Institutional Assessment Plan

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The Higher Learning Commission

Criteria for Accreditation

Criterion 4. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

SFCC engages in institution-wide, systematic, and continuous improvement through the assessment of the effectiveness of the institution in all academic and administrative units.

Institutional effectiveness is the process of determining whether the college is meeting its mission and goals. The continuous assessment of the quality of all college processes is a necessary component of institutional effectiveness. The results of assessments are used to inform the planning and budget development process.

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Every department provides unique services that contribute to our institution's success. The annual Service Review process at State Fair Community College represents our commitment to growth and improvement, providing regular assessment of overall performance and effectiveness of all departments. The process provides accountability of program quality to key stakeholders and information essential to operational planning, budgeting, and accreditation. Service Review, in particular, affords ongoing opportunities to identify what works well, honestly appraise what could be better, and thoughtfully plan improvements for greater effectiveness.

Service Review is parallel to but distinct from the Program and Discipline Review process conducted by academic and technical, credit and non-credit programs and disciplines. While the process within Program and Discipline Review focuses on student success within the classroom, Service Review for other areas highlights their role in supporting institutional success through their unique services. Both processes are equally important and reinforce the shared connection to our institutional mission.

This process benefits the institution by creating better experiences via thorough review of practices and resources. The process benefits employees who collaborate to articulate current strengths and develop appropriate services and offerings. The process also helps the institution identify needs and specify necessary resource allocation for improvement.

The Service Review would be due from departments Oct. 1 and reviewed by leadership by Nov. 1 and will consist of the following components.

Key Performance Indicators

The Service Department will establish Key Performance Indicators that measure effectiveness. They should address the simple question: How do we know we are doing what we say we are doing? At least one measure should address customer satisfaction. Experience suggests the greatest success with few indicators; three to five indicators are appropriate. With each measure, benchmarks should be established. Those benchmarks could be based on industry standards or institutional experience. In subsequent years, improvements will be suggested as part of the Key Performance Indicator review. In this section you should also reflect on previous actions taken, evaluating the success through these KPIs. Finally, you will establish an improvement plan, tied to the KPIs and if possible to the Strategic Plan.

Budget

Services will submit budget requests for the next fiscal year, in accounts where the increase or decrease exceeds $5,000, in Capital requests, in personnel requests and in professional development. Budgetary recommendations include estimated costs and are tied to strategic planning, Key Performance Indicators, HLC requirements, and the department goals.

Service review results are reported annually to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and to the Board of Trustees.

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Academic Program and Discipline Review

Each career and technical program and each academic discipline complete program or discipline review annually. The purpose of program and discipline review is to assess the viability and the effectiveness of technical programs and academic disciplines.

During the review process, faculty program and discipline coordinators analyze Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) maintained by Institutional Research and report on planned improvements to address KPIs for which the program or discipline did not exceed the college benchmarks. These KPIs include:

1. Success in subsequent courses for developmental students
2. Technical program placement rates
3. Technical end-of-program Technical Skills Assessment results
4. Completion rates
5. Within semester retention
6. Fall to Fall retention
7. Credit hour generation.
8. Number of declared majors
9. Revenue over expenses
10. Percentage of courses taught by adjunct and full-time faculty.

In addition to the Program Review KPIs, the program and discipline faculty and their division chairs and deans analyze Institutional, Program and Course student learning outcomes assessment results and processes, propose budget requests tied to assessment and strategic planning, propose improvements that would make the program or discipline exemplary, review technical program advisory meeting minutes, and for programs with external accreditation review accreditation requirements and reports. Based on the analysis of KPIs and the other information, the program and discipline coordinators, division chairs and deans will develop an action plan for each program and discipline. Programs and disciplines that do not meet viability thresholds will develop an improvement plan with the goal to improvement viability. If that plan does not improve viability, or in the event of financial exigency, programs or disciplines will be recommended to the Curriculum Committee for program/discipline inactivation. The Curriculum Committee will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees (BOT), and the BOT will vote to inactivate or maintain the program or discipline.

