Category One: Helping Students Learn

1P1 Common student learning objectives and specific program learning objectives
Whenever a course or program is created or updated, the faculty of the area and the respective Associate Dean work to develop the required syllabi and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) required forms. The syllabi and forms are taken through two college-wide committees to ensure that the course and/or program meet the College’s standards.

Almost from the beginning of Heartland Community College’s fairly brief history, the Curriculum and Academic Standards (CAS) Committee has played a crucial role not only in providing guidance to faculty writing new courses and programs, but also in assuring the creation of academically appropriate curricula characterized by suitable rigor and meaningful content.

Creation of such curricula, however, is a task separate from their maintenance. This second component is both the duty and responsibility not of a single committee but of dedicated and committed faculty members and administrators whose goal is to assure high quality courses and curricula that can take their place among the best that community colleges can offer.

To formalize efforts toward that goal, as well as to assist all faculty in these efforts, an additional advisory body, focused on assessment of general education outcomes, was formed somewhat later in the College’s history. Originally a sub-team of the CAS committee, more recently the Assessment Committee (AC) has become a separate standing committee at the College, at the same time widening its interest from general education courses alone to include academic assessment in general. This change is reflective of the difference between these two major instructional committees, CAS and the AC.

Whereas CAS has as its primary responsibility the advisement of faculty in their tasks of creating or modifying challenging courses and programs, the Assessment Committee has the primary responsibility of creating and maintaining throughout these courses and programs a learning environment that supports student success. More specifically, CAS has the responsibility of assuring the College and the community that academic standards are appropriately rigorous and are fairly applied.

The AC, by contrast, has the role of assuring that the course described by the syllabus is successful – that is, that the course fosters significant learning attainment, and that student learning outcomes are achieved both within the class and within the program overall. Thus both committees have responsibilities related to learning outcomes. CAS, through its advisement of faculty, helps them to select appropriate outcomes that are then incorporated into course syllabi. The AC advises faculty and departments concerning the implementation of these outcomes both within courses and departmentally. At the same time, the AC works actively to promote internal research related to assuring course, departmental, and institutional effectiveness. In short, CAS’s role can be summarized as one of oversight, while the AC’s role is one of implementation.

1P2. Specific program learning objectives
Faculty members are primarily responsible for the curriculum. Whenever a program is created or updated, the faculty and administration meet to discuss all aspects of the program including the overall learning objectives. The objectives themselves are embedded into the courses that form the program. Once it is agreed upon by department staff that the objectives are appropriate, the program’s curricula are taken through college-wide committees (i.e., Assessment Committee and Curriculum and Academic Standards) to ensure that the way the objectives are infused into the courses that make up the program meets the College’s and the Illinois Community College Board’s standards.

Recently the Office Administration, Microcomputer Applications, and Business programs began the process of creating program-level outcomes, as none formally existed. Full-time faculty drafted program outcomes based on professional guidelines, industry standards, and College and division mission. Those were submitted to part-time faculty for input. From there, we re-examined course learning outcomes for all courses in the programs to make sure individual course learning outcomes within programs were working to meet and reinforce overall Program outcomes. In many cases, this led to curriculum revisions within programs.

The nursing faculty believes in the philosophy, mission, and goals of the College and further believes that the nursing unit’s philosophy is in accord with those of the College. The associate degree nursing program is an integral part of Heartland Community College and derives its philosophy from the mission and goals of the College. The philosophy guides the faculty in providing quality educational opportunities, which promote self care in communities served by the College.

The relationship between the nursing curriculum and the mission/philosophy of the nursing unit is demonstrated in curriculum maps, developed and used for reviewing the curriculum. Initially, educational and course outcomes were compared to the guidelines of the National League for Nursing (NLN) and the results of Pew Research Center’s report on competencies nurses would need in the 21st century. The faculty determined appropriateness of progress toward outcomes and noted any discrepancies or missing concepts from national standards. Next, course outlines and objectives were mapped across the curriculum. This enabled the faculty to view the entire curriculum and note redundancies or missing concepts.

The sequence of course offerings is planned to meet program outcomes. Courses have been developed to build one upon the other and to present a logical progression utilizing Orem’s self-care model. As a result, the graduate possesses behaviors consistent with the educational outcomes. Course materials, such as syllabus and clinical evaluation forms, reflect this progression. The classroom objectives for all nursing courses relate to the program educational outcomes and are designed to demonstrate progression from simple to complex based on Orem’s self-care model throughout the curriculum. The same consideration is given to objectives for clinical experiences, also leveled and designed to enhance classroom theory.

