HOMECOMING

Assessement Times

Whether at home on Zoom, on campus on Zoom, in class in person, or hybrid, we are learning to embrace being in these spaces together.

ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING FOR OVER 20YRS

FALL 2022

CHAIR'S WELCOME

By David Richardson

(Life of the Party & Most Likely to Hurt Themselves (or Others) on the Dance Floor)

The Assessment Committee was kicking around themes for this edition of our newsletter—submissions on the board included: gratitude, connections, interconnectedness, trust, and reinvestment—when there was a pause; then a voice broke the silence and said, "Homecoming." Within a few minutes, it was clear that "Homecoming" would be our theme, as it seemed to be an idea that connected with all of our interests and worries, with all the themes already mentioned, with all our questions and goals.

We talked for the rest of the meeting about our sense of the college climate, including some people's experiences of being back on campus for the first time in a couple years, and others' experiences of being back again but now with many more people than last year, and others' experiences of finally feeling "at home" with remote and online instruction and with the idea of not coming back to campus anytime soon. It was already week three, but the sense of first day nervous energy and weird mix of high hopes and old worries lent a crackle to the conversation, one we hope you'll feel in these pages.

I was recently speaking with friends whose high school-aged children were getting ready for their homecoming dance when one of them said, "What is it, anyway—this 'homecoming'? How did it start? What is it for? Does anyone actually 'come home'?" I had to admit that I had no idea.

Of course that was no deterrent to speculating wildly. We theorized that it had probably started as a formalized version of an informal reality—a nostalgic desire of those who had moved on to come back to something in hopes of remaining part of it, an aspirational desire of those new arrivals to feel connected to and a part of their new place, and a dual desire of those who had remained to keep space for and connections to those who had left, even while welcoming in the newcomers.

Thomas Wolfe's assertion that "You can't go home again" is so familiar that it's almost cliché, but every year schools of all sorts try to falsify it by welcoming back graduates and including their new students. We don't have a homecoming game or a dance at HWC, but every semester we prove Wolfe's adage both false and true when we do come home again and always to a new place.

Regardless of the origins of our theme, we hope you enjoy our descriptions of our efforts to learn about student learning while facing once again the challenges of forging a learning community out of strangers, coherent learning experience out of disparate classes, and a college community out of a maelstrom of purposes, we were all focused on key elements of molding a kind of home for everyone attached to HWC.

So, kick back, make yourself at home, and enjoy!

"Our personal mythologies intermingle with the myths of the land. We become part of a place and its history. And even when we do not originate from a place, dwelling with intention helps us be of a place. We become local. In other words, to dwell with intention is an act of homecoming."
— Solstice, The Earth Spirit Hearth and Home

DIGITAL IMAGE VERNACULAR: HOW SMALL AND HOW BLURRY

By Galina Shevchenko, Art & Architecture Liaison
(Most Artistic & Most Likely to Add a Mustache to Your Photo)

Proposed Unit level assessments in Digital Multimedia Design Program Department of Art and Architecture Harold Washington College: understanding of digital file types and resolution sizes for printing and for digital distribution.

As we live in the fascinating environment of continuous image flickering, mobile devices, tablets and phones, abbreviated text messaging, and instantaneous image / moving image transmissions, the demand for and acceptance of smaller image formats is continuing to increase.
How does this affect the print and digital industry standards? Are hi-res file formats becoming obsolete, or is it just an illusion perpetuated by overwhelming trends for accessibility of digital printing? Did you ever get a message on your Facebook or Instagram feed advertising that you can print/publish a beautiful picture book out of your Instagram/Facebook photos? Is this a real possibility or is simply a hoax luring consumers that trust their social media?

Here in the Harold Washington College Digital Multimedia Design program we are committed to introducing our students to the current industry standards of digital image processing. We run beautiful glossy prints on our EPSON industry standard inkjet printers. However, it turns out that this academic year, students' understanding of acceptable file formats and resolution for printing is being obstructed, and they are not in clear understanding of the proper industry standard.

The problem emerged this Fall as I observed that some of my current students in Advanced Computer Art, DMD268, are downloading tiny .jpeg images, then enlarging and collaging them to compose large 13"x19" 300dpi composition, intended for printing.The students were genuinely surprised finding out that their printed images turned out degraded and blurry. They got disappointed, and I got alarmed! This was a clear warning sign that the fundamental skill of digital image handling that is supposed to be taught in the beginning DMD class, DMD168, had not been mastered by some of the students that were enrolled in my advanced DMD 268.

I have been teaching mainly advanced program courses since the pandemic. The two beginning classes were being taught by our adjunct instructors, who are both pros in design and digital imaging. What is then happening in the beginning DMD classes? How many students are being affected? What else could be a contributing factor?

