

**Cosumnes River College
Proposed Assessment Process
February 2008**

Last fall, the Outcomes Assessment Task Force (OATF) convened to formulate and recommend the process, and resources needed, to implement and sustain an ongoing assessment cycle at the college. The Task Force wants to update you about the status of our work. We have reviewed processes adopted by other colleges, examined our interests, discussed our current strategies and explored our various options. Our goal is to not reinvent the wheel, to make this process beneficial for employees and students, and to keep the process as streamlined and simple as possible. From our research, we are **proposing the following structure** for outcomes assessment at the college. Key elements for this **proposed structure** include the following:

1. College-wide and GE outcomes will be assessed on a four-year cycle that includes:

- Graduation Competencies and General Education (Year 1),
- Program Completion (Year 2),
- Student Development as Self-Reliant Learners (Year 3), and
- Society, Ethics and Pluralism (Year 4).

The assessment strategy for these will be twofold:

- The Research Office will develop and implement college-wide assessments using an appropriate sampling methodology. The aggregated results will be shared with the campus community for discussion and planning.
- Faculty and/or programs whose courses or activities map closely to the selected college wide or GE outcome theme for that year can choose to conduct and report on a related course or activity assessment via a simple web-based form (see #3 below for more information).

More information about the College-wide and GE outcomes is available online at:
http://www.crc.losrios.edu/Campus/College_Student_Learning_Outcomes.htm

Note: Outcome assessment is the general evaluation of how well our students are meeting the established learning objectives. A good outcome assessment process is one that clearly defines student learning for the students and provides students information that helps them improve. In addition, a good assessment supports and encourages professional development to enhance student success.

2. During the fall convocation, faculty will have the opportunity to identify and discuss assessment needs in their department. For example, a department may choose to focus assessment on a college-wide outcome or on specific outcomes critical to a program (e.g. gatekeeper courses). After identifying departmental assessment needs, faculty will then choose which outcome(s) they will assess during the fall semester. The goal here, of course, is to complete assessments that will ultimately improve instruction and facilitate student learning.

In particular, Individual faculty or staff at the college can select whether to:

- Assess one or more outcomes from a course or activity that supports the selected GE or college-wide theme for that year; or

- Assess one or more outcomes from a course or activity relevant to the identified critical program issue; or
- Assess one or more outcomes from any other course or activity chosen by faculty or staff member (for reasons such as: wanting to assess a new teaching methodology, having a special concern about a specific student outcome or course, teaching classes not related to the critical program or college wide them for the year, or needing to meet the requirements of outside accreditation for vocational programs).

3. Faculty and staff will complete a **brief** web-based assessment form at the end of fall semester that reports the results of their outcomes assessment. We envision an easy process requiring the faculty to select the options that reflect their assessment. This data will be helpful in affirming the strengths of the methods used and can be used for dialogue at the departmental level about ways to strengthen and enhance student success.

This brief reporting form will allow the faculty or staff member to

- identify the general assessment strategies used,
- state the practices affirmed by the assessment, and
- indicate changes that will be made in response to what was learned.

Reports for college wide outcomes will also include an overall assessment of students' strengths and weaknesses with respect to the outcomes.

4. Time for departmental dialogue about what was learned from the fall assessments will be provided during spring convocation. Again, a brief reporting form will be utilized to document this assessment evaluation and dialog process. Aggregated assessment data will be disseminated by the Research Office to the campus community each year. Relevant aggregated program level assessment data will be made available to programs during the program review process.

5. The committee is also recommending a Phase I and Phase II implementation of the assessment plan. Phase I will be an initial trial and evaluation period and will commence during the 2008-2009 academic year. Phase II will be the full implementation of the four year cycle (with any modifications that are deemed necessary after Phase I).

Details about the implementation of these ideas are still under development. We are consulting with other groups on campus to ensure that we capture everyone's interests. The web-based forms to support this process are also currently under development and review - when they are completed, they will be posted and available for pilot testing and/or review and comment.