1P3. New programs and courses that facilitate student learning
Generally, when designing new courses and programs to facilitate learning and be competitive, Heartland looks to multiple resources. First, our faculty must be current in their disciplines. Also, we seek the advice of our Advisory Boards as well as any industry standards. Finally, we contact
other institutions in the State with similar programs to discuss the nature of their programs and get a sense of the demand they have for those programs. All new programs and courses have to be approved by the Assessment Committee and the Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee before being approved by the Illinois Community College Board.

For example, when ENGL 121: Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature was created, the faculty member researched the curriculum of similar courses at other colleges and universities. The learning outcomes and master syllabus were designed to model the most effective aspects of those external courses and also to meet the Illinois Articulation Initiative guidelines.

Additionally, the College is often made aware of potential career program needs directly through community input. Recently the Bloomington-Normal School of Radiography asked Heartland to take over the program. In such cases the College conducts a needs assessment to be sure we can offer a cost-effective program within the College’s mission.

1P4. Learning goals, students' career needs, and the realities of the employment market
One method we have used to fuse academic and career aspects of learning is to have career programs and transfer programs within the same division. For example, coursework, certificates and degrees for Accounting, Anthropology, Applied Computer Science, Small Business Management, Business (transfer), Economics, Education, Geography, History, Insurance, Office Technology, Political Science, Psychology, Microcomputer Applications, Social Work and Sociology are all offered through the Social and Business Sciences division.

Faculty in occupational areas must keep up with industry and offer courses and programs that will prepare students for industry careers. To that end, one of our primary resources are our Advisory Committees. We meet with employees from local industry (such as State Farm Insurance, Country Companies, Keane, etc.) to determine what the current needs are and how those needs are changing. The faculty members then ensure that any changes or additions that result from that committee fit into the overall structure of our programs and learning outcomes.

Career programming (job preparation, placement and exploration) is influenced by feedback from employers including Advisory Boards and from local and nationwide employment trends. Students receive career counseling in individualized sessions with their academic/career advisors. Job placement, internships and specialized preparation are facilitated by Workforce Services, which aligns many of its programming efforts with the College's CTE programs.

1P5. Preparation required of students
Heartland Community College adheres to the mandatory assessment of all entering students, including degree-seeking students, transfer students and non-degree seeking students, according to the following guidelines. The College uses a combination of both locally-designed assessments and the ACT COMPASS assessments.

- **Degree-seeking students:** Complete assessment is required prior to enrollment in their first semester at HCC.
- **Transfer students:** Assessment requirement is to be determined after reviewing the student’s transcript(s). Students who have been dismissed for academic reasons will be required to assess in all areas prior to enrollment in their first semester at HCC.
- **Non-degree seeking students:** Assessment should be completed as required for the course(s) in which they plan to enroll.

Students for whom developmental coursework is recommended are most successful when they are required to complete their developmental courses upon enrollment into the College. Although well-intentioned, this requirement can become a hardship when developmental students are required to complete their developmental coursework *before* enrolling in transfer courses. Allowing developmental students the option of concurrent enrollment in a select group of transfer-level courses while completing their developmental studies is an option utilized at Heartland, and this process is facilitated by the use of the Course Selection Guides.

The course selection guide is a table of credit-bearing courses to be used by students, advisors, and instructors in making course selection decisions to enhance the success of developmental reading and writing students. These courses are identified by lead faculty members as courses into which developmental reading and writing students might enroll and achieve success. The information on this guide will be reviewed annually by the appropriate academic division.

From among the courses they teach, faculty members identify those courses in which developmental reading and basic writing students may concurrently enroll with a great likelihood of success in spite of their basic skills deficit(s). To assist in this effort, reading and writing faculty have prepared descriptions of *reading and writing behaviors typical of students enrolled in each of HCC’s basic writing (ENGL 094, 095) and developmental reading (READ 070, 090, 091) courses.* These descriptions are found below.

Please note that while reading and writing courses are described separately, an individual’s reading ability and that same individual’s writing ability develop in an interdependent, mutually beneficial manner. Writing assignments are often based on reading in many courses, so the generation of the writing is dependent on reading ability.

*Basic Writing Courses*

ENGL 094: A typical ENGL 094 student may be able to complete short writing tasks (e.g., a summary of or an open-ended response to a reading, writings based on personal experience) with a great deal of support from instructors and/or tutors; longer writing tasks, such as term papers, will offer a tremendous challenge.

