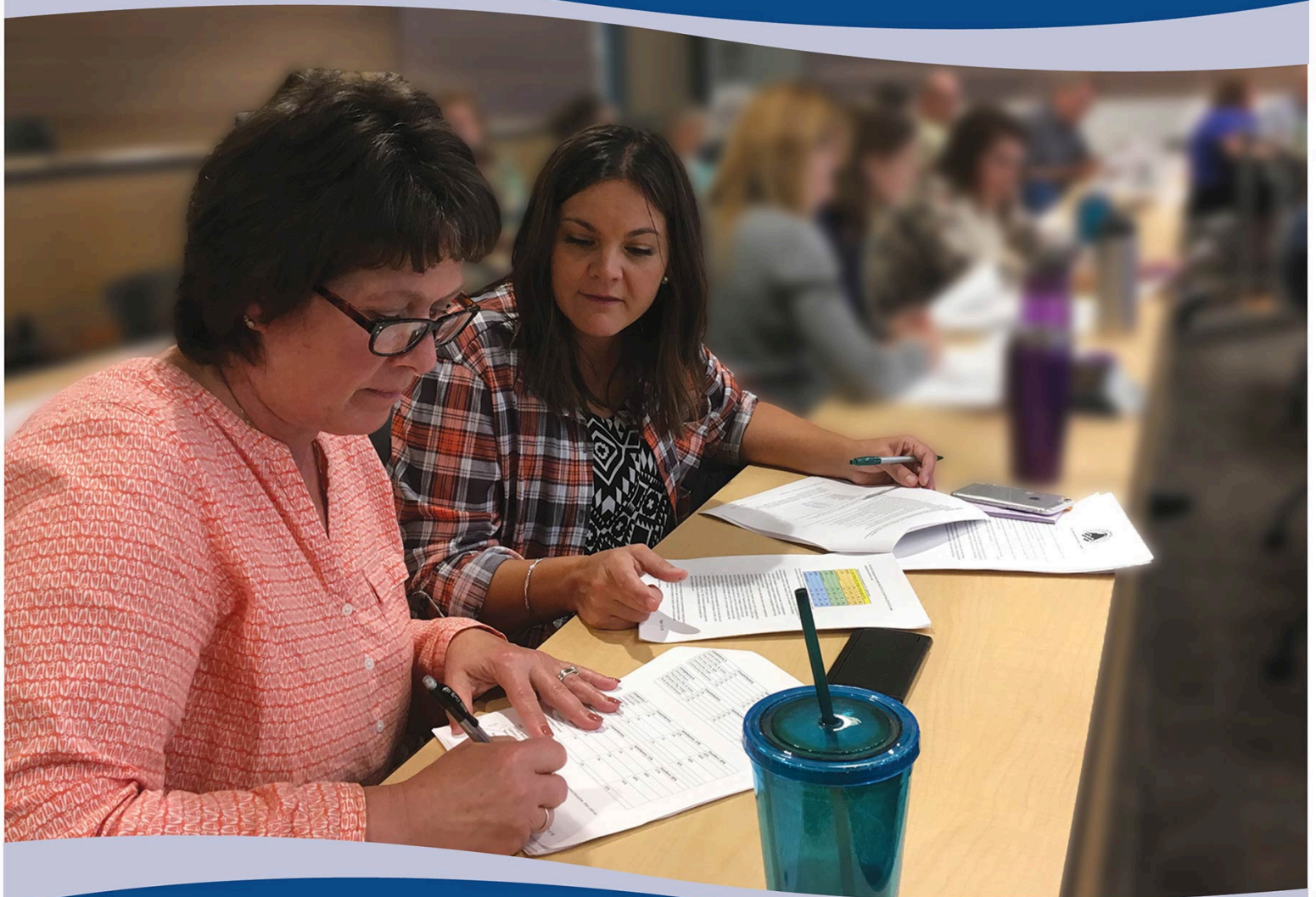LOWER COLUMBIA COLLEGE

The Smart Choice!

FACULTY ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

Where to Get Help

You are not alone.

Whether you are part of a large department or a discipline of one, assessment help is available.

If you have questions, consider contacting your dean, your Instructional Assessment Committee representative or department chair, Effectiveness and College Relations, or eLearning.

Useful Links:

- LCC Directory (services4.lowercolumbia.edu/employees)
- Instructional Assessment Committee page (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/organization/committees/instructional-assessment/)

Measuring Outcomes

There are multiple ways to measure student learning.

