

BISMARCK STATE COLLEGE

LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY REPORT FOR 2002-2003

ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

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Introduction:

This report explores some of the challenges and opportunities that our Assessment Committee encountered in trying to maintain the viability and validity of the course assessment element of our assessment program while at the same time orchestrating the expansions and refinements we planned for the program. Combining a clear focus on improved student learning with representation from across campus, we have been able to meet challenges and opportunities with creativity and a spirit of possibility.

Over the last several years, BSC has developed a program for the assessment of student academic achievement based on course assessment and four-point primary traits analysis scales. Faculty are familiar with the program and using it with consistency. In our job readiness programs, the concepts of assessment were a big part of the culture even before assessment efforts began on our campus, with measures like certification and licensing exams, employer surveys, and other industry-driven means of assessing student learning. The assessment program helped to systematize these results and reported the data from the various programs in a consistent format.

Our plans were to refine our course assessment and expand the assessment program, most notably in the area of broad-based assessment of general education. Along with fostering a generally positive attitude toward assessment among the faculty, we wanted to make our students more aware of our assessment program. Finally we had the ongoing challenge implicit in any assessment program: to continue to use the results to improve student learning.

Campus Development Day

Traditionally, BSC has set aside a day for employee development, a day when classes do not meet, a day during which the staff and faculty mingle socially as well as attend workshops together for increased camaraderie and professional development.

During meetings of the assessment committee in the spring of 2002, the committee decided that it would be a good idea to have assessment activities during Employee Development Day as well. At the same time as these discussions were taking place, the state mandated that a standardized Student Satisfaction Survey be given to the student body, and our stated goal was 100% completion. Talk shifted to the best way to accomplish this task. Additionally, a common and annual complaint among faculty and student services was the dearth of faculty advisor-advisee interaction; there did not seem to be any time set aside for advising activities, and many students planned their schedules alone, often making errors which postponed their graduations.

After much discussion, it was decided that Employee Development Day on Monday, October 21, would be transformed to Campus Development Day on Wednesday, October 23, a strange new hybrid phenomenon for students, faculty, and staff. The morning would be used for students to meet in a group with their advisors. It was conceived as a time for general advising information, assessment awareness, and the administration of the Student Satisfaction Survey. The afternoon would be the time when all employees would meet together off campus for social and professional activities. Furthermore, by working with the Learning Innovations Team (the Learning First Team charged with planning Employee Development Day), we arranged to have assessment be the topic of the keynote address in the afternoon, as well as one of the break-out session choices.

This transformation from Employee Development Day to Campus Development Day took massive planning. At first it was thought that logistically the plan was impossible, that there simply was not enough space on campus to gather the entire student body of over 3000 students together. We weren't even sure we had enough rooms for all of our advisors.

Lists of advisors, advisees, and classrooms were gathered and scrutinized. A walking tour of the campus verified that we had more than enough classrooms for advisors, but that the seating capacity in most rooms wouldn't accommodate all the advisees at once. Two sessions were planned, half the advisees at 9:00 a.m. and the other half at 10:15. The logistics of the advisor/advisee sessions were worked out with only a couple members of the faculty being displaced from their regular rooms. The Learning Innovations Team drew up lists of talking points to assist advisors during the advising sessions. With all this preparation, we felt like the advising sessions could work as long as we could get the students to come.

A letter for each student was placed at the front desk of the library under the names of advisors and was handed out by the library staff. Students needed to know their advisor's name or look it up on a list posted in the hallway. Two weeks ahead of Campus Development Day, students were reminded by instructors to pick up their letters and come to the advising sessions. The letters that weren't picked up were mailed to students directly. To further promote the event, posters were developed, reminding students to come and promoting assessment in general.

Some administrators were predicting a 30% turnout; some optimists were hoping for 75%. Considering there were no direct consequences for not attending and that about 20% of our students are part-time, many taking only evening classes, most people seemed well satisfied that over 50% of our students attended their advising sessions.

Campus Development Day provided several expected benefits, beyond those directly related to assessment. Not only did we feel like we had made a very good effort in complying with the survey mandate, but we also felt that the morning had helped to strengthen the advisor/advisee relationship—some students learned their advisor's name for the first time. We had advanced the cause of assessment both in the morning with the students and in the afternoon with faculty and staff. Furthermore, the promotional posters were displayed all

over campus for days ahead of the event, reinforcing assessment issues for faculty, staff, and students.

But there were also several unexpected benefits. Going to the library and being handed their letters by a real, live librarian can only serve to make students more likely to come to the library again. Also the bookstore has enjoyed increased traffic since students received their discount coupons.

Beyond that we had transformed Employee Development Day to Campus Development Day. In the evaluation surveys filled out by employees after Campus Development Day, most people agreed that half a day of development activities seemed like enough. Of course, improvements were suggested, but faculty were almost unanimous in their approval of the concept of advising sessions, and many staff members seemed to appreciate a morning to catch up on work out of the routine of a regular school day.

Explorations into Broad-based Assessment

One of the important expansions we needed in our assessment program was to develop valid, broad-based measures for assessing our students' learning in our general education curriculum. One of the things that seemed important in assessing the effectiveness of our general education curriculum was to determine how well our students are able to apply what they learn. While course assessment has many advantages, experience and anecdotal evidence of students unable to write in biology or speak in history or interpret data in sociology suggested that assessing skills in the same courses where they are taught might not be the most valid way of measuring what our students are learning. How well students performed in a composition class, for example, was not necessarily a valid indication of how well they would be able to write outside of that class. We were seeking a valid, feasible way of assessing knowledge and skills in courses outside their discipline.

Among the ideas that we explored were capstone courses and cross-disciplinary learning communities. Capstone courses seemed like a natural opportunity to gather assessment data on our students' ability to pull together and apply what they have learned; however, no capstone courses existed in our general education curriculum nor in the expectations of our students. As noted earlier, our students might be working on requirements for a certificate, a diploma, or an associate of applied science degree through our job-readiness curricula or an associate of arts or associate of science degree in our transfer curricula. General education requirements vary from four semester hours for a certificate to nine for a diploma, 15 for an AAS, and 36 for an AA or AS. Given this variety of possible profiles in our general education enrollment, implementing appropriate capstone courses did not seem feasible.

Cross-disciplinary learning communities seemed more workable, and also advantageous for reasons beyond the assessment program. These learning communities have developed in a couple of different ways on our campus. For some, we yoke two or three courses together and students enroll in some or all of the particular sections of those courses, knowing that there will be a built-in cohort of students and shared material and discussion among the courses. The courses are still separate and still maintain the common course numbering and

credits of our system, but they are linked by theme and enrollment, creating a learning community. The other form of cross-disciplinary course that has developed on our campus is a general education course for particular kinds of major, specifically a speech course for science majors.

While the assessment committee and some in the administration continue to encourage the development of these cross-disciplinary opportunities for students, they haven't yet become a significant enough part of the campus culture, with students or with faculty, to provide valid data for broad-based assessment.

Still these learning communities are worthy of mention here because they are an example of the unexpected treasures that can be unearthed when on a quest for something else. Even if we are not yet able to make use of these courses for broad-based assessment, they are a positive educational opportunity for our students and faculty alike, and their development is being encouraged and promoted.

Making Assessment a Way of Life:

Our quest for a valid method of broad-based assessment of our general education curriculum continued. Simultaneously, experience had taught us that some refining and revising of our general education objectives was needed to make them more easily assessable. We had been working with ten general education objectives for a number of years. These were developed in conjunction with a rewrite of our college's philosophy and mission statements. Most of the ten objectives had specific sub-points; some of the objectives were still ill-defined. The Assessment Committee took on the task of examining these objectives to ensure that they were all assessable and truly being assessed for our students.

This revision process turned out to be grueling, exhausting, surprising, and finally rewarding. At one stage in the process, the ten main objectives became 42 assessable sub-points. Further examination allowed for some sensible combining and eliminating. The ten main objectives remain, but for the purposes of assessment, we now have 24 assessable points or intended outcomes within those ten.

