Open Email List

Print this report

Fayetteville Technical Community College

Detailed Assessment Report
2008-2009 Curriculum Programs- Gen Ed Competencies

Mission/Purpose

FTCC provides programs to meet the technical, vocational, and general education needs of its students and the surrounding community. Graduates of FTCC, regardless of program area, should possess a common core of general education competencies that promote success in the work place, facilitate the learning of technical skills, and ease the transition to further higher education. Achievement of these core competencies should also serve to enhance quality of life.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Achievement Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

O 1: Effective communication

Graduates of FTCC will communicate effectively in speaking, writing, reading and listening.

Associations:

General Education or Core Curriculum:

1 Communicate effectively in speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

Institutional Priorities:

2 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS-To provide a comprehensive educational program committed to quality...

Strategic Plans:

Curriculum Programs- Gen Ed Competencies

2.1.1 Promote active learning to serve students from diverse populations. (Ongoing) NOTE: Click the link, Strategic Plan, for additional objectives and activities for Curriculum Programs 2.1.1.

2.20.1 Request Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Office provide data on attainment of general institutional competencies. (Ongoing)

2.20.2 Measure attainment of general institutional competencies. (Ongoing)

Related Measures:

M 1: ENG 111 essay

ENG 111 (Expository Writing) is the required first course in a series of two designed to develop the ability to produce clear expository prose. Upon completion, students should be able to produce unified, coherent, well-developed essays using standard written English. All degree programs require ENG 111.

A critical component of meaningful written communication is the correct use of language, diction, and mechanics in organizing and developing ideas. In the Fall semester of each academic year, a five-paragraph composition of students in ENG 111 will be examined by a five-member English Assessment Team. A standardized grading rubric will be examined for the use of standard academic structure and mechanics in the introduction, body, and conclusion of the composition. The rubric will be used to establish A, B, C, D, and F level work in these areas and will distinguish between those who successfully complete ENG 111 and those who do not.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Achievement Target:

At least 80% of students who successfully complete ENG 111 will score at least 70% on the rubric to evaluate the five-paragraph composition.

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Not Met

In the Fall semester of 2008, 274 sample papers were submitted for review and evaluation by English instructors from ENG 111 or higher. In the Spring semester of 2009, an additional 183 papers were evaluated. A valid and uniform process of grading was established using a standard grading tool (rubric). The rubric evaluted papers based on three standards: MLA formatting, structure, and organization. Based on the sample of papers that applied the grading criteria correctly, the related achievement target was not met. Results indicated that 76.5% (309/404) of the students' papers earned above 70% in the categories for organization and structure & mechanics. *The attached documents include the evaluation rubic, tabulation of the results, and explanation of the evaluation process.*

Documents:

ENG 111 Essay Rubric
ENG 111 Results for 2008-09
ENG 111 Documentation process for essay evaluation

Related Action Plans:

Refine evaluation procedure/Focus on MLA formatting

This first year of in-depth assessment proved to be a challenge in both establishing criteria and obtaining instructor buy-in to the process. Although a workable plan was developed, the English Division will continue to re-evaluate and revise as needed. The following items will be addressed in the 2009-10 assessment cycle:

1. Adjust the process of collecting and evaluating students' work - focus on the Fall semester to involve the entire division *(both 10-month and 12-month instructors will be part of the assessment process)*
2. Reinforce the validity and usefulness of the rubric to current and new instructors
3. Update the rubric (since it is also an instructional tool) to the new edition of the reference textbook
4. Gradually move emphasis of the division's efforts from establishing an

evaluation procedure to achieving the targets and objectives. According to the evaluation rubric, MLA formatting appeared to be the weakest component of student essays. Instructors will increase efforts in 2009-10 to successfully apply MLA formatting.

