# HWC Student Assessment Progress 2007-2008 Report

The Harold Washington College Assessment Committee (AC) made several major changes during the 2007-2008 college school year to improve the Harold Washington College (HWC) Assessment Program.

1. The Assessment Committee updated its charge (Attachment 1). The Assessment Committee is no longer a sub-committee of the Faculty Council. It is a standalone committee responsible for the Assessment of HWC General Education Student Learning Outcomes. It now advises the council, department chairs and administration on assessment across HWC.

2. The AC has instituted a continuous improvement program for assessing student learning outcomes. It has revised the assessment schedule to reflect a continuous quality improvement cycle where we assess, improve, measure and repeat. The steps for each assessment are:

   **A. Outcome Definition** *Formulate and approve specific general education student learning outcomes.*

   **B. Assessment Research and Design:** *Find or create appropriate tools and process for our specific outcomes and context.*

   **C. Pilot Assessment Tools and Process:** *Faculty and a small number of student sections was used for our design purposes.*

   **D. Administer Specific Assessment:** *Recruit faculty and sections, ensure sample size, and conduct testing process.*

   **E. Data Analysis:** *Data input, reliability and validity checks, produce analyzed and usable data.*

   **F. Supporting Evidence-Based Change:** *Partner with others to recommend change. Review SLO and restart assessment process*.

3. The committee has instituted a seven year assessment cycle to reflect on going assessment of the seven general education Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). The 2007-2014 plan is shown in Attachment 2.

4. The General Education Outcomes the AC focused on in 2007-2008 were: Humanities, Math, Science, Information Literacy and Student Engagement.

A. **Outcome Definition**: The Committee developed of SLOs for Math and Information Literacy during the Spring and Summer of 2008. Attachments 3 and 4 are the Student Learning Outcomes

**B. Assessment Research and Design:** The AC Math sub team has identified 3 possible tools for the HWC Math assessment scheduled for Fall 2008. The committee will make a final decision in Fall 2008 on the tools.

HWC will participate in the 2009 Community College Survey of Student Engagement. Recommendations have been made based on analysis of the 2005 CCSSE (Attachment 3). These recommendations are discussed under item G: Evidence Based Change.

The Information Literacy assessment from 2004 using the SAILS () analysis tool was reviewed (Attachment 4). These recommendations are also discussed in item G.

Formal assessment at HWC has extended beyond the institutional level to the department and program. The AC works closely with programs and departments developing their assessment plans. During the Summer 2008 term several departments worked on their plans (Applied Science, Business, CIS, Library and Social Science (Attachment 5). The AC has also partner with the HWC Administration in the delivery of the voluntary Friday Assessment Labs (Attachment 6).

**C. Pilot Assessment Tools and Process:** The Science Assessment tool EBAPS (Epistemological Beliefs Assessment for Physical Science) was piloted in Spring 2008. The pilot of the EBAPS assessment was administered in four class sections, including Business, Chemistry, Child Development, and Physical Science. The assessment consisted of the student demographics survey similar to the one used for the Humanities Assessment in addition to the general science version of EBAPS. (Attachment 7)

**D. Administer Specific Assessment:** The Humanities Assessment was completed in Spring 2007. Students were asked to write surveys about 3 works of art: poetry (), Visual () and music (Jimmy Hendrix Star Spangled Banner). A copy of the report is in Attachment 8.

**E. Data Analysis:** The Humanities data analysis is in progress. Some initial findings are:

- Most of our students chose the musical (46.8%) artifact over written (24.4%) or visual (28.6%). Further analysis is required to determine if this is indicative of how HWC students learn.

- The artifacts used should be changed to ensure the artifact name recognition does not skew results
- Students will be asked to write only one essay. This should improve essay quality and decrease the cost of review.
- Technology needs to added to HWC assessment tools to enhance expediency, reliability, and security.

**G. Supporting Evidence-Based Change:** The AC worked on several projects to implement change to ensure continuous improvement in student learning at HWC.

- Humanities - see above
- Diversity
  - Standing College Diversity Committee
- CCSSEE -
  - Define representative student population sample
  - Follow up on Customer Service
  - Establish goal for 2009 student satisfaction
- SAILS
- Critical Thinking (Attachment 9)
  - New approaches to teaching critical thinking skills such as inductive and deductive reasoning.
  - Introduce critical thinking during student orientation
  - Allow part time faculty to participate in professional development workshops on critical thinking.

5. The Community Colleges of Chicago has hired an outside agency (April 23 minutes) to administer, collect and analyze data for CCC assessments

6. The Assessment Committee has been very active during 2007 – 2008. The assessment of all of HWC General Education outcomes is in process. The AC is actively working with departments and programs on their assessment plans and activities. Several committee members worked the Summer of 2008 on data analysis. This has increased time demands on all AC team members.

7. HWC assessment team members (Carrie, Jennifer and Todd) made various presentations, including at HWC during Assessment Week in November 2007 on the Diversity and Humanities data.

8. It is recommended that HWC Administration develop a full-time position at HWC to focus on assessment to continue to enhance and improve the HWC assessment program. The current faculty based AC does not have the time to fully analyze all the assessment data, make change recommendations, implement these changes and monitor the improvements. The AC would remain in existence working with departments and administration.

## Attachments

1. Assessment Charge
2. Harold Washington College Assessment Schedule
3. CCSSE 2005 Analysis
4. SAILS 2004 Analysis
5. Summer 2008 Assessment Projects
6. HWC Friday Lab
7. Science Assessment
8. Humanities Assessment Analysis
9. Critical thinking Analysis

Attachment 1

# Harold Washington College Assessment Committee Charge

Abstract
The Assessment Committee at Harold Washington College is an interdisciplinary group composed of faculty, professional and clerical staff, students, and administrators who collect, review, analyze, and disseminate data on the educational experiences of the college community in an effort to maintain high standards for learning quality and, ultimately, improve student learning.

The Harold Washington College (HWC) Assessment Committee is committed to maintaining a campus culture focused on learning in which faculty, students, and the administration share a common understanding of the meaning, purpose, and utility of assessment. It recognizes that for the faculty to be successful in this endeavor there must be meaningful input from students and strong support from the Administration. The HWC Assessment Committee characterizes assessment of student learning as a comprehensive process that is ongoing, systematic, structured, and sustainable.

To be effective, the assessment process involves:

1) Establishing faculty expectations for student learning and attainment that are explicitly and publicly stated and that set standards for the quality of the learning experience as well as the quality of learning outcomes.
2) Aligning assessment activities, methods, and instruments with the learning outcomes expected by the faculty.
3) Gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence of student development and attainment to determine how well their performance aligns with faculty's stated expectations and standards.
4) Using assessment information from both direct and indirect measures:
    a) To understand how, when, and where learning takes place
    b) To identify in what areas and for which students learning needs to be improved
    c) To encourage efforts to make changes in modes of instruction, program curricula, learning resources, and support services designed to improve student learning
    d) To create and sustain an institutional culture in which it is the College's priority to assure and improve the quality of education each academic program promises and offers

## ***Directive***

The HWC Assessment Committee is dedicated to the improvement of student learning through the meaningful utilization of assessment data in an effort to support the HWC community towards the evolution of college curriculum. As outlined in this charge, the HWC Assessment Committee is committed to defining assessment at Harold Washington College, as well as establishing and ensuring that appropriate assessment procedures and practices are followed in collecting, reviewing, analyzing and disseminating information/data on assessment. Finally, the HWC Assessment Committee is responsible for providing a forum for dialogue regarding assessment issues to support a college culture, which includes the assessment process.

