

# Building a Culture of Student Learning Assessment

This document focuses on providing contextual information about student learning assessment at Lane as well as information about strategies and actions we are working on for developing a more systematic approach to assessment.

## Goals

- Hold campus-wide conversations to promote collaboration and get feedback on a student learning assessment plan;
- Determine current and ongoing professional development and training needs focused on student learning assessment;
- Create foundational strategies and professional development for mapping Core Learning Outcomes across the curriculum;
- Finalize a student learning assessment plan;
- Promote excellence in teaching and learning on campus;
- Maintain/exceed Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU); accreditation standards for student learning outcomes and assessment.

## Context

**Lane is committed to *transforming lives through learning* by providing a quality educational environment.** To accomplish this mission, LCC prepares students for success in a variety of capacities: in completion of programs, degrees, and certificates; in preparation for transfer; in pursuit of lifelong learning; and in engagement as citizens of local and global communities. Ensuring quality educational experiences is an ongoing process, and this assessment plan is meant to be the first step in laying a foundation for continued collaboration and success around teaching and learning.

**Student learning assessment transcends grading**—assigning value to a particular piece of student work or overall student performance in a course—and involves cyclical conversations around numerous factors that are connected to, and give evidence of, student learning:

- The design and articulation of course- and program-level student learning outcomes;
- The creation of supplemental materials that clearly articulate these outcomes to students;
- The development of shared assignments and evaluation rubrics that will facilitate the collection and assessment of student learning;
- The interpretation of data generated through artifact assessment;
- The examination of indirect measures of student learning, such as surveys, grades, completion and persistence data;
- The mapping of course and program level outcomes to Core Learning Outcomes (CLOs) to facilitate the assessment of general education outcomes.

Over the past decade, Lane has made steady improvement on broader engagement of faculty with student learning assessment practices. Much of this work has been promoted by the faculty-led Assessment Team, which has established a structure for professional development, and the college has provided funding and support for collaborative assessment projects and fellowships. These efforts

have helped to promote assessment within a number of departments and disciplines, but have not yet resulted in campus-wide collaboration to establish a system of assessment.

Thus, we aim to involve the campus community in drawing from the assessment work currently being done in pockets on campus to create the structures and processes through which we will create a culture of assessment at Lane.

**At its basic level, assessment includes:**

- **Defining/refining** student learning outcomes, which occurs at the course, program/discipline, and Core Learning Outcomes (CLO) levels;
- **Evaluating** student achievement of learning outcomes;
- **Reflecting and making changes** based on evidence (closing the loop);
- **Reporting** and sharing results within programs/departments but also broadly across divisions and within governance structures to ensure continued transparency.

## Guiding Principles

Assessment of student learning is a faculty-driven process, honoring academic freedom, faculty responsibility for the curriculum, and shared governance. Assessment of student learning is a continual cycle of improvement that includes systematic review and analysis of learning outcomes and data, the results of which are used to improve student performance and ensure a quality learning environment.

**Assessment of student learning:**

- Is the responsibility of all faculty
- Is a collaborative process between faculty, staff, and administration
- Focuses on student success through clearly articulated learning outcomes and continuous reflection, evaluation, and improvement
- Is central to the curriculum
- Is meaningful, measurable, and sustainable
- Is embedded into college processes such as
- Academic Program Review, FPD, department planning, financial planning, and strategic planning, and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee
- Requires ongoing and sufficient resources devoted to supporting assessment work and
- creating professional development opportunities
- Requires transparency and communication of results to the campus community

**Lane's Core Learning Outcomes (CLOs) articulate our values for student learning**

Each CLO includes dimensions that further articulate each outcome. View the CLOs and dimensions on the Assessment website at <https://www.lanecc.edu/assessment/core-learning-outcomes>

1. **THINK** critically
2. **ENGAGE** diverse values with civic and ethical awareness
3. **CREATE** ideas and solutions
4. **COMMUNICATE** effectively
5. **APPLY** learning

## Strategies and Actions

This section outlines current strategies and actions currently being considered or underway in 2017 as we work to develop a long-term assessment plan and sustainable structures for capturing and reporting data.