The students in my advanced class, that is being taught only in the Fall semester, have taken beginning courses during the last academic year.

I immediately sent emails and scheduled meetings with both adjunct instructors teaching beginning DMD168. It turned out that while they had both covered required material on file sizes and resolution, students were still not getting enough practice in handling digital images and fully experiencing what image resolution means.

When I taught my beginning classes, my students practiced image resolution while doing scanning exercises, scanning images from books and magazines at various resolution rates and practicing working with various file sizes.

As we have only 2 scanners in the classroom and due to our extreme precautions during pandemic, the scanners were barely used and students did not get to practice and explore first hand poorly scanned small files scanned as lossy .jpegs verses files scanned in high resolution and saved as hi rez lossless tiffs.

Overwhelming virtuality during the pandemic also became a contributing factor. Easy proximity of digital images gives us an illusion of their versatility and accessibility, as they are easily downloadable and are ready to be used for mockups and idea development layouts intended for digital distribution. Digital images that are intended for printing have to be tended differently. They have to be watched for their pixels per inch distribution. The image could look amazing on the screen, but if it does not have enough pixels per inch, once it gets printed, it looks degraded.

If students work towards a printed image goal, starting with a digital file, they need to be made aware of file size requirements, compression formats, etc. Without enough practice of scanning/digitizing and printing, it appears to be difficult to fully understand the value of a large file size, and lossless image file format, that not only looks good on the screen but also does not degrade after being printed.

In addition to lack of scanning, we also had some difficulty with printing last year, mainly due to the convoluted process involved for our students in paying for DMD print cards: only cash was accepted in the business office, as well as office hours were limited.

Now knowing all these factors and reassessing instructional tools in the current classrooms, I would love to see how beginning DMD students are acquiring and retaining knowledge and skills associated with digital/print file sizes.

The purpose of my proposed assessment is to measure the level of command /understanding of proper industry standard files types/ sizes acceptable for printing while working with both raster and vector digital files. This skill is incorporated in every DMD 168 graded project throughout the semester. Students are working with various digital file types: painting, compositing raster images and designing/ drawing/ painting vector images. Every file needs to be properly prepared for print and digital distribution.

The assessment will be given to students in DMD168 Computer Art during week 14. This semester we will run a pilot in two sections of DMD168. The assessment will also run in the Advanced class DMD 268 to see if the information covered in DMD 168 have been retained by the students. The assessment will take the form of an in-class exercise. Students will have to execute and prepare two file types(raster and vector) for printing and digital distribution.

"This skill is incorporated in every DMD 168 graded project throughout the semester."

LEARNING PREFERENCES & MODALITY CHOICES IN BIOLOGY

By Farah Movahedzadeh, Biology Liaison
(Most Likely to Put Something Under a Microscope)

In recent years, most higher education institutions have increasingly begun to focus on student success. One of the ways that student success is being measured is retention rate-enroll, where first-year students continue their education to their sophomore year.

In the query done two years ago by the assessment committee, we asked our students about their experiences at HWC: What can be done to help them feel comfortable, safe, valued, and/or able to be yourself in all HWC physical and virtual spaces. 30.31% of student responses addressed the theme of teaching modality. 76.96% of students felt safe because classes were remote, while 23.5% said they were having a difficult time learning online or were missing in-person collaboration.

While two years ago teaching remotely was the only option for our students, they now have the additional opportunities of in-person or hybrid learning. Students come to our college with unique learning styles, needs, and life experiences, so administrators, advisors, and faculty need to be aware of the new questions facing these students in regard to the best method of learning that will benefit each student the most (online, in-person, or hybrid).

Additionally, after being away from a formal classroom for at least two years, a good portion of our students may have a difficult time connecting with peers and professors. So, I wonder, do we know our students, are we advising and supporting them correctly, and are they aware of the differences in the three modalities?

We need to understand our students' perceptions of their own learning processes. Have they chosen the right classes, what kind of learning opportunities are most helpful to them, and have we been helping them to understand which modality is best for their learning style?

For instance, can students be successful in higher level classes like microbiology if they have only taken online classes and never used a microscope? If not, is a reorganization of online or hybrid learning modalities necessary for advanced classes to be accessible to students who have only taken college courses online?

As we have the ongoing conversations about enrollment, retention, and student success, we must also consider students as individuals, their learning style, and the modalities each student uses. We need to take a fresh look at what the realities are for different students and think about how we should be responding to their needs.

In order to make progress toward these goals, this year I will be working on developing an indirect assessment of Biology students, starting with Bio 121 classes.

"So, I wonder, do we know our students, are we advising and supporting them correctly, and are they aware of the differences in the three modalities?"

