Mission-Based Assessment

During 2007-2008, faculty and staff from across the College worked collaboratively to identify and explore key mission-based assessment topics and developed actions steps to improve student learning outcomes and institutional performance related to:

- Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Developmental Education (Dev Ed)
- General Education (Gen Ed)
- Student Support Services
- Transfer Education
- Workforce/Community Development and Continuing Education.

The mission-based assessment process was once again a great example of faculty and staff from different locations working together.

CTE Assessment

The Career and Technical Education Assessment Committee considered the following questions:

- What factors affect retention in CTE programs?
- How can we best improve retention in CTE programs?

To address these issues, the Committee has proposed the following:

- Pilot the use of faculty to aid in the term-to-term retention of CTE students.
- Because students who commit to a program major are more likely to be retained and complete their educational goal, work with Advising and CTE departments to stress the importance of the accurate selection of a CTE program major.

Dev Ed Assessment

The Developmental Education Assessment Committee asked, “How do Introduction to College Reading (RDG: 030) skills transfer to future content-area courses?”

Based on its research, the committee has recommended the following:

- Members of the committee will meet with the departments used in this study during Service Week in August 2008 to report the results of this study.
- The Reading Departments may want to revisit paired reading/content area courses, especially to ensure that advisers and counselors are on board to encourage students to sign up for paired classes.
- RDG 030 “graduates” might benefit from “refreshers” to which other students could be “invited.”
Based on the discussion with content area faculty, establishment of a college-wide reading across the curricula program and/or enrichment workshop series to enable faculty across the disciplines to promote and use reading and learning strategies for student success may be in order.

Gen Ed Assessment

The committee focused on the General Education Skill Area of Communicating to

- learn more about students’ self-reported perceptions of their experiences in speaking and writing intensive classes.
- learn more about faculty’s self-reported information about speaking and writing intensive classes.

As a result of the information gathered from students and instructors, the committee and Staff Development Coordinators scheduled events during August 2008 Service Week at which results of the Spring 2008 student and faculty surveys were reported and additional interpretations of the data and development of strategies to improve speaking and writing intensive courses were considered.

Student Support Services Assessment

This committee assessed the effectiveness of the new tuition payment plan which was implemented fall 2007.

The committee made the following suggestions in response to student input:

- Literature students receive about the Payment Plan should stress that it is the student’s responsibility to check their accounts and payment dates on the web.
- An FAQ should be developed.
- The ability to remove MO-PIRG electronically should be investigated.
- The ability to change method of payment should be considered.

In addition, although the staff evaluation results showed that they were very pleased with the process, it yielded the following suggestions:

- More staff training needs to be conducted.
- More student training needs to be conducted.

Transfer Education Assessment

This year, the committee focused on the degree to which students are using advisors, counselors, and teachers to help them make the transition from STLCC to a four-year institution.

The committee proposed the following:

- The idea was put forward that the idea of using advising, and thus increasing the chance of eventual transfer, has to be a part of every first time, degree seeking student’s orientation.
- The possibility of requiring each first time, degree seeking student to see an advisor either in their first semester, or maybe twice in the first year was suggested.
- Seeing an advisor as a component of COL020 was suggested, and it was stated that it already is a part of that curriculum.
• Perhaps the college could require orientation ceremony or speech that all first time, degree seeking students must attend. It is the chair’s understanding that this is part of the college orientation seminars conducted at the beginning of each semester by student life, but it is not a requirement at this time.
• Perhaps there could be a mentoring program with successfully transferred UMSL students helping or advising new community college students.

Workforce / Community Development and Continuing Education Assessment

Using Donald Kirkpatrick’s four-level training evaluation model, this committee examined the degree of student engagement in CE and WCD seminars to gain a better understanding of the impact this engagement has on learning outcomes.

Upon interpreting its findings, it decided that

• The survey instruments will be refined in order to provide additional information about specific facilitator/instructor behaviors that trigger positive responses from students.
• The survey instruments will continue to be used with all noncredit courses and seminars.
• Data collected by these surveys will be used to enhance program content and delivery on an ongoing basis. For example:
• Survey data will be shared with CE and CBIL instructors and used as the focal point of discussions and planning on ways to improve instructional quality and program impact.
• This data will also be used to guide the development of instructor selection and training processes used by both CE and WCD.

Finally, the committee intends to increase efforts to develop instructional strategies which allow WCD/Continuing Education coursework to be applied toward credit degree/certificate programs.

STLCC Assessment Support Committees

The Divisions and Departments Assessment Committee examines the College’s assessment model to ensure that the data necessary to assess student learning is accessible. In addition, the committee coordinates the collection of annual assessment plans from each division.

Divisions and Departments Results

In addition to the College-wide mission-based assessment work, each academic division was charged with identifying and exploring key student learning outcomes. As part of this effort, faculty and staff at all locations explored the following topics:

• The relationship between student engagement and program retention and completion.
• Upon graduation, the successful completion of key student learning outcomes related to selected workforce skills.
• The degree to which selected general education courses contribute to key student learning outcomes in critical thinking, reading, speaking, and writing.
• The degree to which students successfully transfer skills learned in RDG030 to their college-level coursework.
• Exploration of student engagement and related student learning outcomes for students involved in TRIO efforts.
• Exploration of student engagement for first-time college students enrolled in key Allied Health courses and programs.
• The degree to which students acquire key skills/knowledge related to valuing and global education competencies.
• Examination of student engagement in selected business, accounting and information systems courses with special attention directed toward the impact of writing and service learning.
• Examination of how faculty can better identify strengths and weaknesses in writing for ESL students so that such students are better prepared for ENG101.
• The degree to which students are successfully completing courses objectives related to COM101.
• Exploration and examination of student/faculty interaction in mathematics courses taught in math lab setting.
• Using Bloom’s Taxonomy, assessment of the acquisition and use of higher order thinking skills in a variety of general education courses.
• Exploration of the extent to which adjunct faculty are aware of and using Classroom Assessment Techniques to improve instruction and student learning outcomes.
• Evaluation of student satisfaction with newly designed student support services.

As is obvious from the abundance and variety of innovative projects listed above, STLCC is committed to assessment and consequently to improving instruction and the institution.