BUILDING A CULTURE OF ASSESSMENT:
INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT FOR IMPROVEMENT

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WELCOME!

- Who do we have with us today?
- Where are you in your local accreditation cycle?
- What are you hoping to take away from today’s session?
The National Institute of Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) conducted its third national survey of institution-level assessment practices in 2017. Among other findings, they note that:

- Assessment continues to be driven by both **compliance** and **improvement**, with an emphasis on equity.

- Institution-level assessment results are regularly used for compliance and improvement purposes, addressing accreditation and external accountability demands along with internal improvement efforts.

- Institutions are trending towards greater use of authentic measures of student learning. (Rubrics, classroom-based performance assessments, and capstones.)

- Institutional needs for advancing assessment work have shifted since 2009 from engaging more faculty in assessing student learning to supporting faculty use of assessment results and wider stakeholder involvement.
The vast majority of institutions have statements of learning for all undergraduate students and growing numbers have aligned learning throughout the institution.

• Alignment of learning outcomes throughout the institution has increased since the 2013 survey, with 82% of respondents confirming their institution has established learning outcomes for all students.

• Half of all respondents reported that all of their programs have defined learning outcomes that also align with shared institution-wide statements of learning.

• Institutional respondents from ACCJC accreditation region were more likely than those from any other region to indicate that all programs had learning outcomes and that they align (81%)

• The more selective an institution, the less likely they were to have program learning outcomes that align (36%) while open-enrollment institutions were the most likely (53%).
• ACCJC Standards reflect a combination of the need for compliance and a commitment to institutional improvement.

• Standards touching on assessment/SLO compliance include: IB2, IB4, IB5, IB8, IC3, IC4, IIA1, IIA3, IIA9, IIA11, IIA12, IIA13.

• **Standard II.A.3.** The institution identifies and regularly assesses learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates and degrees using established institutional procedures. The institution has officially approved and current course outlines that include student learning outcomes. In every class section students receive a course syllabus that includes learning outcomes from the institution’s officially approved course outline.

• **Standard II.A.11.** The institution includes in all of its programs, student learning outcomes, appropriate to the program level, in communication competency, information competency, quantitative competency, analytic inquiry skills, ethical reasoning, the ability to engage diverse perspectives, and other program-specific learning outcomes.
Standards related to SLO/assessment improvement include: IB1, IB6, IIA16

- **Standard I.B.1.** The institution demonstrates a sustained, substantive and collegial dialog about student outcomes, student equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and **continuous improvement** of student learning and achievement.

- **Standard II.A.16.** The institution regularly evaluates and improves the quality and currency of all instructional programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, pre-collegiate, career-technical, and continuing and community education courses and programs, regardless of delivery mode or location. The institution systematically strives to **improve programs and courses to enhance learning outcomes** and achievement for students.

- Many assessment-related standards focus on compliance practices (programs have learning outcomes, the institution completes assessment for those outcomes, etc.) that are necessary to demonstrate a later emphasis on improvement (i.e. how those practices are used systematically to improve learning).
Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change. (AAHE Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Education, #8).

• How do we design good, reliable, data-driven assessment projects? (Assessment for Compliance)
• How do we develop valid assessment that leads to faculty conversation and improvement? (Assessment for Improvement)
PAUSE FOR DISCUSSION

• What aspects of compliance are most challenging on your campus?
• What strategies do you use to make assessment work visible and systematic?
• What are some strategies you use to make assessment meaningful—to move the conversation from compliance to improvement?
ABOUT COLLEGE OF THE SEQUOIAS

• We are a single-college District in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley, with our main campus in Visalia and Centers in Tulare and Hanford.

• COS is a mid-size California Community College District serving an average of about 15,000 students annually. In 2017-2018 COS enrolled ~16,500 students (headcount; ~10,000 FTES).

• COS is a Hispanic-Serving Institution with approximately 60% of students identifying as Hispanic. This is in-line with the regions we serve: Tulare County (62% Hispanic) and Kings County (53%).