I. HWC Assessment Committee Membership
    A. Voting Members
        1. At least one and not more than two full-time faculty members from each department appointed by the respective Department Chair.
        2. Dean of Instruction
        3. One student member recommended by the faculty
        4. One representative from Faculty Council, appointed by the Faculty Council

    B. *Ex Officio*
        1. Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs

II. Relationship to the Faculty Council

A. The purpose of the Faculty Council's representation on the Assessment Committee is to ensure open communication regarding the accomplishments and concerns of the faculty
    1. Design assessment strategies/plans
    2. Collect and analyze assessment data
    3. Interpret assessment data with the overall purpose of improving student learning

B. The Assessment Committee and Faculty Council will collaboratively nurture a college culture, which honors assessment and together will monitor the general effect of assessment activities on the academic culture of the college

C. The Assessment Committee and Faculty Council will strive to provide opportunities for faculty to dialogue regarding various assessment components
    1. Assessment activities
    2. Assessment data and subsequent interpretation of data
    3. Implementing informed, meaningful change to improve student learning

III. Relationship to the Academic Departments

A. Disseminate information on current trends in assessment

B. Provide assistance, in terms of assessment, to a department or to an individual faculty member upon request

C. Review Departmental Assessment Plans for the purpose of providing suggestions

D. Collect and provide feedback on Annual Departmental Assessment Progress Reports submitted by Department Chairs

E The Annual Assessment Report will be submitted formally to the Department Chairs

IV. Relationship to the Office of the Chief Academic Officer (CAO)

A. Make recommendations to the CAO for modification in current assessment process, procedures and policies

B. Make recommendations to the CAO for integrating assessment and academic program review into the planning and budgeting calendar at the institutional level

C. Based on the assessment data, make recommendations to the CAO regarding the improvement of student learning through pedagogy, curriculum and instructional resources

VI. Committee Responsibilities

A. Create and maintain a yearly Assessment Calendar

B. Maintain a glossary of terms in support of assessment policies and procedures

C. Develop and disseminate Assessment resources
    2. Maintain the Assessment Website
    3. Develop and maintain an Assessment Newsletter

D. Form Interdisciplinary work groups on an ad hoc basis

E. Assessment Week activities
    1. Include planning for Assessment Week in the yearly Assessment Calendar
    2. Administer assessment tools during Assessment Week
    3. Coordinate data collection
    4. Disseminate results

F. Collect Annual Departmental Assessment Progress Reports
    1. Provide report format
    2. Provide feedback to the departments

G. Compile public Annual Assessment Report and formally submit to the CAO, President and Faculty Council and share with key constituents

VII. The Assessment Committee Chair (6 hours of release time)

A. Must be a tenured, full-time HWC faculty member

B. Nominated and elected by members of the Assessment Committee during the spring semester and serve for one year.
C. Set the agenda for regularly scheduled Assessment Committee meetings
D. Preside over Assessment committee meetings using procedures in Robert's Rules of Order
E. Oversee the development, distribution and implementation of the Assessment Calendar working with the Dean of Instruction and the Vice President of Academic Affairs
F. Provide oversight for persons and offices charged with collecting, analyzing and disseminating assessment data
G. Coordinate the processes involved in acting on assessment data
H. Coordinate and maintain lines of communication between the Assessment Committee and internal HWC constituents
I. Act as liaison between the Assessment Committee and the HWC Administrative and Academic officers
J. Write the public Annual Assessment Report, which describes the year's outcomes regarding the assessment of student learning at HWC
K. Formally submit the Annual Assessment Report to the CAO, President and key constituents
L. Work with the Dean of Instruction and the Vice President of Academic Affairs to implement evidence based changes identified by assessment data

VIII. Vice-Chair (3 hours release time)

A. Must be a full-time HWC faculty member
B. Nominated and elected by members of the Assessment Committee before the end of spring semester
C. Provide direct support to subcommittee work
D. Coordinate the dissemination of assessment resources to the Harold Washington College community
    1. Maintain and revise the HWC Assessment Website
    2. Coordinate the creation and maintenance of a periodic Assessment Newsletter targeting faculty, administration, students and professional staff for the purpose of informing the college community of ongoing assessment activities

E. Support the Assessment Committee Chair in communicating with the Department Chairs regarding assessment results at the departmental level

IX. Secretary

A. Nominated and elected by members of the Assessment Committee on an annual basis
B. Take minutes during the Assessment Committee meetings and disseminate to Assessment Committee members
C. Disseminate information generated at Assessment Committee meetings
D. Maintain current Assessment Committee roster

X. Election of Officers - Officers are elected in the spring semester.

Attachment 2

# Harold Washington College Assessment Committee – 2003-2007 Schedule

| Assessment Process | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 | Spring 2005 | Fall 2005 | Spring 2006 | Fall 2006 | Spring 2007 | Fall 2007 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Outcome Definition** Formulate and approve specific general education student learning outcomes. | **Diversity (06)** | | | **Humanities (07)** | | | | |
| **Assessment Research and Design** Find or Create appropriate tools and process for our specific outcomes and context. | | **Diversity (06)** | | | **Humanities (07)** | | | |
| **Pilot Assessment Review Tools and Process.** Faculty and small number of student sections used for our design purposes. | | | **Diversity (06)** | | | **Humanities (07)** | | |
| **Administer Specific Assessment** Recruit faculty and sections, ensure sample size, and conduct testing process. | **Critical Thinking (CCTST)(03)** | **Information Literacy (SAILS)(04)** | **Student Engagement (CCSSE) (05)** | **Diversity (06)** | **Critical Thinking (CCTST) (06)** | | **Humanities (07)** | |
| **Data Analysis** Data input, reliability, tool review and validity checks, produce analyzed and usable data. | | | | | **Diversity (06)** | | | |
| **Supporting Evidence-Based Change** Partner with others to recommend change. Review SLO and restart assessment process. | | | | | | | | |

Attachment 2

# Harold Washington College Assessment Committee –2008-2011 Schedule

| Assessment Process | Spring 2008 | Summer 2008 | Fall 2008 | Spring 2009 | Summer 2009 | Fall 2009 | Spring 2010 | Summer 2010 | Fall 2011 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Outcome Definition** Formulate and approve specific general education student learning outcomes. | **Math (09)** | **Info Literacy** | **Social Science** | **Writing Across the Curriculum** | | | | | |
| **Assessment Research and Design** Find or Create appropriate tools and process for our specific outcomes and context. | **Math (09)** | **Math (09) CCSSE (09) Info Literacy** | | **Social Science** | | **Writing Across the Curriculum** | | | |
| **Pilot Assessment Review Tools and Process.** Faculty and small number of student sections used for our design purposes. | **Science (08)** | | **Math (09)** | **CCSSE (09)** | | | **Social Science** | | **Writing Across the Curriculum** |
| **Administer Specific Assessment** Recruit faculty and sections, ensure sample size, and conduct testing process. | | | **Science (08)** | **CCSSE (09)** | | **Math (09)** | | | **Social Science** |
| **Data Analysis** Data input, reliability, tool review and validity checks, produce analyzed and usable data. | **Humanities (07)** | **Humanities (07) Diversity (06) CCSSE (05) SAILS (04)** | | **Science (08)** | **Science (08)** | **CCSSE (09)** | **Math (09)** | **Math (09)** | **Social Science** |
| **Supporting Evidence-Based Change** Partner with others to recommend change. Review SLO and restart assessment process. | | | **Humanities (07) Diversity (06) CCSSE(05) SAILS (04)** | | | **Science (08) CCSSE (09)** | **Science (08)** | | **Math (09)** |

Attachment 2

# Harold Washington College Assessment Committee – 2011-2014 Schedule

| Assessment Process | Spring 2011 | Summer 2011 | Fall 2012 | Spring 2012 | Summer 2012 | Fall 2013 | Spring 2013 | Summer 2013 | Fall 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Outcome Definition** Formulate and approve specific general education student learning outcomes. | | | | | | | | | |
| **Assessment Research and Design** Find or Create appropriate tools and process for our specific outcomes and context. | | | | | | | | | |
| **Pilot Assessment Review Tools and Process.** Faculty and small number of student sections used for our design purposes. | | | | | | | | | |
| **Administer Specific Assessment** Recruit faculty and sections, ensure sample size, and conduct testing process. | **Writing Across the Curriculum** | | | | | | | | |
| **Data Analysis** Data input, reliability, tool review and validity checks, produce analyzed and usable data. | **Social Science** | **Writing Across the Curriculum** | | | | | | | |
| **Supporting Evidence-Based Change** Partner with others to recommend change. Review SLO and restart assessment process. | | | **Social Science Writing Across the Curriculum** | | | | | | |

**Attachment 3**

# HWC Student Engagement Assessment Process

**A. Outcome Definition** *Formulate and approve specific general education student learning outcomes.*

Student Engagement is not one of HWC's General Education Objectives. Therefore specific student learning outcomes were not defined for Student Engagement. The makers of CCSSE, University of Texas Austin, have provided a definition for engagement, which HWC adopted verbatim. The Assessment Committee, along with the Office for Institutional Research, the Dean of Instruction, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs, understand that student engagement is an essential key to student persistence and student success.

