**Oregon Institute of Technology
2007-08 Academic Assessment Report**

Prepared by

**The Director of Assessment
and
The Executive Committee of the Assessment
Commission**

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Contents

Academic Assessment Report 2007-08
OIT Assessment Commission

Introduction
This report outlines OIT assessment activities and accomplishments during the 2007-08
academic year and is based on the 2007-08 Academic Assessment Plan. This document
was prepared by the Director of Assessment, reviewed by the Executive Committee of
the Assessment Commission, submitted to the Provost and President, and posted on the
OIT web site at www.oit.edu/provost/assessment.

The primary focus of activity this year was addressing recommendations on assessment
stemming from a full-scale accreditation visit from the Northwest Commission on
Colleges and Universities. Based on NWCCU's recommendations, OIT established a
director position to lead assessment efforts, implemented program outcomes assessment,
increased efforts to include assessment in curriculum and program improvement
strategies, took steps to broaden communication about assessment matters, and created a
web site to publish assessment results. Details on these recommendations and actions are
summarized in this report.

The Executive Committee of the Assessment Commission also wrote a new assessment
plan, which will be reviewed and updated each academic year in the fall. Each annual
plan includes specific goals for the academic year. In addition to the NWCCU items
mentioned above, this report summarizes the accomplishment of planned goals for the
2007-08 academic year, in particular the Executive Committee's focus on institutional
student learning outcomes. A summary of other academic assessment activities is also
included in the report.

It should be noted that actual results of assessment activities are reported in stand-alone
reports that are separate from this document. Reports on program and institutional
assessment outcomes are posted on the following web menus:
- Information on program student learning outcomes:
  www.oit.edu/provost/learningoutcomes
- Information on institutional student learning outcomes: www.oit.edu/provost/islo

NWCCU Recommendations on Assessment
The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities conducted a full-scale
evaluation of OIT in April, 2007. In their Evaluation Committee Report, the evaluators
made the following recommendations on assessment:

1.   The Evaluation Committee recommends that OIT complete and implement
        programmatic educational assessment, with emphasis upon the evaluation of
        learning outcomes across all educational programs; the incorporation of student
        learning outcomes into curriculum planning and improvement strategies; and the
        provision for systematic feedback and communication on assessment practices
        and data to all appropriate levels within the institution (Std. 2.B, Policy 2.2).

2. The Evaluation Committee recommends that OIT identify and publish the expected learning outcomes for each of its programs and provide evidence that students who complete their programs have achieved these outcomes. (Std. 2.B.2).

OIT has made substantial progress towards meeting these recommendations as described below.

Assessment Leadership
Following receipt of the NWCCU recommendations in June 2007, the Provost appointed an experienced OIT administrator to lead assessment efforts. The new director, Beth Murphy, has served the institution for 18 years in various roles, including Registrar, Title III Director, and Distance Education Director. She began her new duties in September 2007.

The director received assessment training by attending training sessions at the IUPUI Assessment Institute in November 2007 and the ABET Institute for the Development of Excellence in Assessment Leadership in January 2008.

The director established an assessment office, created an assessment budget, and gathered and organized assessment records. Working with members of the Executive Committee of the Assessment Commission, the director outlined a strategy to open the academic year with focused, structured action plans for implementing program assessment. With the approval of the Executive Committee, the director then met with each assessment coordinator to prepare the coordinators for convocation week.

During the 2007-08 year, the Executive Committee of the Assessment Commission, working with a Director of Assessment for the first time, clarified leadership roles and responsibilities for all parties involved. The committee determined that the Executive Committee of the Assessment Commission, the Chair of the Assessment Commission, and the Director of Assessment have joint responsibility and authority to guide assessment activities on the campus. The Provost and School Academic Chairs support the work of the commission and ensure accountability for assessment activities across the institution.

During the 2007-08 academic year, the Director of Assessment led the campus activities in preparation for the NWCCU focused interim visit. In fall 2008, the Chair of the Assessment Commission will resume leadership of the Assessment Commission and the Executive Committee. The chair and director worked closely together on all assessment matters during this year and will continue to do so in future years.

