Assessment Overview

Discipline/Program Name: English and Reading Developmental Studies
Assessment Year: 2009-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Outcome Type</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>History</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Strength of Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Essay Writing Skills</td>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>Pre-Post Test</td>
<td>Approx. 800</td>
<td>4 (I believe)</td>
<td>70% improvement rate</td>
<td>In this little box? We met benchmark.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Passing Rates</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Institutional Research</td>
<td>Approx 800</td>
<td>2 (I think)</td>
<td>70% passing rates</td>
<td>Dependent on the class.</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe the Learning Outcome That You Have Measured
GE, Discipline or Other
Pre-Post Test, Judged Competition, Embedded Questions, Rubric Graded Essay
Number of Students Assessed
# of Years This Outcome Has Been Assessed
Measurement Standard
Report the Results of Your Data Analysis

Recommendation: Complete this Assessment Overview Table after you have completed your Assessment Summary in the following template.

Program / Discipline Assessment Report

Program/Discipline: English / Reading Developmental Studies
Responsibility: Jamey Trotter, Michelle Van de Sande

Program/Discipline's Mission Statement:
The Developmental Studies Program’s mission in a learning-centered college is to provide basic academic skills to prepare students for success and retention in transfer core courses and vocational programs. The Developmental Studies Program is committed to improving student learning through continuous assessment which guarantees student access to quality education, job readiness, and personal satisfaction.

Program/Discipline's Assessment History:
By using the assessment process as an evaluative technique, how has it previously affected your program's curricula and/or teaching strategies?
- By having a beginning-of-the-semester and an end-of-the-semester in-class essay examination, our Developmental Studies classes have become more academically rigorous because faculty understand the importance of scores improving over the course of the semester, as do students.
Over the past five years, the faculty of Developmental Studies has responded to assessment data from September 2004 that found that students’ skills of summarization were weak. We revised curriculum to increase the number of formal summaries to a minimum of five and promoted more consistency in grading criteria in all levels of composition instruction. Beginning Fall 2006, ENG 090 courses required a minimum of five summaries, and REA 090 faculty would emphasize summary writing in activities for reading comprehension.

Developmental and transfer-level course faculty meet together at the beginning and end of each term to score pre- and post-writing blue book essays. Blue book essays contain a summary as well as a response to a college-level article from the newspaper. Developmental course instructors are also encouraged to do a mid-semester blue book essay to prepare students for the end-of-semester post-writing essay.

By using the assessment process as an evaluative technique, what changes to student learning have been noted?

- Students have found that they are more confident about their writing and grammar skills after taking developmental courses.
- Students improve their blue book diagnostic essay scores from the beginning to the end of the semester, demonstrating that their skills in reading, summarizing, generating a thesis, organizing and supporting a thesis, and using correct grammar and mechanics do improve over the course of the semester. Students therefore have concrete proof that their writing abilities have increased, relating back to point one – confidence in one’s reading and writing abilities is essential to succeeding in college and indeed life.
- Another impact we’ve observed on student learning is that the students understand right up front that the developmental class they are has high academic standards (by engaging in an essay exam on the first or second day of the semester).

What unintended consequences, if any, have occurred because of the assessment process?

- Full-time and adjunct faculty come together at both the beginning of the semester and the end of the semester to scores the hundreds of Blue Book essays; this provides an exceptional professional development opportunity for both entities, as well as a greater sense of collegiality within the department. Further, before we score the essays, we spend lots of time norming, which results in a greater level of equality in grading across the department.
- We found that while students may pass a course in the Developmental Studies sequence (ENG 030, 060, 090; REA 030, 060, 090), they may not decide to move on and take the next class in the sequence.
- Instructors have found that students with ESL challenges do not do as well in their courses as native speakers.
Instructors have found that our students may need to take a lower level Developmental course to prepare them for ENG060 / REA060 or ENG090 / REA 090; hence, we added ENG030 / REA 030 to our departmental course offerings.

Instructors have found that our students that fall below the minimum cut-off score in ENG 030 and REA 030 do not have the ability to benefit in a 030 course. Our department will begin enforcing the cut off score of 25 in these courses, and we are exploring other options for these students.

