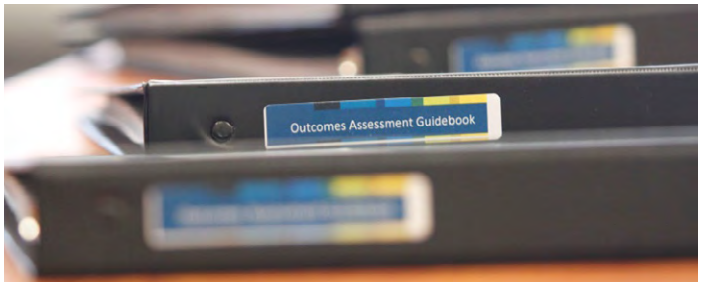
# Office of Outcomes Assessment

## 2013 Annual Report

JOHNSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE




# Annual Report
# Office of Outcomes Assessment

*"Assessment is a process that focuses on student learning, a process that involves reviewing and reflecting on practice as academics have always done, but in a more planned and careful way."*
Paloma & Banta, 1999, pg. 1

## *Introduction*

This annual report of the Office of Outcomes Assessment (OOA) highlights the work over the past academic year of the outcomes assessment work undertaken by the faculty of the college. This report represents a glimpse into assessment efforts of the campus, but is not exhaustive in scope.

## *Purpose of Assessment*

Understanding how well our students learn and improving teaching are two key points of assessment activities at JCCC. This report serves to highlight student successes through the college's faculty-driven assessment process. This year's report will showcase the ongoing work of the campus in promoting and increasing assessment education and training opportunities; demonstrating regional leadership in assessment initiatives; and encouraging greater engagement in a culture of assessment on campus.

As in previous years, the report also serves two complementary purposes: 1) to provide useful information on what and how our students are learning; and 2) to illustrate evidence of student learning at JCCC for external constituents.

## *Student Learning Outcomes*

*"In our simplest definition, an outcome is a stated expectation. A learning outcome is a stated expectation of what someone will have learned."*
Driscoll & Wood, 2007, pg. 5

At the heart of the college's assessment activities are the eight student learning outcomes (SLOs). These student learning outcomes reflect the college's commitment to our students and

to the community we serve. This year brought a level of discourse concerning the college's SLOs, and their breadth in covering the types of learning activities that take place throughout the curriculum.

In the spring of 2013 the OOA hosted a series of eight focus groups in different campus locations that asked the following questions:

- How approachable are each of the SLOs and their detailed definitions?
- Are there important abilities not reflected in the bullet points?

From these focus groups and through discussions with the Educational Affairs Committee, the student learning outcomes were modified to include "aural" skills. In addition, minor modifications were added to the subpoints of the SLOs to better incorporate sustainability into the learning outcomes.

Successful students will be able to:

1. **Access and evaluate information from credible sources**, including the ability to:
    a. Use critical thinking skills to select, analyze, evaluate and synthesize source materials;
    b. Select and execute appropriate methods of inquiry;
    c. Comprehend and assess the relevancy and credibility of written, visual and numeric information.

2. **Collaborate respectfully with others**, including the ability to:
    a. Participate effectively as a member or leader of a group or team;
    b. Respect and value diversity in viewpoints, life experiences and culture;
    c. Operate as a socially and civically responsible citizen.

3. **Communicate effectively through the clear and accurate use of language**, including the ability to:
    a. Clearly articulate concepts, opinions and theories orally and in writing;
    b. Express quantitative information in written or graphic forms;
    c. Demonstrate a variety of interpersonal communication skills required in a range of professional, civic, social, and personal environments and relationships.

4. **Demonstrate an understanding of the broad diversity of the human experience and the individual's connection to society,** including the ability to:
    a. Identify and compare social and civic practices and structures from diverse cultures;
    b. Demonstrate an appreciation for aesthetics and creative activities;
    c. Utilize multiple perspectives to critique policies and guide ethical decision making.

5. **Process numeric, symbolic and graphic information**, including the ability to:
    a. Identify information required and select appropriate processes/formulas to yield relevant solutions;
    b. Extract relevant quantitative information from tables, graphs, raw data and written material;
    c. Predict probable outcomes and use as a guide to evaluate reasonableness of solutions;
    d. Interpret and explain solutions.