Education has to do more than teach students to write in a writing class and manipulate numbers in a math class. Education has to enable students to learn when and how to use their knowledge and skills effectively, in whatever situation they find themselves. Because of that, valid assessment programs have to do more than assess writing in a writing class and math in a math class. They have to be cross-disciplinary, they have to be systematic, and they have to be systemic.

This thinking led to the four-year plan for broad-based assessment of general education. This is a plan that combines standardized testing, program assessment, cross-discipline assessment, and many of the processes we have learned through course assessment. It sets the assessment activities up on a rotation that ensures that each of our 24 assessable points will be assessed on a periodic basis. It spreads the assessment workload out among the disciplines and faculty groups. It uses multiple measures. And finally, it has a significant element that is cross-disciplinary.

General Education Objectives and Assessable Intended Outcomes

1. Know the principles and methods of the social sciences and understand the basic social, political, and economic issues of the contemporary world
 - A. Know the principles and methods of the social sciences **(1)**
 - o Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of people, movements, institutions and/or forces that influence society
 - B. Apply the principles and methods of the social sciences to social, political, and economic issues **(2)**
 - o Analyze and evaluate sociological phenomena
 - o Develop an independent interpretation of sociological phenomena and events by adapting and applying different perspectives and methodology used in social science
2. Have knowledge, appreciation, and understanding for human cultural tradition as expressed in art, music, theater, language, literature, history, philosophy, or religion
 - A. Know human cultural tradition **(3)**
 - o Identify and discuss different individuals/movements from a list of historical and contemporary artists, philosophers, musicians, or writers
 - o Identify and discuss historical trends in at least one major world region.
 - B. Understand and appreciate human cultural tradition **(4)**
 - o Explain how historical developments have affected culture and creative expression
 - o Analyze, interpret, and critique works of art, theater, music, literature, history, religion, or philosophy, based on evidence and appropriate criteria and methodology
 - o Demonstrate an increased interest and appreciation in one of the humanity areas by seeking out experiences or opportunities to develop further understanding in that area
 - o Create and/or aesthetically appreciate works of art, literature, music, or theater
3. Know the principles and be able to apply the methods, terminology and reasoning of science **(5)**
 - o Recognize the role of science in understanding nature, society, agriculture and industry
 - o Understand and use the scientific process of question and investigation
 - o Acknowledge the developing nature of science
 - o Understand the terminology of science and recognize the dynamic nature of living languages
4. Understand and apply mathematical principles and be able to communicate quantitative information effectively
 - A. Understand and apply mathematical principles **(6)**
 - o Demonstrate an understanding of the function concept by several means (verbally, graphically, numerically, and/or symbolically)
 - o Use abstract concepts and symbols to solve (apply) equations and inequalities
 - o Express problems in mathematical form
 - o Apply the basic math principles to practical situations
 - B. Understand and communicate quantitative information effectively **(7)**
 - o Organize and analyze data to make inferences about real world situations
 - o Clearly communicate quantitative relationships and solutions
5. Recognize the role of values and ethics in making personal, social, and professional decisions **(8)**
 - o Identify, articulate, and explain their own values
 - o Recognize the connection between values and behavior
 - o Identify and understand the values and ethics of another individual or group as revealed through actions, society, and culture
 - o Use their understanding of their own values and those of others to resolve conflicts and make responsible decisions
6. Demonstrate knowledge of both global and American cultural diversity, including races, religions, subcultures, and ethnicities **(9)**
 - o Understand that all individuals and cultures are not alike
 - o Display tolerance for the ideas and perspective of others
 - o Use the knowledge, attitudes, and skills gained through their understanding of individual and cultural diversity to communicate, work, and make decisions with people of other backgrounds
7. Read, write, speak, listen, and research effectively
Read at a level that allows students to participate in collegiate studies and chosen careers
 - A. Understand what is read **(10)**
 - o Anticipate and understand the structure and organization of written work
 - o Recognize an author's thesis and forms of support
 - o Assimilate and connect information and ideas from multiple written sources
 - B. Evaluate what is read **(11)**
 - o Evaluate the effectiveness and validity of an author's style, organization, support, evidence, and presentation
 - o Demonstrate awareness of the connection that style and language have to an author's topic, audience, and purpose

Write effectively

 - C. Understand and use the writing process **(12)**
 - o Use the stages of the writing process (inventing, planning, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading) to develop, organize, and present ideas in writing
 - o Participate effectively in peer editing of written work, responding productively and respectfully and being open to the ideas and suggested revisions of others
 - D. Express ideas effectively through writing **(13)**
 - o Analyze the demands and possible strategies of a writing task, based on the topic, purpose, and audience, and then accomplish that task with clarity and accuracy
 - o Produce finished writing that includes a clear, original idea or thesis, appropriate evidence and support, a logical structure and organization, and a style of language that serves the writer's purpose and audience
 - o Identify and exercise their individual voices as writers, as appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience of a writing task
 - o Use Edited Standard Written English in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and syntax

Speak effectively

E. Understand and use a process in developing a speech **(14)**

- o Develop, organize, and present ideas in a formal or informal speaking situation
- o Participate effectively in peer editing of oral presentations, responding productively and respectfully and being open to the ideas and suggested revisions of others
- o Analyze the demands and possible strategies of a speaking situation based on the topic, purpose, audience and occasion

F. Express ideas effectively through speaking **(15)**

- o Feel more confident in their ability to speak in public or in other oral communication settings
- o Deliver an oral presentation that includes a clear, original idea or thesis, appropriate evidence and support, a logical structure and organization, and a style of language that serves the topic, purpose, audience, and occasion
- o Identify and exercise their individual voices as speakers, as appropriate for the topic, purpose, audience, and occasion of a speaking situation.
- o Use standard English in pronunciation, grammar, and syntax

Listen with literal and critical comprehension at a level that allows students to participate in collegiate studies and chosen careers

G. Understand information and ideas gathered through listening **(16)**

- o Anticipate and understand the structure and organization of oral presentations
- o Recognize a speaker's thesis and forms of support
- o Assimilate and connect information and ideas from multiple oral presentations

H. Evaluate information and ideas gathered through listening **(17)**

- o Evaluate the effectiveness and validity of a speaker's style, organization, support, evidence, and delivery
- o Demonstrate awareness of the connection that style and language have to a speaker's topic, audience, and purpose, as well as the occasion

Use information resources effectively

I. Develop and follow a research strategy **(18)**

- o Find and consult a variety of research sources
- o Formulate and refine a researchable question
- o Evaluate the relevance and reliability of sources

J. Apply the information found through research **(19)**

- o Draw conclusions based on information and ideas found through research
- o Use sources ethically and honestly, preserving the meaning of the source, avoiding plagiarism, and documenting the use of the source in the style appropriate for the student's discipline or field
- o Integrate source material smoothly and clearly into the student's own communication

8. Use computer technology to access, retrieve, process, and communicate information **(20)**

- o Interpret data collected or generated by technology and equipment.
- o Use appropriate technology to communicate information effectively
- o Recognize the responsible and ethical use of technology

9. Think logically and critically and solve problems effectively

A. Think critically **(21)**

- o Analyze and interpret results or outcomes of investigation and draw reasonable conclusions from the analysis
- o Provide reasoned support for beliefs or ideas
- o Recognize and analyze arguments that support theories and perspectives other than their own
- o Follow and give directions, whether written or oral
- o Analyze content, discover meaning or significance, draw conclusions, and make an assessment
- o Compare and evaluate opposing arguments or ideas
- o Distinguish between fact and opinion

B. Solve problems effectively **(22)**

- o Identify a problem and outline or describe a realistic approach to solving the problem
- o Draw conclusions based on the outcomes

10. Think independently in creative and interpretive tasks

A. Think independently in creative tasks **(23)**

- o Produce creative work that fulfills established criteria for effectiveness and/or aesthetics
- o Develop an independent appraisal of what defines quality creative work