• Overall District enrollment has grown by about 6% since 2011 – 2012, at about 1% enrollment growth each year.
• At COS, we have a full-time faculty coordinator for Curriculum & Outcomes Assessment.

• The O&A Coordinator is an Executive member of the Academic Senate, and also sits on the Instructional Council as an advisory member.

• The Outcomes and Assessment Committee, a subcommittee of the Academic Senate, has representatives from each academic Division, the Library, and the Research Office.

• The O&A Committee makes recommendations to the Senate related to assessment processes and procedures, provides training and events, and coordinates the assessment of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO).
Assessment, broadly defined, is embedded in all planning processes at COS.

SLO Assessment specifically for courses and programs is part of annual institutional program review reports, which require a summary of the previous year’s SLO (courses) and PLO (programs) assessment. This data can be used alongside other data sources as evidence for decision-making.
At COS we have five institutional learning outcomes, and our ILO assessment cycle loosely follows our planning processes; The O&A Committee plans and leads an assessment of one ILO each year.

In 2015 – 2016, we used surveys to assess our Communication ILO. We then applied what we learned to the development of survey items for all 5 ILOs.

In 2016 – 2017, we distributed the survey items and designed a rubric-based assessment of student work for the Research & Decision Making ILO.

In 2017 – 2018, we designed and conducted student focus groups for the Civic Engagement ILO.

For 2018 – 2019, we are designing case study activities and observations for the Critical Thinking ILO.
ILO ASSESSMENT DESIGN

2016 – 2017: Research and Decision Making

Students will locate and evaluate information, including diverse perspectives, to make informed and ethical decisions.

Survey Items:

• I can use information from the research resources available at COS to complete my assignments
• I consider multiple perspectives when evaluating information.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Meets: 3</th>
<th>Developing: 2</th>
<th>Evidence Not Present: 1</th>
<th>Not Addressed: 0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locate Information</td>
<td>The artifact includes information from a variety of sources appropriate to the relevant genre, discipline, and/or audience.</td>
<td>The artifact includes information from limited or similar research sources; sources are not always appropriate to the relevant genre, discipline, and/or audience.</td>
<td>The artifact includes information from few or no identifiable sources. Sources selected are inappropriate.</td>
<td>This artifact does not include any identifiable sources.</td>
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<td><strong>Score:</strong> ____________</td>
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<td>Evaluate Information</td>
<td>Information from sources is accompanied by enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are contextualized or questioned.</td>
<td>Information from sources is accompanied by some interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts may be contextualized but are taken mostly as fact.</td>
<td>Information is presented with little to no evaluation or interpretation. Viewpoints of experts are accepted without question or context.</td>
<td>This artifact does not include any identifiable sources.</td>
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<td><strong>Score:</strong> ____________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use Information to Make Informed Decisions</td>
<td>Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information to successfully achieve a clear purpose.</td>
<td>Communicates and organizes information in support of a purpose. Information may not be fully synthesized.</td>
<td>Communicates information, but information is fragmented and/or may be misquoted or misapplied. Purpose is unclear.</td>
<td>The artifact does not include any identifiable purpose.</td>
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<td><strong>Score:</strong> ____________</td>
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<td>Use Information to Make Ethical Decisions</td>
<td>Defines a purpose that is relevant to ethical decision making and appropriate to audience, genre, or discipline. Information is clearly and ethically referenced through citations or other discipline-appropriate methods.</td>
<td>Defines a purpose that is relevant to audience, genre or discipline. Information may lack some clear references or citations.</td>
<td>Defines a purpose that is unclear, unethical, inappropriate or not supported by evidence. Information presented lacks appropriate references or citations.</td>
<td>The artifact does not include any identifiable purpose.</td>
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<td><strong>Score:</strong> ____________</td>
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ILO ASSESSMENT DESIGN

- Students invited to participate were selected using stratified sampling from a larger group containing all COS students who had completed 30+ units.
- Selected students were contacted via email and Canvas invite to submit work.
- Participants were asked to “Please submit a sample of your work completed here at COS that shows your ability to do research. Ideally, the sample you submit should show your ability to complete research and make decisions based on that research.”
- In total we received 48 samples from 44 students. Each was double-blind scored by trained faculty raters using a rubric developed by the O&A committee.
- There were ~1900 respondents to the ILO items on the survey.
Overall Direct Assessment Results*

