# North Central Missouri College

# Assessment Guidebook

*Revised Spring 2023*

# Contents

Introduction ..... 2
Mission Statement ..... 2
Philosophy of Assessment ..... 3
Assessment Team ..... 3
Assessment Records and Dissemination ..... 3
Assessment Team Calendar Overview ..... 4
Assessment Processes ..... 4
Course Assessment ..... 4
Program Outcome Assessment ..... 5
Program Reviews ..... 6
Suggested Timeline for Program Review Coordination ..... 6
Additional Processes ..... 7
Assessment of Student Learning ..... 8
General Education ..... 8
Academic Programs ..... 9
Assessment of Co-Curricular Programming ..... 9
Assessment Coordination Calendar ..... 9
Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness ..... 11
Administrative Programs ..... 11
Strategic Enrollment Management ..... 11
Performance Funding Indicators ..... 11
Resources ..... 12

# Introduction

## Mission Statement

North Central Missouri College (NCMC) provides accessible, affordable, and quality educational programs, with emphases on excellence in teaching, learning, workforce development, and service.

## Philosophy of Assessment

Teaching, learning, workforce development, and service are dynamic activities depending heavily on human inputs, and higher education is a complex environment with many internal and external obligations. The college must address the unique needs of its students, employees, and constituents in addition to observing the expectations of the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (MDHEWD), the Higher Learning Commission and other accrediting bodies, as well as relevant federal agencies.

In this context, two critical components of quality are a culture of continuous improvement, and a focus on transparency and accountability. Thus, North Central Missouri College concurs with the purposes of assessment as outlined by the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development: assessment documents and improves student learning and the effectiveness of the institution and its programs. It is a continuous process, embedded in the culture of the college and provides a framework for improvement and accountability. Assessment at NCMC employs clearly stated goals and processes to prove and improve the quality of both academic and administrative operations.

It is the responsibility of the college to ensure that its graduates meet appropriate standards of performance. NCMC collects data on student learning using multiple modes of assessment including quantitative and qualitative, direct and indirect measures. The college also collects data on institutional effectiveness including persistence, retention, completion, transfer, and job placement. Longitudinal reports based on both types of data provide valuable information used to make positive changes. NCMC's "Culture of Evidence" (Dwyer et al, 2006) assures that graduates are equipped with the skills and knowledge to be productive members of the workforce and to continue their learning, whether informally or through transfer to a four-year institution.

## Assessment Team

NCMC has a designated team whose primary role is to assist college personnel in the assessment process. The Assessment Team comprises an assessment team leader, institutional research, one faculty assessment consultant from each division, representatives from non-academic departments, the Chief Academic Officer, and the Dean of Instruction. This team is also responsible for orienting new faculty to the assessment process, maintaining records, revising the Assessment Guidebook, leading the annual review of assessment practices, and facilitating the program review process annually.

## Assessment Records and Dissemination

The college has an obligation to disseminate assessment results through appropriate channels in a professional and ethical manner to promote improvement and accountability. North Central Missouri College makes assessment information available to appropriate constituencies, including students, through multiple forums. The assessment webpage https://www.ncmissouri.edu/about/assessment/ contains general information about college assessment activities, and recent documents of interest to external stakeholders including this Assessment Guidebook and the annual Assessment Report.

The annual Assessment Report provides a quick look at some salient assessment results and course/program revisions based on these results. Program reviews and most assessment reports are stored on the college's intranet. Course assessments and other documents are stored on the faculty share drive. Program outcomes are included in the catalog, and course objectives (SLOs) are on individual course syllabi.

### Assessment Team Calendar Overview

The assessment team typically meets twice a month during the fall and spring semesters. The suggested annual activities include: updating the Assessment Guidebook in spring, making sure the summer Adjunct and Dual Credit Workshop includes course and program assessment discussion, publishing an Annual Assessment Report by early fall.

## Assessment Processes

### Course Assessment

The course assessment process allows instructors to collect, analyze, and reflect on information and changes pertaining to a specific course. To begin the process, instructors must identify the student learning objectives (SLOs) for the course, the assessment tool(s), criteria defining levels of student success (exceeding, meeting, and failing to meet expectations), and point(s) in time when the data will be collected. Next, the instructor collects and records summary data including student information related to enrollment, final grade distribution, withdrawals, and attendance. Instructors then report success data per SLO. They then analyze this data, reflect on the class, and draw conclusions that become the action plan for sustaining or improving the course. Faculty assessment consultants should visit with members of their division during the first 3 weeks of the semester to review the previous semester's assessment results and discuss future plans. The instructor implements the action plan and the process begins again.

