

**Oregon Institute of Technology
2008-09 Academic Assessment Report**

Prepared by

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

May 22, 2009

Contents

Introduction.....	1
NWCCU Focused Interim Visit.....	1
Leadership of Academic Assessment Efforts	1
Communication of Assessment Matters	1
Assessment Reporting	2
Liaison with Other Campus Bodies Engaged in Assessment	2
Assessment and Curricular Matters	3
Resources in Support of Assessment	3
Institutional Assessment	3
Program Assessment.....	5
Other Academic Assessment	6
Summary	6

Academic Assessment Report 2008-09 OIT Assessment Commission

Introduction

This report outlines OIT assessment activities and accomplishments during the 2008-09 academic year and is based on the goals set in the 2008-09 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.

NWCCU Focused Interim Visit

As a follow-up note to the 2007-08 Academic Assessment Report, OIT had a successful focused interim visit from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) in October 2008. The report prepared by the evaluator included the following remarks:

OIT has taken to heart the recommendations made during the full accreditation visit of spring, 2007. Sufficient progress has occurred on all recommendations, and remarkable progress has been made in the area of assessment. OIT is to be commended for the scope of the assessment efforts undertaken.

Leadership of Academic Assessment Efforts

During 2008-09, Maria Lynn Kessler, the Chair of the Assessment Commission, resumed leadership of the Executive Committee of the Assessment Commission as well as the full Assessment Commission. During 2007-08, Beth Murphy, the Director of Assessment, had temporarily assumed leadership of these two groups in order to lead focused efforts to implement program assessment. This implementation was in response to formal recommendations from NWCCU, as noted above. Dr. Kessler and Ms. Murphy worked closely together during both 2007-08 and 2008-09 to coordinate assessment efforts.

Communication of Assessment Matters

OIT continued to emphasize communication of assessment matters through the following means:

- The Director of Assessment and the Chair of the Assessment Commission continued as active, voting members of Academic Council (AC), the Curriculum Planning Commission (CPC), and the General Education Advisory Council (GEAC).
- The director continued to update the deans and Provost on important junctures in the assessment process and about various assessment matters. In addition, the director also included chairs in the accountability process of reminding coordinators of assessment deadlines and following up on overdue assessment reports.
- The director regularly communicated with assessment coordinators through email, formal meetings, and regular one-to-one and small group work sessions.

- The Executive Committee of the Assessment Commission met weekly and included broad representation from the campus.
- As noted below in Assessment Reporting, the director completed and disseminated OIT's annual assessment reports. These reports were posted on the Provost's web site and the link to these reports was sent to the faculty list serve. During the fall 2008 convocation, the results were presented to the faculty as described below.
- The Director of Assessment ensured that the Institutional Student Learning Outcomes were communicated to students through posters on bulletin boards, flyers in orientation packets, a display in the college catalog alongside the list of degree programs, and the assessment web site.
- The Director of Assessment maintained the assessment web site as an important communication vehicle. The web site publishes student learning outcomes along with assessment reports for each program. The site also includes institutional assessment reports and documents.

Assessment Reporting

The commission completed the following reports and posted them on the Provost's web site:

- 2008-09 Academic Assessment Plan
- 2008-09 Academic Assessment Report (this report)
- 2008-09 Assessment of Mathematics
- 2008-09 Assessment of Science

In addition, the commission ensured, per the assessment plan, that the following 2007-08 assessment information was shared with faculty during the fall 2008 convocation:

- 2007-08 Assessment of Critical Thinking
- 2007-08 assessment accomplishments and plans for 2008-09
- Results from the Fall 2007 Cooperative Institutional Research Program Freshman Survey (CIRP)

Liaison with Other Campus Bodies

The director met with the chair of the Commission on College Teaching (CCT) to ask the commission to consider offering a faculty teaching seminar on critical thinking. The chair of CCT was favorable to this idea and brought it up for discussion. To date, however, CCT has not made plans to implement this idea.

