History of Assessment at Muskegon Community College

March 1992

Muskegon Community College is informed by North Central that continuing accreditation involves the creation of a plan to document assessment of student academic achievement. MCC’s Institutional Effectiveness Committee begins work to develop a plan for the assessment of student academic achievement. Muskegon Community College uses the CAAP test to test student general education skills on a trial basis. Other assessment methods used at this time include licensing exams in health programs, employment surveys for AAS graduates, student grades, general education survey of associate degree student perceptions, and an employer survey for AAS graduates.

February 1993

107 faculty, staff, and students complete the Assessing General Education Survey. Two methods were favored including post-test students on three basic skills measured on the Compass placement test, and getting statistics from transfer institutions regarding the success of MCC students.

October 1993

MCC submits A Plan to Assess Student Academic Achievement to North Central Association.

May 1994

MCC receives notice from North Central that its plan was acceptable.

November 1995

Muskegon Community College adopts new requirements for the ASA transfer degree.

August 2000

MCC creates a full-time position dedicated to Institutional Research, in response to HLC recommendations.

September 2000

MCC completes the NCA (HLC) institutional Self-Study Report.

November 2000

North Central Self-Study report is received by MCC. Recommendations include the development of a standing Assessment Committee and that the college file a progress report (due in 2004) to address the team’s concerns about the college’s efforts in assessing student learning. The team wanted the college to better develop an understanding between direct and indirect measures of learning and the difference between program review and the assessment of learning. The team appreciated the monthly
assessment newsletter, the annual report, and the fact that some departments were examining and using assessment results. The team stated, “Before the next comprehensive evaluation, the College faculty will agree on an overriding set of general education or basic core competencies which should be required by every educated person.”

April 2001

Survey results from ASA graduates published (31 or 41 responses gathered). 97% strongly agree that “I have acquired a broad base of knowledge that will help me later in life” and “I feel well prepared to go on to a four-year college.”

October 2001

Muskegon Community College develops a new Assessment Committee made up of 15 faculty and staff members. Richard Doctor is named Assessment Coordinator and Assessment Committee Chairperson. CATS (Classroom Assessment Techniques) are introduced in an Assessment newsletter.

February 2002

Academic Profile test is administered to several hundred transfer students. The test is described as the primary tool for assessing general education. Summary of results show that students who complete all or a portion of required general education courses perform better on the test than students who have not completed those requirements. The Institutional Planning, Assessment, and Development Council (IPADC) meets for the first time. Assessment of student learning is defined as taking place at four levels: Program, General Education, Course, and Classroom.

March 2004

MCC submits a Progress Report on Assessment to the Higher Learning Commission. The report included many recommendations and changes that would impact assessment practices at MCC. One change involved combining the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Dean of Occupational Programs position into a Dean of Instruction position that would be responsible for Assessment. The report lists some of the assessment procedures involving the Academic Profile test, Work keys, SSEOP, and discipline reviews. The report proposed to conduct the MAPP test of general education.

June 2007

A comprehensive assessment of all programs took place while creating the Academic Master Plan. The MAPP test is used to test students’ knowledge of general education. General education graduate surveys continue to be used. Assessment Committee examines how general education is related to literacy. Much information (data) has been collected on student satisfaction and student learning, but challenges arise in analyzing the information. Class Climate student surveys are being used. CATS and discipline reviews continue to be used.
March 2009

Assessment committee discusses using either MAPP or CAAP test to measure the effectiveness of general education program. Committee examines how to best measure the six abilities and critical thinking.

July 2009

Discussion continues on how best to use data from MAPP and General Education Survey. Discipline reviews and SSEOP’s continue to be completed. Goals for the Assessment Committee include creating a smaller and more effective Assessment Committee, increase awareness of assessment, finish information literacy modules, create a new MAPP testing system, develop a student tracking system, promote CATS, and complete more discipline reviews.

January 2010

Assessment Committee discusses the status of a critical reading plan, student tracking system, discipline reviews, CATS, and a student learning survey.

October 2010

Comprehensive self-study process completed. Visiting team from the Higher Learning Commission comes to MCC campus.

January 2011

Final report from Higher Learning Commission received and reviewed. The visiting team suggested the college create one set of general education outcomes, rather than the two sets currently used for the transfer program and occupational program. The team also recommended the college spend some time developing outcomes for each program and outline how the learning will be assessed. The team recommended a progress report be submitted to the HLC in December of 2013 that includes the following information:

- A consistent general education core and outcomes expected of all graduates with a process for evaluating the attainment of these outcomes.
- A set of learning outcomes for each program (graduate competencies) and the methods and tools to evaluate these.
- A college-wide protocol of assessment practices with specific timelines, documentation processes, links to planning and improvement, and persons responsible for each activity.
- Identify assessment leadership responsibilities of VP Academic Affairs, Assessment Committee, Institutional Research, and faculty development.
February 2011
Subcommittee appointed to review and revise general education outcomes.

April 2011
Assessment Committee becomes standing committee of Instructional Affairs Committee. Assessment Committee adopts new Mission and Vision statements.

June 2011
Assessment Committee web page created on MCC website. Analysis made of most popular classes at MCC to use in assessment plans.

July 2011
Assessment Committee approves new general education outcomes. Plans made to have an assessment session during fall faculty seminar days.

November 2011
Instructional Affairs Committee approves new general education outcomes. English department begins pilot test using one of the new general education outcomes. Department chairs come to assessment committee meetings to make future assessment plans.

December 2011
Assessment Committee develops a pamphlet that explains the general education assessment practices. The pamphlet is shared with faculty members. English pilot test is successful.

May 2012
Pilot testing of general education outcomes continue in English and expand to Biology and Philosophy. Plans are made for developing program and discipline outcomes for fall faculty seminar days.

August 2012
Learning outcomes are developed by program and discipline faculty members as part of faculty seminar days.

September 2012
Select group of sixteen faculty members launch new general education assessments for fall classes.