NEW BUSINESS: THREE PILOT ASSESSMENT PROJECTS

By Bridgette Mahan, Business Liaison *(Most likely to Delegate)*

In Fall 2021, when I prepared my Assessment Times article, I entitled it "How Do I Assess Remote, Online vs In-Person Learning or How Important to Learning is My Ability to See Your Face?" At that time, I was responding to the challenges and changes in our academic world in light of the pandemic. Now, the question facing us is what is the new normal and how do we, from an academic perspective, identify and address student learning needs as we teach, access, and modify, if needed, curriculum and academic programs. For the Business/ CIS Department, this question has been particularly relevant in light of our ongoing preparation for our upcoming ACBSP reaffirmation review and our piloting of several assessment tools this fall.

The first assessment tool we are piloting is a preliminary challenge exam for our Business 111, Introduction to Business course. The purpose of this challenge exam is to access student success and knowledge retention of introductory/foundational concepts required for future business course curriculum. This challenge exam will be administered twice, at the beginning and at the end of the semester. The challenge exam was piloted this semester in two in-person sections with the first exam administered during week one of the semester.

The results are now being reviewed by the course faculty lead to determine if semester coursework should be modified based on the preliminary results. Ultimately, after the exam has been administered both in the beginning and the end of the semester, the results will be reviewed to determine whether students are successfully learning key concepts. This assessment is particularly relevant since Business 111 is a business survey course and serves as a prerequisite for many of our Business courses. Our goal from this assessment tool is to determine if curriculum or program modifications are needed.

The second assessment we will be piloting this term is related to our accounting programming. We will be offering an end of semester assessment exam in our two introductory accounting courses, Business 181, Financial Accounting and Business 182, Managerial Accounting. These exams have been offered in prior semesters in our in-person class sections. For Fall 2022, we will offer these exams across pilot sections of all modalities to determine student success. Results will be incorporated in our ACBSP reaffirmation review aligned with data related to our Business Economics AA Degree which is also offered in a fully online modality. Both Business 181 and Business 182 are required for transfer into four-year undergraduate business programs as well.

Lastly, we would like to gather data from students regarding their impressions of learning under the different modalities, in-person, remote and traditional online, to identify teaching tools that are particularly effective and supportive of student learning. Obviously, all students have different learning styles but some mechanisms such as the use of breakout rooms, polling, or regularly scheduled synchronous meetings even for traditional online courses may enhance the student learning experience. This semester, we would like to design a survey tool to pilot in Spring 2023 to help us access student preferences regarding modalities and their alignment with student learning styles. Obviously, our normal has changed and we want to be responsive to the movement.

"Results will be incorporated in our ACBSP reaffirmation review aligned with data related to our Business Economics AA Degree which is also offered in a fully online modality."

IN SEARCH OF A 360° VIEW

By Amy Rosenquist, Vice Chair Area Assessment &
English, Speech, Theatre, & Journalism Liaison

(Most Likely to Win "The Voice" & Most Likely to Tell a Story that Makes You Snort Unintentionally)

In August, 2021, I went back to campus for the first time since the day we'd all gathered our things and gone home. It was exhilarating, nerve wracking, desolate. The "ghost town" feel that I knew well from years of teaching Children's Literature on Saturday mornings had taken a dark turn; week after week, besides my own smaller-than-usual set of students, I almost never saw a soul.

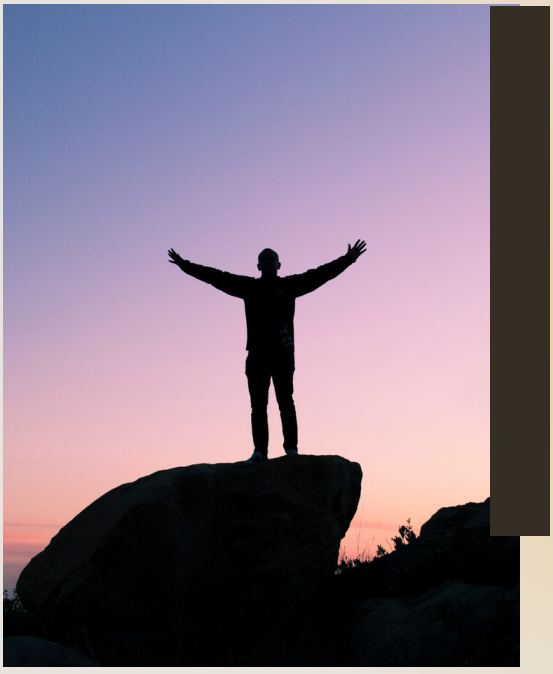
Fast forward to Fall 2022 and I still find myself walking around the classroom more than I need to, celebrating the physical return. This fall, however, the halls are full. Students blanket the shiny silver benches; if I arrive too close to a class start time, I have to wait for an elevator; lines to get into the women's restroom have reappeared. Unexpectedly, I'm teaching 3 classes back to back on Mondays, something I haven't done since my adjunct days, but unlike those days, I'm full of life afterwards rather than dragging myself to the red line. Students are engaged, energetic, showing up. Like, every class, (almost) every student. Everything is brilliant, wondrous, renewed, like the sun coming out after a 2-year rainstorm.

