Progress Report on Assessment of Student Learning

To

The Higher Learning Commission
A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

March 2014
Lake Region State College
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Executive Summary
Lake Region State College (LRSC) prepared this report as requested by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) to provide evidence of its progress toward assessment of student learning. This report details the changes implemented by LRSC to address the recommendations and methods for improvement identified by the evaluation team following its site visit. It is important to note that while these new initiatives have been implemented, LRSC has also continued the assessment practices reported in its 2011 Self-Study Report.

The recommendations raised by the evaluation team are listed below with a summary of the steps taken by LRSC to evidence progress toward assessment of student learning.

1. **“Standards for improvement have been established”**
   
   To support and further develop the accomplishments made toward enhancing the effectiveness of assessment, the College has made many changes within the campus’s structure. First, a full-time counselor was hired to “assist students in coping with issues outside the classroom that may affect their ability to learn”. Next, a Power Skills Center was established to provide academic support to all students, increasing opportunities for academic success. This new program is overseen by a coordinator, who also serves as the disability services officer. Also, a director of institutional research was hired to develop processes for informed decision-making.
   
   To further support this recommendation, LRSC has reevaluated its strategic planning process and has made improvements to foster inclusive, college-wide participation.

2. **“Assessment results are used to systematically enhance educational effectiveness”**
   
   LRSC has taken the advice of the evaluation team and begun creation of its own “homegrown assessment measures”. The revised assessment plan now includes electronic submission of assessment data. This allows for the tracking of previous and current assessment goals at the course, division and institutional level. LRSC is now capable of quantifying student CAAP scores with the results of the division level assessment data, providing correlation of the results.
   
   In addition, LRSC has fully supported the North Dakota University System in its new policy regarding student placement into college courses and has made course and curriculum changes to create a procedure to support this policy.

3. **“Course and program outcomes have been improved”**
   
   The newly created Assessment Guide and Procedures for Faculty will provide assessment data that has not been accessible to LRSC in the past. As a result, faculty will be better able to make changes to course and program outcomes. This year serves as a benchmark for data; resulting changes will be made in future academic semesters.
   
   To further support outcome improvements, LRSC has piloted the use of Pearson eCollege’s Learning Outcomes Manager with the goal being to enhance assessment of online courses and programs.

4. **“Effectiveness in the use of the institutions data collection, storage and analysis structure”**
   
   The College has hired a director of institutional research to coordinate its assessment efforts. The director will make it a priority to publish data in a timely manner to all stakeholders and to “develop processes that help end-users learn to interpret, analyze, and use data for informed decision-making in their respective areas”.
I. Introduction

During the spring of 2011, LRSC underwent a comprehensive evaluation and site visit from the Higher Learning Commission. The College was granted continued accreditation for the period of 10 years. As a condition of this continued accreditation, the HLC requested a progress report on assessment of student learning due March 5, 2014.

In response to this request, LRSC has prepared this report to document the progress achieved toward addressing the recommendations made in the “Assurance Section” of the “Report of a Comprehensive Evaluation Visit” as prepared by the four-person evaluation team. These recommendations are the result of the need identified by the evaluation team for LRSC to permeate assessment at three areas: institutional effectiveness, divisional assessment, and course assessment.

To document fulfillment of the recommendations made in the “Assurance Section”, the HLC requests that the progress report include responses to the following four recommendations to validate its accountability of student learning:

1. Standards for improvement have been established
2. Assessment results are used to systematically enhance educational effectiveness
3. Course and program outcomes have been improved
4. Effectiveness in the use of the institution’s data collection, storage and analysis structure

In addition, the evaluation team identified four methods to facilitate progress and future improvement of these recommendations. These methods, detailed in the “Advancement Section” of the “Report of a Comprehensive Evaluation Visit”, include:

- Comprehensive Assessment of Student Learning - develop direct in-house measures of core knowledge at the institutional level, developing processes; hire a director of institutional research to develop processes that ensure data is collected and disseminated in a timely manner and develop processes that help end-users learn to interpret, analyze and use data for informed decision-making; evaluate student success once they transfer to other institutions.
- Succession Planning – conduct national level searches for replacements at all academic and administrative levels.
- Assessment of General Education – develop a plan for assessing all of the general education and co-curricular education goals and/or intended learning outcomes through both internal and nationally-normed assessment tools and using the resulting data to improve student learning, to support the college strategic and budgeting planning processes.
- Institutional Research Officer – hire a full-time institutional research officer.
- Strategic Planning – implement an institution-wide strategic planning process, tied to the budget planning process and the measurement of student learning.
II. History of Assessment
LRSC has had a comprehensive assessment plan in place since 1992. The assessment plan outlines a three-tiered assessment structure: institutional, instructional division and individual course assessment. The Assessment Committee consists of two full-time faculty from each of the three instructional divisions who serve for three or more years on a volunteer basis. A member of the student body is also recruited each year to serve on the committee. The committee meets frequently to update the assessment plan, monitor its implementation, report assessment results and follow-up on the use of assessment outcomes to institute improvement.

The goals of the committee are to ensure that assessment a) flows from the institution’s mission, b) has a conceptual framework, c) has faculty ownership/responsibility, d) has institution-wide support, e) uses multiple measures and provides feedback to students and the institution, f) is cost-effective, g) does not restrict or inhibit goals of access, equity, and diversity established by the institution, h) leads to improvement, and i) includes a process for evaluating the assessment program.

The current institutional assessment plan was revised to reflect the current views and practices of the college and include the following assessment tools:

- Course assessment guidelines and checklists
- Division assessment plans and annual reports
- College Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP)
- ACT/CAAP Linkage Reports
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)
- Employer Perception Survey
- Institutional program review
- North Dakota Career and Technical Education program evaluation

In 1999, the Assessment Committee developed a course-level instrument to assess student learning of course objectives and general education objectives. Revised in 2013, this instrument requires every instructor to assess one course per year. To promote participation, the Assessment Committee provides training to all instructors throughout the year. There is a wide range of programs and locations from which the Assessment Committee receives course assessment checklists, including dual credit courses, a satellite campus and online courses, all of which encompass technical and liberal arts courses. This variety of locations and disciplines inhibits the initiation of a single assessment method for the courses. Instead, it creates an opportunity for utilization of various quality assessment techniques. Instructors are encouraged to use multiple methods of assessment to determine to what extent students meet course and general education objectives in each course.

Course assessment checklists are collected from faculty at the end of the fall and spring semesters. The Assessment Committee reviews each checklist early in the subsequent semester and provides written comments to each instructor, encouraging effective assessment methods and reports, and providing constructive suggestions to instructors who are still learning the process.

