Closing the Loop with Assessment

Summary of Assessment Activities 2011-2013

HAWAI‘I COMMUNITY COLLEGE

May 31, 2014
Environment

Hawai‘i Community College has engaged in formal assessment activities since 2005. From 2005 to 2012, the College conducted instructional program assessment through a well-designed process that evaluated student learning outcomes at the program level. Through the 2011-12 academic year assessment was facilitated through an ad hoc Assessment Committee and implemented within and through each division and department, based on the instructional programs’ and support units’ needs.

During the 2012-13 academic year, the ad hoc Assessment Committee its mission, goals, and membership framework and was accepted as a formal College committee. During the 2012-13 academic year, the committee responded to recommendations made by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACCJC) Accreditation Team. The responses to and results of the College’s actions to the ACCJC Accreditation Team’s recommendations are part of the report that follows.

The Challenge

During the College’s initial years of assessment practice, the challenges included developing a framework for assessment, implementing the process within instructional programs and support units, and training faculty and staff to conduct authentic assessments with results that were practical and applicable. During the initial phases, the College’s staff participated in rethinking the institutional mission, vision, and goals and developing institutional learning outcomes. Instructional programs and support units developed learning outcomes to support students based on the mission, vision and goals for the instructional programs and support units. An hoc Assessment Committee, comprised of faculty, staff and administrators, facilitated the development of the assessment process, developed forms and activated the assessment cycle. In addition to assessment, a five-year comprehensive review process was implemented which included all

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Recommendations

“Our Action Plan, based on the recommendations of the Advisory Council members was taken into consideration and implemented. Their suggestions for the manually designed and drafted floor plan, front exterior elevation, site plan and project data assignment were as follows:

1. Emphasize more clarity in delivering instructions.
2. Review standard dimensioning techniques.
3. Remind students of proper line values.
4. Require students to self-check for accuracy, and provide a check-list for their use.

Changing our instructional approach to this assignment did seem to improve the quality of some of the students’ work. However, AEC also need to work on scheduling more time as the students’ speed in hand drafting, manual sheet planning and layout, etc. is time consuming, which compromises quality and accuracy when rushing to meet a deadline.”

Architectural Engineering & CAD Technologies
instructional programs and support units. The comprehensive review process incorporated the results of assessments within its reporting structure.

As part of the College’s accreditation process, a team from the ACCJC visited the college in October 2012 and reported its findings to the College in December 2012. In its report, the ACCJC Accreditation Team recognized the progress that the College had made on comprehensive program review and instructional program and support unit assessment. A portion of the team’s report included the recommendation, “The College has developed a plan for assessing Student Learning Outcomes at the course, program, and institutional levels. Evidence supports the adoption of program, general education (GE), and institutional level outcomes. There is evidence of wide and continuous assessment of outcomes at the program level leading to institutional improvement. Assessment for institutional level outcomes is planned, but has not yet occurred. Although assessment of course level outcomes is referenced in the self-evaluation narrative and in the accreditation update provided by the College, evidence is not readily available to validate this assertion. Although not listed in the original recommendation, it should be noted that initial assessment of unit (service area) outcomes is occurring. Administrative units have established goals, but do not have unit outcomes identified and assessed at this time.

The implementation of SLO assessment plan at all levels remains incomplete. Therefore, the team concluded that this recommendation is partially met.”

The Assessment Committee responded to this recommendation by hosting a full-day retreat on March 1, 2013 that focused on establishing a course-based assessment model for instructional programs and for developing a substantial unit outcome based standard for support units. This effort resulted in revising the instructional program assessments for the 2011-12 academic year to include the course information that was used to support the program level assessments.

To continue the move to a course focused assessment model, the Assessment Committee developed new assessment reporting forms for the 2012-13 Academic Year that included assessed courses and associated course learning outcomes. The new assessment format included aligning course learning outcomes to the program learning outcomes and institutional learning outcomes. Additional fields were added to the assessment reporting forms to

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1 http://hawaii.hawaii.edu/accreditation/docs/hawaii_cc_evaluation_report_12-14-12.docx
reflect the requirements for the University of Hawai‘i System’s ADRP system to facilitate reporting assessment data for that process. As part of the move to course-based assessment, each instructional program developed a five-year assessment plan. The plans were posted on the College assessment website along with assessment plans, reports and all the historical assessment data for each instructional program.

