
**2001 Consultant-Evaluator
Professional Development**

**Assessment at
GoodPlace Community College
Case Study**

Attached is information on Goodplace Community College's assessment of student academic achievement efforts of the past four years. The case is presented as if you have read and pulled information from the self-study on Goodplace Community College's assessment implementation and as if you and other team members have interviewed campus staff and students about assessment at Goodplace Community College.

NEXT COMPREHENSIVE VISIT: 2002-2003

ASSESSMENT AT GOODPLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NOTES FROM INTERVIEWS, DOCUMENTS, SELF-STUDY REPORT

Background

Assessment Plan first developed in 1992-93; approved by NCA in 1994.

Assessment Committee established by VPAA in 1995-96; committee charged with assessment implementation at the course, program, and core/general education outcomes levels; co-chaired by Dean of Teaching and Learning (beginning 1996-97) and Assessment Coordinator.

Core Curriculum Subcommittee of the Assessment Implementation Committee established in 1996-97 to define and implement assessment of the core/general education outcomes of the institution; co-chaired by Assessment Coordinator and Dean of Arts and Sciences.

Curriculum Committee reorganized in 1996-97 as Program and Curriculum Review Committee; charged with program and curriculum design, development, effectiveness, delivery, and efficiency; co-chaired by a department/division chair and the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Effectiveness and Accountability Committee established in 1996-97; charged with evaluating progress on strategic and operational goals at the institutional and divisional levels (instructional services, student services and life, administrative and computer services, financial services, human resources, institutional advancement and community relations). Responsible for strategic and operational planning and resource allocation.

Faculty Assembly structure and policies expanded in 1997-98 to include Assessment and Program and Curriculum Review committees in Assembly by-laws and governance structure.

Testing and Advising Standing Committee established in 1995-96; charged with entry and exit testing, career advising, and job placement of students; co-chaired by Director of Testing and Placement (beginning 1996-97) and Director of Enrollment Services.

Plan for core outcomes portfolios and capstone courses for core curriculum (developed by Core Curriculum Subcommittee) adopted by Assessment Committee in January 2000.

Resources

\$350,000 re-allocated in 1999-2000 strategic projects fund (overseen by Dean of Teaching and Learning) for assessment implementation 1999-2002 (administration of assessment, inservice/professional development days, faculty release time, clerical support, general administration and supplies) (Goodplace College has 140 full-time faculty, 2800 FTE annually).

\$700 additional per full-time faculty member (\$98,000 total additional per year for 140 full-time faculty), established in 1998-99 in the instructional budget for the next four years for continued professional development at the discretion of the departments and programs in response to program and curriculum review (overseen by Program and Curriculum Review Committee).

\$25,000 established in 1998-99 strategic project fund for the next four years for cross-faculty inservice days, assessment workshops, assessment-related professional development, and training (overseen by Assessment Committee).

\$80,000 in innovation and state incentive grants matched by administration in one-time capital venture funds, 1999-2000 for continuation of Faculty Development and Innovation Center (overseen by Dean of Teaching and Learning).

\$150,000 added to annual budget Testing and Advising Center (overseen by the Director of Testing and Job Placement).

Dean of Teaching and Learning position established (1996-97), reporting to the Vice President of Academic Affairs; responsible for faculty development, technology in the classroom, teaching and delivery systems, and assessment implementation across the instructional division.

Assessment Coordinator position (50%) established (1995-96), reporting to the Dean of Teaching and Learning beginning 1996-97; responsible for assessment implementation.

Director of Testing and Job Placement position established (1996-97), reporting to the Vice President of Student Affairs; responsible for entry and exit testing, advising, and tracking of student goals, graduation, placement rates, and employer satisfaction.

Program and Curriculum Review

Participatory program review headed by department chairs implemented in 1997-98 with six categories of program effectiveness and efficiency (demand for the program, cost efficiency and effectiveness, program retention and completion, curriculum, student academic achievement and satisfaction, graduate placement and employer satisfaction) evaluated by annually collected monitoring and screening data; benchmarks and standards developed in 1999-2000 with implementation fall 2001.

Program and Curriculum Review Committee (comprised of department chairs, faculty, deans) established new program evaluation process that integrates assessment results into the decision-making. Programs are evaluated on a three-year cycle; however, annual mini-cycles provide recommendations on curricular change, technology requests, and requests for professional development funds.

Institution-wide syllabus format proposed by Assessment Committee January 2000. New format integrates program outcomes, course competencies, core/general education outcomes, and suggested assessment measures and standards. All courses to be in the new format by fall 2003.

