



## **Assessment Committee**

# **2017-2018 Annual Report**

## **Introduction**

This is the first Annual Report under the current Assessment Committee charter. CAC has been fully engaged in course, program and institutional assessment since prior to 2012. In 2012 CAC attended the HLC Assessment Academy, with the goal of establishing a stronger and more consistent approach to assessing institutional outcomes. Under Assessment Coordinator Professor B. Demeline, CAC moved from an initial concept of having students create portfolios for institutional assessment, to using ETS. CCSSE had already been used for Student Services Assessment; ETS was chosen to complement CCSSE and provide a nationally normed, reliable instrument for assessing institutional outcomes in the Academic Division.

The college began its Institutional Outcomes assessment focusing on General Education outcomes. After participation in the HLC Assessment Academy, the college moved to a broader, more inclusive Institutional Outcome focus. This was part of an Action Project, which was successfully completed.

## **ETS, History**

The initial implementation of ETS (2012) aimed to assess sophomore level courses, with the thought that they were close to graduation, and would provide solid data regarding what students had acquired during their tenure at CAC. In the end, however, the group found that they had recruited more Honors Freshmen, who placed into higher level courses; these were not second year students ready to graduate. This was not a good measure of institutional outcomes. Additional ETS testing was carried out (both Fall 2012 and Spring 2013, then again in Spring 2016 and Spring 2018 (with a gap in Spring 2014 because of the two semester assessment in 2012-13). The subsequent ETS testing targeted students who applied for graduation with a certificate or degree; this group represented a broad range of CAC students who had been with the institution for approximately 2 years (or longer for part time), and were a reasonable group to assess for overall institutional outcomes.

## **CCSSE, History**

The college has used CCSSE for a longer time, initially intended to measure Institutional outcomes for Student Services, and later expanded to include Institutional Outcomes in general. The Assessment Committee, with later additional guidance from our new President (as of July 1, 2017), Dr. Jacquelyn (Jackie) Elliott, created a crosswalk from CCSSE to our four institutional outcomes. This has been used consistently in our most recent analyses of CCSSE, and will be going forward. While CCSSE focuses on student experience, it also captures additional information relevant to all our institutional outcomes.

## **College Goals and Current Year Outcomes**

The Institutional Assessment goals each year are to be at or above the national average for all measures. These measures are linked to a benchmarking group designated as our national comparison group (similar institutions in terms of size, demographics, rural location, etc. If the college falls short on a measure, our remediation practice is to push the results out to all groups,

and ask each constituent group at the college (each academic division, the learning center and library, student services, and administrative services) to implement an additional measure to improve on that outcome. We then track improvement. This year we are happy to report that the college exceeded all measures. We attribute this in part to growing awareness and engagement in assessment across the college, and to the better alignment of our Mission-Vision-Values, new strategic plan, Board ends and our learning outcomes. Central Arizona College ranked 4th among our 29 benchmark sister colleges designated in the ETS sample, in all categories.

Our overall results in the Proficient category were strong for basic levels of achievement — Reading Level 1, Writing Level 1, Mathematics Level 1, all above 40%, with Reading at 57% achievement. We only failed to achieve proficiency in Mathematics Level 3, and under the Reading skill, we were low in Critical Thinking at 3%. Our overall ranking, however, still met or exceeded the national average. With this in mind, however, the assessment committee aims to recommend remediation in critical thinking. Mathematics Level 3 is more difficult to remediate, as many of our students never take a class in that category, particularly those who pursue certificates rather than degrees. Our Level 1 and Level 2 for both Reading and Mathematics are acceptable. These measures all crosswalk to Institutional Outcomes.

### **Curriculum and Assessment**

All new curriculum now incorporates not only course learning outcomes, but also must match to institutional outcomes or CSLO's (at least one).

### **Conclusion**

Central Arizona College remains committed to continuous quality improvement. The assessment committee has a new plan going forward, will meet three times in person over the summer to prepare for launching the following initiatives in the fall.

1. Revisit academic divisions with reminders regarding course assessment. Implementation of a “Two Form” system, modeled at HLC National Conference. Each academic division carries out its annual course assessments. As we learned through a survey two years ago, each area does this somewhat differently, and stores the information in different formats, all aimed at meeting overall learning outcomes for that particular area, and institutional outcomes for the college. Instead of asking people to re-enter all their data, we are content to let each group manage their information and processes, with some guidance from the assessment committee and academic leadership. This year, however, we will layer a second electronic form to record consistently that 1) each group has met annually to discuss assessment 2) each group has reviewed current assessment activities and results 3) each group has a plan for improvement and continued learning outcomes assessment going forward.
2. Consider administering “Stages of Concern” Questionnaire to faculty (UT Austin) to assess as an institution where our faculty and staff are with respect to understanding and participating in assessment.
3. Meet the following central goals: 1) Improved reporting; 2) Refine and consolidate processes; 3) Improved communication and training for all