### Focus on Curricular Coherence and Alignment of Learning Outcomes

The first step to creating an environment conducive to assessing student learning is to ensure that learning outcomes are measurable, observable, or demonstrable in some way. Course learning outcomes and expectations should be embedded in syllabi and connected to course assignments and activities. They should be communicated to students in multiple ways.

#### Action: Review and revise learning outcomes

- Collaborate with colleagues and discuss course and/or program learning outcomes at the department/discipline level
- Review/revise course-level learning outcomes
- Ensure outcomes are measurable, observable, demonstrable

### Curriculum Mapping to Core Learning Outcomes

**General Education:** One strategy for evaluating General Education is to develop measures for assessing high-enrolled courses that are taken by students entering into various academic programs or transfer areas. This should include students matriculating from both 100 and pre-100 level courses.

**Career Technical Education (CTE) Programs:** Many of Lane's career and technical programs have a core set of courses and electives students take. Student typically move through a program in a linear way or as a cohort each academic year. Additionally, career technical programs often align learning outcomes with external accrediting organizations or with industry or professional standards. Incorporating these standards and ensuring alignment allows CTE programs to show student attainment of learning goals relevant to a particular industry or profession.

**What is curriculum mapping?** Curriculum mapping is a process through which faculty:

- Develop a shared understanding of student learning outcomes at the course, program, and college level (CLOs)
- Begin conversations about thresholds for student performance
- Ensure coherence and cohesion within academic programs and in sections of the same Course
- Align course- or program-level outcomes with Core Learning Outcomes and specific assignments used to assess the outcomes (typically done using a spreadsheet, chart, or other visual means of indicating connections among outcomes and assignments)

#### Actions related to curriculum mapping

- Determine who already has curriculum maps
- Hold professional development workshops focused on mapping

- Work with faculty who teach in highly enrolled courses to: map course-level outcomes to CLOs, develop signature assignments focused on CLOs, design rubrics to assess CLOs in signature assignments, and collect and assess artifacts;
- Work with Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning (IRAP) to determine collection process for artifacts and the percentage of student work necessary to conduct a valid assessment project;
- Review and reflect on data generated via the evaluation of student work;
- Share results of assessment projects broadly throughout campus;
- Revise courses and curriculum based on results of assessment.

## Develop Reporting Structures and Systems

In order to facilitate more systematic assessment practices, we need to create better structures and systems that enhance how we communicate the results of assessment efforts. To support assessment work, members of the Assessment Team have been working on the following:

### **Curriculum Mapping System** (CMS under development)

- Enter curriculum map information into the CMS

### **Department assessment plans and reporting** (not yet developed)

- Develop common criteria for inclusion in basic assessment plans
- Create shared reporting structures

### **Academic Program Review Alignment** (in process)

- Embed/align assessment of student learning and outcomes review in the Academic Program Review process

# 2017-2022 Student Learning Assessment Plan

## Plan Contents

March 2017 Draft

1. Introduction
2. Executive Summary
3. Vision, Mission, Values, Core Themes
4. Planning Framework
  - a. Relationship to Strategic Plan, Institutional Effectiveness model, NWCCU accreditation standards
  - b. Integration with planning, stakeholder responsibilities
    - i. Annual department planning
    - ii. Academic program review
    - iii. Annual curriculum review and development
5. National and Regional Context
  - a. National assessment efforts/research/forecast
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6. Strategies for 2017-2022
7. Appendices
  - a. Implementation plan
  - b. Synthesis of work completed 2016-17
    - i. From program review
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    - iii. A-Team funded projects and distribution of CLO analysis
    - iv. Spring conference reports
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  - c. Links and resources