

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

A Report on the 2006-2008 Assessment Cycle

Submitted to the
Northland Pioneer College Instructional Council

by the
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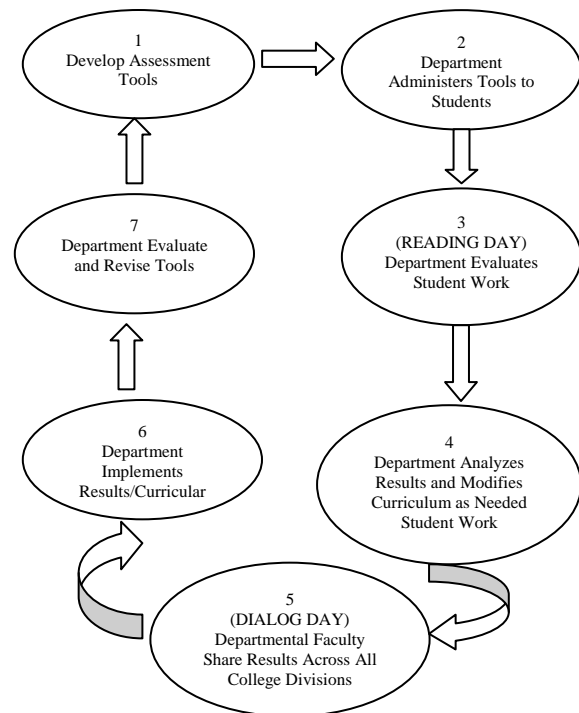
Table of Contents

OVERVIEW of the 2006 – 2008 ASSESSMENT CYCLE	1
Assessment Dialog Day Agenda	2
Dialog Day Meeting Notes	3
TABLES:	
TABLE 1: Summary of Assessment of Student Academic Achievement Reports	T-1
TABLE 2: 2008 Assessment of Student Learning Summary Departmental Methods and Analyses	T-2
TABLE 3: ASK Committee Reviewers' Comments	T-5
APPENDICES	
Departmental Reports	
Administrative Information Services	
Biology	
Chemistry	
Community Education	
Computer Information Systems	
Cosmetology	
Early Childhood Development	
Education	
Emergency Medical Training	
English	
Fire Science (missing)	
Humanities	
Industrial Maintenance and Operations	
Mathematics	
Nursing	
Real Estate	
Social and Behavioral Science	
The Learning Cornerstone	
Welding	

OVERVIEW of the 2006 – 2008 ASSESSMENT CYCLE

Northland Pioneer College initiated its program for assessment of student academic achievement in the 1996-1997 academic year.¹ The college published the Faculty Handbook for the Assessment of Student Academic Achievement in 1999. The handbook outlined the assessment process at the college but has remained substantively unaltered since that time.²

NPC has followed a two year assessment cycle model which is illustrated by the diagram to the right. The process begins with the development of assessment tools. The assessment is administered to students during year 1. During year 2, departmental members evaluate the student work collected during year 1. Much of the evaluation takes place on “Reading Day,” when departmental members collectively read and discuss student work. This is followed by “Dialog Day” when representatives from across departments gather to discuss the results derived from the individual departments and to share ideas about revising assessment tools and implementing curricular changes.



Each assessment report includes a cover sheet that indicates the “activity level” of the department’s assessment efforts. There are five levels:

Level I: The department assessment processes have been detailed and developed for use by faculty.

Level II: Data collection has been implemented.

Level III: Faculty, instructional leaders, and deans have analyzed the data.

Level IV: Faculty, instructional leaders, and deans have used the data to improve student academic achievement.

Level V: Data has been used to improve the assessment process.

¹ 1999 Self-study, p. 206.

² See NPC’s the Faculty Handbook for the Assessment of Student Academic Achievement, January 2005. Information on the assessment cycle and activity levels is drawn from this handbook.

Each assessment report was read by two members of the Assessment of Student Knowledge (ASK) subcommittee of the Instructional Council. In addition, copies of the report were made available to those attending Dialog Day.

About 25 people participated in the Dialog Day activities, including twenty faculty members (nearly 30% of NPC's regular status full-time faculty), three deans, the Director of Institutional Research, and the Vice President for Learning. The Dialog Day agenda, notes on the Dialog Day discussion, and a list of participants is presented below.

