

# ASSESSMENT FALL 2001

“Do assessment for improvement; nothing else matters.”

Northwestern Michigan College

August 2001

## ***We did it!***

We developed our philosophy of General Education, stated the outcomes, gathered evidence, and scored it. Before we begin the second year of General Education Assessment using our present plan, we need to look at how it went—assess the assessment. And we may need to make some changes.

## ***How did the system work?***

We started the assessment process with 27 course sections identified as providers of evidence of General Education Outcomes learning. We were able to score 14 sets of student work in Communications (6) and Critical Thinking (8). The Cultural Perspectives team decided not to compile any data this spring. They have used the artifacts to revise and fine-tune the CP rubrics.

## ***Why couldn't all the artifacts be scored?***

Some of the student work submitted was anonymous critiques and couldn't be tracked for the number of credits, etc. One video was submitted which very nicely presented the **finished** student work, but the outcome it was submitted for examined **process**. And some never materialized.

## ***What did the Rubric Teams find, besides evidence of good learning?***

- Scorers thought it was difficult to separate content from writing. But they did it anyway. (Those Chemistry papers were really something for us non-science majors!) When we shared our scores, we found that they were almost identical. Inter-reader reliability, yes!

- Qualities assessed in Level 1 rubric were not reflected in subsequent levels. So in Communications, scorers assessed things like sense of purpose and sentence structure but those qualities were not mentioned in Levels 2 or 3. Should they be? Or is it understood?
- Group project work is difficult to use as evidence. We want evidence of individual learning so that we can look at the results by the number of credits the student has earned.
- Assignments were often descriptive when the outcome asked for evaluative work.
- Assignments (and the results from them) did not always match the outcome. Faculty might want to look at the rubrics when deciding which assignment to use as evidence of General Education learning.
- Faculty should have an opportunity to indicate General Education Outcomes for each course again. Some may have changed, now that some of the rubrics have been revised.

## ***What are the results?***

Please remember that, for various reasons, this data represents only 50 percent of the number of artifacts originally included in the Assessment Plan.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

*Students whose work was scored at Level I had a mean age of 31.6, had completed 38.6 credits, and had a GPA of 3.15.*

### **Proficient is 3 on a 4 pt. scale**

**Level 1: Understand (75% Proficient), organize (75% Proficient), and express**

ideas using standard English. (50% Proficient)

*Students whose work was scored at Level 2 had a mean age of 26.4, averaged 38.5 credits, and had an average GPA of 3.15.*

**Level 2:** Use qualitative or quantitative information-gathering methods (58.3% Proficient), and communicate with an awareness of audience (58.3% Proficient), and a sense of purpose (75% Proficient). (over)

*Students whose work was scored at Level 3 had a mean age of 21.6, averaged 49 credits, and had an average GPA of 3.5.*

**Level 3:** Apply strategies, (80% Progressing, 2 on 4 pt. scale) theories (60% Proficient) or technologies (NA for these artifacts) to communicate in one or more disciplines or professions.

## CRITICAL THINKING

*Students whose work was scored at Level 1 had a mean age of 30.8, averaged 50.8 credits, and had an average GPA of 3.56*

**Level 1:** Identify issues and articulate a process to resolve them. (Between 80 and 100% Proficient on all items on rubric)

*Students whose work was scored at Level 2 had a mean age of 22.4, averaged 28.7 credits, and had a GPA of 3.14.*

**Level 2:** Construct arguments, evaluate claims, and develop conclusions using evidence and logic. (56.6% Proficient)

*Students whose work was scored at Level 3 had a mean age of 21.8, had completed 39.8 credits, and had an average GPA of 3.4.*

**Level 3:** Demonstrate the ability to resolve issues in one or more disciplines or professions. (46.2% Proficient in process and 76.9 Proficient in professional language and method)

## What's next?

- Faculty determine standards.
- Each faculty member reviews the rubrics and determines if the outcomes chosen for his/her course are still valid.
- Each academic area reviews assessment results and determines how to “close the gap.”
- Institutional Research office notifies faculty whose fall class sections are to provide artifacts (copies of student work on selected assignment).
- Artifacts (copies of student work on selected assignment) due Dec. 14. More on this later.

**Thanks to these faculty members for developing the first round of rubrics and using them to score the evidence.**

## Critical Thinking

Gary Klotzbach  
Margery Taylor  
David Terrell  
Jim Valovick  
(Needs science/math faculty member)

## Communications

Ann George  
Tom Gordon  
Marilyn Jaquish  
Mary Quinn  
Jerry Williams

## Cultural Perspectives

Doug Domine  
Mark Howell  
Sonja Olshove  
(Needs science/math and occupational faculty)

We need more faculty members on each team. Please consider working in this very important part of the assessment process.

**Programs and Services Self-Assessment Process**

This past year, the Programs and Services Self Assessment Process (PSSA) was revised to correlate with identified outcomes for each program and service area. On a three-year cycle, with an annual update, academic programs and service areas will complete the six-step self-assessment process with the goal of continuous improvement. Steps include:

- \* Identify Program/Service outcomes.
- \* Establish assessment standards.
- \* Identify and/or develop assessment methods.
- \* Summarize results of assessment.
- Develop action plan to improve results.
- Evaluate PSSA status annually.

Training sessions will be offered during the Fall Semester for academic programs and service areas scheduled to complete their self-assessment this year.

**Stay-tuned for details...**