Fall 2021
Assessment News Brief

The New Assessment Repository is Open and the Integrated Assessment Cycle Enters its Second Year

Assessment Spotlight

English and Reading Area Creates a Master Plan through the CAR

Article Contribution by Sharon Anthony
Department Chair for English and Reading at the Germantown Campus

The CAR report may seem like a daunting task, so how useful can the experience truly be? The English & Reading area recently learned first-hand that the CAR report is a powerful tool. ENGL/READ used the CAR as an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of our initiatives during the past few years. But, we did more than that. Through the CAR process, we were able to craft our own research questions, addressing crucial issues of concern to us. We then gathered relevant data, interviewed faculty to gain their perspectives on discipline strengths and problems, and sought information from various resources and partners throughout the College. This exploration highlighted our noteworthy successes and also revealed some surprising, but essential areas in need of improvement. We shared this information widely with our faculty through sharing sessions and in meetings in order to raise awareness of our area's successes and to gather feedback on our top priorities for the next five years.

Our CAR serves as a master plan to guide our efforts and time allocation over the next couple of years. For example, after undertaking a deep revision of our Technical Writing Certificate Program to update the curriculum and provide students the writing skills most in demand in today's workplace, we were able to use the CAR to create a solid marketing plan for the new program. We were able to create specific action plans to address our areas of need, including enhanced critical reading instruction throughout our curriculum, equitable student success strategies to address gaps in student achievement in our highly-enrolled courses, and an honest assessment of how our composition course outcomes align. By defining these recommendations and seeking input from our content experts, the CAR report will guide and strengthen our efforts to educate and support all of our students, now and in the future.

The Following Disciplines are Completing their CAR Report during Assessment Year 2021-2022:

- Architectural Technology
- American Sign Language
- Automotive Technology
- Building Trades Technology
- Construction Management
- Geography
- GHUM
- Landscape Technology
- Physical Science
- World Languages

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Fall 2021 Assessment Workshops

CAR Workshops

Several Zoom session workshops will be offered this fall to offer information and answer questions about the CAR process. On November 12, guest speaker Scott Poese, a research analyst from the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis (OIRA), will provide information about data sources for the CAR. These workshops are intended to assist anyone currently working on their College Area Review report or those planning for their report in the near future.

Interested in attending one of these sessions?

Email: outcomes@montgomerycollege.edu and be sure to provide your name, discipline, and the date you would like to attend.

All Zoom Sessions will take place from Noon to 1 p.m. on Fridays.

Date	Topic
November 12	***Making Sense of the Data*** (Guest Speaker Scott Poese from OIRA)
December 3	***Alignment of Curriculum with Professional Standards, External Reviewers, and Planning for Spring 2022***
February 18	***Assessment–Results and Next Steps***
March 11	***SOAR Analysis***
April 8	***Recommendations and Preparing for Summer and Fall***

Scoring Versus Grading Workshop

This workshop will be conducted by Debbie Grubb. It will review the differences between *grading* as an evaluation tool in the classroom for individual students, and *scoring*, which involves assessing students' performance to attain certain competencies, proficiencies, or outcome levels (across multiple courses, disciplines, or programs).

This workshop is open to all full- and part-time faculty members. It will be offered via Zoom on **Tuesday, November 9, 2–3 p.m**.

To register for this workshop, please click on the following link:
https://montgomerycollege.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEqduuuqD8oH9y75mtixQT8Ke_yyoKXoPLt

Assessment Confusion

This workshop will be conducted by Cassandra Jones. It will review the new assessment process and schedule for General Education and Program Assessment.

This workshop is open to all full- and part-time faculty members and will be offered via Zoom on **Monday, November 15, 2–3 p.m.**

To register for this workshop, please click on the following link**:**
https://montgomerycollege.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0lcu2orTsvHNdj8k7TEfL71vsXiXZvaFOv

Featured Article

James Madison University: Assessing and Planning During a Pandemic
By: Keston H. Fulcher and Brian C. Leventhal (2020)
Center for Assessment and Research Studies at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA

As we all know, the COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges for institutions of higher learning as faculty and staff continue to maintain the highest standards of educational excellence in such dynamic conditions. Keston Fulcher and Brian Leventhal (2020) present a pertinent discussion regarding the approach to assessment practices in such a demanding environment.

In this brief article, Fulcher and Leventhal pose "*tough questions*" about the value and implementation of assessment practices during the *surreal conditions* the pandemic has created, asking the overriding question: "***Is student learning outcomes assessment essential during the time of COVID-19 or is it more of a luxury item, better suited for times of prosperity?***" (p.4). Taking an interesting approach to answer the question, the authors compare the assessment of learning outcomes with the assessment of quality output in other professions, asserting that, "*...student learning outcomes assessment is as important now as it ever has been, perhaps even more important*" (p. 4).

Curious about how they came to this conclusion? Please see their explanation below in the following article excerpt:

> *"One way to explore this question is to look at similar situations in other sectors. Will they cease to monitor quality because of COVID-19? For example, could you imagine hospitals only looking at the number of patients entering hospitals and not examining the quality of service nor investigating methods to improve the down-stream health outcomes? Or could you imagine an automobile manufacturer merely tracking how many cars are produced without keeping track of quality indicators? We would be appalled if they did.*
>
> *Educators around the world have had to scramble to deliver curricula in unconventional ways. Despite the changes in delivery, we imagine that the desired learning outcomes remain the same. Will students who have experienced this COVID-19 modified postsecondary education have the same skills and knowledge as the students directly preceding them? Are entering students disadvantaged because their secondary education was remote and nontraditional? For students who are currently being affected by COVID-19, is there a way to catch them up if they fall behind? These are questions that every institution, including our own, should be attempting to address, and assessment should be a key tool in this process."* (pp.4-5)

In addition to the discussion above, the authors briefly explore the topics of improvement versus accountability and share adjustments made to their own assessment activities as a result of COVID-19. Interested in reading more? Information on how to access to the full text is listed below.

Source Citation and Full Text:
Fulcher, K. H., & Leventhal, B. C. (2020). James Madison University: Assessing and Planning During a Pandemic. Assessment Update, 32(6), 4–5. https://doi.org/10.1002/au.3023

Please Join the Assessment Repository

Assessment Resources and Access

Assessment Resources

The Assessment Repository serves as a comprehensive assessment site that stores documents and reports pertaining to the Montgomery College assessment process. It provides up-to-date resources for assessment activities being performed at the College.

The repository represents a central location for faculty and staff to easily access assessment materials for the purpose of promoting optimal collaboration, organization, and efficiency during assessment functions.

Access

The Assessment Repository is open to any faculty or staff member who is in involved in official assessment activities at the College. The Repository is a Blackboard Community within the MC Blackboard platform and requires users to be signed into MyMC before accessing the site.

For instructions on gaining first-time access to the site, please click on the following link: Instructions

The Integrated Assessment Cycle Enters Year 2

The integrated assessment cycle combines all assessment functions into one cycle for each discipline and/or program (*Please see the graphic to the right*). *All programs and disciplines should have completed and submitted the required reports for assessment year 2020-2021 and should now be working on requirements for assessment year 2021-2022.

🤔 Have questions? Please contact the Office of Assessment at outcomes@montgomerycollege.edu

To find out what activities your discipline should be completing for the 2021-2022 Assessment Year, click on the Combined Schedule HERE.