6. **Comprehend, analyze and synthesize written, visual and aural material**, including the ability to:
    a. Demonstrate comprehension of complex written, visual and aural information;
    b. Comprehend and summarize content;
    c. Make connections and draw conclusions using multiple sources.

7. **Select and apply appropriate problem-solving techniques**, including the ability to:
    a. Identify and define relevant problem;
    b. Select and execute appropriate qualitative or quantitative methods to explore solutions;
    c. Collect, analyze, prioritize and synthesize evidence to determine the best solution.

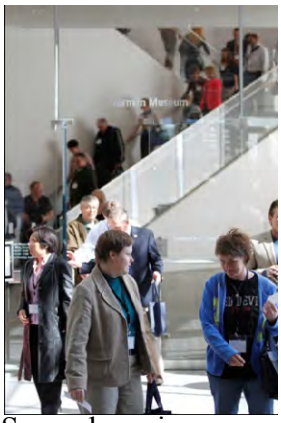
8. **Use technology efficiently and responsibly**, including the ability to:
    a. Transfer computer literacy concepts and skills across technologies;
    b. Use computer and emerging technologies effectively;
    c. Develop an ethical and professional online presence.

***OOA Activities and Faculty Engagement***

*"Assessment matters if it connects to a process that is second nature to most faculty."*

Dr. Susan Hatfield, keynote speaker, 3rd Annual Regional Community College Conference

This year JCCC hosted the 3rd Annual Regional Community College Assessment Conference, *Assessment Matters!* on April 19, in the Regnier Center. Originally conceptualized and launched by then OOA co-directors Brenda Edmonds and Lori Slavin, the college hosted the first conference in 2011. The conference, which is hosted in alternate years by JCCC and Kansas City's Metropolitan Community College, was attended by institutions from across a five-state region, including Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa and Illinois.



This year's conference had representatives from 32 colleges with a total enrollment of 143. The plenary speaker for the conference was Dr. Susan Hatfield. Dr. Hatfield is a recognized leader and innovator in the assessment of student learning from Winona State University. Dr. Hatfield shared with conference participants' insights on the framework necessary to ensure that assessment matters on their campuses. The keys to good assessment include making assessment an iterative process, participatory in nature, focused on questions that matter to faculty and connected to the curriculum.

Speakers at the breakout session covered a host of great assessment topics. Several sessions were offered by JCCC faculty:

- Bill Robinson and Caroline Goodman, mathematics, shared how common core questions embedded in final exams helped the math faculty develop strategies and interventions to improve teaching and learning.
- Kathryn Byrne, Writing Center, gave practical advice on the pros and pitfalls of assessing writing in disciplines other than English.

- Anna Page, dietary manager/hospitality management and
  Holly Milkowart, ESL/EAP, presented on assessing learning in a service learning environment.
- Jane Zaccardi and Ginny Radom, health occupations and practical nursing, outlined how the practical nursing program used assessment to promote allocation of additional resources to promote student success.
- Sheri Barrett, outcomes assessment and Kay King, administration of justice, did a two-part workshop on using the cycle of assessment to focus on student learning and data-driven curriculum changes.

In addition to JCCC presenters, colleagues from other colleges shared best practices from their institutions:

- Melody Shipley from North Central Missouri College presented on the value of teamwork between data and assessment during the program review process.
- Kristy Bishop and Cynthia Sexton Proctor from Metropolitan Community College described the process of revising general education outcomes and getting support from faculty and administration.
- Tamara Agha-Jaffar and Sangki Min from Kansas City Kansas Community College shared their work on the Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile.
- Frederic Burrack of Kansas State University presented on creating a culture of assessment across a college campus.
- Chelli Gentry from the Des Moines Area Community College made a strong case for assessing your assessment.

In addition to the conference, faculty participated in a host of other assessment opportunities:

- World Café
  - This event was offered as part of Professional Development Days in the fall and spring; the World Cafés offered faculty and departments the opportunity to work on assessment activities such as planning, brainstorming, writing an assessment plan or analyzing data.