For more information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

M 2: COM 231/ENG 115 speeches

COM 231 (Pulic Speaking) and ENG 115 (Oral Communication) provide instruction in the preparation and delivery of speeches in both small group and public settings. One of these courses is required in degree programs. Upon completion of these courses, students should be able to demonstrate the principles of effective oral communication.

During both Fall and Spring semesters, at least one class section (per instructor) for COM 231 or ENG 115 will have student speeches videotaped. A representative sample of these speeches will be examined by a team of three communication instructors. A rubric will be develped to assess the strengths and weaknessess of the presentations.

Source of Evidence: Video or audio tape (music, counseling, art)

Achievement Target:

At least 80% of students who successfully complete COM 231 or ENG 115 will achieve a score of 70% or better on the speech evaluation rubric.

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Met

Results showed that 84% of students who successfully completed COM 231 achieved a score of 77 or better on the speech evaluation rubric. Although this indicates that the target was met, the Communications faculty are undertaking the following actions to help refine the assessment process for 2009-10:

1. Adjust the process of collecting and evaluating students' work - focus on the Fall semester to involve the entire division (both 10-month and 12-month instructors will be included in the process)
2. Reinforce the validity and usefulness of the rubric to current and new instructors
3. Improve the rubric (since it is also an instructional tool) and make sure it is closely matching the evaluated assignment.
4. Gradually move emphasis of the division's efforts from establishing an evaluation procedure to achieving the targets and agreed objectives
5. Establish a rotation schedule to include evaluation of ENG 115

The attached documents show the evaluation rubric and the rubric results. They also provide additional insight into the evaluation and analysis process.

Documents:

COM 231 Documentation Process
COM 231 Rubric results
COM 231 Rubric 1

O 2: Critical thinking

Graduates of FTCC will use critical thinking to analyze problems and make logical

decisions.

Associations:

General Education or Core Curriculum:

2 Use critical thinking to analyze problems and make logical decisions.

Institutional Priorities:

2 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS-To provide a comprehensive educational program committed to quality...

Strategic Plans:

Curriculum Programs- Gen Ed Competencies

2.1.1 Promote active learning to serve students from diverse populations. (Ongoing) NOTE: Click the link, Strategic Plan, for additional objectives and activities for Curriculum Programs 2.1.1.
2.20.1 Request Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Office provide data on attainment of general institutional competencies. (Ongoing)
2.20.2 Measure attainment of general institutional competencies. (Ongoing)

Related Measures:

M 3: Outcome analysis from curriculum academic units

Every curriculum academic unit must develop an outcome that addresses how students use critical thinking to analyze problems and make logical decisions. This will be listed as Outcome #1 on all instructional unit assessment plans and must incorporate the phrase "use information to analyze problems and make logical decisions". At the end of each assessment cycle, the findings for Outcome #1 on all plans will be reviewed by members of the assessment team. The compiled results will be reported and analyzed to determine the level to which the critical thinking competency has been achieved.

Source of Evidence: Document Analysis

Achievement Target:
At least 80% of the curriculum academic units examined will show findings that meet or exceed their achievement targets for Outcome #1.

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Partially Met
There were a total of 63 curriculum academic units that were reviewed. Of these, 50 met the achievement target relating to Outcome #1 on cririca thinking. This indicates a success rate of 79.4%. See attached document to see individual unit results.

Document:
Critical Thinking Matix

Related Action Plans:

Continued Review
A success rate of 79.4% is so close to the achievement target that no corrective action will be taken. All academic units will continue to emphasize critcal thinking as a course outcome, with yearly reviews of results.
For more information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

O 3: Socialization skills

Graduates will demonstrate socialization skills that support cultural awareness and a global

perspective.

Associations:

General Education or Core Curriculum:

3 Demonstrate socialization skills that support cultural awareness and a global perspective.

Institutional Priorities:

2 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS-To provide a comprehensive educational program committed to quality...