DIALOG DAY AGENDA

Assessment Dialog Day Agenda

April 18, 2008

SCC

11:00 – 2:30

- 11:00 am General Session:
- Opening Comments
 - Commitment v. Compliance
 - Assessment, Accreditation, and Accountability
 - Assessment Academy
 - General Education Outcomes
 - Modality of Instruction
 - Linking Assessment to Mission (College, Program, and Department)
 - Overview of Assessment Procedures at NPC:
 - Assessment of Student Knowledge Subcommittee of Instructional Council
 - Course level assessment and program assessment
 - From a two-year cycle to a one-year cycle
 - This year's reports
- 12:00 Lunch
and Small Group Discussions of this year's reports -- Breakouts
- 1:30 pm General meeting – Reports from small groups
- 2:30 pm Adjourn
- Rooms:
- General Sessions: Symposium
- Break out 1: LC 102 led by Shannon Newman (AIS, EDU, EMS, Real Estate)
- Break out 2: LC 104 led by Barbara Hockabout (CHM, Community Ed, COS, Fire, Hum, Nursing)
- Break out 3: LC 111 led by Pat Canary (BIO, ECD, ENL, Welding, ITP)
- Break out 4: SNC 123 led by Eric Bishop (BOC, CIS, Soc-Beh Sciences, TLC)
- LC109: Lunch

Present: Loyelin Aceves, Peggy Belknap, Eric Bishop, Patrick Canary, Curtis Casey, John Darst, Sherry French, Heidi Fulcher, Ron Goulet, Barry Graham, Andrew Hassard, Eric Henderson, Dick Heimann, Barbara Hockabout, Julie Holtan, Randy Hoskins, Dana Jolly, Kenny Keith, Nettie Klingler, Greg Maloney, Mary Mathias, Debra McGinty, Tom Nagle, Shannon Newman, Randy Porch, Doug Seely, Bill Solomon, Mike Solomonson

General discussion of assessment at NPC.

Presentation of the Commitment versus Compliance Team (Bishop, Canary, and Klingler)

noting that we focus on assessment as a part of instructional responsibilities to improve student learning. Assessment can be fun as well as functional.

Assessment is linked to external accountability and assessment but it is primarily a process by which faculty explore ways of improving how their students learn.

Presentation by the Assessment Academy Team (Bishop, Canary, Henderson, Hockabout, Newman) focused the project submitted to HLC. The team plans to focus first on general education outcomes starting with critical thinking and then moving to other elements of general education. A critical thinking rubric is being developed and will be tested with a random sample of spring associate degree recipients. In the future the team will examine modality of instruction as part of our assessment practices.

The importance of linking departmental and program missions to the college mission was stressed. Departments and programs should revise (or develop) mission statements and measurable outcomes.

Revisions to NPC's assessment procedures were discussed. The Instructional Council will soon approve a new subcommittee to specifically address assessment (this will be a successor to the former Assessment Committee). The Assessment of Student Knowledge (ASK) subcommittee will be comprised of the five members of the Assessment Academy Team plus a faculty member from each division that is not represented on the academy team, an academic advisor, and a student. The recommendation that we move from a two-year cycle to a one-year cycle seemed to be well received. Some departments are already involved in assessment more frequently than every two years. For other departments the two-year cycle seems to lead to neglecting the process.

Departments broke into small groups to discuss their report with members of other departments and a member of the Assessment Academy Team.

Copies of each submitted report were available. A few copies of late reports were run.

Reconvened Group

Questions:

- How do we motivate neglectful departments to engage in the assessment process?
- How do we gather data?
- Training? Required?
 - goals / objectives / terms
 - professional development time
 - an Assessment workshop

Suggested Changes

- Read in the fall and meet earlier in the spring, consistent with a one-year cycle.
- “Close the loop” -- demonstrate that what is learned in the assessment process is applied and analyze the results of the changes flowing from the assessment reports
- Need to link assessment to overall college mission through departmental and program missions

Break-out Groups on Dialog Day

Group	Room	Facilitator	Attendees
Break out 1:	LC 102	Shannon Newman	AIS -- Nagle EDU-- Heimann EMS & Real Estate - Belknap MAT – Graham
Break out 2:	LC 104	Barbara Hockabout	CHM -- Maloney Community Ed - Aceves Fire Science -- Solomon HUM -- Hockabout Nursing – McGinty, Jolly Also: Solomonson, Mathias
Break out 3:	LC 111	Pat Canary	BIO & ECD -- Canary ENL -- Goulet WLD – Casey & Hoskins ITP – Keith Also: Porch, Holtan, French
Break out 4:	SNC123	Eric Bishop	BOC -- Darst CIS -- Seely Soc-Beh Sciences -- Hassard TLC -- Fulcher
		4 facilitators	22 additional participants

Additional Attendees: Klingler, Henderson