- Poster Session of Best Practices in Assessment
  - This new event was launched during the Professional Development Days and was presented just prior to the start of World Café in the Atrium. Eleven presenters prepared posters on the assessment activities in their respective departments. Faculty who attended the session enjoyed conversations with the poster presenters on a wide range of assessment strategies. Departments presenting posters were art history, practical nursing, English, engineering, mathematics (two posters), foreign language, chemistry, service-learning, interior design, and geoscience.
- Brown Bag Brownie Breaks
  - These faculty-driven seminars explore topics on assessment on a monthly basis while enjoying brownies and a soda. Topics for the BBBBs this year included:

    - Incorporating Assessment Activities into Your Faculty Portfolio
    - Writing a Good Assessment Question
    - Assessment Toolbox
    - Service-Learning: Multiple Projects, One Rubric
    - Designing Effective Rubrics
    - Got Data? Understanding and Presenting Assessment Data
    - Acting on and Reporting Assessment Work – Timing Is Everything
- Coffee Breaks
  - The coffee breaks are monthly informal discussions about assessment which are open to all faculty members (complete with a free cup of coffee).
- Professional Development Days Assessment Sessions
  - Assessment workshops are offered during fall and spring Professional Development Days at the college. Topics for this year's sessions were:
    - Jump Start Assessment
    - Assessment Toolbox
    - Assessment Success Stories
    - What is Your Assessment Data Telling You?
    - Getting Ready for World Café
- Mini-Grants
  - Funding sources are available to provide faculty resources to support evidence-based initiatives to assess student learning outcomes. Grants are awarded through a competitive

process up to $500 each. These are available for full-time and adjunct faculty in the instructional branch. Awards have included some of the following items:

- resources materials
- travel to conferences with assessment tracks
- equipment and software
- faculty retreats for assessment initiatives

Fall 2012 Mini-Grant Recipients

- **Kay King,** *Phase III: ADMJ Outcomes Assessment Revision,* $450
- **Jennifer Menon, David Pendergrass, Karen LaMartina**, *Cardiac System Assessment,* $500
- **Lori Slavin,** *General Chemistry Retreat for Outcomes Assessment,* $200
- **Lorie Paldino, Maureen Fitzpatrick, Jane Stock, Steve Werkmeister**, *Assessing Student Reading: A Follow-Up to Our First Assessment Workshop,* $500
- **Terry Murphy-Latta,** *Using Technology for Field Training Data Collection,* $500
- **Nancy Holcroft-Benson,** *Closing the Loop – Intro to Biology for Non-Majors,* $250

Spring 2013 Mini-Grant Recipients

- **Jay Antle and Kim Criner,** *Cross-disciplinary Assessment Rubric for Sustainability Curriculum Courses* – Retreat, $153
- **Sheri Barrett,** *Participation in the Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education Conference,* $500
- **Kay King,** *Participation in the Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education Conference,* $500
- **Melanie Harvey,** *Analysis of Student Learning on Final Exam in General Chemistry – 4000 Scantrons,* $450
- **Jennifer Menon,** *My Readiness for Anatomy and Physiology Pilot* – Retreat, $422
- **Anna Page,** *Nutrition Assessment Project* – Textbook and retreat, $244
- **Jane Zaccardi,** *Practical Nursing/HCPW* – Retreat, $400

In addition to these activities, this year the OOA office "took it on the road" offering faculty workshops at the Olathe Health Education Center.

***External Assessment Activities***

Several of the college's faculty have been active around the region and nation with presentations at assessment conferences and forums. A few highlights included:

Jane Zaccardi, director, practical nursing and health outcomes, presented a poster titled *Ability of Practical Nursing Students to Process Numeric Information, Student Learning Outcome #5: Process Numeric, Symbolic and Graphic Information* at the Institute for Student Learning and Assessment at Kansas State University.

Lori Slavin, associate professor of science, and Brenda Edmonds, associate professor of mathematics, recently won both the League for Innovation in the Community Colleges Award and the John and Susanne Roueche Excellence Award. President Terry Calaway, Slavin and Edmonds received the Roueche awards during the League for Innovation Conference in Dallas, Texas. The League for Innovation award was based on a portfolio of work related to Edmonds' and Slavin's work on outcomes assessment at JCCC.