Despite the general awesomeness that is HWC every new school year, I can't remember a time when there was quite this much joy in the air. And I've heard similar stories from colleagues teaching remotely: students are more engaged, zoom classes are well attended, faculty who are teaching online live are often heard mentioning that it's because they want to offer this modality option to students who choose it, rather than working remotely solely for pandemic-related reasons.

Building on my continued awe and renewed love of classroom teaching, I have been wondering about the "crash" of 2020–21, when we saw large numbers of students remain disengaged for whole semesters, drop out without our ever having really known them, not pass our classes, and most of all, just not enroll to begin with. Besides the obvious improved public health metrics, what's the difference? I very much want to know the data behind this new energy, whether it is solely post-pandemic or if it represents something that transcends our emergence from the collective trauma, and whether it can and will translate to longer term improved persistence and outcomes.

To that end, this fall and next spring, the English assessment will focus on student perceptions of nearly-post-pandemic success measures: Why are they better able to enroll, persist, succeed? Which modalities seem to work best for which types of students, and why? This indirect assessment will attempt to identify the factors that students in all modalities experience as vital to their success during these rapidly changing, ongoingly stressful times, with a particular focus on how students have been able to translate the vital elements of a composition classroom into their virtual learning spaces. The pilot will roll out after midterm, with the full assessment running in Spring 2023, when I am looking forward to my usual dread of traveling downtown in the brutal Chicago winter being utterly tempered by the simple fact that I can.

"I very much want to know the data behind this new energy."



TAKE MATH COURSES FULLY ONLINE, ONLINE LIVE (ZOOM) OR IN-PERSON?

By Chao Lu, Math Liaison
(Most Likely to Never Miss a Deadline)

Many of our students find that mathematics is one of the most difficult subjects that they encounter in their academic journey. Mathematics, as a pure theoretical subject, is not that enjoyable for some students. Learning it can be somewhat stressful and challenging.

Since the pandemic started in early 2020, many things have changed: people's living style, working environment, as well as students learning at school. Before 2020, no one would imagine that there would be days when schools would be empty across the entire country, but student learning is still happening – just not happening in school. No one would deny that the pandemic changed our lives. It also changed how we teach and how students learn. When the pandemic started, the traditional in-person, classroom setting learning became unfeasible. The reality forced schools/teachers to be open-minded to seek new delivery methods to teach our students. The Online Live classroom was born.

Math is somewhat challenging for most of our students at Harold Washington College. Before pandemic times, most of our students chose in-person math classes. We used to hold about 80% to 90% of our sessions in-person and only about 10% to 20% were fully online sessions. When the pandemic hit, the only choices/learning modalities left were to learn math fully online or online live through virtual classrooms. How well were/are we doing? How do our students feel about the fully online, online live (Zoom) course vs. traditional in-person setting? Which modality would our students prefer for their next level of math course while we are close to the post pandemic stage? Those are the questions that math faculty at our campus would like to know.

At the first department meeting of the Fall 2022 semester, colleagues from the math department at Harold Washington College decided to conduct a survey to collect related information regarding the students' learning modalities. The first draft is completed and will be sent to the department for review and feedback early next week. Then we will do modification if needed. We are planning to deliver the survey to the students who may be enrolled in any math section for the Fall 2022 semester at HWC between week 10 and week 14. We will analyze the data at the beginning of the Spring 2023 semester and share with colleagues among the departments. Hopefully, the results from this survey will help us to create future course offerings strategically to better serve the students in our department.

https://www.reddit.com/r/comics/comments/glygc6/zoom_class_oc/

END OF A FRENCH PRONUNCIATION PROJECT & A NEW POSSIBILITY

By Matthew Williams, ELL/WL Liaison

(Most Likely to Be Everyone's Favorite & Best All Around)

The French pronunciation project finally reached the end of the pilot stage. However, according to the participating faculty member, French Professor Andrew Aquino-Cutcher, students found the assessment tool to be too complicated and cumbersome. This was the verdict after multiple revisions of the tool over multiple semesters. A full accounting of the stages covered and the revisions that were made can be found both in previous issues of the assessment times as well as in previous reports which are available on the assessment website.