B. Think independently in interpretive tasks **(24)**

- o Develop an independent interpretation of information, ideas, concepts, actions, trends, and/or works, based on evidence and appropriate methodology
- o Draw conclusions based on the interpretation

Bismarck State College			
Four Year Plan for Broad-Based Assessment of General Education			
Faculty Group	Gen Ed Outcomes	Standardized Tests & Outcomes	Surveys
2002-2003			
Math		Academic	• Student

Science & Technology	5, 13, 6, 7	Profile 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 13, 21, 22	Satisfaction Survey • BSC Sophomore Self Assessment of Learning Survey • Alumni Outcomes Survey
Social & Behavioral Sciences	1, 2, 21, 8		
2003-2004			
Communications	12, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24	CAAP Critical Thinking 21, 22	• Entering Student Survey • Withdrawing Student Survey • BSC Sophomore Self Assessment of Learning Survey
Arts & Humanities	3, 4, 20, 13, 23		
2004-2005			
Math Science & Technology	6, 7, 20, 21, 22, 23	CAAP Writing 13	• CESQ • BSC Sophomore Self Assessment of Learning Survey
Social & Behavioral Sciences	1, 2, 24, 9, 16, 10, 13		
2005-2006			
Communications	7, 8, 9, 11, 17	CAAP Reading 10, 11	• BSC Sophomore Self Assessment of Learning Survey
Arts & Humanities	3, 4, 14, 15, 23		

During the years when faculty groups aren't focused on broad-based assessment, they do course assessment.

Travel

Several committee members attend conferences to keep abreast of the assessment movement during 2002-2003. Mike Kern (Associate professor of Mathematics) and Dr. Jane Schulz (Director of Institutional Research and Planning) attended the 8th annual summer academy, 2003 sponsored by the Council of the North Central Two-Year College and the Higher Learning Commission of NCA. The topic of the keynote was meeting the challenge of accountability. Cecelia Lopez gave a session on what constitutes evidence of assessment. Dr. Schulz also attended a workshop on Assessment of Values and General Education in DePere, Wisconsin. Janelle Masters, (Assessment Coordinator) Jane Schreck (Assistant Professor of English) and Wayne Boekes (Vice-president of Instructional Services) attended the Higher Learning Commission's Annual Meeting in Chicago in March. Jane Schreck and Janelle Masters presented a paper on BSC's assessment plan and certain activities sponsored by the assessment committee. Another assessment committee member, Wendy Pank, (Associate Professor of Sociology) attended a conference in DePere, Wisconsin entitled Assessment of General Education and Values in Higher Education with James Nichols as main presenter and consultant.

Group Leader Reports

Developmental English

This report includes statistical data of students enrolled in Bismarck State College's English composition program from 1997 through 2003. A comparison will be made between those students who, in addition to the general course program of ENGL 110 and ENGL 120, were supplemented with College Writing Prep 087 and Composition Lab 088 from the beginning of the program until the present time. From the inception of the idea of a need for remediation at the college level in the early 1990s through the introduction of a developmental writing program at BSC in 1997 through the completion of the first five years of the pilot program, a history will appear, a perspective will be laid out, and a recommendation for the future will follow.

History

A memo from Paul Bodmer, Chair of the English Department, dated May 6, 1999, outlined the recommendation for the assessment and placement of students in the

composition program at Bismarck State College. The report stated that “by the middle of the 1990s, support was developed to move forward with institution research, and the English faculty was able to recommend, based on the experience of students’ performance, that students scoring certain levels on the ACT test would fail the first semester course. It was agreed that mainstreaming all students was no longer an appropriate process. However, the English faculty still preferred to place students who had the potential to succeed in the ENGL 110 course in that course, but those students would be given additional help in the form of a composition lab program.”

For the 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 academic year, there were essentially three entry levels for first-year college composition: College Writing Prep for ACT 0-12, ENGL 110 with lab for ACT 13-21, and ENGL 110 without lab for ACT 22-36. The 1997-1998 academic year gave us some preliminary data that proved the worth of the developmental course. We were able to project that students who scored below 13 on the ACT would more than likely fail ENGL 110, but if they took ASC 087, eighty percent would pass ENGL 110 with a C or better the next term.

The data gathered from the first semester of the 1998-1999 academic year reiterated that the College Writing Prep class was still very effective in preparing students with low ACT scores for the ENGL 110 course. However, the data also revealed that the current writing lab courses did not appreciably change the grade record for students placed in ENGL 110 and the writing lab. In addition, students who scored 13-14 on the ACT did not succeed as well in the ENGL 110 course as had been hoped, and students who scored 18-21 on the ACT did not need the full compliment of the writing lab course.

Based on the above information, new cut scores for placement were recommended as well as a new course to meet the needs of the students. Rather than three entry levels, five were recommended: ASC 086 (Writing Basics) for ACT 0-10, College Writing Prep ASC 087 for ACT 11-14, ENGL 110 with a hands-on lab for ACT 15-17, ENGL 110 with a self-paced (online) lab for ACT 18-21, and ENGL 110 without lab for ACT 22-36.

2000-2003 Data Perspective

The data gathered from 2000-2003 concerning students who have placed in College Writing Prep 087 with ACT scores of 0-14 continues to show that students completing this course will successfully complete ENGL 110 with a C or above at the rate of 73 percent. These same students tracked through their ENGL 120 successfully completed the program with a C or above at the rate of 70 percent.

There is also strong indication that students who complete the College Writing Prep 087 class enter into ENGL 110 with the same success rates as students with ACT scores of 15 and 16 (who are required to take the lab but do not take the College Writing Prep 087). This would also suggest that changing the placement scores for students with ACT 13-14 and requiring them to take ASC 087 has been a success and has greatly leveled the playing field for these students and given them an equal chance of success in ENGL 110.

On another note, students with ACT 19-21 (plus self-paced lab) scored slightly higher than students with ACT of 22 (without any lab), and were just as likely to receive As and Bs as their counterparts. Again, this would suggest that the self-paced lab is providing the skills

necessary for this group of students to move out of the C category into the A/B category and compete with students with higher ACT scores.

Pre and Post-diagnostic tests also indicate that students in the self-paced composition labs (ACT 18-21) have greatly improved their editing skills upon completion of the course. Of the 134 students in the Fall 2002 labs, only 4 of the 134 passed the pre-diagnostic test. The average overall score was 48 percent. The post-diagnostic showed 99 of the 134 students now passing (74 percent) with an average score of 76 percent, an overall 28 percent improvement on their editing skills.

Data suggested, though, that students with ACT 18 (plus self-paced lab) had scores more comparable to students taking the hands-on labs (ACT scores of 15-17) and averaged a grade of C in their ENGL 110 (2.49 average score) compared to the other students in the self-paced group, which were more apt to receive an A or B (ACT 19: 2.63 average score, ACT 20-21: 2.8 average score). Students with ACT 18 also tended to have higher dropout rates than the other students in their self-paced group (ACT 18: 21.6% compared to ACT 19: 18.2%, ACT 20: 15.7%, ACT 21: 17.4%).

The data also shows that the overall GPA of students is skewed (lowered) due to students not dropping ENGL 110 when indications show they should. This skewing (lowering of overall GPA in English 110) is higher for students with lower ACT scores, with the exception (it is interesting to note) of students completing the College Writing Prep 087 course. Data indicates that 16 of the 123 students with ACT scores of 1-14 received an F (13 percent), 57 of the 323 students with ACT of 15-17 received an F (18 percent), 45 of the 294 students with ACT 19-21 received an F (12 percent), and 16 of the 261 students with ACT 22-26 received an F (6 percent). So, this data would suggest that the higher the ACT score, the more probability for a student to drop a course rather than fail a class and threaten their overall GPA (with the exception of students who have completed the College Writing Prep 087).

