

Monitoring Report to the  
Middle States Commission on Higher Education  
from  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF PHILADELPHIA  
Philadelphia, PA 19130

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Subject of the Monitoring Report:

Documentation that the College “has achieved and can sustain compliance with Standard 14, including but not limited to (1) implementation of a documented & sustained assessment process, in all programs, that uses multiple measures of sufficient quality to provide direct evidence of student achievement of key learning outcomes; (2) steps taken to promote a culture of assessment, including evidence of support and collaboration among faculty and administration in assessing student learning and responding to assessment results; and (3) evidence that student learning assessment information is shared and discussed with appropriate constituents and is used to improve teaching & learning.”

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## **Introduction**

Founded in 1964, Community College of Philadelphia is the only public institution of higher education in the city of Philadelphia. Since its founding, the College has served over 685,000 individuals and currently has an enrollment of over 34,000 students. The College serves a diverse, non-traditional population: approximately 76% of students are persons of color (53% African-American, 12% Hispanic, 10% Asian) and 53% are older than 25. A substantial portion of the College's students are low-income and first-generation students. Community College of Philadelphia offers more than 75 degree and certificate programs in Business, Humanities, Allied Health, Science, Technology and Social/Behavioral Sciences at the Main Campus, three Regional Centers and at various neighborhood sites. The College also provides special programs and support services that are tailored to the needs of our student population and designed to help students overcome obstacles to success. Approximately 73% of full-time students and 62% of all students receive some type of financial aid.

The 2014-2015 academic year has been one of significant change in leadership for the institution. The College welcomed a new president in July 2014. Two vice presidents (Institutional Advancement and Business and Finance) and a director for Institutional Research were appointed.

## **Overview**

In Summer 2014 the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) informed the College that it needed to provide a monitoring report to address concerns regarding compliance with Standard 14 (Assessment of Student Learning). The purpose of this report is to inform MSCHE of the current status of assessment efforts at Community College of Philadelphia.

The specific issues identified in the MSCHE action from June 2014 were:

(1) implementation of a documented and sustained assessment process, in all programs, that uses multiple measures of sufficient quality to provide direct evidence of student achievement of key learning outcomes; (2) steps taken to promote a culture of assessment, including evidence of support and collaboration among faculty and administration in assessing student learning and responding to assessment results; and (3) evidence that student learning assessment information is shared and discussed with appropriate constituents and is used to improve teaching and learning (Standard 14).

The College's approach to responding to the concerns of MSCHE is to move beyond compliance to fostering the climate and skills necessary to achieve excellence in assessment of student learning. The [College's plan](#) for MSCHE compliance was posted on the College's Middle States web page in Fall 2014. Faculty and administrators met to review the MSCHE action and to provide ideas for the response. Information about the College's approach was shared in the Academic Affairs newsletter ([Academically Speaking@CCP](#)), in multiple Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 semester meetings, and in sessions during the College's professional development weeks in August 2014 and January 2015. A draft of the monitoring report was posted for feedback in February 2015.

To create sustainable processes, a collaborative culture for assessment, and to share and use assessment information to improve teaching and learning, the College's focus has been on: (1) strengthening the processes for conducting assessments based on existing theoretical structures to improve teaching and learning; (2) creating an assessment design that links the multiple levels of assessment into a clear and coherent framework for improving student learning based on data and thoughtful analysis; (3) closing the loop by creating an annual cycle of assessment activities

guiding the process of assessment, analysis, interpretation and implementing changes; (4) improving institutional structures and interoffice collaboration for assessment, including adding staff and revising job responsibilities; (5) working collaboratively to support faculty in assessment of student learning, including assisting them in closing the loop; and (6) employing technology to streamline organization of assessment information, ensure accountability and provide access to information for all constituencies.

The College embraces the principle that assessing student learning outcomes is an organic process occurring in multiple contexts and at multiple levels. Consistent with the framework offered by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, the cumulative set of knowledge, skills, competencies and habits of mind are constructed from the lowest unit of learning objectives coalescing into program objectives and resulting in degree or certificate completion. Assessing the objectives at each level ensures curriculum alignment, program effectiveness and student learning. Concurrent with the assessment of program outcomes is the assessment of the core competencies of General Education.

Each program outcome is embedded in the courses which make up the program. Those program outcomes are at times embedded in single courses or in collections of multiple courses. The program faculty determine the set of skills and knowledge essential for program competence, and they decide in which courses students are expected to acquire those skills and knowledge sets. The courses are assessed as a standalone course or as part of a discipline; but also, they are assessed as a learning objective in the broader context of a program. Some courses are assessed for their General Education function.

To ensure that the assessment process is systematic and sustainable, an annual calendar of dates --“assessment-activities-due-dates” -- has been established (see Appendix A). The purpose of the calendar is to guide the process from the beginning stages of identifying the learning objectives and related purposes through the assessment activities and decisions about change. The process is designed to close the loop by driving the necessary changes for curriculum improvement.