As stated above, the main reason for the failure of the project was its complexity. To be specific, the tool that was necessary to carry out the assessment, an open source computer program for speech analysis known as Praat, was reported by students to be too cumbersome to use easily. Despite multiple attempts to train the students, the perception among them that Praat was too complicated persisted. Attempts were made to pilot the assessment in the following classes: French 101, French 102, French 103, French 104, and advanced pronunciation. Students at all of these levels reported the same concern, that the procedures were too complicated, and the computer program was too cumbersome. The decision was made at the beginning of this semester to discontinue the project.

Professor Karen Smith has proposed a new project. She will try to assess the usefulness of metacognitive learning strategies in her class of advanced English language learners. This semester, I will assist in the definition of a suitable student learning outcome. By the end of the semester we will have decided on specific metacognitive learning strategies to assess, either one or several. By the end of the semester, we hope to also have the general broad strokes of the assessment project laid out in full. During the spring semester, 2022, we will design suitable pre and post assessment tools that will assess one metacognitive learning strategy or several. The assessment tools will be pilot tested in a summer ESL reading and writing course here at HWC. By this time next year, therefore, it is hoped that a full assessment can be undertaken in several sections of ESL reading and writing courses.

STAYING THE COURSE

By Phillip Vargas, Data Analyst & Physical Sciences Co-Liaison

(Most Likely to Win a Nobel Prize & Most Likely to Use a Pivot Table)

For the past 3 years the Department of Physical Science has been administering the Lawson Classroom Test of Scientific Reasoning (CTSR) assessment to every introductory physical science class. This tool measures scientific reasoning across six domains 1) conservation of matter and volume, 2) proportional thinking, 3) probabilistic thinking, 4) correlational thinking, 5) control of variables, and 6) hypothetical-deductive reasoning. These skills are essential components to science courses and are typically included when defining scientific reasoning. The results of this survey have been surprisingly consistent across these years (total mean performances have varied by less than 5%).

While there is significant temptation to assess a different learning outcome or modify the approach of how we are assessing scientific reasoning, I am resisting that urge. Consistent data, while not very flashy, is still very meaningful. It provides baselines that are statistically reliable. It provides us a control variable for our future experiments (both intentional and natural). Furthermore, during rapid transitions in instruction, and higher education in general, it gives us a sense that learning is not being lost.

As we transition out from the pandemic and as we hopefully return to a more consistent instructional environment, having this data will be invaluable. There are many confounding variables already present in attempting to assess student learning and making methodology changes too frequently can exacerbate those. Tracking an assessment outcome through this period will take advantage of a natural experiment that will hopefully not happen again for another 100 years.

So that leads me to the question, “What am I going to do?” As a scientist, I need to try something. That is what makes this work fun and exciting. As I mentioned previously the results of this assessment have been very consistent. However, the level of participation has not. The number of students participating have varied by 500% between years. This inconsistency is primarily due to changes in the administration process.

This year I will be focusing more of my efforts in improving this process and determining what processes work best for our department. This will probably be a hybrid model with some faculty members opting for an in-class assessment, others providing a link to an online assessment, and others relying on the liaison to provide the assessment to their students. Any option a faculty member chooses would be fine but organizing this information for a streamlined administration will take time. A great amount of work was done in the previous semesters to create easily accessible reports that provide contact information of every student enrolled in general physical science classes. Developing a strategy to more effectively coordinate administration of this assessment across modalities with these resources will be the experiment.

"Consistent data, while not very flashy, is still very meaningful. It provides baselines that are statistically reliable."

GENERAL CHEMISTRY I ASSESSMENT: ONLINE VS. IN-PERSON

by Samar Ayesh, Physical Sciences Co-Liaison
(Most Likely to Know the Answer to Your Question)

In the fall of 2011, I was so excited to be back on campus. I was very tired teaching behind my computer screen for the last 18 months not knowing if students are even there or not. I had one section of General Chemistry I (CHEM 201) in-person and another section over Zoom. Although my in-person section students were not very engaged all the time, it was nice being able to teach in the classroom.

I was also excited to be able to give the Assessment I created during the pandemic to my in-person class. I was working on creating a new assessment for General Chemistry I course when the pandemic started. I wanted to see if there will be a difference in the results between taking the Assessment online or in person. During that first semester in the fall of 2021, I felt that student's concentration during class was very low, they lacked motivation, and they had to be reminded all the time to stay on top of their course work. The first time I gave the students the assessment in person was during the spring of 2022.

One main object of my assessment was to classify the CHEM 201 SLOs using Wiggins and McTighe's "Understanding by Design" as either critical outcomes, important outcomes, or desirable outcomes. With the help of the faculty teaching CHEM 201, we were to classify the SLOs as critical, important, or desirable, based on the following definitions.

- Critical outcomes **(CRO)** are considered to be vital and of fundamental importance. They are outcomes in which an enduring understanding is needed, such that students will remember them long after the details have faded.
- Important outcomes **(IMO)** are more specific and pertain to ideas or skills that the student must know or be able to do. Student learning is incomplete without mastery of these essentials.
- Desirable outcomes **(DO)** are recognized as worth knowing, but the aim is exposure, not mastery.