Strategic Plans:

Curriculum Programs- Gen Ed Competencies

2.20.1 Request Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Office provide data on attainment of general institutional competencies. (Ongoing)
2.20.2 Measure attainment of general institutional competencies. (Ongoing)

Related Measures:

M 4: Common Exam in Social Science/Humanities courses

Certain introductory courses within the Social Science/Humanities Division have several components that focus on themes of socialization. These themes address the Division's purpose of educating students “to recognize and analyze the various facets of human nature” and “to become better community and world citizens”. Because PSY 150, SOC 210, REL 110, and HIS 111 share these common themes, they lend themselves well to being evaluated simultaneously.

The Social Science/Humanities Division will use a single, 10 question multiple-choice test to assess the level of socialization skills that have been attained by students who successfully complete these courses. This exam will be administered to randomly selected sections of PSY 150, SOC 210, REL 110, and HIS 111. Additionally, the exam will be administered to students in randomly selected sections of advanced Sociology/ Humanities courses in the belief that these competencies will be increasingly reinforced and internalized. The test will be administered near the end of the Fall and Spring semester to all students in each of the selected sections. The essay questions on the exam will be evaluated by a subject matter expert using standardized rubric. Responses to the multiple choice questions will be compiled and analyzed by a team of instructors from Social Science/Humanities.

Source of Evidence: Standardized test of subject matter knowledge

Achievement Target:

At least 80% of students who successfully complete the introductory courses of PSY 150, SOC 210, REL 110, and HIS 111, as well as the randomly selected advanced courses in those disciplines, will score at least 70% on the standardized test.

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Met

The combined results of scores obtained from the randomly selected introductory and advanced Social Science and Humanities courses indicate that 79% of students met the achievement target of scoring at least 70% on the standardized test. Although this is not quite at the target level of 80%, it will be recorded as meeting the target due to a mis-communication in compiling test

results. The mis-communication involved the inclusion of all student scores rather than segregating results into successful completers and non-completers. Because scores of non-completers were included in the assessment, it is assumed that the target of 80% would easily have been achieved had scores of non-completers been removed from the database. See chart below.

SOCIAL SCIENCE/HUMANITIES ASSESSMENT RESULTS 2008-09				
Course Level	**Subject**	**Target**		**Total N**
		Not Met	**Met**	
General and Advanced Courses	Philosophy	6 (15%)	35 (85%)	41
	Religion	1 (4%)	24 (96%)	25
	Spanish	8 (24%)	25 (76%)	33
	Art	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	4
	History	30 (18%)	137 (82%)	167
	Sociology	7 (7%)	89 (93%)	96
	Psychology	15 (32%)	32 (68%)	47
	Drama	8 (20%)	33 (80%)	41
SubTotal		**76 (17%)**	**378 (83%)**	**454**
Introductory Courses	Religion 110	4 (40%)	6 (60%)	10
	History 111	11 (46%)	13 (54%)	24
	Sociology 210	1 (14%)	6 (86%)	7
	Psychology 150	19 (54%)	5 (21%)	24
Sub Total		**35 (54%)**	**30 (46%)**	**65**
Total of all		**111**	**408**	**519**

courses		**(21%)**	**(79%)**	

Related Action Plans:

Modifications to Process

For the 2009- 10 assessment cycle, several modifications will be made. The first of these involves including only successful completers in the final report. The second involves increasing the number of test questions from 10 to 15 to increase the scope of the assessment. The third modification will involve adding some randomly selected Humanities (HUM) courses to the assessment. These courses were not included in this first assessment due to some timing and scheduling issues.

For more information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

O 4: Quantitative competencies

Graduates will demonstrate quantitative competencies.

Associations:

General Education or Core Curriculum:

4 Demonstrate quantitative competencies.

Institutional Priorities:

2 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS-To provide a comprehensive educational program committed to quality...

Strategic Plans:

Curriculum Programs- Gen Ed Competencies

2.1.1 Promote active learning to serve students from diverse populations. (Ongoing) NOTE: Click the link, Strategic Plan, for additional objectives and activities for Curriculum Programs 2.1.1.