Future Recommendations

The Portfolio for Success: A Learning Community was first created for the Fall 2003 semester. This series of classes was specifically designed for students with an ACT accumulative average of 14 or below. Research has proven that when students complete the ASC (Applied Skills Courses) as assigned by their ACT placement scores that they not only succeed at BSC but often surpass all expectations. By completing this portfolio of classes, students will complete the ASC courses (ASC 087, College Writing Prep; ASC 092, Beginning Algebra; ASC 082, Effective Reading) and general education courses in the areas of Business, Math, Science and Technology (3 credits) and Enrichment (2 credits). Students must be enrolled in all 13 credits for their first semester. As of the Fall 2003, a full compliment of students have enrolled and the class is ready to roll. I would recommend that this group of students be evaluated at the completion of this first semester, and, if successful, I would advise that the group as a whole continue with another cohort to include ENGL 110, Composition Lab 088 (hands-on), Math 102 (slower paced), BIOL 098 (Basic Biology/lab) and SOC 110 (Intro to Sociology). This schedule would provide students with 6 credits toward their General Education required credits (English and sociology), 8 elective credits, building skills toward the required math and biology/lab General Education credits, and 1 ASC credit (non-transferable composition lab) for a total of 15 semester credits. I would also

recommend that we track these students through the rest of their college experience in order to assess the success of the cohort.

Another class that had been recommended based on data gathered from 1997-1998, Writing Basics ASC 086, was taught only one semester (Fall 099) due to a difficulty of finding qualified instructors. Of the eight initial students, seven successfully completed the course (88 percent). Six of these students continued straight into the ENGL 110 class; four successfully completed the course (67 percent). Of the remaining four students, three continued into ENGL 120 and two successfully completed the course (67 percent). Overall, two of the initial eight students completed the English sequence successfully (25 percent). This small sampling does not suggest a true sample, but it was my personal belief that this class was necessary and successful for students with severe developmental writing problems, and it would be advisable to pursue additional classes in the future for the sole purpose of retention and success of this community of learners. I would suggest that these students be tested after completion of the ASC 086 and placed in either ASC 087 or ENGL 110 (plus lab) as their scores indicate. I would also suggest that we track students with ACT 0-10 to see what their success rate and retention has been in the past five years without the additional boost of the ASC 086.

Another area that needs attention is Effective Reading 082. Although, BSC continues to offer several classes of reading each semester, we need to do more to promote the necessity of reading comprehension for at risk students. Research indicates that reading skills are vital to writing skills and should be given equal support in a developmental program. Data indicates that only about half of the students placed in Effective Reading have actually taken the course (1998-2002: 310 compared to the 569 placed in College Writing Prep 087 during the same period). I would recommend that we require (not just suggest) Effective Reading 082 for students with ACT scores of 0-14, concentrating on vocabulary and "key point/thesis" comprehension. Again, I believe that promoting reading comprehensive would increase retention and success rates for this learning community not only in the English classes, but in other reading based classes. This would be another area that would require long-range tracking for retention and overall GPA. It would be interesting to compare the progress and GPA of students who successfully completed the Effective Reading 082 course (74 percent) with those students who passed on the opportunity to take Effective Reading.

Getting back to an analysis of data gathered from 2000 through 2003 indicates that students with ACT 18 did not score as well as the other self-paced students in the online composition labs. Students with ACT scores of 18 should be required to take the hands-on lab rather than the self-paced labs. Their scores also indicate higher drop out rates (21.6 percent) and their overall GPA is lower (2.49 compared to 2.8 of students with ACT scores of 20, 21, and 22).

Data also indicates that students with ACT 22 could benefit from the composition lab and should be required to take the self-paced lab. Students with ACT 22 have dropout rates that are higher than other students who are exempt from labs (20.2 percent compared to ACT 23: 14.1%, ACT 24: 5.3%, ACT 25: 16.3%, and ACT 26: 16.7%). There is also evidence to support that that taking the lab would probably increase their overall GPA in ENGL 110 as the students in the self-paced labs with ACT scores of 19-21 showed the greatest improvement of all students taking labs.

And finally, to closer link the composition labs as a companion to the ENGL 110 for the purpose of teaching editing skills and improving their ENGL 110 GPA, I would recommend that the composition labs should be run for the first 7 ½ weeks of each semester. Hands-on classes should meet twice a week for 7 ½ weeks rather than once a week for 15 weeks. Self-paced lab students should also be required to finish their course work during the first 7 ½ weeks of the semester. I believe that taking the necessary instruction during the first half of the semester would give the students the tools necessary to compliment editing their composition papers for the last half of the semester, by giving them time to improve their editing skills and ultimately improving their composition writing skills. I also believe that strengthening and reinforcing their skills early on in the semester may lower the dropout rates and actually improve students' GPA.

This study has included a very narrow study of students who have completed work in the English program from ASC 087, ENGL 110 plus ASC 088, and ENGL 120. Data is needed for a comparison of the success of these students completing an entire program of study as compared to the general population. Initially it was projected that students with ACT scores of 14 or below had a 10 percent chance of successfully passing ENGL 110. We assumed that if students could not pass this first level English course, they did not complete their college experience either. We now have data to support that students with an ACT of 14 or below will pass the ASC 087 with a 70 percent success rate. Approximately 80 percent of those students continued into ENGL 110 with a 73 percent success rate. Of the 56 percent that continued into ENGL 120, 75 percent successfully completed the course. The data shows that from the onset (the initial 813 students), 40 percent (328) successfully completed ENGL110, and 17 percent of the original 813 students successfully completed ENGL120. So, although it appears that we have improved our success rate from 40 percent of overall numbers compared to the original 10 percent projected, and we have greatly improved the odds of at risks students completing the ENGL110 course, extensive data needs to be drawn to compare this data with the overall student population and whether or not the final outcome is a terminal degree.

Communications

Communications courses were assessed by most fulltime and adjunct faculty in 2002-2003. Four-point primary traits analysis scales were used to assess all students in most sections. Speaking was assessed in speech classes and writing was assessed in writing classes. Many instructors also assessed a second competency, often critical thinking or interpretive thinking with direct measures. In eight sections of English 125 and one section of 120, indirect measures were used to assess values.

Instructors have a good understanding of assessing writing and speaking; however, we developed a common PTA scale to assess writing in English 120, and the results suggest that we need to work toward better consistency in how we apply our PTAs. We seem less clear about the assessment of thinking skills, and we need to analyze how we teach thinking and how best to assess it. Whether with thinking or writing, most instructors continue to find that students perform better when given the chance for in-class practice assignments and when tasks are broken down into manageable steps for them.

Assessment is telling us some things about learning online. Generally the results of assessment of online writing courses suggest that students with stronger writing skills do well in the online environment compared to on-ground students, while students with weaker skills do less well than on-ground students. While these results are preliminary, this is a useful trend to track because it lends support for our policy of requiring minimum performance on standardized tests for enrollment in English 110.

The Sophomore Self-Assessment of Learning Survey was administered to sophomores in the spring semester. Responses from students on their view of their learning experience in the Communications courses fall right between the last two years; however, based on the results of the section of the survey dealing with values and diversity, Communications faculty need to do a better job of emphasizing values and diversity in their courses.

A pre and post survey of the values common to writing and working in a professional setting was administered to students in English 125. While most students held the appropriate opinion on these values at the beginning of the course, there were shifts in the right direction by the end. The most surprising result had to do with giving credit to sources. At the beginning of the semester, students were almost unanimous in recognizing that research sources need to be cited in their own writing, yet several students failed to cite sources in the research assignment during the semester, suggesting some students still have an incomplete understanding of how to cite sources even in a second semester Communications course.

Communications faculty members need to continue to emphasize that the skills and habits students have learned in our classes need to be applied to all aspects of their lives, academically, professionally, and personally. Also in the coming year, we need to develop and implement our part of the 4-Year Plan for Broad-Based Assessment of Student Learning.

Arts and Humanities

Changes: Faculty assessed courses once a year.