ENGL 095: Students at this level will be able to complete most brief writing tasks (e.g., summaries or writings based on personal experience) with considerable support from faculty and tutors at the beginning of the semester. ENGL 095 students may be able to complete more developed writing tasks, fewer than 5 pages, during the second half of the semester with substantial assistance from instructors and tutors.

*Developmental Reading Courses*
READ 070: Almost 100% of READ 070 assignments are completed in novels selected by individual students from an approved list; remaining readings are likely to include newspapers, short stories, and magazine articles. Students enrolled in READ 070 may be able to comprehend one- to two-page readings in disciplinary texts with substantial instructor or tutor support, but they will be unable to comprehend disciplinary textbook readings exceeding three pages in a satisfactory manner.

READ 090: In READ 090, 75% or more of the readings are completed in novels chosen from an approved list, with one or two whole-class choices complemented by individual selections. Articles from magazines, encyclopedias, and journals provide the remainder. Typical READ 090 students should be able to understand disciplinary text readings of three to seven pages with minimal instructor or tutor support. Readings that exceed 10 pages in length or are conceptually dense may prove extremely challenging for 090 students, and these will likely require substantial support. Even at the end of the semester, READ 090 students’ comprehension of full-length disciplinary textbook chapters will not be satisfactory.

READ 091: READ 091 students spend half their time reading journal articles, reference works, and textbook excerpts and chapters—the other half, they are reading novels of their choice. Students enrolled in READ 091 should be able to comprehend readings in disciplinary textbooks of seven to 10 pages with little or no support; those that are conceptually dense or exceed 20 pages in length may require instructor or tutor support at the beginning of the semester. By semester’s end, 091 students should be able to demonstrate satisfactory comprehension of full-length disciplinary textbook chapters.

In addition to initial placement, the College has a system of course prerequisites. Students enrolling in courses with stated prerequisites must provide documentation of their fulfillment of those prerequisites at the time of their enrollment in the course.

1P6. Admissions, student support, and registration services
The Office of Student Services provides a coordinated program for all new students called SOAR (Student Orientation, Advisement and Registration). Each full-time student must participate in a half-day SOAR session in order to enroll in classes. Each part-time student completes an online SOAR session. The SOAR program is intended to help new students succeed at Heartland. Students receive information about student life, financial aid, and faculty expectations. Students also complete basic skills assessments before meeting with an advisor, building a class schedule, enrolling in classes and obtaining a photo ID.

As students continue at Heartland, specific program requirements, career information, transfer/applied degree requirements and certificate information are reviewed with them in groups and in individual advising sessions. Post-SOAR advising sessions focus on assisting students in staying focused and on-track, monitoring their progress toward their educational goal, and/or assisting students in the exploration of alternate career options. As students become closer to degree or certificate completion, they benefit from an online degree audit that is available to assist them in keeping track of their personal progress toward completing their respective goals (usually transfer and/or graduation requirements). Advisors assist students by addressing specific
concerns and facilitating students’ successful understanding and progression towards program or goal completion.

Students in Nursing, Radiography, and the EMS programs all get handbooks that outline program policies and procedures. The divisions have developed extensive web pages to provide information on specific programs, and brochures are printed for the various events to recruit or display our programs. The College catalog also has information required for the program. Selective admissions programs also have Admission Criteria Packets outlining the criteria and the selection process, and information sessions are offered to deliver necessary information about the program and admission process and to answer general questions about the discipline.

1P7. Programs of study that match student needs, interests, and abilities
Advisors are formally prepared to advise and address students’ academic and career concerns. Advisors are also certified through graduate education and specialized training to provide career counseling. In addition, specialized training allows career/academic advisors to administer and interpret the results of a number of career and personal inventories. These inventories are used to assist students in identifying and selecting programs of study that are best suited to their needs, interests and abilities. Students may also enroll in two courses taught by the academic advisors. GENS 101: Career Choice and GENS 102: Personal Success are both one-credit-hour courses that are offered each semester.

1P8. Underprepared students
All first-time students must take a placement assessment to determine their appropriate placement in English, math and/or reading. During the orientation process (SOAR), each student meets with an advisor who interprets his/her score and recommends the appropriate course placement. Students must fulfill all developmental or course prerequisites before progressing to the next level in the course of study sequence. Students’ course placement is monitored. Students who do not satisfy course prerequisite or subject area deficiencies are not allowed to take the next course in the sequence.

