

Assessment Conversations

Assessment Database

A new tool is available for your Program, Department, or Unit.



Dr. Amos Olagunju
Dean of Undergraduate Studies

In 2007-8 Richard Mowe and Amos Olagunju received a \$2000 assessment grant for their project entitled, "A Comprehensive Student Learning Outcome Assessment Program for CNA (C-SLOAP-C)". The result of the project is a Microsoft Access database that is now available to the entire campus.

If your program or department has a complete assessment plan in place, including a mission statement, student learning outcomes, matrix and timeline, then this database will help you keep track of which outcomes are being assessed where, when, and with what success. You can also include learning outcomes for each program and even each class for a greater level of detailed information about your assessment program. It will also

track alumni and employer survey results. The database can run programmed or customized reports on any of the information in the database tables, primarily program learning outcomes as they are linked to course learning outcome assessments, surveys, exam results, etc.:

If you are interested in additional information about the database, please watch our [video](#) of Dr Olagunju demonstrating the database and its uses. Note: Please allow thirty seconds before the video begins.

Again, the program is free and available to anyone who is interested. Dr Olagunju can provide installation and training on its use. [Contact Dr. Olagunju](#) if you are ready to get started.

CLA in the Classroom

A CLA in the Classroom Performance Task Academy will be held at SCSU May 14-15, 2009.

Through presentations, hands-on work and discussions during the two-day workshop, you will:

- Gain a deeper understanding of authentic assessment tools and rubric-based assessment as they relate to teaching and learning
- Become certified to administer a disclosed CLA performance task to diagnose your own students' higher order skill levels
- Work in groups to create a complete performance task that can be used in a course to help students develop and practice their thinking, reasoning and problem-solving skills
- Have opportunities to interact with faculty and teaching and learning staff from other institutions, disciplines and departments
- Share strategies to improve pedagogical practices as they relate to higher-order skill development



Visit our [website](#) for additional details.

A NEW PROCESS FOR UPPER DIVISION WRITING REQUIREMENT

SCSU has two requirements known as "University requirements" that are neither General Education nor major program requirements. One of these is the Upper Division Writing Requirement (UDWR), which requires each program to design and implement a writing requirement for majors. The UDWR was implemented after semester conversion eliminated a lower level writing course. The Faculty Association formed an Ad Hoc UDWR Assessment Committee to specify the nature of the requirement and to certify UDWR plans. During its period of operation, the ad hoc committee approved UDWR plans for the vast majority of SCSU programs, but when it expired in 2007 there was no longer a mechanism for approving new or revised UDWR plans.

At its Feb. 24 meeting the Faculty Senate approved a motion to institute a permanent process for approving and monitoring UDWR plans and their assessment. The motion states that "College Assessment Committees will identify and notify programs still in need of approval of their UDWR criteria and related materials. Affected departments

will submit their UDWR criteria and related materials to their respective College Assessment Committee. The College Assessment committee is responsible for evaluating the submitted UDWR criteria and materials using the templates developed by the UDWR ad hoc committee."



This Faculty Senate action means that College Assessment Committees are authorized to approve any new plans or revisions to existing plans. This

should be an advisory process in which the committee reviews proposed UDWR plans for compliance with the UDWR requirement using the form created by the Ad Hoc Committee. They may ask for clarifications and/or make suggestions for improvement but final responsibility for the nature of a program's UDWR plan rests with the program. Once a college committee votes to accept a program's UDWR plan the committee chair will notify Academic Affairs and the program will be noted as being in compliance with the University's UDWR requirement.

ASSESSING THE NEW GENERAL EDUCATION PLAN

The University General Education Committee is finalizing a new General Education program that is scheduled to take effect in Fall 2010. It has 11 "Goal Areas", each with a set of student learning outcomes. For an example, see the box [below] for the draft mathematical and quantitative reasoning Goal Area.*

Beginning next fall, all existing General Education courses will need to be recertified into the new program by indicating that they meet a minimum percentage of

the learning outcomes in a goal area.

Inclusion in the new General Education curriculum will obligate courses to participate in the General Education assessment plan that Faculty Senate approved in 2006.** Assessment will be guided by 11 committees called GETGOs—General Education Teams for Goal Oversight. Each GETGO—composed of 3-5 faculty—will oversee assessment of the student learning linked with its Goal Area. They will set

assessment goals, suggest assessment methods, collect, evaluate, and report on evidence of student learning in their respective Goal Areas.