Program review results are reported annually to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and to the Board of Trustees.

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The goal of assessment of student learning at SFCC is to improve student learning and thus help the College fulfill its educational mission. This faulty driven assessment provides evidence of how well SFCC is meeting its learning objectives and helps identify areas for improvement.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes -- skills or knowledge level that a student will achieve at the end of a course or a program --is a continuous process, as described in Figure 1.
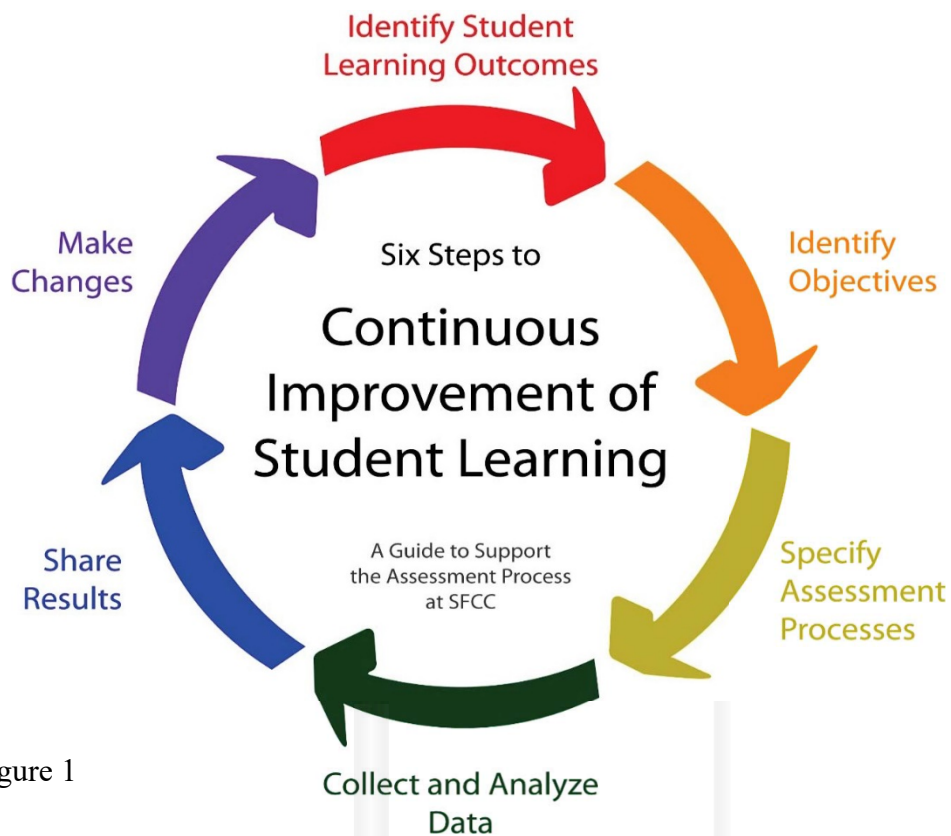

Figure 1

Student Learning Outcomes are assessed through Course Outcomes, Program Outcomes, Institutional Learning Outcomes, General Education Outcomes and Co-Curricular Assessment.

Course Outcomes

Course assessment evaluates student learning through measurable student outcomes for each course. Each course's assessment plan includes:
- Course student learning outcomes: These outcomes are defined by the lead instructor for each course and are included in each course's Course Management System shell.
- Measurement Tools: Assessment tools are identified for each course. These tools may include exams, papers, student performances, products created by students, portfolios and other assessment techniques.
- Benchmarks: Assessment benchmarks are established by the lead instructor.
- Time Frame and Person Responsible

The results of course outcomes assessment are reported each fall during the annual program review. Program and discipline coordinators discuss an analysis of the results of their course learning outcomes assessment with their division chair and dean, including recommended changes.