Sheri Barrett and Susan Johnson presented at the Kansas City Professional Development Teaching and Learning Conference. Professor Johnson presented on *Assessment 101: Using Embedded Assessment to Improve Learning*. Dr. Barrett presented on the *Three Ms of Assessment: Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*.

Sheri Barrett and Kay King co-presented at the national conference of the Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education in Lexington, Kentucky. The two-hour workshop focused on the cycle of assessment as a framework for engaging faculty in assessment activities. The session also highlighted many of the assessment initiatives undertaken by the college over the last two to three years.

***Spotlight on Excellence in Outcomes Assessment Award***

*"The challenge now is to make assessment an integral part of faculty and student work, and a significant resource in strengthening learning."*
Schneider & Rhodes, 2011, pg. V

The 2012-13 academic year marked the inauguration of a new award for faculty. The *Excellence in Outcomes Assessment* award was given in recognition of exemplary use of assessment to improve student learning. The award was made possible by a generous grant from the JCCC Foundation. The award was established to recognize exemplary use of assessment to improve student learning by part-time or full-time faculty in the instructional branch.

In its first year, there were several award nominations in both the individual award and team award categories. An outside reviewer, with a national reputation in assessment, appraised the nomination materials. The nominations came from several different disciplines in the sciences, mathematics, healthcare professions and business and were each impressive in their engagement of faculty in assessment of student learning. This year's award winners were honored at the BNSF awards luncheon in the Regnier Center.

*Profiles of Awardees*

**Individual Winner**

Judith A. Runser, associate professor, RDH, MSED, dental hygiene

Professor Runser's assessment work assessed Student Learning Outcomes #3 – Communicate effectively through the clear and accurate use of language. The focus of the assessment was the need for students in the dental hygiene program to develop communication skills to share medical and dental information with their clients, faculty and dental professionals, both during their two years of clinical experiences in the program and then after graduation.

The assessment used a video communications assignment and a rubric designed by Dr. Runser to monitor student performance. The overall assessment also incorporated the use of Strengths Quest curriculum and testing. The work received high praise from the external reviewer who noted that her work in assessment is "already bringing value to colleagues, the dental hygiene curriculum and most importantly to students who leave the program with solid skills."

**Team Winners**

The team award was presented to the mathematics department, professors Susan Pettyjohn, Linda O'Brien, Julane Crabtree, Libby Corriston and associate professor Bill Robinson.

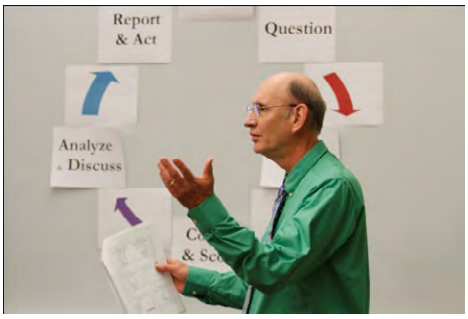
The core of the assessment project in mathematics was the question of how to better understand students' performance on graphing lines and other core question items in elementary algebra. The team worked to create and use mastery tests as part of the curriculum and then gathered data based on which sections of the courses did or did not use mastery tests. This assessment design provided the team with a rich data set from which to make recommendations on the success of the mastery tests to help students learn key concepts.

The external reviewer was impressed with the strong research question and the overall research design noting that it was "impressive; data analysis is excellent and offers insight not otherwise possible."

***Assessment Stories***

*"… it is an opportune time to take a critical look at assessment in higher education and to consider how this potentially powerful tool might be used for the benefit of students, faculty and institutions alike."*

Astin and Antonio, 2012, pg. 2




Listed below are highlights of assessment activities that were reported across campus in the 2012-2013 academic year.