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), LCC's institutional accreditor, considers direct assessment of outcomes more rigorous than indirect assessment. Direct assessment is typically done by faculty subject matter experts.

Examples of direct methods of assessment:

- Rubrics
- Standardized tests and exams
- Pre- and post-test design
- Competency-based demonstration of outcomes
- Portfolios

Examples of indirect methods of assessment:

- Student self-evaluation or reflection
- Peer assessment
- Surveys
- Course grades

Considerations for measuring student learning.

Answering "no" to any of the questions below may indicate that it's time to rethink your outcomes.

- Are my outcomes meaningful?
- Are my outcomes measurable?
- Are my outcomes manageable?

If you need help with your outcomes, contact your dean, Instructional Assessment Committee representative, or Effectiveness and College Relations for assistance.

Useful Links:

- A Simple DIY Approach to Tracking and Improving Student Learning Outcomes (campustechnology.com/articles/2015/05/20/a-simple-diy-approach-to-tracking-and-improving-student-learning-outcomes.aspx)
- Direct Versus Indirect Assessment of Student Learning (www.niu.edu/citl/resources/guides/direct-versus-indirect-assessment-of-student-learning.shtml#:~:text=Indirect%20Assessment%20refers%20to%20any,of%20learning%20is%20less%20clear.)
- Measuring Student Learning (teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/assessment-evaluation/measuring-student-learning)

Grades vs. Outcomes

There are crucial distinctions between grading and student learning outcomes assessment.

The example below demonstrates the problem with asserting that all student learning outcomes will be met if all students pass (a common misconception).

In this example, Outcome "B" was not met even though all students did reasonably well in the class.

Student Number	Outcome A	Outcome B	Outcome C	Grade
1	90	45	100	78% = C
2	95	55	95	82% = B
3	100	35	100	78% = C
Outcome Total	95%	**45%**	98%	N/A

If faculty document outcomes achievement in addition to grades, especially if the two are directly linked through a rubric, it is possible to use one assessment process to accomplish both objectives.

Developing Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes should be:

- Meaningful
- Manageable
- Measurable

Kick-start your effort by finishing the following sentence:

By the end of this course (or program), students will be able to...

Use action words in crafting your response, such as:

- Produce
- Design
- Assemble
- Investigate
- Compare
- Contrast
- Demonstrate
- Solve
- Classify
- Identify
- Recognize
- Report

Pro tip: avoid action words that are more difficult to measure, such as "understand" or "appreciate."

Useful Links:

- Vanderbilt University's page on Bloom's Taxonomy (cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/)
- IUPUI's page on Assessment of Student Learning (ctl.iupui.edu/Resources/Assessing-Student-Learning)

About Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes are the knowledge, skills, and abilities a student should be expected to achieve as the result of a specific educational experience, such as a course or program.

The most commonly used resource for developing educational outcomes is Bloom's Taxonomy. Originally produced in 1956, it was updated in 2001. Perusing the information can be very helpful for faculty looking to create or revise learning outcomes for their courses or programs.

The Degree Requirements (lowercolumbia.edu/publications/catalog/programs) listed in LCC's Academic Catalog are a rich source of learning outcomes for the respective degree or certificate. Exploring planners beyond your own can be a valuable exercise, offering fresh perspectives and inspiring new ideas.

Another potential resource for LCC faculty developing student learning outcomes is the rubrics developed for each Global Skill: Communication, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, and Quantitative Literacy. The current Global Skills rubrics are available on the Global Skills webpage (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment/global-skills) .

Useful Links:

- Vanderbilt University's page on Bloom's Taxonomy (cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/)
- LCC Degree Requirements (lowercolumbia.edu/publications/catalog/programs)
- Global Skills webpage (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment/global-skills)

Institutional Accreditation

Accreditation is a validation process in which colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher learning are evaluated against a set of pre-defined standards.

LCC is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), one of the institutional accrediting bodies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

Institutional accreditation requires assessment of student learning outcomes, including "global" skills. Faculty play a crucial role in accreditation.

Useful Links:

- LCC accreditation webpage (lowercolumbia.edu/accreditation)
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) website (nwccu.org/)

Definition of Terms

Here are the key assessment terms used at LCC.

Curriculum and Program Review

A standardized process and template are used by all faculty to assess student learning outcomes.

Global Skills

Four "general" outcomes to apply to all disciplines and programs, as defined by LCC faculty: Communication, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Literacy, and Teamwork.