The ACCJC accreditation team re-visited the campus in November 2013 to review the College’s progress in response to the recommendations from the Spring 2013 report. This visit resulted in additional recommendations for the College. The team concluded, “Hawaii Community College has improved documentation of implementation and assessment at the course level, although pervasive assessment of and dialogue on course outcomes is not yet evident. The College has developed a draft plan for assessment of institutional learning outcomes, but has not yet engaged in a full cycle of assessment. The recommendation is partially addressed, and the Standards are partially met.”

The Solution

In response to the ACCJC team’s conclusion, the Assessment Committee made a number of changes to the assessment process and enhanced the access to the assessment information. The assessment form was separated into three sections: planning, reporting and improvement (closing the loop). For instructional program assessment, the planning and reporting sections applied to each assessed course. The improvement section was added to provide a clearer picture of the improvements made as a result of conducting assessments and implementing Action Plans. The improvement section will be submitted upon completion of each Action Plan in order to close the loop on that assessment effort. In parallel with the forms modifications, the Institutional Learning Outcomes, Program Learning Outcomes and Course Learning Outcomes were reviewed, aligned and furnished to the instructional programs to facilitate assessment development and reporting. The assessment reporting section includes information that is applicable to the new Annual Reports with the intention that all the assessments, annual and comprehensive reporting data are part of the College’s integrated master planning and reporting system.

During the 2013-14 academic year, closing the loop forms were distributed to instructional programs and support units in order to gather information about course and program improvements made during the 2011-12 and 2012-13 academic assessment periods. Prior to the 2011-12 assessment, reports focused on program level evaluations and execution of Action Plans occurred at the program level.

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Therefore, the decision was made to start close the loop reporting with the 2011-12 assessment reports that contained identified courses. Gathering the closing the loop information will become part of the annual assessment reporting process to continuously reflect the improvement made through the application of assessment results.

The College Council has purview for developing, implementing and assessing the Institutional Learning Outcomes. Based on the ACCJC team noting that the Institutional Learning Outcomes had not been assessed, the College Council charged the Assessment Committee with developing and implementing an assessment plan. A portion of the September 2012 E ‘Imi Pono day activities included aligning the instructional program learning outcomes with the institutional learning outcomes. Using this alignment information the Assessment Committee developed an Institutional Learning Outcome Assessment Plan. The plan was presented to College Council and approved for implementation during the 2013-14 Academic Year. The assessment gathered quantitative and qualitative survey data from faculty, staff, administration, and students. A report based on the data is scheduled for review by the College Council during the Fall 2014 semester.

The Results

A few selected comments from the closing the loop submissions are included in this report’s sidebars to illustrate the reflection through analysis and dialog that is taking place within the College’s assessment processes.

Tables 1 and 2 represent a summary of the assessments reports submitted, student learning outcomes assessed at the course level, program and institutional learning outcomes aligned within the assessments, and a log of the responses submitted through the closing the loop reports. These data represent a slice of the College’s assessment data collection that affords the institution with an historical view of assessment’s progress. This is foundational information that the College will continuously review and use to develop meaningful conclusions and plans based on the authentic assessment strategies.

The numbers in the spreadsheets provide a cumulative view of annual information. The primary goal for the various levels of assessment is to assemble and sustain a robust environment for affording instructional programs and support units opportunities to apply information and results from the assessment reports and make a positive difference in student learning and support.