2.20.1 Request Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Office provide data on attainment of general institutional competencies. (Ongoing)

2.20.2 Measure attainment of general institutional competencies. (Ongoing)

Related Measures:

M 5: MAT 115 competencies

In non-mathematics-intensive programs, MAT 115 (Mathematical Modeling) develops the ability to utilize mathematical skills and technology to solve problems. Upon completion, students should be able to solve practical problems, reason and communicate with mathematics, and work confidently, collaboratively, and independently.

A Math Assessment Team, made up of full-time math instructors, will focus on specific MAT 115 competencies and develop test questions on those competencies. These questions will be embedded in appropriate unit tests in MAT 115. At the end of the Fall and Spring semesters, student responses to the embedded test questions will be collected from randomly selected sections of MAT 115 and scored by the Math Assessment Team according to a pre-determined rubric. As part of the analysis, results will be divided into two categories: an item analysis for students passing the course with a D or higher and an item analysis for students who do not pass the

course.

Source of Evidence: Standardized test of subject matter knowledge

Achievement Target:

At least 90% of students who successfully complete MAT 115 will attain an average score of 75% on the embedded test questions.

Documents:

MAT 115 Assessment Questions
MAt 115 Rubric

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Not Met

Seven sections of MAT 115 participated in the assessment in the fall semester. The sample included 8-week and 16-week classes; day and evening classes; and both online and face-to-face classes. Instructors were given two sets of questions to embed either in the unit test on functions (Chapter 3) or, in the case of the online class, on a face-to-face midterm exam. One set of three questions required students to analyze and draw conclusions about a nonlinear function represented by a graph. The other set of three questions required an analysis of a linear function represented by a table of data. From the seven sections of MAT 115 that were sampled, 110 papers were obtained from students who were present on the day the assessment was given and who passed the course with a D or higher. These papers were collected from the various instructors and scored by a member of the math assessment team according to a 24-point rubric. Once the papers were scored, they were classified into three categories: 18 - 24 points (75% or more of the total points possible); 12 - 17 points (50 - 74%); and 0 - 11 points (less than 50%). The results are summarized below:

	18 - 24 pts (≥ 75%)	12 - 17 pts (50% - 74%)	0 - 11 pts (< 50%)
Total (out of 110)	74	22	14
Percent	67.3%	20%	12.7%

Related Action Plans:

increased focus on outcome skills
The purpose of the MAT 115 assessment was to gauge students' ability to read, interpret, and analyze data presented in tabular or graphic form. The

forms used and the types of questions asked were ones that should be familiar to MAT 115 students after completing work in Chapter 3 of their text. The scoring rubric assigned a total of 4 points to each question and allowed for a reasonable amount of partial credit. One possible flaw in the rubric, however, was that it required students to use proper formatting of their answers to receive full credit for some questions.

Since the achievement target was not met for this learning outcome, the math assessment team intends to include the same learning outcome on its assessment plan for the 2009-2010 cycle. All MAT 115 instructors will be made aware of the results of the 2008-2009 assessment and will be asked to increase their efforts to teach the skills addressed in this learning outcome. In designing the assessment plan for the 2009-2010 cycle, the target for this outcome will be to improve by at least five percent over the previous year's results (from 67.3% to at least 72.3%) the number of students scoring 75% or better on a similar set of embedded test questions.
For more information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

M 6: MAT 161 competencies

For programs that require a college transfer level mathematics course, MAT 161 (College Algebra) provides an integrated technological approach to algebraic topics used in problem solving. Upon completion, students should be able to choose an appropriate model to fit a data set and use the model for analysis and prediction.

