Introduction

In 2004 and early 2005 Columbia College passed through faculty governance and began implementing a new assessment plan. The plan’s primary goal is to address the two Higher Learning Commission (HLC) concerns raised during the 2002 comprehensive reaccreditation visit: 1) lack of course objectives (CO’s) and measurable learning outcomes (MLO’s) and 2) inadequate export of assessment activity to adult learning venues.

The Academic Assessment Committee worked for two years on the plan, while full-time faculty spent considerable effort during 2004-2005 writing CO’s and MLO’s for more than 600 undergraduate and graduate courses taught at the College. The CO/MLO project will be concluded during the 2005-2006 academic year, while assessment export will be ongoing indefinitely.

In essence, all instructional venues – Day, Adult Higher Education (AHE), Graduate – have learning outcomes assessed. A few academic programs – all three graduate programs, Art, Social Work – use significant project-based culminating experiences (CE) for assessment. The others use nationally-normed standardized tests: the Major Field Test (MFT) for all degrees but Education, which uses the PRAXIS. Results of these tests, together with the Assessment of the Major Form (AM), completed online by all instructors of CE courses, are sent to the respective full-time faculty each semester for analysis. Faculty interpret the results and make recommendations, through governance where necessary, for improvements to curriculum and pedagogy.

General Education learning criteria are assessed using a nationally-normed standardized test, the Academic Profile (AP). The AP is administered to Day freshmen (in their INCC classes) and seniors (in their CE classes). “Value-added” data are now available for two freshmen-senior cohorts. The AP is administered to SAMPLED adult learning CE classes to assess general education learning. Results are given to the General Education Committee for analysis and recommendations.

Subsequent annual reports will follow up on recommendations and the impact of curricular and pedagogical changes.

Assessment of Degree Programs

Each department has reviewed results of assessment of degree programs that took place during calendar 2004. Their findings and recommendations are below.
Art
Art students were assessed with portfolios and a survey. All portfolios were judged to be of acceptable quality. The questionnaire, used to assess course content, is a “work in progress;” some questions need to be reworked.

Analysis of results: all created works were judged acceptable based on faculty criteria (concept, scale, competence, presentation [visual, oral, CD produced]). Student writing skills remain a concern.

Faculty recommendations:

- Develop a senior seminar course, per program review visit team suggestion.
- Devote more time in ARTS 101 to media and design (from questionnaire responses).
- Look at decline in numbers in Graphic Design major.

Business Administration
Undergraduate
Day undergraduate students (20) were assessed with the MFT and case analyses. They showed strengths in strategic analysis and weaknesses in qualitative analysis and projection. Day students performed above national means in all eight areas of the MFT.

Recommendations:

- Increase “future projection” exercises.
- Incorporate more “mini-applications.”

AHE undergraduate students (91) were similarly assessed. The AM form was not a success. MFT results gave useful feedback: four campuses exceed national means and five below, with St. Louis and Orlando highly problematic.

Faculty Recommendations:

- All instructors must use universal CO’s and MLO’s.
- Emphasize seriousness of MFT/build assessment culture.

Graduate
Home campus graduate students (15) were assessed by strategic case analysis. All students met established standards that reflected content areas of prior course.

Faculty Recommendation:

- Continue small group strategic case analysis.

Computer and Mathematical Sciences
CIS students (41) were assessed with the MFT. Day students scored over one-half standard deviation above the national average although the sample was very small (3). The AHE results were disappointing with the average student scoring 0.7 standard deviations below the national average. This can be partially explained by the fact that the exam is intended for computer
science students and not computer information systems students. In order to address this difficulty, the department is currently constructing a tailored exam covering all core courses for both the computer science and the computer information systems degree.

MFT results were not available for Math graduates in 2004.

**Criminal Justice Administration and Social Work**  
**Criminal Justice/Undergraduate**  
Criminal Justice students (26 Day, 55 AHE) were assessed with the MFT and AM; Day and Evening students also took a departmental test and completed a survey.

AM results showed most Criminal Justice students are solidly grounded in content and skills. Weaknesses occasionally occurred in corrections, juvenile justice and communication skills. MFT results reinforced these findings, as did home campus departmental test results and survey findings.

