

Assessment Taskforce
July 10, 2008

The Assessment Taskforce met on Thursday, July 10, 2008 at 2:30 p.m. in the Blue Room. Members present were Kim Gold, Tommy Tucker, Pat Freeman, Becky Cleland, Elisabeth Barrows, Rhonda Davis, Paula Walker, Robin Wiggins, Charles Wiggins, Jo James, Barbara Peterson, Kelly Dedmon, Evelyn Woods, and Katrina Shambaugh (intern).

Myra Johnson has referred some important questions to us. Do we want the new competency (Diverse Cultural and Historical Perspectives) listed in the periwinkle brochure? Taskforce members voiced support for including the new competency in the periwinkle brochure. When we mention "Perform technical skills in their chosen occupations" should we specify that this pertains to technical and vocational areas? Members of the taskforce felt that this is obvious, and that it is not necessary to specify. Some editing issues were mentioned. Kim noted the suggested changes on her brochure proof. The taskforce was unanimous that the brochure should continue to be periwinkle!

The next topic of discussion was the purpose of the Assessment Taskforce. Kim asked members to brainstorm about what we see as the purpose. Some ideas were: 1) Make sure that the college is doing its job correctly. 2) Determine whether or not our practices are in line with our mission. 3) Exploring best practices in assessment. 4) Encourage linking assessment to teaching practices – closing the loop. 5) Promote student self assessment. 6) Drive continuous improvement. 7) Make assessment integral to the portfolio. 8) Consider learning outcomes and be specific about what we want students to learn. 9) Define and acknowledge how services areas contribute to learning. 10) Assist in preparing for next SACS visit. 11) Consider how assessment impacts employee role and growth. 12) Support faculty self assessment. 13) Ensure that institutional practices are in line with the college mission statement.

There was a discussion of whether or not staff should or should not do portfolios. Kim asked whether or not any staff are currently doing portfolios. It was noted that Student Affairs staff have been doing portfolios since 2004. These staff persons do a reflective narrative annually which compiles the learning that has taken place over the previous year and how their efforts may be refined in the upcoming academic year. Kim noted that staff in Business Sciences to PEP plans annually. Other approaches were mentioned. Some faculty keep notes on post-its on relevant learning and compile the notes annually. This provides the opportunity to reflect on teaching and learning and how they can improve student learning.

The taskforce discussed the need to support staff in assessment and consider how their efforts promote learning campus wide. The need to review available data was also mentioned. There is lots of information generated on the campus which should be reviewed and considered in closing the loop campus wide.

Kim mentioned that our long list of mission related tasks can probably be streamlined.

A question was raised about the role of the Assessment Taskforce. What is our role? Are we driving the assessment effort on campus? If we aren't driving, then who is now leading assessment efforts on campus? Kim mentioned that we are certainly an assessment "cheerleader" on campus, and it is important to encourage these efforts.

Ideas for a mission statement were drafted as follows.

The Assessment Taskforce exists to guide the continuous improvement of programs and services at Isothermal Community College. The Taskforce will accomplish this mission by providing ideas and support for:

Improvement of Student learning outcomes

Program and service area assessment

Employee and student self-assessment

Research and evaluation of best practices in assessment

Improvement of the assessment process

Kim will send this information out to us, and we will work on further developing our ideas into a mission statement.

At our next meeting we will break our mission statement into outcome statements. This meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 27 at 2:00 p.m. in the Blue Room. Future meetings will be held on Mondays. The second fall semester meeting will be held on September 15 at 2:00 p.m. in the Blue Room.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.