Each of the three instructional divisions (academic, business and trade/tech/health) has developed its own assessment plan using program-specific assessments and addressing the division mission statement. An annual report of outcomes and actions is prepared and shared with stakeholders. An example of a division assessment plan is shown in Appendix A.
Lake Region State College has institutionalized assessment of student achievement through its evolving assessment plan, its committed and hard-working Assessment Committee, and its creative and inter-departmental approaches to assessing and strengthening general education goals. It is a continuous effort to stay current with assessment instruments, to communicate assessment results to stakeholders in a timely fashion, to engage all instructors in course assessment, and to provide training and support. Implementing changes and following up on outcomes is an unceasing task that requires constant development.

III. Responses to HLC Recommendations
Upon receipt of the monitoring report in May 2011, LRSC immediately began to take steps toward improvement that would be necessary to address HLC recommendations and complete the required progress report.

Organizational Changes
In response to the evaluation team’s suggestion that “LRSC students would benefit from the hiring of a full-time counselor to assist students in coping with issues outside the classroom that may affect their ability to learn”, the College began the search for a counselor immediately. In August 2011, a master’s level counselor was hired to work with students in this capacity.

Since 2001, LRSC’s TRiO-Student Support Services program has provided tutoring, peer mentoring, testing accommodations and other academic support services to students meeting eligibility criteria. To enhance learning and provide academic support to all students, the College opened a Power Skills Center in August 2013 and hired a full-time coordinator to work with students that do not qualify for the TRiO program. In addition to the academic support provided and the enhanced student learning that follows, this person also serves as the disability services officer.

Another recommendation was for LRSC to hire a full-time institutional researcher, stating, “The hiring of a Director of Institutional Research would be a positive step in helping LRSC to better coordinate its assessment efforts”. To accomplish this, the College president authorized the addition of an assistant vice president for instructional services who would oversee this function, provide assistance to the vice president for instructional services, serve as the supervisor of programs and faculty and ultimately oversee the assessment process. In the fall of 2012, the assistant vice president began an effort to prioritize assessment needs and implement strategies to enhance the current assessment plan. The membership of the Assessment Committee was changed from two members at large from each division to a hand-picked group of faculty most knowledgeable about student learning and assessment methods. The recommendations from the site visit were provided to this group to begin formulation of a plan to improve assessment. Results of this committee’s work is discussed in the “Assessment Plan” section of this report.

Almost immediately upon filling the assistant vice president position, and only months after the evaluation visit report was received, LRSC President Mike Bower announced his resignation, ultimately accepting the presidency of a community college in Ohio. A search by the North Dakota State Board for Higher Education commenced, and thirteen months later Doug Darling, the vice president for instructional services, was named president. On July 1, 2013, the instructional services vice president position was filled by the assistant vice president. As a result of these changes, and internal promotions, the college named a director of instructional services and institutional effectiveness. In doing so, the College also created a new position, the instructional services
program coordinator, to ensure the institutional research portion of the director position was given priority.

While the College continued its teaching and learning activities during this thirteen month period of uncertainty, delays in launching new initiatives did occur. Once the leadership structure was secured, the College was able to focus on furthering its assessment initiatives and addressing the evaluating teams concern that “full-time attention is needed by LRSC in the collection, analysis and maintenance of all institutional data in order for the important initiatives in academic assessment, strategic planning, and curriculum development, and student satisfaction to continue”. With this focus, the director of institutional effectiveness has:

- Attended the HLC annual conference in 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2013 and HLC sponsored webinars to learn the Open Pathways model, including the new online Assurance System
- Instructed University 101 – Introduction to College Life, a course designed to provide guidance in development skills necessary for academic success and provide ways to enhance student learning
- Facilitated the first strategic planning meetings under the new college president.
- Cross trained with the registrar to assume responsibility for institutional research and compliance at the institutional, state and federal levels. This includes IPEDS, common data sets, external surveys, North Dakota University System accountability measures and the HLC Institutional Update
- Assumed the supervisory position for the Career Resource and Student Placement office and coordinator
- Created the LRSC academic and assessment webpage where student satisfaction surveys, institutional assessment results, IPEDS information, and HLC data are uploaded. This task was completed to remedy the assurance report observation that indicated, “very little of this information [on student learning outcomes and student performance] is readily available to or understood by the stakeholders”
- Collaborated with the Administrative Council and the director of public relations to create the college’s initial strategic and operational plans
- Become an active participant in the college’s faculty driven assessment committee
- Begun researching the design for a dashboard system to collect, manage, analyze, report and archive data

Assessment Plan

To stress the importance of accreditation and accountability, the evaluation team’s report states, “campus wide participation in assessment is a professional development activity that should result in improved teaching and student learning”. During the fall 2012 faculty in-service, the instructional office placed a high priority on division level assessment processes and the related student employment and placement data necessary to “close the loop”. As a result, in cooperation with our career resource coordinator, a comprehensive and campus wide placement report was completed. In addition, to reinforce the importance of the assessment process and specifically the evaluation of student learning at the division level, the instructional office held mandatory assessment training during spring 2014 faculty in-service.

An effort spearheaded by the Assessment Committee in fall 2012 to revamp classroom level assessment and allow a direct link to division and institutional level assessment needs has provided
the most progress to date. The evaluation team’s report provided the following observation, “the incorporation of “homegrown” assessment measures would strengthen the overall assessment process on the campus” and “LRSC should now concentrate on developing direct in-house measures of core knowledge at the institutional level”. As a result, the committee changed the way instructor level assessments are completed. The changes include: a) creating clear directions and recommendations, b) providing website accessibility for assessment information, forms, and examples, and c) the availability of video tutoring for filling out and properly documenting student learning.

The Assessment Guide and Procedures for Faculty (Appendix B) was created in 2012 as a result of the Assessment Committee’s goal to have 100% of faculty perform meaningful, effective assessments. The new assessment guide gives faculty a blueprint on quality assessment options, clear expectations and in-depth examples of assessment techniques. Faculty did not have this resource in the past and the diversity in assessment methods chosen by the faculty was lacking. The guide and electronic submission form also enable the Assessment Committee to gather data in an efficient and productive manner. The electronic data can now be easily sorted for use in identifying areas of success and areas in need of improvement. The data now available allows the committee to easily identify the general education goals measured and the course objective evaluated.