**B. Assessment Research and Design:** *Find or create appropriate tools and process for our specific outcomes and context.*

During the Fall 2004 semester, due to HWC's partnership with a teaching project at Loyola University, the Community College Learning and Teaching program (CCLT), the university afforded the HWC Assessment Committee the opportunity to administer the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The Fund for the Improvement of Secondary Education (FIPSE) funded the Loyola CCLT project which paid for HWC's administration of this tool. FIPSE requested an over sampling of the HWC instructors who were participants in the CCLT group.

The *CCSSE* is a 45-item, indirect measure of student learning, which asks students about their college experiences — how they spend their time; what they feel they have gained from their classes; how they assess their relationships and interactions with faculty, counselors, and peers; what kinds of work they are challenged to do; and how the college supports their learning.

The HWC Assessment Committee agreed to these terms and administered the survey during the Spring 2005 Assessment Week. Additionally, the Assessment Committee approved over sampling for Child Development Students and for students enrolled in Art classes (12/8/04).

All faculty, staff, and administrators were invited to attend workshops focusing on student engagement on January 25th and 26th 2005. These workshops took place prior to the administration of the CCSSE in an effort to get information to the college community regarding the importance of student engagement to the learning process.

**C. Pilot Assessment Tools and Process:** *Faculty and a small number of student sections were used for our design purposes.*

During the Spring 2005 Assessment Week, 100 students were randomly selected by the CCSSE administrators to participate in this 45-minute survey. HWC also chose to over-sample three separate student populations: art students, child development students, and students in courses taught by instructors who had participated in or were presently enrolled in Loyola University's *Community College Learning and Teaching* program.

The University of Texas at Austin reported the CCSSE data for HWC students and comparison data for two 2005 consortia, Illinois community colleges and 15 HIS (Hispanic Serving) /HACU (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities) colleges. Assessment Committee members and administration felt that comparisons with Illinois community college were more meaningful than with the other consortium since HWC is not an H.I.S. institution, although the College does hold membership in HACU.

**D. Administer Specific Assessment:** *Recruit faculty and sections, ensure sample size, and conduct testing process.*

The University of Texas at Austin randomly chose 100 HWC students to participate in the 2005 administration of the CCSSE.

**E. Data Analysis:** *Data input, reliability and validity checks, produce analyzed and usable data.*

The overall data indicate eleven areas in which HWC students rated their experiences at HWC significantly *above* the mean and seven areas which they rated as significantly *below* the mean in comparison to the Illinois Community College Consortium (n=10) and the total number of community colleges (n=257) that participated in the Spring 2005 administration of the CCSSE.

According to CCSSE data, HWC students rated their satisfaction with academic activities and resources and student services as significantly *above* the mean, as compared to the colleges in the Illinois Consortium in six areas that covered twenty-six items. The ten Illinois community Colleges were Black Hawk College, College of Lake County, Kankakee CC, Lincoln Land CC, Moraine Valley CC, Parkland College, Rend Lake College, South Suburban College, and Wilbur Wright College.

According to the CCSSE, the "items listed are significant at $p < .001$ with an effect size greater than or equal to .2, with the effect size representing the magnitude of the discrepancy between HWC and the Illinois comparison group in the student and institutional behavior represented by the item.

The numbers and letters for each item refer to topical areas for that item. The asterisk (*****) after each item indicates practical and statistical significance for full-time students, part-time students, or both:

| HWC Student Scores Significantly ***ABOVE*** the Mean in Comparison with Students Enrolled in Ten Illinois Community Colleges | | |
|---|---|---|
| **College Activities:** | **Part-Time** | **Full-Time** |
| 4k. Used email to communicate with an instructor | * | * |
| 4r. Discussed ideas from your reading or classes with others outside of class. | * | |
| 4s. Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own. | * | * |
| 4t. Had serious conversations with students who differ from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values. | * | |
| 5c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways. | * | |
| 5d. Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods. | * | |
| 5e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations. | * | |
| 6b. Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment. | * | * |
| | | |
| **Opinions About Your School:** | | |
| 9c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic background. | * | |
| | | |
| **Weekly Activities:** | | |
| 10e. Commuting to and from classes | * | * |
| | | |
| **Educational and Personal Growth:** | | |
| 12j. Understanding yourself | | * |
| 12k. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. | * | * |
| 12l. Developing a personal code of values and ethics. | | * |
| | | |
| **Student Services:** | **Part-Time** | **Full-Time** |
| 13d1. Frequency: Peer or other tutoring | | * |
| 13e1. Frequency: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.) | | * |
| 13f1. Frequency: Child Care | | * |
| 13g1. Frequency: Financial aid advising | | * |
| 13h1. Frequency: Computer lab | | * |
| 13k1. Frequency: Services to students with disabilities | | * |
| 13c3. Importance: Job placement assistance | | * |
| 13d3. Importance: Peer or other tutoring | | * |
| 13e3. Importance: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.) | | * |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 13g3. Importance: Financial Aid advising | | * |
| 13d3. Importance: Computer lab | | * |
| 13d3. Importance: Student organizations | | * |
| | | |
| **College Experiences:** | | |
| 14e. Transfer to a 4-year college or university | * | |

Data from HWC's *Human Diversity Survey* corroborates the significant finding from the CCSSE regarding items (4s, 9c, 12k) dealing with race and ethnicity. Although the College does have a significant number of students, faculty, and administrators of color, faculty work hard to incorporate issues of culture and diversity as appropriate in their course materials, lectures, assignments, and activities. Since critical thinking is stressed across the entire credit curriculum, faculty were pleased that student perceptions of that construct (as suggested by items 5c, 5d, and 5e) were positive and significant.

Of concern are the responses from part-time students for the items under "Student Services." Full-time students rated the student services that are cited above as significant in their "Frequency" and "Importance" in comparison to those services offered at ten Illinois community colleges. However part-time students did not. The Vice President has requested that the Dean of Student Services consider those data and determine what services need to be made more accessible to part-time students and what strategies could assist part-time students in being more aware of the services that are available to them.

Four of the seven areas rated as below the mean of all participating colleges are of particular interest to this study since all four deal with areas mentioned by students who participated in the Spring 2006 Customer Satisfaction focus groups and subsequent on-line survey. According to CCSSE results, HWC students rated their experiences at Harold Washington College as significantly *below* the mean in four topical areas, which accounted for eight items. The topical areas and items are listed below:

| HWC Student Scores Significantly ***BELOW*** the Mean in Comparison with Students Enrolled in Ten Illinois Community Colleges | **Part-Time** | **Full-Time** |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| **Weekly Activities:** | | |
| 10b. Working for pay | | * |
| 11c. Relationships with administrative personnel and offices | * | * |
| | | |
| **Educational and Personal Growth:** | | |
| 12b. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills | | * |
| | | |
| **Student Services:** | | |
| 13a2. Satisfaction: Academic advising / planning | * | * |
| 13b2. Satisfaction: Career counseling | | * |
| 13j2. Satisfaction: Transfer credit assistance | | * |
| | | |
| **College Experiences:** | | |
| 23. How many TOTAL credit hours have you earned at this college, not counting the courses you are currently taking this term? | * | * |
| 27. How would you evaluate your entire experience at this college? | * | * |
| | | |

**Weekly Activities** – Most students in the CCSSE sample (100 students) did not work (Item 10b). However, 70% of the students in the HWC student population profile (Attachment 2) were employed. The Fall 2006 HWC Registration survey indicated that 56% of students did no attend the orientation workshop and 56% of students surveyed did not use the Office of Dean of student services. This correlates with the result on relationships with administrative personnel (Item 11c).