Many of the students who utilize Tutoring Services are underprepared. Tutors are automatically placed in the two lowest levels of developmental courses for reading and English, and in Math 096. Instructors in other developmental classes (math, English and reading) can also request tutors for their courses. This gives students one more person with whom to establish a relationship at the College and also puts a face to Tutoring Services. Tutors also have hours in the Center to work with students on an individual basis. Tutors are specifically trained to work with underprepared students in our Working with Diversity: Developmental and Adult Learners tutor training module. Many of our tutor training modules consist of techniques that tutors can teach students in order to help them be successful.

The Transitions Program is designed for non-traditional students who plan to enter post-secondary education in pursuit of a degree but are academically unprepared for the rigors of college-level work. The purpose of the program is not only to successfully place these students in the higher level developmental classes but also to expose them to the expectations of college faculty and the culture of higher education. Expected students in this program are graduates of GED or any HCC Adult Education or Workforce Development certificate programs. This 6-
week-long program will meet three days per week and three hours per day, with one hour devoted each for math, English, and college success skills instruction. The program is not a certificate program and is not for college credit.

The Heartland Academy for Learning Opportunities (HALO) is a brand new program offered by Heartland Community College that is designed to provide access to higher education for students with intellectual disabilities who are interested in continuing their education in a supportive yet challenging learning environment. Working with Heartland faculty, the student body and community volunteers, HALO students receive a first-rate educational experience as well as exposure to various social and enrichment opportunities.

1P9. Differences in students’ learning styles
In FY09 all sections of GENS 100: College Success were turned into a series of workshops that any enrolled student at Heartland can participate in for free or enroll and complete a portfolio for one elective credit. College Success is a series of workshops designed to focus the learner on active learning strategies and study methods in order to become a better student.

The eight topics presented are:
• Mastering Time and Task Management
• Exploring Your Learning Preferences
• Exploring Your Strengths and Career Choices
• Becoming an Active Reader
• Becoming an Active Student
• Improving Test Performance
• Exploring Healthy Lifestyles
• Understanding Civic Responsibility.

Additionally, in developmental composition, faculty members are encouraged to introduce the theory of learning styles to students to increase their awareness of diverse learning strategies. Some faculty use websites such as VARK to address these issues. Faculty members are also encouraged to be aware of the needs of different students and to present course information in a variety of formats.

Also, tutors are trained to help students identify their preferred style of learning and techniques students with a particular learning style can use to make the most of their learning. All tutors are required to take the training module “Basic Learning Styles” before they are allowed to work with students. This early training focuses on three different learning styles and the strategies students can use to make the most of a particular learning style. Tutors also have opportunities to take Learning Styles II and Learning Styles III. These training modules give tutors more tools with which they can work with students.

There is still a debate among our faculty whether the theory of learning styles is valid.

1P10. Special needs of student subgroups
It is the goal of Disability Support Services to provide “reasonable accommodations” to qualified students to give equal opportunity to campus programs and services. The types of
accommodations offered are determined by the Director of Disability Support Services and the student. Possible services may include:

**Services for Students with Visual Impairments**
- Programs such as ZoomText Extra, JAWS, and the use of CCTV's are available.
- Three primary formats for adaptive material are available: E-Text, large print and Braille.
- Document conversion is available. Please remember, the earlier the text is ordered, the better chance the text will be available when class begins.
- Possible orientation and mobility training from the Division of Rehabilitation Services to learn the layout of our campus.

**Accommodations for Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing**
- FM systems, interpreters or captionists are available. Students should make a request to the Director of Disability Support Services at least four weeks before classes begin.
- Notetakers are available to qualified students.

**Accommodations for Students with Learning Disabilities**
- Adaptive testing: e.g. extended time, readers, scribes, use of a computer for essay exams, use of calculator, use of a screen reader.
- Textbooks in an electronic text.
- The use of a laptop computer.
- Notetakers.
- Use Computerized Text Reader.

**Services for Students with ADD/ADHD**
- Adaptive testing: e.g. extended time on exams.
- Reduced distraction room for testing.
- Use of a word processor.
- Notetakers.

**Services for Students with Mobility and Physical Impairments**
- Adaptive testing: e.g. extended time, and/or a scribe.
- Ergonomic accommodations.
- Notetakers.
- Use of tape recorder in class.
- The Division of Rehabilitation Services offers orientation and mobility training to assist students in learning the campus.

