

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Title: Student Learning Outcomes	Number: 4.08.0311.1
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RATIONALE

The HLSCC Board, administration and faculty are committed to preparing students and workers for their place in a rapidly developing British Virgin Island community. Student learning outcomes assessment provides for ongoing monitoring of the extent to which students are developing the knowledge, skills, beliefs, and attitudes that are appropriate of degree and certificate recipients from each of its instructional programmes. By providing evidence of the quality of teaching and learning, learning outcomes data assists the faculty in refining course goals and outcomes, ensuring effective curricula and innovative teaching, and identifying faculty development needs relative to methods of teaching. In addition, student learning outcomes assessment assists programmes and the College as a whole in the accreditation process by providing evidence of quality teaching and learning.

In helping to promote a culture of evidence, this policy reaffirms that the College is committed to the central role of faculty in the assessment process and allowing instructional programmes flexibility in choosing the assessment methods that will be most useful and appropriate to programmes, hence to student learning outcomes.

DEFINITIONS

Culture of evidence: An environment in which the use of research and/or assessment results to guide policy decisions is expected and valued;

Instructional programme: represents any entity that offers instruction and from which students may receive a degree and/or certificate of completion following a requisite description of courses, regardless of the method of instructional delivery.

Assessment: The systematic process of evaluating educational goals and objectives, gathering, using, and analysing information about student learning outcomes to make decisions about programmes, individual student progress, or institutional accountability.

Student learning outcomes: The achieved results or the actual consequences of what a student has demonstrated or accomplished; it may be academic and occupational, as well as the intellectual, personal, civic development, attitudes, values, and beliefs that students attain as a result of their educational participation.

Institutional effectiveness: Benefits or changes in a population, organisation, or community due largely to

instructional programme activities; typically expressed in aggregate form. These benefits may include economic, civic, service, community, as well as student learning.

POLICY

The President shall exercise leadership to support student learning at H. Lavity Stoutt Community College. In so doing the President is hereby granted full authority and autonomy by the Board of Governors to utilise College resources to that end in any manner deemed appropriate, so long as the President exercises prudent judgment, ethical and lawful behavior, and reasonable interpretation of this policy. The President shall ensure the College:

1. Develops courses and programmes of instruction with clearly articulated learning outcomes aligned with its mission.
2. Clearly articulates its course, programme and significant institutional learning outcomes for the benefit of faculty, staff, and students.
3. Establishes and publishes academic policies such as graduation requirements and grading policies.
4. Provides programmes which prepare students for successful transfer and accurately inform students how courses transfer to their universities of choice.
5. Provides programmes which have been developed in concert with the requirements of universities and potential employers.
6. Provides programmes which prepare students for successful job placement and provide an appropriate level of career and academic advising regarding the job market and preparation needed for individual careers.
7. Effectively utilises available technology to improve student learning and access to learning.
8. Develops and maintains a library collection of sufficient scope and currency to support a high-quality community college curriculum and to meet the information needs of its students, faculty and staff.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES POLICY STATEMENTS AND PROCESS

A. Planning and Managing the Assessment of Student Outcomes

A positive culture of assessment requires the input of multiple stakeholders. The following guidelines provide a framework for the planning, management and support of student outcomes assessment:

1. Student Learning Outcomes assessment may occur at the instructional, non-instructional or institutional levels.
2. The faculty and staff closest to the delivery of programmes and services are responsible for assessing the student learning outcomes;
3. All instructional programmes are required to maintain and implement a Student Outcomes Assessment Plan that is based on, and that clearly articulates the purpose (mission), goals, expected student learning outcomes of the programme.

4. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plans should reflect a three-year cycle within which all learning outcomes will be assessed. During this term, plans should be adjusted based on changes in the goals or curricula approved for the programme.
5. Courses or other programme components, whether offered through traditional classroom instruction, distance delivery or other forms of instruction should be reflected in the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan.
6. It is the responsibility of the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness to ensure that a three year plan for the assessment of non-instructional student outcomes (including student learning outcomes contained in Board-approved indicators of institutional effectiveness) approved by the President are included as part of a single comprehensive three-year Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan for the College.

B. Assessment Information and Use

1. Assessment should be based on multiple direct and indirect measures, and activities shall be designed to identify both programme and institutional strengths and challenges.
2. The respective department decides what specific student learning outcomes are to be measured, as well as the instruments and procedures for assessing such outcomes.
3. Assessment information shall be used by departments to better understand and improve student learning.
4. The assessment of student learning is expected to stimulate discussions among faculty (full-time, part-time and adjunct) concerning programme learning goals, expected student learning outcomes, curriculum, and teaching strategies as means to improve learning.
5. As an effort designed to foster programme improvement and effective student learning, student learning outcomes assessment information may not be used for personnel decisions (except voluntarily provided by individual faculty), nor should it be the primary criterion for the allocation of resources to instructional departments.

