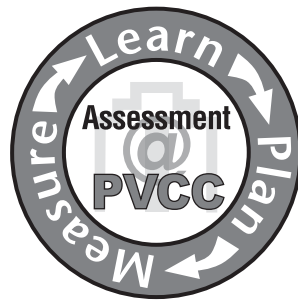


PARADISE VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Progress Report on the Assessment of Student Learning for The Higher Learning Commission

2005-2007



February 2008



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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This Progress Report provides evidence of Paradise Valley Community College's advancement on four assessment-related items identified for further attention by the Higher Learning Commission during its 2005 comprehensive evaluation visit. The report includes an introduction to the College and its accreditation history, a brief history of PVCC assessment initiatives, and a comprehensive response to each of the four items required by the visiting team.

College Overview

Paradise Valley Community College (PVCC) is a member of the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) and serves a predominately residential area of northeast Phoenix. The College offers eight Associate's Degree programs in general education fields and 38 certificate programs in occupational areas; major emphasis is placed on university transfer. Student annual enrollment (headcount) is over 17,000 in credit-based courses. The College's Full-Time Student Equivalent in fall 2007 was 3,891.5. A comprehensive description of Paradise Valley Community College is available on its Web site at www.paradisevalley.edu.

The Maricopa County Community College District consists of 10 colleges and two skill centers located throughout metropolitan Phoenix. A five-member Governing Board oversees the colleges and skill centers. Day-to-day leadership for the District is administered by a Chancellor and Vice Chancellors who unite the colleges in many policy and administrative decisions including: terms of employment, salary and benefits, governance, articulation agreements, curriculum, and government interactions. Each college has its own mission, supportive of the District mission, and its own President, administrators, faculty, and staff. Many important issues and initiatives such as planning, budgeting, governance, and curriculum occur at two levels – the District level and the local College level. The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools separately accredits each college.

Mission Statement

The mission of Paradise Valley Community College is to educate the whole person and to serve our students and our communities by providing learning opportunities that are designed to help them achieve their goals. PVCC provides diverse learning opportunities including:

- ❖ University transfer education
- ❖ General education
- ❖ Developmental education
- ❖ Continuing education
- ❖ Community education
- ❖ Workforce development
- ❖ Student development
- ❖ Honors education
- ❖ Global engagement
- ❖ Civic responsibility

PVCC provides access to these opportunities in a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environment. As a college committed to learning and continuous quality improvement, PVCC annually assesses and publishes reports concerning the effectiveness of its programs and services.

Core Value

Learning is the core value of Paradise Valley Community College. PVCC encourages and supports learning at three levels – student, employee, and organizational – and the integrative relationship between the three levels. Learning at Paradise Valley Community College means increasing the capacity of our students, employees, and the College itself to achieve desired goals. The regular use of assessment results by individuals, departments, divisions, and the College is a significant indicator of being learning-centered.

Strategic Issues

The 2004 to 2007 strategic issues at PVCC are compelling questions the College used to focus its planning, budgeting, and institutional effectiveness. Ongoing conversations based on these eight pervasive questions enabled PVCC to continuously improve its ability to accomplish its mission.

- Strategic Issue #1: What should PVCC do to become a more Learning-Centered College?
- Strategic Issue #2: How will PVCC become a comprehensive College, while developing niche-focused programs?
- Strategic Issue #3: What can PVCC do to address the needs of the increasing numbers of ethnic minority students, other culturally diverse student groups, and a changing student body forecasted for the future?
- Strategic Issue #4: How can PVCC better serve the increasing number of under prepared students entering PVCC?
- Strategic Issue #5: How can PVCC optimize enrollment and retention patterns and better utilize resources and facilities?

- Strategic Issue #6: How can PVCC support institutional advancement and deepen its connections with our community?
- Strategic Issue #7: How will PVCC sustain our support of technology that enriches learning and enhances student and administrative support services?
- Strategic Issue #8: How will PVCC support the stewardship of our resources and optimize the development and use of our facilities?

Organizational Structure

PVCC is organized into three major divisions: Learning, Learning Support Services, and Administrative Services. It employs 109 full-time residential faculty, 368 adjunct faculty, and 138 full-time staff.

The College consists of 11 academic divisions: Business and Information Technology, Communication and Humanities, Counseling and Personal Development, English, Fine and Performing Arts, Health and Exercise Science, Library Services, Mathematics and Computer Science, Science, Social Sciences, and Behavioral Sciences. A faculty chairperson, elected by the faculty within the division, oversees each academic division.

Student Demographics

PVCC faculty and staff serve a diverse student population, representative of northern Phoenix. In fall 2007, Hispanic students made up 11.1% of the total student body, Asian students 2.4%, and Black students 2.4%. The 2000 U.S. Census demographic data from the PVCC service area indicated a population of 79.4% white, compared to 68.9% in the PVCC student population.

Women represent the majority of student enrollments, approximately 58%. The College's Office of Disability Services currently has 454 Americans with Disabilities Act-registered students. The percentage of students aged 19 and under has expanded to almost 30%, reflecting increasing interest in dual enrollment for high school seniors; however, almost 20% of the student body is aged 40 or over.

ACCREDITATION HISTORY

Background

In 1989, Paradise Valley Community College applied for initial accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools to establish itself as the eighth independent college in the Maricopa County Community College District. Following a comprehensive self-study and evaluation, the College received accreditation status on June 22, 1990. The visiting team acknowledged the quality of education at PVCC and advised the College on its initial priorities and strategic issues.

In 1995, PVCC completed another successful self-study and comprehensive evaluation and the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools approved the recommendation for a 10-year accreditation. In 2005, PVCC again completed its self-study and evaluation. The Higher Learning Commission approved the recommendation for a 10-year accreditation, with a required Progress Report on assessment of student learning due March 1, 2008.

Progress Report Requirements

In the progress report, the Higher Learning Commission requested an account of advances on the following:

...the full implementation of the assessment of outcomes of student learning, including evidence:

- (1) that assessment is being used in all program areas and by all faculty to improve teaching and learning;
- (2) that assessment of general education has developed measurable objectives;
- (3) that assessment practices inform and involve students; and,
- (4) that assessment is providing feedback to programs and is being used to improve student learning.

This report provides evidence of the College's progress in each of the items noted by the Higher Learning Commission. A brief section outlining the history of assessment at PVCC prefaces the Progress Report to provide context.

HISTORY OF ASSESSMENT AT PVCC

Background

Assessment of student learning outcomes at Paradise Valley Community College is in direct alignment with the College's Mission Statement, Core Value of Learning, and Strategic Issues. In its simplest form assessment at PVCC attempts to answer the following main questions:

- What do we want our students to know and be able to do?
- How will we know what our students have learned?

The assessment of learning is a central component of PVCC's ongoing transformation to be a more Learning-Centered College. Following the advice of the Higher Learning Commission's visiting team in 2005, PVCC has continued to grow and expand its assessment programs throughout the College.

Assessment Defined

Assessment is a cyclic process for educational improvement. An effective assessment program can be used to substantially improve student learning, facilitate institutional improvements, and validate institutional effectiveness. PVCC's commitment to assessment enables the College to realize its core value of learning.

Assessment of student learning is a systematic attempt to understand what students are, and are not learning; provide feedback to reinforce student learning; and improve student learning.

Philosophy of Assessment

To help the PVCC community better understand the purposes of assessment, in 2001, the Student Academic Achievement Assessment Committee drafted philosophical foundations defining assessment as being:

- The cornerstone of a commitment to become a more learning centered college
- Focused exclusively on the continuous improvement of learning
- Developed by teams
- Viewed as an essential element of the College's instructional program
- Derived from District and College goals and measures
- Tailored to the specifics of each course, discipline, division, service, program, or department
- Considered to be in a state of continuous refinement and improvement

- Conformed to the Higher Learning Commission’s accreditation requirements
- Communicated in simple and clear ways
- Implemented and sustained over time throughout the College

The Committee confirmed that academic assessment within the Learning Division must be faculty driven—that the faculty identifies the outcomes, specifies the means of assessment, and decides what to do with the results. Similarly, department managers in the Learning Support Services and Administrative Services Divisions define out-of-class assessment. Thus, everyone at PVCC has a voice in the assessment process and a responsibility for implementing improvements based on the results.

Assessment Leadership and Teams

The College has taken seriously the recommendations made by the HLC Visiting Team. And, as a result, a major commitment was made to provide leadership for the full implementation of the assessment of outcomes of student learning. The college’s administrative structure was reorganized to advance and support assessment at all levels. A Director of Institutional Effectiveness was hired, whose primary responsibility is to focus the college on assessment, research and planning. The responsibilities of the Director of Research were realigned, with the purpose of providing leadership for building the infrastructure for faculty involvement in assessment. In addition, a residential faculty member was provided released time to serve as the Faculty Assessment Coordinator. This individual partners with the Director of Research in establishing the college’s comprehensive assessment program.

PVCC’s three Vice Presidents and its Director of Institutional Effectiveness oversee the coordination of assessment activities at the College. The Director of Research, Faculty Assessment Coordinator, and Out-of-Class Assessment Coordinator provide direct leadership to the assessment teams. In 2007, the **Assessment Coordination Team** was formed to provide holistic oversight of the College’s assessment activities. This core leadership group collaborates with the major assessment teams: the Academic Assessment Team, Out-of-Class Assessment Team, and General Education Assessment Teams. The Assessment Coordination Team meets at least once each semester to communicate about current assessment activities, identify areas of focus, support projects, monitor improvement efforts, and transfer results into strategic planning.

The **Academic Assessment Team** (AAT) is co-chaired by the Faculty Assessment Coordinator and the Director of Research. It includes faculty

representatives from each of the College's academic divisions. The AAT works with faculty to effectively assess authentic student learning and achievement.

The Out-of-Class Assessment Coordinator assists the **Out-of-Class Assessment Team** (OCAT), consisting of representatives from Learning Support Services and Administrative Services, in the assessment of compelling student learning outside of class.

The **General Education Assessment Teams** are comprised of AAT members and additional faculty who design rubrics and accompanying materials to promote, apply, and assess student learning in general education areas, specifically Written Communications, Oral Communications, Information Literacy, Problem Solving, and Technology.

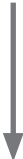
The organizational structure of the teams, leadership, membership, and major responsibilities are outlined in the following figure, Organizational Structure of Assessment at PVCC.

Organizational Structure of Assessment @ PVCC

Assessment Coordination Team (ACT)

Leadership	Membership	Major Duties
------------	------------	--------------

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Institutional Effectiveness • Vice President of Learning • Vice President of Learning Support Services • Vice President of Administrative Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Research • Faculty Assessment Coordinator • Out-of-Class Assessment Coordinator | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Strategic Planning • Overall Coordination • Monitor Progress |
|---|---|---|



Academic Assessment Team (AAT)

Out-of-Class Assessment Team (OCAT)

General Education Assessment Teams (GET)



Leadership	Leadership	Leadership
------------	------------	------------

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Assessment Coordinator • Director of Research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out-of-Class Assessment Coordinator | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Education Team Leaders |
|--|---|--|

Membership	Membership	Membership
------------	------------	------------

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice President of Learning • Academic Division Representatives • Director of Institutional Effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice President of Learning Support Services • Vice President of Administrative Services • Director of Institutional Effectiveness • Director of Research • Faculty Assessment Coordinator • Department Managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAT Representatives • At-Large Faculty |
|--|--|---|

Major Duties	Major Duties	Major Duties
--------------	--------------	--------------

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Outcomes Support • Measurement Tools • Reporting Results • Consulting Assistance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Outcomes Support • Providing Feedback • Reporting Results • Consulting Assistance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of General Education Learning Outcomes • Measurement Tools • Reporting Results • Consulting Assistance |
|--|---|---|

Chronology of Key Assessment Events from 2005 – 2007

The following chronology of key assessment events provides evidence of the heightened level of college-wide emphasis placed on assessment at PVCC following the 2005 comprehensive evaluation visit.

2005 – 2006

- Feb. 2005* Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) conducted.
- Fall 2005* “Connecting Academic and Student Affairs to Enhance Student Learning and Success.” Dale, P., & Drake, T. (2005, Fall). In Helfgot, S., & Culp, M. (Eds.) *Community College Student Affairs: What Really Matters. New Directions of Community Colleges*. Number 131. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Aug. 2005* Out-of-Class Assessment Coordinator hired to assist with assessment efforts in Learning Support Services and Administrative Services.
- PVCC Board-Approved New Employee Orientation presentation reviewed assessment as best practice and related processes.
- Division-specific assessment training held for residential and adjunct faculty in English, Communication/Humanities, and Developmental Mathematics.
- Learning Week presentation on CCSSE findings to faculty and staff.
- Sept. 2005* “Assessment as the Cornerstone to a Learning Centered College” presentation by Vice President of Learning Bendotti to residential and adjunct faculty.
- Director of Research position realigned to support assessment functions; position especially supports academic assessment, building infrastructure for faculty involvement.
- Out-of-Class Assessment Steering Committee formed.

- Oct. 2005* General Education rubrics drafted and approved by the Academic Assessment Team.
- Learning outcomes identified by Learning Support Services areas.
- Nov. 2005* General Education assessment timeline and process finalized. Courses selected for spring assessment with input from Division Chairs.
- Jan. 2006* “Implementing Rubrics for Learning” Learning Week session trained faculty and staff on use of rubrics for General Education assessment.
- “Student Engagement Best Practices” Learning Week training session for faculty and staff based on 2005 CCSSE findings.
- “Why Good Teaching Matters” Learning Week session by Kati Haycock, Director of The Education Trust.
- Mar. 2006* “Developing Student Learning Outcomes in Student Affairs” all-day assessment workshop by Dr. Maggie Culp.
- “*Assessing General Education Learning Outcomes in the Out-of-Class Experience,*” Dale, P. (2006, March). NASPA National Conference.
- College reallocated funds from a vacant position to create Director of Institutional Effectiveness line, in direct response to HLC’s recommendations.
- Apr. 2006* “Validating the Total Student Learning Experience: PVCC’s Out-of-Class Assessment Initiative” awarded the Maricopa County Community College District Innovation of the Year.
- May 2006* First set of General Education assessment data collected and compiled.
- Joint Assessment Retreat – Administrative Services and Learning Support Services Divisions.

- June 2006* Academic division and out-of-class assessment reports collected and analyzed.
- “*Assessing Student Learning Outside the Classroom*,” Dale, P. (2006, June). NASPA International Assessment and Retention Conference.
- July 2006* Faculty from the Academic Assessment Team previewed the General Education Learning Outcomes assessment data in preparation for discussions on resulting program improvements.
- 2006 – 2007**
- Aug. 2006* PVCC Board-Approved New Employee Orientation presentation reviewing assessment as best practice and related processes.
- General Education Learning Conversations – faculty and staff gathered to examine and discuss the General Education assessment data and draft recommendations.
- Division-specific assessment sessions held in English, Communication/Humanities, Counseling, Business/IT, and Mathematics.
- Sept. 2006* “Assessment as the Cornerstone to a Learning Centered College” presentation by Vice President of Learning Bendotti to residential and adjunct faculty.
- Oct. 2006* Assessment Workshop for Learning Support Services and Administrative Services staff. Templates developed for out-of-class assessment plans and reports.
- Nineteen Learning Support Services departments submitted out-of-class assessment plans.
- General Education Teams and the Academic Assessment Team reviewed faculty recommendations and drafted action plans to implement changes as a result of the spring General Education Learning Outcomes assessment.