In parallel with the modifications to the assessment process, forms, and reporting, the College implemented an Institutional Learning Outcome Assessment Plan during the Spring 2013 semester. In the plan, two surveys were developed and distributed in order to gather quantitative and qualitative data from the College staff and graduating students. The results of the surveys are illustrated in Table 3 below. In August 2014, the College is conducting a full-day, all-staff retreat to discuss the surveys’ results and develop an Institutional Learning Outcome Action Plan based on the activities and dialog carried out during the retreat.
Conclusions

The assessment process at the program level has become a familiar exercise; and the focus on course learning outcomes produced some initial confusion. Overall, the move to course-based student learning outcome assessment from the program learning outcome model is producing positive results. Instructional programs and support units within the institution are acclimating to the full process that resulted from the ACCJC’s October 2012 and subsequent visits. After completing two years of course level assessment, instructional programs and support units are closing the loop and reporting the reflections and results of implementing the assessments’ Action Plans. The chart and tables depict only a portion of the program and course assessment story. The true results rest in incremental improvements within curriculum practice and dialog.

While not all instructional programs and support units have emerged with robust, comprehensive recommendations and dialog, their efforts reflect an emergent understanding that assessment’s results carry effects beyond an assessment report. Application of the changes made based on Hawai‘i Community College’s assessment results and recommendations will provide a continuous regenerative process for curriculum improvement, pedagogical transformation, and enhanced student learning.
### Assessment Planning, Reporting, and Closing the Loop 2011-12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Plans</th>
<th>Assessed</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>(% submitting assessment plan)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Programs&lt;sup&gt;1)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>Courses&lt;sup&gt;2)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>7%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Alignment<sup>3)</sup>
- Institutional Learning Outcomes: Aligned
  - ILO 1: 27
  - ILO 2: 27
  - ILO 3: 13 (Total PLOs: 162)
- Program Learning Outcomes: 74

#### Assessment Reports<sup>4)</sup>
- Action Plans Developed: 50 (98% of Assessment Plans (courses) with follow-up Action Plans)
- Goals: N/A*
- Timeline: N/A*

#### Closing the Loop<sup>5)</sup>
- Recommendations: 10 (20% of Action Plans with Closing the Loop responses)
- Modifications: 9
- Dialog: 8

Table 1: [Closing the Loop 2011-12]

### Assessment Planning, Reporting, and Closing the Loop 2012-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Plans</th>
<th>Assessed</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>(% submitting assessment plan)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs&lt;sup&gt;1)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses&lt;sup&gt;2)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Alignment<sup>3)</sup>
- Institutional Learning Outcomes: Aligned
  - ILO 1: 36
  - ILO 2: 35
  - ILO 3: 29 (Total PLOs: 162)
- Program Learning Outcomes: 75

#### Assessment Reports<sup>4)</sup>
- Action Plans Developed: 52 (100% of Assessment Plans (courses) with follow-up Action Plans)
- Goals: 33
- Timeline: 34

#### Closing the Loop<sup>5)</sup>
- Recommendations: 19 (57% of Action Plans with Closing the Loop responses)
- Modifications: 19
- Dialog: 17

Table 2: [Closing the Loop 2012-13]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I think Hawai'i Community College graduates are prepared to: (1) communicate effectively in a variety of situations</th>
<th>I think Hawai'i Community College graduates are prepared to: (2) gather, evaluate and analyze ideas and information</th>
<th>I think Hawai'i Community College graduates are prepared to: (3) overcome challenges, solve problems and make decisions</th>
<th>I think Hawai'i Community College graduates are prepared to: (4) make contributions to our community</th>
<th>I think Hawai'i Community College graduates are prepared to: (5) respect diversity and Hawaiian culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty</strong></td>
<td>Strongly Agree: 7, Agree: 42, Neutral: 4, Disagree: 2, Strongly Disagree: 0</td>
<td>Strongly Agree: 11, Agree: 37, Neutral: 5, Disagree: 0, Strongly Disagree: 0</td>
<td>Strongly Agree: 13, Agree: 36, Neutral: 4, Disagree: 0, Strongly Disagree: 0</td>
<td>Strongly Agree: 23, Agree: 30, Neutral: 3, Disagree: 0, Strongly Disagree: 0</td>
<td>Strongly Agree: 21, Agree: 32, Neutral: 3, Disagree: 5, Strongly Disagree: 0</td>
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<td><strong>Staff</strong></td>
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<td>Strongly Agree: 0, Agree: 0, Neutral: 0, Disagree: 0, Strongly Disagree: 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: ILO Assessment Data