The director and chair of the Executive Committee actively engaged in the work of the General Education Advisory Council (GEAC), along with two other members of the Executive Committee. The director and chair wrote and presented a memo to the GEAC, outlining shared concerns for possible discussion and action. The items included 1) the need to clarify the relationship between general education requirements and institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs), 2) the request for support in closing the loop on institutional assessment work, 3) the need to clarify the proposed intercultural awareness general education requirement, and 4) a request to review the performance criteria for ISLOs to be assessed in 2009-10.

Assessment and Curriculum Matters

The director and chair continued as voting members of the Curriculum Planning Commission (CPC). These two individuals reviewed all CPC documents, regularly attended CPC meetings, and provided an assessment perspective on CPC matters. CPC still requires the assessment director, along with other academic officers, to sign final approvals for new programs and significant revisions of current programs.

The CPC manual requires appropriate assessment questions for faculty members to answer when creating proposals. The director ensured that these questions were updated in a revision of the manual this year. The director also provided review and technical assistance to faculty members in responding to these questions in their proposals.

Resources in Support of Assessment

The Provost's Office continued to provide budget and staff resources to the Assessment Commission and to departments to help design, revise, implement, and evaluate assessment programs. The Provost also provided funding for the National Survey of Student Engagement and for director travel to statewide Learning Outcomes and Assessment task force meetings.

Institutional Assessment

The Executive Committee engaged in or completed the following institutional assessment work during the 2008-09 academic year:

- As noted above in "Assessment Reporting," the committee led a faculty session on assessment during convocation. The presentation included a summary of 2007-08 activities and accomplishments, discussed plans for 2008-09, presented assessment results on critical thinking, and solicited faculty suggestions for closing the loop on critical thinking issues. In addition, the committee arranged to have Anji Duchi, Director of Institutional Research, present the fall 2007 CIRP results to the faculty.
- The committee made plans for closing the loop with critical thinking, communicated these plans to the faculty, and during winter 2009, conducted a mini-assessment on the weaker areas found in the assessment.
- The committee completed the 2008-09 assessment plan in September, received Provost approval, and posted the plan on the assessment web site.
- The committee completed the 2008-09 assessment report (this report) and posted it on the assessment web site.
- The committee planned, implemented and reported on the assessment of mathematics.
- The committee planned, implemented and reported on the assessment of science.
- The committee reviewed the ISLO survey associated with the Application to Graduate. They re-affirmed the previous questions used in the 2007-08 survey. In addition, specific questions relating to the performance criteria for math and science, which are being assessed this year, were added.
- The committee updated the Mission Statement and Charter for the Assessment Commission to remove references to "Associate Provost," a position that was

eliminated during academic restructuring in 2007-08, and posted the revised document on the assessment web site.

- The committee reviewed the CIRP data collected in 2007-08 for actionable items and, other than presenting the data to the faculty, did not initiate any further assessment activities.
- The committee planned the 2009-10 ISLO assessment activities, including vetting of the performance criteria for ethics and teamwork, working with assessment coordinators to plan the assessments, and approving rubrics and processes for the assessment. The committee vetted the performance criteria broadly across the institution, including meetings with the Academic Council, the General Education Advisory Council, the full Assessment Commission, and individual meetings with assessment coordinators.
- The committee decided not to assess the ISLO on cultural awareness in 2009-10, pending review and adoption of a general education requirement by the institution.
- The director tracked “closing the loop” items from 2007-08 program reports and provided reminders to assessment coordinators.
- The committee sought the assistance of the Communication Department to develop common rubrics for speech, teamwork, technical writing and essay writing. The committee released these rubrics to all faculty and posted them on the assessment web site.
- The committee held discussions on bridging ISLO assessment results and the associated pedagogy. The group discussed issues of ownership of the curriculum, the need to reach campus-wide consensus on performance criteria, and the challenges of successfully assessing ISLOs that are not associated with a general education requirement.
- The committee followed the work of the statewide Learning Outcomes and Assessment Task Force, with Beth Murphy providing updates from the task force. In addition, Linda Young served as an OIT representative and attended the January 2009 AAC&U conference. The work of the statewide task force was associated with this conference, which focused on LEAP outcomes, general education reform, and the AAC&U Compass project. The committee also hosted a visit from the OUS Chancellor’s Office for the purpose of discussing assessment initiatives and challenges with OIT faculty.
- The committee followed state- and national-level accountability trends and completed two projects to better position OIT for possible future requirements in this area. The first project was to administer the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), a widely used instrument that is often used as one measure of university accountability. The second project was to compile a list of national board and licensure pass rates among our degree programs. This report is posted on the assessment web site at www.oit.edu/provost/assessment/reports.
- With the decision to use the NSSE, the committee decided to discontinue use of the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory.
- The committee met with the Acting Provost and the ETM Dean regarding stipends for assessment coordinators. While the committee had approved guidelines for awarding stipends for coordinators, the majority of the committee