Faculty Review and Development

New faculty performance appraisal developed in 1999-2000 that includes student evaluation, supervisor evaluation, self-evaluation, optional peer evaluation, and goal-setting and review. Will be implemented July 2001.

Four paid faculty inservice days established and dedicated to assessment implementation or faculty development related to assessment or technology; effective since 1996-97.

Faculty Teaching and Goal Inventory being developed based on outcomes of faculty evaluation process and will be used in planning faculty development schedule

Monthly faculty meetings held (beginning fall 1998) for discussion on assessment implementation and sharing of information, convened by Dean of Teaching and Learning and Assessment Coordinator

Support Services

Testing, Career Advising, and Placement Center established in 1996-97 for entry and exit testing for educational programs; for student goals, graduation, and placement tracking; and for employer and student satisfaction tracking. 50% of faculty now using the center regularly.

Faculty Development and Innovation Center established in 1997-98 with federal funding and state incentive grants to provide on-site training in technology for faculty, on-site training in new curriculum software syllabi requirements, and on-site training in educational and administrative software. All faculty have completed one or more trainings provided by the Center.

Institution-wide administrative software purchased in 1998-99 for student, human resources, financial, and operational systems; operational in January 2001.

Office of Institutional Research and Development expanded in 1997-98 to secure grants for faculty development and technology innovation in the classroom; to provide monitoring and screening data for program review; to conduct environmental scanning and community satisfaction; and to provide data to meet state system accountability requirements. \$250,000 in grants received and being used in a focus on teaching methodology innovation and curriculum transformation.

Key Documented Results since 1995-96 (taken verbatim from Assessment Committee Minutes and Program and Curriculum Review Committee minutes)

Assessment implementation has helped Goodplace Community College to...

Review the college mission, vision, values

Refocus the college on learning versus simply implementing assessment

Define core/general education outcomes and competencies and measures; implementation cycle to begin in 2000

Develop outcomes-based syllabi format that reflects core outcomes and competencies at the course, program, and institutional levels

Define course and program outcomes for all degree programs; each program has an assessment plan endorsed by the Assessment Committee

Initiate discussion about institutional and program effectiveness model

Establish resources for assessment implementation, testing and advising, and program development and evaluation

Provide faculty development in assessment theory and strategies, technology and innovation

Design student academic achievement portfolios and capstone courses for core/general education outcomes

Establish student support services that enhance student academic achievement

GUIDING STATEMENTS

Institutional Mission: In service to the common good, Goodplace Community College provides responsive, student-centered education that promotes professional excellence, self-actualization, lifelong learning, and community involvement.

Institutional Purposes:

To provide education leading to associate and baccalaureate degrees that prepare students for employment

To provide education leading to associate and baccalaureate degrees in the liberal arts and sciences

To provide general education for all students

To provide customized training for business, industry, and government in the area

To provide student personnel services that assist the student in fulfilling his/her goals

To provide community services that meet the educational and cultural needs of the area

To provide remedial education

Institutional Values: *Excellence in Education of the Whole Person for Community Good*

Student Centeredness
Flexible Responsive Service
Professional and Personal
Excellence

Academic and Organizational Quality
Boundaryless Access
Quality Continuous Learning

Institutional Core Outcomes: *Excellence in General Education*

Developing Understanding

- Cultural literacy
- Responsive service
- Global perspective

Developing skills for life and work

- Critical thinking skills
- Communication skills
- Technology skills
- Computational skills
- Lifelong learning skills

Learning about self

- Self-awareness
- Personal development
- Personal accountability

Developing knowledge of life and work

- Scientific/Environmental awareness
- Contextual competence
- Aesthetic awareness
- Intellectual inquiry

2000-2004 Strategic Goals: *Excellence in Organizational Advancement*

Define Goodplace Community College's niche

Enhance communications and partnerships

Promote technological excellence

Achieve fiscal growth

Increase student enrollment

Develop five-year facilities plan

Educational Mission and Goals: *Excellence in Academic Achievement*

As an institution of higher education, Goodplace Community College creates a learning environment that offers the opportunity of education toward self-actualization, professional excellence and life-long learning.

Expand educational offerings through technology
Improve student support services
Renovate educational facilities
Improve student and faculty technological skills
Improve student basic skills

EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEWS

President... "Yes, there has been a tremendous commitment in time and resources given to the Instructional Services area for meeting the requirements of assessment implementation exactly as defined by NCA. The Vice President of Academic Affairs has designated two positions to the ongoing implementation of assessment and faculty development related to it....The Effectiveness and Accountability Committee has been established to ensure that we meet the system board's new performance requirements and that we achieve the strategic and operational goals."