The College revised guidelines and templates, updated the institution’s [assessment plan](#), and developed an [assessment manual](#) for faculty and staff. Academic Affairs made changes to the [guidelines for academic program audits](#) and for curriculum development and revision. A [Curriculum Assessment Team](#) (CAT), modeled on the College’s well established Curriculum Facilitation Team was created to add peer to peer support for assessment. Assessment work is highlighted as a new and permanent feature in the Academic Affairs newsletter, [Academically Speaking@CCP](#). Starting in Fall 2014, each issue includes a description of the assessment work of a particular program. The Office of Professional Development and the Faculty Center on Teaching and Learning ensured that assessment topics were included in their programming. An [assessment conference](#), a collaboration of the Faculty Center on Teaching and Learning, Office of Professional Development, Faculty Council on Education, and the Academic Assessment and Evaluation Office was added to the College’s January 2015 professional development week, and will be an annual spring semester event.

Position descriptions were changed to make assessment a clear part of the responsibilities of the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Coordinator of the Curriculum Facilitation Team. The Coordinator of the Curriculum Facilitation Team now works closely with the staff in the Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation to ensure that assessment is part

of the curriculum development and revision processes. Responsibility for the Institutional Research Office was moved from Finance and Planning to Academic Affairs. Now Institutional Research and the Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation include a team of assessment and research professionals who communicate closely and support each other in their work. A coordinator was hired to assist with academic program audits and other assessment tasks - more than tripling output in six months. These personnel changes provide a cost effective way of increasing the College's ability to manage and sustain assessment efforts. A Monitoring Report Work Group consisting of faculty and administrators was created to take a deeper, collaborative look at the College's monitoring report and overall assessment efforts (see Appendix B).

College faculty and administrators (see Appendix B) worked together to create an electronic repository for storing assessment documentation using SharePoint (the web application framework platform). Use of this repository and identification of faculty responsible for entry of information provides a sustainable vehicle for communicating assessment results to all College constituents. The SharePoint electronic repository also makes it easier to monitor progress in using assessment to improve teaching and learning and to share ideas across programs.

The College introduced new assessment activities and enhanced current assessment efforts. For example, the College started the assessment conference for faculty and staff and expanded the number of programs using direct assessment activities such as holistic readings, portfolios, and common embedded test items. The College continued existing course and institution level assessment practices and adhered to established plans for assessment and review of general education/core competency requirements. The Coordinator of the Curriculum Facilitation Team tracks compliance with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Chapter 335 requirements. For Fall 2014, 98% of these course level assessments were completed on time. All general

education/core competency requirements implemented in 2009 have been assessed at least once using direct evidence and indirect evidence, and, as planned in 2009, department heads started the process for review of the general education/core competency model. The work of faculty and administrators at the College related to Standard 14 is summarized in Appendix C and explained in more detail below.

### **Documented and Sustained Assessment Processes for Academic Courses and Programs**

Community College of Philadelphia has two types of assessment at the course level, Chapter 335 course level assessment and course level assessment of student learning outcomes (SLOs). The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania defines the requirements for Chapter 335 assessment. Each course must be assessed against the Commonwealth standards at least once every five years. The College added questions about course level SLOs to the [335 compliance form](#). The Coordinator of the Curriculum Facilitation Team works with the academic division deans to manage the process and reports on the status of compliance each semester. As demonstrated during the Visiting Team visit, the College's compliance rate by semester has been above 90% for many years. The compliance rate for Fall 2014 is 98%.