The assessment data can be grouped by instructor, course and division. Linking this information with the philosophy of general education and the standardized institutional level assessment information will allow the College to make sound decisions for areas in need of focused improvement at all levels, from the classroom to the institution as a unit. For the first time, it will be possible for LRSC to individually quantify student CAAP scores with the results of the division level assessment data. With these scores and the division identifier, correlation of the results will be possible. The reporting process has made it possible to use a structured template to track previous and current assessment goals at the course, division, and institutional level. As a result of these efforts, the institutional researcher will be in a better position to provide sound recommendations to faculty and administrators on effective ways to increase student learning.

**Learning Outcomes Manager**

To enhance the assessment of online courses and programs, LRSC’s Fitness Trainer Technician (FiTT) program is piloting Learning Outcomes Manager (LOM), a Pearson eCollege assessment tool. Student learning objectives are organized, collected and monitored through LOM, which is integrated into each of the foundation courses. LOM connects course learning activities to established outcomes to track student learning performance. The data provided enables the instructor to see areas where instructional changes need to be made within the course and program.

**Student Placement into College Courses**

To increase student success in math and English, the North Dakota University System and the State Board for Higher Education created a new system-wide, eleven campus policy requiring minimum scores for entry into composition I and college algebra. In January 2013, LRSC fully implemented procedures to comply with this policy by offering additional student testing, creating additional preparatory courses and restructuring an English writing lab that is taken simultaneously with freshman English. The desired outcome of these procedures is to align the academic ability of students with the curriculum requirements necessary to achieve academic success. While it is too
early to determine definitively whether students are more successful in English and math as a result of these changes, data analysis is underway.

**Strategic and Operational Plans**

In its report to LRSC, the evaluation team stated, “it is apparent that the internal planning process is driven by the administration with some limited input from faculty, staff and students” and “evidence is still lacking that the process is campus-wide”. To address this concern, the College tasked two employees with creating a system to create a long-range strategic planning process. Through a two year period, numerous meetings were held to ensure all stakeholders, faculty, staff, students, and the community, received opportunities to provide input into the College’s goals and priorities. As a result of these meetings, four main institutional goals were created:

1. To ensure excellence in student learning
2. To create an innovative, diverse and accessible environment
3. To continuously improve the quality and effectiveness of student support and community services
4. To effectively manage and develop resources

Four teams, consisting of staff and faculty, were then formed to create objectives, clear targets for specific action, and outcomes, quantified results of that action. The resulting list of objectives and outcomes were presented to the Administrative Council for final prioritization.

The resulting strategic and operational plans (Appendix C) were implemented in fall 2012. The operational plan is currently undergoing its yearly review to determine its impact on student development and strategic goal achievement.

**Conclusion**

Preparing this progress report has allowed LRSC to perform a comprehensive self-evaluation of its assessment processes, reaffirming strengths and identifying weaknesses. While it is evident that LRSC is committed to improving student learning, the College will continue to emphasize its importance to the overall effectiveness of the institution. Overall, LRSC agrees with the evaluation team that completion of this report has assisted LRSC in “maintaining the momentum it has established for assessment of student learning and taking its processes to the next level”.
### Appendix A

#### Business Division Annual Assessment Report 2012-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence/Data/Findings</th>
<th>Use of Results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portfolios</td>
<td>Portfolios contain organized collections of the students’ work as well as a cover letter, resume and thank you letter that the student can use when seeking a job.</td>
<td>Demonstrates that the student has the qualities and skills for which the employer is looking.</td>
<td>Students use their portfolios when job searching. Portfolio contents are reviewed by the advisor at the end of the semester.</td>
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<td>Administrative Assistant and Office Management students complete a portfolio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capstone projects</td>
<td>The students have opportunities to practice and demonstrate how well they have achieved their learning objectives. Collegiate DECA students donated one full day of volunteer hours to ring the bell for Salvation Army during the holiday season.</td>
<td>Marketing students successfully developed marketing plans and promotions for a new Christian Day Care in Devils Lake, LRSC Trio Program, LRSC Online, Train ND, and a new roller derby organization in Devils Lake. They also maintain the display window at LRSC for several events throughout the year. Administrative Assistant and Office Management students complete several community service projects. Farm Managements students develop a production and financial analysis of their farming operation.</td>
<td>Students and business personnel analyze and discuss the results of the project to determine strengths and weaknesses and areas for change. Strong network building among the students and positive public relations.</td>
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<td>Marketing students work with local businesses to develop hands-on sales skills and participate in community service projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm Management capstone project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Certification exams</td>
<td>Students receive the opportunity to understand the skills that are necessary to achieve certification in various technology areas.</td>
<td>A small percentage of students pass these certification exams each year, but they are given knowledge of the criteria needed if they pursue that career area.</td>
<td>Exam results demonstrate the degree to which students have acquired skills. Textbooks, course materials and course objectives may be changed based on their ability to prepare students for the certification exams.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced Information Technology students can take the Microsoft Office Certification tests and CompTia A+, Network+, and Security+ in related courses</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Student individualized productivity measures</strong></td>
<td>Farm management records progress statistics and trends for individualized farmers through the years. Marketing students competed at the state Collegiate DECA. Marketing students attended Fall Collegiate DECA Leadership Conferences in Fargo, ND and New York City, NY. Business Education PBL students competed at state and national PBL Conferences. Information Technology students have the opportunity to compete at SKILLS USA conferences.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Farm Management statistics</strong> indicate that over the last five years students enrolled have shown a $13.70 per acre increase in profits compared to similar operations. Three Marketing students attended the North Dakota State Collegiate DECA Conference and earned first place in a prepared business presentation event: Entrepreneurship—Starting Your Business. One student placed at National PBL held in Anaheim, CA in the summer of 2012 in the top 10. Eight Business Education students competed in three events each at state competition held at LRSC in April 2013 and all in the top three. One student from LRSC was elected to serve as state PBL President. LRSC PBL students helped organize and plan the state PBL convention be held at LRSC in April, 2013. Four Business Education students competed at national PBL in June 2013 at Anaheim, CA.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Advisory committees</strong> Two formal program advisory board meetings are held each year. Advisory committee members are able to relay back the successes and weaknesses of student graduates that they hire from LRSC and provide information on what skills are needed and used in the current workplace. Advisory board members mentioned the need for the inclusion of instruction in the use of proper dress as a professional and also the importance of preparing for interviews. Advisory board members saw the need for adequate meeting space for farm management participants.</td>
<td>Mock interviews will be conducted in related learnings and proper business attire will be addressed. Farm Management is relocating to Dakota Precision Ag Center, which allows increased technology usage and interaction between Farm Management and Precision Ag students and instructors.</td>
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| **CTE program evaluation** | Program offerings are current and up-to-date | **The Administrative Assistant and Office Management programs were combined into one—Administrative Assistant and Office Management** | **The Business Division Courses and degrees are compatible with the other colleges in the NDUS and offer seamless transfer and collaboration with other colleges.**  
The Business Division offers upper divisional course offerings for Mayville State University. |
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<tr>
<td>Completed by the State Career and Technical Education (CTE) Board every five years for each CTE program</td>
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</table>
| **Professional development** | Students benefit from instructors that participate in professional development activities. | **Instructors’ network and gain new ideas to use in the classroom.**  
Dr. Gutschmidt assisted with the ND DECA High School Conference in March, 2013.  
Diane Karlsbraaten serves on the regional Mountain Plains Business Educators Association Board & the NDBOTA board. She is also a state advisor for PBL. | **Prepare students for today’s work environment and future industry demands.** |
| Instructors are board members and officers of regional and state organizations.  
Instructors have several technology and professional certifications. | | | |
Appendix B