- MEETS: 68%
- DOES NOT MEET: 32%

Indirect Assessment Results

- Agree
- Disagree

*Where Meets = an average rubric score of 10 or higher (n = 44)

(n ~ 1,899)
**RESEARCH & DECISION MAKING**

Make Informed Decisions

- MEETS: 72.92%
- DOES NOT MEET: 27.08%

Make Ethical Decisions

- MEETS: 70.83%
- DOES NOT MEET: 29.17%
• Where students struggle, they struggle with source use—locating strong research and citing it in discipline-appropriate ways.
  • The O&A Committee worked with our Faculty Enrichment Committee (FEC) to identify areas where students struggle and recommend faculty professional development opportunities in these areas.
  • Citation workshops were offered by the Library for Faculty (on teaching citation and available resources) and Students (on source use and available resources). These workshops continue to be offered annually.
## WHAT WE FOUND

**LRC CITATION WORKSHOP**

*All students welcome to attend.*

**“Love @ 1st Cite”**

**VISALIA, LRC 203**
- Friday, February 9th, 1pm – 2pm
- Saturday, February 10th, 11am – 12pm
- Monday, February 12th, 10am – 11am
- Tuesday, February 13th, 9am – 10am
- Wednesday, February 14th, 12pm – 1pm
- Thursday, February 15th, 2pm – 3pm

**TULARE, A202**
- Tuesday, February 13th, 10am – 11am

**HANFORD, V105**
- Monday, February 12th, 12pm – 1pm

Please RSVP to nicolesc@csu.edu or drop into a workshop.
ILO ASSESSMENT FOR IMPROVEMENT

• Following each assessment, we hold workshops to share results with faculty, and reports on results are presented to Academic Senate and shared with Faculty Enrichment Committee for professional development planning.

• We also work as a committee to share what we’ve learned and try new, innovative assessment methods each time. We learn, grow, and iterate our assessment models.

• The District-wide survey has a high response rate (~1900 students), allowing us to disaggregate data, and trying innovative direct assessment methods each year allows us to collect more qualitative information—such as narratives, examples, and student viewpoints we can share with faculty, even if response rates are lower.
ILO ASSESSMENT FOR IMPROVEMENT

• How do we design good, data-driven assessment projects? (Assessment-for-Compliance)
  • Large-N survey results for each ILO provide a way to collect and disaggregate data campus-wide.
  • Iterative survey results can inform smaller-scale direct assessment planning.
  • Student Success data gives context to assessment results with smaller sample sizes.
  • Use of national instruments and other resources for validity (the VALUE Rubrics, CCSSE survey, etc).

• How do we develop assessment that leads to faculty conversation and improvement? (Assessment-for-Improvement)
  • Partnerships with campus stakeholders (like FEC or other professional development committees) create opportunities for interventions that are teacher-led.
  • Regular presentation and discussion of assessment results is embedded in governance and other structures.
• What are some strategies you can take back to your campus and use right away?
• What are some of the challenges you face in moving toward an improvement model for assessment?
• How can you leverage campus-wide assessment efforts (like ILO assessment) to start a conversation on your campus?
REFERENCES & RESOURCES


• About COS Video: https://vimeo.com/303355636

• Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education is a great organization! Join the nationwide ASSESS listserv: https://www.aalhe.org/page/AssessListserv

• Consider attending the AALHE annual conference! Learn more here: https://www.aalhe.org/mpage/2019Conference

• Join an informal listserv just for CCC O&A Chairs and those in related roles! Please share widely with colleagues at this conference! You can request access by emailing: cccassess-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
FURTHER INFORMATION

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Twitter: @DrSeharris

Full Reports of our Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessments are available on the COS O&A website:
https://old.cos.edu/Academics/OA/Pages/ILO-Assessment-Reports.aspx