
The Department Chairs' Assessment Toolbox

A Course and Program Assessment Guide for
Department Chairs

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CPR

Components of the College’s Plan for the Assessment of Student Academic Achievement

Understanding the academic assessment plan is easy to remember; it’s CPR:

Five-year

CycleSee page 4
Of Department Courses & Programs

Annual Department

PlanSee page 6

Annual Department

ReportSee Page 6

Department Chairs' Assessment Checklist

Each Department should have a Five-Year Assessment Cycle – (See Page 4 for details)



_____ A five-year cycle accounts for assessment of every course or program within the department

_____ This five-year cycle should be on file with the department chair and the Director of Academic Assessment.

_____ If the department doesn't have a five-year cycle or is developing a new cycle, submit the new cycle with the annual assessment plan (see **Plan** below).

For the 09-10 Academic Year, each Department must submit an Assessment Plan (See page 6 for details)

_____ Description of new and continuing assessment initiatives for 2009-10

_____ Submit 09-10 Annual Assessment Plan by May 30, 2009.

For the 08-09 Academic Year, each Department must submit an Assessment Report (See page 6 for details)

_____ Evidence or description of the department's assessment work as it correlated to the 08-09 Annual Assessment Plan

_____ Documentation of faculty discussions regarding assessment planning, development, implementation, and analysis of results

_____ Changes and improvements to curriculum and instruction occurring in 08-09

_____ Changes and improvements in student learning occurring in 08-09

_____ Submit FY 08-09 Annual Assessment Report by June 30, 2009

Role of the Assessment Director

This guide contains important information on the assessment of student academic achievement at Moraine Valley Community College, and how it relates to you, the department chair. Inside, you'll find explanations, guides, examples, and a checklist for assessment in your academic department. These docs will help you prepare your annual assessment reports and plans.

As the Director of Academic Assessment, my job is to help department chairs prepare these reports and plans, organize the findings, and report the successful implementation of the three components (cycle, plan, and report) of the college's assessment plan. I'm here to help the department chairs as they lead faculty in meaningful assessment work.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions related to student assessment. I look forward to working with you on our shared goal: improved student learning at the college.

Sincerely,

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Five-year cycle

The five-year cycle guides the department's ongoing sequence of assessment. In each year, assessment is focused on identified courses/programs.

At the most basic level, a cycle displays a department's courses/programs divided across five years. (See Sample A on page 5)

In a more advanced cycle, one year's focus or new initiative might expand into several stages. (See Sample B on page 5)

- Stage 1: **Planning**
 - During this stage, chairs and their department faculty determine how the selected courses will be assessed and for what purposes.
- Stage 2: **Application**
 - In this stage, departments apply their assessment methods. This is where the data for an assessment report is generated.
- Stage 3: **Analysis**
 - In this stage, departments analyze assessment results. Do the results indicate a change or an improvement in student learning?
- Stage 4: **Recommendation**
 - Based on the assessment results, departments discuss and create recommendations for changes to curriculum or instructional practices.
- Stage 5: **Implementation of Changes to Curriculum and Instruction**
 - In this stage, you will put into practice your assessment recommendations.

Department Cycle - Samples

Sample A

Academic Year	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14
Courses	PSY 101 PSY 104	PSY 105 PSY 106	PSY201 PSY 202	PSY 205 PSY 210 PSY 211	PSY 212 PSY 215 PSY 220

Sample B

Courses	Planning	Assessment Development	Assessment & Analysis	Analysis & Recommendations	Implementation of Changes
PSY 101 PSY 104 PSY 105	Fall 08	Spring 09	Fall 09	Spring 10	Fall 11
PSY 106 PSY201 PSY 202	Fall 09	Spring 10	Fall 11	Spring 11	Fall 12
PSY 205 PSY 210 PSY 211	Fall 11	Spring 11	Fall 12	Spring 12	Fall 13
PSY 212 PSY 215 PSY 220	Spring 11	Fall 12	Spring 12	Fall 13	Spring 14

Assessment Plan

The Annual Assessment Plan establishes clear assessment initiatives for the upcoming year. Assessment plans will generally include:

- A **list of courses/programs being assessed** in the coming year.
- An explanation of **the assessment methods** that will be used to assess these courses/programs.
- A brief explanation regarding **the implementation of the plan** (task assignments, lead instructors, document handlers, etc.). A timetable, including dates for anticipated assessment meetings and due dates for department assessment docs would also be beneficial.

Note: Some departments have already developed their FY09-10 annual assessment plan using the college's new Continuous Improvement Objective & Results Form/CIOR. This is an allowable alternative to the template provided on the following page.

Assessment Report

The Annual Assessment Report documents the department's assessment activities carried out according to your departmental assessment plan. In other words, *how did you carry out this plan and what are your findings?*

The assessment report will generally include:

- **Description or copies of assessment methods/tools used**
- **Student learning outcomes documented/achieved.** What exactly did your assessment results measure?
- **A copy of your assessment results.** These are the findings from your assessment tools. These results could include test scores, surveys, rubric scores, etc.
- **A results analysis.** This is your interpretation of the results. What do the results mean? How are the results indicative of student learning in the course/program?
- **How the assessment results have been or will be used to improve the curriculum and instruction.** Once you have the results, understand what they mean, and have a clearer command over the measurement of the student learning outcomes, determine how these results will be used in the upcoming year or as part of your next assessment plan. The ultimate goal is to use assessment results to improve student learning.