Who receives information about your department's assessment and why? (Please note if you plan on altering either of these items for the coming year.)

We share this report and ask for feedback about our results from all instructors who teach Developmental courses and with the Chair of the English and Developmental Studies.

Part 1: Previous Academic Year Assessment Summary

Previous Academic Year: 2008-2009

Last year we used three methods to assess our Developmental Studies program:
1. The blue book diagnostic essay
2. Retention data generated from Institutional Research
3. Reading pre- and post-test

The Blue Book Diagnostic Essay
We found that students blue book scores did increase from the beginning to the end of the semester, and we met our benchmark of 70% of the students increasing their scores, as well as the benchmark that student’s scores leaving the lower-level class are equal to or greater than the students entering the next level (for example, a student leaving ENG 060 would score equal to or higher than a student entering ENG 090).

Perhaps the greatest finding in this year’s data is the amount of improvement in scores over the previous year. The previous year’s results were “that students’ post scores leaving ENG 090 were not at a comparable level to students entering ENG 121.” As a result, meetings and workshops were held by the department to “share strategies for improving students’ blue book scores.” These workshops and meetings led to a drastic increase of the improvement of student scores from the beginning to the end of the semester, and students are not only improving, but they are doing better than the students entering a class the level above them. In other words, students in ENG 060 are scoring higher on their exit exam than
students entering ENG 090, while students leaving ENG 090 are scoring higher on the essay exam than students entering ENG 121.

From our discussion of the 2007-2008 assessment report we found that many students enrolled in ENG 060 do not have the requisite skills for this course, and we decided to add ENG 030 into our course offerings. ENG 030 enrollment continues to grow both at ACC and in community colleges across the state.

Retention Data Generated from Institutional Research
Institutional Research gathered data to show pass-fail-withdraw rates for all of our developmental classes. The concern of retention and the percentage of students passing to those failing is ever-present, especially with our developmental program continuing to grow (we’ve gone from one section of REA and ENG 030 to three sections of each, for example). It’s important to track these numbers, and to continue to do so, for a few reasons

- There is a campus-wide investigation of the developmental studies programs (English, Reading, and Math) occurring as I write this sentence.
- There has been established a “Below 030 Taskforce.” It was decided that all departments will be enforcing the bottom-cutoff score for entrance into all 030 classes.
- We meet regularly with all three disciplines to discuss pressing issues and for professional development opportunity.
- Members in developmental programs from other colleges across the state have visited our campus to take a look at our programs, and as well to share information about their.

Much is indeed being done. It will be interesting to see what affect (if any) these focused efforts will have on student success rates, as well as student retention.

Reading Pre- and Post-Tests
The reading pre- and post-tests continue to undergo changes. We continue to pilot various assessment measures including both textbook and online formats. We are currently using MyReading Lab for REA 030 and REA 090. Because of the nature of the program, we have found that the results are not consistent and have resulted in a wide range of outcomes. We continue to look for a program that will be effective in measuring student growth and skill deficiencies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome #: 1</th>
<th>Outcome Title: Essay Writing Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome Type</strong> (choose by bolding):</td>
<td><strong>Outcome Description:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline/Program; General Ed; Other</td>
<td>- Locate a thesis in various patterns of published written work and produce an essay that agrees or disagrees with the argument that exhibits a clear thesis and organized support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If General Education outcome (choose by bolding):</td>
<td>- Apply standard conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication; Critical Thinking; Quantitative Reasoning; Use of Technology; Diversity and Global Awareness; Leadership and Teamwork</td>
<td>- Students exiting a class will be at a level equal to or greater than students entering the next level class. For example, a student leaving ENG 060 will score equal or better than a student entering ENG 090.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark for success</td>
<td>- 70% of students will improve their ability to read, summarize, produce a thesis, give supporting evidence, organize their ideas, and demonstrate effective writing style (grammar, mechanics, style) in their pre/post diagnostic blue book essays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Please specify what percentage of the sample size is expected to meet or exceed your benchmark.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) What is the rationale for choosing this measure?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of assessment process:</strong></td>
<td>1) Pre and post reading and writing assessment (blue book exams)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) What assessment methods were used to measure this outcome (i.e. pre/post test, portfolio review, etc.)?</td>
<td>2) It measures their growth as a writer over the course of a semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) How do these methods show students are learning?</td>
<td>3) We administer and score the essays at the beginning and end of every semester because we want to be able to quantify the growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) What frequency is this outcome being measured (i.e.: each semester, yearly, every other year, etc.) and why?</td>
<td>4) All sections of English developmental studies courses and some students from English 121 sections: in total about 400.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) How many students made up the sample size?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results
What were the results of the assessment process? (List results for each method, if more than one were used.)

