



JOHNSON COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Volume 5, Issue 3
November 2013

Save the Date

**Brown Bag
Brownie Break**
Nov. 21, 2013
3-4:00 p.m., GEB 264

Coffee Break
Second Wednesday
of each month
Nov. 13, 2013
2-3:00 p.m.
JavaJazz COM 1st Floor

Office of Outcomes Assessment

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**Assessment
Council Members**
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Brenda Edmonds
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Susan Johnson
Kay King
Valerie Mann
Anna Page
Terri Teal
Krista Thomas

photos by
Susan McSpadden,
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Spotlight on **Assessment**

Assessment: A Primer for the Novice

Valerie Mann, *Adjunct Associate Professor of Learning Strategies*

Assessment is a critical part of our culture at JCCC. In fact, assessment infuses the entire culture of higher education. Have you ever wondered about the “Why?” “How?” and “What?” of assessing your students’ learning? I started out the 2013-14 academic year by beginning my three-year term on the college-wide Assessment Council. As a new addition to the assessment council I asked the director of outcomes assessment, Dr. Sheri Barrett, to recommend some reading for me to bring me “up-to-speed” on assessment. This article is a result of my readings.

Faculty assess student learning frequently. Whether it is an electronically scored exam, evaluative essay question, research paper, project or group activity, performance, etc., faculty are expected and prepared to measure the comprehension of their course content or departmental curriculum. So what is the difference in providing my students grades for assignments and assessment activities at JCCC? In answering that question I was able to more succinctly understand the current expectations for assessment and how simple the process can be.

What is Assessment?

A clear definition of assessment is “the process of collecting, reviewing and using information about academic programs in order to improve student learning and development” (Palomba & Banta 297). This definition makes it clear that assessment is focused on student learning, and the assessment process is about the systematic collection of that information.

Why Should I Assess?

Assessment ensures “program coherency,” as well as “intentional action” on the part of faculty, and provides opportunities for “scaffolding” on what our students learn (Cameron et al, pg. 415). Assessment also allows faculty to make plans for improvement in the curriculum and to reflect not only on how our students learn, but how we teach.

Who Should Assess?

Actually, the answer here is simple. At some point, EVERYONE should assess their students’ learning. Whether it is a specific math skill, learning terminology or more process-related goal, assessment is a gift we give our students—and ourselves.

How Can I Assess?

Assessment plans can start with: 1) considering your course materials as you prepare for the next semester, 2) with a meeting of a few interested faculty members in your department, or 3) attending a World Café table during Professional Development Days.

Here at JCCC there is help wherever you find yourself in the assessment cycle. If you want assistance in formulating an assessment question, designing the assessment instrument, refining your plan, or analyzing the data, check in with the Office of Outcomes Assessment. In addition, many of the office’s resources are available at: blogs.jccc.edu/outcomesassessment, or on the college’s <https://infoshare.jccc.edu/communities/slo/default.aspx>.

References

Cameron, J., Stavenhagen-Helgren, T., Walsh, P. & Kobritz, B. (2002, Oct.). Assessment as critical praxis: A community college experience. *Teaching Sociology*, 30 (4). Teaching Sociology with a Purpose: Issues in Curriculum Design and Assessment, 414-429. Retrieved October 12, 2013, from JSTOR.

Palomba, C.A. & Banta, T.W. (1999). *Assessment essentials: Planning, implementing and improving assessment in higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Announcements

“Are We There Yet? When To Move on to a New SLO Assessment”

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Spring 2014 – The 4th Annual Community College Assessment Conference

Hosted by Metropolitan Community College, Penn Valley Campus, on Friday, March 28, 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Mark your calendars now to attend! Additional details to follow.

Planning now for the Spring term?

Call the OOA and reserve your table for World Café in January. Always a productive time of planning, analyzing and reviewing your departmental assessment activities. This semester's World Café will be January 10, noon-2:00 p.m.

Quote of the Month

“In an analysis of closing reflections written by departments when they submitted the results of student learning outcomes assessment, four lessons learned seem to reflect Gallaudet’s assessment spirit:

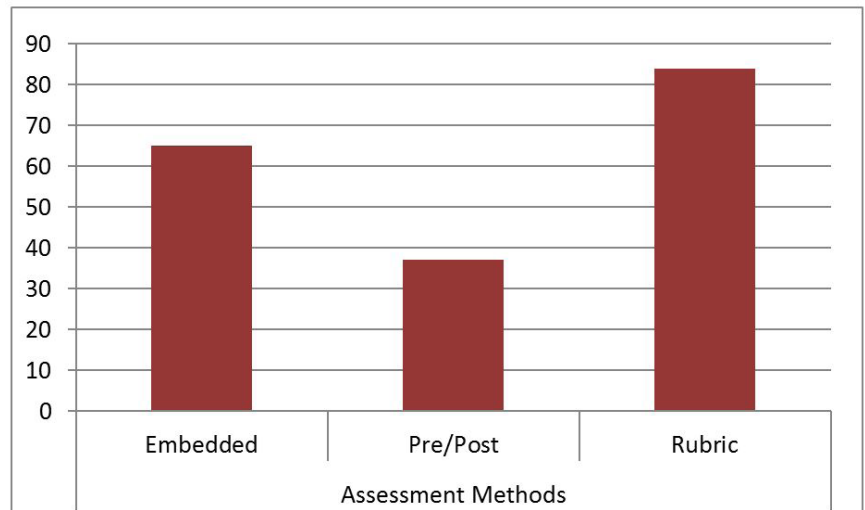
- 1. Assessment can benefit teaching and learning.*
- 2. Assessment is not rocket science.*
- 3. Assessment is not a report.*
- 4. Assessment fosters conversations about one’s discipline.”*

Coming to Terms with Student Outcomes Assessment. Edited by Peggy L. Maki.

To read more, check out this book and others in the OOA Resource Library in GEB 262.

Update on General Education Assessment AQIP Project

Departments from around the college participated in mapping the General Education Student Learning Outcomes to the Gen Ed curriculum. Approximately 190 courses were mapped during the process. The most common SLO that courses were mapped to is SLO #6 – Read, analyze and synthesize written, visual and aural material. The most common form of assessment is use of a rubric to evaluate student work.



OOA has moved!

You may not have noticed, since the great staff in OOA made everything seamless, but the Office of Outcomes Assessment has moved to a new location!

The office has just moved down the road from OCB to **GEB 262**. Come by and check out the new digs! And check out all the resources for assessment in the OOA library.

