Moving Toward AQIP: STLCC Service Week Workshop on Survey Results

On January 13, 2010, faculty, staff, and administrators were asked to consider the results of a recent survey on the primary principle driving AQIP – continuous improvement. At this Service Week session, entitled AQIP’s Principles of High Performance Organizations: Exploring St. Louis Community College’s Perceptions, John Cosgrove, Director of Institutional Research & Planning, presented the results of the fall survey to which approximately 300 employees responded.

Following Cosgrove’s scan of the results, participants broke into groups to analyze and discuss four bits of data, provided here as Slides 27 – 30.

STLCC uses assessment results to improve student learning outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Admin</th>
<th>Fac</th>
<th>Prof</th>
<th>OT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STLCC has effective processes for building internal collaboration among the various locations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Admin</th>
<th>Fac</th>
<th>Prof</th>
<th>OT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STLCC has effective processes for building internal collaboration across different departments and units at my location.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Admin</th>
<th>Fac</th>
<th>Prof</th>
<th>OT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STLCC has effective processes for making sure that leaders communicate and share decisions and strategies throughout the organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Admin</th>
<th>Fac</th>
<th>Prof</th>
<th>OT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In these groups, participants were asked to consider the following questions:

1. Did you find the results surprising?
2. How would you explain the different perceptions of the employee groups?
3. What would you recommend to make improvements in these areas?

Following are the reports from each group. As you can see, most lean more heavily toward solutions rather than explanations.

**Group 1**

1. Involvement of high-end leadership is imperative.
2. Campus-wide training in AQIP-related procedures is necessary.
3. Hold a retreat on/regarding AQIP.
4. Use Service Week to focus attention on AQIP.
5. Develop a metric that would gauge levels of collaboration.
6. Prioritize / categorize institutional communication. Go face-to-face first; e-mail is least useful / effective.
7. Use clickers at district-wide events to gather % on faculty/staff/administrator views.

**Group 2**

- **Did you find the results surprising?**
  1. News related to student learning outcomes must/should be shared at dept / chairs’ meetings.
  2. Reports on meetings should be more prominent.

- **How would you explain the different perceptions of the employee groups?**
  1. Report more action, forward progress.
  2. Identify existing processes in which collaboration is working.

- **What would you recommend to make improvements in these areas?**
  1. Align the disciplines to foster more collaboration.
  2. Allow time across the disciplines during Service Weeks.
  3. Manage by walking around.

**Group 3**

1. Results equate with understanding only if tied together with examples.
2. Describe processes in departments/units that are effective.
3. Various locations have various perceptions as well as various strengths.
4. Communicate action / results.

For the complete survey and results, go to

Pell Institute Report on Transfer Students

*Bridging the Gaps to Success: Promising Practices for Promoting Transfer Among Low-Income and First-Generation Students* ([http://www.pellinstitute.org/pdf/COE_Pell_Report_layout_3.pdf](http://www.pellinstitute.org/pdf/COE_Pell_Report_layout_3.pdf)) offers a framework for the development and implementation of a strategic plan of action aimed at increasing transfer rates, particularly for low-income and first-generation college students. According to this study, improving transfer rates requires a strong, culturally-sensitive leadership committed to involving all segments of the campus community – including faculty, administrators, and staff. In addition, an in-depth, data-driven discussion and analysis of current practices, along with the development of a multifaceted plan of action aimed at developing a student-centered transfer culture will together improve transfer rates.

In their conclusion to the study, the authors emphasize that “all these different strategies are marked by a fundamental belief in and commitment to students, who are at the heart of what each campus does. All through the study we have emphasized their student-centered cultures, developed and maintained by a culturally sensitive leadership, faculty and staff. Additionally, they are committed to engaging, retaining, graduating, and transferring students.”