What did the department learn?
1) How did group performance compare to the benchmark?
2) How does the data compare to the previous year, if applicable?
3) If multiple measures were used, how do they compare to each other?

1) Both benchmarks were met.
   - Students leaving ENG 060 preformed better than their counterparts entering ENG 090.
   - Students leaving ENG 090 performed better than students entering ENG 121.
   - More than 80% of students improved their scores.

2) Last Year:
   - Students in ENG 060 improved their scores by 1.85 points over the course of the semester, compared to this year’s 2.6 points improvement.

ENG 060 students improved their scores from 5.68 in the beginning of the semester to 8.28 at the end of the semester, an increase of 2.6 points.
ENG 090 students improved their scores from 6.61 to 9.54, an increase of 2.93 points.
ENG 121 students improved their scores from 8.71 to 11.89, an increase of 3.18 points.

Figure 1.1 Average blue book essay scores in ENG 060, 090, & 121 Academic Year 2008-2009
| **Student performance summary** | **1)** Based on the findings, how does the department rate student performance in regards to this outcome (strong, weak, or neutral)?  
2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of curricula, teaching strategies, and assessment methods? | **1)** Strong.  
2) Department Plans:  
   - The department is revamping Advancing Academic Achievement (AAA) classes, which relate to the students taking our developmental courses.  
   - The college is looking at the possibility of requiring all students placed in ENG/REA 030 and/or 060 to take AAA class.  
   - We will analyze specific students’ ENG090 blue books (8 per class) to see what skills are lacking. We will engage ENG090 instructors in the discussion of what areas need improvement.  
   - Instructors of REA 030, REA 060 and REA 090 and ENG 030, ENG 060 and ENG 090 will schedule a joint meeting to discuss summary skills and other joint expectations. |

- Students in ENG 090 improved their scores by 2.01 points over the course of the semester, compared to this year’s 2.93 points improvement.
- Students in ENG 121 improved their scores by .80 points over the course of the semester, compared to this year’s 3.18 points improvement.

In general, students scores were improved over the previous year.

3) N/A
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Type (choose by bolding):</th>
<th>Outcome Title: Passing Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discipline/Program; General Ed; Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If General Education outcome (choose by bolding): Communication; Critical Thinking; Quantitative Reasoning; Use of Technology; Diversity and Global Awareness; Leadership and Teamwork</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcome Description:**
Passing rates of students at the developmental level is at once a concern and a challenge. Obviously, we want our students to succeed. However, we must not push students through the system who are not succeeding, despite whatever good reasons they may have for not succeeding—this is important because anecdotal evidence suggests that students in developmental courses are (generally speaking) high needs students who have challenges in their personal lives and/or learning abilities greater than students in transfer level classes. Because of this, instructors may feel the need to pass students through as a favor to them, but as we know, this actually hurts the student more than it helps them. Therefore, it’s important to mediate moderate passing levels of our developmental classes, and begin to compare them on a yearly basis.

**Benchmark for success**
1) Please specify what percentage of the sample size is expected to meet or exceed your benchmark.
2) What is the rationale for choosing this measure?

According to the traditional bell curve, 70% should be the passing rate for any given class.

**Description of assessment process:**
1) What assessment methods were used to measure this outcome (i.e. pre/post test, portfolio review, etc.)?
2) How do these methods show students are learning?
3) What frequency is this outcome being measured (i.e.: each semester, yearly, every other year, etc.) and why?
4) How many students made up the sample size?