Assessment Guide and Procedures for Faculty

Purpose of course assessment
Classroom assessment of student learning helps LRSC faculty to obtain useful feedback information on what, how much, and how well their students are learning. This information can be used to help faculty refocus their efforts to make student learning more efficient and effective. Teaching without learning is just talking, so it is important to determine if learning has occurred. As an integral component of the accreditation process, it is vital that LRSC faculty provide evidence student learning has occurred in their courses specific to the course objectives and general education goals of the college. It may be evident that there is need for improvement in the delivery of the instruction. Therefore, this process can provide the guide for improving student learning. According to the Higher Learning Commission, “a focus on achieved student learning is critical not only to a higher education organization’s ability to promote and improve curricular and co-curricular learning experiences and to provide evidence of the quality of educational experiences and programs, but also to fulfill the most basic public expectations and needs of higher education.”

Procedure for completing the course assessment checklist (page 4):
1. At the beginning of the course, choose one general education goal and one course objective to assess. Type these in the space provided on the checklist. Also determine if this will be the start of a new process of teaching/method of assessment (opening the loop) or an assessment of something done previously (closing the loop).
2. Determine the appropriate method to assess student learning. A list of possible tools/methods is provided in this document along with a brief description of each. Use the examples or samples methods as the guide.
3. Instructors are encouraged to address different course objectives and general education goals over a period of years.
4. To determine the sample quantities required for the assessment follow these guidelines:
   - The instructor should include enough samples to be representative of the class population.
   - A suggested acceptable sample quantity will be four (4) or twenty percent (20%) of the class, whichever is greater.
   - The evidence should include student samples that represent all grade categories.
5. Instructors must eliminate from the samples all names or recognizable marks that would indicate a student’s identity if the samples are included. All student samples submitted shall be graded or evaluated by the instructor and have those grades or comments clearly marked on the samples. If only data is included, a sample of the assessment is to be provided.
6. The Assessment Committee encourages using multiple methods of assessment done over multiple times throughout the course. Sample assessments are provided for use as a guide. The method of assessment must measure the course objective and be
appropriate to the General Education Goal. Indicate which of the following forms of assessment was utilized during this process by selecting the appropriate box on the checklist.

- Essay writing
- Class Projects
- Student Portfolios
- Student self-evaluations
- Peer evaluations
- Concept maps
- Competition results
- Pre/post course exams
- Threaded discussions
- Other creative method of assessment: [Provide brief description]

7. Provide a written summary of the process indicating how student learning was determined and the rationale for the method of assessment chosen.

8. Complete the assessment questions and determine if there are areas for improvement. Provide any reflection on the questions that were answered NO.

9. Discuss in the space provided any changes that will be implemented or if changes were made from a previous assessment, how the changes that were implemented in the course affected student learning. Note: opening the loop and closing the loop.

**Criterion for a quality course assessment**

**General Education Goals**

- *Meets expectations* – an appropriate LRSC General Education goal to be assessed from the LRSC catalog (pertaining to the course) is listed in the space provided.
- *Partially meets expectations* – [one of the following]: the general education goal is not provided, is listed improperly, or is not appropriate.
- *Does not meet expectations* - [more than one of the following]: the general education goal is not provided, is listed improperly, or is not appropriate.

**Course Objectives**

- *Meets expectations* – an appropriate and measurable objective is provided.
- *Partially meets expectations* – a measurable objective is provided but is not appropriate for the submitted assessment.
- *Does not meet expectations* – an appropriate measurable objective is not provided.

**Adequate Sample Size**

- *Meets expectations* – The sample size has enough samples to be representative of the class population, with a minimum quantity of four (4) or twenty percent (20%) of the class, whichever is greater. The evidence should include student samples that represent all grade categories.
- *Partially meets expectations* – N/A
- *Does not meet expectations* – the sample size is not at the minimum quantity

**Student names removed (if samples are provided)**

- *Meets expectations* – all remnants of student names are removed. A code for identification that is untraceable to the student can be utilized for tracking.
- **Partially meets expectations** – identification of a student is possible but not obvious
- **Does not meet expectations** – names or traceable identification are visible or not removed

**Method of Assessment**
- **Meets expectations** – an appropriate method is selected for the type of assessment completed. The type of assessment must fit the method of collecting data and be implemented properly. See assessment examples for a guide.
- **Partially meets expectations** – the type of method selected is not appropriate for the assessment completed
- **Does not meet expectations** – an assessment method is either not present or does not measure student learning

**Summary of Assessment**
- **Meets expectations** – a detailed description of the assessment process is typed providing a concise overview with the outcomes indicated. Data is provided in a manner that is easily interpreted and accurate.
- **Partially meets expectations** – the description lacks a few components of the process or the data provided is difficult to interpret.
- **Does not meet expectations** – either no summary or data is provided.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor Check Off</th>
<th>Required Items</th>
<th>Committee Check Off</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1) The LRSC General Education Goal from the syllabus to be assessed is Click here to enter text.</td>
<td>☐ Meets expectations  ☐ Partially meets expectations  (see explanation #1 below)  ☐ Does not meet expectations (see explanation #1 below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) The course objective from the syllabus to be assessed is Click here to enter text.</td>
<td>☐ Meets expectations  ☐ Partially meets expectations  (see explanation #2 below)  ☐ Does not meet expectations (see explanation #2 below)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3) Adequate Sample Quantity (See #4 in the procedure instructions)</td>
<td>☐ Meets expectations  ☐ Partially meets expectations  (see explanation #3 below)  ☐ Does not meet expectations (see explanation #3 below)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4) A summary of the information/data is provided below in the summary of assessment (#1). If the actual assessments are included, all student names are eliminated from attached</td>
<td>☐ Meets expectations  ☐ Partially meets expectations  (see explanation #4 below)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5) Method of Assessment is applicable to determine student learning, the method is indicated (see examples provided) Refer to quality assessment guidelines for information regarding a quality course assessment.

