginning. If someone doesn't know what to do with the data once they have it, maybe they should consider asking a different question.)
- 6) Conduct the assessment activity.
- 7) Summarize and interpret the results.
- 8) State what action they will take as a result.
- 9) Share and discuss with colleagues your experience, conclusions and actions.

We could do this activity twice. One time each person would focus on something specific to one of their courses and address a course learning outcome. They could pick something simple that could be done in one or a few class sessions between committee meetings. They could do steps 1-5 in one meeting, do step 6 between meetings, and then do steps 7-8 at the next meeting. I'm sure the conversations about the process itself and how to be document/report out would be very rich.

The other time we conducted the activity we would focus on a gen. ed. outcome that all committee members could address in their courses. I think going through this process as a committee would be incredibly valuable in helping them draw conclusions about how to address the So What question and close the loop at the higher gen. ed. level. Then they could speak concretely about it with their peers.

Assessment Committee Activity #4 – Generate a Glossary of Terms

We should generate a glossary of terms that includes our definitions for assessment of student learning, program, general education, related instruction and any other relevant terms we agree upon. This document, in combination with the definitions we worked on yesterday, could be where we reference and state our interpretation of the NWCCU accreditation standards.

We also here want to address any specific departmental concerns about our definitions and ultimately have these approved by the whole faculty.

Improvement results

Faculty are beginning to use the new framework to develop assessment plans that result in program improvement rather than merely meeting a compliance deadline. The new process should be fully implemented by spring 2017.