- Nov. 2006 Assessment Handbook published and distributed.
- Director of Institutional Effectiveness hired to focus on College planning, research, and assessment.
- Academic Assessment Team worked with division chairs to increase the number of sections participating in the spring 2007 General Education Learning Outcomes assessment.
- “A Mosaic Collection of Student Learning Outcomes for Student Affairs,”* Dale, P. (2006, November). NASPA Regional Conference.
- 2007 “Paradise Valley Community College: General Education Case Study.” Dale, P. (2007). In Bresciani, M.J. (Ed.) *Assessing Student Learning in General Education* (pp.125-145). Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Company.
- Jan. 2007 “iCanThink: General Education Outcomes Assessment 2007” Learning Week session trained and prepared faculty and staff for upcoming General Education assessment.
- Feb. 2007 Four Out-of-Class Assessment Study Hall sessions held for Learning Support Services and Administrative Services staff to receive assessment assistance.
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) West newsletter included article on assessment of student learning outcomes by Vice President of Learning Support Services and Out-of-Class Assessment Coordinator.
- Mar. - Apr. 2007 CCSSE administered in classes.
- May 2007 General Education assessment data collected and compiled.
- June 2007 Academic division and out-of-class assessment reports collected and analyzed.
- “Out-of-Class Learning Outcomes Assessment,” all-day workshop by Dr. Marilee Bresciani for faculty and staff.

July 2007 “Using Assessment of General Education Outcomes to Bring an Out-of-Class Learning Centered Model to Life,” Dale, P. (2007, July). Evaluating Institutional Learning Centeredness Conference, San Diego, CA.

Jul. - Aug. 2007 Faculty from the Academic Assessment Team previewed the General Education Learning Outcomes assessment data in preparation for discussions on resulting program improvements.

2007 – 2008

Aug. 2007 PVCC Board-Approved New Employee Orientation presentation reviewed assessment as best practice and related processes.

“Assessment Tuesday: General Education Learning Conversations,” Faculty and staff examined and discussed the General Education assessment data and drafted recommendations.

“English Division Assessment Day!” Training session for English faculty using the written communications rubric.

Learning Week presentation on CCSSE findings to faculty and staff.

Oct. 2007 Continued refinement of assessment templates for out-of-class assessment.

Academic and Out-of-Class Assessment Manuals reviewed and revised by Out-of-Class Assessment Team and Academic Assessment Team members. Distribution of combined manual planned for spring 2008.

Nov. 2007 Three Study Hall sessions held for individual faculty to receive assessment assistance.

Levels of Assessment

Assessment at PVCC emphasizes authenticity, is viewed as a best practice, and is done for the specific purpose of individual and organizational learning. Assessment measures and standards at PVCC are developed at the Class/Course, General Education Learning Outcomes, Program, and Out-of-Class levels. Data are used to inform improvements at every level.

Class- and Course-level assessment focuses on individual and collective best practices for instruction. Faculty members use assessment regularly and report on their projects annually through the Assessment Project Report.

Performance standards for **General Education Learning Outcomes** are established in five key areas: Written Communications, Oral Communications, Information Literacy, Problem Solving, and Technology. Data from each general education area are collected annually during spring semester, analyzed, discussed by faculty, and used to inform changes.

In **Program-level assessment**, the College collects student learning outcomes data that exist consistently across programs. Additional assessment activities at the program level include the evaluation of core elements and national best practices.

PVCC has a system for planning, developing, and implementing strategies and practices that assess student learning in **Out-of-Class** experiences. Staff members use assessment results to stimulate reflective thinking and conversation that contribute to continuous program improvement and increased student learning.

Collectively assessment initiatives are cast as “Assessment@PVCC” to reflect a full, systemic, integrated implementation at all levels. A comprehensive view of assessment of learning at PVCC and the Assessment Handbook are available on the College Web site at <http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/AL/>.

ITEM ONE: Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes Besides General Education

Statement of the Problem

In 2005, it did not appear that assessment activities at Paradise Valley Community College had moved adequately beyond the course level to division/program-level and degree-level assessment.

Background

Assessment at PVCC includes class- and course-level, general education learning outcomes, program level, out-of-class, and student engagement. Class-level assessment is defined as one instructor assessing learning in one course; course-level as multiple instructors assessing learning in the same course. Program-level assessment is defined as multiple instructors assessing learning in two or more courses. The various levels will be discussed separately in this report as they relate directly to the progress report items required.

This section of the report will respond directly to Item One identified by the HLC and will report PVCC's progress in the areas of class/course-level, program-level, and out-of-class assessment. General education assessment will be discussed in Item Two of this report, and student engagement in the assessment process will be discussed in Item Three of this report.

Item Four will demonstrate how PVCC has used its assessment results to inform program improvements and enhance student learning.

Progress

Class/Course Assessment

Class assessment refers to assessment efforts conducted by an individual faculty member for a specific class or section. The faculty member determines the outcome(s) of interest, selects the most appropriate measures, analyzes the results (with assistance from the Director of Research, if requested), decides the most effective course of action for improvement, and implements the changes. Although most faculty members have always engaged in this process informally, they now take a more scientific and systematic approach to make their outcomes and assessment efforts explicit.

Course assessment is similar, but the assessment efforts are conducted by groups of faculty – usually those teaching multiple sections of the same

course. Faculty members collectively agree on the outcome(s) of interest, measures, and recommendations for action.

All residential faculty members (full-time, Board-approved) are expected to complete and report on at least one class/course assessment project per year. The Assessment Project Report (see Appendix B) asks in what course(s) the assessment was implemented, what assessment strategy was used, what challenges were experienced implementing the assessment tool, how the results of the assessment were analyzed, what changes were suggested and/or implemented as a result of the assessment, how the faculty member's understanding of and involvement in assessment was enhanced that year, how the faculty member's progress in assessment was limited that year, and how additional progress and participation in the assessment of student learning can be facilitated. Faculty members discuss best practices and share their learning experiences resulting from assessment activities. These reflections occur individually and collectively at monthly division meetings and at the college-wide Assessment Day (a Learning Week training and reflection seminar held prior to the start of each semester).

Course assessment for Online and FlexExpress sections is carried out using the same instruments and tools as the traditional on-ground courses. PVCC expects students to demonstrate knowledge and skills of the same course competencies through equivalent assignments and methods. PVCC does not offer any degree or certificate programs through alternate course delivery mechanisms, only selected courses. A team of four faculty, an instructional technologist, and a Learning Services administrator will be trained to become Quality Matters™ certified evaluators. Quality Matters™ is a peer-based program for quality assurance in online education.

Division Assessment Reports

At the end of each academic year, division chairs assemble a report containing the class/course assessment projects reported by all residential faculty members. The Division Assessment Report (see Appendix B) asks the following:

- how division chairs have interacted with their division representative to the Academic Assessment Team;
- how division chairs have interacted with their division representatives on the General Education Teams;
- how division chairs have encouraged and supported the assessment of student learning with their full-time residential faculty;

- how division chairs have encouraged and supported the assessment of student learning with their adjunct faculty; and
- how division chairs have facilitated course and program assessment in their division.

In the Division Assessment Report, the division chairs also describe how they have worked with their faculty in evaluating assessment results to improve student learning, how PVCC's expectations and reporting requirements for student learning assessment can be improved, and how the division chairs have increased their faculty members' understanding of assessment as a core component in becoming a more learning-centered college.

The annual Division Assessment Report is reviewed to identify opportunities to further develop assessment as a core pedagogical practice at PVCC. The assessment reports focus on not only the outcomes and measures, but on closing the loop by identifying specific ways the results were used to improve teaching and learning practices.

As an example, in 2005, the English Division began conducting its own additional assessment meetings before the start of the fall semester. During the fall 2006 review, assessment data suggested that grammar/mechanics and MLA format were areas that needed improvement in teaching. To be consistent and helpful in the instruction of MLA format, assessment data were used to develop teaching and learning strategies for the English Division, the Learning Center, and the PVCC Library. Based on a commitment to increase the integration of program- and class/course-level assessment, the English Division Chair completely revised the English Division rubric, assessment instructions, and assessment report forms to create an English Division Assessment notebook that offers guidelines for conducting the ENG101 and ENG102 assessment.

Participation in Assessment

In 2005-2006, 69% of residential faculty reported direct involvement with class/course assessment. In 2006-2007, participation of residential faculty rose 10%, when 79% reported direct involvement with class/course assessment.

Adjunct faculty members are also participating in both class/course assessment and general education assessment. In 2005-2006, 26% of adjunct faculty members conducted such assessment projects and 32% of adjunct faculty members participated in 2006-2007. Residential faculty are helping adjunct faculty by sharing how they conduct assessment for specific

assignments in specific courses. This allows the adjunct faculty member to use established methods and concentrate on results.

Faculty Participation in Class/ Course Assessment	2005-2006 n	2005-2006 Percentage	2006-2007 n	2006-2007 Percentage
Residential Faculty	74 of 107	69%	82 of 104	79%
Adjunct Faculty	99 of 375	26%	146 of 454	32%

Assessment is emphasized during new employee orientation, to ensure that all faculty and staff are aware of its importance and applications at PVCC. New residential faculty members are required to participate in the Collegial Support Partnership Program (CSPP) during their first year at PVCC, which includes a thorough orientation to becoming learning-centered and an understanding of PVCC’s commitment to assessment. Training sessions cover the College’s assessment philosophy and methods. Experienced faculty members mentor new faculty during their first year at PVCC. Assessment is covered in the orientation for adjunct faculty. In addition, adjunct faculty are invited to college-wide and academic division events, which include assessment discussions.

Program Assessment

As a first emphasis to expand assessment beyond the class/course level, PVCC has concentrated its assessment efforts on core courses in each discipline and on general education. One of the emphases of the College is preparing students for successful transfer to a four-year university, usually one of the three public universities in Arizona. Thus, general education is core to the mission of the College, and an established general education curriculum and learning outcomes apply throughout the degree and certificate programs offered. General Education Assessment is fully discussed in Item Two of this report.

To set the stage for program-level assessment, PVCC’s program review process was expanded after the 2005 HLC comprehensive evaluation visit. The definition of a program for PVCC’s program review purposes is determined by the Division Chair or Work Unit Manager, in consultation with the appropriate Vice President. Examples of programs include a group of courses that result in a degree or certificate, a transfer sequence, or a combination of discipline-specific courses. PVCC recognizes that program review is not synonymous with program assessment. The program review process solicits information on learning outcomes, competencies, and an assessment profile. In this regard, the College believes that we have the

strong foundation for program assessment. Learning outcomes and course competencies are considered for each course in the program. The program review describes how student learning is assessed and how assessment information is used by faculty and staff to enhance student learning. Program reviews are scheduled on a five-year cycle. Between 2005 and 2007, 12 program reviews were completed and 14 programs reviews are in-progress:

<i>Completed Program Reviews</i>	<i>Program Reviews In-Progress</i>
Real Estate	Music Bus./Audio Production
Communication	Child/Family
Microsoft® certification	Psychology
Developmental Writing	Computer Information Systems
Nutrition	Emergency Medical Technician
Geology	Administration of Justice
Management	Foreign Languages other than Spanish
Emerging Leaders	Personal Development
Professional Scientist	Reading
Spanish	Music Transfer
Counseling	Fire Science
English as a Second Language	Math Education
	Anthropology
	Adult Reentry

Action plans developed through the program review process support the College’s assessment initiatives and are used as part of the operational planning process for the College. Results are discussed in Item Four of this report.

Out-of-Class Assessment

PVCC recognizes that student learning occurs both in and out of class. Over the past several years, Learning Support Services and Administrative Services professionals at PVCC have participated in professional development opportunities emphasizing the assessment of student learning. Staff members in these divisions have identified learning outcomes for students and employees, and continue to refine their learning outcome assessment plans annually. Development of methodologies and specific requirements for content, form, and planning and reporting schedules has resulted in approximately 60% of the Learning Support Services departments preparing to move to more complex assessment activities.

Since PVCC conducted its Self-Study in 2005, an Out-of-Class Assessment Coordinator was hired part-time to assist with assessment efforts. Templates were developed for out-of-class assessment plans and reports (see Appendix B). Managers in each Learning Support Services and Administrative Services area are responsible for implementing an assessment plan during the academic year. The Out-of-Class Assessment Coordinator works with the managers to develop the plan, identify assessment tools, and to develop an implementation strategy. Assessment plans are developed in the fall semester and are reviewed by the Out-of-Class Assessment Team. Projects are conducted and assessment summary reports are completed at the end of the spring semester. The reports are reviewed by the Out-of-Class Assessment Team and improvements are incorporated in the planning process for the next year.

During 2006-2007, all of the areas in the Learning Support Services Division submitted assessment plans, and 13 of the 19 areas submitted reports documenting their results. Staff members are encouraged to use the general education rubrics for out-of-class assessment when appropriate (see discussion in Item Two). An emphasis has been made in all assessment efforts to stimulate reflective thinking and contribute to the continuous improvement of student learning.

ITEM TWO: Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes

Statement of the Problem

In 2005, Paradise Valley Community College had not translated the general education learning outcomes into performance measures that could be directly assessed in ways that allowed a meaningful summation of assessment results across programs and degrees.

Background

Faculty representing all of the colleges in the Maricopa County Community College District drafted MCCC'D's general education statement, prior to PVCC's 2005 Self Study (see www.maricopa.edu/academic/ccta/curric/cphb/genedguide.php). The College used the District statements as starting points and subsequently crafted its general education learning outcomes to be in full alignment with the District objectives, yet more focused on the College's unique student population, mission, and learning-centered philosophy. The result was a list of four general education learning outcomes in the areas of: Communication, Information Literacy, Problem Solving, and Technology. These four components are considered important facets of the core outcome of Critical Thinking.

PVCC General Education Learning Outcomes:

Critical Thinking is exhibited by the ability to:

- respond to material by distinguishing between facts and opinions, judgments and inferences, inductive and deductive arguments, and the objective and subjective;
- generate questions, construct and recognize the structure of arguments, and adequately support arguments;
- define, analyze, and devise solutions for problems and issues;
- collect, organize, classify, correlate, analyze and present materials and data;
- integrate information and identify relationships; and
- evaluate information, materials, and numerical and/or graphical data by drawing inferences, arriving at reasonable and informed conclusions, applying understanding and knowledge to new and different problems, developing rational and reasonable interpretations, suspending beliefs and remaining open to new information, methods, cultural systems, values and beliefs and by assimilating information.

I. Communication

A. Listening

The student will be able to listen to others with literal and critical comprehension.

1. The student will be able to listen with literal comprehension and be able to:
 - recognize main ideas.
 - identify supporting details.
 - recognize explicit relationships among ideas.
 - recall basic ideas and details.

2. The student will be able to listen with critical comprehension and be able to:
 - attend with an open mind.
 - receive the speaker's purpose and organization of ideas and information.
 - discriminate between statements of fact and statements of opinion.
 - distinguish between emotional and logical statements.
 - detect bias and prejudice.
 - recognize the speaker's attitude.
 - synthesize and evaluate by drawing logical inferences and conclusions.
 - recall the implications and arguments.
 - recognize discrepancies between the speaker's verbal and nonverbal messages.
 - employ active listening techniques when appropriate.