A Math Assessment Team, made up of full-time math instructors, will focus on specific MAT 161 competencies and develop test questions on those competencies. These questions will be embedded in the final exam for MAT 161. Instructors of MAT 161 will score these exam questions uniformly, according to a predetermined rubric. As part of the analysis, results will be divided into two categories: an item analysis for students passing the course with a D or higher and an item analysis for students who do not pass the course. The Math Assessment Team will collect results from randomly selected MAT 161 classes at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters.

Source of Evidence: Standardized test of subject matter knowledge

Achievement Target:
At least 90% of students who successfully complete MAT 161 will attain an average score of 75% on the pre-selected final exam questions.

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Not Met
All sections of MAT 161 taught in the spring semester were invited to participate in this assessment. The sample consisted of 123 students from 11 sections of the course who took the two-part common final exam and passed the class with a D or higher. Of the 11 sections that participated, two were Huskins classes, three were online classes, and one was an 8-week class. Instructors who participated in the assessment were asked to score four pre-selected questions on the common final exam according to a given set of guidelines and to report the results. Each question was scored on a 2-point scale, allowing for very limited partial credit. Total scores for each student were grouped into three categories: 6 - 8 points (75% or more of the total possible points); 4 - 5 points (50 - 62.5%); and 0 - 3 points (less than 38%). The results are summarized below:

	6 - 8 pts (≥ 75%)	**4 - 5 pts (50% - 62.5%)**	**0 - 3 pts (< 38%)**
Total (out of			

123)	66	26	31
Percent	53.7%	21.1%	25.2%

Document:

MAT 161 Rubric

Related Action Plans:

Partial credit, content, and quantity review

The purpose of the MAT 161 assessment was to measure the students' ability to manipulate and evaluate formulas. Four questions from the common final exam for the course were selected for the assessment. In scoring students' answers, a two-point scale was used, allowing for very little partial credit. Also, with a total of only 8 points possible, a student missing more than one question scored less than the requisite 75%. Since the target for this learning outcome was not met, the math assessment team will carry over this learning outcome to its plan for the 2009-2010 assessment cycle. The team will carefully review the content and quantity of items used in the assessment tool to ensure that students are given an adequate opportunity to demonstrate mastery of this learning outcome. Also, the team will amend its target for this outcome, with the goal of raising the number of students scoring 75% or better to at least 80% of those passing the course with a D or higher.
For more information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

O 5: Computer literacy

Graduates will demonstrate computer literacy.

Associations:

General Education or Core Curriculum:

5 Demonstrate computer literacy.

Institutional Priorities:

2 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS-To provide a comprehensive educational program committed to quality...

Strategic Plans:

Curriculum Programs- Gen Ed Competencies

2.1.1 Promote active learning to serve students from diverse populations. (Ongoing) NOTE: Click the link, Strategic Plan, for additional objectives and activities for Curriculum Programs 2.1.1.
2.20.1 Request Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Office provide data on attainment of general institutional competencies. (Ongoing)
2.20.2 Measure attainment of general institutional competencies. (Ongoing)

Related Measures:

M 7: Computer Literacy Skills Management Assessment

The CIS Department will administer the Skills Assessment Manager (SAM) to students in CIS 110, CIS 111, and CIS 113. SAM is robust software package designed to help train and test students in the latest software applications. The areas of commonality that are to be evaluated through SAM are Operating System Skills, Word Skills, and Powerpoint Skills. This assessment will be given

throughout each semester in all sections of CIS 110, 111, and 113. Scores will be examined from students in approximately 20% of class sections offered. The Department Chair or assessment coodinator will compile the results.

Source of Evidence: Standardized test of subject matter knowledge

Achievement Target:

80% of students who successfully complete CIS 110, CIS 111, or CIS 113 will achieve a score of 77 or better on the Skills Assessment Manager.