Since we were able to classify our SLOs for CHEM 201, I wrote questions that should assess how much our students have learned during the semester for each of the SLOs. The initial assessment consisted of 25 multiple choice questions and was given online during spring/summer/fall of 2021. A total of 70 students in 4 different sections took this assessment. I revised the assessment in spring of 2022 and added 2 more questions. The revised assessment consisting now of 27 multiple choice questions was given in-person during the spring and summer of 2022. A total of 28 students in 3 different sections took this assessment. The data collected was studied and analyzed.

Data Analysis

The following table summarizes the results for some of the studied SLOs. The table shows the difference in the results between the online and the in-person groups.

SLO	Classification	Question(s) #	% Correct	
			Online	In-person
Understand the Nuclear Model of the Atom	CRO	4	81.4	60.7
		5	50	75
Apply derived units, such as volume and density, to perform calculations.	CRO	2	42.8	57.1
Utilize rules of nomenclature to name the different types of compounds including: **ionic compounds**, covalent compounds, oxoacids, and hydrates.	CRO	1	75.7	53.6
Identify the limiting reactant in a reaction.	CRO	12	68.6	35.7
		13	44.3	71.4
Define resonance and determine the resonance structures of a species.	CRO	19	34.3	3.57
Determine the Lewis structures of species that do not follow the octet rule, including radicals.	CRO	20	92.9	60.7
Use the valence-shell electron pair repulsion (VSEPR) model to determine the shape of a molecule.	CRO	21	41.4	50
		22	84.3	32.1
Determine amounts of reactant required or product formed using stoichiometry.	CRO	14	68.6	85.7
		15	**4.3**	**7.1**

Looking at the data collected, it is very clear that there is a significant difference in the results of those students who took the assessment online compared to those who took it in-person. More work is still needed to further analyze the data. I was only able to collect data from 28 students in-person. This is a very small sample and more data needs to be collected in the next few semesters. Moving forward and since all of the CHEM 201 sections are being taught in-person now, this tool will be used strictly in-person.

This fall, I'm glad to notice that things are much better. Students are much more engaged, they come prepared to class, they ask questions, they are doing their homework (most of them), and overall, they are doing well in their exams so far.

LATINX DIVERSITY

By Juanita Del Toro, Social & Applied Sciences Liaison
(Most Curious & Most Likely to Be Late Because She Saw a Dog On The Way)

A key learning outcome of the Latin American and Latinx Studies (LALS) program, and courses that focus on LALS, relates to understanding the diversity of Latinx people in the United States. Latina/o/x people in the United States are often portrayed as a homogenous group. This conflated representation often conveys Latina/o/x populations as Spanish-speaking, foreign-born and undocumented. This obscures the diversity of cultures, traditions, and histories of Latin American countries. [1] Further, the majority of the U.S. Latinx population is native-born, and this portrayal fails to recognize the diversity of heritage within the population.

To begin, I decided to start with one course, U.S. Latinx History, for a pilot this current semester. I have selected specific SLOs in this course that address diversity. In the future, I will expand this to other classes of mine and classes in other disciplines that focus on Latin American and Latinx Studies. Long-term, I'd like to develop assessment tools for use in relation to the HWC Latin American and Latinx Studies program overall.

For my pilot this semester, I will give students an essay question that I hope will prompt them to address diversity. I will also develop a rubric and rate their answers to utilize as a preliminary data set. This pilot will also assess the effectiveness of the essay question I assign.

Last semester, I gave students the essay question, "Why is it important to learn about U.S. Latinx History?" I realized this was broad, but I hoped it would provoke some thoughts about diversity, nonetheless. Instead, though, most students focused on examples of discrimination Latinx people in the United States have endured since the mid-nineteenth century and discrimination they still face today. It seems students based a lot of their thoughts on their own experiences and their families' histories. This semester I adjusted my introduction and will revise the essay question to address the topic more directly.

Perhaps I could utilize students' tendency to reflect on their own experiences. According to the Pew Research Center, in 2020, Cook County, Illinois had the fourth largest Latinx population in the country.[2] The Chicago Latina/o/x population is no longer as concentrated as it has historically been. Per the Chicago Sun-Times, demographics are changing in Chicago and Latinas/os/x people are moving to neighborhoods throughout the city.[3]

After the pilot, I could potentially execute the specific assessment next semester, Spring 2023, followed by data analysis. But as my goal is to assess multiple classes, this might carry into Fall 2023. Any evidence-based changes would be recommended and implemented during subsequent semester(s).