*Figure 1:Course Assessment Feedback Loop Diagram*

Course assessment can help answer the following questions:

- To what extent are students achieving the stated course objectives?
- Do minimum standards need realigning?
- Does the student know what is most important?

- Are the prerequisites and entry levels set at an appropriate level?
- Can topics be introduced in a more effective way to enable student learning?
- Do students know when they are mastering the course content?

Answering these questions and others can inform and improve the quality of student learning in the course. To strengthen the course assessment process further, instructors are to arrange a follow-up meeting with their division's faculty assessment consultant to review results and discuss strategies to improve student learning. An action plan will be written, outlining changes to make the next time the course is taught. To facilitate course assessment, the Assessment Team provides a Course Assessment Template, a Course Assessment Checklist for Consultants, and a Course Assessment Consulting Log. Faculty access the Course Assessment Template and submit their Course Assessments by going to the shared Faculty drive, then finding the Assessment folder within the Permanent folder.

NCMC administers course evaluations electronically for all courses each semester for all instructors. The surveys are available to all students through the college website and are typically left open for students to fill out from week 12 to week 14, with first or second session (eight-week) classes adjusted appropriately. Many instructors allow class time for students to log in to the computers and fill out the course evaluations. The questionnaires are completed online (beginning in 2020) using an MS Forms survey format. Beginning in 2022, the college is piloting a return to in-person proctored evaluations in selected sections to improve response rates. Evaluations are tabulated, and results and comments made available to faculty and administration after that session's grades are due each session/semester. The questionnaires are available on the assessment website. Faculty and administration may access results through the Academic Affairs department. Academic administrators and faculty member(s) may meet to discuss identified concerns, as needed.

## Program Outcome Assessment

Each NCMC program maintains and assesses regularly a set of program outcomes. Wherever possible, there should be more than one method of assessment. One option is use of exit or licensure examinations, in cases where these are necessary or advantageous for employment. For example, the nursing programs use the NCLEX examinations. Course SLO assessments can also assess program outcomes in courses that feed these outcomes through an established curriculum map. A third possibility is a project or embedded assignment designed to measure student achievement directly on a particular program outcome.

Each year, general education faculty will cooperate to assess one general education outcome directly. Every dimension of the outcome need not be assessed every time, and all disciplines do not need to assess all the same things, but the goal is to develop normed assessments that will work across as many disciplines as possible. For example, if it is the year to assess Communicating, the faculty might agree to focus on the listening aspect of that outcome. All disciplines that address listening skills should agree on a way to assess listening within their courses, and discuss what would be an acceptable level of student performance. Disciplines that do not significantly address listening might choose to assess a different aspect of communication.

As this system of assessment matures, various assessments and rubrics can be built into the LMS so results can be collected annually across all sections with no extra effort. At that point, the assessment process will focus on annual discussion of the results and possible changes needed. Faculty may choose to use more complicated rubrics, but most critical is to distinguish between students who meet the standard and those who don't. The current LMS system for collecting outcome data works best if we focus on meet vs does not meet, rather than adding other levels like 'exceeds expectations'.

The program review captures accumulated information about outcome assessment every five years, and detailed information by course and program is stored on the faculty drive. A more accessible summary appears in the annual Assessment Report.

### Timeline for General Education Assessment

| | |
|---|---|
| February | Choose aspect(s) of the upcoming year's outcome to assess. Determine performance standard(s) and assessment method(s). |
| June | Discuss planned assessment and performance standards with PT faculty in preparation for upcoming assessment in the fall. Discuss results of the previous year's assessments to decide if changes to curriculum or instruction are needed. |
| Fall | Assess general education outcome. |
| Spring | If department decides to make a change based on fall assessment, assess outcome again. |

## Program Reviews

A review is an opportunity for self-study, self-renewal and recognition of the excellence of North Central Missouri College's educational and support programs, as well as an opportunity to identify areas that may need improvement. Reviews involve self-scrutiny by college entities to determine how well each NCMC program/department is achieving objectives and advancing the mission, vision, goals and institutional effectiveness of the college. Documentation includes relevant information as to how assessments are administered, student performance is measured, results are used for curriculum improvement, and assessment processes are reviewed and validated. Results from these reviews are used in planning on the program and institutional levels, which influence strategic planning and budgeting.