**Educational and Personal Growth** – In the HWC Fall 2005 Student Profile (Attachment 2), .5 % of students indicated their education intent/goal was "To improve present job skills" and an additional .5% said "To prepare for future job immediately". Only 1% of HWC students surveyed were interested in job or work related knowledge.

**Student Services** - Student dissatisfaction with "Student Services" (Items 13a) is a misnomer since at HWC "academic advising/planning" is a service performed by Academic Advisors as part of their job and by faculty as part of their contractual obligations for registration week and office hours. In response, administration and faculty instituted for Fall 2006 half-day training workshops on academic advising that were mandated for all faculty and Academic Advisors. The workshops were led by the Dean of Student Services, staff, and faculty who have been acknowledged as being particularly successful in advising students.

The College plans to continue offering training workshops on academic advising online and prior to each semester's registration. Items 13a and 13b have received the focused attention of

administration and Student Services staff. In order to determine why students rated their entire HWC experience less positively than the comparison consortium (item 27), administration conducted an on-line survey (Spring 2006) and a series of focus groups with students.

During the Fall 2005 Professional Development Week in August, CCSSE data were presented to full-time and adjunct HWC faculty. The data from the CCSSE were compared with the results from a subsequent in-house survey, which was prompted by a student's complaint in the student paper about problems with the registration process and customer service. President Wozniak called on the campus community to focus on retention efforts, especially as they related to customer service. He commissioned a series of focus groups conducted with students (Spring 2006) to get at the reasons for their dissatisfaction with student services, such as registration and learning resources such as tutoring services.

**College Experience** – Most of the students in the CCSSE sample were from the Art and Child Development programs. These were both new programs in 2004 Art and Child Development. This directly correlates to the responses showing less total credit hours and a limited exposure to the college at the time of the CCSSE Survey.

**CCFSSE** - After the administration of the CCSSE, faculty members were encouraged to complete on line the CCSSE's companion survey, the *Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement* (CCFSSE). Of the 99 full-time faculty employed Spring 2005, 68 (67%) completed the CCFSSE. Of the 68, 27 were part-time and 41 were full-time.

***Selected Results from the2005 Administration of the CCFSSE***

The Assessment Committee examined faculty responses to those CCFSSE questions that have the most influence on student learning. The frequency distribution for a select number of questions follows:

| CCFSSE Question | Range | Count | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| How much do you incorporate the use of academic advising into your selected course section? | Sometimes<br>Often | 36 | 48% |
| How much do you incorporate peer or other tutoring into your course section? | Sometimes<br>Often | 51 | 75% |
| How much do you incorporate the use of skills labs (writing, math, etc.) into your course section? | Sometimes<br>Often | 39 | 57% |
| How much do you incorporate the use of computer labs into your course section? | Sometimes<br>Often | 52 | 77% |
| About how many hours to you spend in a typical 7-day week advising students? | 1 to 4<br>5 to 8 | 45<br>11 | 66%<br>16% |
| About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week involved in other interactions with students outside the classroom? | 1 to 4<br>5 to 8 | 32<br>12 | 47%<br>18% |
| During the current academic year, is **team teaching** part of your teaching role at this college? | No<br>Yes | 60<br>8 | 88%<br>12% |
| During the current academic year, are **linked courses** parts of your teaching role at this college? | No<br>Yes | 60<br>8 | 88%<br>12% |
| During the current academic year, are **learning communities** part of your teaching role at this college? | No<br>Yes | 59<br>9 | 87%<br>13% |
| During the current academic year, are **capstone courses** parts of your teaching role at this college? | No<br>Yes | 62<br>6 | 91%<br>9% |
| During the current academic year, is **academic advising** part of your teaching role at this college? | No<br>Yes | 37<br>31 | 54%<br>46% |
| During the current academic year, are **distance learning courses** part of your teaching role at this college? | No<br>Yes | 59<br>9 | 87%<br>13% |
| During the current academic year, is **service learning** part of your teaching role at this college? | No<br>Yes | 63<br>5 | 93%<br>7% |

The above frequency distributions suggest that in addition to the training of faculty to advise students, more work needs to be accomplished with both our academic advisors and the faculty on issues dealing with academic advising during the semester and during registration.

During Fall 2005 workshops on the results of the CCSSE, faculty also received and discussed data from the CCFSSE. A useful discussion ensued about the comparison of the CCSSE data with those of the CCFSSE, with most seeking to find solutions for how the entire HWC community can improve customer service, student services, and academic advising rather than trying to ascribe blame.

The Assessment Committee members as well as the faculty present at the workshops expressed surprise at the variance in answers between faculty perceptions and student perceptions on engagement. For example, in answer to the question, "How often do students ask questions or contribute to class discussions?", 65% of faculty chose "very often" as compared to 33% of students reporting "very often". In answer to another question, "How often do students in your class skip class?", only 1% of faculty reported "never" compared to 55% of students reporting "never". These differences of perception provided rich material for discussion among faculty during professional development week.

**H. Supporting Evidence-Based Change:** *Partner with others to recommend change. Review SLO and restart assessment process*.

1. **HWC will participate in CCSSE again in Spring 2010**

2. **Review student profile -** Child Development and Arts represent <3% of the total HWC student population. (Attachment 1)

3. **Does sample reflect population – CCSSE chose the** sample size of 100 students out of 15,693 students. This sample was chosen from primarily 2 programs. A larger more diverse sample may give different results reflecting the total HWC student poplation.

4. **Re-Analyze 2004 CCSSE results from sample perspective vs population perspective -** The 2004 CSSE results may not really reflect the student satisfaction with HWC. It was focused only 2 programs (Arts and Child Development). For example program participants (10b) were employed significantly below the other schools in the survey. The HWC student profile (Attachment 2) shows 70% of our students were employed full or part time.

5. **Re-Analyze 2004 CCFSSE results -** The 68 faculty completing this survey were from all programs. These data is more representative of the entire HWC population and students.

6. **Follow up on Customer Service -** City Colleges of Chicago conducted a district wide Credit Student Satisfaction Survey (Attachment 3) in Spring 2006. HWC achieved a 70% student satisfaction rating compared to an overall CCC district wide student satisfaction rating of 67%. This is a better comparison for HWC. The ten Illinois community Colleges were: Black Hawk College – Moline, College of Lake County – Grayslake, Kankakee CC – Kankakee, Lincoln Land CC – Springfield, Moraine Valley CC - Palos Hills, Parkland College – Champaign, Rend Lake College - Ina, South Suburban College - South Holland and Wilbur Wright College – Chicago. All of these colleges are non metropolitan except Wilbur Wright. In the Spring 2006 survey Wilbur Wright scored 78% in overall student satisfaction.

7. **Follow up on registration and advising -** Fall 2006 Harold Washington College conducted a Registration Survey (Attachment 4). A sample of 20.3% (1473 students) was surveyed. HWC continued to achieve a 70% satisfaction rating. The 70% satisfaction rating may have been because only 42% of students (New and Continuing) attended the orientation workshop and learned what resources (advisors, student services, deans, etc.) were available to assist them during registration.

8. **Recommend sample format for 2009 -** The Spring 2009 sample for the CSSEE should be at least .05-1 %( 750-1569 students) of the overall student body to be a statistically significant sample. These students should be drawn from all programs (Art s1%, Health 1%, Transportation 20%, Business 6%, Child Development 2%, Food Sanitation 9%, Public Safety 6%, IT 1%, Transfer 53%) to ensure a true measurement of HWC student body satisfaction

9. **Recommend focus for 2009 -** HWC has not requested any additional questions be added to the 2009 CCSSE survey tool. HWC will focus on improving overall student satisfaction with registration, billing, financial aid, college advising services, career planning, and transfer related services

10. **Goal for 2009 student result -** HWC should strive to achieve at least 75% overall student satisfaction rating. This would be a 5% increase. The stretch goal should be 80%, a 10% increase. To achieve this goal HWC needs to simplify registration, improve billing, increase financial aid options, expand college advising services, increase career planning counseling, and improve transfer related services to increase overall student satisfaction.

