

Out Comes Learning

McHenry County College's Assessment Team Newsletter

A newsletter dedicated to the promotion and recognition of Academic Assessment at MCC

Meet the Assessment Team of 2007-2008



Left to right: Julie Freelove, Gabriel Decio, Kathy Chamberlain, Bev Dow, Diane Nyhammer, Elaine Whalen-Pedersen, Jennie Hoffman, Paul Hamill, Reggie Monday, Jim Gray, Christine Grela. Not pictured: Phillip Getchell

Assessment Team Outcomes for 2007-08

Using the results of the Faculty Surveys and reflections on our accomplishments of the past year, every spring the Assessment Team formulates goals/outcomes to accomplish in the next academic year. In 2007-08, the team hopes to improve student learning through the following activities:

1. Continue discussion about using Work Keys as end-of-program assessment.
2. Plan and facilitate curriculum mapping workshops
3. Design templates to use in the curriculum mapping workshops
4. Help departments develop/revise mission statements and learning outcomes
5. Continue training in the new TracDat software and help with chair trainings
6. Continue efforts to update both the internal and external websites on assessment
7. Promote the institutionalization of Writing Across the Curriculum Rubric for the improvement of student learning.
8. Present at state and national conferences

In response to faculty requests, we have planned additional assessment trainings through Professional Development. We will continue to find ways of sharing assessment information with our students and getting them more involved in their learning. The team is working cooperatively with the Executive Deans to carve out time for promoting dialog among department/division faculty regarding assessment results. The Assessment Team meets once a week to facilitate the assessment efforts here at MCC. Please take time to thank these dedicated and hardworking people for their efforts to improve student learning at McHenry County College.

Our Mission: The mission of the McHenry County College assessment team is to provide support to divisional faculty for learning outcomes assessment. This support will be provided by division liaisons who will communicate information about the assessment and transformation process; coordinate the flow of information; investigate and recommend plans to record, organize, analyze, and report data; and be an advocate for the integration of assessment into the College community for the purpose of improving student learning.

General Education Outcomes Assessment

CAAP Comes to MCC

School year 2006-07 was one of change for general education outcomes assessment at MCC. After learning that the ETS Academic Profile would no longer be available through its publisher, the Assessment Team selected the ACT Collegiate Academic Assessment Program (CAAP) instruments to replace the Academic Profile. The CAAP comprises a battery of college-level tests, in reading, writing, mathematics, science and critical thinking. In fall 2006, 158 freshmen in MCC 101 took the CAAP critical thinking test, and last spring 242 MCC graduation students completed the CAAP reading, writing and mathematics tests. This report focuses exclusively on the 242 graduating students who took the reading, writing and mathematics tests.

The majority (61 percent) of the graduating students tested in spring 2007 was female, and most (92 percent) were white and non-Hispanic. The group was relatively young, 76 percent under the age of 25. Ninety-six percent spoke English as their first language and 71 percent of these students described themselves as primarily full-time students. Although student motivation in assessment is always a tricky business, the majority of students indicated that they gave “moderate effort” or “tried [their] best” on each of the three tests. Ninety-two percent of the students reported that they made an effort on the writing test; 81 percent on the math test; and 72 percent on the reading test (the last test taken).

CAAP results showed that graduating MCC students performed statistically better than the sophomore national average for writing skills (see Figure 1). The MCC average exceeded the national average for sophomores for both the usage/mechanics section and the rhetoric section of that test. Graduating MCC students also scored significantly higher than the national average on the mathematics test and for both its basic algebra and college algebra subtests. However, the MCC group did not differ significantly from the national norms in reading.

Our findings suggest that MCC students who advance to the point of graduation perform comparable well with other sophomores nationally. While between two-third and three-fourths of our students scored above the national averages in the math and writing skills tests, slightly fewer than half exceeded that average in reading. In general, these findings are encouraging.

**Figure 1: Mean CAAP Test Scores
Spring 2007 MCC Graduates v. National Norms**