"Latina/o/x people in the United States are often portrayed as a homogenous group. This conflated representation often conveys Latina/o/x populations as Spanish-speaking, foreign-born and undocumented. This obscures the diversity of cultures, traditions, and histories of Latin American countries."

[1] Karen Mary Davalos, "Mexican American Art Since 1848: A New Open-source Digital Search Tool," The Latinx Project, January 18, 2022, https://www.latinxproject.nyu.edu/intervenxions/mexican-american-art-since-1848-a-new-open-source-digital-search-tool

[2] Pew Research Center, "Hispanic Population Growth and Dispersion Across U.S. Counties, 1980-2020," February 3, 2022, https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/interactives/hispanic-population-by-county/.

[3] Jackie Serrato, "Chicago's Latino population spreads out, Census shows: Latinos are the second largest racial group in the city of Chicago, in Cook County, and in the State of Illinois," Chicago Sun-Times, December 30, 2021, https://chicago.suntimes.com/la-voz/2021/12/30/22860685/chicagos-latino-population-spreads-out-census-shows.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

By Carrie Nepstad, Child Development Program Assessment Coordinator

(Most Likely to Find the Silver Lining)

Last year at this time, the AAS degree program in Child Development (CD), Preschool Education was in a peer review process with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and was granted full accreditation renewal. In that same month, NAEYC's revised *Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation Standards* were approved which meant all assessment work and consequently course design would need to be revised to meet the updated standards. This fall, HWC's CD program in collaboration with the 5 other sister programs at CCC offering Child Development, have decided to work together to revise the curriculum, course level student learning outcomes, program level student learning outcomes and key assessments to reflect updates in the profession, in the discipline, and in higher education accreditation.

In the midst of that revision work, one overarching challenge for us is to consider who our students are. Over the pandemic, CD students have become much more fluid in terms of where they take courses across the District. They may not even be aware that their schedule of courses per semester includes multiple colleges. Because our CD program key assessments are the same regardless of where students take a course, the method of assessment is consistent, but the data analysis has increasingly become more challenging. We use Brightspace to collect data, but we are now considering different methods of coding in order to disaggregate data in a variety of ways.

Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation Standards

COCURRICULAR ASSESSMENT AND BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

By Carrie Nepstad, Director of Cocurricular Assessment

(Best Style)

What is Cocurricular Assessment?

HLC describes it this way:

Cocurricular: Learning activities, programs and experiences that reinforce the institution's mission and values and complement the formal curriculum. Examples: Study abroad, student–faculty research experiences, service learning, professional clubs or organization, athletics, honor societies, career services.

Institutions determine for themselves, based on their mission, what they deem to be cocurricular, as an essential part of, or partner to, their curricular activities (as opposed to "extra–" curricular).

In 2018, the HWC Assessment Committee developed a Coordinator of Cocurricular Assessment as an executive role on the committee. Over the years, both faculty and staff have served in that role, meeting with stakeholders in Academic and Student Affairs to examine various assessments used in areas such as academic support services like tutoring, student services like advising or student initiatives and clubs. Over that same period of time, the AC developed institutional learning outcomes that focus on student learning across the institution. The goal for this year is to bring these initiatives together to explore how we can make use of our well-established assessment processes to support the assessment of student learning in both curricular and cocurricular spaces.

With the revision of HWC's organizational structure, with employment turnover in administration and staff, and with the many shifts we continue to make in response to the pandemic it feels like we are on a constant loop of separation and reunion. What does "coming home" mean in this context? To me, it is a kind of reacquaintance. I'm getting reacquainted with my work home, yet people and their roles have shifted and changed, spaces have changed, and processes and ways of interacting with one another have changed. It seems like a good time to focus on building relationships among us, particularly between Academic and Student Support; to draw from our collective strengths, to learn more about each other, and to find ways to meaningfully collaborate in order to support student learning in all its forms.

A HOME FOR OUR DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT REPORTS

By Special Guests Jennifer Meresman and Chris Sabino
(Most Likely to Get ID'd When They're 30)

In 2019, CCC completed its Developmental Education Planning Committee Recommendations, outlining 18 recommendations to improve Developmental Education and asked each college to create an annual, collaborative report–featuring contributions by a variety of faculty and administrative constituencies serving Developmental Education students–on their efforts to implement those recommendations. In hopes of providing more visibility to the report we put together last spring, we asked the Assessment Committee if they would be willing to host the report on their Web page and they agreed.

The executive summary is structured in a "Looking back" and "Looking forward" format in which we identify key takeaways and improvements from the 2021-2022 academic year and areas of focus in the year to come for our respective areas. This is followed by college-wide updates on selected recommendations from the Dev Ed Council's work. Next, we include an in-depth look at the year's data, along with a discussion and next steps.