Implementation of Program Educational Assessment
During the fall convocation, the director laid out the 2007-08 strategy for implementation of program educational assessment to all assessment coordinators and department chairs. This plan included the requirement that all undergraduate and graduate degree programs create a manageable assessment plan focusing on program-specific learning outcomes created by each academic department. The strategy centered on submission of small assignments at regular intervals for each degree program in an ongoing report, including these first items:

- Program mission, educational objectives, and student learning outcomes
- Three-year rotational plan for assessing student learning outcomes
- Plans for direct and indirect measures of 2007-08 student learning outcomes scheduled for assessment
- Periodic assessment write-ups, including data summaries, evaluation of data, and action plans for program improvement.

The assessment director provided support to faculty during the fall with two activities—a special session on direct and indirect assessment measures, and a program assessment audit. The special session outlined possible assessment measures and tips for selecting the measures. Two faculty members demonstrated actual assessment measures they had completed. During the program assessment audit, the director met with each coordinator to discuss current department assessment practices, possible new assessment measures, and a review of data collection already available in the department that could be used for assessment purposes.

By the end of fall 2007, the majority of academic programs had completed the above items and performed at least one assessment measure per their assessment plan for the year. The director reviewed all assessment reports and provided feedback to coordinators on technical issues with their assessment activities, with suggestions for improvement. The director also provided updates on the status of each program to the school academic chairs. The school chairs in turn met with those few department chairs and coordinators who were not keeping pace with institution assessment efforts.

During winter and spring terms, the coordinators continued to execute their 2007-08 assessment plans. In addition to their core assessment activities, the coordinators also completed the following tasks:

- Organized program assessment records in a notebook or file cabinet
- Planned and completed assessment of an OIT institutional learning outcome on critical thinking
- Organized a spring department meeting to review assessment data and make plans for program improvement
- Submitted periodic additions of data summaries, evaluations and action plans to the ongoing assessment report
- Wrote a final assessment report
- Participated in the creation of a learning outcomes web site, as noted below

The director supported these activities with several full meetings of the commission, brown bag luncheons on assessment topics, feedback on all assessment reports, and frequent one-to-one consultations with coordinators. The director also solicited and received positive feedback from the coordinators on the use of this year's structured approach as a model for future academic years.

The director worked with a number of departments that were seeking or renewing discipline-specific program accreditation from external bodies, in order to coordinate their efforts with campus efforts. The director provided coordination and support for several engineering departments that were preparing for ABET accreditation visits in fall 2008, including the Computer Systems Engineering Technology Department, the Electrical Engineering and Renewable Energy Department, and the Manufacturing and Mechanical Engineering and Technology Department. This support included facilitation of meetings, facilitation of faculty development through ABET webinars, facilitation of committee work on alumni and employer surveys, and review of accreditation documents. The director also met with two representatives of the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE) during their accreditation visit with the Management Department. The director and assessment coordinator sought ways to coordinate and simplify the assessment activities of the Management Department in meeting both institution and IACBE requirements.

The director worked with each assessment coordinator to plan for senior exit data collection. For each program, the director and coordinator discussed what data has been gathered in the past, and reviewed whether the data related directly to the program's student learning outcomes. In many cases, this discussion led to revision of senior exit surveys and the incorporation of more systematic data collection for such activities as senior projects.

In summary, OIT planned and implemented a focused, structured strategy for establishing assessment of program learning outcomes during the 2007-08 academic year. The faculty engaged fully in implementing the plan, produced meaningful assessment work, made plans for program improvements, and in some cases, completed and re-assessed program improvements during the year. Results of these activities can be viewed on the web site www.oit.edu/provost/learningoutcomes.

Curriculum Planning and Improvement Strategies
To ensure that assessment of student learning outcomes is incorporated into curriculum planning, the Curriculum Planning Commission (CPC) added the assessment director to the commission as a full voting member as of fall 2007. The chair of the Assessment Commission is also a voting member. These two individuals reviewed all CPC documents, regularly attended CPC meetings, and provided an assessment perspective on CPC matters. CPC now requires that the assessment director, along with other academic officers, sign final approvals for new programs and significant revisions of current programs.

The director worked with the chair of CPC to ensure that the CPC manual requires appropriate assessment questions for faculty members to answer when creating proposals. The director ensured that these questions were answered and provided review and technical assistance to faculty members in responding to these questions in their proposals.

CPC intends to launch a new program review process, which is scheduled to be designed during the spring 2008 term. The assessment director and chair will be involved in this process and the director has submitted proposed questions for inclusion in the process.

