Concord University



Plan for Assessing Student Academic Achievement

2007-2008

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"Failure to plan is a plan to fail."

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Concord University Plan for Assessing Student Academic Achievement 2006-2007

Assessment of student learning has always been an expected responsibility for Concord University faculty. Development of goals reflecting the University mission and goals, evaluation of student learning, and implementation of curriculum revision have required faculty development and oversight. Therefore, the requirement by the NCA of the HLC to develop and implement an institutional assessment plan is an opportunity for systematic, reflective, use of assessment results to inform change in an effort to improve student learning.

Concord University's mission and goals reflect the institutional commitment to improvement of student learning. The educational programs of Concord University are designed to foster skills, knowledge, and attitudes applicable across a wide range of academic fields and professional careers in a culturally diverse, perpetually evolving global community.

- 1) Skills include proficiency in interpreting data, integrating information, formulating ideas, thinking critically, and communicating with others.
- 2) Knowledge refers to familiarity with principles underlying academic discourse in various fields.
- Attitudes are tendencies conducive to self-knowledge, personal growth and development, and responsible citizenship.

Effective assessment is a strategy for understanding, evaluating, and improving student learning within the context of the institution's mission and learning goals.

Therefore academic assessment should necessarily:

- Generate information on student learning outcomes.
- Produce evidence of intended student learning.
- Guide stakeholders in using information to improve student learning.
- Guide broad educational and organizational improvement.

The assessment program should necessarily help the University effectively accomplish its mission and goals through the development of valid, reliable assessment tools. Assessment efforts focus on improving student learning through input from all members of the University community. These efforts should result in improvement of student learning by providing feedback to stakeholders concerning curricula, instruction and student support services. Effective assessment demonstrates an institutional commitment to learning and is not simply a matter of compliance.

Goals of the Assessment Process

The following goals and objectives have been developed to ensure effectiveness of the assessment program itself. Each goal and/or objective is a measurable reflection of both the University's mission and the NCA HLC best practices for assessment. These goals will be re-evaluated and revised each year as needed.

- Goal 1: Ensure faculty, administration, and student knowledge and involvement in the University's assessment program in an effort to increase commitment to educational improvement based on student learning outcomes.
 - Objective 1a: Establish a system of communicating assessment information to University stakeholders.
 - Objective 1b: Provide faculty development opportunities on assessment.
 - Objective 1c: Improve student involvement in assessment.
 - Objective 1d: Involve faculty and staff from across the University in Assessment Committee meetings.
 - Objective 1e: Increase the "usability" of assessment results by clearly indicating areas for improvement.
 - Goal 2: Implement a systematic process for collection, compilation, analysis, and use of documentation of student learning outcomes.
 - Objective 2a: Implement the revised General Studies assessment measures.
 - Objective 2b: Implement a timetable for development of departmental assessment plans and reports.
 - Objective 2c: Insure departmental goals are consistent with the University mission and goals.
 - Objective 2d: Complete an annual assessment report summarizing institutional assessment results and changes resulting from results.
 - Objective 2e: Distribute and discuss results with all stakeholders.

Goal 3: Concord University students will demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes outlined in the mission and goals statements.

- Objective 3a: Students' mean scores on the CLA will be equal to greater than the national norm.
- Objective 3b: Comparison of the FAS and GSS surveys will demonstrate attitude change consistent with University goals.
- Objective 3c: Results of the NSSE will be equal to, or greater than, the national norm.
- Objective 3d: GSS surveys will indicate preparedness for education or employment upon graduation.
- Objective 3e: Capstone courses in specific disciplines will indicate preparedness for education or employment upon graduation.
- Objective 3f: Departmental assessment plans will be consistent with University mission and goals.
- Objective 3g: Departmental assessment reports will demonstrate achievement of University goals both within the discipline and in General Studies.

Assessment Components

As stated in the Concord University mission and goals the educational programs of Concord University are designed to foster skills, knowledge, and attitudes applicable across a wide range of academic fields and professional careers in a culturally diverse, perpetually evolving global community. The University's mission statement indicates the value of student learning. Similarly, the University's assessment efforts must flow

from the mission. The following four tables serve to illustrate the correspondence between the University's goals and the institutional-level component measures used to assess these goals.