Trained adjunct theater instructor

Began plans for next years broad based assessment of the Arts & Humanities

Competencies assessed in 2002-2003: Knowledge

649 students

89% above 2 on PTA scale of 1-4

Independent/interpretive/creative thinking

642 students

86% above 2 on PTA scale of 1-4

Critical thinking/problem solving

633 students

90% above 2 on PTA scale of 1-4

Values

38 students

94% above 2 on PTA scale of 1-4

Total Number of students assessed: 758

Participation of faculty: 10 fulltime 6 adjunct (out of 14 fulltime and 11 adjunct)

Changes to be made by faculty due to assessment findings:

Listed on page 6 of full report

Assessment Tools: wide variety of direct measures listed on page 9 of the report and indirect measures were evaluated in the Sophomore Survey listed on pages 5 of the report.

Broad-based Assessment of Science and Writing at Bismarck State College

The 2002-2003 school year included our first attempt at broad-based assessment in the Business, Math, Science and Technology general education group at BSC. We set-up a timeline that would work best with the faculty's schedules to ensure the highest possible positive participation. The objectives outlined by this group several years before were measured using three separate essay questions.

The questions were developed and critiqued by the faculty for reliability and validity. The PTA/rubric was developed and critiqued in the same manner. There was significant concern that the questions would not accurately tell us what we wanted to know about student learning and that the rubric would result in data that did not accurately reflect the student outcomes. The concerns were valid but we agreed we needed to start somewhere and the experience would pave the way to improvement in the future. We also agreed we had a good measure and a reasonable rubric.

The Process

The goals and methodology were discussed with the faculty early in the fall semester. We were to assess three science objectives and one writing objective with one assignment. All students registered in all general education science classes would participate. The measure was developed by early November and administered shortly thereafter by most faculty. The assignment was a take-home exercise with at least one week to complete. Detailed instructions, supplementary writing information and the scoring rubrics were provided to the students. The essays were graded for points but the assessment scoring was not completed until the spring semester.

Early in the spring semester, the faculty discussed the science rubric again. The English faculty provided some ideas for a writing rubric that was further developed for use by science faculty. The essays were scored and the results recorded. The science faculty gathered for an assessment debriefing after the scoring was completed. The meeting was candid and productive. It allowed for each faculty member to voice concerns, reactions and ideas for

improvement while they were fresh in their minds. The process was effective and encouraging. The capstone meeting was extremely important for the success of this broad-based assessment process.

Selection of Students

We selected students with more than 30 credit hours earned (sophomores) to participate in the science assessment. Students that had completed their required English courses (students pursuing an AAS degree that had completed English 110 and students pursuing either an AS or AA degree that had completed English 110 and 120) were selected to participate in the writing assessment. Initially, over 980 assessment assignments were distributed.

Many students were in more than one science course and only their first set of essays was assessed. These students were identified in advance so they would not have to prepare multiple sets of essays. Some students failed to complete the work, many did not fit the selection criteria and the end result was 188 assignments scored for science assessment and 156 assignments scored for writing. Due to the work load involved with this process, only full-time faculty participated in the scoring of the assessment essays. Adjunct faculty were welcome to participate in the scoring process though none volunteered.

Results

Three science objectives and one writing objective were assessed using essays. The first science objective was *Recognize the role of science in understanding nature, society, agriculture and industry*. Sixty-seven percent of the students assessed scored 3 or above on the 4 point primary traits analysis (PTA) scale. The second science objective was *Understand the scientific process of question and investigation*. Forty-six percent of the students assessed scored 3 or above on the PTA scale. The third science objective was *Acknowledge the developing nature of science*. Seventy percent of the students assessed scored 3 or above on the PTA scale. The writing objective assessed was *Express ideas effectively through writing*. Seventy-eight percent of the students assessed for writing scored 3 or above on the PTA scale.

Responses of Faculty to Our Broad-based Assessment

Following the data collection portion of the assessment process the science general education full-time faculty met to discuss the measure, the process and areas that we need to improve. The faculty responses were generally positive concerning the measures and critical of the rubrics. The consensus was that the instructions needed to be refined with very specific goals identified.

Response to the measure

Faculty would like to spend more time and develop a measure that truly reflects the students' knowledge of scientific method. Further discussion of how that may be accomplished will continue. The process needed to achieve this goal will be identified at assessment meetings through the fall.

Response to the process

The similarity between the course-level assessment and broad-based assessment resulted in a high comfort level for faculty. This allowed for an advanced level of discussion and an excellent critique of our assessment process. The faculty would like to explore alternatives to having to grade the essays twice. The most obvious solution is to spend more time planning and to develop a measure that is closely tied to the coursework yet fulfills the general education aspects of assessment. Most faculty felt that the 4 point scale was too rigid. The students' knowledge levels would be best scored with a larger scale, possibly a 6 point scale. This will be discussed with the assessment committee for input for planning more accurate future assessment.

Areas to improve:

Timing

Proper timing of assessment has been a problem for some faculty in this general education group. Faculty were directed to give students a minimum of one week to complete the assignment. Again, we saw that some professors offered this assessment exercise too late in the semester. Student compliance and the quality of their work may have suffered as a result of this bad timing. The assessment was rushed and finalized too late in the semester. Timing problems can be minimized by closer supervision and timely reminders sent by the faculty group leaders.

Assessment measures must be ready by the 10th week of the semester. Faculty must make an attempt to drive home these objectives in connection with specific coursework by this time. The students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of *general education objectives* at several points throughout the semester. Complete knowledge of the course material is not necessary for this to occur.

Objective 1

Objective one scores could have been skewed due to students' failure to follow directions. The measure has a built in level of failure that does not reflect the high understanding of this objective seen in our students writing. The solution would be to require only one example and require a minimum word count for this essay. The faculty will be encouraged to point out before and after attitudes and abilities as their courses progress.

Objective 2

Objective two scores may have been influenced by writing errors and a lack of structure and detail in the rubric provided to students. The rubric included points for writing style which did not allow for the knowledge of science to be assessed solely based on the students' knowledge of science. A mention of the need for a hypothesis, for controls and for variables should be included in the instructions regardless of the question that is used.

There were problems with the measure, the instructions and the rubric. The scores on objective 2 also indicate the students' lack of ability to demonstrate knowledge of scientific method at a level BSC faculty are willing to accept. The faculty will be asked to develop at least one exercise that clearly teaches scientific method and informs the students as to the importance of the process of question and investigation (see Follow-up on broad-based assessment from 2002-03). This exercise may be something already used in the course but

the importance and steps of the scientific process must be reinforced. Ideally this objective will be reinforced repeatedly throughout the course.

Objective 3

Students performed reasonably well on objective three. Some faculty would prefer to require a response other than computers though the diversity of topics students chose to write about was encouraging. Once again, a rubric that does not include reference to writing style would more accurately measure the high understanding of this objective seen by faculty but not reflected in the scoring.

Writing

Our students' writing ability tends to be an area of concern for most science faculty. Surprisingly enough, students scored highest on the writing portion of this assignment. There was a tendency for science faculty to assign low scores on science objectives. This may reflect the confidence science faculty have in grading their area of specialty versus grading writing. The results of the writing assessment will be shared with the communications faculty. Writing assignments continue to be an important method of evaluating students' knowledge of conceptual information.

Our first attempt at broad-based assessment of science and writing was a learning experience for all of us. The improvements indicated above will reinforce the importance of our science and writing objectives and improve student learning in both areas. As faculty become more aware and experienced in the process of assessment we will be better able to tackle some of the more nebulous broad-based assessment areas especially critical thinking.

Broad-based Assessment--Math

The results from this assessment clearly indicate that our students are very capable of handling the numerical and symbolic aspects of mathematics. They have little trouble with substituting values into given equations to calculate a final result. Being comfortable with technology (calculators) may help in this area. They are also good at manipulating simple equations to obtain a solution.

Although our students seem quite proficient at the mechanical aspects of mathematics, they are not quite as skilled at reading and analyzing information presented on a graph. A dislike or "phobia" of graphs is something that many students will readily admit. Typically during the semester, as was the case on this assessment project, when students are presented a problem that includes a graph or table as a means to solve, they often have difficulty focusing on the relevant information needed to finish the problem. This difficulty results in a lack of understanding the problem conceptually, which then leads to students failing to communicate their solutions both analytically and verbally.