In addition to CPC membership, the assessment director is now a voting member of a new standing committee on general education, along with the chair of the Assessment Commission. This committee will consider results from assessment of OIT's Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs) where they relate to general education requirements and recommend changes as appropriate. In fall 2007, the assessment director performed an ISLO audit with each assessment coordinator to determine how each curriculum incorporates these institutional level outcomes. These results were shared with the General Education Advisory Council in spring 2008.

Systematic Feedback and Communication on Assessment
OIT took the following steps to increase systematic feedback and communication on assessment matters to all appropriate levels within the institution:

- The director and chair of the Assessment Commission are now voting members of the Curriculum Planning Commission, Academic Council, and the General Education Advisory Council. The director prepares written reports for Academic Council for each of its meetings and brings assessment matters to the council as needed.
- The director is now a member of the President's cabinet and reported verbally on assessment matters at each bi-weekly meeting.
- The director periodically updated the school chairs and the Provost on important junctures in our structured process and on assessment matters in general.
- The director regularly communicated with assessment coordinators through email, formal meetings, and regular one-to-one work sessions.
- The Executive Committee of the Assessment Commission met weekly and included broad representation from the campus.
- The director was charged with writing and disseminating the following annual reports, which were completed by the end of the academic year:

  o Report on Annual Assessment Activities
  o Updated Assessment Plan
  o Report on ISLO Assessment Activities

  These reports are posted on the Provost's web site at www.oit.edu/provost. A link to these reports was sent to all faculty on the faculty list serve.

- The director met with the Vice President for Student Affairs and his staff to clarify ownership of the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) and the Cooperative Institutional Research Program Freshman Survey (CIRP) instruments. It was decided that the Strategic Enrollment Management committee, under Student Affairs, would administer and interpret results of these two surveys and report the results to appropriate campus bodies.

Publishing Expected Learning Outcomes
As of December 2007, OIT published the expected program learning outcomes for each of its programs on a web site at www.oit.edu/provost/learningoutcomes. Each web page includes the program mission or purpose statement, educational objectives, expected student learning outcomes and a link to the program's curriculum map. Upon completion of assessment coordinator reports in the spring, several additional sections were added to the web site to provide evidence of student learning and plans for program improvement. Each program's full assessment report is also attached to the program web page.

The Assessment Commission developed a statement on institutional student learning outcomes which is included on the OIT web site at www.oit.edu/provost/islo. This information is also posted on campus bulletin boards, inserted in student orientation packets, and included in the OIT catalog. Assessment results for each ISLO will be posted to this web site each year. The Commission assessed critical thinking this year and the report is now posted on this site.

Institutional Student Learning Outcomes
During the 2007-08 academic year, the Executive Committee of the Assessment Commission met weekly, and focused its attention on ISLO assessment. The committee completed the following goals during the year:

- The committee updated the campus assessment plan, which included 2007-08 Executive Committee goals, reported below. The assessment plan is posted on a new web site at www.oit.edu/provost/assessment. This plan will be reviewed annually and academic year goals will be established during the annual review.
- In its full-scale accreditation evaluation of April 11-13, 2007, the NWCCU Evaluation Committee noted that "the differences in courses assessed, student abilities, program definitions of 'mastery' and other performance criteria means that the [ISLO] data cannot be meaningfully generalized across institutional programs and courses."

  The committee addressed these concerns and redesigned the assessment of ISLOs, using critical thinking as the focus this year. The committee designed a broad mid-level assessment of comparable student papers from courses emphasizing critical thinking. A group of faculty examined 175 papers using a rubric, with training provided by two members of the Executive Committee. In addition, the Executive Committee asked each program to assess student work using an upper-division or senior level activity. Each program used the same rubric for critical thinking that was used for the mid-level assessment. A report detailing results of

this assessment can be found in the final report for this ISLO on a new OIT web site at www.oit.edu/provost/islo.