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment Paper

Trudy Banta, the heart and soul of the nation’s leading assessment conference, has published a new paper on authentic assessment entitled *Three Promising Alternatives For Assessing College Students' Knowledge And Skills* ([http://learningoutcomesassessment.org/documents/AlternativesforAssessment.pdf](http://learningoutcomesassessment.org/documents/AlternativesforAssessment.pdf)). “Authentic assessments” typically ask students to generate rather than choose a response to demonstrate what they know and can do. In this paper, Banta and other assessment experts describe the development of several promising authentic assessment approaches, such as portfolios, common analytic rubrics, and online assessment communities, can more effectively link assessment practices to pedagogy. In addition to discussing the strengths and limitations of each approach, the paper offers concrete examples of how these authentic approaches are being used to guide institutional improvement, respond to accountability questions, and involve more faculty, staff, and students in meaningful appraisals of learning outcomes.

Educators and policy makers in postsecondary education are interested in assessment processes that improve student learning, and at the same time provide comparable data for the purpose of demonstrating accountability. This paper discusses three promising alternatives that afford authentic, information-rich, meaningful assessments that are essential for improving student learning, and at the same time provide reportable data for comparisons.

Accreditation 2.0

In her January 18, 2010 article in *Inside Higher Education* ([http://www.insidehighered.com/views/2010/01/18/eaton](http://www.insidehighered.com/views/2010/01/18/eaton)), Judith Eaton analyzes three current and simultaneous “conversations” that focus on accreditation and accountability, which “taken together provide the foundation for the future and next iteration” of accreditation.

According to Eaton, “the first major conversation is led by the academic and accreditation communities themselves.” This discussion frequently includes talk about common expectations of general education across all institutions as well as the need to more fully address transparency. This conversation takes place at meetings of higher education associations and accrediting organizations and has been underway since the 1980s, when the assessment movement began.
The second conversation is led by critics of accreditation who question its effectiveness in addressing accountability. These critics often argue that “conflicts of interest are inherent in accreditation as a result of peer review and the current funding and governance of the enterprise.” The most recent version of this conversation was triggered by the Spellings Commission and persists today.

The third conversation is led by federal officials who focus on the gatekeeping role of accreditation. “Attention here is on expanding use of the gatekeeping role of accreditation – to enforce expanding accountability expectations at the federal level.”

Of course, STLCC Assessment must eavesdrop on each of these conversations, for each will have some bearing on the ways assessment is viewed and used at the college.

In Sight & On Site, On Campus and Off

The Joy and Responsibility of Teaching Well
Thursday, March 25
2:30 – 4:00 pm
3rd Floor, Instructional Resources Building, Florissant Valley Campus

The featured presenter, Dee Fink, author of Creating Significant Learning Experiences (Jossey-Bass 2003), poses a fundamental question for all teachers: "How can I create courses that will provide significant learning experiences for my students?" In the process of addressing this question, he urges teachers to shift from a content-centered approach to a learning-centered approach that asks "What kinds of learning will be significant for students, and how can I create a course that will result in that kind of learning?"

Attendance for the afternoon session is open to all faculty across the district.

Adjunct Faculty Certificate Program: “Assessment: How to Know If Your Students ‘Get It’”
Saturday, March 13,
9-11 am
Wildwood Multipurpose Room

This session on classroom-based assessment techniques will be facilitated by Anne Wessely and Kim Granger. All STLCC adjuncts are welcome and may register by calling Continuing Education at 314-984-7777. Please refer to STAD 711 300, CRN 11320.

Campus Assessment Sessions
As we move past the mid-year point of the 2009-2010 academic year, please keep division assessment on your agenda. The 2009-2010 Division Assessment reports are due to Vice-Chancellor Dare on Friday, April 16, 2010. As in previous years, reports should follow the College’s I DID (Inquire, Discover, Interpret, and Develop) Assessment format. The work related to division assessment over the past few years has been outstanding and a key component of the College’s assessment success.
These reports will be featured in Campus Assessment sessions held at each campus throughout the month of April. The purpose of these sessions is that each campus can share and highlight division/department assessment efforts undertaken during the 2009-2010 academic year. Last year the sessions ran approximately 90 to 120 minutes. Campus vice-presidents and deans will orchestrate these sessions at each campus.

Also, please remember to mark your calendars for the College’s annual Assessment Luncheon. The 2010 Assessment Luncheon is set for Friday, April 30th on the Meramec campus. During this Assessment session, each campus will have the opportunity to highlight division assessments results from 2009-2010. In addition, the Assessment Council will engage participants in the valuable and necessary work required to assessment some aspect of STLCC’s assessment program.