Faculty Assembly President... "We authorized the committee structure based on the mandates from the state and NCA, but assessment really is taken care of by the new Dean and Coordinator. We work more closely with the Program and Curriculum Review Committee, for its actions tend to determine if any programs are going to be discontinued or developed, having implications on our faculty work load...The core outcomes and capstone courses are creating a work load issue for us; we don't have structures for team teaching or for interdisciplinary studies....really, it still comes down to whether there's enrollment in a program--not learning."

Full-time Faculty Member, Ms. C... "There have been many meetings, lots of discussions, and even money to learn and do assessment. Yet we seem to be drowning in data and have little or no real information on learning, nor do our discussions center on learning--they center on implementing assessment. However, within the programs, several of us are creating our own information loops on learning. In our major (engineering), we're finally getting our first results from our program's assessment plan and using them to make changes in our course content, course sequence and course and program outcomes. We're waiting for the institution to do something with the core outcomes; we're supposed to have one-credit seminar courses or capstones required of every student before graduating. These would provide information for the portfolio, but we already have portfolios and I'm not sure how they'll relate to each other....No, I don't think anyone other than the Dean and VPAA and the research person in admin. knows what we're doing in terms of assessment in our program; we seem to have two admin. camps one for learning and one that just espouses learning."

Full-time Faculty Member, Dr. B... "I don't know when we're supposed to do this work. I can't believe the Assembly sold us out. It will all go away after NCA."

Full-time Faculty Member, Dr. X... "Actually, we've all done an inventory of what we assess and how and we've put that up on the internal website. I look at it a lot--then I just go get the information from the person who's doing work I'm interested in. The engineering programs are way ahead of all of us. They have student self-directed portfolios and rubrics and even software programs that link to what they're assessing. But their enrollments are dropping and it's tense as to whether some of their programs will survive. Which raises an interesting question--if my program's on the block, am I going to focus on assessment or recruiting?"

Director of Institutional Research... "The expansion was really needed given the system board's new institutional effectiveness categories and indicators. We've worked hard to create data gathering and reporting systems to the state to meet all 17 indicators in the four categories...The data is primarily focused on creating numbers to make the system look good against the University system--but there's some focus on student achievement.

...Unfortunately the demand for data is far beyond what is really used. Right now, the data for testing and assessment is mostly being collected by individual faculty; the original plan for this office was not accepted--we were given the charge to fulfill the state's demands, so data on learning went to the backseat. We have mounds of data on everything--everything but student learning--yet--yet...the plan

is good; our work just isn't aligned with it yet. Next year this office goes through its evaluation process, and I think that's good; perhaps we'll streamline the whole data and information-gathering process and refocus more on data that indicates whether or not we're improving learning, how that relates to teaching--and use this data for our proof of accountability and effectiveness. Unfortunately, like many institutions we're trapped in cycles of other-mandated performance data that takes incredible time and creates the illusion that we're focusing on students and learning.

Actually, if we back up, we're just a college caught in the transition from old to new. Focusing on learning is hard when all the systems are set up to focus on other types of performance (such as enrollments and completions) that also have merit, but in a different way. ...actually the work to put in place real evaluation systems has been good--but they need to be reviewed now. "

Vice President Academic Affairs..."Many good pieces are in place both for assessment, for program review, and for institutional effectiveness. It's far more expensive than had been anticipated, and we really have not begun to turn the corner on using results, but we will. The competing factor is the new state performance funding measures--in the midst of assessment with a focus on learning, the state has forced a focus on other types of information that may not be as clearly learning focused. It's a matter of competing values--what the state wants are results on efficiency, what the college administration wants are results on efficiency and inputs/outputs, and what faculty really want is to see how anything relates to their teaching and their students' learning--and resolution about workload. There's a solid core of full-time faculty, about 35, who are committed to assessment at both the course and program level; however, program review has had more impact to date. When the Dean of Teaching and Learning leaves two months from now, we'll have to review the position. There might be a better way to make implementation more pervasive in instruction and more influential on the other macro systems of the institution."

Student Senate member..."In some courses now, we have to write down and evaluate our own learning every professor explains what we're supposed to get out of the courses. The new portfolios...I don't see that they'll happen, I mean, what student is going to keep track of what they've learned...I don't get it; it's not in regular courses, and they're adding these seminar things on top of our real courses. I can't see that they can make the students do that. We're paying a great deal of money and it's the teacher's job to teach and grade, not ours."

Assessment Committee Member, Dr. F ..."We've been focusing mostly on getting the outcomes into the curriculum and designing what will be learned. We had to start there and with the mission and the core outcomes. We know we need to orient around what our students actually learn and how to improve that, but there's so much infrastructure that has to be in place to make that happen that we're often frustrated."