Additionally, each academic department develops assessment plans and submits assessment reports regularly. These reports provide documentation of discipline specific goals corresponding with the University mission and goals.

Skills: Proficiency in interpreting data, integrating information, formulating ideas, thinking critically, and communicating with others.

Table One: Skill acquisition as assessed by component measures.

SKILLS	CLA	NSSE	GSS	CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE
Effective inter- communication skills and literacies	X		X	X
Proficiency in skills used for problem solving	X		X	X
Ability to conduct, interpret, and apply scholarly research			X	X
Ability to analyze, synthesize, and integrate elements, information and ideas	X		X	X
Ability to critically evaluate Information and ideas	X		X	X
Ability to apply learning in different contexts	X	X	X	X
Ability to learn and work Independently and collaboratively		X	X	X

Knowledge: Familiarity with principles underlying academic discourse in various fields.

Table Two: Knowledge acquisition as assessed by component measures

KNOWLEDGE	GSS	
Understanding of the reciprocal influences of environments, cultural beliefs and attitudes, and societal institutions and practices		POL SCI SOC GEOG SOC WK
Awareness of the fundamental characteristics and properties of the physical universe.		CHEM PHY SCI NAT SCI
An ability to interpret events and trends within historic contexts.		HIST POL SCI SOC GEOG
Proficiency in language acquisition including linguistics mathematics, and computer language systems.		LANG MATH COMP SCI
A recognition of the complex interactions between organisms and their environments.		BIOL ZOOL GEOG
An awareness of the principles, methods, materials, and media employed in the creation and presentation of art and literature.		FINE ARTS LIT
Self-knowledge, including awareness of one's competencies, deficiencies and learning-style.	X	PSYCH SOC WK EDUC

Attitudes: Tendencies conducive to self-knowledge, personal growth and development, and responsible citizenship.

Table Three: Attitude formation as assessed by component measures

	FAS	NSSE	GSS
Attitude			
Ethical	X	X	X
decision-making			
Responsible leading and following	X	X	X
Respect for diversity and conflict resolution	X	X	X
Fostering of well-being	X	X	X
Appreciation of art and Creativity	X	X	X
Social responsibility	X	X	X
Lifelong learning and Intellectual growth	X	X	X

Table Four gives a brief description of the component measures used in assessment. A more complete description of each measure is included in Appendix A.

Table Four: Descriptions of component measures

Instrument	Subjects	Development	Purpose	Information Collected	Nationally Normed?
Freshman Attitude Survey (FAS)	All entering freshman	Local	Collects pre- test information on attitudes and values post- tested in the GSS.	Attitudes and values related to Concord's stated goals.	NO
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)	Sample of Freshman and Seniors	External	Gathers outcomes assessment, undergraduate quality, and accountability data.	Quality of effort inside and outside the classroom; educational and personal gains; satisfaction.	Yes
College Learning Assessment (CLA)	Sample of Freshman and Seniors	External	Direct measure of analytic and written communication skills.	Proficiency in analytic reasoning and written communication skills.	Yes
Capstone Experiences	Seniors	Internal	Direct measure of learning outcomes in major field of study.	Specific outcomes by discipline.	NO
Graduating Student Survey (GSS)	Seniors	Local	Collects information on perceived learning outcomes in general education and major field as well as overall satisfaction and changes in attitudes and values.	Reports of knowledge acquisition in general education and major field; satisfaction with educational experiences; attitudes and values related to Concord's.	NO

Program-level Assessment

Program-level assessment is conducted by the faculty within each academic program. Assessment reports are submitted by each academic discipline consistent with the University's mission and goals. Multiple methods, including, but not limited too capstone experiences are used to evaluate student learning within the major. An updated assessment schedule, incorporated into the academic planning calendar, will be implemented in the 2006-2007 academic year. This is an improvement on the earlier process in that it more clearly involves the use of assessment results for planning academic improvements in a timely and consistent manner.