We need to continue to teach the basic manipulative skills of mathematics, but we also need to increase emphasis on the graphic and verbal aspects. For example, in addition to simply discussing how to construct a histogram, emphasis should be placed on what kind of information can be gleaned from the graph. Instead of simply determining the slope of a line

or the intersection of two lines, more emphasis should be put on the meaning of these concepts as they apply to real world situations. Students should also be required to verbally express their understanding of these concepts.

Our challenge here is to get students to “think” more about mathematics and its applications rather than just getting the right answers or solutions. If we are to teach students to think critically and become good problem solvers, our students must be better at interpreting graphical and verbal information.

SOCIAL SCIENCE FACULTY GROUP BROAD BASED ASSESSMENT

In the winter of 2003 the Social Science (SS) Department met to begin the process of designing a broad-based assessment activity. Those involved were: Wendy Pank-Faculty Group Leader, Dave Sitte-Political Science, Anita Wilson-Sociology, Ivan Tschider-Economics, Lloyd Anderson and Henry Riegler-Psychology, and Lisa Schlafman-Human Services. There were several ideas that were discussed. One of the most popular was to have the Social Science Department create their own multiple choice assessment tool that would be able to determine students’ knowledge in the SS area. The difficulty and time-consuming task of accomplishing such a feat was not feasible at that time. After much discussion and bandying of ideas, it was agreed upon that we would use an essay question that a member of the SS group had composed. The essay question was written in such a manner as to have the capacity to delve into the student’s knowledge base in the broad arena of the Social Sciences.

The question: After the 9-11 terrorist attacks our society has experienced several changes. Using your knowledge of the Social Sciences, psychology, sociology, criminal justice, political science or economics, analyze one or two of these changes.

The question was fine-tuned through review by all SS department members to the point where the majority of members felt confident in the question’s ability to produce the desired information. The group then devised a Primary Traits Assessment (PTA)/Rubric to be used in the assessment process. There were many different ideas and much discussion. A decision was finally made to combine several existing PTA’s from our classes as well as information from resources found on the web.

Our next task was the creation of a direction sheet that included the PTA as well as “hints” or “ideas” of what an excellent paper should contain. This information was to accompany the PTA and be distributed to the students with the essay. Additional discussion focused on what type of information should be included on the cover/data sheet. Once again, the members of the department worked together to determine correct wording and the questions needed to be asked in order to gather the data we desired.

In late April of 2003 the assessment tool was ready for distribution. All Social Science faculty were asked to distribute the tool in any course they taught, not just general education courses. The tool was distributed in late April and collected in early May by the faculty (there was some variance as to when each faculty member distributed and collected the material). The directions that were given to the faculty members are included with the assessment document.

The completed assessment tool was collected by the faculty and submitted to the team leader, Wendy Pank, in May. Evaluation of the collected information ensued in the fall and is reported on the data form attached.

SUMMARY

The student criteria utilized for completion of this assessment stated that only students who were graduating sophomores (60 or more credits at the end of spring semester 2003), would be eligible for assessment. This garnered us fifty-one students, sixteen of which were male, thirty-five female. Numerical statistics were as follows: scoring a 4-excellent 25.5%; 3-above average 21.5%; 2-average 41.25; and 1-below average 11.8%. A breakdown by gender is indicated on the Outcomes chart.

USE OF RESULTS TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

The statistics were consistent with the desired goal of 80% of students scoring a “2” or higher. However, the ultimate goal is to have 100% of students in this category. The Social Science faculty struggles with how to use these results to initiate concrete changes in the classroom. One of the main “sticking” points is the variability between disciplines (see Implications...for others). Basic changes that have been suggested would be to focus more on applying the knowledge in each discipline to more “real-life” situations and reiterating this practice throughout the semester. Another implication is to concentrate on more activities that encourage critical thinking. The faculty are encouraged to incorporate these changes into their 2004-2005 syllabi.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE ASSESSMENT

The Social Science faculty group is divided on how to proceed with the results of this broad-based assessment. The concerns are as follows:

- Did we achieve a true sampling of Bismarck State College students by administering the assessment only in Social Science courses? Would we have a more accurate indicator of Social Science knowledge by administering the assessment to a randomly chosen student population?
- Did the question we utilized accomplish what we wanted it to? Did we get feedback that accurately reflects knowledge of the Social Sciences?
- Would another assessment method serve us better? A suggestion was made to create a multiple choice assessment document by our own SS group. The variability between our disciplines makes the creation of a test very difficult, plus how do we standardize or norm the test, how much time and money can we apply to this project?
- Should we use a pre-existing standardized test designed for the Social Sciences? What about the problems associated with such tests?

CONCLUSIONS

The faculty composition of the Social Science group is so diverse that individuality can be an obstacle for us to overcome. All of the faculty are dedicated to assessment and want to improve student learning; however, the path to our goal is not always clear. As the Social Science faculty group leader, I believe that we have made tremendous strides toward a sound assessment of the social sciences. The difficulty is now in bringing together the faculty group as a whole into one mindset and finding a way of achieving the assessment that satisfies all faculty. The various ideas discussed above are all excellent, our next step is to agree on a feasible path for future assessment and the improvement of student learning.

Program Reports

Computer and Office Technology Program

For the Computers and Office Technology Faculty Group, the 2002-2003 year was a year of changes. First and foremost, the Group reviewed how completers of the five programs were reported. Historically, any student taking any course in any program was included in the results. After much discussion, the Group decided a more accurate picture of our programs' assessment would be to report only those students listed as completers by the Bismarck State College Registrar's Office.

Another change was a significant number of software changes for the academic year. Microsoft Office updated to Office XP, Adobe PageMaker and InDesign replaced Microsoft Publisher and Macromedia Dreamweaver and Flash were incorporated into the web design courses.

In this report, two of the five programs will not show any results for the academic year 2002-2003. Since the programs now only report on completers listed in the Registrar's Office, a report is generated by the Registrar's Office during the summer. The Administrative Assistant – General program showed no completers during the academic year. The Administrative Assistant – Legal showed only one completer. It was decided the one student could be potentially identified and therefore, no report was generated for the program.

In the Computer Support Specialist program, 29 completers demonstrated 100% on seven of the eight objectives for the program.

In the Computer Information Systems – Information Processing Specialist program, the Assessment Implementation Plan was completely revised to more accurately include more results from faculty other than the industry exam. Of nine completers, 30% passed the industry exam. Of the projects from individual faculty, 100% scored 80% or better in web design, five scored 80% or better using Macromedia, five scored 80% or better using Adobe software, six scored 80% or better in keyboarding, and two had keyboarding speeds greater than 50 WAM net.

In the Administrative Assistant – Medical program, seven completers were recorded. Of the seven completers, 6 scored 80% or better of transcribed documents, 6 scored 20-25 WPM in keyboarding skills, 6 scored 85% or better in the insurance and coding Blue Cross Program and 6 scored 80% or better in labeling of the anatomy & physiology anatomical body structures.

Summaries for each program

Administrative Assistant – General

Courses for the Administrative Assistant – General program had students who were enrolled in the courses, however, the Registrar's Office reported no students completed the program during the time of September 2002 – August 2003. Therefore, no results were submitted on the Faculty Group Report for the academic year.

Changes Made During 2002-2003 Academic Year

The following changes were made during the 2002-2003 academic year in the Administrative Assistant – General program:

1. A pretest of punctuation and capitalization was administered before starting that portion of Business English 122 so coursework could include a review on the areas needing the most help.