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Partially Met

Findings 2008-09

	No. of Completers	No. scoring 77 or better	Percent
CIS 110	100	74	74%
CIS 111	31	23	74%
CIS 113	51	43	84%
Cumulative	**182**	**114**	**77%**

Documents:

CIS 110 SAMs Overview and Summary
2009SP CIS 110
2009SP CIS 111
2009SP CIS 113

Related Action Plans:

Format change for CIS 110

CIS 110 has the largest enrollment of the three courses evaluated. An improvement in SAM scores in this class will have a greater impact on overall scores. During 2008-09, many of the 110 lecture sections were double sections; with one person teaching the lecture and another teaching the lab on alternate days. For Spring 2010 the format will change to 2-hour lecture blocks for one half of the term, and 2-hour lab blocks for the other half of the term. Instead of the student going back and forth between lecture and lab instructor on alternating days the entire term, this should provide more accountability for the students to the lab instructor and more concentrated lab time for students to apply their knowledge. It is hoped that this format will be less intimidating and more conducive to student success. Additionally, since the first-time implementation of the SAMs test was in Spring 2009, it is felt that data over two semesters might produce a truer picture of student achievement.
For more information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

Details for Action Plans Established This Cycle

Continued Review

A success rate of 79.4% is so close to the achievement target that no corrective action will be taken. All academic units will continue to emphasize critcal thinking as a course outcome, with yearly reviews of results.

Priority: High

Target Date: 05/2010

Format change for CIS 110

CIS 110 has the largest enrollment of the three courses evaluated. An improvement in SAM scores in this class will have a greater impact on overall scores. During 2008-09, many of the 110 lecture sections were double sections; with one person teaching the lecture and another teaching the lab on alternate days. For Spring 2010 the format will change to 2-hour lecture blocks for one half of the term, and 2-hour lab blocks for the other half of the term. Instead of the student going back and forth between lecture and lab instructor on alternating days the entire term, this should provide more accountability for the students to the lab instructor and more concentrated lab time for students to apply their knowledge. It is hoped that this format will be less intimidating and more conducive to student success. Additionally, since the first-time implementation of the SAMs test was in Spring 2009, it is felt that data over two semesters might produce a truer picture of student achievement.

Priority: High

Target Date: 08/2008
Fall 2009 and Sping 2010

Responsible Person/Group: CIS Dept Chair

increased focus on outcome skills

The purpose of the MAT 115 assessment was to gauge students' ability to read, interpret, and analyze data presented in tabular or graphic form. The forms used and the types of questions asked were ones that should be familiar to MAT 115 students after completing work in Chapter 3 of their text. The scoring rubric assigned a total of 4 points to each question and allowed for a reasonable amount of partial credit. One possible flaw in the rubric, however, was that it required students to use proper formatting of their answers to receive full credit for some questions.

Since the achievement target was not met for this learning outcome, the math assessment team intends to include the same learning outcome on its assessment plan for the 2009-2010 cycle. All MAT 115 instructors will be made aware of the results of the 2008-2009 assessment and will be asked to increase their efforts to teach the skills addressed in this learning outcome. In designing the assessment plan for the 2009-2010 cycle, the target for this outcome will be to improve by at least five percent over the previous year's results (from 67.3% to at least 72.3%) the number of students scoring 75% or better on a similar set of embedded test questions.

Priority: High

Target Date: 12/2009
end of Fall semester

Responsible Person/Group: Math assessment team and MAT 115 instructors

Modifications to Process

For the 2009- 10 assessment cycle, several modifications will be made. The first of these involves including only successful completers in the final report. The second involves increasing the number of test questions from 10 to 15 to increase the scope of the assessment. The third modification will involve adding some randomly selected Humanities (HUM) courses to the assessment. These courses were not included in this first assessment due to some timing and scheduling issues.