Every full review occurs on a five-year rotating schedule and involves an external review by a panel outside of the program/service area. In 2020, the faculty senate and cabinet approved moving from four different templates to two: academic and administrative. The process was also revised to include an abbreviated annual component for all programs beginning in fall 2021, but retaining a reflective five-year review.

### Suggested Timeline for Program Review Coordination

Fall Program Reviews:

- Hold/Complete Program Review Orientation during April preceding scheduled program review.
    - If there are any employee changes in the area, hold another orientation in September.
- Check in with Program Review leads in late August-early September.

- Help each lead/group as needed.
- Depending on how far along the groups are and their other commitments during the semester, schedule tentative dates and times for Program Review Meetings in late September or October. Be sure to check with Program Review lead to see if additional team members should be invited.
- Deadline for Fall Reviews: October 15.
- Read submitted reviews, offer revision suggestions and feedback as relevant. Check additional drafts, if applicable.
- Send revised documents to Program Review Council at least a week before scheduled reviews.
- Send a reminder email with review documents attached to Program Review Council and Program Review lead/team two days before review.
- Hold Program Review meetings in late October-November.
- Loop back with Program Review lead/team on revisions.
- Once revisions are made and submitted, send to IR for compilation and posting.
- Send "review process complete" email to Program Review lead/team.

Spring Program Reviews:

- Hold/Complete Program Review Orientation during the early November preceding the scheduled program review.
    - If there are any employee changes in the area, hold another orientation in January.
- Check in with Program Review leads in January.
- Help each lead/group as needed.
- Depending on how far along the groups are and their other commitments during the semester, schedule tentative dates and times for Program Review Meetings in February or early March. Be sure to check with Program Review lead to see if additional team members should be invited.
- Deadline for Fall Reviews: March 15.
- Read through submitted reviews, offer revision suggestions and feedback as relevant. Check additional drafts, if applicable.
- Send revised review documents to Program Review Council at least a week before the scheduled reviews.
- Send a reminder email with review documents attached to Program Review Council and Program Review lead/team two days before review.
- Hold Program Review meetings in late March-April.
- Loop back with Program Review lead/team on revisions.
- Once revisions are made and submitted, send to Tara for compilation and posting.
- Send "review process complete" email to Program Review lead/team.

## Additional Processes

The institution also surveys students and employees, conducts both one-time and serial assessments using external instruments such as Noel-Levitz and CCSSE, and analyzes other data sources such as enrollment and retention reports, Perkins reports, IPEDS, and the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) for actionable information and trends.

# Assessment of Student Learning

## General Education

General education imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students, developing skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess. It is the curricular foundation for all degrees awarded by North Central Missouri College, introducing students to the traditional disciplines of the arts and sciences and the connections between them. It provides the means to come to terms, intelligently and humanely, with the diversity of the world and helps students to acquire appropriate investigative, interpretative, and communicative competencies. General education equips students for success in their specialized areas of study and for fulfilled lives as educated persons, as active citizens, and as effective contributors to their own prosperity and to the general welfare of society.

The philosophy and framework for general education at North Central Missouri College align with the guidance and policies of the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (MDHEWD). Representatives from Missouri public institutions worked with MDHEWD to design a statewide general education framework to improve transferability among Missouri colleges and universities. The Missouri Core 42 establishes distribution requirements and lists of commonly offered general education courses that may fulfill these requirements. Committees of discipline faculty drawn from public institutions statewide review individual college courses to determine their equivalency, and the state maintains a catalog of courses at each public institution approved as Missouri Transfer "MOTR" courses.

The faculty oversees the general education component of the curriculum and its assessment. In 2018, NCMC implemented the Missouri Core 42 as the general education portion of its Associate in Arts degree, as mandated by legislation. Other NCMC degree programs define general education components based on sets of MOTR courses deemed appropriate by NCMC faculty, in consultation with transfer partners and/or employer advisory groups. In AY22, North Central Missouri College faculty approved a revised set of four learning outcomes for general education:

1. Communicating - Students will be able to read and listen critically, and write and speak with thoughtfulness, clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness.
2. Managing Information - Students will be able to access, organize, evaluate, and present information in various formats.
3. Problem Solving - Students will be able to analyze information or evidence and apply it to draw conclusions, formulate a position or hypothesis, and solve problems.
4. Engaging – Students will be able to interact effectively in classrooms, communities, and across the world to accomplish goals.