Changes Planned for Administrative Assistant - General

The following are changes planned for the 2003-2004 academic year, according to the Faculty Assessment Group Report:

1. A new text will be adopted for Business Communications; the use of INFOTRAC for research will be incorporated as part of the text coursework. More research will be required as part of group presentations and speeches. A pretest in Business Communications will be administered covering all aspects of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and word usage. A post test will be given at the end of the semester and the results compared by student and overall.
2. A different keyboarding text will be adopted for Keyboarding I—it parallels to the software used for mastering the keyboard.
3. A new book and software for the CIS 103 Course (WordPerfect 10) will be adopted.

Courses required for the Administrative Assistant – General program are not exclusive to the program; the courses are also required for other programs and contain a mix of students enrolled in various programs.

The Assessment Implementation Plan, the Multiple Measures Matrix, the Composite Curriculum Matrix and the Faculty Group Report for the Administrative Assistant – General program were completed and are on file with the Assessment Coordinator’s office and the group leader’s office.

Administrative Assistant – Legal

Courses for the Administrative Assistant – Legal program had students who were enrolled in the courses, however, the Registrar’s Office reported two students who completed the program during the time of September 2002 – August 2003. Of the two students, one student was reported with the previous academic year’s results. Therefore, no results were submitted on the Faculty Group Report for the academic year since reporting on only one student’s results could potentially identify the student.

Changes Made During 2002-2003 Academic Year

The following changes were made during the 2002-2003 academic year in the Administrative Assistant – Legal program:

1. A more structured setting was used for Legal Transcription and Legal Office Procedures.
2. Spelling and definition quizzes on legal terminology were implemented on a weekly basis.
3. More material was provided on spelling and grammar
4. More review was held at the beginning of the sophomore year regarding software and previous coursework.

Changes Planned for Administrative Assistant - Legal

The following are changes planned for the 2003-2004 academic year, according to the Faculty Assessment Group Report:

1. Program requirements are changed beginning 2003-2004. Legal terminology will no longer be offered. Instead, students will take Criminal Law, Intro to Criminal Justice and Human Resources Management.
2. New textbooks for the core Legal Office Procedures course will be adopted.
3. More hands-on projects reflecting course content and objectives.

Courses required for the Administrative Assistant – Legal program are not exclusive to the program; the courses are also required for other programs and contain a mix of students enrolled in various programs.

The Assessment Implementation Plan, the Multiple Measures Matrix, the Composite Curriculum Matrix and the Faculty Group Report for the Administrative Assistant – Legal program were completed and are on file with the Assessment Coordinator’s office and the group leader’s office.

Administrative Assistant – Medical

The Registrar's Office reported seven students who completed the Administrative Assistant – Medical program during the time of September 2002 – August 2003.

Changes Made During 2002-2003 Academic Year

The following changes were made during the 2002-2003 academic year in the Administrative Assistant – Medical program:

1. More flash card use improved terminology knowledge
2. Updated cassette tapes for transcription were used for a more realistic practice.

Changes Planned for Administrative Assistant - Medical

No changes planned for the 2003-2004 academic year, according to the Faculty Assessment Group Report.

Courses required for the Administrative Assistant – Medical program are not exclusive to the program; the courses are also required for other programs and contain a mix of students enrolled in various programs.

The Assessment Implementation Plan, the Multiple Measures Matrix, the Composite Curriculum Matrix and the Faculty Group Report for the Administrative Assistant – Medical program were completed and are on file with the Assessment Coordinator's office and the group leader's office.

Computer Information Systems – Information Processing Specialist

The Registrar's Office reported nine students who completed the Computer Information Systems – Information Processing Specialist program during the time of September 2002 – August 2003.

Of the nine completers in the program, 30% of the students passed the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) exam. The students may have taken more than one exam during the student's time at Bismarck State College. All students in this program are required to take Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access MOS exams.

A new version of the industry exam was administered during this academic year. Many more students than average reported difficulty in completing the industry exam during this academic year. In addition, a significantly lower number of students passed the industry certification exam. Faculty met and discussed student concerns and worked with the contact at the testing center.

Of the nine completers in the program, 9 of 9 scored 80% or better in the following objectives: designing web pages and business math. Data was not collected in Business Communications this academic year. Five completers of nine scored 80% or better in Adobe software and Macromedia software, while six of nine scored 80% or better on the keyboarding assessment. Two of the completers keyed over 50 words per minute.

Changes Made During 2002-2003 Academic Year

The following changes were made during the 2002-2003 academic year in the CIS – Information Processing program:

1. New software was added to the program, specifically Adobe PageMaker, Adobe InDesign and Macromedia Dreamweaver.
2. Students reviewed the objectives for the MOS exam the last week of class and also completed additional worksheets in preparation for the exam.
3. More projects were added and portfolios by students were encouraged.

Courses required for the CIS-Information Processing Specialist program are not exclusive to the program; the courses are also required for other programs and contain a mix of students enrolled in various programs.

The Assessment Implementation Plan, the Multiple Measures Matrix, the Composite Curriculum Matrix and the Faculty Group Report for the CIS-Information Processing Specialist program were completed and are on file with the Assessment Coordinator's office and the group leader's office.

Changes Planned for CIS – Information Processing Specialist

The following are changes planned for the 2003-2004 academic year, according to the Faculty Assessment Group Report:

1. Require student to purchase exam prep materials
2. Review one week prior to MOS test.
3. New textbooks will be adopted in Adobe and Web page design to more accurately reflect the new curriculum.

Computer Support Specialist

Courses for the Computer Support Specialist program had students which were enrolled in the courses; the Registrar's Office reported 29 students who completed the program during the time of September 2002 – August 2003.

In seven of the eight objectives for the Computer Support Specialist program, 100% of the students scored at 70% or higher. 82% of the students in the program scored 70% or higher on the eighth objective.

Changes Made During 2002-2003 Academic Year

The following changes were made during the 2002-2003 academic year in the Computer Support Specialist program:

1. More worksheets and examples were provided in class.
2. More hands-on time was provided during class time.

Changes Planned for Computer Support Specialist

The following change is planned for the 2003-2004 academic year, according to the Faculty Assessment Group Report:

1. Provide more examples and in-depth coursework for all objectives.

Courses required for the Computer Support Specialist program are not exclusive to the program; the courses are also required for other programs and contain a mix of students enrolled in various programs.

The Assessment Implementation Plan, the Multiple Measures Matrix, the Composite Curriculum Matrix and the Faculty Group Report for the Computer Support Specialist program were completed and are on file with the Assessment Coordinator's office and the group leader's office.

Coop/Intern Program

Students within each of the programs may sign up for various co-op and internships that become available during the academic year. Employers who accept students into their work environment are then surveyed each summer.

Employers are surveyed on various aspects of the co-op and interns' personal and professional traits as they pertain to the work environment. Twelve personal traits and twelve professional traits are part of the survey.

For the academic year 2002-2003, the survey results are averaged and summarized below. Each trait is rated from 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest.

Personal Traits:		Professional Traits:	
Punctuality	5	Spelling	4
Cooperation	5	Penmanship	4
Willingness to work	5	English	4
Adaptability	4	Math	4
Reliability	5	Accounting	4
Initiative	4	Computer Skills	5
Resourcefulness	4	Filing	4
Loyalty	4	Telephone Skills	4
Obedience to Rules	5	Personality	5
Judgment	4	Following Directions	5
Tact	4	Neatness	5
Promise of Success	5	People Skills	4

Farm Management

Approximately half of the students responded to the survey sent out. This response is as much as it seems we are able to get from the students.

The survey indicates satisfaction on the part of the vast majority of all students enrolled in the Farm Management Education program at BSC. 93% of the responses indicated average, above average or excellent quality of education in the areas in question. 7% of the responses indicated N/A or that the area of education in question was not covered.

This might indicate they did not want to spend time in this area or that they felt the coverage of that subject material was inadequate. One area that continues to have the weakest performance is in developing a marketing plan for the farm. We started having regular marketing meetings throughout the winter months, a few years ago to improve in this area. However it appears those who responded the least favorably continue to avoid the marketing meetings. This may be partially due to distance from Bismarck and travel time and expense. It also may indicate unwillingness on the part of some students to make the decisions involved with marketing. The students who are told to enroll in Farm Management to fulfill the Farm Service Agency borrower training requirement may also distort the results. Some of them are very happy with what they learn in class while others seem unsatisfied no matter what is done.