Transfer and workforce processes use different assessment methods.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Performance metrics used by LCC to measure institutional effectiveness.

Mission Areas

Five categories representing different aspects of college operations:

- Workforce and Economic Development
- Academic Transfer
- Preparation for College Level Studies
- Student Access, Support and Completion
- Institutional Excellence and Community Enrichment

Each mission area has different performance metrics and a separate monitoring team.

Monitoring Reports

Each mission area has a separate annual report to present and analyze data.

Monitoring Report Review Teams

Each mission area has a separate review team of faculty, staff, students, board, and community members. Teams analyze data and participate in planning for the college.

Program

A specific LCC credential or an academic discipline (AA-DTA focus areas).

Rubric

A guide listing specific criteria for grading or scoring academic papers, projects, or tests.

Student Learning Outcomes

The knowledge, skills, and abilities that a student should achieve within a defined educational experience, such as a course or program.

Useful Links:

- Learning Outcomes Assessment (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment)
- Global Skills (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment/global-skills)
- Strategic Plan (lowercolumbia.edu/strategic-plan)

Global Skills Assessment

Like Curriculum and Program Review, Global Skills assessment is an accreditation requirement.

Who is responsible for assessing Global Skills?

All full-time faculty participate in Global Skills Assessment.

- Professional/technical faculty assess their own students and submit average scores through an online form.
- Academic transfer faculty provide artifacts for the summer assessment institute. Faculty are invited to apply to participate in the summer assessment institute every spring quarter. It's a competitive application process.

What is assessed?

Faculty at LCC have defined four Global Skills: Communication, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Literacy, and Teamwork. Each has an associated rubric. Rubrics and reports are available on the Global Skills webpage (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment/global-skills) .

When does the work happen?

One Global Skills is assessed yearly, so a cycle takes four years. In addition to the summer assessment institute, time is set aside on each quarterly assessment day to address Global Skills. See the Master Instructional Assessment Timeline (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment/assessment-schedule) .

Where is information about Global Skills located?

Global Skills rubrics and reports are available on LCC's internal Global Skills (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment/global-skills) webpage. There is also a public-facing page (lowercolumbia.edu/disclosure/global-skills) intended for students.

Global Skills posters are located in nearly every classroom and lab on campus.

Useful Links:

- Global Skills (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment/global-skills) (internal webpage)
- Global Skills (lowercolumbia.edu/disclosure/global-skills) (public-facing webpage)

- Master Instructional Assessment Timeline (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment/assessment-schedule)

Curriculum & Program Review Template Defined

All full-time faculty are required to participate in the Curriculum and Program Review process using the approved template.

Section A - Enrollment, Course Success and Equity

This section asks you to review data dashboards to identify potential equity gaps in your courses and programs and develop action plans to reduce them.

Section B - Environment

This section focuses on the external environment and next steps for our graduates (the workforce, transfer institutions, etc.)

Section C - Curriculum

This section requires documentation of curriculum changes and should align with actions taken through the Curriculum Committee.

Section D - Outcomes and Equity

This section entails defining and measuring student learning outcomes and will likely take more time to complete than other sections.

Outcomes should align with the relevant degree requirements pages (lowercolumbia.edu/publications/catalog/programs) in the LCC Academic Catalog.

Section E - Actions Plans

This section documents actions taken after your review and is often referred to as "closing the loop."

Section F - Peer Sharing and Administrative Review

This section involves peer sharing and feedback from your dean and vice president. Faculty have an opportunity to respond to any feedback they receive.

Useful links:

- Curriculum and Program Review Template (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment)
- LCC Degree Requirements (lowercolumbia.edu/publications/catalog/programs)
- Learning Outcomes Assessment webpage (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment) -

Curriculum & Program Review Basics

All full-time faculty should be familiar with the basic Curriculum and Program Review requirements.

Who is responsible for Curriculum & Program Review?

All full-time faculty participate. The faculty-led Instructional Assessment Committee oversees the process, with logistical and administrative support from Effectiveness & College Relations. It applies to all degree/certificate programs and academic disciplines.

Faculty are responsible for determining learning outcomes and assessment methods for their courses and programs. Curriculum and Program Review work must address outcomes identified in the Degree Requirements (lowercolumbia.edu/publications/catalog/programs) section of the LCC Catalog.

What is Curriculum & Program Review?

Everyone uses a template developed by the Instructional Assessment Committee. Taken together, the questions provide a framework for faculty to review and improve their program and/or discipline regularly.