All departmental assessment reports are due to the Director of Assessment on, or before, September 24^{th,} 2007. The report is then distributed to the Assessment committee for review. A check sheet is used by the Committee for reviewing reports in order that evaluation is consistent and clear (See Appendix). A summary of pertinent data, findings, and recommendations will be compiled into an Annual Assessment Report by the Director of Assessment. Reports are then forwarded, with assessment committee input, to the VPAD prior to October 17^{th,} 2007. The VPAD will review departmental requests using assessment report data and forward planning recommendations to the President no later than February 8^{th,} 2008. The President will respond concerning requested academic improvements/resource issues to the VPAD no later than May 2nd, 2008. Prior to the completion of the spring, 2008, semester, the VPAD will forward the President's planning/budgetary recommendations to the faculty through the Division Chairs. Therefore, approved academic improvements can be implemented in the following academic year.

Appendix I.

Description of Assessment Components

Freshman Attitude Survey (FAS)

Who takes it and when is it administered? All entering freshman take the online survey as part of their orientation course early in the fall semester.

How long does administration take? Approximately 30 minutes

Who originates the survey? The Director of Assessment

When are results typically available? Within 4 months following administration

What type of information is sought?

The FAS asks questions related to attitudes and values reflected in University goals. Used as a pre-test measure of locally developed questions administered as a post-test to seniors in the GSS.

To whom are the results regularly distributed? President, VPAD, Division Heads, and Assessment Committee

Are the results available by division or discipline? YES

Are the results comparable to data of other universities? NO

What is the estimated cost of administration? None

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Who takes it and when is it administered?
A sample of freshmen and seniors take the measure during the spring semester.

How long does administration take? 15 minutes

Who originates the survey?
National Survey of Student Engagement
Center for Postsecondary Research
Indiana University Bloomington
Eigenmann Hall, Suite 419
1900 East Tenth Street
Bloomington, IN 47406-7512
(812) 856-5824
http://www.indiana.edu/~nsse/

When are results typically available? The next December

What type of information is sought?

The NSSE measures student perceptions of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interactions, enriching educational experiences, and supportiveness of the campus environment.

To whom are the results regularly distributed? President, VPAD, Division Heads, and Assessment Committee

Are the results available by division or discipline? NO

Are the results comparable to data of other universities? YES

What is the estimated cost of administration? \$275 participation fee pus per-student sampling fee based on undergraduate enrollment. Total cost varies, from approximately \$2,500 to \$5,000.

College Learning Assessment (CLA)

Who takes it and when is it administered?

A sample of freshmen take the test in the fall semester and a sample of senior take the test in the fall. Fifty-percent are administered the Applied Writing tasks and fifty-percent take the Performance tasks test.

How long does administration take? 1 ½ hours

Who originates the survey? CLA at CAE 212.217.0700 cla@cae.org.

When are results typically available? The following academic year

What type of information is sought?

Applied Writing tasks measure a student's ability to articulate complex ideas, examine claims and evidence, support ideas with relevant reasons and examples, sustain a coherent discussion, and use standard written English. Performance tasks require students use an integrated combination of critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem solving, and written communication skills to answer several open-ended questions about a hypothetical but realistic situation.

To whom are the results regularly distributed? President, VPAD, Division Heads, and Assessment Committee

Are the results available by division or discipline? NO

Are the results comparable to data of other universities? YES

What is the estimated cost of administration? Currently, cost is covered by WV HEPC.

Graduating Student Survey (GSS)

Who takes it and when is it administered? All graduating seniors take the online survey as part of their graduation packet shortly prior to commencement.

How long does administration take? Approximately 30 minutes

Who originates the survey? The Director of Assessment

When are results typically available? Within 4 months following commencement

What type of information is sought?

The GSS asks questions related to student satisfaction, attitude formations, and perceived skill and knowledge acquisition reflecting University goals. Also used as a post-measure of locally developed questions administered to freshmen in the FAS.

To whom are the results regularly distributed? President, VPAD, Division Heads, and Assessment Committee

Are the results available by division or discipline? YES

Are the results comparable to data of other universities? NO

What is the estimated cost of administration? None

Capstone courses

Who takes it and when is it administered? All seniors take a capstone course in their major field of study.