6) Instructor summary details the overall process of the assessment.
1. Summary of Assessment and Sample. Include data in the discussion.

2. After reviewing your particular assessment, respond to the following questions. Then review your responses and reflect on whether you should consider making any changes to the assessments you use in a class in order to more effectively meet the needs of a diverse group of students. Please note that assessments can be used for differentiation of student learning in terms of how students learn and how your course delivery affects student learning. It can also serve as a means of helping students understand the expectations of the course. Using an ongoing assessment guide, the data obtained can serve as the educators’ starting point for teaching and point for each student to assume increasing responsibility for their own success as learners. The information can then drive improvement of student learning.

The questions to review your submitted assessment for effectiveness are:

1) Does the assessment clearly measure the learning objective that the students need to achieve? ☐ Yes; ☐ No
2) Is the assessment measuring something that the students expect to be measured? ☐ Yes; ☐ No
3) Is this the right type of assessment to use to measure this learning objective? ☐ Yes; ☐ No
4) Does the assessment measure a fair representation of the components of the learning objective? ☐ Yes; ☐ No
5) Does the assessment measure the most important components of the learning objective rather than immaterial or tangential components? ☐ Yes; ☐ No
6) Is the assessment appropriate for all the students who will use it? ☐ Yes; ☐ No
7) Does the assessment make clear what students must do to provide a high quality response? ☐ Yes; ☐ No
8) Will the results of the assessment provide you with the information you need to determine how to refine and revise your instructional plans for the near term? ☐ Yes; ☐ No
9) Will the results of the assessment provide students with the information they need to see where they are proficient and where they need to improve? ☐ Yes; ☐ No


For ANY of the above answers that are NO, please indicate how you plan to change to accommodate it in the future. Please provide the question number for which you are providing the information.

3. (If opening the loop) what changes would I make to improve student learning the next time this course is offered? (If closing the loop) How did the implemented changes improve student learning?
LRSC Philosophy of General Education

I. An educated person must have a critical appreciation of society and of self. This includes some understanding and experience in thinking about moral and ethical problems which enable an educated person to make discriminating moral choices—personal/interpersonal skills.

1. To understand how a human being behaves individually and how one is linked to one’s social and natural environment—know thyself
2. To understand the complexities and uncertainties of personal and social environments, to understand how individuals may be changed and controlled by their environments, and to develop skills to change and control environments—personal change and growth
3. To apply knowledge gained in the educational process and use that knowledge in everyday living—apply knowledge to the real world
4. To develop skills for designing and evaluating a personal mental and physical health program—mental and physical wellness
5. To recognize the importance of leisure and develop the use of leisure for positive life changes—importance of leisure
6. To develop the ability to make responsible decisions based upon understanding and experience in discussing moral and ethical problems in society—values and ethics
7. To develop work habits and ethics necessary to function effectively in the workplace—work-related skills

II. An educated person must be able to think, speak and write effectively—communication/thinking skills.

1. To develop a working knowledge of the English language to communicate effectively by writing and speaking clearly and concisely—present ideas
2. To develop the skills necessary to gather, integrate, synthesize, and analyze written and oral information in a critical manner—rational/critical/higher-order thinking
3. To use information objectively for solving problems and arriving at alternative solutions—problem-solving skills
4. To develop the critical listening and reading skills needed to interpret the messages of speakers and authors—reading/listening critically
5. To nurture creative thinking and intellectual curiosity through opportunities and incentives and to encourage attempts at different, divergent solutions to open-ended questions, problems, and situations—creativity/intellectual curiosity
6. To conceptualize links between events, entities, and ideas and the large context in which they occur—integrate ideas of the world

III. An educated person must have an understanding of other cultures to enable one to conduct life with reference to the wider world within which one lives—global/multi-cultural experiences.

1. To gain knowledge of Western and non-Western cultures and other times in order to better understand the world and its people—the world/Eastern/Western civilizations
2. To recognize that world events are interdependently linked, are affected by the social environment, and are influenced by institutions created within an interactive society, and to understand that impact on one event has ramifications for other events and for the whole—*understand world events from differing disciplines*

3. To nurture a philosophy that asserts the dignity of humanity while understanding the value of world diversity in race, ethnicity, and culture—*global culturalism*

4. To encourage development of a working knowledge of a second language—*communication and understanding*

IV. An educated person must have an appreciation for and an informed acquaintance with the arts and humanities. Experiencing the aesthetics of literature, the arts, and history will provide enrichment in a variety of diverse fields and life experiences—*aesthetic/intellectual experiences.*

1. To develop a knowledge of and appreciation for human accomplishments in art, music, literature, and history—*appreciation for the arts and humanities*

2. To understand the connectedness and inter-dependency between events, entities, and ideas and the large context in which they exist—*inter-disciplinary understanding*

3. To understand literary concepts presented through literary works in the humanities, history, and English—*understanding literary concepts*

4. To develop a consciousness of history and an understanding of the common heritage of Western civilization—*understand social, economic, and political structures*

5. To foster an understanding of the benefits and responsibilities of living in a democratic society—*citizenship/leadership*

V. An educated person must have an informed acquaintance with and an appreciation for science and mathematics and their contributions to society—mathematics/sciences applications.

1. To develop a conceptual understanding of mathematics and a practical knowledge of mathematical application—*numerical*

2. To understand and appreciate the natural physical environment of the planet Earth, thus promoting an ethic of stewardship and ecology—*environment*

3. To gain knowledge of the properties of the universe for understanding and application—*physical*

4. To foster an attitude of intellectual inquiry and methodology which will expand one’s view of the universe and the place of humanity within it—*scientific method/inquiry*

5. To provide a general knowledge of the human body and its systems—*biological*

VI. An educated person must be literate in current and future technologies—technology/computers/information applications.

1. To explore the nature, role, and impact of technology on the environment and society—technology literacy

2. To develop a working knowledge of computers and computer programs and their functions—computer literacy
3. To apply current technologies to access and utilize information—application of technology
4. To develop the skills necessary to locate and gather information from both print and non-print resources—library/information literacy

VII. An educated person must have a continued commitment to life-long learning—*life-long learning experiences/skills.*
1. To develop a pattern of intellectual curiosity and inquiry which promotes life-long learning—*value of life-long learning*
2. To nurture and promote the ability to adapt to an ever-changing society— *adapt to the future*
3. To develop an interest in serving the community—*community service*
Example Assessment Techniques

***Please note that the following sample assessment techniques are only suggestions and can be used by the faculty member as guidelines or as a way to promote an individual method for assessment.