B. Reading

The student will be able to read critically and be able to:

- identify both stated and implied main ideas.
- define the relationships between main ideas and supporting ideas.
- recognize the organizational structure of written material.
- paraphrase ideas fairly.
- distinguish between fact and opinion.
- make appropriate inferences.
- accurately describe the author's purpose and tone.

- value reading as a source of lifelong learning and recreational enjoyment.
- successfully apply critical reading skills to a wide range of materials.
- comprehend, apply, synthesize, evaluate, form opinions, and make appropriate decisions based on written text.

C. Speaking

The student will be able to:

- communicate orally his/her ideas on a topic objectively or subjectively in a competent and confident manner.
- choose and narrow a topic appropriately for the audience, occasion, and purpose.
- communicate the thesis/specific purpose in a manner appropriate for the audience and occasion.
- provide supporting material appropriate to the topic, audience, occasion, and purpose.
- use an organizational pattern appropriate to the topic, audience, occasion, and purpose.
- use language appropriate to the topic, audience, occasion, and purpose.
- use vocal variety in rate, pitch, and intensity (volume) to heighten and maintain interest and that is appropriate to the topic, audience, occasion, and purpose.
- use pronunciation, grammar, and articulation appropriate to the topic, audience, occasion, and purpose.
- use physical behaviors that support the verbal message and that are appropriate to the topic, audience, occasion, and purpose.

D. Writing

The student will be able to communicate in writing his / her ideas:

- on a topic objectively or subjectively in a competent manner.
- in an organized manner using an appropriate rhetorical strategy.
- logically using appropriate language (word choice, voice, and tone), supporting materials, and transitions that meet the needs of the intended audience.
- using appropriate grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, spelling, and format, and within a given word count.

II. Information Literacy

The student will demonstrate the ability to determine an information need, access successfully and evaluate critically the needed information, and organize and apply the information appropriately to accomplish a given task.

The student will be able to:

- determine the nature and extent of the information needed.
- access needed information effectively and efficiently.
- evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.
- individually or as a member of a group, use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.
- understand many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and access and use information ethically and legally.

III. Problem Solving

The student will be able to analyze information and solve problems.

The student will be able to:

- distinguish between probable and improbable causes of a problem.
- distinguish between plausible and implausible inferences, predictions and interpretations based upon a problem presented.
- recognize and evaluate assumptions based on information presented in a short passage.
- recognize restatement of data, valid hypotheses and the reasons for data presented.
- weigh evidence and decide if generalizations or conclusions based upon the given data are warranted.
- determine if data from various experiments (sources) support one or another hypothesis based upon a given problem.
- distinguish between effective and ineffective action based on information presented.
- predict consequences.
- use evidence or sound reasoning to justify a position.
- distinguish between relevant and extraneous facts when presented with a problem.

- determine the appropriate method of inquiry when presented with a problem.

IV. Technology

The student will be able to use technological resources appropriately and efficiently.

The student will be able to:

- use online and electronic resources to communicate, collaborate, and retrieve information.
- use input and output devices to successfully access modern technologies.
- use a variety of technology and multimedia resources and applications to remediate skill deficits, facilitate learning throughout the curriculum, and support personal, academic, and professional productivity.
- determine when technology is useful and select the appropriate tool(s) and technology resources to address a variety of tasks and problems.
- understand and communicate, using accurate terminology, common uses of technology in daily life and the advantages and disadvantages those uses provide.
- understand and effectively utilize a networked computer system.
- apply strategies for identifying and solving routine hardware and software problems.
- advocate and apply positive social and ethical behaviors when using technology and identify the consequences of misuse.
- demonstrate knowledge of, and make informed choices among technology systems, resources, and services.

Progress

To ensure alignment between the curriculum offered by PVCC and the general education outcomes, the College completed a course-mapping matrix. This spreadsheet details each course in the general education curriculum and the expected general education outcomes and can be viewed at www.pvc.maricopa.edu/AI/documents/coursemap.xls. PVCC used a method adapted from the *Outcomes Primer* (Stiehl & Lewchuck, 2002) to show connections between the course description and competencies established by the MCCCC Instruction Councils and the general education learning outcomes, where student performance is measured through assessment.

PVCC's general education learning outcomes statements were complete at the time of the 2005 comprehensive visit, but the rubrics were not. In the fall of 2005, PVCC faculty researched the literature prior to developing the rubrics (see examples of general assessment resources reviewed at <http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/AI/resource.html>). Five rubrics were developed and adopted that would be flexible enough to be cross-disciplinary, yet specific enough to provide reliable and valid data to gauge student performance levels in the specific dimensions related to each outcome. Student learning and teaching effectiveness are measured annually using each of these rubrics. The objective is that every graduate of PVCC is competent in each of these areas.

The basic forms of the five rubrics are provided in Appendix C. All of the rubrics use a standard 3-point performance scale for each dimension, in which 0 = the student does not meet minimum standards for competence; 1 = the student needs improvement; and 2 = the student meets or exceeds minimum standards for competency. It is important to note that the rubrics are not intended to measure excellence, but rather standards of competence. Some courses do not use all of the dimensions, especially if concepts are being introduced, but not mastered. Variations of the rubrics are also prepared to meet the needs of specific applications, i.e. Sample Assessments and Rubrics for Problem Solving at www.pvc.maricopa.edu/AL/gened_probsolv.html. A Web site was created at www.pvc.maricopa.edu/AL/gen_ed.html to provide comprehensive resources for the College's general education assessment tools including learning outcomes for each general education area; sample assessments; rubrics and rubric scoring sheets; assessment guidelines; assessment results; and contact information for members of the General Education Assessment Teams.

The College collected its first comprehensive data for all five of the general education rubrics in spring 2006. Participation increased significantly for spring 2007. Faculty from each division participated and the data provide a measure of student abilities.

Faculty Participation in General Education Assessment	Spring 2006 n	Spring 2006 Percentage	Spring 2007 n	Spring 2007 Percentage
Residential Faculty	36 of 107	34%	75 of 104	72%
Adjunct Faculty	21 of 376	6%	44 of 368	12%

Faculty members using the general education rubrics during the spring semester are asked to complete a General Education Participation Report. The report specifies the following:

- which general education learning outcomes are to be assessed;
- how the assessment will be integrated into the course or program;
- how processes were changed to facilitate the assessment;
- how students were prepared for the assessment; and
- how the rubric will be used in the course or program.

The scored rubrics are compiled by the Director of Research and results are reported in the summer to the College. The results are then analyzed and discussed at the beginning of the fall semester, with improvements identified and implemented. General education assessment results and improvements will be discussed in Item Four of this report.

General Education Assessment Activities	Spring 2006	Spring 2007
Academic Sections Assessed	89	303
Out-of-class Projects Assessed	3	5
Written Communications	39	82
Oral Communications	22	38
Information Literacy	14	89
Problem Solving	9	57
Technology	8	42

At this stage of the implementation, Learning Support Services and Administrative Services professionals are not directly involved with the construction of the general education learning outcomes. In some areas, however, they are measuring general education learning outcomes that occur as a result of student engagement in the out-of-class environment. The Emerging Leaders program, hosted by the Student Life department, and the Service Learning program both use the Written Communications rubric to assess student learning. The Emerging Leaders program also uses the Oral Communications rubric and the Problem Solving rubric. All staff members are encouraged to explore ways to align out-of-class assessment efforts with academic assessment efforts. Many of the out-of-class arenas have faculty on advisory or liaison teams, and some assessment partnerships have resulted.

Professional Development

The week prior to each fall and spring semester is “Learning Week” at PVCC. The College devotes Tuesday morning of each Learning Week to assessment, during which faculty and staff engage in discussions about assessment in general; the general education rubrics and their use; assessment results;

and suggestions for improvement. Additional sessions during Learning Week frequently discuss other aspects of assessment, such as written communications, oral communications, student engagement, etc.

Faculty members lead small group presentations on implementing the rubrics. Instruction materials have been prepared to provide examples of rubric scoring. Additional “study hall” sessions provide assistance for faculty and staff engaged in assessment activities. Help is available to tailor the general education rubrics for use in various disciplines and for assignments that do not fit the generic versions.

ITEM THREE: Assessment Practices Inform and Involve Students

Statement of the Problem

In 2005, Paradise Valley Community College students interviewed during the comprehensive evaluation visit did not appear to be informed about assessment activities and purposes.

Background

Course level assessment is often not known as such by students; students usually think of such activities as the grading of assignments, papers, projects, tests, etc. At the time of the comprehensive 2005 evaluation visit, PVCC had not yet developed its general education assessment rubrics. Since that time, two collections of annual general assessment data have been compiled, analyzed, and applied. Efforts to involve and inform students in assessment between 2005 and 2007 are detailed in this section of the Progress Report.

Progress

Outcomes Assessment Statement in Catalog

The following statement about outcomes assessment has been added to the PVCC Catalog:

“The mission of the Maricopa Community Colleges is to create and continuously improve affordable, accessible, and effective learning environments for the lifelong educational needs of the diverse communities we serve. In order to evaluate how successfully Maricopa Community Colleges accomplish this mission, student outcomes will be assessed as part of the continuous improvement process. Students may be asked to participate in a variety of assessment activities at each college. Assessment results will be used to improve educational programs, services and student learning.”

Course Syllabi

An increasing number of faculty now include information about competencies and assessment in their course syllabi. Many faculty share the general education rubrics with students as a part of their teaching and learning.

Agenda for Student Success and Learning

PVCC’s Agenda for Student Success and Learning was developed as a student-engagement and learning plan that includes eight outcomes, organized into three parts – iPlan, iLearn, and iDo. iPlan outcomes help the student to identify educational, personal, and career goals; to describe how degree

and certificate requirements and general education courses assist them in reaching educational goals; and to discover how to become an independent, self-sufficient learner through the monitoring of their educational, personal, and career goals. iLearn outcomes help the student to identify and become an active, engaged learner and critical thinker; and to recognize and establish an effective relationship with other students, faculty, and staff. iDo outcomes outline student participation in areas including: leadership and civic engagement activities; the demonstration of behavior that respects individual uniqueness and differences; and engagement in wellness activities. Students are encouraged to meet with an academic advisor and/or counselor to help them with planning and clarifying goals, assessing skills, identifying resources, and continuing their life development processes.

During 2006-2007, the outcomes identified in the Agenda for Student Success and Learning were widely communicated to the student body. The Agenda for Student Success and Learning was printed in the PVCC Student Handbook and the PVCC Catalog. These outcomes were also communicated to students during New Student Orientation (on-campus sessions and hybrid on-campus/online sessions), and are listed on the “New Students Start Here” Web site.

iStartSmart Program Introduced

iStartSmart was implemented as a cross-functional project at PVCC designed to increase student success. The specific outcome of *iStartSmart* is to significantly increase rates of retention and persistence towards the successful completion of each student’s academic goals, whatever they may be. The *iStartSmart* program was based on research by PVCC’s Underprepared Student Initiative Committee, with the help of several outside consultants, and was piloted in 2007.

Based on the concept of “informed intrusiveness” and the infusion of a systems-thinking approach, *iStartSmart* introduced new organizational practices that contribute to student success. The *iStartSmart* suite includes:

1. Required Placement testing
2. Required Orientation
3. Required Academic Advising
4. Required successful completion of a College Success Course (AAA115, CPD115, or CPD150)

iStartSmart targets two specific student cohorts: new-to-college full-time students, and new-to-college students taking 6 or more credit hours who test into a developmental course in English, reading, or math. Specific learning outcomes have been developed for the following components: New Student

Orientation, Academic Advising, iGoal (incorporated in the College Success Course, Academic Advising, and Orientation), and the College Success Course. For more information on learning outcomes for *iStartSmart*, visit www.pvc.maricopa.edu/usi/.

The fall 2007 *iStartSmart* cohort included 959 students. Gender was more balanced in the *iStartSmart* cohort, versus all PVCC students (51% female, compared to 58% female for all PVCC students); ethnicity was comparable to all PVCC students; and the average age of the *iStartSmart* students was considerably younger (19.4 years for the *iStartSmart* students). Seventy-four percent of the *iStartSmart* students were recent high school graduates with no prior college experience. Data are being collected regarding student success measures, and will be reviewed and analyzed in spring 2008.

Foundational Components of *iStartSmart*

iGoal

iGoal is available to all PVCC students and is also a critical component in the *iStartSmart* suite. PVCC designed the iGoal program to help students plan their success as learners. iGoal is a Web-based, interactive tool that helps students identify and monitor their educational, personal, and career goals. The program encourages students to set goals and guides them through the goal setting process. It is based on research indicating that students who have clearly defined goals are much more likely to persist towards the accomplishment of those goals. iGoal provides a vehicle to help students make substantive connections between their academic program and their goals. By tying academic success to students' individual outcome statements, the program assists students in getting the most of their college education. An outcome is defined as an intended result.

During 2006-2007, approximately 1,200 students used iGoal. Samples of 300 student goals were evaluated using a goal-setting rubric. The rubric assessed the quality of the student goals using the SMART criteria which asks, "Is the goal: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely?" Of the goals scored, 48% were deemed "proficient" and 49% were judged "developing." More information about iGoal can be found at www.pvc.maricopa.edu/igoal/.

New Student Orientation

New Student Orientation is available to all students, and is required of all new-to-college full-time students, and new-to-college students taking 6 or more credit hours who test into a developmental course in English, reading, or math. Orientation is offered in two formats: on-campus and as a hybrid on-campus/online combination. The online component can be viewed at www.pvc.maricopa.edu/onlineorientation/. New Student Orientation teaches students how to: navigate the college system (Learning Support, Financial Aid, Disability Services, Counseling, etc.), meet successfully with an academic advisor, build a course schedule, and register for classes. Students are also made aware of the Agenda for Student Success and Learning. Assessment components were included in both the on-ground and online versions of orientation, measuring students' knowledge of orientation learning outcomes.

College Success Course

All new-to-college full-time students, and new-to-college students taking 6 or more credit hours who test into a developmental course in English, reading, or math are required to take a College Success course during their first semester at PVCC. Nearly 1,000 students enrolled in the new College Success courses for fall 2007, coordinated by PVCC's Counseling Division—and taught by faculty and staff from nearly every division on campus. The course includes strategies for achieving goals in college and in life including: identifying individual learning styles, college note taking, time management, and exam preparation. The general education rubric for Written Communications is used for an assignment in this course. Students are also exposed to the learning outcomes emphasized in the other general education rubrics to gain life skills whereby they can:

- THINK ... critically, creatively, and practically
- COMMUNICATE ... through speaking, writing, listening, and reading
- RESEARCH ... find, identify, evaluate, and apply information
- SOLVE PROBLEMS ... identify causes, options, and solutions
- USE TECHNOLOGY ... online, electronic, and multimedia resources

Student Involvement in Academic Assessment

The number of students involved in academic assessment has increased as the general education rubrics are implemented. The following table gives the number of student assignments assessed the past two years:

Student Assignments Assessed Using General Education Rubrics		
	Spring 2006	Spring 2007
Written Communications	570	1209
Oral Communications	362	475
Information Literacy	163	723
Problem Solving	103	803
Technology	71	463
Total	1269	3673

Student Involvement in Out-of-Class Assessment

The Office of Student Life and Leadership expanded its assessment efforts in 2005. Numerous students were involved in planning the assessments for the Emerging Leaders program, and several of those students provided feedback on the resulting rubrics. All Emerging Leaders participants were provided with evaluative results. Student Leadership Council members also assisted in the development and improvement of the Leadership Portfolio rubric and were provided with evaluative results.