Tutors also receive specialized training for each of these groups. Invited presenters from Disability Support Services and Adult Education assist in training the tutors in working with special populations. There is also training for working with developmental and ESL students.
Our hours of operation enable students to see a tutor at a variety of times throughout the week and on weekends. In-class tutors are helpful for students who need individual assistance.

Since all our students are commuters, we try to offer traditional courses during the day, at night and on the weekend. We also offer alternative delivery course formats for any student with scheduling issues. In fall and spring more than 50 sections in the Hybrid and Online format are offered, which allow these students to take classes while still maintaining a flexible schedule. Furthermore, regardless of course format, materials from many of our courses are available online via WebCT, a web presence, or both. This allows for some flexibility even within a course utilizing the traditional delivery method. Technology students also have access to a Remote Lab. This allows those students to log into the network from home and still have access to all of the software they use in the class as well as access to all of their network drives. They log in from anywhere they have internet connectivity and experience exactly what they would see if they logged in here at HCC.

1P11. Expectations for effective teaching and learning
In recent semesters, four methods have emerged for communicating the expectations and importance of effective teaching and learning across the instructional divisions.

As our first AQIP action plan, the Faculty Academy has become our best example of success. The charter stated:

“Professional development for all faculty members is part of the mission of HCC. Therefore, a class/cohort approach for new faculty will help us with the professional development process and will also help with a variety of orientation issues for both new and adjunct faculty. Finally, a professionally developed faculty can enhance student learning. The team will organize a formal ‘class’ for new college instructors about eight weeks in length delivered through the Instructional Development Center. The class will cover such topics as creating student learning outcomes, rubrics and grading, class presentations, class organization, syllabus construction, classroom assessment techniques, and an introduction to WebCT.”

What started as a fall cohort offering for new full- and part-time faculty has evolved to include Faculty Academy II sessions for continuing faculty. Typically Faculty Academy II cohorts have read a common book and discussed its implications for practice at Heartland. Past books used have been *Discussion as a Way of Teaching*, *The Skillful Teacher*, *the Courage to Teach* and *What the Best College Teachers Do*. In spring 2009, Faculty Academy evolved once more to more issue-driven as opposed to text-driven workshops. Grounds for Learning used face-to-face and online discussions to examine our specific experiences in spring classes. Additionally, other faculty groups met in Faculty Academies to discuss Experiential Learning, Developmental Education, and Mentoring. More than 90 faculty and staff have participated in Faculty Academy offerings in FY 2009.

Our first summer Faculty Academy will be offered in 2009, as a group will read and write about *Enhancing Learning through the Scholarship of Teaching*. In fall 2009 we will again offer Faculty Academy I for new faculty, and we will offer at least one Faculty Academy II: *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. 
A second method has been the College’s Best Practice workshops that kick off the fall and spring semesters. All full-time and part-time faculty and instructional administrators are invited, with a typical turn out of between 90 and 115 staff. The Fall 2009 topic will be critical thinking and problem-based learning. Previous themes or individual session topics have included:

- Community Outreach: a Valuable Context for Teaching and Learning
- Best Practices for Teaching about Issues of Class
- Loving to Learn, Loving to Teach
- Connecting Course Learning Objectives with Class Assignments
- Concept Maps and Retention Diagrams
- Reflecting Upon and Using Gradebook Project Data

A third method, the Cornerstone Project, has emerged from our HLC Assessment Academy.

Beginning with what have been deemed the “Cornerstone” courses in our General Education Program (those with the highest enrollment)*, this project seeks to tie course learning outcomes to General Education Program Outcomes areas (Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Communication, and Diversity) and develop meaningful assessments for those Program outcomes.

The project is also about coordinating the efforts of the General Education Program faculty to ensure faculty have a common understanding of our four General Education Program Outcomes and to ensure that faculty assess them in ways that reflect that common understanding.

Cornerstone is about developing a systematic approach to the delivery and assessment of our General Education Program through a course development process that ensures that every course identified as “Cornerstone” includes assessment of one level of each of the four main General Education Program outcomes, and through a program development process that ensures that across the General Education Program, each of the 20 General Education Program learning outcomes are taught and assessed. In FY 2009 English 101, Sociology 101, Psychology 101 and Communications 101 were revised under the Cornerstone Project.