Faculty who might be interested in either chairing or serving on a GETGO related to their area of general education teaching interests are encouraged to contact Joe Melcher, General Education Assessment Coordinator, jmmelcher@stcloudstate.edu.

CONTEXT FOR LEARNING- STUDENTS STRONGLY ENDORSE MILLER CENTER RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Academic Environment for Student Learning

During 2007-08, more than a million people visited the Miller Center, and many others accessed library and technology services via computer. The resources and services in the Miller Center support the university's curriculum, supply materials and equipment needed to enhance students' information literacy skills, and provide a university-wide academic context and environment for student learning. In a fall 2008 telephone survey of more than 500 students administered by the SCSU Survey, 97% said they were satisfied with library and technology resources and services they have used.

In a spring survey of 300 the Miller more than visited the Center 81% that they least



2008 more than students in Center, half (51%) Miller daily, and indicated visited at weekly.

Although 85% of the students have easy access to a computer at their residence and 67% own a laptop, 81% of the students still used a Miller Center computer on the day they completed the survey. The main reasons students used Miller Center computers were for class assignments (65%), email (50%), D2L (41%), printing (32%), and group work for a class (16%). (OK, so you're probably wondering if students used MC computers for Facebook – yes, 29% used Facebook, 10% used instant messaging, 9% used the computer for entertainment, and more than likely some of the email use is personal.)

On the day they completed the survey, more than half (52%) of the students used library resources for activities such as researching a class assignment (19%), using a search engine like Google or Yahoo to research a class assignment (17%), and using library databases to find articles (11%). And, yes again, some of the students (10%) used library resources for personal research. In the fall 2008 telephone survey, 87% of the students accessed library services and resources by computer on or off campus. In the same survey, 15% said they didn't have any class assignments that required going to the Miller Center facility.

Library Resources and Collections

The fall 2008 telephone survey asked students about their use of the Miller Center during fall semester.

Student satisfaction with library collections

- Does the library's book collection support research for your classes?
 - 94% of those who used the book collection agreed or strongly agreed
 - 25% of all the students had not used the book collection
- Does the library's collection of journals, magazines, and newspapers support research for your classes?
 - 95% of those who used the periodical collections agreed or strongly agreed
 - 22% of all the students had not used periodical articles
- Does the library's access to online full text articles support research for your classes?
 - 93% of those who used full text articles agreed or strongly agreed
 - 10% of all the students had not used full text articles

Student overall satisfaction with Miller Center

- Overall, are you satisfied with the library and technology resources and services you have used?
 - 97% agreed or strongly agreed
 - Only 2% had not used these resources or services, either in the Miller Center or by computer
- How do students learn about the Miller Center services and resources?
 - #1 way – from professors (#1 answer for past 3 years)
 - #2 way – from another student (#2 answer for past 3 years)

Reasons to use the Miller Center

In the spring 2008 survey, students identified the main reasons they use the Miller Center.

- #1 use (55%) is general academic work (studying, reading, doing assignments, etc.)
- #2 use (41%) is computer access (writing a paper, printing, D2L, email, etc.)
- #3 use (31%) is the environment of the Miller Center (quiet place to study, comfortable, good lighting, able to concentrate, space to work in groups, etc.)
- #4 use (29%) is using library resources for

CONTEXT FOR LEARNING (CONT'D)

D2L (Desire to Learn) Course Management System

In the spring 2008 survey, students were asked about their awareness of and satisfaction with D2L. InforMedia Services and Information Technology Services in the Miller Center provide D2L help to students and faculty, both in person and via email; 95% of students who used help were satisfied with the assistance they received. Almost all of the students (99%) had at least one class that used D2L. In FY 08, a total of 13,323 unique students used D2L, with 1,094 courses (42% of all SCSU courses) having a D2L site. Here are some of the student responses to questions about D2L.