**Service Week Saturday: Adjunct Faculty Event**

Breakout Sessions at the recent Service Week Saturday at Meramec offered an assessment angle for adjuncts to consider. For example, the following sessions included at least a pinch of assessment in their recipes for success:

- The Adjunct’s Guide For Retaining Our Students (Karla Gable, Enrollment Management & Communications)
- Improved Student Outcomes In Less Than an Hour – Guaranteed (Cindy Clausen, Meramec Academic Center)
- Bloom’s Taxonomy in Practice (Colin E. Suchland, Social Science)
- Using Rubrics to Improve and Evaluate Learning Outcomes (Larry McDoniel, English & STLCC Assessment)

**STLCC Assessment Council Meeting Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date / Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri, Jan 29</td>
<td>Forest Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 – 4</td>
<td>L 007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri, Feb 19</td>
<td>Florissant Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 – 4</td>
<td>TC 110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri, Mar 12</td>
<td>Wildwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 – 4</td>
<td>Multipurpose Rm 102 A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fri, April 30</strong></td>
<td>Meramec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12 pm – 3 pm</strong></td>
<td><strong>Student Center 200 - 201</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Assessment of Assessment)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri, May 7</td>
<td>Forest Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 – 4</td>
<td>L 007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Save the Date!!!”

Following is a listing of important events relative to assessment and AQIP scheduled for Spring 2010. Please include these in your “must do” calendars and plans for this academic year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>April, 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campus / Division Assessment Reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus VPs &amp; Deans  will determine Times and Locations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fri, April 30</th>
<th>Meramec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 pm – 3 pm</td>
<td>Student Center 200 - 201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Assessment of Assessment)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Announcing ...

AAC & U Gen Ed and Assessment: Maintaining Momentum, Achieving New Priorities
Network for Academic Renewal Conference
February 18-20, 2010
Seattle, Washington
http://www.aacu.org/meetings/generaleducation/index.cfm

The conference will draw on AAC&U's long-standing projects and publications on general education reform including work to bring diversity, global, and civic learning into general education and models for advancing scientific and quantitative literacy through real-world curricula and problem-based pedagogies.

10th Annual Texas A&M University Assessment Conference
February 21-23, 2010
Hilton Conference Center
College Station, Texas
http://assessment.tamu.edu/conference/index.html

“Recognizing change as a powerful vehicle for achieving success is an important part of this year’s conference theme. Our assessment community is interested not only in what is being done, but what changes are being made to that assessment process, what are the long term implications and plans, what are the next steps?”

League for Innovation Innovations 2010
March 28-31, 2010
Baltimore, Maryland
http://www.league.org/i2010/
Innovations 2010 is the premier event for professionals dedicated to improving organizational teaching and learning, and discovering new approaches for enhancing the community college experience. The conference provides a tremendous forum for collaboration among academic experts and leading community college professionals, while granting participants exclusive access to the most inventive and thought-provoking programs from around the world.

Conference on Quality in Higher Education  
115th Annual Meeting of NCA / The Higher Learning Commission  
The Higher Learning Commission  
Chicago, IL 60602  
April 9 -13, 2010  
http://www.ncahlc.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=166&Itemid=155

Don’t miss this chance to participate in one of the largest and most diverse higher education conferences of the year! The Higher Learning Commission seeks innovative, engaging proposals on a variety of topics for its 2010 Annual Meeting program.

NASPA Assessment & Retention Conference  
(National Association of Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education)  
Baltimore, Maryland  
June 10 - 12, 2010  
http://www.naspa.org/programs/arc/default.cfm

The NASPA Assessment & Retention Conference has been designed to address emerging issues in assessment and retention, as well as to provide a forum for experienced assessment professionals to advance their skills by discussing assessment with practitioners and policy-makers.

Important STLCC Assessment Links

- Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment Toolbox  
  http://collegeweb.stlcc.edu/assessment/
- Assessment Resources  
  http://www.stlcc.edu/Faculty_and_Staff_Resources/Assessment/Assessment_Resources.html
- Assessment Public Site  
  http://www.stlcc.edu/Faculty_and_Staff_Resources/Assessment/