Background and Rational for the  
Master Course List for SLO Assessment  
Spring 2012

Background

For the past year the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC) has been working within context of a Two-Year Action Plan, 2011 – 2013, which was developed in the Spring of 2011. One of the goals of the plan is to develop a baseline inventory of regularly offered courses (primary and non-special topics) to form a framework for course level assessment of SLOs. The purpose of this framework is to provide a realistic list of courses, and course clusters, across disciplines to be assessed and the frequency of assessment. This is part of our overall plan to meet accreditations standards for SLOs at the Proficiency/Sustainable levels, as defined by the ACCJC effectiveness rubric.

Step 1

While the Two-Year Action Plan was being developed an analysis was conducted of all courses and sections offered during the 2010-11 academic year. This analysis included a review of how the courses and sections were arranged by programs. The result was a set of course clusters shown in Attachment 1). Eight major categories were identified:

1. Basic Skills courses: highly sequential with high section volume (ENGL, MATH, ESL)
2. CTE programs: highly structured cohorts, with high integration of course and program SLOs (NURS, PTA, RT, INT)
3. CTE programs: less structured cohort programs, with high integration of course and program SLOs (ECS, BRDC, EDT, MM)
4. CTE programs: more course-based with low section volume but aimed at specific student needs (e.g., AH, CFS, CAOT, etc….)
5. General Education: courses with high section volume (eg. HIST, PSY, SPCH, etc…) 
6. General Education: courses clustered around specific student goals
7. General Education: courses with low section volume
8. Foreign Languages

Step 2

Since the cluster analysis was first developed, dialogue with Deans and faculty, and review by the SLOAC have led to further refinement of the clusters. This has resulted in the development of a Master List of Courses for Assessment. The following factors were considered when creating the list:

- Included courses that are offered on a regular basis, at least two sections per year in at least two of the three terms
- Nursing, PTA, RT and INT already do regular courses assessment integrated with their Program Review and outside Accreditation processes.
- Basic Skills has developed a sustainable approach to regular course assessment
Within Basic Skills, Deaf Studies is pursuing a portfolio-based assessment strategy. Potential target courses linked to the GE Assessment plan are identified. Combined sequential A, B, C courses, which are often stacked. Combined other sequential courses (e.g., 121, 122) where the assessment of the last course in the sequence would constitute an assessment of all in the sequence, especially when taught by the same person. Excluded department-specific 195 work experience classes (est. 40 courses with very little enrollment); excluded department-specific Special Projects (201, 202, 203); excluded courses rarely offered; excluded Consortium courses;

The categories of clusters and programs were also refined from 8 to 6 as follows:

1. General Transfer
2. Basic Skills
3. Structured CTE Cohort Programs
4. Semi-Structured CTE Programs
5. Course-Based CTE
6. Languages

The resulting Master Course List for Assessment is shown in Attachment 2. The list is meant to be an ongoing guide for our SLO assessment work and subject to adjustment as we move forward. We will use the list to track course assessment over time.

Frequency of Formal Course Assessment

We have established a three-year cycle of course assessment to allow for the improvement loop to take place. Departments may decide to use a shorter cycle or a longer cycle up to four years, if the nature of the improvement plans warrant.