## Attachment 4

**SAILS**

**Attachment 5**

## HWC Assessment Summer 2008 Projects

1. **Assessment Committee Process Projects**
    a. **Assessment Research and Design – Find, Create, or Evaluate Tools**
        - Math
        - CCSSE
        - Information Literacy
    b. **Data Analysis – Analyze data for reliability and validity and develop recommendations for change**
        - Diversity
        - Humanities
        - CCSSE
        - SAILS
        - Critical Thinking
    c. **Evidence Based change – document evidence of change**
        - Diversity
        - Humanities
        - CCSSE
        - SAILS
        - Critical Thinking
    d. **Develop 2008 Assessment Report**
        - Status report
        - Calendars (2006-2008, 2008-2010, 2010-2012)
    e. **Redesign Assessment Website**
        - Content and Format
        - Technical Coding and design

2. **Departmental Assessments**
    a. **Applied Science Department**
        - Criminal Justice
    b. **Business/CIS Department Programs**
        - Accounting
        - Business Administration
        - Management/Marketing
        - Hospitality Management
        - CIS
    c. **Library Science Department**
    d. **Social Science Department**
        - Social Science
        - AAT Degree

## Attachment 6 Friday Labs

Friday Labs Agenda
September 5, 2008 – Correlating Mission Statements, Objectives, and Outcomes
**Facilitator: Anita Kelley**

**Objectives**

- To review each departmental mission statement to ensure that it correlates both with the CCC and the HWC mission statements;
- To develop from the departmental mission statement as well as from the general education objectives the following:
    - Department or program objectives
    - Department or program student learning outcomes
- To clearly define department or program objectives and student learning outcomes as opposed to course objectives and student learning outcomes or institutional-level objectives and outcomes.

**Learning Outcome**

At the end of this workshop, participants will have revised or drafted their departmental/program mission statements as well as their departmental/program objectives and outcomes to be discussed and approved by their departments.

**Materials**

1. **Departmental Mission Statements handout**
2. **Glossary of Terms handout**
3. **HWC Mission Statement handout** (from 2008-2010 catalog)
4. **General Education Outcomes handout** (from 2008-2010 catalog)
5. **Departmental Assessment Plan Summaries as of Spring 2008** – Please see me to look at your individual department or plan.
6. **Worksheets on Developing Goals and Outcomes from University of Central Florida** – for review, discussion, and use(?). The electronic copy is at (*oeas.ucf.edu/doc/acad_assess_**handbook**.pdf)*

**Attendees**

Todd Heldt
LaRhue Finney
John Kieraldo
Anita Kelley
Rosie Banks
Ivanhoe Tejeda
Farahnaz Movahedzadeh
Anthony Escuadro
Michal Eskayo
Myra Cox

**Agenda**

1. Introductions & Purpose of Friday Labs – **Rosie briefly discussed the purpose of Friday Labs and invited all attendees to share what their department or program was doing towards assessment. Most were well past drafting the mission statement and the outcomes/objectives.**
2. Anita Kelley – **did an excellent job presenting how to correlate mission statements, outcomes, and objectives with CCC and HWC mission statements, outcomes, and objectives. There was much discussion.**
3. **Todd Heldt discussed the new Library Assessment website.**
4. **Rosie distributed some handouts as listed above. She promised to attach the same documents for all Friday Labs participants. The 2008-2010 catalog is online, so all documents derived from the catalog can be obtained online.**
5. Setting agenda for October's meeting –
    a. The meeting will be **Thursday, October 2, 2008 from 2-4pm**.
    **b. Agenda**
        i. Presentation on English 101 and 102 SLOs – LaRhue Finney
        ii. General Discussion of the concept of Assessment Plans
        iii. Cases in Assessment – Michal Eskayo and LaRhue Finney
        iv. How to work with numerical assessment data – Anthony Escuadro

## Attachment 7 Science Assessment

# GEMS Report – May 2008
# Outcome Definition and Assessment Research for the Natural Sciences General Education Objective

**Outcome Definition**

During the Fall 2006 semester, the Assessment Committee initiated the re-evaluation of the Natural Sciences General Education Objective, a process that involved writing a definition and student learning outcomes appropriate for this objective. On October 31, 2007, the Assessment Committee approved the definition and student learning outcomes as shown below:

Definition
The Natural Sciences encompass the life sciences (Biology, Zoology, and Botany) and the physical sciences (Physics, Chemistry, and Earth Sciences - Geology, Meteorology Oceanography and Astronomy). The Scientific Method is the process used to explore nature, and it is based on observations, predictions, experimental investigations, and theoretical explanations of natural phenomena. Application of the scientific method reveals patterns in the observed phenomena, which leads to the fundamental concepts, theories, and laws of the life and physical sciences.

Student Learning Outcomes
The student will be able to:

1. Formulate reasonable explanations of natural phenomena based on thorough observations.
2. Interpret and articulate scientific results that are presented in verbal, graphic and/or tabular form.
3. Critically evaluate scientific resources and scientific claims presented in the media.
4. Apply steps of the scientific method to solve problems.

In addition to the approval of the definition and student learning outcomes, a change was proposed to the Natural Sciences General Education Objective. The proposal is "To apply the scientific method to biological, physical, and environmental systems." The current objective reads "To understand the major principles of the natural sciences and the application of the scientific method to biological, physical, and environmental systems."

**GEMS**

The subcommittee (lovingly called GEMS – General Education Math and Science) consisted of Chao Lu, Liliana Marin, Carrie Nepstad, Dana Perry, Chris Sabino, and Glenn Weller. During the process of developing the definition and student learning outcomes, GEMS reviewed the outcomes of a few other colleges (Mesa Community College, Tacoma Community College, and College of Mount St. Joseph, for example) in addition to including the Physical Science and Biology department chairs.

GEMS decided an important component to emphasize with this objective was that science involves a process, formally called the scientific method, which includes observation, experimentation, and explanation. This process is stated in the approved definition, the student learning outcomes, and is the basis for the proposed change to the objective. Moreover, the wording change in the objective was proposed because students earning an AA degree are not necessarily exposed to "the major principles of the natural sciences."

To earn an AA degree, students need to complete two science courses, one biological and one physical, one of which needs to include a laboratory. So, a student can earn an AA degree by taking astronomy and general education biology (with lab), whereas another student can take chemistry (with lab) and nutrition. Both students fulfill the general education natural sciences requirement; however, they are exposed to completely different disciplines and may have different ideas of the major principles of science from those disciplines. However, both students should have been exposed to the scientific method through those courses.

**Assessment Research and Design**

With the process of science a central theme of the Natural Sciences General Education Objective, GEMS focused the research of an assessment tool on assessing science as a process. GEMS considered several assessment tools and ultimately chose EBAPS (Epistemological Beliefs Assessment for Physical Science), which measures student beliefs of science and of learning science.

The Assessment Committee had discussed several criteria for an assessment tool. The assessment tool should: 1) be aligned with the approved student learning outcomes; 2) be appropriate for the Harold Washington College student population; 3) provide useful data; 4) be time efficient to fit within a class period; and 5) be accessible.

