

**Assessment Trend Report
Student Learning Outcomes in IN150/151**

November 2009

The goal of this report is to evaluate the assessment of student learning outcomes in the CWRR Program. The report addresses four key questions to evaluate the quality of our assessment processes.

(1) How have we sustained the assessment effort over a multi-year period of time?

How many years have you completed an annual assessment report?

2006 2007 2008 2009

Dr. Carmella Braniger, Writing Program Director and former coordinator of IN150/IN151, led the development and implementation of the ongoing assessment process in this program and mentored Dr. Peiling Zhao, who rotated in as Coordinator in 2009.

(2) How do we systematically and comprehensively collect and analyze data about student learning?

All CWRR faculty are actively involved in the assessment process, from identifying learning outcome goals to designing assignment guidelines for student artifacts; from developing and refining rubrics to improving assessment methods. The CWRR program has set up an Assessment Team, usually made up of three CWRR faculty with two permanent members and one rotating member each year. The Assessment Team first develops consensus in using rubrics, and then assesses artifacts using those rubrics. After evaluating each artifact, the Assessment Team meets to discuss observations, reflections, concerns, and recommendations about the assessment of student artifacts. The CWRR coordinator collects the data and submits the annual assessment report to the Dean of Learning and Teaching.

The CWRR assessment process is systematic and comprehensive. To assess how the CWRR program has helped students achieve learning outcome goals, the CWRR program uses **three** assessment methods:

1. Student Artifacts (Reading Response, Research Paper, Reflection Piece) will provide substantial qualitative data about student performance in each goal area.
2. Library Entrance and Exit Surveys will measure effectiveness of research instruction.
3. Student Survey administered through Millikin Office of Institutional Research will measure students' perceptions of their successful completion of the goals.

Student artifact assessment is the primary assessment method for evaluating student performance in the program. We assess all 4 learning outcome goals through evaluating a sampling of three student artifacts—a reading response, a research essay, and a reflection piece—collected from all sections of CWRR II. These three student artifacts are assessed with rubrics developed by all CWRR faculty. Each learning outcome is assessed by at least three criteria from the rubrics. Student artifact collection is systematic and comprehensive.

The annual Library Instruction Assessment Report, provided by the Librarian Cohort for the CWRR program, offers an assessment on the learning outcome goal for research. The Library Instruction Assessment report compares and contrast the results of entry and exit surveys to assess how library instruction on research assists student in achieving learning outcome goal 3.

A CWRR survey of student perceptions of learning outcome goals also provides a comprehensive assessment of the CWRR program from the students' perspective.

Trends in CWRR Learning Outcome Goals

YEAR	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4
06-07	Green	Green	Green	Green
07-08	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow
08-09	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow

(3) How do we use the analysis to improve curriculum and pedagogy and to inform decisions about budgets and strategic priorities?

Each academic year, the CWRR program director sends out the assessment report through email to generate conversations and discussions about the assessment, then presents through powerpoint presentation to all CWRR faculty at the first CWRR meeting in August, and holds full discussion of the assessment analysis and improvement plans in the report. The assessment reports are also available on the CWRR website. The monthly CWRR meeting is

devoted to discussing and workshopping on how to implement the improvement plans, how to improve the teaching of student artifacts, and how to improve assessment.

Assessment based changes in university-wide curriculum provided an opportunity for curriculum change, pedagogical initiatives and budget priorities in IN150/151. In 2007, funds were made available to appoint a Coordinator to oversee the program's curriculum and pedagogy.

A curriculum map of the learning goals for the MP SL during the 2006-2007 academic year, based on the three elements of the University Mission, displayed deficiencies in IN250 curriculum that were addressed in a funded Nyberg faculty study group during Summer 2007. Three new skills-based learning threads were introduced to the IN sequence, two of which IN150/IN151 faculty were already teaching and assessing: reflection and writing.

In Summer 2008, funds were allotted for IN Coordinators to study the new skills-based learning threads. The study resulted in the development of a series of workshops during 2008-09. Along with the other IN Coordinators, the IN150/IN151 Coordinator led university orientations and workshops on the integration of the MP SL's three new threads—reflection, ethical reasoning, and writing—introducing faculty to the new skills-based learning thread, and leading discussion about best ways to deliver these curriculum changes.

Since the assessment tradition was established with the program in 2007, individual faculty members continue to revise their courses and experiment with new pedagogy initiatives and approaches. Numerous CWRR faculty workshops and meetings provide a forum to discuss strategies and best practices in implementing pedagogy initiatives and changes. For example, since Goal 4—reflection—is consistently rated lower than other goals, the CWRR coordinator organized a faculty workshop on teaching reflection. To help faculty integrate goals into CWRR courses, the Coordinator organized another workshop on best practices of teaching.

Workshops and meetings like these are clear examples of how the CWRR assessment closes the loop by using the assessment to inform, guide, and improve teaching of learning goals. In addition the Teaching Guide to CWRR provides a useful tool for mentoring new faculty members as well. The CWRR curriculum, as a result of these successful efforts, has been successfully transformed into a coherent, dynamic, well-structured program.

(4) How do we evaluate, modify, and continue to improve the student learning assessment process in this program?

The assessment process—the learning outcome goals, assessment methods, data collection, data analysis, and dissemination/implementation of recommendations—of the CWRR program has proven, over the past four years, to work for assessing student learning. CWRR Coordinators create deliberate, open forums for discussions of recommendations and make rigorous efforts in closing the assessment loop. As the assessment reports in the past four years suggest, there have been systemic and comprehensive efforts to implement and refine assessment processes, as needed. The tradition of assessment has been well established and built into the routine professional development of CWRR faculty, and has been a model for other university studies programs in building and sustaining assessment efforts.

Evaluation from Focus Visit Leadership Team (includes Academic Deans, Program Leaders, and Focus Visit Report Writers)

Rating: Green

Academic program	Goal 1 (multi-year)	Goal 2 (data collection)	Goal 3 (Use assessment to improve)	Goal 4 (improve assessment)	Total
IN150/IN151	3	3	3	3	12

Based on the four questions/criteria, the Focus Visit Leadership Team rates IN150/IN151 as green and concludes that the program can sustain systematic and comprehensive data collection and analysis over multiple years. The CWRR program uses assessment to make pedagogical initiatives, curricular changes, and budget priority decisions, and continues to modify the assessment process, as needed. CWRR has developed a strong culture of assessment in their program.