How long does administration take? Semester

Who originates the survey? The faculty of the discipline

When are results typically available?
The fall following the year in which the course is given.

What type of information is sought?

Each discipline establishes specific outcomes for that discipline.

To whom are the results regularly distributed? President, VPAD, Division Heads, and Assessment Committee

Are the results available by division or discipline? Yes—by discipline only.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities? NO

What is the estimated cost of administration? None

Appendix II. Freshman Attitude Survey

FRESHMAN ATTITUDE SURVEY

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You recently became a Concord University student. You will contribute much to Concord in your time here, and hopefully Concord will contribute to your personal and intellectual growth. Your answers to this questionnaire will help Concord improve academic programs and services. All responses will be kept strictly confidential. Thank you for your assistance and best wishes for success.

confid	lential. Thank you for your assistance	and best wishes for success.
1.	What is the highest academic degree Bachelor's degree Master's degree Professional degree (e.g. M.D., D.O. Doctorate	
2.	What is your primary future plan? Graduate or professional school Working in a new job Other	
3.	What were your two most important	nt reasons for attending Concord?
	Primary reason: Cost Size Social atmosphere Ratio of teachers to students Location Quality of academic programs Academic reputation Availability of scholarship Availability of financial aid Family influence To be with friends Other	Secondary reason: Cost Size Social atmosphere Ratio of teachers to students Location Quality of academic programs Academic reputation Availability of scholarship Availability of financial aid Family influence To be with friends Other
4.	Please indicate your major(s):	
5.	Please indicate your minor(s):	
6.	During the past year, approximate you spend outside of class on coupapers, projects, rehearsals, studi	rse-related work (e.g. homework,
7.	Upon entering Concord, approxim will you spend working on-campus	

8. Upon entering Concord, approximately how many hours per week will you spend working off-campus? _____ hours

9. During the course of the past school year, how often were you involved in the following activities?

involved in the following activities:					
· ·	NEVER	₹		OFT	EN
Interacting with people from other cultures	1	2	3	4	5
Discussing topics with others whose opinions or personal values differ from your own	1	2	3	4	5
Using the library to gather research materials and information	1	2	3	4	5
Communicating with a faculty member outside of class	1	2	3	4	5
Attending a cultural event	1	2	3	4	5
Writing papers and/or projects	1	2	3	4	5
Applying the knowledge and skills gained in one discipline to learning in other disciplines	1	2	3	4	5
Discussing issues of social, cultural, or academic significance with others	1	2	3	4	5
Completing reading assignments for class Preparation	1	2	3	4	5
Using a computer lab for completion of Assignments	1	2	3	4	5

10. Rate yourself on the following traits and abilities:

	LOW	/			HIGH	1
Leadership ability	1	2	3	4	5	
Ability to work cooperatively with a group	1	2	3	4	5	
Ethical decision making	1	2	3	4	5	
Respect for diversity	1	2	3	4	5	
Ability to think independently	1	2	3	4	5	
Love of learning	1	2	3	4	5	
Critical thinking ability	1	2	3	4	5	
Ability to write clearly	1	2	3	4	5	
Reading comprehension	1	2	3	4	5	
Conflict resolution	1	2	3	4	5	
Social responsibility	1	2	3	4	5	

1. Please indicate your intended year of college graduation					
12. Please indicate your sex	male	female			
13. Please indicate your age					
14. Please indicate your marital status	Marrie Divorc Single Widow	ed			
15. Will you be a resident or commuter	Reside Comm				
16. Permanent residence	Other	/irginia state country			
17. How would you describe your race/ethni	Black, Americ				

Appendix III. Graduating Student Survey

GRADUATING STUDENT SURVEY

Dear Graduating Student:

Soon you will be a Concord University graduate. You have contributed much to Concord in your time here, and hopefully Concord has contributed to your personal and intellectual growth. Your answers to this questionnaire will help Concord improve academic programs and services. All responses will be kept strictly confidential. Thank you for your assistance and best wishes for continued success.