Initially, GEMS planned to design a homemade tool to meet these criteria, using the Humanities tool as a model. We discussed including three articles from three different science sub-disciplines (Physical Science, Environmental Science, Biology) and having students choose one on which to answer questions. Over time, however, we realized the difficulty in writing questions that address how a student understands and applies the scientific method. Moreover, because of the multiple science disciplines, choosing articles seemed problematic. The following excerpt from the Assessment Committee minutes from 1/30/08 explains the change in direction toward an attitudinal survey:

> ***GEMS (Chao, Chris, Dana, Liliana)***
> *The committee discussed at length the timeline for the Math and Science assessments. Given the discussion of last week's meeting, the committee decided it was very important to find an external tool. This was proving difficult, however, since General Education Science consists of multiple scientific disciplines. Likewise, General Education Math also consists of a variety of paths that a student can take. At this point, Dave chimed in and helped us realize that our assessment could be for the affective domain with respect to perceptions of Science, Math and possibly Social Science. There are several known tools for this. Dana will continue researching these tools for next week. In addition, it was decided that the main short-term goals of the committee are to find this assessment (at least for Science) and to work on the Math General Education objectives and outcomes.*

Several attitudinal assessment tools were considered. The website for the University of Maryland Physics Education Research Group provided a list of attitude surveys in physics and science, including EBAPS and VASS. The table below summarizes all of the tools the committee considered and the reasons for not using them.

| Tool Considered | Reasons Not Chosen |
|---|---|
| Self-designed (like past) | 1) Validity, reliability questionable<br>2) Difficult to write questions that assess science as process |
| CAAP (Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency) | 1) Too content-specific<br>2) Based on reading of facts and answering questions<br>3) Science as a process not approached<br>4) Not aligned to SLO's<br>5) Difficult to read<br>6) Too long |
| VASS (Views About Science Survey) | 1) Focused only on physics and physicists<br>2) Awkward format |
| Thinking about Science Survey Instrument (TSSI) | 1) 60 items – too long<br>2) All Likert scale<br>3) But interesting questions |
| Mesa Community College Scientific Inquiry Assessment | 1) Too content-specific<br>2) Graphs too complex and difficult to read |

**EBAPS**

EBAPS, written by Andrew Elby in the Department of Physics at the University of Maryland, is a freely-accessible survey intended to study the beliefs students hold in science knowledge and in how science is learned. The survey consists of questions in three different formats. The first group has statements requiring a Likert-scale response, the second group contains multiple-choice questions, and the third group consists of multiple-choice questions referring to a

dialog between two fictional students. There are two different forms of EBAPS, and we chose the general science version, which contains thirty-two questions that can be answered within a class period.

EBAPS was chosen because it satisfies the criteria of a satisfactory assessment tool. The questions can be aligned to the approved student learning outcomes, and they focus on the process of science rather than conceptual details of particular science disciplines. Each question on EBAPS belongs to one of five subscales developed by Andrew Elby: 1) Structure of scientific knowledge, 2) Nature of knowing and learning, 3) Real-life applicability, 4) Evolving knowledge, and 5) Source of ability to learn. In general, subscales 1, 3, and 4 relate to our student learning outcome 4 (Apply steps of the scientific method to solve problems), which is the central focus of the Natural Sciences objective. More specifically, individual questions on EBAPS can be mapped to one or more of the student learning outcomes, especially outcomes 1 (Formulate reasonable explanations of natural phenomena based on thorough observations) and 4.

The questions are appropriate for the HWC student population. The Likert-scale questions are easily readable and are typically one to two typed lines in length. Additionally, students will be able to relate to the dialog-type questions because they are written with a conversational tone.

EBAPS is readily accessible. In email communication with Andrew Elby, he sent an electronic version of the general science form of EBAPS and said we could make changes to it, such as changing the word “physics” to “science”.

**Pilot Assessment Tools and Process**

In Spring 2008, a pilot of the EBAPS assessment was administered in four class sections, including Business, Chemistry, Child Development, and Physical Science. The assessment consisted of the student demographics survey similar to the one used for the Humanities Assessment in addition to the general science version of EBAPS.
The pilot verified that the assessment can be completed in less than one hour; most students answered the questions within 40 minutes. Also during the pilot, we discovered that two questions (#10 and #12) in the demographics survey had the incorrect choices listed under them; this will be corrected for the formal assessment in Fall 2008. Anecdotal student responses indicated that the length of the assessment was sufficient and that the questions were readable; neither the length nor the readability of the questions led to student fatigue.

## Attachment 8 Humanities

*Process*

The Humanities and Arts Cross Disciplinary Group working on this objective defined the Humanities and the Arts as "the study of the evolution and development of ideas, beliefs, and philosophies in the context of various forms of cultural expression to broaden the human experience." The group then crafted the following student learning outcomes based on this definition:

Students will demonstrate:

1. Analysis skills by identifying historical periods, major movements, and theories related to the evolution of a particular discipline.

2. Evaluation skills by establishing criteria to assess the major characteristics, and to draw inferences from a work (e.g., a painting, novel, play)

3. Interpretation skills by responding through the "self" to the synthesis and integration of analyzed and evaluated information.

4. Application skills by using techniques relative to the discipline to construct a physical manifestation as a vehicle for communication.

5. Communication skills by articulating ideas, emotions, or interpretations through dialogue, reading, writing, and visual imagery (e.g., an essay, an oral presentation, a painting.)

During the summer of 2006, the Assessment Committee requested that the HWC Administration provide a stipend to support Amanda Loos, Assistant Professor of Humanities, to research and then design the first draft of an assessment tool for HWC. The assessment tool was to align with the five student learning outcomes listed above. Ms. Loos researched several tools, but found one from Mesa Community College to be particularly compelling. This tool consisted of a presentation of multiple artifacts, allowing students to choose one before responding to questions about it (interpretive, analytical, etc.). With this model in mind, she designed a similar instrument but added a survey section as an indirect measure. The survey section focuses on student attitudes toward and behaviors associated with appreciation of the arts. In the survey section, students are given the choice of responding to one of three artifacts: (1) a poem, (2) a visual work of art, or (3) a piece of music. The response questions remain the same regardless of which artifact the student chooses. At the end of the summer term, 2006, Loos submitted her work to the Assessment Committee.

During the fall 2006 semester, the Assessment Committee began conducting its weekly work in subcommittee groups. One subcommittee group was dedicated to refining Loos' draft assessment tool and setting goals for administering the tool during the spring 2007 Assessment Week. It took the sub-committee approximately four weeks of discussion and reflection to fully comprehend (and agree upon) an understanding of the measure and of the Assessment Committee's goal and purpose in assessing the objective and its related student learning outcomes.

Throughout the discussion, a number of logistical concerns, such as tying the demographic data to the "exam" score, arose and were resolved. There was some debate within the sub-committee and the larger group about whether the scope of the measure was too comprehensive to be completed effectively, but it was eventually agreed that Committee members would work to try to resolve these and other issues in the pilot, and if that proved unworkable, split the measure into two separate assessments later.

> The Humanities and Arts sub-committee has then turned its attention to the survey section of the measure. It hoped to refine the survey—both content and format—in order to capture the data the Assessment Committee believes will be useful to faculty, while paying strict attention to efficiency. Knowing as they did that students would be required to do an "exam" like activity after the survey, they had to drastically reduce the length of the original draft and re-engineer its format so as to be minimally taxing. Doing so took approximately four weeks. Subsequently, the sub-committee sought and received the Assessment Committee's approval of the survey portion of the Humanities and Arts assessment tool. The sub-committee then completed the exam portion of the assessment tool and submitted it to the Assessment Committee; it was approved November 15, 2006.

The committee piloted the tool with the committee and a small selection of volunteered classes, at the end of the fall 2006 semester, holding focus groups with participants to obtain feedback on their experience taking the exam. The assessment was then revised in minor ways and prepared for offering during Assessment Week of spring 2007. The sub-committee then turned its attention to the grading process and rubric, both of which were approved by the full committee on XXXXXX.

The committee conducted the assessment over the week of XXXX. The examination booklets were graded by a team of seven graders over the summer of 2007 (see Methodology, below), and the data was compiled and prepared for analysis over the subsequent two semesters (see Results, below).

**Attachment 9**

**Assessment Report on the 2003 and 2006 CCTST Assessments at HWC**

Compiled by Matthew Williams, Adjunct Faculty, Dept. of ESL/FL

Parts A-D taken from Final Progress Report May, 2007.

**A. Introduction**

Harold Washington College (HWC) is committed to improving student learning, development and achievement by utilizing an assessment process that is systematic, structured, ongoing, and faculty owned and led. In response to concerns raised by the North Central Association in 1998 and by Dr. John Taylor in 2001, regarding the assessment of the college's general education goals, the Assessment Committee at HWC has focused its' resources and time on studying various aspects of student learning. This report will focus on Critical Thinking skills.

**B. Critical Thinking Goal and SLO Definitions**

Critical thinking (General Education Goal #1) had been in place at HWC since the initial assessment committee was formed in 1994 (See Historical Context, Appendix X, Progress Report, May 2007). However, it had not been assessed. In spring 2003, the Assessment Committee approved the definition of critical thinking as:

> "the ability to reason which results in the interpretation, analysis, evaluation and inference of the argument or the problem situation on which the judgment or solution is based."

