

Action Project 15

Title: Assessing Students' Achievement of Core Abilities

Category: Category 1: Helping Students Learn

Submitted: 3/1/2017

Timeline: January 2017-August 2017

Planned project kickoff date: 1/19/2017

Action completion date: 9/1/2017

Briefly describe the project in less than 100 words. Be sure to identify the key organizational areas (departments, programs, divisions, units, etc.) and key organizational processes that this action project will affect, change, and/or improve.

Faculty, deans, the Curriculum and Assessment Committee, and the Faculty Development Committee will extend the current efforts to assess student learning of three of BTC's seven Core Abilities (the core abilities being BTC's common or shared student learning outcomes). This will involve processes related to assessment, documentation of results and changes in the Worldwide Instructional Design System (WIDS), faculty development in-service planning and sessions, program review, and curriculum review.

Describe your institution's reasons for initiating this action project now and how long it should take to complete it. Why are this project and its goals high among your institution's current priorities? Also, explain how this project relates to any strategic initiatives or challenges described in the institution's recent or soon-to-be submitted Systems Portfolio.

This Action Project is a natural extension of the last Action Project related to Helping Students Learn, which focused on course-level assessment. During the In-Service in May 2016, the faculty extended their focus on assessing student learning of the College's Core Abilities. The faculty were asked to identify where in the curriculum (or co-curricular) students are given opportunities to develop the following three Core Abilities: Solve Problems Efficiently, Demonstrate Professional Work Behavior, and Work Effectively in Teams. Of the College's 7 Core Abilities, these three were the ones faculty felt were most likely developed in nearly all courses, and they determined this would be a good starting point for Core Abilities assessment. Thus, during the May 2016 In-Service, faculty had an opportunity to work within their own program courses to develop a plan for assessing one (or more) of these three core abilities, using newly revised rubrics. The rubrics for these core abilities were created by faculty and

academic administration through the Curriculum and Assessment committee during the 2015-2016 academic year. During the August 2016 and January 2017 in-service days, faculty were again given time to continue their work on Outcome Assessment Plans at the course level as well as for the college-wide Core Ability project. Faculty worked in the curriculum data warehouse (WIDS) to complete the data analysis and evaluation of their plans from course success rates that began in August 2014 (Gatekeeper Course identification). Faculty considered revising or changing curriculum or instruction if needed (based on results), and they reviewed current assessment plans or created new plans for the academic year for course level and/or College Wide Core Abilities assessment. This project is timely because BTC recently revised a number of processes to further integrate the Core Abilities into co-curricular opportunities, such as internships. This change was due, in part, to the Systems Appraisal feedback which indicated "BTC has an opportunity to describe specifically how student organizations and student activities align with the learning outcomes; however, BTC offers co-curricular educational leadership, employability, etiquette lunches, professional conferences, job search workshops, and mock interview experiences which align with program outcomes and the College-wide core abilities." A number of these co-curricular experiences are embedded within programs, which provides faculty an opportunity to strengthen the connection between the learning that occurs within the course and in related co-curricular activities. This next phase of gathering and analyzing data on core abilities assessment, with subsequent planned changes for improvement, should be completed with the August 2017 in-service. (Although as an iterative process, the assessment of core abilities will continue).

List the project goals, milestones, and deliverables along with corresponding metrics, due dates, and other measures for assessing the progress toward each goal. Be sure to include when you anticipate submitting the project for formal reviews.

All programs will submit the results of their Core Abilities Assessment at the end of the spring semester, 2017. Results will be tabulated and the resulting metrics will be shared with all faculty and academic staff during the August 2017 in service. During the August 2017 in-service, an action plan will be developed that focuses on enhancing student achievement of core abilities through curricular and co-curricular programming. These plans will be documented in WIDS. We anticipate submitting the project for formal review during the June 30-September 30 review cycle.

Describe how various members of the learning community will participate in this action project. Show the breadth of involvement by individuals and groups over the project's duration.

All full-time faculty will have assessed and documented results for 1-3 of the Core Abilities. With support from deans and the Manager, Teaching Support Services, this information will be documented in our curriculum information system (WIDS). This work is supported by deans, directors, Student Services staff, and the faculty and academic staff who are part of the Curriculum and Assessment Committee. The overview, vision and support for this project is

also provided and sustained by the Vice President of Learning and was presented to college's District board in fall of 2017, where they indicated their support for these efforts.

Describe how the institution will monitor project progress/success during, and at the completion of this project. Be sure to specifically state the measures that will be evaluated and when.

Outcome Assessment Plans are monitored specifically by the Curriculum and Assessment Manager with the support of faculty on the Curriculum and Assessment Committee and under the guidance of the Vice President of Learning. The college has a regular curriculum review cycle that each program goes through every five semesters and the Curriculum and Assessment Manager supplies deans and directors with an update on progress on the Outcome Assessment Plan development and analysis a minimum of three times per year. This monitoring ensures academic leaders can support work on this initiative during in-service as well as during division meeting and work times. A review of each program's assessment plans and results for core abilities will be conducted following the August 2017 in-service. Program tracking sheets show red (inadequate progress), yellow (work in process, but analysis needed), and green (on track) in accordance with the goals identified. For example, by August 2016, programs should have reached "Tier III" (with one or more Course/Program level assessment results and an Outcome Assessment Plan for at least one core ability).

Describe the challenges that may be encountered in successfully completing the project or for institutionalizing the learning from the project's goals.

Sustaining assessment of the core abilities while also continuing to maintain progress on assessment at the course and program level will be a challenge. This is why time is devoted to this work during each in-service day. Another challenge to be addressed is the possible revision of the 7 College Wide Core Abilities which were established and written 10 years ago. As the assessment criteria for all seven core abilities was reviewed by the Curriculum and Assessment committee in 2016, members of the committee concluded that some operational definitions of the core abilities are redundant, inaccurate, or difficult to measure. As we continue to look at fully assessing students on particular core abilities, this information and possible revision of the core abilities will need to be addressed in the near future. Finally, incorporating more core abilities assessment in co-curricular offerings will be an ongoing effort.

Provide any additional information that the institution wishes reviewers to understand regarding this Action Project.

N/A