Overall, I felt the results were good and indicated a need to continue similar to the way I have been doing things. 42% of the responses indicated superior, 41% above average, 14% average and 3% not applicable. There is always room for improvement, and I will keep trying to do so, but on the whole the results are encouraging.

AIR CONDITIONING, HEATING AND REFRIGERATION PROGRAM

The assessment for this academic year started off with a student completion survey. We implemented a new survey form this year in hopes of receiving a more complete response from graduates. Past surveys have shown only about a 75% of the students returning the surveys. We found that our students felt that the program adequately prepared them in most areas that they entered. They did feel that the lab projects needed to be cut back and

would have liked to have welding reinstated. Our contractor survey also showed that the contractors would like the students to receive some instruction in welding, cutting and brazing, also. We will be rearranging part of our program to install a welding component, probably as soon as the 2002/2003 academic year.

Curriculum for both the Sheet Metal and the HVAC classes is reviewed and updated every three years by the National Center for Construction, Education and Research, which is based at the University of Florida.

Auto Collision Technology

A direct measure was used within the class, and 14 of 15 students scored above a 75% on all competencies. An Employer Survey on competencies was again conducted, and as a result of that survey, again this year, contractors would like more emphasis placed in the areas of structural damage and mechanical/electrical components. A graduate survey was sent out to all trainees completing the program, but a very poor reply has shown a need to approach the graduates in a different method. A new graduate survey will be needed. The Employer Survey showed that the contractors surveyed felt that the students were being prepared for employment, but we would like to rewrite this survey in the hopes of getting better results on employability skills. All graduating students have met and/or exceeded the standards set by NATEF. The assessment implementation plan, multiple measures matrix, composite curriculum matrix and Faculty Group Report were completed and are on file with the assessment team.

Residential Carpentry

The assessment methods include the use of National Center for Construction Research written and performance test and student and employer surveys.

The NCCER curriculum and testing is based on national standards, competencies and objectives. The testing includes written and performance tests to assess knowledge

and skill. The curriculum is updated every three years. Based on the student's achievements on the tests it appears evident that continued use of current methods and materials is appropriate. The student and employer surveys show that both are satisfied with the level of training provided. Given these indicators the faculty of the Carpentry Program intends to continue to provide future educational opportunities substantially similar to those offered in the 2002-2003 school year.

Commercial Art

The program used a Juried Portfolio Review for their direct measure. Select members of industry, the Commercial Art Advisory Committee, student peers, and faculty were used for the review. 89% of the reviews resulted in a favorable rating. Plans are to continue with the advisory committee to review, to improve the judging criteria and the assessment vehicle, and to keep the curriculum current with industry. Plans are to improve direct measures of specific classes. The assessment plan, multiple measures matrix, composite curriculum matrix and Faculty Group Report were completed and are on file with the assessment coordinator.

ELECTRONICS/TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

The results of the graduate survey, employer survey, pre-test/post-test, and PTAs were all positive this year, indicating no major changes are necessary at this time. We will, however, rewrite the pre-test/post-test to reflect recent curriculum changes. These changes will specifically address the telecommunications courses that were added this year.

FARM AND RANCH MANAGEMENT

RECORDKEEPING/ ANALYSIS

Successful completion of summer internship

100% successful completion by all students enrolled

Complete records and analysis for a complete calendar year

100% completion by graduates in Farm & Ranch Management Program

Employer survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Student internship survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Employer survey within one year of graduation

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Graduate survey

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Pre-test scores accessing Recordkeeping/Analysis = 41.5%

Post-test scores accessing Recordkeeping/Analysis – 78.35%

CROP SCIENCE

Employer survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Student internship survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Employer survey within one year of graduation

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Graduate survey

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Pre-test scores accessing Crop Science = 33.125%

Post-test scores accessing Crop Science = 68.75%

ANIMAL SCIENCE

Employer survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Student internship survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Employer survey within one year of graduation

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Graduate survey

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Pre-test scores accessing Animal Science = 41.67%

Post-test scores accessing Animal Science = 77.75%

AGRICULTURE MECHANICS

Employer survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Student internship survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Employer survey within one year of graduation

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Graduate survey

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Pre-test scores accessing Agriculture Mechanics = 50%

Post-test scores accessing Agriculture Mechanics = 55%

ACTION: Continue to work with advisory committee and agricultural groups to keep curriculum in pace with industry needs.

AGRIBUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Successful completion of summer internship with minimum of 400 hours

100% completion by all students enrolled

Employer survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Student internship survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Employer survey within one year of graduation

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Graduate survey

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Pre-test scores accessing Recordkeeping/Analysis = 33.75%

Post-test scores accessing Recordkeeping/Analysis – 58.31%

CROP SCIENCE

Employer survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Student internship survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Employer survey within one year of graduation

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Graduate survey

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Pre-test scores accessing Crop Science = 35.44%

Post-test scores accessing Crop Science = 65.3%

ANIMAL SCIENCE

Employer survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Student internship survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Employer survey within one year of graduation

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Graduate survey

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Pre-test scores accessing Animal Science = 41.67%

Post-test scores accessing Animal Science = 50%

AGRICULTURE MECHANICS

Employer survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Student internship survey after summer internship

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Employer survey within one year of graduation

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Graduate survey

100% of respondents indicated a satisfaction level of AVERAGE or above

Pre-test scores accessing Agriculture Mechanics = 42%

Post-test scores accessing Agriculture Mechanics = 61.1%

ACTION: Continue to work with advisory committee and agricultural groups to keep curriculum in pace with industry needs.

Lineworker

At the BSC Lineworker Program we felt that we have continued to meet entrance level personnel needs. We continue to update our curriculum by keeping current with industry

changes. A situation did arise in that certain employers would like to see BSC Lineworker graduates have Commercial Drivers Licenses upon completion of program. The issue has been turned over to BSC administration.

Welding Program

The pre-post test exams, along with the competency based curriculum will show that 100% of the students have demonstrated the ability to use welding technology and the equipment specific to the Bismarck State College Welding Program. This data will also show that the students have the ability to explain and use the equipment for welding and to interpret data collected or generated by the welding technology equipment.

Process Plant Technology

Prior to the 2001-2002 school years we have tested all of our classes with a pretest and posttest. This testing was given to all current power plant students. The testing procedure wasn't correct because they were all tested. We didn't compare the first, second or third semester students to anything. We just tested them. We came up with stats that didn't follow the students all the way through the program.

Now it's a new school year and we have now started to assess just the first semester classes when they start. In the spring semester we will again assess this same class as they are now a 2nd semester class. We will assess them and track their progress as they move along out of 2nd and into the 3rd semester. This will give us a view of how they have progressed throughout the whole program.

Our pretest exams have shown that our math skills need improvement. These scores are from first semester students. This means that we have not had any influence on them yet. What we are planning to do is revise our curriculum in the next few months. With the

revision we may see our math classes change in the program. We may drop our basic math class and make it a requirement for them to take a basic math class from the general education side of the campus. Right now they are not required to take any math other than our basic math.

We have evaluated the test questions on the pretest. They are more pertinent to the education they will receive. This could show a better increase in the post test scores. As always our lab areas need improvement. At the Christmas break we are supposed to be revising our lab curriculum as well as our lecture curriculum also.

Power Plant Technology

In the 2002-2003 year we assessed our students the same way as the 2001-2002 term. These competencies are outlined in the column labeled “**Power Plant Technology Competencies/Objectives**” in the Faculty Group Assessment Report Matrix.

Prior to the 2001-2002 school years we have tested all of our classes with a pretest and posttest. This testing was given to all current power plant students. The testing procedure wasn't correct because they were all tested. We didn't compare the first, second or third semester students to anything. We just tested them. We came up with stats that didn't follow the students all the way through the program.

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