North Central Missouri College faculty approved a general education curriculum map, showing that each MOTR course has one or more SLOs that link to at least one general education outcome. This ties course assessment processes with the program level.

Each year, faculty teaching Core 42 courses will focus on one of these four general education outcomes. During the February In-Service, disciplines decide most aspects of the outcome that will be of most interest, and determine appropriate methods and expectations. Each discipline may assess the outcome in the manner of its choosing, to assure meaningfulness, but faculty are encouraged to consider common normed assessments across multiple disciplines wherever feasible. The rotation schedule below includes a review of the A.A degree every fifth year. Data from Higher Order Thinking in AY21 will be substituted for Problem Solving in the AY25 Associate in Arts review.

| | |
|---|---|
| AY22 | Communicating |
| AY23 | Engaging |

| | |
|---|---|
| AY24 | Managing Information |
| AY25 | Associate in Arts |
| AY26 | Problem Solving |
| AY27 | Communicating |
| AY28 | Engaging |
| AY29 | Managing Information |

## Academic Programs

Each instructional program maintains a set of program outcomes, which summarize the key learning elements accomplished by a successful graduate of the program. These outcomes are on the program webpages and in the catalog. The Associate in Arts (A.A.) degree has no required courses outside the state-mandated core 42. Students choose free electives with help from an adviser, based on the student's intended major field of study after transfer. Therefore, NCMC considers the general education outcomes described above to be the learning outcomes for the Core 42, and for the A.A. degree.

Occupational program faculty design a curriculum, including a sequence of courses, designed to help students achieve the program outcomes. Curriculum maps for each program demonstrate how students meet program outcomes through the required coursework. Each course in turn has a set of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) describing the intended learning in the course.

### Assessment of Co-Curricular Programming

Working definition: Co-curricular programming encompasses organizations, clubs, and activities that enhance, supplement, and encourage persistence in an academic program or class.

North Central Missouri College offers co-curricular programs in pursuit of two primary goals:

1. Enhance and supplement student learning to promote success, progression, and completion
2. Provide social, service, and leadership opportunities to promote student engagement with academic programs

Not all programming meets both goals by design. Suggested assessment activities include:

- Analyze student performance to determine academic impact of co-curricular programs
- Analyze persistence and retention data to determine engagement impact
- CCSSE or other student surveys on engagement

The program review process records some information on assessment of co-curricular programming.

## Assessment Coordination Calendar

Fall Semester

- Remind faculty to set up Course Assessment consultation appointments with their Assessment Liaisons and meet before the end of Week 3.
- Set meeting dates and times for the semester
- Orient new Assessment Team members
- Hold Program Review Orientation for any new employees tasked with a Program Review • New Faculty Assessment Orientation
- Early September:

- Collect Course Assessment Consultation Logs from liaisons after Week 3
- Set up Course Evaluations for First Session (opens Saturday 8:00 am of Week 5, closes Friday 11:59 pm of Week 7—if an 8-week session, end of Week 6 if a 7-week session) ○ Set up Course Evaluations for Second, Dual, and Main Sessions (opens Monday 8:00 am of Week 12, closes Friday, 11:59 pm of Week 14)

- Week 9 after grades are due: Send email to faculty, adjuncts, Vice President, Dean of Instruction, Dean of Extended Campus, Director of IR to let them know Course Evaluations for First session are available
- Late November: send Course Assessment reminder email to faculty
- December after grades are due: Send email to faculty, adjuncts, Vice President, Dean of Instruction, Dean of Extended Campus, Director of IR to let them know Course Evaluations for Second, Dual, and Main sessions are available