Program Outcomes

Program assessment evaluates student learning through measurable student outcomes for each program. Each program's assessment plan includes:
- Program Student learning outcomes: These outcomes are defined by the program coordinator.
- Measurement Tools: Technical programs may utilize various assessment strategies, depending on program, including advisory committee and employer input, accreditation, capstone courses and projects, exams, ties to course level assessments, student performance, and state and national licensure.
- Benchmarks: These benchmarks are established by the program coordinator.
- Time Frame and Person Responsible

The results of program outcomes assessment are reported each fall during the annual program review. Program coordinators discuss an analysis of the results of their program student learning outcomes assessment with their division chair and dean, including changes made to the curriculum and the process for sharing the results and changes with others.

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

State Fair Community College students, regardless of their status or particular program of study, will, upon the completion of their general and specialized studies, be able to:

1. Think critically.
   - Gather information by listening to and reading from varied sources.
   - Evaluate information as a guide to belief and action.
   - Apply information to the solving of problems and decision making.
   - Broaden awareness and formulate new ideas.
2. Communicate effectively.
   - Apply Standard English in speaking and writing to clearly express ideas.
   - Use language with clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness.
   - Recognize the role of nonverbal signals in communication.
3. Behave responsibly.
   - Demonstrate personal and professional integrity and ethics.
   - Understand the importance & benefits of service.
   - Exhibit responsible citizenship
4. Value others.
   - Work cooperatively as part of a team.
   - Appreciate cultural diversity and its benefits
   - Cultivate tolerance, civility, and respect for others
5. Develop life skills.
   - Manage time and finances effectively.
   - Value life-long learning.
   - Utilize workforce readiness skills.
   - Incorporate principles of a healthy lifestyle into daily activities
6. Utilize technology.
   - Demonstrate ability to adapt available technology to workplace or personal life.
7. Investigate world processes.
   - Distinguish qualities and characteristics of social, economic, and political systems
   - Appreciate the world's natural and physical processes
   - Explore the roots and expressions of culture

Each technical program and academic discipline assesses at least one Institutional Learning Outcome. The ILO assessment plan for each program and discipline includes:
   - Designation of ILOs being assessed.
   - Identification of tools utilized to evaluate the ILO.
   - A definition of Benchmarks used to assess the ILO.
   - Time Frame and Person Responsible

The results of institutional learning outcomes assessment by program and discipline are reported each fall during the annual program review. Program and discipline coordinators discuss an analysis of the results of their institutional student learning outcomes assessment with their division chair and dean, including changes made to the curriculum and the process for sharing the results and changes with others.

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General Education Outcomes

State Fair Community College faculty and staff maintain the belief that a core of learning experiences exist that are invaluable to all students regardless of their present or future roles in the workplace and the community. These core experiences, which are addressed and assessed in the General Education Program, are consistent with the required skill-based and knowledge-based learning outcomes identified by the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE). They are also consistent with the college's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs).

The CBHE outcomes include mastering the skills of communicating, higher-order thinking, managing information, and valuing through the completion of at least 42-semester hours (CORE 42). These are distributed across the broad knowledge areas of communications, humanities and fine arts, natural sciences, mathematical sciences, and social and behavioral sciences. The ILOs include thinking critically, communicating effectively, behaving responsibly, valuing others, developing life skills, utilizing technology, and investigating world processes. The basic competencies are achieved through the completion of the CORE 42 in its entirety.

In 2018, five general education instructors attended the Higher Learning Commission workshop, Assessing General Education, subsequently using that method to create a regularly meeting General Education Committee comprised of two lead instructors from each knowledge area. Those lead instructors also serve as chairs for their own knowledge area meetings, which focus on reviewing their own classes for success in their chosen state-approved General Education Competencies, referred to as General Education Goals within the institution. Lead instructors in each knowledge area came to consensus on the CBHE outcome(s) for which they believed their areas covered. They aligned their outcomes assessment, so students can be assessed for mastery in those CBHE outcomes, captured in a matrix.