Essay Writing

The use of writing to assess learning is a useful tool for assessment. In this technique, the student will complete a writing assignment that is evaluated by the instructor through the use of an established rubric. This technique should utilize a pre-evaluative assignment, like a pre-test, that the students are provided feedback for improvement. Any additional essay assessments can then be evaluated using the same process.

Effectively Utilizing Essay Writing Assessments

The teacher should select the course objective that applies to the assessment as well as the LRSC General Education Goal. The general procedure for using essay writing as an assessment of student learning consists of providing the students with the opportunity to write an essay following the guidelines established by the teacher/educator. After completion of the writing, the pre-established rubric is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the writing. The essay is returned to the student for feedback purposes. This type of assessment may be used as an assignment in the course; it is the decision of the faculty member. Later in the course, additional assignments or assessments are gathered to demonstrate progression of the student.

A sample rubric is provided for an example in the space below. Clear and concise instructions for the assignment or assessment should be provided to the students to reduce confusion of the expectations. After the students have completed the tasks, evaluate the writing using the established rubric. Provide a score for the writing with some way to identify the student. Once all the writing essays are completed and evaluated, gather the data to be analyzed. Use some form of statistical analysis for comparison. Possible calculations include percentage change, difference from the mean with standard deviations, or use of a t-test. Provide a conclusion summarizing the assessment and the outcomes.
**Conventions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The writing has a pattern of errors that may significantly interfere with meaning, for example: sentence fragments, sentence splices, subject/verb agreement, plurals, inaccurate or missing words, punctuation, and/or spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The writing may have numerous errors that distract the reader, but they do not usually interfere with meaning (e.g. sentence fragments and splices, punctuation, missing words, spelling, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics may be apparent, such as a few words spelled inaccurately, missing apostrophes and commas, etc., and they may distract and occasionally interfere with meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A few errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics may be apparent, such as occasional spelling inaccuracies, missing commas, etc., and they rarely distract or interfere with meaning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Style:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Weak control of language is apparent: sentence structures are often flawed and incomplete, as several sentences may be fragmented and confusing; word choices are simple and may be incorrect, imprecise, or vague. Words may be inaccurate or missing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A control of language is apparent: more than one sentence may be fragmented or confusing; a few words may be inaccurate or missing, but word choice is usually appropriate; phrasing may be vague or repetitive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A competency with language is apparent; sentences are clear, correct, and somewhat varied; word choice is appropriate and accurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Language use is interesting and engages the reader: a command of the language is apparent; sentences are varied in length and structure; word choice is varied, specific, and precise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Content:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Support for ideas is extremely minimal or absent; specific details are lacking or not relevant; the writer does not adequately engage in the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Only a little support is provided for the position taken; a few reasons may be given without much elaboration beyond one or two sentences for each reason; a main impression may be one of rather simple and general writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Support for the position is somewhat elaborated and detailed in well-developed paragraphs; specific examples may be given, but they are sometimes not well-selected. Development may be a bit repetitious.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Support for the position is elaborated in well-developed paragraphs; relevant, specific details and varied examples, sometimes from personal experience, are used. Development is clear, precise, and thorough.

**Organization:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Organization may lack clear movement or connectedness; paragraphs may not be used; transitional words or phrases are rarely or awkwardly used; may lack introduction, body, or conclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Organization is clear enough to follow without difficulty; the introduction and conclusion, if present, may be undeveloped; transitions may be lacking, confusing, or predictable (e.g. “first,” “second,” etc.); the overall effect may be one of “listing” with several supporting ideas given but with little or no elaboration. Paragraphs may be overly long or too short, reflecting a lack of structure or a lack of development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Organization is generally clear; introduction and conclusion are appropriate; some transitions show relationships among ideas and are usually appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Organization is unified and coherent; introduction and conclusion are developed; ideas show a progression or appropriate transitions show relationships among ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Focus:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The writing is not sufficient to maintain a point of view with any clarity or consistency. Focus is unclear due to one or more of the following reasons: the response is too short to provide sufficient evidence of focus; there is a lack of a main idea; digressions; or confusing language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The main idea(s) and point of view are generally maintained. The writer maintains a general focus on the stated position; digressions usually led back to the stated position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The main idea(s) and point of view are maintained. The writer maintains a generally clear focus on the stated position; minor digressions eventually lead back to the stated position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The main idea(s) and point of view are well maintained throughout the writing. The writer maintains a clear and consistent focus on the stated position.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Instructor Comments:_
Class Project

The use of project-based assessment techniques has continued to grow within education curriculums as resources and concepts beyond traditional testing applications have evolved. There can be extensive value to the student's overall learning process with the addition of project-based learning to supplement standard curriculum material. Often the project-based component of a lesson plans can help to make the concepts relatable for students.

Assignments that compile into a project-based assessment are also a technique option for educators looking to review the ability of students to be creative, diverse and authentic with their course work and the experience gained throughout the time frame of the class. Learning is guided by much more than study skills and the completion of worksheets and lesson plans. The ability of teachers to apply additional assessment techniques to determine the level of understanding of a topic can be highly beneficial to the overall development of a student.

Effectively Utilizing Project-Based Assessments

Project-based assessments are an opportunity to utilize and measure the higher order thinking skills of students. A project-based assessment will apply multi-faceted skills to be encompassed into a cumulative project. This can be a singular project at the end of a grading period or it can be done at designated intervals throughout the marking period. The intent is to design the project-based assessment to encompass the lesson plans, teacher worksheets and any additional teacher resources which will ultimately provide a physical example of what was has been learned and what can be applied by the student.

The criteria for the project-based assessment can be as specific or as generic as a teacher designates. A field trip that relates to the course work is potentially a project-based assignment but its effectiveness as an assessment opportunity would require a more direct correlation. Developing rubrics to define the class structure and curriculum design can be an effective means of applying project-based learning skills. Worksheets can help guide a student throughout the process during the semester.

Procedure

- Determine the course objective to be assessed and match it with the general education goal established by LRSC.
- Provide the students with the template and expectations of the project. A rubric will be helpful to provide the guidance and expectations. Provide the students with any information or materials necessary to effectively complete the project.
- Following completion of the project, gather the materials and categorize any results so a comprehensive summary can be performed.
- Write a comprehensive summary of the assessment explaining the process, results, and interpretation.
- Submit the assessment to the appropriate committee or person.