Assessment Committee Member, Dr. A ... "There's no support yet from Student Services; we can't seem to get the Testing Center to understand what their role is supposed to be. I just want to know student entry and exit scores for my program."

Assessment Committee Member, Dr. L ... "Assessment is a priority for about half of the full-time faculty; adjuncts aren't included—not in the committee or the planning. It's not part of their responsibility. Progress is slow. We have program review requirements, the new technology and administrative software systems for our budgets and grades and schedules...assessment is just one of many big initiatives the new president has endorsed."

Assessment Committee Member, Dr. R ... "Strategic planning is done by the Accountability Committee; the president runs that. The VPAA sits on the committee and brings the recommendations from the Program and Curriculum Review Committee. Only recently, the results

from assessment are being integrated as one of the effectiveness categories of program review, but we're not ready yet. The capstone courses and portfolios are just now in development."

Assessment Committee Member, Dr. G ... "All areas of the college are represented on the Assessment Committee, including one officer of the Faculty Assembly. ...no, there aren't any students on the committee or basic education and continuing education faculty. These areas operate with adjunct faculty who aren't required to do committee service as part of load."

Director of Testing and Job Placement..."We're now using Compass at entry and CAAP at exit from ACT and several other data reports on students, along with our longstanding processes for student placement, graduate follow-up, employer satisfaction, and others. The Institutional Research Office also collects data, although mostly on the other categories required by the system board. We basically do student tracking, which will be greatly enhanced with the new administrative software. We are directly involved in the student academic achievement process in the sense that we do the testing at entry and exit. But we don't intrude on the courses; we want very much for assessment to be owned and driven by the faculty, rather than administratively driven. We haven't identified the position or responsibility yet for tracking the portfolios and capstone courses. The new software isn't set up for the competencies that the faculty seem to want in either the core outcomes or the portfolios."

Assessment Coordinator... "Actually, I'm a nursing faculty member who's half-time devoted to assessment and that's primarily for leading the Assessment Committee. I'm also a department chair, which means I report to two deans. Only the Dean of Health Sciences evaluates me, however. There are many plans in the works for better communication about assessment through our campus newsletters and media; however, they are housed in Student Services and Community Relations and their plates are extremely full already. We don't have the staff or time to focus on reporting systems yet. The Development Center, inservice days, and professional development money has been well-used and has really helped. Everyone seems to know about assessment, so understanding will come. Awareness building has been the main thrust and has had to be....the four priorities of the assessment implementation plan for the past two years were curriculum, awareness and development, core/general education outcomes, and portfolio and capstone course development. We're making good headway on all of them; I would guess 10 programs are very advanced in assessment, like nursing and engineering; another 5-10 don't get it yet. The bulk are in the middle somewhere—but all are actively at work on assessment."

Director of Community Relations..."You need to talk with the Assessment Coordinator and the Dean about assessment; it's the responsibility of the faculty and they're the leaders. We're helping them design potential newsletter formats...for the next several years, our focus here will be the capital campaign and the performing arts center, a result of our increased endowment and foundation work...Marketing and recruitment for programs is done through Student Services, although our office does handle employer advisory committees and any external focus groups and public organizations....Oh, the programs and faculty also tap the advisory committees in annual meetings; but we're focusing on building advisory committee support for the capital campaign--so for the next three years, we're hosting additional breakfasts and forums with them."

VP Student Services..."Assessment has really taken hold and is a priority for instruction. Student Services is focused on key goals as well: enrollment services, marketing and recruiting, student activities, service learning, athletics—these are my key priorities this year in our area. I try to support the VPAA with assessment; however, my plate is full with work in my division and so I'm unable to attend the meetings. It's just not something that touches Student Services directly at this point in time."

Dean of Teaching and Learning... "Moving a culture takes time, and honestly it often takes an external force to get it going. Our momentum is due to the comprehensive visit in a couple of years and the commitment of the Assessment Committee members. Unless there's some basic restructuring done that provides this position with some authority, I think we will have trouble moving beyond the pieces we've put in place already. The understanding of assessment has not moved much outside of instruction; it seems to be a basic barrier in awareness. With two more years of solid effort, there should be sound processes in place for connecting all the pieces of assessment that have begun. What will be critical is the data/information process; its success is dependent on two other divisions that as yet don't see assessment as something that directly involves them. How do you build that awareness and understanding in ways that change thinking and processes that are decades old?I've accepted a new position as VPAA . My recommendation will be that the Dean of Arts and Sciences takes on assessment with the coordinator.

GOODPLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE: SELECTED PORTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