We will be writing this report each Spring semester; for 2023, we plan to add a section on student perspectives of their experiences. Please contact Jeni (jmeresman@ccc.edu) or Chris (csabino@ccc.edu) with questions, comments, or suggestions for what to include in the next report.

Link to Harold Washington College's 2022 Developmental Education Continuous Improvement Report

"HEY. HOW'S THAT NEW ASSESSMENT PROCESS GOING?" CLARIFICATIONS AND UPDATES ON INQUIRY BASED ASSESSMENT OF THE ILOS

By Ukaisha Al-Amin, Vice-Chair of General Assessment
(Most Likely to edit the next Great British Baking Show Cookbook)

Recently, the Assessment Committee started a new process for assessing the college wide learning outcomes. These outcomes come from one very big question: What do we want students to learn and what knowledge do we want them to build upon by the time they graduate? This means taking into consideration all the learning that happens inside the classroom as well as outside the classroom. We are also interested in how students perceive what they learned.

This process starts with a question to the students about their learning. The main purpose is to hear students' voices and let that drive the next round of assessment. In other words, instead of us just choosing one of the outcomes to assess, we instead want to see what students are saying about their learning. The hardest part is not falling back on the ways we are used to running assessment. It is all too easy to wonder why we haven't asked more questions in the inquiry stage, or why we aren't reaching out to students based on their answers or most importantly– what we are going to do with the data.

Initial queries can supply interesting information about student learning and can spark initial recommendations, but they don't have to. It is like any other research process. You have to do the research first before formulating any type of thesis, and yes, some of what you find will not be useful or be usable later. This can be discouraging, but we as a committee have agreed that we would prefer a more organic process than the latter. We want to invite student input and let their responses shape our work. I'll give one more example; let's say we really want to assess the ILO 'Communicate'. We are really curious about it. However, a query survey comes back and the answers all point to students being more concerned with how they initiate conversation or step into leadership roles. This would mean doing a formal assessment on 'Initiate' instead.

This semester, we started a new query. This was shaped from discussions related to last year's participate survey. To ensure we are able to move into choosing the assessment more quickly, we decided to use three closed-ended questions. One of the things we learned from our first Query Project was that while having one open-ended question allowed for more thoughtful responses, it still took a year to complete because rating opened-ended questions takes time. By the time the Participate survey was up and running, significant time had passed since the Query Project from which it originated. I think also there was a lot of pressure 'to do' something with the information from the Query Project besides using it as step 1 in the process like it was meant to be used. So our hope moving forward is to move from Query Project to Assessment more seamlessly.

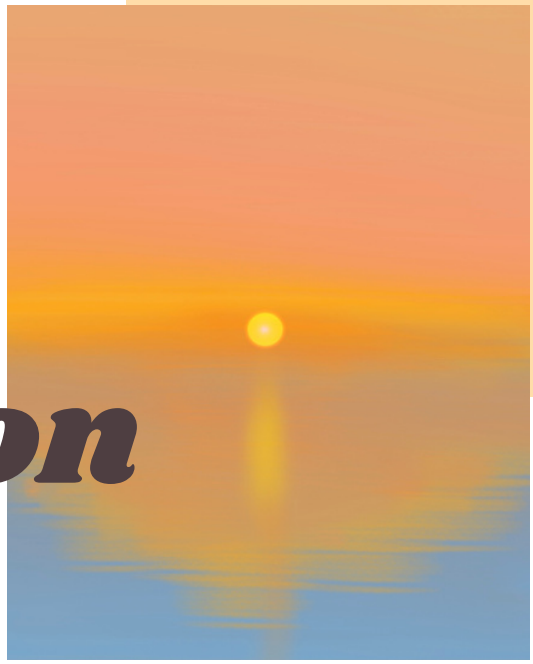
Our current Query Project asks the following questions and asks students to respond using a Likert-scale: Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neutral, Somewhat Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

- I feel comfortable enough in my classes to ask questions or discuss content.
- My classes provide a sense of connection and community.
- I have been encouraged to actively engage in and contribute in my classes.

These questions are rooted in place: the classroom, but we are not evaluating the classroom. Rest assured. Depending on what answers we receive, this will expand into the other spaces of the HWC community just from the nature of the ILOs. Then again, the results may not yield what we want. All in all, that is part of the process. We will be updating our progress soon. Results on this project and other updates will be published to our website.

Stay tuned.

Thanks for Reading!



Dedication

The Assessment Committee dedicates this edition to our friend and colleague Matthew Williams in memory of his beloved partner, Jongbo Kang Williams.

The Assessment Committee would like to thank all of its members for their thoughtful contributions not only to the Assessment Times but to the meetings every week. You all could be some where else on Wednesdays from 3-4, but you choose to spend that time with us. We appreciate you!

Special shout out to Jeffrey Swigart for maintaining our website. Scan the QR code to check it out.