Student Portfolio

A portfolio is a collection of documents representative of a student’s best work over a period of time. It is a learner-focused assessment that is up to the student to determine what
should be included to provide evidence of their learning. Faculty can use the portfolio to assess the progress of a student over a period of time. Student portfolios could contain sample items that illustrate a progression of skills from only one course or they could be a compilation of skills acquired throughout their college years that would accompany the student when job hunting.

Portfolios assignments used as a method of assessment should include the following requirements from the faculty for the students:

1. Compile a list of criteria of what to include in the portfolio, how to label it, and how it will be graded for the students. Provide a grading rubric to serve as the guide for completion of the portfolio.
2. Instructions for a method of organization that would include a table of contents or labeling.
3. Instructions for attractive assembly that may include a binder and clear protector sheets or digital assembly.
4. A list of required materials that will illustrate skills desired in the student’s area of study or in areas that will increase their chances of obtaining a future job may be included in the assignment such as:
   a. Student profiles where they assess themselves and determine goals
   b. Sample assignments that show increased proficiency
   c. Certification scores
   d. News articles of achievements that may give evidence that skills learned were applied outside the classroom
   e. Commendations
   f. Honors achieved in and out of school
   g. Relevant courses successfully completed
   h. Resumes and cover letters
5. Instructor comments on material that is included

**Self-reflection/self-evaluation**

Student self-reflection is an assessment technique where students provide personal feedback regarding their learning experience. When completed properly, it can provide valuable information about the quality and appropriateness of student learning. Implementing this technique multiple times throughout the course will generate the most effective summary of student learning. This technique can be completed after chapters, units, and at the end of the course. Planning the assessment should be based on the selected course objective. The students should complete the self-reflection on their learning multiple times during the course.

**Procedure**

- Select the course objective to be assessed
- Determine which general education goal is appropriate for the assessment
- Determine how many self-reflections will be completed throughout the course and plan accordingly. Having multiple times is most appropriate. For example, the students can complete two chapter self-reflections on their learning and a final course reflection on what they have learned. Provide the students with appropriate starter questions to be
used as a guide for them to answer. Their answers should be geared toward the chosen course objective.

- Gather the assessments and categorize any themes or concepts that have emerged.
- Provide a written summary of the process and conclude how well the process went in relation to the students' reflections.
- Submit the completed checklist and summation to the appropriate committee or person.

*The following is an example of a self-reflection assessment.*

Please select the best answer from the choices offered and provide an explanation for your selection.

1. Before taking this course/section I knew _________ about [course topic/concept]
   a. Quite a bit
   b. Some things
   c. Very little
   d. Absolutely nothing

   Explanation:

2. The lab based approach providing engaging opportunities for effective learning is _________.
   a. The best way for me to learn because
   b. A good way for me to learn but I learn best using ___ because
   c. Not a good way for me to learn because

   Explain:

3. This year in the lab your instructor relied significantly less on algebra as a way of teaching hydraulic power concepts that he did in the past. I believe this is a ________ approach.
   a. Good
   b. OK
   c. Poor

   Comments

4. This class relies heavily on student participation in groups. I find this to be a ________ way of learning hydraulic concepts.
   a. Very helpful
   b. Moderately helpful
   c. Not helpful

   Comments
Peer evaluations

Using student evaluations of their peers’ activities, assignments, or other methods can be an important part of learning and assessment. According to Suski (2009), peer evaluations help the students being evaluated by adding the insight of their fellow students from a different perspective from the instructor. The evaluations can motivate students to participate and to help to improve critical thinking skills. For course objectives that include the development of interpersonal skills, collaboration, or leadership building, peer evaluations can improve the opportunities for students.

Peer evaluations should be used with caution and should have a detailed framework, like a rubric, for the evaluators to follow. Significant biases may be present since it is obvious which are positive and negative. The student may evaluate their peer poorly because of a disliking or more positively because of a friendship.

A suggested procedure to complete a peer evaluation is to select the course objective and the general education goal to be assessed at the beginning of the semester. Provide the students with the expectations of the assignment and the tool or rubric that will be used in the evaluation. The assessment should be completed multiple times throughout the course to gather data to demonstrate student learning has occurred. After each evaluation, provide opportunity for the students to gain an understanding of the concept or topic evaluated and to understand the areas of improvement. Provide them with any feedback for them to improve on their learning. At the end of the semester, gather the completed assessments and provide a summary of the individual students learning and overall student learning using an appropriate statistical calculation. An appropriate statistical calculation could be use of a percentage of the score that has changed. Write up the summary and complete the checklist that will be turned in to the LRSC assessment committee.


Concept maps

Concept maps can be used as an assessment to determine student learning through students demonstrating the connection of concepts. By providing several concepts maps of concepts specific to the course, an assessment of student learning can be determined. A concept map is a special form of a web diagram for exploring knowledge and gathering and sharing information. Concept mapping is the strategy employed to develop a concept map. “A concept map consists of nodes or cells that contain a concept, item or question and links. The links are labeled and denote direction with an arrow symbol. The labeled links explain the relationship between the nodes. The arrow describes the direction of the relationship and reads like a sentence” (citation from http://www.graphic.org/concept.html).

*Sample procedure for Concept Map Assignment Expectations: (provided by Dr. Betsy Bannier)*
Each student will develop a comprehensive, computer-generated concept map. This map should connect the most important concepts in textbook chapters 1 – 10 with the water-related concepts included in our first nine “Building Connections” activities. Basically, your job is to visually show how each of our main course concepts (both within and beyond the textbook) all fit together.
Your map should be placed in the Concept Map drop box by the due date. **Please make sure your maps are saved as .jpg files** – (.jsf or .cmap files may not open on some computers) If you are using Inspiration (see below), simply click on “export” to export your map as an “image file” – this is a .jpg file.

Steps to completing this assignment:
1. Read the resources listed below. Be sure to spend an adequate amount of time with each website.
2. Click on "Betsy's Sample Concept Map" to see a concept map that I developed for a different course. Feel free to use this CMap as a general example, but do not feel obligated to "mimic" it exactly. Please note that this is an individual assignment, not a "group" assignment. Each student’s concept maps should be unique.

**Concept Mapping Resources**

**Directions:** Everyone should visit link 1 to gain a general understanding of what concept mapping is, how to create a concept map, and the reasons for creating and using concept maps. Then, everyone will need to **download concept mapping software to use for this assignment.**

Two options are provided below (you only need to download one form on concept mapping software, not both!). Link 2 will direct you to **free** software. Link 3 will direct you to a **free 30 day trial** of a different software package. Please investigate both Link 2 and Link 3 before making your decision about which software to download! Questions? Just ask!