In addition, the Athletic department includes its student learning outcomes in its printed and online versions of the handbook (see www.pvc.maricopa.edu/athletics/handbook.html). The Children's Center also posts its learning outcomes on its Web site at www.pvc.maricopa.edu/childcare/.

Student Engagement

PVCC administered the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in spring 2005 and spring 2007. The value PVCC places on assessment is communicated to students during the administration of the CCSSE, in which approximately 900 students responded to the survey. The survey asked questions about institutional practices and student behaviors that are highly correlated with student learning and retention. The survey reports findings for five benchmarks: active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners. Results are discussed in Item Four.

ITEM FOUR: Using Assessment Feedback to Improve Student Learning

Statement of the Problem

Evidence is needed that Paradise Valley Community College's academic assessment program is closing the loop by using results to make significant curricular and division-wide changes to improve student learning.

Background

In 2005, PVCC's assessment program was not formally reviewing and reporting comprehensive assessment results or identifying needed improvements in teaching and learning.

Progress

Class/Course results and improvements

In defining class/course assessment projects, faculty members are encouraged to complete a Course Outline Guide. This guide asks for prerequisites to the course, concepts and issues covered, skills (competencies) to be acquired, assessment tasks to be included, and intended outcomes. The Course Outline Guide has been found to be very beneficial to faculty by focusing efforts on the following key elements of teaching and learning:

- What must the student be able to do before engaging in this work?
- What must the student understand to demonstrate the intended outcome(s)?
- What skills must the student master to demonstrate the intended outcome(s)?
- What will the student do in this course to demonstrate evidence of the outcome(s)?
- What do the students need to be able to do beyond college for which this course will prepare them?

Faculty use a wide variety of assessment instruments in their classes including pre/post tests, case studies, common exams, electronic portfolios, rubrics, surveys, interviews, student self-evaluations, feedback to instructors, one-minute assessments, and other class assessment techniques. Faculty may use questions from national test banks in their exams so that comparisons can be made between the performance of PVCC students and national averages. For example, questions from the American Chemical Society are used in PVCC's chemistry courses.

The English Division Chair developed an English Division Assessment Notebook during summer 2005 for ENG101 and ENG102. It contains assessment tools and instructions for assessing an argumentative essay and a research paper, required in the classes. All faculty members instructing these classes use the same tools, and results are analyzed collectively. Revisions have been made to the rubrics as a consequence.

Assessment reports submitted by faculty members revealed a trend: many faculty are repeating assessment activities over multiple years. Faculty indicate that they spend considerable time developing tools the first year; many feel uncomfortable and uncertain at this stage. The second year, they are more comfortable and start to concentrate on the results, but may still feel uncertain about what they are finding. The third year, they are better able to understand the findings, interpret results, and identify improvements. The last step, implementing needed improvements, seems to be the hardest.

When division chairs reviewed the assessment projects by the faculty in their area during 2005-2007, they were looking beyond what concepts the faculty taught. Faculty members were asked if the students learned specific skills, and how the faculty member knew that to be true.

Assessment is now discussed by faculty in each of the academic divisions at their meetings, generally held monthly. Representatives to the Academic Assessment Team and the General Education Teams provide updates and share issues at these meetings. Best practices in teaching and learning are also shared. Faculty members are encouraged to work together on assessment projects. Efforts are being made to involve more adjunct faculty in assessment by division chairs and residential faculty members.

A great deal of learning has occurred in developing assessment instruments as faculty define and focus on what is most important for students to learn. This includes identifying essential competencies and defining measurable outcomes. The assessment criteria provide guidelines for the faculty to focus instruction and content. For example, in SPA101 more emphasis is now placed on testing comprehension through having students read a passage in Spanish and respond to questions about the reading. Instructors have learned, and can inform their students, that those without prior instruction in Spanish perform as well in SPA101 as those who have been exposed to the language in the past. (Students new to the language can be intimidated by those who may have had some Spanish in K-12).

The use of assessment tools has provided faculty with consistent, objective instruments to gauge student learning. Grading is less subjective as the faculty member can focus on defined content dimensions rather than mechanical aspects, and be more objective in the feedback to students. Dimensions where improvement was needed become obvious, allowing faculty to enhance their effectiveness.

Results from class/course assessments provide evidence of problems which faculty use to adjust teaching – spending more time on deficiencies in learning. In many areas, faculty members have found that students need more practice exercises and an earlier introduction of processes. Comparisons of results across sections (when the same assessment is used) and over subsequent semesters help identify trends where the curriculum needs to be improved or class time adjusted.

The use of assessment instruments has increased communication between instructors and students, providing clearer expectations and more effective feedback to students, enhancing their learning. Assessment instruments help students focus on areas of strength and weakness, rather than just the final assignment grade. This is especially true when an assessment, such as a rubric, is used throughout the course and students are expected to improve in weak dimensions.

Assessment methods have impacted the pedagogy of faculty. Based on assessment data, faculty have broadened their teaching methods. For example, students learn through group work, with the faculty serving as a coach rather than a lecturer. Such data have also resulted in faculty encouraging more students to engage in learning support opportunities outside of class.

Program results and improvements

The Dietetic Technology program mapped the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE) foundation knowledge and skills to PVCC's courses. All PVCC students who have taken the Dietetic Technician Register (DTR) exam passed on the first attempt. Scores from 2003-2006 have been higher than the national mean. The program also uses surveys to get feedback from graduates and employers.

Based on the assessment of student learning in its Nursing program, PVCC now provides nursing students with review material and practice tests on specific areas of content expected at the LPN and RN levels to help students succeed. The Emergency Medical Technology, Paramedic, and Fire Science Technology programs now focus additional time on components of the

curriculum that relate to practitioner skills. PVCC also makes a student support package available with review materials and practice tests on specific areas of content. The Knowledge, Skills & Abilities (KSA) of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) are mapped to classes in the Health and Exercise Science curriculum. The Science Division monitors the success of PVCC students who take the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) and Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT), and makes adjustments based on student feedback.

The Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) is a specific collection of courses articulated with the public colleges and universities in the state. PVCC's general education outcomes extend beyond the boundaries of the AGEC courses and are found across the curriculum of all of its programs and courses. Results and improvements made in the general education area are discussed in the next section.

General Education results and improvements

PVCC completed its second consecutive year of general education assessment in spring 2007. Results from applying the general education rubrics for the past two years are given in the tables below. Results are collected and reported to the College such that comparisons can be made for each rubric about student performance. Only the aggregate results for all students assessed are shown in the tables below, based on a 0-2 scale.

Written Communications	Spring 2006	Spring 2007
Introduction	1.42	1.40
Purpose	1.65	1.73
Thesis Statement	1.59	1.47
Main Points	1.44	1.39
Paragraph	1.48	1.63
Conclusion	1.32	1.37
Organization	1.45	1.43
Transitions	1.47	1.64
Mechanics/Style	1.36	1.22
Works Cited	1.36	1.11

Oral Communications	Spring 2006	Spring 2007
Excite Step	1.69	1.68
Launch Step	1.66	1.63
Relate Step	1.49	1.48
Inform Step	1.79	1.83
Reiterate Step	1.46	1.38
Energize Step	1.48	1.51
Volume	1.83	1.87
Variety	1.66	1.63
Pronunciation/Articulation	1.80	1.84
Eye Contact	1.58	1.46
Facial Expressions, Gestures, Posture, Movements	1.63	1.60
Vocal Pauses and Distracting Mannerisms	1.46	1.45

Information Literacy	Spring 2006	Spring 2007
Determine Information Needed	1.31	1.71
Access Information Needed	1.39	1.50
Evaluate Information	1.15	1.38

Problem Solving	Spring 2006	Spring 2007
Define Problem	1.64	1.82
Develop Plan	1.52	1.73
Collect Information	1.46	1.65
Interpret Findings	1.29	1.53
Evaluate Effectiveness	1.17	1.57
Communicate Results	1.06	1.54

Technology	Spring 2006	Spring 2007
Demonstrate Computer Literacy	1.63	1.83
Use to Communicate/Retrieve	1.89	1.44
Use a Variety of Resources	1.79	1.67

During Learning Week in fall 2006, faculty and staff met to examine the general education assessment results and brainstorm suggestions to improve student learning in each area. The suggestions were then collected by the General Education Teams and summarized into a list of action plans. Several short-term objectives were implemented immediately while others are still in progress. The action plans addressing these improvements are outlined in Appendix D.

During Learning Week in fall 2007, faculty and staff again examined the general education assessment results and brainstormed suggestions to improve student learning in each area. The General Education Team leaders considered the following in preparing for these meetings:

What did we find out in the assessment of learning?

- Strengths identified in rubric dimension scores
- Weaknesses identified in rubric dimension scores
- Implications of results on learning and teaching

What should we do based on the assessment of learning?

- Discussions on possible improvements
- Recommendations listed on possible improvements
- Priorities of these recommendations
- Timeframes for implementing recommendations
- Responsibilities for implementing recommendations

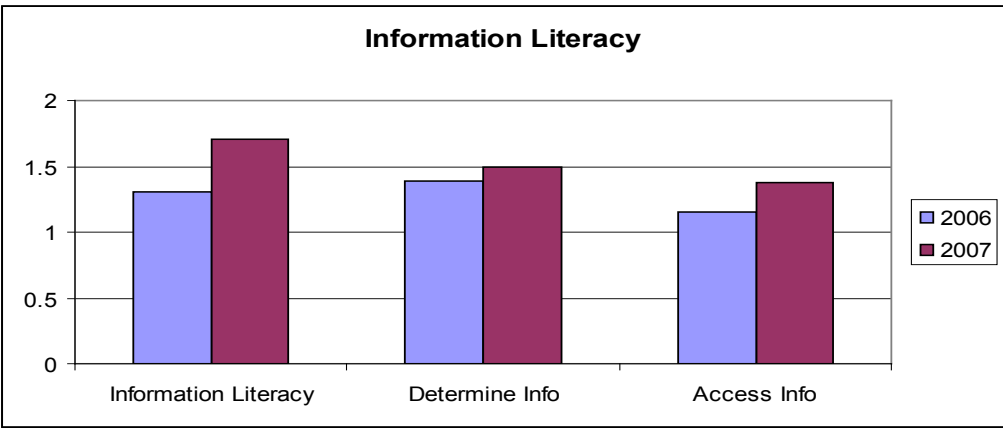
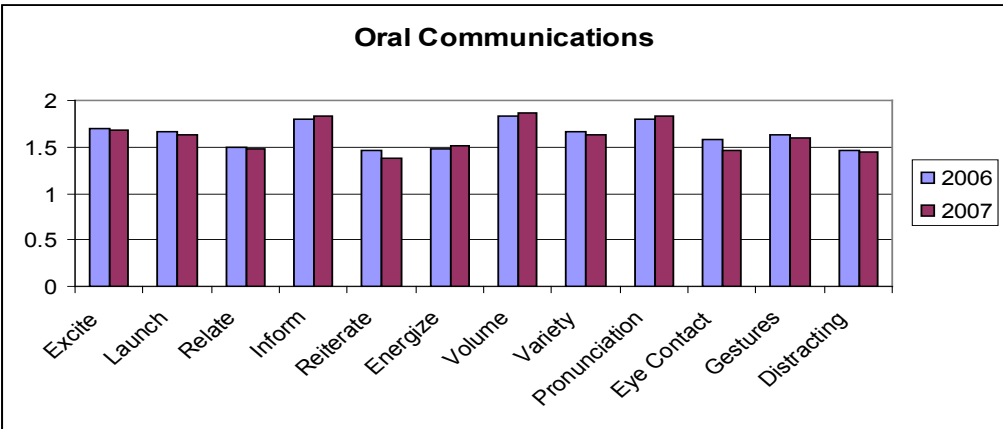
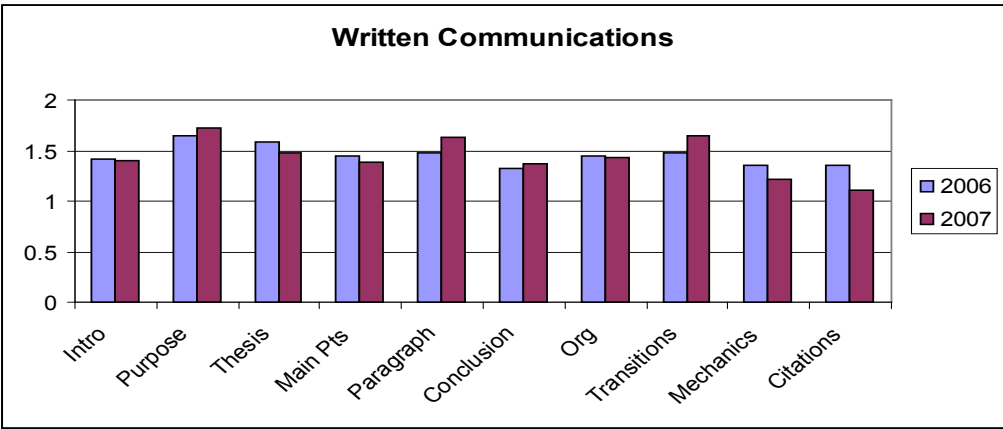
Did the general education assessment process work?

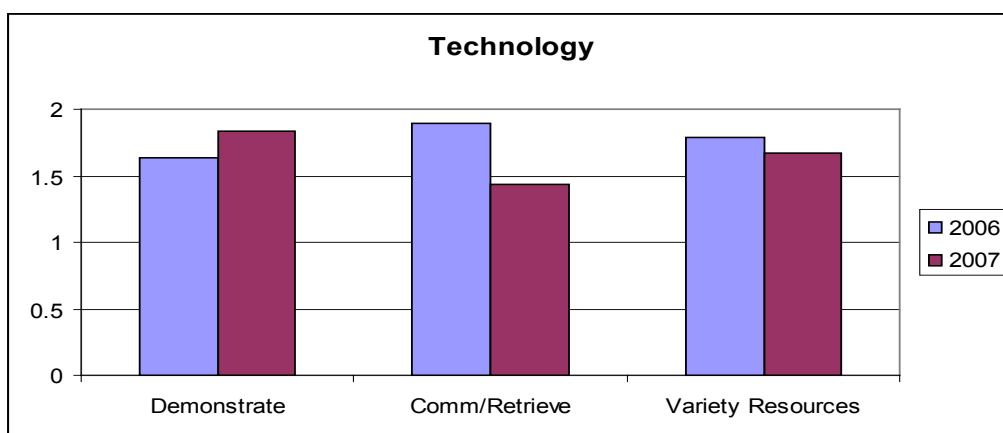
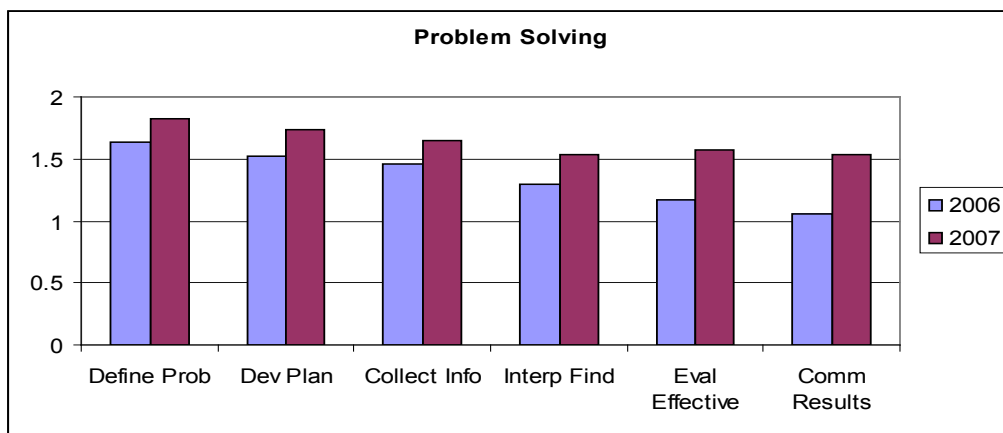
- Participation levels in each general education area
- Rubric content and use
- Changes listed to improve process
- Recommendations summarized

Again, suggestions were collected by the General Education Teams and summarized into a list of actions plans provided in Appendix D. Progress continues as improvements are implemented.