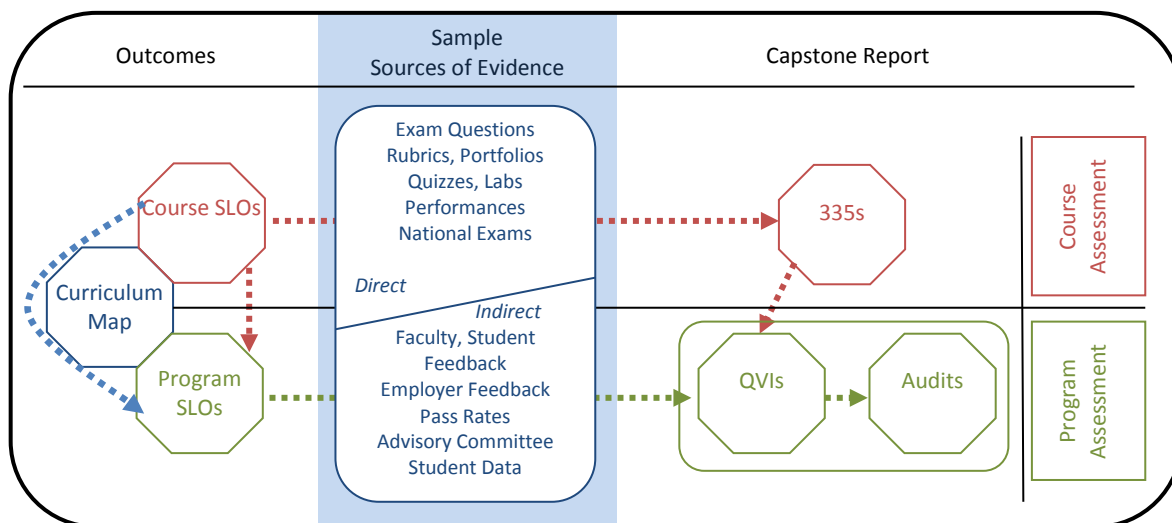
Department faculty define course level SLOs and the SLOs are published on the syllabus provided to students. Department faculty work collaboratively to identify assessment tools and the timeframe for assessment, with all course level SLOs planned for completion in time for the five-year 335 assessment. Academic deans are responsible for making sure that course level assessments are created, use direct assessment tools, and that results are used to improve teaching and learning. The Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation has been added to the process (see Appendix A) to intervene for support if department faculty are not using quality assessments or need assistance interpreting results. Effective Spring 2015, departments are



responsible for submitting documentation in the College’s SharePoint electronic repository. Use of the repository makes it easier to review and assist faculty with assessment.

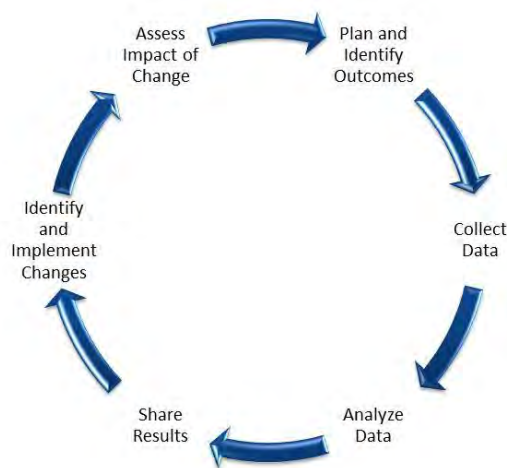
The Community College of Philadelphia has three categories of assessment at the program level: program assessment of student learning outcomes, annual academic program review, and full academic program audits. The process for program level assessment of student learning was defined in 2009. College faculty and administrators developed a model for assessment that included course assessment, program assessment and general education/core competency assessment. The process for assessment at all levels is now described in more detail in an [assessment manual](#), distributed to all faculty and administrators in Academic Affairs. Course level assessments, assessment of program student learning outcomes, annual program reviews using the [Quality/Viability Indicators](#) (QVI) rubric, and full academic certificate and degree program audits, are linked by design (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1 – Course/Program Assessment**



At the course, program and institution (general education/core competency) levels, the College uses a cycle of planning, gathering information, analyzing information, and implementing changes as part of the assessment process (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Assessment Cycle (Closing the Loop)**



### Program Level Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

At the program level, program faculty are responsible for developing assessment plans for the assessment of student learning outcomes. This responsibility includes identifying program learning goals, identifying how the goals are met using a curriculum map, identifying the assessment tools that will be used, creating a timeline for assessment, and analysis and decisions based on outcomes to close the loop and improve teaching and learning.

The first step in documenting the commitment of all academic programs to the assessment process and cycle was to understand the status of each program's work. During Summer 2014, the academic deans and the Director of Academic Assessment and Evaluation did a triage of programs based on documentation that the academic divisions had on file. Programs were grouped into three tiers:

Tier 1: Completed the cycle of assessment of program learning outcomes with direct evidence

Tier 2: Partial completion of assessment of program outcomes with direct evidence

Tier 3: No evidence of completing the cycle of assessment of program learning outcomes

The Vice President for Academic Affairs held meetings with faculty and administrators in tiers two and three, respectively, during the fall semester. The meetings included: (1) review of the meaning of direct and indirect assessment; (2) review of surveys from 2008 and 2013 on the assessment culture at the College; (3) expectations for collaboration, communication to all constituencies, and use of results to improve teaching and learning; (4) importance of documentation; (5) identification of resources and support available to assist programs. Faculty and administrators from the programs in each tier attended the meetings.