- **SLO #1 – Access and evaluate information from credible sources** was one of two SLOs chosen to be accessed by a new course in the entrepreneurship program, Entrepreneurial Mindset. The faculty used a pre-test/post-test design to measure gains in students over the semester. While many of the pre-test scores exceeded initial benchmarks, several areas of the curriculum showed great gains of 46 to 48 percent.
- **SLO #2 – Collaborate respectfully with others** was assessed by the English department faculty using a peer review attitudinal survey with 14 questions. The survey was distributed in nine classes in English 106 and English 122. The focus of the assessment project was to identify instructional methodologies affecting the teaching of peer review as well as concerns regarding the effectiveness of peer review practices. The study was repeated in the current academic year to expand on the dataset.
- **SLO #2 – Collaborate respectfully with others** was also the focus of an assessment project in the Practical Nursing program at the request of the program's advisory board. A portion of the project included a mapping of the curriculum and several surveys of the students at different points in the program. The project focused on professionalism in the field and the need to identify where in the curriculum students were taught key concepts and their understanding of professionalism as they progressed through the program. As a follow-up on the results, the department will be discussing the needs of employers for distinctive professional behaviors.
- **SLO #3 – Communicate effectively through the clear and accurate use of language** was also explored in the practical nursing department with a four-minute taped simulation of students interacting with patients on morning patient rounds. The follow-up from the rounds included factual charting of the encounter, including appropriate medical terminology. Results from the activity led to an increase in narrative documentation into class activities and clinical assignments on a regular basis.
- **SLO #5 – Process numeric, symbolic and graphic information** was the focus of science faculty in the nonmajors biology department who devised a pre-test/post-test

assessment to evaluate students' ability coming into the courses and their progress over the semester. Based on results of 20+ sections that were assessed, the department developed some course-embedded activities to help students improve skills in reading and analyzing data in tables, graphics and complex diagrams.

- **SLO #5 – process numeric, symbolic and graphic information** was also the focus on an assessment project in the astronomy department that involved a pre-test/ post-test design with the final test embedded in the final exam. The assessment was conducted in three sections of *Fundamentals of Astronomy*. Overall, students increased their understanding of graphing 11 percent during the course of the semester.
- **SLO #5 – Process numeric, symbolic and graphic information** was assessed in 11 sections of *Principles of Chemistry* through the use of a set of embedded test questions on measurements and graphing data. A pre-test established a baseline for the data, while the post-test was incorporated into the final exam. Based on the students' performance on the post-test, additional practice sheets were added to the laboratory manual.
- **SLO #6 – Read, analyze and synthesize written and visual material** was one of two SLOs chosen in the science division by the physics faculty. The assessment focused on students' understanding of Newton's laws, with data gathered over three semesters. In response to the data, the course instructors instituted new quizzes, auxiliary questions in optional homework, and new exam questions. Overall student performance has increased and the department is considering developing similar assessment plans for other modules in the curriculum.
- **SLO #7 – Select and apply appropriate problem-solving techniques** was assessed by the entrepreneurship program in the *Legal Issues for Small Business* course based on the students' ability to read and understand prepared case studies. As part of the assessment, students had to select the correct legal opinion and apply the legal rule and the reasoning of the court. Overall students performed strongly on the assessment.

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## 2012-13 Outcomes Assessment Council

**A special thank you to the Assessment Council whose work in assessment made this report possible:**

Susan Johnson, co-chair, professor/chair, civil engineering technology

Sheri Barrett, co-chair, director, Office of Outcomes Assessment

Donna Duffey, professor/chair, entrepreneurship

Brenda Edmonds, associate professor, mathematics

Maureen Fitzpatrick, professor, English

Kay King, associate professor/chair, administration of justice

Heather Rhodes, assistant professor, practical nursing

Lori Slavin, associate professor, science

Terri Teal, professor, music

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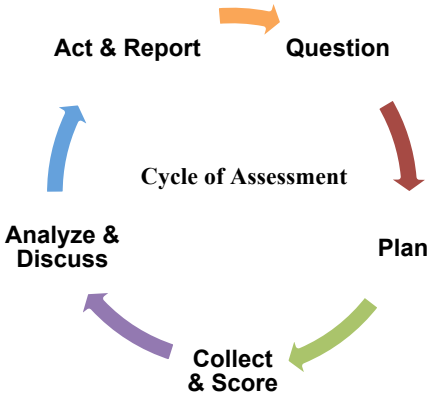

*"Assessment reports that end up briefly perused and then filed without any resulting action are, to be blunt, a waste of time."*

*— Suskie, 2009, pg. 297*


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