PVCC is aware of the importance of scorer reliability in using the rubrics. Efforts are being made to provide examples of the different performance levels for the general education rubrics to assist faculty and staff in attaining consistency. PVCC will monitor results for real trends about student learning as data is collected over the future. With only two years worth of data, it is still early to know if differences are due to inexperience with the scoring criteria, irregularities due to other circumstances, or deficiencies in teaching and learning.

The following graphs illustrate the changes from Spring 2006 to Spring 2007 in the general education learning outcomes results, as shown in the tables above.





An evaluation of these data resulted in a general consensus—to improve learning, students needed more exposure to the assessments and more practice on the components defined in the rubrics. When students see the same rubric used across many different courses, their understanding of the related processes improves, as does their ability to respond appropriately to all prompts. In part, gains were attributed to the fact that faculty began emphasizing the components of the rubrics that identified students’ weaknesses, and then following up with additional practice assignments.

At the most recent Learning Week session on assessment, faculty and staff were encouraged to model the dimensions defined in the general education rubrics. For example, lectures should model the Six-Step Guide for Oral Communications.

Web Site for the Assessment of Learning

During the fall 2007 semester, the assessment Web site was redesigned to make information easily accessible to faculty and staff. The Web site

(www.pvc.maricopa.edu/AL) includes current forms; a calendar of assessment activities and personnel assignments; the online version of the Assessment Handbook; current members of the Academic and General Education Assessment Teams; archives of information from the old assessment Web site; and materials related to general education assessment.

Out of Class Assessment results and improvements

As mentioned in Item Two, during the 2006-07 academic year, 300 randomly selected student goals developed in iGoal were evaluated using a goal-setting rubric. Elements of goal setting are measured on a three-point rubric for SMART elements: is the goal Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time bound. As a result of the findings from use of the rubric, a number of improvements were made including: adding new features to iGoal to allow students to more easily share goals with other students, faculty, and staff; the inclusion of iGoal in the New Student Orientation program; and the addition of a staff training program.

Evidence from Career Services indicated that even students with computer skills were uncomfortable uploading their resumes and conducting online job searches. The Maricopa Career Network, an online job board endorsed by all 10 Maricopa Community College Career Centers, was an ideal area to assess student learning of appropriate and efficient uses of technology for obtaining employment. By utilizing a pre- and post-assessment process, the Career Services staff were able to demonstrate evidence of student learning. As a result of this assessment, Career Services staff are working more collaboratively with faculty and staff to advance the technology skills of students to better prepare them to utilize the Career Services technology.

The Children's Center at PVCC used their assessment results for future planning and as an addition to their National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation materials. The results were used to improve the staff members' abilities to communicate with parents about their children's emerging literacy skills. Additionally, parents increased their own knowledge of book handling and pre-literacy skills by assessing their own child's development. Finally, parents and children learned to value the lifelong learning skill of reading for pleasure.

The Information Resources and Technology Services staff deployed a public wireless network in fall 2006. The purpose of the wireless network was to allow students unfettered access to learning and learning support Web sites from their personal laptops. Data were gathered to assess the effectiveness of the wireless network. Initial data indicated that students were using the

system, but that the instructions didn't address specific operating system differences or give step-by-step guidance for configuring the computer to connect to the network. Based on the student feedback gathered, the instructions were improved which resulted in an immediate surge in students using the wireless network to connect to the library database, Blackboard, email, and social networking sites.

In a continued effort to provide feedback and share best practices for out-of-class assessment efforts, division meetings include the assessment of student learning as a standard agenda item. The Learning Support Services Division features the assessment activities of one of its 17 departments at each division meeting. Staff members discuss assessment progress, lessons learned, and resulting program improvements. At this time, departments in the Administrative Services Division have identified more with employee learning rather than student learning. This is an area identified for additional development.

The Out-of-Class Assessment Team provides professional development activities in the area of assessment; gathers and reviews all of the out-of-class assessment plans; provides consultation and peer support to encourage improvements in assessment strategies; and gathers and evaluates the annual assessment reports. Staff measuring student learning in out-of-class activities are encouraged to incorporate the use of the general education assessment rubrics, when possible. An annual "Out-of-Class Assessment Cup" was established in 2005 to recognize and encourage outstanding out-of-class student learning assessment programs.

- 2005 – 2006 Out-of-Class Assessment Cup was awarded to Student Life; runners-up were the Athletics, Computer Commons, and Counseling departments.
- 2006 – 2007 Out-of-Class Assessment Cup was awarded to Career Services; runners-up were the Children's Center and the Information Resources and Technology Services department.

Student Engagement results and improvements

The research-based Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) survey uses a sampling methodology consistent across all participating colleges. The resulting information is appropriate for multiple uses, including:

- Benchmarking instrument – establishing national norms on educational practice and performance by community and technical colleges.
- Diagnostic tool – identifying areas in which a college can enhance student's educational experiences.

- Monitoring device – documenting and improving institutional effectiveness over time.

Compared to the CCSSE adjusted mean of 50.0, PVCC’s benchmark scores for 2007 were: Active & Collaborative Learning = 49.4, Student Effort = 44.0, Academic Challenge = 44.4, Student-Faculty Interaction = 47.2, and Support for Learners = 46.9. Data from both the 2005 and 2007 surveys, as well as supporting information, are available on the Web site at www.pvc.maricopa.edu/ccsse/.

Between 2005 and 2007 scores in active and collaborative learning improved, according to the CCSSE data. More students asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions, worked with other students on projects during class, and participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course. Scores in student-faculty interaction also improved. There was an increase in prompt feedback from instructors on student performance, discussion of ideas from readings or classes by students with instructors outside of class, and more students worked with instructors on activities other than coursework. CCSSE questions related to general education are included in the table below, based on a four-point scale.

CCSSE Question	PVCC 2005 Results	PVCC 2007 Results
Coursework emphasized analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory	2.78	2.78
Coursework emphasized synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways	2.63	2.64
Coursework emphasized making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods	2.45	2.47
Coursework emphasized applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	2.65	2.60
Acquired a broad general education	2.77	2.78
Acquired job or work-related knowledge and skills	2.22	2.34
Write clearly and effectively	2.46	2.46
Speak clearly and effectively	2.36	2.39
Think critically and analytically	2.68	2.69
Solve numerical problems	2.35	2.35
Use computing and information technology	2.48	2.52

Results from the surveys were discussed at divisional and departmental meetings during the following fall semesters, and an emphasis was placed on activities to encourage more student engagement in and out of class between 2005 and 2007. *PVCC CCSSE Update* newsletters have been distributed on a regular schedule to all employees and include suggested strategies for engaging students, research links, and best practices. According to “Factors Which Contribute to Student Success” (www.pvc.maricopa.edu/ccsse/docs/FacContStuSuccess.pdf), students are likely to learn more and persist if they:

- are active learners;
- establish meaningful relationships with other students, faculty, and staff;
- create a sense of belonging so students feel connected to the College in some way;
- make a connection between why they are here and where they plan to be in the future (goal setting);
- navigate through our systems, processes, and procedures; and
- get involved on campus.

As a result of the CCSSE, the College made a number of programmatic improvements and initiated several new programs to further engage students in the learning process. After the 2005 CCSSE results were reviewed by all of the College departments and divisions, each area developed a “CCSSE Action Plan.” The purpose of the plans was to identify areas where services and programs could be improved in the context of one or more of the CCSSE benchmarks. Several new programs were introduced as a result of this planning process including: a career and academic planning process for student athletes developed jointly by Academic Advising and Athletics; a revision of the adjunct faculty evaluation tool that aligns the CCSSE benchmarks with teaching behavior and class practices; an English composition writing guide; and several new collaborative learning strategies in English.

The Health & Exercise Science Division developed several best practice strategies and a document called “Suggested Strategies for Student Engagement” (see www.pvc.maricopa.edu/ccsse/docs/SuggStratStuEng.pdf). Learning Support Services departments are incorporating student success strategies into their operational and assessment plans to encourage student participation in all areas, especially Academic Advisement, Career Services, Computer Commons, Financial Aid, and the Learning Support Center. Additionally, IRTS is working to create the infrastructure to increase access to new technologies (i.e., wireless connectivity and computers outside the Computer Commons).

SUSTAINABILITY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Background

This Progress Report discussed advancements that were made in the assessment of student learning at Paradise Valley Community College from 2005-2007. PVCC recognizes that assessment is never a completed task and additional work will always be needed in this area. The College has identified a number of areas where it intends to concentrate assessment efforts in the future:

- Expanding faculty participation, especially adjunct faculty
- Providing assessment training and support, especially adjunct faculty
- Evaluating assessment of courses delivered through alternative delivery formats
- Defining and assessing learning outcomes at degree and certificate levels
- Strengthening Out-of-Class assessment activities
- Considering additional general education outcomes
- Increasing student involvement and awareness of assessment
- Reviewing the general education rubrics and assessment processes for needed improvements
- Continuing discussions about assessment findings and results
- Implementing and monitoring improvements based on assessment results
- Developing a more systems-based view of assessment that includes class/course, program, general education, out-of-class, and student engagement perspectives to gain a more complete, holistic picture of student learning

One charge of the new Assessment Coordination Team, created in 2007, is to integrate all levels of assessment, evaluation, and review at the College. While much progress has been made in class/course, out-of-class, and especially general education assessment, PVCC must continue to clarify assessment efforts at the program level.

Additional evidence of planned progress in the assessment of student learning outcomes is outlined in the Assessment Strategic Plan timeline below. This plan is a working document and will be updated and expanded, based on assessment results evaluating student learning.

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT TEAM

Assessment Strategic Plan

Tasks Over Next Five Years

Primary tasks

- Improving student learning
- Improving faculty participation

Additional tasks

- Identifying potential changes to assessment process and sequence
- Developing updates to assessment Web site
- Identifying potential changes to assessment rubrics
- Reviewing learning outcomes with rubrics (alignment)
- Identifying additional general education outcomes (reading, international, listening, diversity, etc.)
- Developing online entry of scoring sheets
- Developing methods to assess learning in distance education courses
- Developing ways to further adjunct faculty participation in assessment
- Developing methods to assess learning at the program level, initially in vocational areas
- Monitoring of national actions and discussions on assessment
- Monitoring assessment progress in preparation for next Self Study

Tasks Allocated for Each Academic Year

Academic Year 07-08 (Detailed specifics for first year only)

Primary tasks - Improving student learning and faculty participation

Sources of information

- Fall 2006 Learning Week summary
- Fall 2007 Learning Week summary
- AAT-GET conversations

Steps for completion

- Summarization of recommendations by rubric dimension - AAT and GET
- Determination of ways for additional conversations on learning improvements – method and timing

- Final summary and distribution of improvements to learning and steps to improve participation
- Spring 2008 Learning Week presentations on improved learning strategies and rubric use

Additional tasks

- Identifying potential changes to assessment process and sequence
- Developing updates to assessment Web site
- Identifying potential changes to assessment rubrics
- Developing ways to further adjunct participation in assessment
- Monitoring of national actions and discussions on assessment

Academic Year 08-09 (Tasks only)

Primary tasks

- Improving student learning and faculty participation
- Identifying potential changes to assessment process and sequence
- Reviewing learning outcomes with rubrics (alignment)

Additional tasks

- Developing updates to assessment Web site
- Identifying potential changes to assessment rubrics
- Developing ways to further adjunct faculty participation in assessment
- Monitoring of national actions and discussions on assessment

Academic Year 09-10 (Tasks only)

Primary tasks

- Improving student learning and faculty participation
- Considering additional general education outcomes (reading, international, listening, diversity, or others)

Additional tasks

- Identifying potential changes to assessment process and sequence
- Developing updates to assessment Web site
- Identifying potential changes to assessment rubrics
- Developing ways to further adjunct faculty participation in assessment
- Monitoring of national actions and discussions on assessment

Academic Year 10-11 (Tasks only)

Primary tasks

- Improving student learning and faculty participation
- Developing online entry of scoring sheets
- Developing methods to assess learning in distance education courses
- Developing methods to assess learning at the program level, initially in vocational areas

Additional tasks

- Identifying potential changes to assessment process and sequence
- Developing updates to assessment Web site
- Identifying potential changes to assessment rubrics
- Developing ways to further adjunct participation in assessment
- Monitoring of national actions and discussions on assessment

Academic Year 11-12 (Tasks only)

Primary tasks

- Improving student learning and faculty participation
- Monitoring assessment progress in preparation for next Self Study

Additional tasks

- Identifying potential changes to assessment process and sequence
- Developing updates to assessment Web site
- Identifying potential changes to assessment rubrics
- Developing ways to further adjunct participation in assessment
- Monitoring of national actions and discussions on assessment

SUMMARY

Paradise Valley Community College is pleased to submit this Progress Report outlining our developments in the area of the assessment of student learning. In response to the 2005 HLC comprehensive evaluation, the report shows the progress made from 2005 to 2007. It includes discussions about assessment at all levels, with an emphasis on general education learning outcomes, faculty participation, involvement of students, and how the College is using assessment results to improve teaching and student learning.

PVCC is committed to assessing student learning across the curriculum and through its multiple learning support services. The College has dedicated human and fiscal resources toward assessment efforts. Authentic assessment is a key component of all College planning for the future.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

List of Acronyms

AAT	Academic Assessment Team
ACT	Assessment Coordination Team
GET	General Education Team
HLC	Higher Learning Commission
IL	Information Literacy
LSC	Learning Support Center
MCCCD	Maricopa County Community College District
OCAT	Out-of-Class Assessment Team
PVCC	Paradise Valley Community College

APPENDIX B

ASSESSMENT PROJECT REPORT 2008

Due Date: February 28, 2008

Time Period: Spring 2007 thru Fall 2007

Division Name:

Type of Assessment: check one box only

- Classroom (one instructor assessing learning in one course)
- Course (multiple instructors assessing learning in the same one course)
- Program (multiple instructors assessing learning in two or more courses)

Faculty members who participated in this assessment:

Learning outcome(s) assessed:

Course Prefix and Number(s) where this assessment was implemented:

Attach or paste a copy of your completed Course Outcome Guide.

What assessment strategy did you use? Attach a copy of the assessment tool.

What challenges did you experience implementing this assessment tool?

How did you analyze the results of your assessment?

What changes did you suggest and/or implement as a result of this assessment?

How has your understanding of and involvement in assessment been enhanced this year?

How has your progress in assessment been limited this year?

How can additional progress and participation in the assessment of student learning be facilitated?

Thank you for completing this report. Please send it to your Division Chair by February 28, 2008.