To assist the Director of Academic Assessment and Evaluation in supporting faculty in their program assessment work, the College created a [Curriculum Assessment Team](#) (CAT). The CAT is modeled after the College's successful and long standing Curriculum Facilitation Team (CFT). The faculty members selected for CAT have expertise and experience in assessment of student learning outcomes at both the program and course level. The Director of Academic Assessment and Evaluation conducted an orientation for team members and provided guidance. Similar to the Curriculum Facilitation Team process, the CAT members work directly with faculty in disciplines other than their own to guide them through the process of data gathering, analysis and documentation of assessment efforts in courses and programs. In Fall 2014, CAT team members were matched with programs based on the team member's understanding of the types of assessment most frequently used by the disciplines. CAT members also worked on the creation of the College's SharePoint electronic repository. In Spring 2015 the CAT was expanded and members will assist the Director of Academic Assessment and Evaluation in

helping faculty with review of outcomes, identifying additional quality assessment tools, and supporting use of assessment results to close the loop and improve teaching and learning.

The CAT brings a strategy familiar to Community College of Philadelphia faculty to enhance our assessment work. Both teams, Curriculum Facilitation and CAT, now work to ensure that assessment is a clear expectation as faculty develop and revise courses and programs and then engage in the assessment processes identified. Unlike the Curriculum Facilitation Team, where members stay on the team as long as they want and as long as they perform effectively, the plan for the CAT is to limit the time for participation to two years so that a greater number of faculty has the opportunity to engage in assessment support of peers, expanding the level of assessment work and expertise throughout the faculty.

To help faculty and staff understand the College's approach to assessment of student learning at the course, program and institution levels, Academic Affairs created a [manual](#) and sent it to all faculty and staff in Academic Affairs electronically. The manual includes templates to assist faculty and staff with understanding and tracking of assessment information.

In September 2014 a team of faculty and staff started working collaboratively to create an electronic repository for documents using SharePoint. The SharePoint electronic repository provides a user-friendly environment for storing and sharing assessment outcomes with a goal of closing the loop to improve teaching and learning. Representatives from the academic divisions were trained to input existing data. By February, 100% of programs (excluding programs closed by Board action) had academic certificate and degree program level evidence entered in the SharePoint repository library. Based on the College's Self Study and the recommendation of the Visiting Team, proficiency certificate information is being added to the repository as it becomes

available. By February all but six proficiency certificates were also included. More than 60 faculty members, representatives of every department, volunteered to enter data on an ongoing basis. An advantage of using the SharePoint electronic repository is that reports can be created to review documentation. The first report generated in February 2015 showed there were 269 assessment reports on 188 distinct program outcomes dating back to Spring 2011. The timeline for assessment includes review of documentation at least twice a year (see Appendix A). Deans are responsible for enforcing program requirements and have been informed that meeting program level assessment requirements will be a factor in their annual performance review. Additionally, department heads were informed during a meeting in Fall 2014 that programs that do not comply with the requirements cannot continue to be supported by the College.

### Annual Program Review and Full Program Audits

#### Annual Program Review

College faculty and administrators created the [Quality/Viability Indicators](#) (QVI) rubric for annual program review. By using the QVI as the basis for program revision, the faculty and academic administrators are able to: (1) ensure curriculum relevancy; (2) ensure achievement of student enrollment goals, teaching and learning goals, and programmatic goals; (3) evaluate the assessment of course and program outcomes and assessment practices; (4) assist in meeting compliance standards and requirements; (4) recognize program strengths; and, (5) yield recommendations for program improvements, changes, and (in some cases) termination. Further, completing the QVIs on an annual basis means the College is in compliance with the Commonwealth's requirement that all programs be reviewed at least once every five years. The QVI development process and model were presented at a national assessment conference by the

Director of Academic Assessment and Evaluation, and has been adopted as a model by other institutions. Effective 2010-2011, each academic program was required to complete a QVI. Additionally, each program is required to identify student learning outcomes at the program level and is required to develop a plan for assessment of program level outcomes. Each program level outcome is assessed once during a five-year program audit cycle. Compliance has been 100% for submission of the QVI. Programs that do not comply with the requirements will not continue to be supported by the College. The next QVIs are due summer 2015, and programs will be required to submit information in the SharePoint electronic repository. In Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, programs were required to submit their assessment plans for the semester. Starting in the Summer 2015, these submissions will be included annually with the QVI.

The program development and revision process is coordinated by the College's Curriculum Facilitation Team. The Curriculum Facilitation Team is composed of faculty who assist their colleagues with course and program development and revision. The College's program development and revision documents include required statements of program level outcomes. The documents also require a curriculum map that shows how program level outcomes are achieved in courses across the program. The College enhanced the Curriculum Facilitation Team's emphasis on assessment of student learning outcomes. First, the position description for the coordinator of the Curriculum Facilitation Team was revised to increase the requirement for assisting faculty with assessment and collaborating with the Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation. The new Coordinator has been working closely with staff in the Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation to ensure coordination of efforts as curricula are revised or created. Second, the Coordinator works with the faculty on the Curriculum Facilitation Team and the Director of Academic Assessment and Evaluation to revise the College's curriculum models to

clarify and strengthen the expectations for assessment, in support of curricular revision. The final versions of the revisions were approved in January 2015 for immediate implementation.