Other documents that you can include:

- Assessment-related meeting notes
- Assessment correspondence (emails, notes, etc.) with Director of Academic Assessment
- Summaries of any assessment-related research within the department

Pages 7-10 contain templates and samples of assessment plans and reports.

Student Assessment Plan Template

AY ____ - ____
 Department _____ Department Chair _____

Plans for Department Assessment Activities

Possible activities

- ✓ Assessment discussions at department meetings
- ✓ Revision or creation of the 5-year Assessment Cycle of department courses/programs
- ✓ Assessment discussions among faculty centered around a particular course or program
- ✓ Assessment development associated with new or revised curriculum
- ✓ Potential assessment strategies aimed at areas of persistent lower student achievement

Plans for Assessment Strategies to be implemented in a specific course or program

Course or Program	Lead Instructors	Estimated sections per semester	Estimated number of students to be assessed	Goals to be addressed through the assessment strategies	Assessment Strategies to be implemented

Approvals	
Department Chair	Date _____
Director of Academic Assessment	Date _____
Dean	Date _____
Director of Res. Dev. and Inst. Eff.	Date _____
V.P. for Academic Affairs	Date _____

Student Assessment Plan - Sample

Assessment Plan

Developmental Education Department--IELP

May 15, 2006

Schedule S 07 Assessment F 07 Assessment and Analysis S 08 Analysis and Recommendations F 08 Implementation of changes					
Course	Lead Teacher	Estimated sections per semester	Estimated teachers for the course	Method(s) of assessment at the <u>course level</u> , used by all teachers.	Method(s) of assessment at the <u>classroom level</u> , used by individual teachers.
IEL 072		3	3	25 similar objective questions on the pre-test and final exam	Review results of pre-test/final exam analysis and recommend changes or modifications for this and other IEL classes

Approvals

Department Chair _____ Date _____

Director of Academic Assessment _____ Date _____

Dean _____ Date _____

Director of Res. Dev. and Inst. Eff. _____ Date _____

V.P. for Academic Affairs _____ Date _____

Student Assessment Report Template

AY ____ - ____
 Department _____ Department Chair _____

Report of Department Assessment Activities

Description of the Activities	Documentation of discussions, decisions, plans <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Described here <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attached	Next steps

Report on Assessment Methods implemented in a specific course or program

Course or Program	Lead Instructors	Number of sections assessed	Number of students assessed	Review of goals to be addressed through the assessment methods	Review of the assessment strategies implemented
Results of the assessment work				Plans for translating the assessment results into improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum & Instruction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student Learning	

Approvals

Department Chair _____ Date _____

Director of Academic Assessment _____ Date _____

Dean _____ Date _____

Director of Res. Dev. and Inst. Eff. _____ Date _____

V.P. for Academic Affairs _____ Date _____

Student Assessment Report - Sample

MTH/CSC – Assessment Report – Academic Year 2007-2008

The MTH/CSC department focused assessment activities on two major areas this year. First, we re-wrote the five-year assessment cycle. We re-grouped some courses and eliminated the CSC courses (which will become part of another department effective Spring 2008). Second, we decided to calculate several statistics from the departmental exams as a department.

The assessment cycle was re-written in an attempt to focus our assessment activities more clearly. Although the department has departmental final exams for all courses, other assessment activities for particular courses need to be enhanced each year. It is the department's goal to report on these other activities for the appropriate set of courses each year.

In the past, the Director of Assessment has performed some analysis of the final exams. The department decided that it would be better if the faculty compiled some of these numbers. This has forced the faculty to look at final exams with a more critical eye and reflect on the results.

Final Exam Analysis

The faculty completed analysis of departmental final exams for the following courses: MTH 120, 121, 122, 139, 141, 143, and 150. The results are attached. These analyses will be distributed to all faculty who teach the course.

The attached report for each course details four areas:

- Course Learning Outcomes: number of questions correlated to each learning outcome and student performance for the learning outcome.
- Student Achievement Information: highest and lowest scores among learning outcomes and individual questions
- Test Construction Information: test reliability coefficient, distracters and discrimination
- Reporting Information: number of sections and students included in report

Meetings

At the January 2008 in-service meeting, faculty completed the reports on the Fall 2007 final exams. In June 2008, the Spring 2008 final exam analyses were completed. At each department meeting during the academic year, time was devoted to assessment. Discussions included: designing of final exams, information that needed to be distributed to adjuncts concerning assessment, individual faculty assessment activities, etc.

Other Assessment Activities

While the department often discusses assessment activities throughout the year, documentation has been lacking. For the 2008-2009 academic year, the faculty will work with the Director of Assessment to improve the collection and distribution of classroom assessment activities.

Conclusion

Academic assessment helps instructors measure and improve student learning in their courses and programs. While initial assessment plans get the ball rolling, the ongoing commitment to assessment is of paramount importance. The creation and implementation of good assessment processes are rooted in the thoughtful work and dedication of faculty members. Your leadership as department chair is critical as we work together towards our shared goal: improved student learning at Moraine Valley Community College.