GENERAL EDUCATION PARTICIPATION REPORT SPRING 2008

Faculty name:

General education learning outcome to be assessed (check one only):

- Oral Communications
- Written Communications
- Problem Solving
- Information Literacy
- Technology

Course Prefix and Number:

Course Section Number:

Your answers to the following questions will help you to determine how the specific learning outcome will be assessed.

How have you integrated this assessment into your course?

How have you changed your syllabus to facilitate this assessment?

How will you prepare your students for this assessment?

How will you use the prepared rubric in your course?

When do you anticipate completing this assessment? Month: Date:

Thank you for completing this report. Please give the completed form to your Division Chair by November 30, 2008.

GENERAL EDUCATION PARTICIPATION REPORT SPRING 2008

OUT-OF-CLASS

Employee name:

General education learning outcome to be assessed (check one only):

- Oral Communications
- Written Communications
- Problem Solving
- Information Literacy
- Technology

Program where rubric will be used:

Your answers to the following questions will help you to determine how the specific learning outcome will be assessed.

How have you integrated this assessment into your program?

How have you changed your processes to facilitate this assessment?

How will you prepare your students for this assessment?

How will you use the prepared rubric in your program?

When do you anticipate completing this assessment? Month: Date:

Thank you for completing this report. Please give the completed form to your Department Manager by November 30, 2008.

PVCC DIVISION CHAIR ASSESSMENT REPORT SPRING 2008

List your Division representatives who are currently serving on the Academic Assessment Team and/or a General Education Team.

Name	Team Assignment

How have you interacted with your division representative to the Academic Assessment Team?

How have you interacted with your division representatives on the General Education Teams?

How have you encouraged and supported the assessment of student learning with your Full-Time Faculty?

How have you encouraged and supported the assessment of student learning with your Adjunct Faculty?

How have you facilitated course and program assessment in your Division?

Identify the courses your Division has contributed to the general education learning outcome assessment in the Spring 2008 semester.

Oral Communications

Written Communications

Problem Solving

Information Literacy

Technology

What suggestions do you have for changes to our General Education Course Mapping for future General Education Assessments?

How have you worked with your Residential Faculty in evaluating your assessment results to improve student learning?

How can the expectations and reporting requirements for student learning assessment be improved?

How have you increased your Residential Faculty's understanding of assessment as a critical component in becoming a more learning-centered college?

Thank you for completing this report. Please send it to Paul Marsh by May 16, 2008.

OUT-OF-CLASS ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING PLAN AND REPORTING PROCESS

Assessment Project Title: _____

Employee Name: _____

Department: _____

ASSESSMENT PLAN	ASSESSMENT REPORT
Due Date: Oct 30	Due Date: June 30
List your department's vision and mission statements.	List your department's vision and mission statements.
List several possible Learning Outcomes for your department where you could assess learning. What specific Learning Outcome will you focus on this academic year?	Which specific Learning Outcome did you actually address in this last academic year?
How does this specific Learning Outcome relate to the College's Strategic Issues?	
How does this specific Learning Outcome relate to your department's mission?	
How will you measure student/employee performance for this specific Learning Outcome? (Please attach a draft copy of your instrument)	How did you actually measure student/employee performance for this specific Learning Outcome?
How do you intend to involve students and/or other employees in the implementation of this Learning Outcome process?	How did you involve students and/or other employees in the implementation of this Learning Outcome process? (please make sure your learning outcome(s) is/are posted on your department's web site, in your office area, and in your publications).
What steps and time periods are involved in these activities for this specific Learning Outcome?	What steps and time periods did you actually complete in these activities for this specific Learning Outcome?
	What data did you collect for this Learning Outcome? How did you analyze these data? What conclusions did you draw from the data?
What do you intend to do with the results you will attain for this specific Learning Outcome?	What changes have you made, or intend to make, based on the results attained? How will this affect next year's assessment efforts?

APPENDIX C

PVCC General Education Written Communications Rubric

Dimension	Score = 2: meets or exceeds standards for competency	Score = 1: needs improvement	Score = 0: does not meet minimum standards for competence
Introduction	<p>The well-developed introduction engages the readers. It contains detailed background information, develops a significant and compelling position, and a clear explanation or definition of the problem. Finally, it creates interest. – or –</p> <p>The developed introduction contains some background information, uses a technique for creating interest, develops a clearly stated position, and states the problem, using sufficient details.</p>	<p>Introduction does not adequately explain the background of the problem nor does the writer attempt to create interest. The problem is stated, but lacks detail. The introduction is evident, but position may not be clearly stated.</p>	<p>Writer does not attempt to create interest. Background details are a random collection of information, unclear, or not related. The problem is not stated or it is vague. Introduction is vague or fails to establish a position.</p>
Purpose	<p>Writer's response fulfills the specific purpose of the assignment.</p>	<p>General purpose of the assignment is achieved: specific purpose is unclear or misses the point.</p>	<p>General purpose of the assignment is not achieved. Specific purpose is not found.</p>
Thesis Statement	<p>The well-formed, perceptive, and properly placed thesis statement clearly states the writer's position. – or –</p> <p>The clear and properly placed thesis statement obviously states the writer's position.</p>	<p>The thesis statement is present; however, it does not clearly state the writer's position and/or it is improperly placed.</p>	<p>The thesis statement is vague/ unclear, improperly placed, and/or does not clearly state the writer's position; thus making the text difficult or impossible to follow.</p>
Main Points	<p>Main points are well developed and directly related to the thesis. The supporting details are concrete and so rich that the readers learn by reading the essay. The writer is obviously in control/comfortable with his/ her material and knows enough about the subject to explain it in great detail. – or –</p> <p>Main points are well developed and directly related to the thesis. The supporting details are concrete and so rich that the readers learn by reading the essay. The writer is obviously in control/comfortable with his/ her material and knows enough about the subject to explain it in great detail.</p>	<p>Main points are present, but one or more may lack development and/or may not directly relate to the thesis. The essay minimally meets the requirements of the assignment and contains sufficient details to make the overall point clear, but it leaves the reader with unanswered questions.</p>	<p>The main points are not sufficient. There is a poor/ skimpy/ vague development of ideas and a weak or nonexistent link to the thesis.</p>
Paragraph	<p>Paragraphs are effectively constructed with clear unity and coherence. – or –</p> <p>Paragraphs are satisfactory in their construction. Unity is, for the most part, present. Transitional devices are generally used.</p>	<p>Unclear paragraph construction. Coherency problems are evident.</p>	<p>Incomplete, unfocused, fragmented paragraph construction. Unity & coherence are not present.</p>

Dimension	Score = 2: meets or exceeds standards for competency	Score = 1: needs improvement	Score = 0: does not meet minimum standards for competence
Conclusion	<p>Powerful conclusion effectively wraps up point and goes beyond restating the thesis. Conclusion summarizes the main topics without repeating. The writer's commentary is logical, well thought out, and compelling. – or –</p> <p>Conclusion effectively summarizes main topics and goes beyond restating the thesis. Conclusion may lack a compelling aspect.</p>	<p>Conclusion inadequately summarizes main topics, but is repetitive. Conclusion may end abruptly or simply restate the position.</p>	<p>Conclusion does not adequately summarize the main points, and may introduce irrelevant material.</p>
Organization	<p>Logical, compelling organization or progression of ideas in essay; clear structure which enhances and showcases the central idea or theme and moves the reader through the text. Organization flows so smoothly the reader hardly thinks about it.</p> <p>– or –</p> <p>Overall, the paper is logically developed. Progression of ideas in essay makes sense and moves the reader easily through the text.</p>	<p>Progression of ideas in essay is awkward, yet moves the reader through the text without too much confusion. The writer lunges ahead too quickly or spends too much time on details that do not matter.</p>	<p>Arrangement of essay is unclear and illogical. The writing lacks a clear sense of direction. Ideas, details or events seem strung together in a loose or random fashion; there is no identifiable internal structure and readers have trouble following the writer's line of thought.</p>
Transitions	<p>Effective, mature, graceful transitions exist throughout the essay. – or –</p> <p>Strong transitions exist throughout and add to the essay's coherence.</p>	<p>Transitions appear sporadically, but not equally throughout essay.</p>	<p>Few, forced transitions in the essay or no transitions are present.</p>
Mechanics and style	<p>Writing is smooth, skillful, and coherent throughout the essay.</p> <p>Sentences are strong and have varied structure that invites expressive oral reading.</p> <p>Diction is at a level that is consistent with the purpose of the essay.</p> <p>Punctuation, spelling, and capitalization are correct.</p> <p>Virtually error free – or –</p> <p>Writing is smooth and coherent throughout most of the essay.</p> <p>Most sentences are varied in length and style, with an occasional repetition of sentence beginnings or a number of consecutive sentences of the same length or type. The sentence structure is generally correct, though some awkward sentences do appear.</p> <p>Diction is mostly at a level that is consistent with the purpose of the essay, but may have some examples of incorrect or unsophisticated word choices.</p> <p>One/two errors in spelling, mechanics, punctuation, or capitalization.</p> <p>Few, if any, errors distract the reader.</p>	<p>Writing lacks flow to achieve coherence throughout the essay.</p> <p>Work contains some sentence errors (2 or 3) and grammatical errors. Many consecutive sentences begin with the same words, are of the same length or the same sentence construction; the sentences hang together, and get the job done in a routine fashion.</p> <p>Diction is adequate, but is elementary and lacks flair.</p> <p>Three or four errors in punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and/or other mechanics.</p> <p>Errors are distracting; yet, the basic intentions of the writer are clear.</p>	<p>Writing is incoherent.</p> <p>Work contains multiple incorrect sentence structures (more than 3).</p> <p>Diction is inadequate or inappropriate.</p> <p>There are more than 4 errors in punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and/or other mechanics.</p> <p>Errors are beyond distracting; they make the essay difficult to follow and unacceptable for college-level writing.</p>

Dimension	Score = 2: meets or exceeds standards for competency	Score = 1: needs improvement	Score = 0: does not meet minimum standards for competence
Works cited	<p>All outside sources of information are used and smoothly integrated into the text. All sources are accurately documented and in the desired format on the works cited page.</p> <p>All sources are relevant and reliable.</p> <p>Resource material is acknowledged and integrated logically.</p>	<p>Most source material is used, but integration may be awkward. Most sources are accurately documented, but many are not in the desired format on the works cited page. Some sources are relevant and reliable.</p> <p>Material from outside sources is evident, but not necessarily acknowledged.</p>	<p>Lacks sources and/or sources are not accurately documented. Incorrect format is used. Sources are not relevant or reliable.</p>

PVCC General Education Oral Communications Rubric

Dimension	Score = 2: meets or exceeds standards for competency	Score = 1: needs improvement	Score = 0: does not meet minimum standards for competence
ORGANIZATION			
1. Excite Step	The student gains the audience's attention by introducing the topic in an interesting manner.	The student attempts to introduce the topic, but it fails to engage the audience and is not interesting.	The student does not gain the attention of the audience or introduce the topic.
2. Launch Step	The student states the main purpose and the main points as part of the introductory comments.	The student attempts to introduce the purpose and main points, but the introduction is unclear and awkward.	The student does not state the purpose or introduce the main points.
3. Relate Step	The student tells the audience how they can benefit from the information.	The student attempts to connect the topic to the audience, but the connection is weak or inappropriate for the specific audience.	The student does not relate the topic to the audience he or she is addressing.
4. Inform Step	The student presents information in an organized and logical manner using appropriate transitions.	Information is presented with some structure, but it is difficult to follow and doesn't flow smoothly.	The student uses no apparent logic or organization for the information presented and does not use appropriate transitions.
5. Reiterate Step	The student summarizes key points from the presentation.	The student attempts to summarize, but it is unclear what the key points were.	The student ends the presentation without summarizing the key points.
6. Energize Step	The student brings the presentation to a satisfying close.	The student makes concluding remarks, but they are abrupt or irrelevant.	The student makes no attempt to finish the presentation in a formal way. The audience is left wondering if the presentation is finished.
DELIVERY			
1. Volume	The student uses appropriate volume throughout the presentation.	The student uses inconsistent levels of volume that are sometimes inappropriate or inaudible.	The student does not use appropriate volume and does not adjust volume based on cues from the audience.
2. Vocal Variety	The student uses variety in volume, rate, and pitch.	The student uses some variety in specific places, but most of the presentation is presented in a monotone.	The student speaks in a monotone.
3. Pronunciation and Articulation	The student uses appropriate pronunciation and articulation.	The student mispronounces some words and makes some articulation errors (e.g. slurs words and/or mumbles).	The student mispronounces many words and makes many articulation errors (e.g., slurs words and/or mumbles).
4. Eye Contact	The student uses appropriate eye contact: a. 3-5 seconds per person b. includes everyone.	The student restricts eye contact to only a portion of the audience.	The student does not establish any consistent eye contact with the audience.

Dimension	Score = 2: meets or exceeds standards for competency	Score = 1: needs improvement	Score = 0: does not meet minimum standards for competence
5. Facial Expressions, Gestures, Posture, and Movements	The student uses appropriate facial expressions, gestures, posture, and movements.	The student uses some inappropriate facial expressions, gestures, posture, and movements.	The student uses many inappropriate facial expressions, gestures, posture, and movements.
6. Vocalized Pauses and distracting mannerisms	The student uses minimal vocalized pauses (um, uh) or distracting mannerisms.	The student uses several vocalized pauses (um, uh) and engages temporarily in a distracting mannerism.	The student uses frequent vocalized pauses (um, uh) and distracting mannerisms such as playing with hair or jingling coins or keys in a pocket.