Spring Semester

- Remind faculty to set up Course Assessment consultation appointments with their Assessment Liaisons and meet before the end of Week 3.
- Set meeting dates and times for the semester
- Orient new Assessment Team members (if any)
- Hold Program Review Orientation for any new employees tasked with a Program Review
- Early February:
  - Collect Course Assessment Consultation Logs from liaisons after Week 3
  - Set up Course Evaluations for First Session (opens Saturday 8:00 am of Week 5, closes Friday 11:59 pm of Week 7—if an 8-week session, end of Week 6 if a 7-week session) ○ Set up Course Evaluations for Second, Dual, and Main Sessions (opens Monday 8:00 am of Week 12, closes Friday, 11:59 pm of Week 14)
- Mid-February: Send out email requesting nominations, with a brief explanation, for Shipley Assessment Award (must be submitted to me by March 1)
- Week 9 after grades are due: Send email to faculty, adjuncts, Vice President, Dean of Instruction, Dean of Extended Campus, Director of IR to let them know Course Evaluations for First session are available
- March 15: Send Shipley Assessment Award selection to Chief of Staff
- Mid-April (before Employee Recognition Ceremony):
  - Make Certificate ○ Order engraving for plaque
- Late April: send Course Assessment reminder email to faculty
- May after grades are due: Send email to faculty, adjuncts, Vice President, Dean of Instruction, Dean of Extended Campus, Director of IR to let them know Course Evaluations for Second, Dual, and Main sessions are available

Summer Semester •

Early June:

- Set up Course Evaluations for First Session (opens Saturday 8:00 am of Week __, closes Friday 11:59 pm of Week _) ○ Set up Course Evaluations for Second and Main Session (opens Saturday 8:00 am of Week __, closes Friday 11:59 pm of Week _)

- July/Early August after grades are due: Send email to faculty, adjuncts, Vice President, Dean of Instruction, Dean of Extended Campus, Director of IR to let them know Course Evaluations for all summer sessions are available

# Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness

NCMC collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs. The college also evaluates the success of its graduates to ensure that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, completion, placement, and transfer to make improvements as warranted.

## Administrative Programs

Administrative programs are on a five-year schedule for program review. Most of these programs have numerical goals, and through the strategic plan and the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan they participate in activities and tactics designed to help the institution meet targets and become more effective.

## Strategic Enrollment Management

NCMC maintains targets for persistence, retention, and completion within its SEM plan. The SEM Team and Assessment Team review data. Proposals for strategies to improve performance on these measures go to the SEM Team. The SEM Team will meet jointly with the Assessment Team at least annually around October to review effectiveness data, including enrollment and retention, performance funding indicators, IPEDS, NCCBP, Perkins, student tracker, and placement follow-up data.

## Performance Funding Indicators

Based on recommendations from the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE), SB492 became law in 2014. Core funding for each institution starts with fiscal year 2015appropriation as a base, and at least 90 percent of any increase to that core funding would come from institutional success on adopted performance measures. The remaining ten percent of any increase shall address funding inequities within each sector using an equity formula developed by each institutional sector. This becomes the new core funding level, and the process repeats as new funding becomes available.

The current model contains five performance indicators for each institution, and institutions can earn one-fifth of the increase in funding allocated to performance by demonstrating success on one of its five measures. If an institution demonstrates success on two measures, then it would earn two-fifths of the money, etc., while an institution succeeding on all five measures would receive 100% of the performance funding increase. NCMC has historically met all five indicators.

1. **Three Year Completion Rates:** The percentage of first-time, full-time entering students who successfully complete a certificate or degree of at least one year or longer, or successfully transfer to a four-year institution.

2. **Successful Completion of All Credit Hours:** The percentage of enrollee success based on institution-wide credit grades.
3. **All Student Performance on Gateway English:** The percentage of all student performance based on English gateway courses.
4. **Licensure/Certification Exam Passage:** The percentage of career/technical graduates who pass their required licensure/certification examination.
5. **Persistence Rate for Incoming Students:** The percentage of students (full-time & part-time) enrolled in the fall term at an institution who return/re-enroll for the subsequent spring term.

Success on each measure is defined as improvement over the previous year's performance (both measured with three-year rolling averages), year-over-year improvement or, where applicable and appropriate, sustained performance in the top third of the National Community College Benchmarking Project.

## Resources

Missouri Assessment Consortium--Guiding Principles on Assessment
http://dhe.mo.gov/assessment/mac/guidingprinciples.php

Curriculum Alignment Initiative http://dhe.mo.gov/cai/

Committee for Curriculum and Assessment http://dhe.mo.gov/cca/

Learning Assessment in Missouri Postsecondary Education (LAMP) http://dhe.mo.gov/lamp/

Culture of Evidence http://www.ets.org/Media/Resources_For/Policy_Makers/pdf/cultureofevidence.pdf