

# Annual Report for Assessment of Outcomes

## (For Degree, Certificate or Core Outcomes)

**To complete this Assessment Report**, please address the questions below, and send to [learningassessment@pcc.edu](mailto:learningassessment@pcc.edu) **by June 20, 2011**; subject line: REPORT Assessment [SAC]

1. Describe changes that have been implemented towards improving students' attainment of outcomes that resulted from outcome assessments carried out in the previous academic year.

*(Information provided here may be referenced, inserted into or summarized in Program Review 2.C.iii (for Core Outcomes) or 6.B.iii (for CTE Degree and Certificate outcomes).*

Our CTE program presented a plan for the critical thinking outcome but this was tabled in order to implement the plan presented last fall.

2. Identify the outcomes assessed this year, and describe the methods used. What were the results of the assessment (i.e., what did you learn about how well students are meeting the outcomes)?

*(Information provided here may be referenced, inserted into or summarized in Program Review 2.C.i& ii (for Core Outcomes) or 6.B.i & ii (for CTE Degree and Certificate outcomes)*

**a. Describe the method(s) you used.**

- Our assessment plan measured all the outcomes for the Administrative Assistant Degree in the Computer Applications/Office Systems Program. Our plan submitted Fall 2010 proposed using our capstone course, CAS 246, Integrated Computer Projects to measure how our students are meeting the degree outcomes. One of the outcomes did not apply to the CAS 246 course, so we used the final project from the OS 245, Office Systems and Procedures course as outlined in our plan. Although this course is not considered our capstone course, it is one of our more advanced courses and has two prerequisites which assume more advanced knowledge.
- Additionally, we were looking to compare whether there is a difference in how the online students versus the on-campus students met the degree outcomes. In other words, did the mode of delivery make a difference?
- The CAS 246 course recommends that students have one word processing course and one spreadsheet course but does not have prerequisites. Students take this course as part of the one year Administrative Assistant certificate and the two-year AAS Administrative Assistant Degree.
- The two instructors of this course met winter term to try to better align their course assignments and directions to maintain some consistency for assignment results. For several years, there was no collaboration on the content. Instructors were required to follow the CCOG but there was no communication between instructors to determine whether they was consistency in content. This learning assessment project gave the instructors the opportunity to more closely align their content but still allowing for academic freedom in class structure and delivery. Both of the CAS 246 instructors agreed to use the same group project. However, the on-campus course consists of a

service learning project which is the E-cycle Drive at the Sylvania campus. The online course requires students to complete a service learning project of their choosing.

- According to our initial plan, specific projects and assignments were evaluated from the one on-campus section and one online section. The CAS 246 course is only taught on campus one term per year during spring term and generally has a small enrollment compared to the online course. The sampling was approximately 10% of our degree completing students represented from both of these sections.
- The instructors of these courses compiled the assignments that were identified within our initial learning assessment plan with permission from their students and using the rubric outlined in our plan, the learning assessment team evaluated these assignments and applied the rubric. Our SAC assessment team consisted of the two instructors of the CAS 246 course and two other instructors who do not teach the course. To avoid a bias, the CAS 246 instructors did not evaluate their own student's work.
- Each assignment was given a score based on the rubric shown in Table 1.0 below. The scores were then averaged and these averages are shown in the table 2.0, CAS 246 Integrated Projects Learning Assessment Results.

**b. Results: What did you learn?**

Below is the rubric used to evaluate and measure the individual degree outcomes.

**Table 1.0**

| Assessment Rubric                | Levels of Achievement                        |   |  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Course #:<br>Assignment/Project: | Beginning = 1                                | Developing = 2                              | Competent = 3  | Mastery = 4                            |
| Program Outcomes                 | Limited knowledge and application of skills. | Basic comprehension of knowledge of skills. | Competent application of essential features and concepts | Thorough mastery of advanced concepts. |

**As you will see from the rubric table below, the majority of students did not meet the mastery level. Although there were some students who met this level, the majority of our sampling of students did not.**