PVCC General Education Information Literacy Rubric

Dimension	Score = 2: meets or exceeds standards for competency	Score = 1: needs improvement	Score = 0: does not meet minimum standards for competence
Determine the extent of the information needed	<p>Student is able to formulate a clear and focused thesis, topic or research question that leads to relevant information.</p> <p>Given a thesis, topic or research question, the student is able to compile a sufficient list of concepts and information, including, when appropriate, divergent sources.</p>	<p>Student's thesis, topic or research question is on topic, but is too broad and lacks focus to lead to relevant information.</p> <p>Given a thesis, topic or research question, the student is able to identify some concepts, information or sources.</p>	<p>Student is unable to effectively formulate a thesis, topic or research question based on an information need.</p> <p>Given a thesis, topic or research question, the student has not identified any concepts, information or sources.</p>
Access needed information efficiently (emphasis is on the search process)	<p>Student is able to identify appropriate keywords, synonyms, related terms and/ or subject headings for the information needed.</p> <p>Student's search strategy is focused and clear and relates directly to the research question.</p>	<p>Student identifies some appropriate keywords, synonyms, related terms or subject headings, but misses some of the key terms.</p> <p>Student's search strategy is somewhat focused, but returns an overabundance of results.</p>	<p>Student is unable to identify appropriate keywords, synonyms, related terms, subject headings or other methods for the information need.</p> <p>Student's search strategy is unfocused and unclear.</p>
Evaluate information and its sources critically	<p>Student uses appropriate sources for the information need.</p> <p>Student examines information and uses criteria such as authority, credibility, relevance, timeliness, and accuracy to make judgments about what sources to utilize for the information need.</p> <p>Student identifies or excludes biased, untimely, non-authoritative or inaccurate information.</p>	<p>Student uses sources that provide information, but not information of the appropriate caliber for the information need.</p> <p>Student uses a vague set of criteria to decide what to use or applies the criteria inconsistently.</p> <p>The student includes some biased information without comment.</p>	<p>Student uses inappropriate sources for the information need.</p> <p>Student is unaware of criteria that might be used to judge information quality and credibility.</p> <p>Little or no effort is made to examine information once it is located.</p> <p>Student uses obviously biased information and accepts information at face-value.</p>

PVCC General Education Problem-Solving Rubric

Dimension	Score = 2: meets or exceeds standards for competency	Score = 1: needs improvement	Score = 0: does not meet minimum standards for competence
Define the problem	Clearly defines the problem and considers all relevant aspects of the problem.	Inadequately defines the problem and/or fails to consider all relevant aspects of the problem.	Unable to define the problem or defines the problem incorrectly.
Develop a plan to solve the problem	Selects appropriate concepts, procedures, and strategies to solve the problem.	Lacks some concepts, procedures, or strategies to solve the problem.	Selects inappropriate concepts, procedures, or strategies.
Collect and analyze appropriate information	Collects reliable, relevant, and sufficient information. Carefully analyzes information.	Inadequately collects reliable, relevant and sufficient information. Inadequately analyzes information.	Collects unreliable, irrelevant, and/or insufficient information. Fails to analyze information.
Interpret findings to determine plausible solutions	Uses sound reasoning to reach a valid conclusion.	Some reasoning exists, but student fails to carry the procedures or strategies far enough to reach a conclusion. Provides an incomplete response to the problem.	No evidence of reasoning. Provides an incorrect or irrelevant response to the problem. Reasoning does not support conclusions.
Evaluate the effectiveness of the problem-solving process and the results obtained	Assumptions and implications are clearly stated and evaluated. Plausible alternatives are considered. Makes appropriate modifications, as needed.	Assumptions and implications are acknowledged, but not analyzed. Limited evaluation. Fails to check plausibility of solution. Recognizes incorrect process, but fails to correct the process. Fails to recognize that a better process exists.	Assumptions and implications are misinterpreted or unjustified. Unable to discern correct conclusions from incorrect conclusions. Assertions not substantiated. Fails to recognize incorrect problem-solving process.
Communicate the results	Conclusions are stated clearly and effectively. Uses appropriate evidence and sound reasoning to support conclusions.	Conclusions are generally correct, but contain some vague or ambiguous statements. Sometimes struggles to find language appropriate to the discipline. Weak evidence is presented.	No explanation for conclusions or explanation cannot be understood or is unrelated to problem. Fraught with vague, ambiguous statements or inconsistencies. Prone to overgeneralizations, details absent.

PVCC General Education Technology Rubric

Dimension	Score = 2: meets or exceeds standards for competency	Score = 1: needs improvement	Score = 0: does not meet minimum standards for competence
The student demonstrates basic computer literacy	<p>Accurately and effectively uses computer and Internet vocabulary.</p> <p>Competently uses word processing software.</p>	<p>Uses computer and Internet vocabulary.</p> <p>Uses word processing software.</p>	<p>Does not accurately use computer and Internet vocabulary.</p> <p>Does not competently use word processing software.</p>
The student can use online and electronic resources to communicate and retrieve information	<p>Uses email effectively for a variety of computer software programs and uses two or more.</p> <p>Frequently makes appropriate use of college technological resources such as touchstone registration and online services.</p> <p>Uses library technology independently to acquire research material for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Demonstrates facility in navigating the Internet.</p>	<p>Uses email.</p> <p>Occasionally uses college technology resources such as touchtone registration and online services.</p> <p>Uses library technology to acquire research material.</p> <p>Demonstrates a basic ability to navigate the Internet.</p>	<p>Does not or cannot use email.</p> <p>Does not or cannot uses college technology resources such as touchtone registration and online services.</p> <p>Cannot or does not use library technology to acquire research material.</p> <p>Does not demonstrate a basic ability to navigate the Internet.</p>
The student will be able to use a variety of technology and multimedia resources and applications to support personal, academic, and professional productivity	<p>Uses technology in creative ways to complete various types of assignments across courses.</p> <p>Actively and continuously adds to technology skills based on own initiative.</p> <p>Uses technology appropriately and creatively for mathematics purpose.</p> <p>Understands the purposes of a variety of computer software programs and uses two or more.</p> <p>Understands the basic purpose of using a computer hardware/software interface for data accumulation and analysis.</p>	<p>Uses technology to complete assignments across courses.</p> <p>Works to improve current skills or to learn new skills.</p> <p>Uses a calculator or other appropriate technology for mathematics assignments.</p> <p>Understands the basic purposes of a variety of computer software programs.</p> <p>Understands the basic purpose of using a computer hardware/software interface for data accumulation and analysis.</p>	<p>Does not use technology to complete assignments across courses.</p> <p>Does not work to improve current skills or to learn new skills.</p> <p>Does not identify and use appropriate technology for mathematics.</p> <p>Does not understand the basic purpose of a variety pf computer software programs.</p> <p>Does not understand the basic purpose of using a computer hardware/software interface for data accumulation and analysis.</p>

APPENDIX D

GENERAL EDUCATION ACTION PLANS

GENERAL EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS FALL 2006

Written Communications

Priority 1: Things we can do to improve student learning.

- *Objective:* English 101 Guidebook. It is designed to help students and includes information and examples that are student friendly. Also, it is sold as part of their English 101 textbook. The guidebook will be improved and revised spring 2007.
Who: John Nelson & Lois Roma-Deeley. Other PVCC English faculty contributed material.
When: Published fall 2006 and will be revised spring 2007.
Status - Fall 2007: The objective has been accomplished in the sense that the English 101 Guidebook was written, revised and published as part of the ENG 101 text. It proved to be a useful resource for both instructors and students. Revisions will be discussed and changes made as needed.
- *Objective:* Implementation of syllabus template so all PVCC English faculty are consistent regarding course objectives, competencies, campus resources, etc.
Who: John Nelson, Renee Cornell, and June Hawkins implemented the template and reviewed all syllabi. All English faculty are required to use the content included in the template.
When: 2004-2005 and is on-going.
Status - Fall 2007: The objective noted has been applied since 2004. It will be on-going so that PVCC English instructors and students continue to be consistent concerning course objectives, competencies, campus resources, codes of conduct, policies, procedures, etc.
- *Objective:* English Division revised and clarified learning objectives for English 061, 071, 101 and 102.
Who: English Division Instructional Council, Division Chair, and PVCC English faculty.
When: Completed pilot program in 2005 which became official in 2006.

Status - Fall 2007: The pilot has been completed and the project is on-going. Plan to keep dialog open regarding changes or revisions to the learning objectives.

- Objective: Increase student awareness of assessment by introducing them to and educating them about the rubrics.
Who: All PVCC English faculty who are participating in ENG 101 & ENG 102 assessment.
When: Start spring 2007 and on-going.
Status - Fall 2007: The objective has been successfully completed and will be on-going and refined. The discussions during fall Learning Week 2007 helped open a productive and positive conversation about how to make students more aware of assessment and the rubric process.

Priority 2: Increase participation in assessment.

- Objective: Division Chair, John Nelson, required that all full-time PVCC ENG 101 & 102 instructors and adjuncts who teach English 101 and 102 courses complete an assessment project.
Who: Division Chair and all English 101 & 102 instructors.
When: Spring 2007 and on-going.
Status - Fall 2007: The objective has been completed with much success. The number of students went from 343 (2006) to 498 (2007) and the number of sections went from 22 (2006) to 35 (2007). All full-time and some adjunct faculty participated and there was a sampling of all five general education competencies.
- Objective: Have made and will continue to make assessment the first item on the agenda of all Division meetings. Recruit participants who would be willing to do more than the required assessment project. Emphasize the value of assessment and how participating in it is beneficial. (Note that the project can be used for the FEP, CCSSE etc.)
Who: Division Chair, AAT representatives and all English Division meeting attendees.
When: All PVCC English Division meetings.
Status - Fall 2007: The objective has been completed and will be on-going.
- Objective: Division Chair, John Nelson, is researching and gathering information on organizations that help design professional assessment tools.

Who: John Nelson, Division Chair

When: Fall 2007

Status - Fall 2007: The objective is on-going.

- Objective: English Division Assessment Day during the fall Learning Week Sessions. Discuss & analyze data from spring assessment. Share insights and ideas about how to improve teaching based on the results. Encourage more assessment participation from English adjunct faculty.

Who: All English faculty – full-time & adjunct.

When: Fall 2006 and on-going.

Status - Fall 2007: The objective was successfully completed during Fall 2007 Learning Week and will be on-going. Questions and concerns regarding the assessment process (rubric application, evaluating student essays, improvements/changes that would benefit students & faculty) were addressed and discussed at length.

Oral Communications

A. Closing the Loop: What can we do to improve student learning on the General Education Learning Outcome: Communication: Speaking?

The following strategies will help students to improve consistency using the relate step, the reiterate step, and the energize step and avoid the use of vocalized pauses and distracting mannerisms.

1. Marilyn Cristiano (as lead member of the Oral Communications General Education Team) will meet individually or as a group with faculty who are assigning an oral presentation in their class(es). Marilyn will discuss strategies for teaching the four dimensions presented above using the following methods:
 - a. Review with the instructors the document titled “Guidelines for Developing an Oral Presentation Assignment and Rubric and for Assessing the Communication GELO [General Education Learning Outcome] ‘Speaking’ on the Classroom Level.” Give the instructors the document on CD and put the document on the PVCC Assessment Web site for easy access.

Status - Fall 2007: Completed. Instructors found the information and CD very useful.
 - b. Give the instructors an information sheet on organization titled “6-Step Guide to Effective Presentations” and an information sheet on delivery titled “6-Step Guide to Delivering Effective

Presentations” to discuss with and distribute to students. Discuss the importance of the relate, reiterate, and energize steps of the 6-Step Guide and discuss techniques for avoiding vocalized pauses and distracting mannerisms.

Status - Fall 2007: Completed. Instructors distributed the handouts to the students to help them better understand and apply the 6-Step Guides.

- c. Advise the instructors to announce to their students that there is a Web site where students can access information on the 6-Step Guide to Effective Presentations (http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/AL/docs/6_steps_organization.pdf) and a Web site where students can access information on the 6-Step Guide to Delivering Effective Presentations (http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/AL/docs/6steps_delivery.pdf).
- d. Give the instructors a CD and a DVD that includes an example of an incompetent informative speech and a competent informative speech, with corresponding outlines that follow the 6-Step Guide to Effective Presentations. Instructors may use these speeches as instructional tools in their classes. Also, put a copy of the CD and DVD on reserve at the PVCC Library Circulation Desk for students to view in the library.
- e. Ask the instructors to announce to their students that the SE corner of the PVCC Library is available for students to practice their presentations when it is not being used for campus events and library instruction. Students must reserve the space 24 hours in advance.
- f. Encourage the instructors to present the oral communications assignment themselves to serve as an example for students. The instructors should provide students with an outline or manuscript of their presentation or have an outline or manuscript available to students on a Blackboard site or Web site.
- g. Encourage instructors to collect outlines or manuscripts along with a videotape or DVD of excellent student presentations to use as examples for students.

Status - Fall 2007: Completed. Instructors informed during the spring 2006 Learning Week. Handouts and the CDs were distributed and used.

2. When students use the speech practice area (SE corner of the PVCC Library), a digital video camera hooked up to a VHS VCR should be available to students. Students should bring their own VHS tape for use in the VCR.
Status - Fall 2007: Completed. The library set aside the practice area, and distributed information to faculty and students about its availability.
3. Give the Learning Support Center copies of an information sheet on organization titled “6-Step Guide to Effective Presentations,” copies of the PVCC General Education Oral Communications Rubric, and a copy of the CD and DVD that includes an example of an incompetent speech and a competent speech with corresponding outlines that follow the 6-Step Guide to Effective Presentations.
Status - Fall 2007: Completed. The Learning Support Center has copies of all of the training materials.
4. Hire oral communications tutors for the Learning Support Center.
Status - Fall 2007: Pending. Budget constraints have limited the hiring of additional staff.
5. Design an interactive document for the PVCC General Education Oral Communications Rubric, like the 6-Step Guide that can be found at (http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/AL/docs/6_steps_organization.pdf) and (http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/AL/docs/6steps_delivery.pdf). The rubric document should also be available on the Internet.
Status - Fall 2007: In progress.
6. Create a document with examples of the Relate Step (displays the connection between topic and potential benefits.) Have this document available to students and instructors on the Internet.
7. Long Term Goal: Develop a PVCC General Education Oral Communications Web site for students and instructors that includes all information documents, the rubric, and examples of effective presentations.
8. Long Term Goal: Pay Full-time and Adjunct Communication Faculty a stipend to present information on oral presentations to instructors’ classes who will be using the PVCC General Education Oral Communications Rubric and who request the support.
Status - Fall 2007: In progress.

B. Increasing Participation: What can we do to improve faculty participation in assessing student learning on the General Education Learning Outcome: Communication: Speaking?

1. Marilyn Cristiano (in her role as lead member of the Oral Communications General Education Team) will meet with each division to inform faculty that she is available as a consultant to faculty who choose to include an oral communications assignment in their courses and who choose to use the PVCC General Education Oral Communications Rubric.

Status - Fall 2007: Completed. Participation and use of the rubric increased in 2007.

2. Long Term Goal: Develop a PVCC General Education Oral Communications Web site for instructors that includes all information documents, the rubric, and examples of oral communications assignments, rubrics, and oral presentations with corresponding outlines.

Status - Fall 2007: In progress

Information Literacy

Specific Tasks to improve student learning:

- Hold “train the trainer” Information Literacy (IL) workshops – during Learning Week and possibly beyond to emphasize best practices for incorporating IL into class.

Status - Fall 2007: In progress. Piloting ILab during fall semester which is a curriculum-integrated online IL module. Plan to possibly create a faculty IL learning community for fall 2008. Possibly turn ILab into a one-credit lab.

- Instructor Tool Kit:

1. Faculty-friendly brochure

Status - Fall 2007: Accomplished. A new faculty page has also been designed to explain IL and the instruction options as well as assessment at <http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/library/Instruction%20checklist%20and%20planning%20guide.htm>

2. How to create IL friendly assignments – partnering with librarians and team teaching ideas – offered a pilot for fall 2007.

Status - Fall 2007: Accomplished/In progress. Piloting ILab will promote this type of collaboration naturally.

3. Offering the *Reference on Wheels* and *Instruction House Calls* choices (library instruction form) – assessment through a semester-long research journal that will be collected at the end.

Status - Fall 2007: Accomplished. The journal was the assessment method used. Based on assessment scores, instructional choices mentioned have become part of the regular library instruction curriculum. In addition, ILab offers a pre/post test option for assessment. Faculty have the option of administering the pre/post test to students in either online or paper format.

4. Create a table: Performance Indicators, Readings, Handouts, Activities that they can link to for further information.

Status - Fall 2007: Accomplished. IL toolkit page is up and running at <http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/il/>

A new faculty page has also been designed to explain IL and the instruction options as well as assessment at <http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/library/Instruction%20checklist%20and%20planning%20guide.htm>

5. Analyze syllabi of general education courses to determine how much IL is being currently infused in the curriculum?

Status - Fall 2007: Not yet accomplished

- Student Tool Kit.

Status - Fall 2007: Accomplished. Handout has been created and available for distribution. A new Student Resources page is up and running. Assistance with research is highly prominent although the term “Information Literacy” is not being used directly. New online tools have been designed to respond to student need such as video tutorials at <http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/library/Student%20Resources%20Page.htm>

To improve participation:

- Librarians will partner with all other faculty colleagues who bring their classes in for library instruction to complete a general education IL assessment.