Faculty Recommendations:

- Offer more courses in Corrections.
- Emphasize seriousness of MFT/build assessment culture.
- Review qualifications of adjuncts and replace as necessary.
- Conduct a chair visit/workshop at selected AHE campuses.

**Criminal Justice/Graduate**  
MSCJ students (10) were assessed with intensive writing and presentation exercises. All students completed the CE course successfully and gave helpful feedback regarding curriculum (more on constitutional issues, corrections, terrorism, budgeting; reduce repetition in organizational behavior and human resource management).

Faculty Recommendations:

- Revise curriculum to reduce redundancy and increase currency.
- Make courses more rigorous.
- Offer courses more often.

**Social Work**  
Social Work students (10) were assessed with the ACAT (a national senior test) and field instructor evaluation of practicum experiences. ACAT results were not available. Placement results showed most learning goals were met, with three areas needing improvement (structured supervision, training, resources available).

Faculty Recommendations:

- More structure to supervision.
- More training about importance of field experience.
- Better workspace.
- Better Field Experience training.
**Education**

**Undergraduate**
Day and Evening undergraduate students (Spring: 16, Fall: 14) were assessed with portfolio completion, graduating teacher survey and PRAXIS II exam. All fall graduates passed the portfolios and 81% of spring graduates did. In fall 85% passed the PRAXIS II on first attempt; 92% in spring.

Surveys indicated strengths of personal faculty attention, preparation, practical experiences and weaknesses in technology, inadequate assistance with portfolios, too many program changes, departmental communication issues and amount of time allowed for student teaching.

Faculty Recommendations:

- Addition of EDUC 400 will address many portfolio concerns.
- Provide more in-depth technology preparation.
- Improve intra-departmental communication.
- Improve guidelines for program transition.
- Improve communication with extended campuses.

**Graduate**
Five MAT students completed EDUC 508 and the portfolio with 100% passing in fall 2004; four completed the exit interview. Average points for NBPT standards ranged from 10.3-11.4 (12 possible). Exit interviews reported strengths of good modeling by faculty, networking, class size and times, the standards themselves. Reported weaknesses included course rotations and excessive program changes.

Faculty recommendations:

- Continue to use NBPT standards.
- Stabilize course rotations.

**History and Social Sciences**
History and Psychology students were formally assessed using the MFT and AM; History also used a senior thesis. A small group of history students (3) showed uneven writing skills.

Faculty recommendations:

- Refine degree requirements to include more non-European history.
- Improve students scholarly writing skills.

Day Psychology students (9) taking the MFT scored well in clinical, abnormal, developmental and social and less well in learning and cognition.

Faculty Recommendation:

- Collect additional data to be used to identify trends.
Psychology students (16 total) from two AHE campuses (Evening and Rolla) scored below the national mean but within one standard deviation. Hancock students scored at the national mean. In each case one or two students performed very well, raising the mean. The weakest content areas were sensory and perception.

Faculty Recommendation:

- Closely monitor future MFT results from AHE.
- Correlate MFT scores with GPAs to monitor grade inflation.

**Humanities**

Five students (two Day, three Evening) took the English MFT. This was the first administration of the English MFT. Only one (a Day student) scored above the national average.

Faculty Recommendations:

- Await future results, which should improve, with new curriculum and capstone course.
- Bring Evening standards in line with Day.

**Science**

**Biology**

Twelve Day students took the Biology MFT in Spring 2004 and nine in fall 2004. There were no extreme strengths or deficiencies. Weaker fields are biochemistry, diversity of organisms and plant structures and function; strengths are in cell structure and organization and population genetics/evolution. Scores have improved in recent years, indicating the weakness of the old Natural Science major. In the capstone courses about half the students met or exceeded performance goals. The instructor reported strong student desire to learn and be challenged, lack of instructor continuity and poor lab facilities.

Faculty Recommendations:

- Improve labs.
- Continue to monitor course content and rigor.
- Provide opportunities for undergraduate research.
- Hire competent adjuncts.
- Bring Evening standards in line with Day.
- Require students to take Research Design before Senior Seminar.