C. Participatory Governance and Student Learning Outcomes Assessment.

Student learning outcomes assessment and instructional programme improvement are collaborative and ongoing processes. A number of different bodies share responsibilities related to these activities. These include not only the faculty and departments offering the programmes, but also the Curriculum Committee, the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee and Instructional Programme Review committees. Key expectations of these standing committees of the College Governance system are summarised as part of this policy.

Curriculum Committee: Effective student learning outcomes assessment is based on a clearly defined purpose of instructional programmes along with statements of programme goals and expected student learning outcomes. It is the responsibility of the Curriculum Committee to ensure that new curricula offerings, or changes to existing curricula reflect the stated purpose of programme, that course goals are aligned with programme goals, and that provisions are made for assessment of articulated student learning outcomes.

Instructional Programme Review Committee: Reports of instructional programme review documents should

include information on the assessment plan for the programme, the learning outcomes, the yearly summary reports of assessment activities, and descriptions of the impact of improvements made based on the assessment results since the last programme review. While no other assessment-related information will be required in programme review documents, departments may choose to include additional assessment information in their programme review materials as supporting documentation.

Student Outcomes Assessment Committee: This committee is the primary means by which groups and individuals that are engaged or affected by student learning outcomes assessment activities or that provide oversight and support for such activities communicate and ensure a shared understanding and effort leading to the success and institutionalisation of a student learning outcomes assessment plan. For this reason, the responsibilities of the Student Outcomes Assessment Committee are described in a charge to the committee that also reflects its membership and requirements. The policy calls for implementation of the charge as it has been assigned by the President. The Vice President provides executive leadership for the Committee. Changes to the membership and charge must be recommended by the Vice President and must be approved by the President.

Detailed responsibilities of the faculty, Heads of Departments, Deans and the Vice President, as well as the Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning and the Director of the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness are described in the Student Outcomes Assessment Plan.

D. Evaluation of the Student Outcomes Assessment Activities

Annual reports prepared by departments are expected to reflect individual analyses and assessment of their student learning outcomes assessment activities, including a description and rationale for changes and recommendations that are related to their plans for the future. These reports are reviewed by the Deans and Vice President.

Moreover, the Student Outcomes Assessment Committee is required to provide to the Vice President, at the end of each academic year, an annual report that represents a comprehensive assessment of student outcome assessment activities. The report is made up of a description of the status of assessment activities in relation to those contained in the plan, together with an assessment of the Committee's performance in relation to the annual goals of the Committee. The Committee is also expected to offer recommendations for changes that might be indicated and to propose a list of goals for the Committee in the year ahead.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PLANNING AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

A. Assessment Planning

1. Assessment plans will generally establish a three-year cycle of student learning outcomes assessment activities – both as it pertains to instructional and non-instructional student learning outcome assessment activities.

B. Assessment Implementation

1. To facilitate implementation of student learning outcomes assessment, the three-year assessment plans that are required of instructional departments should be aggregated to form a Comprehensive Student Outcomes Assessment Plan. It is the responsibility of the Student Outcomes Assessment Committee to ensure that such a plan is maintained.

2. The Goals contained in Department Planning and Assessment Records (DPARs) for individual college departments should reflect the student learning outcomes assessment activities that are contained in the College's Student Outcomes Assessment Plan.

C. Assessment Reporting

1. At the end of each year, the Department Planning and Assessment Records will also include a summary of the results of assessments and, where indicated, the manner in which such results were used for programme improvement, curricula change, faculty development etc. Completed DPARs must be submitted to the Director of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness.
2. Results and use of Student Outcomes Assessment results are also compiled in the Comprehensive Student Outcomes Assessment Plan by the Student Outcomes Assessment Committee for reporting to the Vice President. In this manner, student outcomes assessment information and the use of results are made readily available for review and use by appropriate governance and review (e.g. accreditation) bodies.

D. Public Access to Student Outcomes Information

1. It is the primary responsibility of instructional departments to ensure that student learning outcomes information for instructional programmes is readily available and accessible to current and prospective students.
2. It is the responsibility of the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, working with the Student Outcomes Assessment Committee and the Director of Communications, Public Relations and Marketing, to ensure that student learning outcomes information is summarised and presented in an easy to understand format. Distribution of such information should be made available via the College website, and other means by which general College information is made accessible both on and off the College campus, to current and prospective students, as well as members of the wider community.