With the implementation of the General Education Committee and a three-year review cycle, the committee and administrators decided to focus efforts on the reviews because the results are readily available and foster collaboration among instructors for meaningful feedback to aid in growth. Not only do knowledge area instructors discuss their goals more frequently with each other, lead instructors use the data collected from their outcomes assessments to drive conversations with section instructors, make changes to curriculum, and communicate those changes to section instructors and the General Education Committee. The committee reviews each knowledge areas' methods of assessment for alignment with the objectives of the knowledge area and chosen CBHE outcomes. Every knowledge area has completed a review that passed these requirements: General Education Goals for the knowledge area are documented and discussed, assessments provided for each course within the knowledge area, assessment tools provided, a timely artifact from each course that is representative of each standard level provided, data provided and number of section instructors in compliance, benchmark documented and discussed, knowledge area's concerns and plan of action documented and discussed, and changes to the curriculum and method of dissemination for section instructors documented and discussed. The first review cycle focused on implementation, but as the committee begins cycle two, the requirements have evolved to include areas which help close the assessment loop: the knowledge area's previous cycle concerns and success of the previous plan of action documented and discussed and the knowledge area's new concerns and plan of action documented and discussed.

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Co-Curricular Assessment

The Co-Curricular Assessment process at State Fair Community College represents our commitment to growth and improvement, providing regular assessment of the effectiveness of co-curricular activities.

Co-curricular activities are structured learning activities that complement the formal curriculum within programs of study, but are not a credit-bearing component of a course. Programs that include a co-curricular component offer opportunities for students to learn by doing. They also allow students to develop problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills.

Differentiating co-curricular from extra-curricular activities is not an exact science. Extra-curricular activities also help students develop problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills and are an essential part of the college experience. Co-curricular activities, however, intentionally align with, augment and enhance curricular goals of a program of study. Co-curricular activities have a specific student learning objective.

The Co-Curricular Review process affords programs with ongoing opportunities to identify what works well, honestly appraise what could be better, and thoughtfully revise for greater effectiveness. Pragmatically, the processes allows State Fair Community College to meet objectives outlined in the Higher Learning Commission's Core Components for Accreditation:
- 1.C.1. The institution encourages curricular or **co-curricular** activities that prepare student for informed citizenship and workplace success.
- 4.B.1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and **co-curricular** offerings.
- 3.C.7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and **co-curricular** activities are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

This process benefits students by creating better experiences through review of learning activities. The process encourages programs to articulate and measure specific student learning objectives for activities, and provides a means to identify strengths and recognize opportunities for improvement.

Programs of study that include a co-curricular component will complete the Co-Curricular Assessment Report for FOUR of the organization's activities, preferable two per semester. If there are not four activities, the report should be completed for all activities. The report also includes information regarding sponsors' professional development, recognitions for co-curricular offerings, and goal setting. The report is due by June 1, annually.

Co-curricular assessment results are reported annually to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and to the Board of Trustees.

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Report Card

The College's highest level Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) are reflected in the SFCC Report Card. The Report Card includes eight key performance measures. The measures were selected as high level KPIs reflecting the college's mission. The Report Card is reviewed at least annually with all staff at the Fall Convocation and with the Board of Trustees. The Report Card includes the measure, the goal for that measure, the actual performance, the trend based on previous years' results, and a benchmark for comparison.

Institutional Surveys

The College regularly surveys key stakeholders to access satisfaction. On an every other year cycle, the College assesses students with the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). In similar fashion, college employees are surveyed every year, alternating the College Employee Satisfaction Survey (CESS) with institutionally-developed surveys to drill deeper into issues raised in the nationally-normed CESS. Survey results are shared with college leadership and college groups and are used to improve instruction and service to students and employees.

End of Course Evaluations

Meaningful input from students is essential for improving courses. One of the most common indirect course assessment methods is the course evaluation survey. Course evaluation surveys provide a way to capture students' perceptions of their learning experiences and attitudes towards the learning process. In addition, course evaluations provide an opportunity for students to reflect and provide feedback on their own learning.

Course evaluation surveys will be open to students in all courses near the conclusion of each part of term. Results will be available to instructors, division chairs, deans, and other administrators as needed after grades are posted at the end of each term. Surveys can be used to offer insight into course design and will inform course, instructional and curricular improvements.

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