The most important aspects of the process are ensuring that faculty:

1. Have defined meaningful and measurable student learning outcomes for their program or discipline.
2. Have a meaningful and sustainable method for collecting data on student outcomes attainment that is distinct from student grading.
3. Are engaged in meaningful and productive data analysis to make ongoing improvements to the curriculum.

When is the work supposed to take place?

Faculty are expected to work on Curriculum and Program Review during designated instructional assessment days (indicated on the Instructional Calendar (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/calendars)). A complete cycle takes two years. The Master Instructional Assessment Timeline (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment/assessment-schedule) indicates which report section must be completed each quarter.

All faculty work on the same questions using a Google form on designated assessment days. The link to the Google form is typically provided in the agenda for the day.

Where are the reports located?

Reports are stored in a shared Google folder called "Curriculum & Program Review." All full-time faculty and instructional administrators have access to the folder. Contact Effectiveness & College Relations if you need access or assistance.

Useful links:

- Master Instructional Assessment Timeline (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment/assessment-schedule)
- Instructional Calendar (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/calendars)
- LCC Degree Requirements (lowercolumbia.edu/publications/catalog/programs)

About Instructional Assessment

LCC faculty are primarily responsible for assessing student learning outcomes.

This is important for compliance reasons (see more about compliance under "institutional accreditation (lowercolumbia.edu/publications/faculty-assessment-handbook/institutional-accreditation) " in this handbook) and because teaching and learning are what we do.

We have a collective responsibility to ensure that students receive a quality education, including the attainment of learning outcomes as defined by faculty.

There are three avenues of assessment at LCC:

Curriculum & Program Review

Curriculum and Program Review (C&PR) involves assessing student learning outcomes and improving courses and programs based on those assessments. Faculty have primary responsibility for C&PR.

Global Skills Assessment

Assessment of Global Skills, carried out through an annual Summer Assessment Institute for academic transfer programs and through program-specific assessment for professional/technical programs, examines communication, critical thinking, quantitative literacy, and teamwork college-wide. Faculty have primary responsibility for Global Skills.

KPI Monitoring

KPI stands for "Key Performance Indicator." The Board of Trustees sets LCC's KPIs. Monitoring Report Review Teams monitor our progress. Five Monitoring Report Review Teams of faculty, staff, students, board, and community members assist with annual data analysis/monitoring and planning. The administration has primary responsibility for KPIs.

Useful Links:

- Learning Outcomes Assessment (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment)
- Global Skills (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment/global-skills)
- The Strategic Plan (lowercolumbia.edu/strategic-plan)

About this Handbook

This handbook was designed for faculty and others with primary responsibility for assessing student learning.

The handbook includes:

- Basic information about the three pillars of assessment at LCC: Curriculum and Program Review, Global Skills Assessment, and Key Performance Indicator Monitoring.
- Definition of assessment (and related) terms, as they are used at LCC.
- General information about institutional accreditation for higher education institutions in the Northwest region of the United States.
- Basic information about student learning outcomes, including how to develop outcomes and use a single rubric to both grade and assess student learning outcomes.

The most efficient way to use this handbook is to view it online (lowercolumbia.edu/publications/faculty-assessment-handbook) , but it can also be printed as a PDF for quick and easy reference.

- To print as a PDF, select either "View PDF" or "Download PDF" from the "Print Friendly" tab on the right-hand side of your screen.

Useful Links:

- Learning Outcomes Assessment (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/faculty-tools/assessment)
- Instructional Assessment Committee (IAC) (internal.lowercolumbia.edu/organization/committees/instructional-assessment)

Table of Contents

Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Information

Lower Columbia College does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment. Lower Columbia College provides equal opportunity in education and employment and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, age, perceived or actual physical or mental disability, pregnancy, genetic information, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, creed, religion, veteran or military status, or use of a trained guide dog or service animal as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act and ADA Amendment Act, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act and Washington State's Law Against Discrimination, Chapter 49.60 RCW and their implementing regulations. All inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX, access, equal opportunity and/or grievance procedures should be directed to Vice President of Foundation, HR & Legal Affairs, 1600 Maple Street, PO Box 3010, Longview, WA 98632, title9@lowercolumbia.edu, Phone number, (360) 442-2120, Phone number/TTY (800) 833-6388. The notice of nondiscrimination is located at https://lowercolumbia.edu/disclosure/non-discrimination/.

Document Index