Researched numbers were provided by Darcy Briggs-Jackson.
Results

What were the results of the assessment process?
(List results for each method, if more than one were used.)

Developmental REA Pass-Fail-Withdraw rates FA08 & SP09

Developmental ENG Pass-Fail-Withdraw rates FA08 & SP09
**What did the department learn?**

1) How did group performance compare to the benchmark?
2) How does the data compare to the previous year, if applicable?
3) If multiple measures were used, how do they compare to each other?

As can be seen, Reading 060 is consistently at the benchmark. Other reading classes are slightly below the benchmark, and it is perhaps important to note that last academic year was the first year the department has offered classes at the 030 level. REA 090 classes are consistently slightly lower than the benchmark.

English 090 is consistently lower than the benchmark by a fairly significant amount. However, we know from anecdotal comparative studies that our ENG 090 classes are more academically rigorous in nature than ENG 090 classes at, say, Community College of Aurora or Red Rocks Community College. While this results in lower passing rates, it’s our hypothesis that students who do pass have higher levels of success at the transfer level. Past assessment data has shown this to be true.

**Student performance summary**

1) Based on the findings, how does the department rate student performance in regards to this outcome (strong, weak, or neutral)?
2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of curricula, teaching strategies, and assessment methods?

1) Neutral
2) We will meet to discuss the results, and make a plan for raising student success rates in classes such as ENG 090 where the success rates might be interpreted as low.

Again, however, there is a *delicate balance* – especially at the 090 level – between sending (potentially unprepared) students through because we need to in order to meet the benchmark and reaching a 70% passing rate at an authentic level. History has shown this to be a challenge for the department, and one will continue to work on.

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**Part 2: Current Academic Year Assessment Plan**

- Your program may wish to examine how retention differs among sections of an important course or you may choose to do an analysis of grade inflation across courses within your program/discipline. Such items aren’t truly student outcomes, but they certainly affect learning. As such, these outcomes will be classified as “Other” in the summary you create next year. (Measuring such outcomes is purely optional.)
- Two or more instruments of measuring an objective may provide greater clarity and validity, but only one is required. The department or program makes the decision. The Program Assessment committee and deans are available for consultation.
- In the past, some programs have been identified purely by prefix or in some cases by the type of section offered. Sometimes, a very limited pool of students have been available for such a program to assess, or the program lacks full-time faculty to plan, assess, and report outcomes. If your program has such difficulties, please contact either the Program Assessment committee’s chair or your School’s Program Assessment committee representative. We will work with you to find a solution.
- CTE programs with external accreditation may use the accreditation report to in addition or in lieu of these forms, please contact the Program Assessment committee representative if this format is desired. In absence of this contact, these forms are expected.
- Outcomes are to be measured annually. Exceptions are made with VPI approval for outcomes that clearly need a less (or more) frequent review.
Outcome minimums

- At least two outcomes are to be program/discipline-related.
- At least two outcomes are to be General Education in nature. One General Education outcome must be continued from the prior year to develop a historical trend. General Education outcomes need to be assessed and reported annually, regardless of the frequency of reporting for other outcomes.
- Both outcomes above are classified as "student learning" outcomes, requiring benchmarks and analysis. It is strongly recommended that you use the table provided in Part 1 of this report for this function. Definitions and examples of these outcomes are provided in Appendix A at the end of this document. Your Program Assessment committee is available to assist.
- An assessment report is requested annually. Such a report may only consist of a report on General Education outcomes and a plan summarizing where your program is in an assessment with multi-year frequency.

Current Academic Year: 2009-2010

Intended Learning Outcomes (only include if they differ from those noted in Part 1)

Assessment Method(s) (only include if they differ from those noted in Part 1)

Benchmarks (only include if they differ from those noted in Part 1)

Have you submitted a separate budget worksheet? (Choose by bolding; for information about this worksheet, please refer to the specific budgeting e-mail sent by the committee chairperson.)

   Yes   No

Please submit this report (including both last year's summary and this year's plan) in a Word document to the Program Assessment committee chairperson (Cheyne Bamford: cheyne.bamford@arapahoe.edu). If you have any questions about the process, please contact the chairperson.