

Academic Assessment Committee

The Academic Assessment Committee is a standing Committee of the Faculty elected by the Faculty and serves as the primary advisory body about practices for the evaluation of student learning outcomes in CCSU's undergraduate and graduate programs. The Committee also coordinates, but does not implement, the overall program for the assessment of general education learning outcomes. The Committee is responsible for providing feedback and support to Departments by reviewing reports about their assessment of student learning outcomes, and for identifying and disseminating promising assessment practices.

Primary Functions

The primary functions of the Academic Assessment Committee are to:

- Provide feedback and support about assessment to Departments on a multi-year cycle through a review of reports about the assessment of student learning in their programs and in general education courses offered by the Department. The Committee addresses assessment models, plans, and use of findings but will not evaluate the level of student performance or learning.
- Identify outstanding or promising assessment practices and make recommendations for awards or grant funding, when available.
- Coordinate the assessment of general education learning outcomes by establishing procedures and practices by which Department-based assessment findings may be connected and aggregated.
- Communicate with the General Education Subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee about student learning in general education and make appropriate suggestions based on findings from assessment.
- Communicate with faculty and the University community to highlight promising assessment models and promote faculty ownership of the assessment process.
- Advise the Office of Academic Affairs about institution-wide initiatives to assess student learning outcomes.
- Consult in the selection of a faculty representative to the CSU System Assessment Committee.

Membership

Committee membership will consist of:

- Twelve (12) voting faculty members to be elected by the faculty, with at least one (1) from each School. Elected members serve staggered three-year terms and may serve no more than two consecutive full terms.
- The Deans of each School may choose to appoint one (1) additional voting faculty member to the Committee. Appointed faculty members serve one-year terms, with no limitation on reappointment.
- The Director of Institutional Research and Assessment is a non-voting (*ex-officio*) member of the Committee.

Provision for initial election of members

To promote continuity from the previous *ad hoc* Committee on Assessment, the first group of four elected members will be elected to serve terms beginning in 2008-09, the second group of four elected members will be elected to serve terms beginning in 2009-10, and the third group of four elected members will be elected to serve terms beginning in 2010-11.

Policy on Academic Assessment

As a primary means for evaluating and improving the curriculum and learning process, academic assessment at CCSU is the ongoing activity of determining the extent to which students meet goals for learning outcomes and using findings to improve programs and services. The primary purpose of assessment is to provide faculty and staff with information that can be used to make improvements and adjustments; compliance with external mandates is a secondary, though necessary, purpose of CCSU's assessment system. As such, each academic department implements an assessment program that clearly articulates outcomes for student learning, measures the extent to which students demonstrate these outcomes, analyzes the findings to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement, and uses the results for curricular or programmatic enhancements or adjustments.

As a part of their critical role in the teaching and learning process, faculty in each department have the primary responsibility for determining the scope and appropriateness of student learning outcomes in each credential-granting program in accordance with standards from their field of study. These outcomes should encompass what faculty deem most important for students to demonstrate in cognitive, behavioral and/or affective domains as a result of completing the program. Using primary measures that extend beyond final course grades,¹ faculty in the department or other qualified professionals designated by the faculty (e.g. internship supervisors or external examinations, but not self-evaluation by students) evaluate the extent to which students demonstrate they have achieved each of these outcomes. In consultation with the Academic Assessment Committee, which is responsible for providing feedback about assessment in academic programs and coordinating the overall assessment program for general education, departments are also responsible for assessing student learning outcomes in general education courses they offer.

On an annual basis, departments provide a report to the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. These reports will be placed on a password-protected website accessible to all instructional faculty as well as Deans and the Provost. Reports will include:

- 1) a list of the learning outcomes for graduates of their program,
- 2) the findings from their evaluation of student learning in their academic programs and in general education courses offered by their department,
- 3) an analysis of what these results mean, including an identification of students' strengths and weaknesses, and
- 4) a description of how these results have been used to make curricular or programmatic adjustments.

Following the principle of peer review and to identify promising assessment practices, the Academic Assessment Committee will provide feedback and support to departments by reviewing these reports on a multi-year cycle.

The results from assessment of student learning outcomes may not be used for the evaluation of faculty or administrators.

¹ Clarifying note: this stipulation does not preclude use of exams, tests, quizzes, papers, or other coursework from serving as valid assessment instruments, so long as they are aligned with learning outcomes faculty have established for the program.