1. What is the highest academic degree you plan to earn?

	Master's degree Professional degree (e.g. N Doctorate	1.D., D.O., J.E	D.)
2.	What is your primary future Graduate or professional so Name of School Working in a new job Job title Employer Other	chool	
3.	What were your two most	important re	asons for attending Concord?
	Primary reason: Cost Size Social atmosphere Ratio of teachers to student Location Quality of academic prograt Academic reputation Availability of scholarship Availability of financial aid Family influence To be with friends Other	ts ms	Secondary reason: Cost Size Social atmosphere Ratio of teachers to students Location Quality of academic programs Academic reputation Availability of scholarship Availability of financial aid Family influence To be with friends Other
4. 5	Please indicate your mino	. ,	

6.	Approximately how many hours per week do you spend outside of class on course-related work (e.g. homework, papers, projects, rehearsals, studio work, etc.)? hours							
7.	Approximately how many h campus? hours		ek do	you s	spend	workir	ng on-	
8.	Approximately how many h campus? hours	-	ek do	you s	spend	workir	ng off-	
9. During the course of the past school year, how of involved in the following activities?					en we	re you		
NEVER						OFTE	TEN	
	Interacting with people from other cultu	res 1		2	3	4	5	
	Discussing topics with others whose op or personal values differ from your own			2	3	4	5	
	Using the library to gather research ma and information	terials 1		2	3	4	5	
	Communicating with a faculty member of class	outside 1		2	3	4	5	
	Attending a cultural event	1		2	3	4	5	
	Writing papers and/or projects	1		2	3	4	5	
	Applying the knowledge and skills gained discipline to learning in other disciplines			2	3	4	5	
	Discussing issues of social, cultural, or significance with others	academic 1		2	3	4	5	
	Completing reading assignments for clarification	ass 1		2	3	4	5	
	Using a computer lab for completion of Assignments	1		2	3	4	5	
10	.Rate yourself on the followi		d abi	lities:			HIGH	
	Leadership ability Ability to work cooperatively with a ground thick the state of t	1 1 1 1 1 1 1		2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2	3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3	4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4	5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5	
	Social responsibility	1		2	3	4	5	

11. How effective has your Concord University education been in helping you to:

you to:	Very Ineffective				Very Effective
Analyze written arguments	1	2	3	4	5
Appreciate other cultures	1	2	3	4	5
Appreciate fine arts	1	2	3	4	5
Broaden your intellectual interests	1	2	3	4	5
Develop leadership skills	1	2	3	4	5
Improve decision-making abilities	1	2	3	4	5
Reason mathematically	1	2	3	4	5
Respect different points of view	1	2	3	4	5
Speak to groups	1	2	3	4	5
Think critically	1	2	3	4	5
Think independently	1	2	3	4	5
Use information technology	1	2	3	4	5
Write clearly	1	2	3	4	5
Develop math skills	1	2	3	4	5
Interpret events within historical contexts	1	2	3	4	5
Understand the relationship between individuals					
and their environment	1	2	3	4	5
Understand the physical universe	1	2	3	4	5
Solve problems	1	2	3	4	5
Work independently	1	2	3	4	5
Work in groups	1	2	3	4	5
Apply learning in different contexts	1	2	3	4	5
Conduct research	1	2	3 3 3 3	4	5
Interpret and apply research	1	2	3	4	5
Analyze information and ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Synthesize information and ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Master the subject matter of your major	1	2	3	4	5
Apply knowledge in problem solving	1	2	3	4	5
Find and apply information	1	2	3	4	5
Understand multiple perspectives	1	2	3	4	5
Develop a love of learning	1	2	3	4	5
Understand your own competencies	1	2	3	4	5
Understand your own deficiencies	1	2	3	4	5
Realize your learning style	1	2	3	4	5