**Chemistry**

There was only one Chemistry graduate. His MFT performance was poor. Much more data is needed.
General Education

ESD AP Results
In late 2003 and 2004 the AP was administered at six AHE campuses. Scores with comparisons to national norms are shown below: Shaded scores are more than one standard deviation below the national mean.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jeff City (16)</th>
<th>Marysville (11)</th>
<th>Orlando - Late 03 (6)</th>
<th>Orlando (17)</th>
<th>St. Louis</th>
<th>National S.D.</th>
<th>National Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>444.0</td>
<td>438.2</td>
<td>426.7</td>
<td>437.4</td>
<td>438.8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>449.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>112.3</td>
<td>108.6</td>
<td>108.2</td>
<td>108.4</td>
<td>110.2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>112.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>117.6</td>
<td>117.7</td>
<td>116.8</td>
<td>119.8</td>
<td>117.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>120.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>113.4</td>
<td>114.3</td>
<td>109.8</td>
<td>113.1</td>
<td>113.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>115.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>114.4</td>
<td>111.3</td>
<td>105.8</td>
<td>111.8</td>
<td>110.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>114.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>114.1</td>
<td>112.8</td>
<td>111.7</td>
<td>112.9</td>
<td>113.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>116.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>113.1</td>
<td>111.5</td>
<td>111.7</td>
<td>111.6</td>
<td>112.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>114.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>115.9</td>
<td>113.9</td>
<td>113.8</td>
<td>114.1</td>
<td>114.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>116.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jefferson City seniors are close to national norms in most categories. Results from other campuses are problematic and clearly warrant close examination. At the very least work remains to create a culture of assessment in AHE. Once AHE instructors and students understand the purpose of assessment (a joint EVP/DAA, VP/AHE and AHE Director responsibility) and students take the AP seriously, the results can be evaluated for curricular and/or personnel change.

Spring 2005 AHE results, while not officially part of this report, show improving scores (still below national means, but all within one standard deviation).

Day AP Results
Day Seniors
In the Day program 39 seniors took the AP in fall 2004 and 85 took it in Spring 2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2004</th>
<th>Spring 2004</th>
<th>National Means</th>
<th>National S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>453.1</td>
<td>452.9</td>
<td>449.6</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>113.2</td>
<td>113.6</td>
<td>112.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>121.9</td>
<td>120.5</td>
<td>120.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>115.5</td>
<td>116.5</td>
<td>115.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>115.7</td>
<td>115.5</td>
<td>114.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>118.1</td>
<td>116.6</td>
<td>116.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>115.2</td>
<td>115.7</td>
<td>114.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>117.3</td>
<td>116.7</td>
<td>116.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Day seniors scored above the national mean overall and on all subscores; all averages were within one standard deviation of the mean. There were no significant intergroup differences (sex, number of transfer hours, etc.). Some majors had high averages (computer sciences, criminal justice, history, political science, psychology) and one had low (social work) but all majors had fewer than ten who took the test. There was an expected direct relationship between scores and GPA.
Day Freshmen

Day freshmen (128) took the AP while enrolled in their INCC class; fall freshmen only were tested:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2004</th>
<th>National Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>442.1</td>
<td>443.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>110.7</td>
<td>110.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>118.1</td>
<td>117.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>114.1</td>
<td>114.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>113.0</td>
<td>114.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>113.9</td>
<td>114.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>112.9</td>
<td>113.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>114.5</td>
<td>115.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Day freshmen performed essentially at the national average on all measures. There were no appreciable differences in any category based on sex.

Value-Added

For the second consecutive year Day seniors demonstrated little “value-added” when they retook the AP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Freshmen</th>
<th>Senior</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1999 Freshmen Avg.</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>+8 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2000 Freshmen Avg.</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>+2 (&lt;1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

The top assessment priority is to continue to build an assessment culture in all venues with emphasis in AHE. Activities will include:

- Improved communication with AHE students, instructors and administrators generally.
- Improved information about the AM form to all CE instructors.
- Better guidelines to departments about analysis of assessment results.
- Improved feedback loops between full-time faculty and AHE administrators:
  - Clear findings and recommendations for improvement from faculty.
  - Mechanisms for feedback on follow-up from AHE administrators to faculty.

The Assessment Plan is being implemented steadily. Most CE, introductory general education and core courses have CO’s and MLO’s; all courses will by the end of 2006. Compliance with AM forms is improving and better information is being gathered from them. The AM form will be improved. The MFT and AP are being systematically exported to AHE venues, including Online. The EVP/DAA is communicating personally with all CE students taking the MFT and AP, including Online.

TBS/kbf
10/19/05