recommended that assessment work be considered institutional service, without extra compensation. The Acting Provost agreed and announced his decision in November 2008.

- The committee refined some of the performance criteria included in the document “OIT’s Institutional Student Learning Outcomes.” This document can also be found on the OIT web site at www.oit.edu/provost/islo.

Program Assessment

During the fall convocation, Brad Burda (HAS) and Charlie Jones (ETM), the interim deans, emphasized the need for ongoing work in program assessment, discussed the role of the chair in assessment work, and discussed possible coordinator compensation.

The director laid out the 2008-09 tasks and timelines to all assessment coordinators. This plan included the ongoing requirement that all undergraduate and graduate degree programs create a manageable assessment plan focusing on program-specific learning outcomes created by each academic department. As in 2007-08, OIT’s structured process 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 (SLOs)
- Three-year rotational plan for assessing student learning outcomes
- SLO-curriculum matrices for 2008-09 SLOs
- Performance criteria for 2008-09 SLOs
- Plans for direct and indirect measures of 2008-09 SLOs
- Plans for implementation of improvements from 2007-08 assessment activities (“closing the loop”)
- Periodic assessment write-ups, including data summaries, evaluation of data, and action plans for program improvement.

The director also provided assessment coordinators with the following information:

- Dates and expectations for the upcoming focused interim visit from NWCCU
- Update on statewide assessment activities
- Training on recommended refinements in assessment, including:
 - SLO-curriculum matrices
 - Performance criteria
 - Presentation of results
 - Closing the loop

By the end of fall 2008, the majority of academic programs had completed the above items and performed one or more assessment measure(s) 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 and offered suggestions for improvement. The director also provided updates on the status of each program to the department chairs and deans.

During winter and spring terms, the coordinators continued to execute their 2008-09 assessment plans. In addition to their core assessment activities, the coordinators also completed the following tasks:

- 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

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 2008-09 academic year, the director worked with Distance Education and its associated departments to ensure that assessment activities included in on-campus courses were also conducted with the online version of the course.

Pre-College Programs

The director continued to work 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 memos are available in Assessment Office records.

Off-Site Locations

The director contacted all assessment coordinators with off-site programs to confirm that similar assessment measures would 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.

Summary

During the 2008-09 academic year, OIT continued its energetic work in assessment. The institution made significant progress in refining assessment efforts at both institutional and program levels. The major accomplishments for the year were:

- A successful focused interim visit on assessment by NWCCU.
- Assessment of institutional student learning outcomes in mathematics.
- Assessment of institutional student learning outcomes in science.
- Implementation of the National Survey of Student Engagement.
- Steady communication about assessment throughout the institution.
- Completion of all planned assessment reports.
- Frequent liaison with other campus bodies.
- Solidified efforts and progressive refinements in program assessment.

As the Executive Committee concludes the academic year, the committee looks forward to the 2009-10 year. We will present assessment results for math, science, and the NSSE to the faculty during convocation. The committee will revisit the annual assessment plan in early fall, and goals for the year will be established. In addition, the committee will implement institutional assessment of teamwork and ethics. The Executive Committee is pleased that the momentum of the very busy 2007-08 academic year carried forward to this year, and that our assessment processes have matured.