### Full Academic Audits

At least once every five years, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires colleges and universities to audit each academic certificate and degree program. The College process includes completion of the audit by program faculty in conjunction with staff in the Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation. Audits include alignment of program mission and College mission, student demographics and outcomes (e.g., enrollment, persistence), information from multiple Quality/Viability Indicators (QVIs), summary information from program level student learning outcomes, program curriculum map, and recommendations for improvement or elimination. Audits are then reviewed by the Academic Affairs Council (Academic Affairs administrators). Audits approved at that level are sent to the Student Outcomes Committee of the Board for review (see Figure 3). The Student Outcomes Committee trustees make recommendations to the full Board of Trustees. The Board may act to approve the program for up to five years, require a follow up report, or eliminate a program. Program faculty then discuss the findings and work on the identified strategies for improvement.

**Figure 3 – Audit Process Flow**



In Fall 2010, the academic audit model was revised to require a description and results of assessments of student learning outcomes at the course and program level, as well as information about changes made to improve teaching and learning based on the assessment results. As noted in the 2014 Team Report (p. 36), the completion of audits was behind schedule; and, as noted by

the College in the 2014 Self-Study, while academic certificates (those with 30 or more credits and some general education requirements) and degrees were included in the audit cycle, proficiency certificates (those with fewer than 30 credits and no particular general education requirements), were not. The 2014 Team Report (p. 19) identified staffing of the Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation as a concern and potential factor in the completion of audits. To address these concerns, a plan was developed to strengthen the relationship between the Offices of Institutional Research and Academic Assessment and Evaluation so staff in both offices could support each other. The Institution Research Office moved from reporting to the Vice President for Finance and Planning to reporting to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The interim director of Institutional Research was appointed as the permanent director, and worked with the Director of Academic Assessment and Evaluation to create a staffing plan that increases resources and support for both areas. A new employee, coordinator of assessment, was hired for the Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation in September 2014. The Director of Academic Assessment and Evaluation now has a second person to work on the College's assessment processes. In Fall 2014 the [audit schedule](#) was revised to add the proficiency certificates to the schedule and to make sure audits were up-to-date. A five-year audit schedule was created. The 2014-2015 audit timeline is on schedule to date. While the schedule is aggressive for 2014-2015, staffing, reduction in the number of programs and aligning certificate and degree audits make it possible to coordinate audits in a manageable way. In 2012-2013, the College completed 15 academic audits through the level of Board action; in 2013-2014, during a leadership transition, the College completed two academic audits through the level of Board action. In 2014-2015, the College is on target to complete all of the audits needed to meet the goal of auditing programs every five years. For example, through February, the Board of



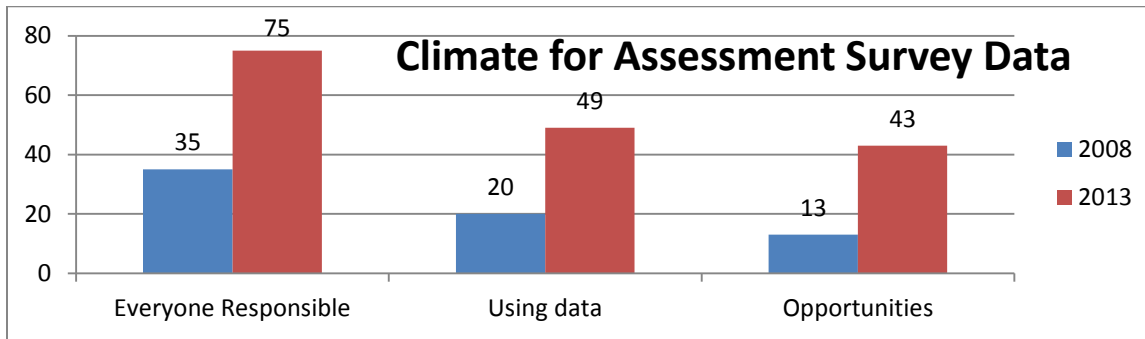
Trustees acted on 10 audits, including audits of proficiency certificates. In February the Student Outcomes Committee of the Board acted on an additional nine audits which will be presented to the Board for action at the April Board of Trustees meeting.

To summarize, the College has established a tenable assessment infrastructure and has begun implementing continuous procedures by revising expectations, enhancing existing processes, and using current successful approaches to create a sustainable approach to assessment. A [manual](#) was created to assist faculty and staff in understanding and implementing the College's assessment processes and requirements. The manual also clarifies who is responsible for assessment work. A staff person was added to the Academic Assessment and Evaluation Office, the Curriculum Assessment Team (CAT) was created and the SharePoint electronic repository was created for storage and dissemination of information. The CAT, working with the Academic Assessment and Evaluation Office staff, has worked to help faculty understand the interrelatedness of program and course assessment. Through the SharePoint electronic repository, faculty and administrators have an easier way of tracking progress.