12. How satisfied were you with the experiences, services, and facilities at Concord as listed below?

	Very Dissatisfied			S	Very atisfied	Not Applicable
Student Life	1	2	3	4	5	0
Faculty interaction	1	2	3	4	5	0
Feedback from faculty	1	2	3	4	5	0
Teaching in General Education	1	2	3	4	5	0
Teaching in major field	1	2	3	4	5	0
Campus intellectual climate	1	2	3	4	5	0
Faculty enthusiasm	1	2	3	4	5	0
Availability of major field courses	1	2	3	4	5	0
Availability of general education courses	1	2	3	4	5	0
Quality of courses in major field	1	2	3	4	5	0
Quality of general education courses	1	2	3	4	5	0
Accessibility of faculty	1	2	3	4	5	0
Academic advising by faculty	1	2	3	4	5	0

	Very Dissatisfied				Very Satisfied	Not Applicable
Attitude of faculty toward students	1	2	3	4	5	0
Attitude of non-teaching staff	1	2	3	4	5	0
On-campus work experiences	1	2	3	4	5	0
Career services	1	2	3	4	5	0
Business office	1	2	3	4	5	0
Campus bookstore	1	2	3	4	5	0
Financial aid office	1	2	3	4	5	0
Food service	1	2	3	4	5	0
Library	1	2	3	4	5	0
Registrar's office	1	2	3	4	5	0
Registration process	1	2	3	4	5	0
Student affairs	1	2	3	4	5	0
Disability services	1	2	3	4	5	0
International Student office	1	2	3	4	5	0
College Center office	1	2	3	4	5	0
Computer labs	1	2	3	4	5	0
CAT facilities	1	2	3	4	5	0
Computer center	1	2	3	4	5	0
McNair scholars program	1	2	3	4	5	0
Counseling center	1	2	3	4	5	0
Recreational facilities	1	2	3	4	5	0
Campus Security	1	2	3	4	5	0
Parking	1	2	3	4	5	0
Classroom facilities	1	2	3	4	5	0
Housing	1	2	3	4	5	0
Student Support Services	1	2	3	4	5	0
Quality of preparation for employment	1	2	3	4	5	0
Quality of preparation for graduate or						
professional school	1	2	3	4	5	0
12 Please indicate your in	tandad yaar	r of co	llogo gr	adur	ation	

13.	Please indicate your	intended year	of college	graduation	
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14. Please indicate your sex	male	temale
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15. Please indicate your age _____

16. Please indicate your marital status

Married Divorced Single Widowed

- 17. Were you a resident, commuter, or both? Resident Commuter Both
- **18. Permanent residence:** West Virginia Other state Other country
- 19. How would you describe your race/ethnicity?

Black, non Hispanic American Indian White, non Hispanic Asian Hispanic Multi-racial Other

Appendix IV.

Assessment Check sheet for Academic Departments

ASSESSMENT REPORT CHECKSHEET

REVIEWER DATE

OVERALL (Refer to Assessment Handbook) Uses appropriate assessment report	
Uses appropriate assessment report	
framework. Uses appropriate assessment plan matrix.	
Contains no major clerical errors.	
DESCRIPTIVE STATUS OF	
ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES	
program goals and objectives linked	
Describes goals and objectives including learning in general	
Describes how learning goals are dentified and addressed through assessment.	
Uses multiple direct and indirect assessment measures.	
Describes indicators of student outcomes currently being used or developed.	
Describes how indicators are being used linking them to program goals.	
Describes capstone experiences.	
Describes data collected.	
Provides an interpretation of data collected.	
Describes whether program goals and objectives are being met.	
Shows evidence of faculty involvement in assessing academic achievement.	
Incorporates an appropriate time line and provisions for administration.	
Describes how assessment information will be used.	
Demonstrates likelihood that assessment activities will lead to programmatic improvement.	
	Contains no major clerical errors. DESCRIPTIVE STATUS OF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES includes a complete description of program goals and objectives linked to university mission and goals. Describes goals and objectives including learning in general education and the major field. Describes how learning goals are dentified and addressed through assessment. Describes indicators of student outcomes currently being used or developed. Describes how indicators are being used linking them to program goals. Describes capstone experiences. Describes data collected. Provides an interpretation of data collected. Describes whether program goals and objectives are being met. Shows evidence of faculty involvement in assessing academic achievement. Incorporates an appropriate time line and provisions for administration. Describes how assessment information will be used. Demonstrates likelihood that assessment activities will lead to

COMMENTS:_	 	 	 	