1. The following website also provides a clear explanation of how to develop a concept map. In addition, this website shows you several examples of concept maps. Finally, the website contains links to other websites that you may want to investigate: http://www.graphic.org/concept.html

2. Free Concept Mapping Software Link! When you visit the following site, click on Downloaded and follow the instructions that appear. Pros and Cons: Some people say that this software is not as easy to use or as fancy as Inspiration concept mapping software. However, it is absolutely free – you may download it for free, with no time limit on its use! http://cmap.ihmc.us/

3. Free 30 Day Trial of Inspiration software! When you visit the following site, simply follow the given directions. Pros and Cons: Inspiration is powerful software, and is easy to use. Because it is so popular for concept mapping, Inspiration can only be used free for 30 days. After 30 days, if you wish to continue using the software, you will need to pay a fee. http://www.inspiration.com/

**Competition Results**

Using national or state competition results can be utilized for an assessment of student learning. These competition results can be used if they are directly related to the course objective being assessed. The standardized competition provides the structure for the assessment and can be reviewed with the student to determine the learning that has occurred. Competitions can provide the students with an engaging experience to improve skills specific to the course, leadership, and an opportunity to experience industry driven competencies.

To complete the assessment using competition results, the course objective and general education goal should be identified. Preparation and documentation of the experience will assist in the assessment of student learning. A student may complete a self-reflection of their
learning to contribute to the assessment. Following the completion of the competition, a summary sheet may be included demonstrating the achievement of any competency levels. The instructor should complete the assessment checklist and include any data that pertains to student learning.

Pre-/post- method of assessment

Use of the pre-/post- method of assessment can be an effective way to measure student learning objectives. The general purpose of this method is to determine an initial level of student knowledge or understanding of a concept specific to the course as indicated by a course objective then throughout the course additional measurements are conducted. After completion of the assessment, the data is then analyzed to determine if a significant change has occurred in student learning. Utilizing multiple methods and multiple collections is the most effective way to collect data regarding student learning. Create a timeline where data is collected throughout the semester and administer the pre-post exams over the length of the course using different techniques. For example, a pre course assessment can be administered the first weeks of a course then re-administered at the end. During the course, several chapter or unit pre-post assessments can also be given. The data can then be accumulated and evaluated for learning.

In the following paragraphs, a general description of this type of method is given. It is intended to serve as a guide and is not the only way to complete this type of assessment. The instructor is encouraged to create their own plan that fits their students’ needs as well as their own.

Procedure:

1. Identify an appropriate course objective to assess. This should be completed in the first few weeks of the course. Use the assessment checklist as the guide.
2. Develop an assessment exam that will appropriately identify student learning for the listed course objective. The exam can be: (a) a writing assignment where the student must synthesize or discuss concepts related to the objective, (b) a set of problems to be solved, (c) several multiple choice questions, or (d) self-reflection of the course or concept. Note that any appropriate testing method may be chosen by the instructor but it is not simply a chapter test or exam. However, if several chapter assessments are completed this would be appropriate.
3. Administer the assessment to the students during multiple times throughout the course. Plan for at least three times throughout the course making sure that the assessments measure the course objective that was indicated.
4. Gather the data and perform an analysis of the results. Appropriate analyses include percentage change, t-test, correlations, or analysis of variance. Contact the assessment chair if there is a need for further instruction on the use of any of these statistical analysis techniques.
5. Complete the assessment checklist following the directions provided. An interpretation and explanation of the process is expected. Include samples of the assessments or if the actual assessments are included, remove all identification specific to students. The assessment data should be provided in table or graph form.
Sample Pre-/Post-Assessment.

Course name: Math XXX

General Education Goal: V. An educated person must have an informed acquaintance with and an appreciation for science and mathematics and their contributions to society—mathematics/sciences applications.

Course objective: Following completion of this course, the student will be able to: analyze and interpret data utilizing the appropriate statistical testing method.

Data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Exam #1-Pre</th>
<th>Exam #1-Post</th>
<th>Exam #2-Pre</th>
<th>Exam #2-Post</th>
<th>Exam #3-Pre</th>
<th>Exam #3-Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Score: 8.67, 14.5, 9.5, 15.5, 5, 19
Total possible: 20, 20, 20, 20, 20, 20
Average %: 43.3%, 72.5%, 47.5%, 77.5%, 25.0%, 95.0%
Percentage Change: 29.2%, 30.0%, 70.0%
t-test: 3.58239E-07, 0.011093408, 2.27431E-07
t-test interpretation: p<.001, p<.05, p<.001

Interpretation of the results:
The above results indicate there is improvement of student scores. The students improved their test scores for each of the statistics exams. The group improved their overall scores at a significant level as indicated by the $t$-test and increase in the average percentage. The $t$-test results indicate there is a significant change in the scores of the groups for each exam as indicated. The probability levels demonstrate there is a low probability of error that the occurrence of these scores is by chance alone.

Threaded Discussion

A threaded discussion includes asynchronous posts, made by students, to an online discussion board. Topics for threaded discussions are assigned by the instructor and students can be divided into groups for interactive exchange. The instructor should decide early in the course what the topic will be for discussion. The assessment should be able to indicate if the course objective identified is measured so selecting an appropriate topic and course objective is vital.
A threaded discussion post can be an ideal method of demonstrating student progress throughout a course. Once the course is completed, review the students' threaded discussion posts comparing posts from early and later in the course. Identify aspects of qualitative improvement using an established rubric appropriate for evaluating the threaded discussion (an example is provided). This will provide a robust snapshot of student understanding of the material at a given point in the term. Complete the assessment checklist and provide the components necessary for the assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does not meet standards</th>
<th>Meets standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes posts from at least two time points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes samples from the required number of students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posts demonstrate improvement in student understanding related to the course objective indicated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posts demonstrate improvement in student understanding related to the general education objective indicated</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C

Strategic and Operational Plans

Lake Region State College
Strategic Plan
2012-2015

Our Mission: We enhance lives and community vitality through quality education.

Enhance Lives
Promote college awareness and access
Access-Learning-Quality

Community Vitality
Provide innovative solutions that promote our region’s economy and workforce competitiveness
Access-Quality

Quality Education
Foster a student-centered environment that promotes excellence in teaching and effective learning
Access-Accountability-Learning-Quality

Institutional Effectiveness
Promote continuous improvement and collaboration
Accountability

NDUS Pathways to Student Success category