### **A Culture of Assessment**

In 2008 the College used a survey developed by education consultant Maggie Culp to measure the climate for assessment at colleges and universities. Maggie Culp gave permission for the College to use the survey a second time to find out if there was an improvement in the climate. The survey was administered again in 2013. The greatest improvements were in: believing everyone is responsible for assessment, using data to strengthen courses and programs, and believing there are opportunities to identify assessment skills and update them (see Figure 4). While the data showed improvement, it was also clear that we need to continue working to engage all faculty and administrators so that they are fully invested in the culture of assessment.

**Figure 4 – Survey Data**



The College’s approach to addressing the issue of fostering a culture of assessment since our 2014 Self Study started with the meetings with faculty in programs that fell into Tiers 2 and 3 to clarify the MSCHE action and expectations. Faculty and administrators responded positively to the challenge of demonstrating a commitment to improve teaching and learning using assessment information. A Monitoring Report Work Group, comprised of six faculty and two administrators, was created. The Monitoring Report Work Group’s task was to review all prior reports to MSCHE since the 2004 Self Study and all MSCHE responses, review follow up report requirements, and review additional information on assessment. The goal was to work collaboratively to ensure that the monitoring report was accurate and addressed the concerns of MSCHE.

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, a faculty-driven professional development resource, included assessment sessions on their schedule, as did the Office of Professional Development. The Faculty Council on Education partnered with the Office of Assessment and Evaluation, the Faculty Center on Teaching and Learning, and the Office of Professional Development to create and host a faculty conference on assessment during the College’s professional development week in January 2015. Faculty responded enthusiastically with

submissions for consideration. There were 15 presentations, all but one by College faculty. The Director of Academic Assessment and Evaluation gave a keynote address during lunch and there were seven discussion roundtables in the afternoon. The conference was open to the entire College community. More than 100 individuals, primarily faculty, attended. A survey of 92 individuals who pre-registered for the conference showed most (78%) reported that communication about assessment had improved since the reaccreditation process and most agreed that the College was creating a culture of assessment (90%). An area for improvement based on the survey was making sure people understand the resources the College is providing to support them in their assessment work (only 66% reported that the College is assisting them in developing the skills needed to do assessment). Many presenters at the conference have agreed to repeat their presentations during the Spring 2015 semester through the Faculty Center on Teaching and Learning, so members of the College community who were unable to attend in January have a second opportunity to hear some of the presentations. [Powerpoints from the presentations](#) are posted on the Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation web site. An assessment conference will be an annual spring semester event.

The Academic Affairs newsletter, [Academically Speaking @ CCP](#), added a permanent “Assessment Showcase” to highlight assessment work in Academic Affairs. Programs featured in the first four issues were: Art and Design, Chemistry, Automotive Technology, and Communication Studies.

For many years, every meeting of the department heads has included assessment on the agenda. In the past, the focus of the assessment discussions in department head meetings was on general education. During Fall 2014, department heads also had an opportunity to discuss work by programs in their departments for program level assessment, and they received updates on the

development of the SharePoint electronic repository. Thus, the department meetings became an ongoing vehicle for expanding attention to assessment at the program level. It is the responsibility of the department heads to consistently update faculty in their department on all departmental matters. Department heads share information from the department head meetings with their faculty so that department faculty can inform decisions made by department heads .

Beyond the faculty, assessment has been included in discussions by the Academic Affairs Council, program advisory committees, President's Cabinet, and Board of Trustees. Each of those groups also was made aware of the SharePoint electronic repository for assessment information. The Board of Trustees also heard presentations by faculty about their assessment work during the Board meetings in October and November.

Students have had opportunities to engage in the conversation about assessment. At the Fall 2014 meeting that the president hosted with student leaders from the Student Government Association and from student clubs, the students were asked to provide input on the best ways to make students more aware of assessment information. Their suggestions included putting the information on syllabi and including information in the student handbook. Department heads were informed of their suggestions. During the department head meeting on January 29<sup>th</sup>, department heads anonymously completed a checklist from the new assessment manual on the status of assessment in their departments. Results from the checklists showed some department heads said they are including program learning outcomes on syllabi. The Vice President for Student Affairs agreed to add information to the handbook. Also in January 2015, the Vice President for Academic Affairs met with students in two art classes to get ideas for communicating about assessment in a visual format. Student feedback will be used to revise the

poster the College has been using to communicate the general education/core competencies that are required for degree students.

The use of technology is a key strategy for increasing the culture of assessment at the College. SharePoint was identified as a cost effective tool for storing and sharing assessment information. The repository has “read-only” access for all constituencies. Point persons have been identified for entry of documentation. More than 60 faculty volunteered to input documentation. This is in addition to faculty and staff who have been entering historical documentation. The reaction to the SharePoint repository is so positive that it will be expanded to include assessment from other areas of the College and expanded to link to the budget process.