Priority: High

Target Date: 05/2010

Responsible Person/Group: Social Science/Humanities Division assessment leaders

Partial credit, content, and quantity review

The purpose of the MAT 161 assessment was to measure the students' ability to manipulate and evaluate formulas. Four questions from the common final exam for the course were selected for the assessment. In scoring students' answers, a two-point scale was used, allowing for very little partial credit. Also, with a total of only 8 points possible, a student missing more than one question scored less than the requisite 75%. Since the target for this learning outcome was not met, the math assessment team will carry over this learning outcome to its plan for the 2009-2010 assessment cycle. The team will carefully review the content and quantity of items used in the assessment tool to ensure that students are given an adequate opportunity to demonstrate mastery of this learning outcome. Also, the team will amend its target for this outcome, with the goal of raising the number of students scoring 75% or better to at least 80% of those passing the course with a D or higher.

Priority: High

Target Date: 05/2010
end of Spring 2010 semester

Responsible Person/Group: Math Assessment team and instructors for MAT 161

Refine evaluation procedure/Focus on MLA formatting

This first year of in-depth assessment proved to be a challenge in both establishing criteria and obtaining instructor buy-in to the process. Although a workable plan was developed, the English Division will continue to re-evaluate and revise as needed. The following items will be addressed in the 2009-10 assessment cycle:

1. Adjust the process of collecting and evaluating students' work - focus on the Fall semester to involve the entire division *(both 10-month and 12-month instructors will be part of the assessment process)*
2. Reinforce the validity and usefulness of the rubric to current and new instructors
3. Update the rubric (since it is also an instructional tool) to the new edition of the reference textbook
4. Gradually move emphasis of the division's efforts from establishing an evaluation procedure to achieving the targets and objectives. According to the evaluation rubric, MLA formatting appeared to be the weakest component of student essays. Instructors will increase efforts in 2009-10 to successfully apply MLA formatting.

Priority: High

Target Date: 05/2010
End of Spring 2010 semester

Responsible Person/Group: Instructors of College Transfer level English

Analysis Answers

What were the strengths of your assessment process?

In the 2008-09 academic year, FTCC embarked upon a more rigorous assessment of General Education Core Competencies at FTCC. The new assessment protocol required that FTTC's faculty, staff, and administrators learn, adjust, and commit to this more intensive and extensive approach. The process of setting measures and achievement targets for individual competencies resulted in many more individuals talking and thinking in the language of assessment. The acquisition of WEAVEonline, our assessment management system, greatly enhanced our ability to organize, track, and gain insight from the assessment of the Core Competencies.

What were the weaknesses of your assessment process?

As expected in any new endeavor, there were many challenges that were faced and instances in which decisions had to be made without the benefit of previous experience. Some of the measures that were enacted to assess the competencies proved to be more difficult to implement than anticipated. Also, it was difficult to accurately determine appropriate achievement targets for the Core Competencies. When research was done on other institutions to determine if a standard level of achievement existed, results were mixed. It is therefore understandable that some units underestimated their expectations and some overestimated. Because this was also the first year that the assessment management system (WEAVEonline) was launched, many faculty and staff were hindered by having to learn a new management system while simultaneously implementing a more intensive assessment process.

What was learned as a result of your assessment process?

We learned that it will probably take a few cycles of assessment to arrive at a plan that best represents student achievement of core competencies. Some of the strategies for measuring outcomes will need to be refined, based on unanticipated developments. Although we feel that refinement will be an on-going process, the second year's assessment of these competencies will most likely reflect the greatest revision. We were able to identify certain areas that need particular attention and uncover both strengths and weaknesses. We also learned that maintaining open lines of communication and making frequent contact with assessment coordinators in individual disciplines is conducive to obtaining meaningful results.

How will what was learned impact the direction and emphasis of your academic or support unit?

Each of the discipline areas involved in measuring a core competency has identified an area for improvement, revision, or further examination. The findings for each measure show the specific concerns. The overall impact from the assessment process of the core competencies is a renewed commitment to "getting things right". When findings indicated that results were below expectations, serious efforts where made to determine cause. More importantly, all involved wanted to instigate changes that would increase chances of student success. We do expect to take what was learned from this year's results and apply it to next year's assessment process, both procedurally and in subject matter delivery.