**Table 2.0**

| CAS/OS Learning Assessment 2010-2011   |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| CAS 246 Integrated Projects Learning Assessment Results  |  |  |
| Program Outcome  | CAS 246 Project/Assignment   | Rubric Avg.  |
| Produce professional, error-free, timely documents by using current and emerging software and hardware technology.   | <b>Job 23 Registration Form</b>  | 2.86   |
| Effectively communicate their own creative and critical ideas; respond effectively both verbally and in written format to the spoken, written, and visual ideas of others. | <b>Introductory PowerPoint—</b><br>Do we need to add student feedback?<br>Need to add a feedback form or survey for students to respond. | 3  |
| Use critical thinking, organization and problem solving to effectively manage numeric, alphabetic and digital data.  | <b>Project 23- Memo for Project</b>  | 3.125  |
| Assess and analyze new tasks to determine what computer technology should be utilized to effectively complete the tasks  | <b>Project 23 Registration Form</b>  | 2.75   |
| Establish and follow procedures to manage digital and hard copy office documents.  | <b>File Management Application</b>   | 3  |
| Apply planning and time management principles to accomplish workplace efficiency and achieve company objectives.   | <b>Job 23 Registration Form</b>  | 3.75   |
| Perform general office tasks: plan and participate in meetings, coordinate travel arrangements, schedule appointments, greet clients/customers, and process mail.          | <b>OS 245 FINAL PROJECT</b>  | 3.1  |
| Understand roles within teams, work units, departments, and organizations to identify the effect of systems on the activities of a business or an organization.            | <b>Project 23 Organization Memo</b>  | 3.125  |
| Exhibit people skills to deal effectively with a variety of personalities and diverse individuals.   | <b>CAS 246: Group Project or eCycle Report/Self-Reflection</b>   | Difficult to measure within the current course design. |

**The assessment team had valuable discussion on why our students are not at the mastery level and what may be contributing factors. Some of the key points of this discussion were the following:**

- How can the instructors get their students to have correlated assignments that meet the outcomes?
- Assignment instructions may not be worded in a way that provides students the specific details that are expected to meet the individual outcome.
- Transfer of skills acquired from other CAS/OS courses that are recommended seems to be challenging and lacking in the depth we would expect. Students don't seem to be able to "think on their feet" and make independent decisions using critical thinking skills which is the goal of not only this course, but what we would expect for students completing the degree.
- Not all students in the course are part of our program since there are no prerequisites for the course. Does this affect the results?
- Do students know what the expectations are for this course? Does the course description and CCOG reflect the course expectations?
- PowerPoint Presentation assignment: Instructors would need to add a measurement for students to give feedback for presentations.
- Not all of the outcomes are easy to identify and measure within an assignment, i.e. understand roles within teams, exhibit people skills. It is difficult to measure this outcome using the rubric but by participating in this type of project, students will have the opportunity to see the dynamics of working within a group and with a diverse student population.
- Students do not seem to be showing thorough mastery of concepts as outlined in our rubric. Do we expect all students to show mastery or are we looking for only the majority?
- Should Learning Assessment team be the instructors who teach the course? Even though instructors did not evaluate their own student's work, were the other members of the team able to make unbiased evaluations of student work?
- The rubric design worked well for this project. It was easy to look at a student assignment and apply the rubric.

3. Identify any changes that should, as a result of this assessment, be implemented towards improving students' attainment of outcomes.

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**From this learning assessment project, our learning assessment team looked at the following recommendations to facilitate a majority of students meeting the mastery level of our degree outcomes:**

- Identify courses in the CAS/OS program where there may be deficiencies in providing the necessary background for students who will take the capstone course.
- Proposed adding prerequisites that provide the necessary background and skills. Next fall, the online instructor will keep data about the relevance of whether prerequisites would get us closer to more students acquiring the mastery level of outcomes.
- Modifying course curriculum for CAS 246.
- Do we need a larger sample size to give a more precise conclusion? We used approximately 10% of degree completion.
- Why don't our students have the necessary background? How can we get them to use the critical thinking aspect to complete projects without specific directions? Is there a method of teaching that can enhance this skill or do we need to apply this aspect more frequently in other CAS courses that feed into this course?
- We found that some of the CAS 246 course activities assigned are difficult to measure mastery of the outcome but meet the PCC core outcome of community and environmental responsibility through the E-cycle drive and service learning project.

Despite the difference in course delivery--online vs. on-campus--the student results were not substantially different. As the two instructors came together to align the assignments, we found that the outcomes are more consistent in their results and are easier to measure.

This learning assessment project improved communication between the instructors to keep the curriculum in each course consistent. It also led us to question whether we need to review and/or revise some of our degree outcomes for continued relevance for today's workplace. As technology has evolved, it is possible that our outcomes need to better reflect where we really want our students to be as well as designing curriculum that allows this to happen. We found one of our outcomes to be somewhat outdated and therefore, more difficult to measure. We questioned how we can revise this outcome to meet what we truly want to measure for mastery.

The results of this assessment of our first degree will be shared with the SAC in the fall. Our Learning Assessment team found this project to be very productive in analyzing our outcomes. As a SAC, we are in continuous discussion on how to keep curriculum relevant and challenge our students but rarely have we

shared and collaborated in such a fashion across the campuses in our department to really look at actual student work and measure their level of mastery.