The committee then approved the following student learning outcomes (SLO's) for the critical thinking general education goal/objective: Students will demonstrate:

1. Demonstrate interpretation skills by
    a. Formulating categories and classifying and grouping data
    b. Making comparisons
    c. Clarifying findings/opinions
2. Demonstrate analysis skills by
    a. Identifying an argument
    b. Distinguishing between direct and indirect persuasion
    c. Determining if an argument rests on biased assumptions
    d. Evaluating statistical information used as evidence to support an argument
    e. Assessing how well an argument anticipates possible abjections or alternate positions
    f. Determining how new data might confirm or question a conclusion
    g. Determining if an argument makes sense
3. Demonstrate evaluation skills by
    a. Assessing the importance of an argument
    b. Evaluating the reasonableness of an argument
    c. Evaluating the credibility and reliability of sources of information
    d. Assessing bias and contradictions in a person's point of view
    e. Assessing clear and consistent use of language
    f. Determining the appropriateness of stated or unstated values or standards upheld in an argument
    g. Judging the consistency of supporting reasons
    h. Determining and judging the strength of an argument
4. Demonstrate inference skills by
    a. Collecting and questioning evidence
    b. Developing alternate hypotheses
    c. Drawing conclusions

**C. Design and Methodology**

Once the student learning outcomes were designed and approved, the committee began to search for an appropriate standardized test. Nine tests were reviewed. The committee narrowed its search by determining which of the instruments most closely aligned with the Committee's approved student learning outcomes. This process further narrowed the search to three measures: the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST), the Cornell Critical Thinking Test (CCTT), and the Watson-Glacier Critical Thinking Appraisal (WGCTA). At this point the committed members piloted each of the three tests with volunteer faculty within the departments. Based on input and a vote from all committee members, the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) was chosen

and approved to be administered during the fall 2003 semester. October 20th – 25th 2003 was then coined, "Assessment Week" by members of the Assessment Committee.

The Assessment Committee determined that it was critical to the success of the assessment process at HWC to communicate effectively to the college community the importance of Assessment Week and to describe the CCTST. Committee members designed a logo, the mathematical symbol for infinity, as well as the slogan: "Measure Your Mind." Both the symbol and the logo became part of an informational brochure describing critical thinking, the CCTST, and Assessment Week. The logo and slogan were also printed on posters and flyers that were distributed throughout the campus. The brochure, which was distributed to all faculty, students and administration, described the rationale and the importance of taking the CCTST, and defined the two main cognitive skills that comprise critical thinking (i.e. inductive and deductive reasoning). The brochure states:

- Harold Washington faculty and administration believe that critical thinking is a foundational skill that every educated adult should possess.
- The results of the CCTST will help faculty and administration determine how instruction methods can be improved to achieve effectively the critical thinking component of the General Education Objectives.
- HWC's Assessment Committee defines critical thinking "as the ability of students to reason which results in the interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference of the argument or the problem situation on which the judgment or solution is based."
- Although the CCTST Test involves the assessment of several cognitive skills (e.g. analysis, inference, and evaluation), the Assessment Committee found it useful to categorize these three skills into two main skills areas: induction and deduction.
- Induction, or inductive reasoning, may be defined as arriving at a general conclusion from a set of instances or facts.
- Deduction, or deductive reasoning, may be defined as arriving at a set of instances or facts from a general conclusion or statement.

The Assessment Committee administered the CCTST in fall 2003 and again in spring 2006. The methods and test results for both administrations follow.

**Methodology: 2003 CCTST Administration**

Over 68 faculty members (47 F/T & 21 P/T) volunteered 119 sections across the entire credit curriculum to approximately 1,800 students enrolled in credit courses. The Assessment Committee carefully selected sections to represent all time slots offered on campus. For example, sections were chosen from morning, afternoon, and evening and Saturday sections. A total of 1,688 students provided usable demographic information and answers for the CCTST. There was no statistically significant difference between the sample tested and the total student population of 7,522 credit students registered during fall 2003. The Committee determined through further analysis that the sample's gender, age, racial, and ethnic data were also consistent with HWC's fall 2003 population.

**Methodology: 2006 CCTST Administration**

Prior to the administration of both the 2003 and 2006 CCTST, all faculty volunteering their sections received an informational packet including the Scranton sheets, number two pencils, and a completion coupon which they would sign and give to students so that they would be excused from taking the test in any other section in which they were enrolled. Students were also told that, although the test was not linked to their grades and faculty was not privy to individual student results, the students themselves would have an opportunity to receive their individual results.

**D. Assessment Results**

**Results: 2003 CCTST Administration**

- The aggregated sample of 729 students was from community colleges in five states: California, Florida, New York, South Dakota, and Tennessee.
- A total of 1,694 students completed the CCTST. There was no statistically significant difference between the sample tested and the total student population of 7,500 credit students registered for fall 2003.
- There was no correlation between the age of the student and how well the student did on the test.
- The gender and race and ethnicity of the sample were consistent with the population registered for fall 2003. For example, the sample consisted of 1,107 (66%) females and 581 (34%) males. The race and ethnicity breakdown was Asian/Pacific Islander (10%), American Indian (1%), African American (48%), Hispanic (22%), White (16%), and Mix/Other (3%).
- Out of a possible score of 34, HWC students scored on average 12.99. This mean score placed our students at the 43rd percentile compared to an aggregated sample of two-year college students.

**Results: 2003 CCTST Total Scores**

- HWC students' overall mean score was 12.99 (SD=4.71) as compared with a mean score of 14.75 (SD=4.92) for the two year national sample *was not statistically significant.*

**Results: 2003 CCTST Inductive and Deductive Sub-Scores**

- For the inductive reasoning section of the CCTST, the mean score for the aggregated sample of two-year college students was 8.60 (50.6%) out of a possible score of 17. This compares with HWC students' inductive reasoning mean score of 7.60 (44.7%).
- For the deductive reasoning section of the CCTST, the mean score for the aggregated sample of two-year college students was 6.14 (36.1%) out of a possible score of 17. This compares with HWC students' deductive reasoning mean score of 5.38 (31.6%).

Although the means and parentages are low, HWC students were statistically only slightly lower when compared to the average aggregated scores of the national sample of two-year students.

**Results: 2006 CCTST Total Scores**

The spring 2006 administration of the CCTST sampled 719 students across 29 sections that were volunteered by faculty.

- The 2006 sample consisted of 434 (60%) females, 252 (35%) males, and 33 (5%) students who did not identify their gender.
- The racial/ethnic distribution of the sample of the 719 respondents who participated in the 2006 administration of the CCTST is statistically comparable at the .76 level with the racial and ethnic distribution of the total population of students enrolled during spring 2006.
- 35% of the respondents in the sample self-identified as African-Americans as compared with 42% in the student population; 8% were Asian/Pacific Islander as compared with 13% in the population; and 9% of the sample identified themselves as Mixed/Other, white 7.3% of the population did so. Additionally, Hispanics accounted for 22% of the sample, and 19.2% of the population, while 13% of the sample identified

**Results (Overall) 2006 CCTST**

- A total of 719 students completed the CCTST in spring 2006.
- Out of a possible score of 34, HWC students scored on average 12.57. This mean score places our students at the 43$^{rd}$ percentile compared to an aggregated sample of two-year college students.
- As in the 2003 administration of the CCTST, the comparison, aggregated national sample of 729 students was from community colleges in five states: California, Florida, New York, South Dakota, and Tennessee.

HWC 2006 students' overall mean score was 12.57 as compared with a mean score of 14.75 for the two-year national sample.

**Results: 2006 CCTST Inductive and Deductive Sub-scores**

- The mean score of the aggregated sample of two-year college students was 6.14 (36.1%) out of a possible score of 17 for deductive reasoning. This compares with HWC students' deductive reasoning mean score of 5.37 (31.5%).