- Using D2L as part of my class improves my learning.
 - 83%



- agreed or strongly agreed
- I would like to see more of my classes use D2L.
 - 81% agreed or strongly agreed
- D2L features that help my learning and performance in class (percent of those who used the feature who agreed or strongly agreed)
 - Syllabus - 98%
 - News items - 92%
 - Content page - 98%
 - PowerPoint presentations - 96%
 - Drop box for turning in assignments - 93%
 - Quizzes and surveys - 96%
 - Discussion - 80%
 - Grades - 97%
- D2L features that students had not used in their courses (percent of all students responding)
 - Discussion (17%)
 - PowerPoint presentations (11%)
 - News items (10%)

Electronic Classrooms

In 1998 there were 31 e-classrooms on campus. Now there are more than 155 e-classrooms available for teaching and

learning. In the spring 2008 Miller Center Survey, students responded to this question:

- Equipment in the campus electronic classrooms (instructor station, Internet connection, projector, etc.) is beneficial and improves my learning.
 - 87% agreed or strongly agreed
 - Only 9% were unaware of the electronic classrooms

Also in spring 2008, a campus-wide survey of professors conducted by Instructional Technology and Infrastructure Services asked about professors' experiences with electronic classrooms. Seventy-five professors responded.

- Do you think the e-classroom environment enhances your teaching?
 - 100% agreed or strongly agreed
- Do you think the e-classroom environment enhances your students' learning?
 - 95% agreed or strongly agreed
- Do you prefer to teach in an e-classroom?
 - 95% agreed or strongly agreed

Relationship of Miller Center Services and Resources to Program Assessment

The data collected about the Miller Center resources and services can be used by faculty to compliment and inform more direct programmatic assessments of student learning. Most of the Miller Center assessment data can be disaggregated to class rank. For instance, of the seniors in the fall 2008 telephone survey, 25% did not use the book collection. Of those who used books, 93% agreed or strongly agreed that the collection was adequate for their research needs. Among the seniors, 22% did not use articles, while 95% of those who used articles agreed or strongly agreed that the library collection supported their research.

At this time the Miller Center survey data cannot be broken down to department or major level. The faculty and staff at the Miller Center would like to know more about how students use and learn from what the Miller Center provides. If you gather (or would like to gather) data related to your program and library or technology resources, please share this information with the LR&TS Coordinator of Assessment or your [college library liaison](#). If you have any questions about this data, please contact Chris Inkster, LR&TS Coordinator of Assessment (cinster@stcloudstate.edu or 308-4930).



ASSESSMENT LUNCHEON

Fourth Annual Assessment Luncheon

University Assessment held its fourth annual assessment luncheon during the 2009 January Workshop days. Invitations were extended to the Provost, Deans, Department Chairs, college assessment committee members, assessment peer consultants, and 2008-9 assessment grant recipients. Discussion topics at the luncheon ranged from possible assessment newsletter topics to the assessment of assessment. The information gathered will help guide the University Assessment Steering Committee in the coming year.

Previous topics at the annual luncheon include such items as the annual program assessment report, which helped to establish both the current due dates and forms in use.

ASSESSMENT PEER CONSULTING:

Here to help

Don't know where to begin? Have questions? Need help? Let our assessment peer consultants come to your aid. They are available free of charge to assist programs, departments and units with any aspect of assessment of student learning.

Visit our [website](#) for additional details.

A.P.A.D.

Advancing Program Assessment through Discussion.

Would you like to start a conversation about assessment in your department? Let us help you by subsidizing the purchase of books to feed the conversation.

Visit our [website](#) for additional details.

Calendar

April 8, 2009

Proposals are due for the [Collaboration Conference November 2009- Bridging the Generational Divide: Working Together to Teach Millennial Students](#)

Bloomington, MN

April 16-17, 2009

Best Practices and Overcoming Obstacles in the First Year Experience

[CETL Mini Conference](#)

St Cloud, MN

April 17-21, 2009

[2009 HLC Conference- Hot Topics in Chilly Times](#)

Chicago, IL

April 24-26, 2009

[2009 NC Undergraduate Assessment Symposium- Aligning Pedagogy, Curriculum and Assessment](#)

Cary, NC

May 14, 2009

St Cloud State University 2008-9 Grant reports are due.

May 14-15, 2009

[CLA in the Classroom Performance Task Academy](#)

St Cloud, MN

September 14, 2009

St Cloud State University Annual Assessment Reports are due.

Visit our [website](#) for additional events.

Contributors

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