Assessment Newsletter

The Assessment Newsletter is a communication tool used to provide the NLC community with practical, helpful, and timely assessment news, ideas, and resources as the college moves from theory to practical applications of assessment.

Mission Statement

Northeast Lakeview College is a public community college within the system of Alamo Colleges, established in partnership with its communities, that is focused on student success through the offering of Associate degrees and continuing education, promoting engagement in civic activities and organizations, and encouraging participation in cultural and enrichment programs.

Assessment in Action

Dr. Holly Verhasselt, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, Texas A&M University at San Antonio
Dr. Robert Yowell Named Assessment Coordinator

Dr. Robert Yowell will serve as Assessment Coordinator for NLC starting in Fall 2014. While Dr. Yowell will still serve as an academic chair, he has agreed to also take on additional duties to help move the college’s academic assessment forward. Some of the responsibilities Dr. Yowell will have are:

• Coordinate all assessment initiatives within Academic Success, including the completion, implementation, and coordination of the academic Assessment Plan.

• Provide assistance to faculty and staff, academic departments and programs, campus committees and groups to plan, implement and use assessment of student learning to improve educational quality

Dr. Yowell, in conjunction with Dr. Follins, presented to the Board of Trustees an overview and update on NLC’s accreditation status and provided a plan and timeline for assessment and continuous improvement moving forward.

About Dr. Robert Yowell - As one of NLC’s founding faculty members, Dr. Yowell has been with Northeast Lakeview College since Fall 2006. He is now Associate Professor of Political Science and received tenure in Spring 2011. Dr. Yowell has a B.A. in liberal arts from Whittier College, a M.A. in legislative affairs from George Washington University, and a Ph.D. in political science from The University of Kansas.
NLC Hosts its first Assessment Week
June 30 - July 2

The Assessment Committee at Northeast Lakeview College coordinated an Assessment Week during the Summer 2014 that included focused sessions on supporting program level assessments for both academic and administrative units. **Dr. Karen Nelson**, retired Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness & Professor Emeritus of Psychology from Austin College in Sherman, TX, presented to the NLC faculty, staff, and administrators to kick off the week.

She reviewed **triangulation, student learning outcomes, elements of a good assessment plan, curriculum mapping, basics of a rubric, and 3x3 matrix.** Attendees were very engaged and asked great questions. One faculty expressed how this presentation was very helpful and that “faculty really needed this.”

Some other workshops included an overview of the Assessment Committee charge, the progress made towards continuous improvement at NLC and a review of the Assessment webpage and other resources available for faculty and staff.

**Program Outcome Assessment Plan Discussed**

Dr. Robert Yowell met with Dr. Pagano to construct a proposed plan to move forward with program outcome assessment. Here is an overview of what Dr. Yowell said about the process.

**Absent the feasibility of creating capstone courses or writing our own standardized tests of skills, the tool by which we must measure core competencies will be common assignments across all NLC sections of any course we identified in our course map. Our goal should be to have no fewer than two courses produce student work to assess each core competency in a designated year.**

*It is important that these common assignments are a part of the grading formula to encourage students to perform well, but the exact proportion that an assignment plays in an instructor’s grading will be up to that instructor. The assignment could be embedded in an exam or stand alone, as long as the assignment can be assessed well using the rubrics we are developing. A good strategy will be to use the rubric as a basis for constructing each assignment to make application of the rubric in assessment very natural.*

Since meeting with Dr. Pagano, the development of rubrics and curriculum map is progressing. Drafts of these documents can be found on the college’s sharepoint site.

Dr. Yowell presented his discussion with Dr. Pagano during assessment week.
Northeast Lakeview College Kicks-Off the academic year focused on assessment.

Both the Adjunct Academy and the Fall 2014 Convocation at NLC focused on assessment and continuous improvement. Held on August 16, the Adjunct Academy began with a general session that featured a keynote presentation from Dr. Ryan McLawhon, Director - Office of Institutional Advancement, Texas A&M University, who discussed Assessing Student Work for Curricular and Pedagogical Improvement.

A summary of his presentation included the idea of how many instructors rely heavily on simple grade distributions, student evaluations, or anecdotal information to evaluate their teaching effectiveness. However, he discussed the importance of knowing how students are asked to demonstrate their learning and how those pieces of student work should be evaluated.

Using rubrics, for example to grade student work,

“can be helpful in discovering the gaps in student learning by disaggregating the criteria of student learning outcomes. Rubrics allow instructors to pinpoint areas of pedagogy and curriculum in need of revision (McLawhon)”

Additionally, during the break-out sessions of the Academy, McLawhon hosted a workshop titled Course-Level Curriculum Mapping and during the interactive workshop, attendees were introduced to the concept of course-level curriculum mapping. The focus centered on creating course-level learning objectives which align with program, department, or college-level learning outcomes.

Follins discusses “State of the College”

Held on August 19, the focus of the Fall 2014 convocation was on the "State of the College." Dr. Craig Follins, NLC President, provided an overview on enrollment, graduation/completion, and how the college is meeting community needs. He also included a detailed timeline for how the college will assess student outcomes and utilize a cycle of continuous improvement to demonstrate overall institutional effectiveness.

Content in this publication is generated from the Assessment Committee and is edited by the Public Relations Office.
Dr. Linda Dickens provides a focused training on assessment

Dr. Linda Dickens, Director of Institutional Accreditation and Program Assessment at the University of Texas at Austin, provided a focused training on assessment with the Academic Chairs, Deans, and Director of Institutional Research at Northeast Lakeview College on June 5. The overall goal of the day’s session was to ensure that department chairs and academic deans acquired the skillsets related to assessment. This will help them create program learning outcome (PLO) schedules and processes to collect data and create documents that can report on the PLO data analysis and improvements recommended.

Some focused topics included:
- Presenting examples of completed program review plans
- Presenting examples of completed General Education assessment plans
- Reviewing direct and indirect measures used at NLC
- Presenting program assessment timeline examples
- Presenting curriculum mapping techniques

Linda Dickens holds a Ph.D. in adult and organizational learning and currently works at The University of Texas at Austin assessing curricula, evaluating programs, consulting faculty, and administrators.

Dr. Terri Manning focuses on concepts of assessment

Dr. Terri Manning, Associate Vice President for Institutional Research and Director of the Center for Applied Research at Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), provided the keynote address at the convocation and she focused on these two concepts of assessment and continuous improvement and provided examples on how to develop and enhance the process the College is currently using. Dr. Manning also met with the NLC Assessment Committee in a focused workshop where she overviewed how to develop Program Outcomes and provided feedback on Northeast Lakeview College’s current assessment materials and resources.
Assessment in Action
Dr. Holly Verhasselt, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs at Texas A&M University – San Antonio, met with members of the Northeast Lakeview College leadership team on Assessment.

She provided the oversight for the institution’s SACSCOC document. Texas A&M-San Antonio recently completed their SACS site visit and received positive feedback. She is currently working with Northeast Lakeview College to provide feedback on and assist with sections of our candidacy application.

Dr. Verhasselt has been with Texas A&M-San Antonio for 2.5 years and supervises Institutional Research (IR). She will be providing guidance to NLC through its SACSCOC submission.

Quotes from Dr. Nelson’s session
“Grading is not assessing”
“Triangulation is key! Several pieces of evidence.”
“Plan to use more pre/post testing to assess improvement”

Assessment in Action
Dr. Karen Nelson presents during Assessment Week