Status - Fall 2007: In progress. ILab will promote integration into the course curriculum and collaboration between librarians and faculty.

- Use the toolkits and learning sessions to promote IL and an easy way to assess students abilities.
Status - Fall 2007: Not yet accomplished. Plans to possibly create a faculty IL learning community for Fall 2008. Possibly turn ILab into a one-credit lab.

Problem-Solving

To improve learning:

Students need more exposure to problem-solving assessments and need more practice responding appropriately to the problem-solving components as outlined in the problem-solving rubric. To increase exposure, we recommend:

1. Give students opportunities to use the rubric in the Student Success course.
2. Increase faculty participation in problem-solving assessment and increase faculty use of the problem-solving rubric. (If students see the same rubric used in many different courses, they will undoubtedly improve in their ability to respond appropriately to all prompts.)

To improve participation in general education assessment:

1. To encourage faculty participation in general education assessment, require all full-time faculty to attend a half-day assessment session each semester during Learning Weeks (we recommend Monday after breakfast/convocation) and pay adjunct faculty to attend a half-day assessment session. Faculty whose courses have an identified general education component attend a break-out session on that particular general education component. General education teams will provide participating faculty with assessment rubrics, results, and examples. Teams will convey the message that for learning, and consequently for assessment results, to improve, students need more practice responding appropriately to the problem-solving components as outlined in the problem-solving rubric. Teams will thus convey the expectation that all faculty whose courses have an identified general education component will participate in one of the general education assessments. Teams will also provide examples of how they have included general education statements in their syllabi and will convey the expectation that faculty participating in general education assessments do the same.
2. Faculty who lead multi-course or multi-section assessments can also provide faculty with assessment rubrics, results, and examples and encourage faculty to participate in general education assessment.
3. Put rubrics, results, and examples on Blackboard (accessible only by faculty to ensure security of assessment documents).

WHAT action is recommended	WHO is responsible for carrying out the action plan	WHEN
To improve learning:		
1. Have AAA-115, College Success, faculty include general education rubrics in their course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Developers: Include General Education rubrics in curriculum. Faculty: use rubrics in AAA-115 course. 	AAA-115 courses, beginning Spring 2007.
2. Increase faculty participation in general education assessment and increase faculty use of general education rubrics. (See below for actual plan.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AAT Coordinators Faculty who lead multi-course assessments. 	Begin steps (see below) to increase participation at Learning Weeks Assessment session in January 2007.
To increase participation in general education assessment:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Require all full-time faculty to attend a half-day assessment session each semester during Learning Weeks and require full-time faculty whose courses contain a general education component to do a general education assessment, and Pay adjunct faculty to attend the same or another half-day session. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AAT Coordinators General Education Teams 	During all Learning Weeks beginning spring 2007.
3. Ask faculty who lead multi-course or multi-section assessments to provide faculty with assessment rubrics, results, and examples and to strongly encourage these faculty to participate in general education assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AAT Coordinators identify faculty leading multi-course assessments and determine appropriate general education assessment. General Education Team leaders visit with identified faculty. 	Ongoing activity, beginning now.
4. Put rubrics, results, and examples on Blackboard (accessible only by faculty to ensure security of assessment documents).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sam Fraulino 	Ongoing activity, beginning now.

Technology

How do we get more faculty involved?

- Develop an online assessment tool for each general education area so faculty can easily do the assessment.
- Develop an online training for each general education area.
- VP mandated training session during spring Learning Week for each general education area.
- VP & Division Chair Mandate: All full-time faculty must complete at least one general education assessment per year.

- Incentive program – contest to get everyone in a division to complete one general education assessment per year.
- Have the VPs remove some other requirements for this academic year - CCSSE or program review.

What method should we utilize to use the data we collected in the assessment?

- Review assessment and make recommendations to curriculum committee.
- Review assessment and make recommendations to advisement/ counselors.

GENERAL EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS FALL 2007

Written Communications

The following areas, listed in order of priority, need improvement.

Suggestions are also given of how to help students improve in these areas:

1. Mechanics: Definition: Proper sentence structure, grammar, spelling, word usage, comma usage, and punctuation make the paper coherent. Suggestions: (1) Grammar Workshops are offered each semester; (2) students can go online to PVCC's "Writer's Block" and find practice exercises in all areas of mechanics; (3) grammar handouts and practice exercises can be made available to all instructors online.
2. Documentation of Research: Definition: Proper MLA or APA format is used to document sources within the body of the paper and at the end of the paper in a formal bibliography. Suggestions: MLA and APA workshops are now being offered and presented by PVCC's library staff. All proper documentation information can also be accessed online through the Learning Support Center and the Library home pages.
3. Organization/The Main Points: Definition: The sequence of points is easy to follow from paragraph to paragraph. Transitions are used to move the reader smoothly from one idea to the next. The main points (most often identified in the topic sentence in each paragraph) organize the direction of the paper and serve as divisions of the thesis statement. Suggestions: Handouts are available online and more can be made available with a list of transitional words and phrases that students can use.
4. Introduction/Conclusion: Definition: The introduction captures the reader's attention, develops significance for the reader, and states the main or controlling idea (thesis). The conclusion restates and summarizes the purpose of the paper. It should convey a sense of completeness and closure and create an impression that stays with the reader. Suggestions: Sample papers/handouts and online sites can be used to assist the students in this area.
5. Thesis Statement: Definition: The controlling idea of the paper. A statement of the writer's opinion or attitude toward the subject. The most important sentence in the paper because it controls the paper and gives it focus and unity. Suggestions: Sample student papers, handouts, and College writing labs online in "Writer's Block" can be utilized to assist students with the thesis statements.

Oral Communications

A. What did we find out in assessing student learning – Strengths and Weaknesses?

1. Overall, students scored between “needs improvement” and “meets and exceeds standards for competence.” No one scored “does not meet minimum standards for competence.”
2. Overall, the best dimensions were Volume, Pronunciation/Articulation, and Relate. The weakest dimensions were Reiterate (worse), Vocalized Pauses & Distracting Mannerisms, and Eye Contact.
3. Results were compared for those students taking core courses (courses which intentionally provide formal training in public speaking skills: COM 100, COM 225, or COM 259), those students who took other courses but who had previously had formal training in public speaking skills, and those students who took other courses but who had not had formal training in public speaking skills. Findings indicated:
 - a. “Core” did best in Excite, Inform, Volume, and Eye Contact.
 - b. “Other with Core” did better than “Core” on the rest of the dimensions.
 - c. “Other without Core” did better on Eye Contact than “Other with Core.”
 - d. “Other with Core” did better than ‘Other without Core’ on all dimensions but Eye Contact.

What did we find out in assessing student learning – Implications?

1. “Other with Core” scored better on all dimensions but Excite, Inform, Volume, and Eye Contact. We speculate this is because they completed the Communication class and those in the “Core” are currently enrolled in the course and still learning the competencies.
2. Scores from 2006 to 2007 did not vary, therefore we still need to focus on the same dimensions as we did in 2006: Reiterate Step, Vocalized Pauses & Distracting Mannerisms, Eye Contact, and Relate Step.
3. We hypothesize that:
 - a. The Reiterate Step was the overall weakness because students run out of time to complete their speech. Also, they may not understand the importance of the step and how it is properly executed. (It is more than simply a statement of the main points. It is a summary of the main points.)
 - b. Vocalized Pauses & Distracting Mannerisms were the second overall weakness because these dimensions are among the most difficult to achieve competency. Speakers are often unaware of the problem and lack experience in overcoming the problem. Public speaking anxiety often contributes to the problem.

- c. Eye Contact was the third overall weakness because students may not understand the importance of practicing their speeches so that they can speak using an extemporaneous style. Again, public speaking anxiety often contributes to this problem because they are afraid they will forget what it is they plan to communicate and therefore end up reading from a manuscript or their notes.
- B. What should we do based on these assessments of learning? How can we make improvements to learning and teaching?
- Marilyn Cristiano will consult with instructors who use the rubric regarding the importance of teaching and how to teach the Reiterate Step, the avoidance of Vocalized Pauses & Distracting Mannerisms, and the use of effective Eye Contact.
 - Instructors could use the 6-Step Guide to model the dimensions for organizing and delivering their lectures and could model the oral communications assignment given to the students.
 - Instructors could introduce the 6-Step Guide to students early in the semester.
 - Instructors who have used the rubric for the past two years could mentor a faculty colleague who will be using the rubric for the first time for their oral communications class assignment.
 - Instructors could collect outlines or manuscripts along with a videotape or DVD of excellent student presentations to use as examples for students.
 - Instructors could do an activity in class to emphasize the importance of and how to do the Reiterate Step. For example, students could be asked to summarize the most important ideas from each main point of a speech or other text.
 - Hire oral communications tutors for the Learning Support Center.
 - Pay Communication full-time and adjunct faculty a \$50 guest speaker fee to present information on oral presentations in the classes of instructors who will be using the rubric and who request the support.
- C. How can we improve the general education assessment process? How can we improve participation levels in this general education area?
- Marilyn Cristiano (in her role as lead member of the Oral Communications General Education Team) will meet with each division to inform faculty that she is available as a consultant to faculty who choose to include an oral communication assignment in their courses and who choose to use the PVCC General Education Oral Communications Rubric.
 - Develop a PVCC General Education Oral Communications Web site for students and instructors that will include all information

documents, the rubric, an example of an incompetent and a competent presentation with corresponding outlines.

- The Oral Communications General Education Team will host a speech contest. Instructors who participate in the oral communications general education learning outcomes assessment in the spring semester can nominate the best speaker from each of their classes to participate in the speech contest. Certificates will be given to all student participants and prizes given to the winners. Logistics regarding the speech contest will be developed.

D. How can we improve the rubric content and use?

For clarification, the group proposed to change the assessment question asked of the students to read: “Have you successfully completed at PVCC COM100 (Introduction to Human Communications), COM225 (Public Speaking), or COM259 (Communication in Business and Professions)?

E. How can we present these recommendations to faculty during the fall 2007 semester?

1. During the fall 2007 semester, Marilyn Cristiano, with the support of Cathy Mendoza and Dina Preston-Ortiz, conducted a work session for faculty who would like to investigate the use of the oral communications rubric in their spring 2008 semester classes.
2. During spring 2008 semester Learning Week, Marilyn Cristiano, with the support of Cathy Mendoza and Dina Preston-Ortiz, will conduct a work session for faculty on how to introduce the 6-Step Guide for organization and delivery to their students.

Information Literacy

Challenge: The scores for the “without core” students were much higher than those “with core.”

Solution: Library faculty, in collaboration with other interested faculty, can provide workshops for scorers to increase inter-scorer reliability.

Solution: Create a concise Assessment Manual specifically designed for Information Literacy that can be used as a guide and as a supplement to the workshops. Library faculty could try to develop this by spring in collaboration with other interested faculty.

Challenge: Same tool used for all levels of students (ENG101 vs ENG102)

Solution: Create tiered outcomes/rubrics so that students who are at an entering level are not tested on concepts/skills they might not have yet learned. Change the assessment tool accordingly.

Challenge: Evaluating information still seems to be the weakest area across the board

Solution: Make this outcome a priority in both library instruction and research-based assignments. Long-term effort at the college level.

Challenge: Gray area in the conversion of data from qualitative to quantitative
Solution: Allow for in-between scores or adapt rubric to allow for qualitative reporting as well. Long-term effect necessitating changes to the rubric.

Challenge: Rubric only shows a snapshot where students' skills are at a given moment in time

Solution: Conduct pre- and post-assessment either (a) each semester or (b) upon entering PVCC and when graduating. This might be a good opportunity to utilize a standardized tool such as SAILS or ICT.

Problem-Solving

What have we learned?

... that students need to be taught the components of problem-solving. We particularly need to convey to students:

- what it means to analyze the effectiveness of their problem-solving processes and results, and
- how to clearly and effectively communicate their processes and results.

... that students need more practice and feedback. Results from spring 2006 assessments clearly showed (not surprisingly) that this led to improved scores.

- Administering multiple problem-solving assessments in the same course using the same problem-solving rubric resulted in greatly improved assessment scores.
- As more faculty participate in problem-solving assessments and use the problem-solving rubric to score them, students' understanding of problem-solving will be greatly enriched and their problem-solving abilities will improve.

Action Plan

To improve learning, the Problem-Solving Team believes that students need more exposure to problem-solving assessments and need more practice responding appropriately to the problem-solving steps as outlined in the problem-solving rubric. If students see the same rubric used repeatedly in the same course and also in many different courses, they will undoubtedly improve in their ability to respond appropriately to all prompts. Thus, increasing faculty participation will lead to improvements in learning.

The Problem-Solving Team recommends the following actions:

1. To increase participation (and thereby improve learning) and promote better understanding:

- a. Request that Division Chairs designate Lead Instructors (full-time faculty) for courses with multiple sections. Lead instructors meet with all faculty teaching the course early in the semester to provide the following:
 - i. An appropriate general education assessment for the course.
 - ii. A rubric including the meaning of each dimension in the context of the assessment.
 - iii. Examples of scored assessments.
 - iv. Other appropriate forms (Participation form and template).
 - v. Lead instructors will recommend that participating faculty use the rubric with several different assessments in the course to provide students with practice and feedback.
 - b. Compile all general education action plans and send them to all faculty.
2. To provide students, faculty, and tutors with additional exposure to the rubrics:
 - a. Introduce all the general education rubrics in the College Success course.
 - b. Make posters (Media or Art classes) for the Learning Support Center (LSC) and for classes outlining the dimensions and criteria for meeting or exceeding standards for competency. See the following table for an example.
 - c. Request that information about general education assessments be included in the LSC orientation for tutors.

Problem-Solving Assessment Rubric	
Dimension	Criteria to meet or exceed standards for competency.
Define the problem	Clearly defines the problem and considers all relevant aspects of the problem.
Develop a plan to solve the problem	Selects appropriate concepts, procedures, and strategies to solve the problem.
Collect and analyze appropriate information	Collects reliable, relevant, and sufficient information. Carefully analyzes information.
Interpret findings to determine plausible solutions	Uses sound reasoning to reach a valid conclusion.
Evaluate the effectiveness of the problem-solving process and the results obtained	Assumptions and implications are clearly stated and evaluated. Plausible alternatives are considered. Makes appropriate modifications, as needed.
Communicate the results	Conclusions are stated clearly and effectively. Uses appropriate evidence and sound reasoning to support conclusions.

3. To provide more meaningful feedback to faculty, add student ID's to assessment results to provide additional tracking opportunities. Request that Division Chairs inform their faculty about tracking potential opportunities.
 - a. Track data results through sequential courses (for example, MAT09X to MAT12X to MAT151).
 - b. Disaggregate data by course and discipline.

Technology

What have we learned?

1. Significant increase in number of students and class sections utilizing the technology rubric (71 students/7 sections in 2006, 463 students/42 sections in 2007).
2. In 2007, students demonstrated a higher level of competency with basic computer literacy skills (word processing, terminology).
3. In 2007, students were 35% less competent in demonstrating the use of online and electronic resources to communicate and retrieve information.
4. In 2007, students were 13% less competent in demonstrating the use of a variety of technology and multimedia resources and applications to support personal, academic, and professional productivity.
5. Due to the large increase in rubric participation from 2006 to 2007, additional data are required to accurately assess students' competence with technology.