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# Building Positive Relationships

— Co-curricular Assessment at HWC —

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# **HWC Assessment Committee**

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# Assessment is...all about learning

## Comprehensive, faculty-driven process:

Ongoing, Systematic, Structured, Sustainable, Fun,  
Voluntary & Non-Evaluative

“The Harold Washington College Assessment Committee (HWCAC) is dedicated to fulfilling the HWC core value of conducting assessment activities to improve student learning.”

The HWCAC Charge

# About growth and unicorns

## An Accurate-ish Timeline:

1998: HLC Complains

2003: Cecilia's Committee

2008: HLC Redemption (Gen Ed Assessment)

2012: Experimentation (Unit Liaisons)

2014: International Recognition

2018: Critical Reflection & Renewal



# Supporting learning across various units

“The HWCAC maintains cycles of assessment focused on various units of student learning, including institutional, general education, cocurricular, and program levels”

## **We use info from Direct and Indirect Measures to:**

Examine assumptions about learning

Explore how, when, and where learning happens

Encourage positively impactful change

Create/sustain inquiry & improvement-oriented culture

# Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

- Initiate
  - Investigate
  - Evaluate
  - Create
  - Participate
  - Appreciate
  - Communicate
  - Contemplate
- The largest scope of outcomes possible that colleges and universities use to assess student learning.
- Asked, “What should students have learned while at HWC as a whole, not just in the classroom or their selected program?”
- Created chance to assess experiences outside of the Gen Ed Core Curriculum (GECC) and learning happening in cocurricular areas, events, and everyday interactions with faculty, staff, and administrators at HWC.

# According to the Higher Learning Commission

(HLC)

**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, etc.

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).

What does HLC mean by Cocurricular?

# Learning Centered Community

## General Education Assessments

- Civic Engagement
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Humanities
- Natural Sciences
- Information Literacy
- Oral Communication
- Human Diversity
- Effective Writing
- Social Sciences

Unit Assessment within all departments

Academic Support Services

Student Services

Student Clubs

College-wide initiatives,  
events, activities



# Relationships as a Cultural Priority

## Relationship-Rich Education: How Human Connections Drive Success in College

- All students must experience genuine welcome and deep care
- Relationships are a powerful means to inspire all students to learn
- All students must develop webs of significant relationships in college
- All students need meaningful relationships to help them - to challenge them - to examine the big questions of their lives.

If our institutions do not honor the contributions of all faculty and staff, our students lose out on powerful relationships:

Every person on campus has the opportunity to be a teacher and a mentor, and all should be supported by strong institutional expectations and commitments.

# Building relationship-rich, co-curricular assessment

Transactional:

Counting numbers: who shows up?

Sending students away to tutoring or advising or clubs or events

Assigning points for advising/tutoring/events

Partnering:

What do they walk away with?

Partnering to develop and support learning outcomes

Collaboratively develop tools to assess shared learning outcomes such as ILOs

# Starting at home

## Child Development and Academic Support Services

- Embedded tutoring
- Hiring committee
- Lab Coordination

## Child Development and Student Services

- Materials for Advising
- Career Center: internships

### **Moving toward relationship-rich, co-curricular work:**

Build trust and understanding

Find common goals

Work with those!

# Building Positive Relationships to support learning

“All relationships, even the most successful ones, have conflict. It is unavoidable. Fortunately, our research shows that it’s not the appearance of conflict, but rather *how it’s managed* that predicts the success or failure of a relationship. We say “manage” conflict rather than “resolve,” because relationship conflict is natural and has functional, positive aspects that provide opportunities for growth and understanding”

From the [Gottman Institute](#)

# Building Positive Relationships

The Four Horsmen:

1. Criticism
2. Contempt
3. Defensiveness
4. Stonewalling

Relationship building:

1. Gentle start up: express a positive need
2. Build culture of appreciation: find gratitude
3. Take responsibility: accept another's perspective and apologize for wrongdoing
4. Physiological self-soothing: take a break

# Relationships Matter

## Relationships Matter

“Designing for welcome and inclusion is good for all students. But relationships are especially powerful for students who for any reason might feel they are on the margins of higher education, including first-generation students, people of color, and LGBTQIA people”

## Relationships are Everyone's Job

It takes everyone working together to create a relationship-rich campus.

We may ask:

- Who is not being served?
- Which students are disconnected and most likely to leave?
- Where do we need to build and strengthen across the institution?

What do you  
think?

# Thank you!

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