In summary, the College has made significant sustainable strides in helping the College community understand and embrace the importance of having a culture of assessment and having faculty and administrators work collaboratively on assessment processes. From meetings, to written materials, to a new conference, assessment is at the forefront of the work of faculty and administration at the College.

### **Sharing of Assessment of Student Learning and Use to Improve Teaching and Learning**

An Institution Wide Assessment Committee (IWAC) was created in 2011-2012 with the following goals:

- Facilitate the achievement of consistency and alignment across the College for assessment efforts (including development of standardized documentation procedures)
- Facilitate college-wide use of metrics for continuous improvement
- Identify and assist in the establishment of best practices in the use of assessment for institutional improvement
- Monitor college-wide efforts to help ensure a cohesive and comprehensive assessment effort across the College
- Develop recommendations for needed resource allocations to achieve college-wide assessment goals.

In 2013, a web page was introduced that organized assessment documents according to the *Characteristics of Excellence* standards. The goal was to have a one-stop location for assessment information and to reinforce the organization of information around MSCHE Standards. Also in 2013, the IWAC was reorganized into three subcommittees: Institution Review Board (for review of internal and external research proposals), Data Standards (for standardizing terminology and processes), and Data Collaborative (to address external requests for data sharing). As noted in the 2014 Team Report (p. 35), the use of IWAC to “bring staff and leadership together to coordinate ongoing assessment” was not having much success. The Steering Committee for IWAC met in Fall 2014 under the new Director for Institutional Research. Under her leadership, there have been ongoing meetings of College report writers for the Data Standards subcommittee. The IRB and Data Collaborative subcommittees meet as required based on external and internal requests. The IWAC is considered part of the organizational structure for the College’s SharePoint electronic repository. The College has moved away from the IWAC repository to the new SharePoint electronic repository as an easier way for stakeholders to submit, review, share and track information about assessment.

The SharePoint electronic repository is a key part of the College strategy for sharing information about assessment of student learning. Our goal is to be proactive in responding to information and not just to gather the information. A review of documentation entered in the SharePoint electronic repository shows faculty and administrators are using assessment to improve teaching and learning. The report on SharePoint information in February showed 100% of existing academic certificate and degree programs had entered assessment information. There were 269 assessment reports dating back to Spring 2011, with 188 distinct program learning outcomes. The report showed 260 changes made to improve teaching and learning. Reports on

information in SharePoint make it possible for administrators and faculty to work together to ensure use of multiple quality assessments.

The First Annual Faculty Conference provided an opportunity to showcase assessment practices at the College for a broad audience of stakeholders. The College community also is using more traditional means for sharing assessment information including an enhanced [web site](#) for the Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation, the Academic Affairs newsletter, professional development sessions, and meetings, including meetings of external stakeholders such as the College Foundation Board and program advisory committees. The result is a more focused, seamless approach to assessment at all levels of the teaching-learning-administrative endeavors of the College.

### **Assessment at the Course and Institutional Levels**

While engaged in revising and adding new processes related to program assessment, the College continued assessment at the course and institutional levels. Course level assessments to improve teaching and learning, continued timely completion at a rate of 98% for Fall 2014. The rate has been above 90% for many years. This process continues to be monitored and tracked successfully by the Coordinator of the Curriculum Facilitation Team. The process includes identifying changes for teaching and learning at the course level. Course level information has been entered in the SharePoint electronic repository, making the tracking and sharing of information even easier.

At the institution level, all [general education/core competency requirements](#) were assessed using direct and indirect evidence at least once during the planned five-year cycle (2009-2014). As stated in the 2014 Team Report (p.29), “Assessment reports show evidence that general

education assessments are planned, organized, and produce results that raised some useful questions for further assessment progress.” The College goal was to continue our organized approach to institutional assessment even as we expanded our approach to evidence at the program and course levels. Thus, department heads (who serve as a general education/core competency committee) continue to make decisions about improving outcomes as appropriate. The cycle of assessment continues as department heads work on assessment of the general education/core competency model. In Fall 2014 department heads reviewed outcomes for Scientific Reasoning, approved an indirect assessment of Scientific Reasoning using the College’s Student Evaluation of Teaching process, and made a final decision about improving critical thinking by working on changes to Interpretive Studies courses that do not intentionally include critical thinking expectations.