- The committee completed the document "OIT's Institutional Student Learning Outcomes," with special focus on the performance criteria for each ISLO. This document can also be found on the OIT web site at www.oit.edu/provost/islo.
- The committee established a cycle for assessment of the ISLOs, provided this information to assessment coordinators, and posted this information on the OIT web site at www.oit.edu/provost/islo.
- The committee created an indirect survey for ISLO outcomes and with the assistance of the Registrar's Office attached the survey to the Application to Graduate. Data from this survey were reviewed by the Executive Committee.
- The committee completed the Assessment Commission's charter and it was approved by the Provost. The charter can be found on the OIT web site at www.oit.edu/provost/assessment.
- The committee planned 2008-09 assessment activities for the mathematics ISLO.
- The director completed an audit of ISLOs with the assessment coordinators, discussing where the ISLOs are addressed in each academic program. The results of this audit indicated a possible need for campus dialogue on ISLOs for professionalism, ethics, lifelong learning, and global perspectives/cultural diversity. The Executive Committee and the director requested that the Provost form a standing, rather than ad hoc, general education committee to address concerns arising from institutional-level assessment activities. The General Education Advisory Council was officially formed and began working in the spring 2008 term. Several members of the Executive Committee are members of the committee and will review and recommend changes in general education requirements as appropriate.

Other Academic Assessment
The director worked with Distance Education, Pre-College Programs and those departments with off-site locations to ensure equivalent academic rigor and the inclusion of comparable assessment measures for these programs.

Distance Education
During the 2007-08 academic year, the director worked with Distance Education to perform an audit of online courses for assessment purposes. The Director of Distance Education met with all campus programs regarding the following questions:

- Is the online course taught on campus by the same instructor?
- If so, does the online course include equivalent student learning outcomes and rigor to the on-campus version?
- If the online course is not taught by the same instructor as the on-campus course, has the department ensured that the two courses include equivalent student learning outcomes and rigor to the on-campus version?
- If an on-campus course is included in assessment activities this year, is the same assessment included in the online course?

Results of this audit are on file in Distance Education and the Assessment Office.

Pre-College Programs
During the 2007-08 academic year, the director worked with Pre-College Programs and faculty coordinators to examine whether or not there is equivalent rigor between OIT courses and high school advance credit courses. Each coordinator prepared a memo describing steps taken to ensure equivalent academic rigor, assessment activities, and any concerns. These concerns were dealt with by Pre-College Programs, the department involved, and the high schools.

Off-Site Locations
The director contacted all assessment coordinators with off-site programs to request that similar assessment measures be administered at both locations. In addition, the director worked directly with the Allied Health Department on assessment activities for Clinical Lab Science, Paramedic Education and Respiratory Care.

IDEA Center Faculty Evaluation System
OIT adopted the IDEA Center Faculty Evaluation System as of fall 2007. The Assessment Commission began to explore how summary reports from the IDEA Center could be used as indirect measures for assessment purposes. Some assessment coordinators used IDEA Center results as part of their program assessment efforts. In addition, the Executive Committee reviewed the IDEA Center question on critical thinking as a supplementary indirect measure to campus-wide assessment of this ISLO.

Stop-Out/Exit Surveys
The director worked with Student Affairs and the Director of Institutional Research to provide more information to departments on students who withdraw or stop out. Student Affairs provided both general information for the institution and specific information by program where possible. This group also made plans to simplify the data collection process for next year and will work on this project during summer 2008.

Summary
During the 2007-08 academic year, OIT took energetic strides and made significant progress in its assessment efforts, including the accomplishments listed below. The university:

- Addressed all NWCCU concerns listed in its April 2007 full scale evaluation visit.
- Established assessment leadership by hiring an assessment director.
- Fully established program assessment of student learning outcomes.
- Ensured an assessment perspective in curriculum matters.
- Increased communication about assessment matters across the institution.
- Published expected student learning outcomes and evidence of student learning on a new assessment web site.

- Redesigned and administered a new assessment process for ISLOs, including definitions of performance criteria.
- Performed a campus-wide assessment of critical thinking.

As the Executive Committee concludes the academic year, the committee anticipates a number of activities for the 2008-09 year. The Chair of the Assessment Commission will resume leadership of the commission as of fall 2008. The committee will revisit the annual assessment plan at that time, and goals for the year will be established. In addition, the committee will implement assessment of math and science ISLOs. The director will assist programs in refining their assessment processes. And the campus will host a focused revisit from NWCCU and demonstrate the significant progress made in assessment. The Executive Committee hopes that the momentum of this very busy year will carry forward to next year, and that our assessment processes will mature and deepen into a robust culture of assessment.