**Results: Comparison of 2003 and 2006 CCTST Scores for HWC Students**

- In 2003 the overall CCTST mean score for HWC students was 12.99 (38.2%) out of a possible score of 34 and in 2006 the overall mean score for HWC students was 12.57 (36.9%).
- The differences in mean scores for HWC students between the 2003 and 2006 administration of the CCTST were not statistically significant. This means that students did no better and no worse in 2003 as compared with 2006 in their overall critical thinking skills.
- In 2003 the mean score for HWC students' inductive reasoning was 7.60 (44.7%) out of a possible score of 17, and in 2006 the mean score for the same category was 7.20 (42.3%).
- In 2003 the mean score for HWC students' deductive reasoning was 5.38 (31.6%) out of a possible score of 17 and in 2006 the mean score for the same category was 5.37 (31.5%).
- There has been only a slight and non-significant statistical decrease in inductive and deductive scores between the 2003 and the 2006 administration of the CCTST.

Although the percentages are low for both groups, HWC students are statistically only slightly lower when compared to the national sample of two-year college students. However, these results are disappointing, given the heavier emphasis since 2003 faculty have placed on critical thinking skills and faculty development workshops focused on critical thinking.

**E. Analysis**

The disappointing results of the 2003 and 2006 CCTST can be explained in two ways:

**E.1** One possible explanation for the results is that the students who were surveyed for the 2003 and 2006 CCTST were surveyed before they had taken many classes at HWC. This would explain the lack of change in the 2003 and 2006 CCTST results. In light of the information provided by these two surveys, it would be valuable to consider how many hours of coursework students had completed at HWC prior to taking the 2003 and 2006 versions of the CCTST. It is assumed that different groups of students were surveyed for each assessment. If the students who took the CCTST 2003 and 2006 assessments had been new students to the college, then the results collected, while disappointing, would not measure the effect of enhanced instruction techniques used by the HWC faculty. If the two student groups which were tested with the CCTST had already taken a comparable and significant number of credit hours at HWC, then this would indicate that either HWC instructors are not emphasizing critical thinking skills enough or in a way that helps students apply those skills on tests like the CCTST.

**E.2** Another possible explanation is that although full time instructors have participated in several professional development training sessions dealing with how to teach critical thinking skills in the time between the two surveys, these instructors have either not been applying the knowledge supplied to them though professional development, or that the professional development training which was provided was not adequate to the take facing the instructors in the classroom between 2003 and 2006.

**E.3** A third possible explanation is that many instructors who volunteered to have their students participate in the second CCTST survey in 2006 did not participate in the professional development provided by the committee. It is possible that instructors who participated in the 2003 survey viewed the subsequent professional development sessions as a goal of the whole process and so did not volunteer their classes for the 2006 survey.

**F. Recommendations**

Reexamining the student population of the college should reveal information that could aid HWC faculty in formulating new approaches to teaching critical thinking skills such as inductive and deductive reasoning. According to the executive summery of the *Fall 2006 Registration Survey*, which was distributed to randomly selected credit classes during the first two weeks of the semester, 38% of students surveyed indicated they were new to college. 53% were returning students. According to the Student Profile of the *Fall Census of 2005*, 41.43% of students surveyed received their high school diploma within the last three years of enrolling at HWC, 12.85% reported receiving their diploma between 4 and 5 years prior to entering HWC, and 45.72% received their diploma more than six years prior to entering HWC. The same survey found that 80.27% of the students surveyed had never attended another college prior to coming to HWC.

The above data show that a significant percentage of HWC students have been away form the classroom for a number of years before they arrive. For a certain number of these students, what is needed is to reemphasize the importance of both inductive and deductive reasoning. For those students who have been out of high school for six years or more, however, these critical thinking skills may have to be re-taught beginning from a more fundamental level.

A significant percentage of HWC students are from other countries. Many of these students come from educational backgrounds in which 'higher order' critical thinking skills such as synthesis and analysis were not valued or taught sufficiently. The Chinese and Korean education systems focus especially on wrote learning and memorization. Therefore, students coming from these backgrounds are especially in need of critical thinking instruction. The placement test for ESL courses could include a portion that is like the CCTST (perhaps in a shortened form). While many foreign students' language ability is too low to comprehend such a survey, those students who do have sufficient language skill to take such a survey could provide faculty with valuable critical thinking related data It may be valuable to treat foreign students as a statistical sub-group and compare their survey results with those of Americans who take the same (or a very similar) survey.

The orientation process could be adjusted to include a CCTST like survey for students who are entering HWC. According to the *Fall 2006 Registration Survey*, about 58% of the students did not attend the orientation workshop, but only 18% of them reported that they were new students. While 42% is not a majority of new students, if this percentage is consistent from year to year, and if all these students were given a CCTST like survey on critical thinking, that data provided would provide a sample that more than adequately reflects the HWC student body.

The students who take this suggested survey at orientation would be given the survey again after (perhaps individually) after each student had completed a certain number of credit hours in basic skills courses. Course details such as whether these students were taught by full-time instructors or adjuncts could provide the committee information regarding which instructors may benefit from further professional development.

This discussion so far has focused on what full time faculty can do to improve the teaching of critical thinking at HWC. Nevertheless, the vast majority of faculty members at HWC are adjuncts, and their participation in professional development will be very important if the committee is to adequately address these issues. The college should make every effort to allow part time faculty to participate in professional development workshops on critical thinking. As adjunct faculty members are under extreme time constraints due to their need to work at three or more different colleges, it is quite difficult for them to make time for such meetings no

matter how beneficial they may be. Online professional development sessions could be more feasible for them. The Blackboard Academic Suite could be an effective delivery method.

**G. Conclusions**

While there is not sufficient time to allow the committee to implement the above recommendations prior to the NCA visit in March, 2009, another CCTST survey a or similar instrument could be planned to show that lessons have been learned from the 2003 and 2006 CCTST surveys and that action is being taken to better measure HWC students' critical thinking skills.

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Appendix A

**Fall 2006 Registration survey, executive summery**

- 77% of students indicated that they have a computer at home, and 78% have access to the Internet outside of the College. 15% reported that they did not have a computer at home.
- 29% of students indicated that their overall educational goal was to earn at least a Bachelor's degree, 34% wanted to earn an Associate's degree, 16% wanted to earn a Graduate degree, 12% were taking courses to lean skills for new job or improve skills for their present job, and 5% were taking courses for personal interest.
- 68% of students stated the desire to transfer to another institution upon completion of their studies at HWC.
- 38% of students surveyed indicated they were new to college. 53% were returning students.
- About 58% of the students surveyed indicated that they did not attend the orientation workshop. Of the 58%, 18% indicated that their overall educational goal was to earn an Associate's degree. 18% wanted to earn a Bachelor's degree. 11% wanted to earn a Graduate degree.
- 18% of students who indicated that they did not attend the orientation workshop were new students.
- 56% of students surveyed indicated that they did not use the Office of the Dean of student services. 36% of students surveyed both new and returning students, indicated that the office of dean of student services was helpful or very helpful; only 8% indicated that it was unhelpful or very unhelpful.

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Appendix B

**Student Profile, Fall Census 2005 (Credit Students)**

| Age | | Work | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Average Age | 27 | Full-time – over 30 hrs/wk | 33.78% |
| Median Age | 24 | Part-time – over 15 hrs/wk | 15.88% |
| | | Not Employed | 30.29% |
| Under 22 yrs | 36.47% | | |
| 22 – 24 yrs | 17.84% | | |
| 25 – 30 yrs | 18.45% | | |

| Family | | Family Income | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 – 3 children | 13% | Under 36K | 53% |
| Single parent | 10% | (Under 6K | 19%) |
| | | (Under 15K | 30%) |

| Native Language | | Enrollment | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Other than English | 24.65% | FT | 47.85% |
| Unknown | 12.17% | PT | 51.29% |

| High School/GED | | Education | |
|---|---|---|---|
| H.S. Diploma | 70.59% | Didn't attend other college b/f CCC | 80.27% |
| Rec'd w/in last 3 yrs | 41.43% | | |
| Rec'd b/wn 4-5 yrs ago | 12.85% | | |
| Rec'd mr tn 6 yrs ago | 45.72% | | |