### **Summary/Conclusion**

The College is working diligently to demonstrate that there is a serious and unified commitment to assessment of student learning, not just for compliance, but to achieve a level of excellence reflective of our mission. The College’s focus has been on: (1) strengthening the processes for conducting assessments based on existing theoretical structures to improve teaching and learning; (2) creating an assessment design that links the multiple levels of assessment into a clear and coherent framework for improving student learning based on data and thoughtful analysis; (3) closing the loop by creating an annual cycle of assessment activities guiding the process of assessment, analysis, interpretation and implementing changes; (4) improving institutional structures and interoffice collaboration for assessment, including adding staff and revising job responsibilities; (5) working collaboratively to support faculty in assessment of student learning, including assisting them in closing the loop; and (6) employing



technology to streamline organization of assessment information, ensure accountability and provide access to information for all constituencies. Assessment is being used in a systematic way to improve student learning outcomes. Student learning outcomes are used to monitor course and program effectiveness and to identify and implement strategies for improvement. Our monitoring report addresses each of the three issues raised by MSCHE and demonstrates a sustainable and collaborative approach to assessment.

Appendix A: Timeline for Course, Program & General Education/Core Competency Assessment

Month	Course	Program	Institution
August		AAE review/publish guides	AAE review/publish guides
September	Review/decisions on Spring SLOs New SLO plans to VPAA CFT-335s due Fall	QVI & Spring SLO review/decisions SLO plans to VPAA SOC acts on audits	Publish Annual Gen/Ed outcomes & Plan Board acts on audits
October	AAE review/intervene SLOs	AAE review/intervene SLOs SOC review QVI info SOC acts on audits	Gen/Ed Review & Decisions Board acts on audits
November	Implement Fall assessments	Implement Fall assessments SOC acts on audits	Gen/Ed Review & Decisions Board Acts on Audits
December	Fall SLOs completed Fall 335s completed	Complete Fall assessment AAE update audit progress	Gen/Ed Assessment
January	Fall SLOs review/decisions CFT-335s due Spring SharePoint review	Review/decisions Fall assessment SharePoint entry review	Gen/Ed review & decisions SharePoint entry review
February	CFT Fall 335 update	SOC acts on audits	Gen/Ed Review & Decisions Board Acts on Audits
March			Gen/Ed Review & Decisions
April	Implement Spring assessment	Implement Spring assessment SOC acts on audits	Gen/Ed Assessment Board Acts on Audits
May		AAE update audit progress SOC acts on audits	Gen/Ed Review & Decisions Board Acts on Audits
June	SharePoint entry review	QVI due to dean SharePoint entry review SOC acts on audits	Gen/Ed Review & Decisions Board Acts on Audits

AAE – Office of Academic Assessment & Evaluation

SOC – Student Outcomes Committee

CFT = Curriculum Facilitation Team

## Appendix B: The Monitoring Report Work Group and SharePoint Teams

### **Monitoring Report Work Group Co Chairs:**

Abbey Wexler, Chair, Psychology, Education & Human Services Department  
Judith Gay, Vice President for Academic Affairs

### **Monitoring Report Work Group Committee Members:**

Viki Kellar, Assistant Professor, Foreign Languages Department (Fall 2014)  
Joseph Kenyon, Assistant Professor, English Department  
John Moore, Director of Academic Assessment & Evaluation  
Cory Ng, Assistant Professor, Business Administration Department  
Margaret Stephens, Associate Professor, Social Sciences Department  
Charlene Truex, Assistant Professor, Dental Studies Program, Allied Health Department

### **SharePoint Co-Chairs**

John Moore, Director of Academic Assessment and Evaluation  
Laura Temple, Assoc. Director for Business Intelligence  
Sharon Thompson, Assoc. Vice President for Academic Affairs & Dean of Liberal Studies

### **SharePoint Team Members**

Amy Birge, Coordinator, Curriculum Facilitation Team, Associate Professor, English  
Deirdre Garrity Benjamin, Assistant Professor, Social Science Department  
Miles Grosbard, Chair Architecture, Construction & Design Department  
Christine McDonnell, Coordinator for Academic Assessment  
Marian McGorry, Assistant Dean for Business & Technology  
Marge Niven, Assistant Dean for Liberal Studies  
Abbey Wexler, Chair, Psychology, Education & Human Services Department

Appendix C: Summary of College Response

<b>Response</b>	<b>Issue 1</b>	<b>Issue 2</b>	<b>Issue 3</b>
Timeline	X	X	X
Revised Guidelines	X		X
Revised Audit Plan	X		
Staff/Job Descriptions	X		
Electronic repository	X	X	X
CAT	X	X	
Assessment manual	X		X
Report workgroup		X	
Conference		X	X
Prof. Development		X	X
Newsletter showcase		X	X
Meeting minutes		X	X
New Web Page		X	X

Issue 1: Implementation of a documented & sustained assessment process, in all programs, that uses multiple measures of sufficient quality to provide direct evidence of student achievement of key learning outcomes

Issue 2: Steps taken to promote a culture of assessment, including evidence of support and collaboration among faculty and administration in assessing student learning and responding to assessment results

Issue 3: Evidence that student learning assessment information is shared and discussed with appropriate constituents and is used to improve teaching & learning.