The Cornerstone course design process seeks to accomplish the following:

1) Engage faculty teaching General Education Cornerstone (high enrolled) courses in cross-disciplinary conversations about how they teach and assess General Education Program outcomes;
2) Identify the Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Communication, and Diversity Outcomes that will be covered in each course;
3) Establish assessments for General Education outcomes that are consistent with and reinforce assessments of the same outcomes in other courses in other disciplines;
4) Create a teaching guide book for each Cornerstone course to be used by all those who teach the course. The guide book will establish consistency of understanding and assessment of the Gen Ed outcomes covered in the course;
5) Implement the Grade Book Project for the course to assess how students are performing on the General Education outcomes;
6) Assist and mentor part-time faculty in carrying out the course revisions and in completing Assessment Forms for the General Education Program outcomes of the course.

Finally, this past year has seen a major revision of our Promotion Review and Tenure process. Promotion to a new range is established through a review by the Promotion Review Team, which includes faculty and administrative members. The promotion criteria include the following:

- Instructional design and teaching practices that bring about more effective teaching and learning;
- Formative and summative assessment practices that promote continued improvement in their teaching and student learning;
- Academic engagement in professional development activities that demonstrate service to the discipline, the College or the community;
- Practices that promote the Scholarship of Teaching.

Candidates for promotion prepare a teaching portfolio and have face-to-face meetings with the reading team.

**1P12. Effective and efficient course delivery system**

With educational quality in mind, the College has developed a balanced approach to the variety of course delivery types. By assigning an Associate Dean to develop and assess alternative course delivery types and to work with other Associate Deans in the development of courses, programs, and instructional support, course development grows out of the Associate Deans collaborating on where and how to provide instruction. The Associate Deans represent the interests of their respective faculty to each other. The collaboration has created a sense of responsibility to the whole curriculum. Instructional priorities and allocation of resources are worked out discursively and openly.

During a fall or spring semester the College typically offers 250 course sections using WebCT as a supplement, 50 course sections in a hybrid format and 50 course sections of online instruction.

One way we ensure effectiveness is to require faculty certification before they are allowed to use WebCT. Faculty complete an online course designed by the Instructional Development Center. Then, each trainee meets with the Associate Dean of Academic Support to focus on course design. The trainee creates two weeks’ worth of curriculum before conducting a show and tell with his/her respective Associate Dean and the Associate Dean of Academic Support. Faculty members are certified at the supplemental, hybrid and online levels. To date, 162 faculty have been certified.

**1P13. Up-to-date and effective programs and courses**

Faculty members are assigned professional development money every year to attend conferences, subscribe to journals, and continue their education related to their field. Encouraging faculty involvement with employers and development of partnerships for all disciplines is essential. Also, advisory committees offer valuable information and insight for program development. Finally, the annual internal program review process allows faculty and administration in each curriculum area the opportunity to assess needs.
1P14. Change or discontinue programs and courses
The annual internal program review process, which feeds into the Illinois Community College Board’s five-year Program Review cycle, includes a method to evaluate the necessity of each curriculum area and its components. If a program or set of courses is to be discontinued, the action would be the responsibility of the Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee.

1P15. Learning support needs
Each year the major support programs of the Academic Support Center complete an Annual Plan based on the College’s five strategic planning questions. The staff analyze: 1) Why are we here? 2) What are we trying to accomplish? 3) How well we are doing? 4) What does it all mean? and 5) Where are we going from here?

In the library, face-to-face interactions with students and faculty drive collection development, which focuses on supporting the curriculum. Headcounts and interaction tallies determine hours and staffing levels. Professional meetings and trainings inform instruction practices. College, state, and national trends inform implementation of new services and technologies.

Each semester Tutoring Services conducts a student satisfaction survey. The results of that survey can bring about changes in programming, policies and procedures. Tutoring Services facilitators work closely with faculty to determine support needs. Finally, at the end of each semester the tutors meet to evaluate Tutoring Services and make changes based on the needs of the tutors, faculty and most importantly, students.

In the Writing Program, student-centered classrooms are common, allowing faculty members to work with students individually and get to know their strengths and needs. Students are often referred to the Tutoring Center, Writing Center, library, open computer lab, and Student Services as the situation demands. Faculty members are also informed about student disabilities from the Disability Office. Communication with athletic coaches and Project RISE advisors is often solicited.

1P16. Co-curricular development goals
Our new Student Life initiative includes both student development and student athletics programming. The Director of Student Development encourages students who are involved in the co-curricular programs to address as many of the institutional Learning Outcomes through their programs as possible. Currently, these students are predominantly involved in either the Student Government Association or the Heartland Activities Committee.

The most obvious examples of this to the casual observer can be seen in the attempt by the Heartland Activities Committee to offer a diverse entertainment program with performers of different ethnic & cultural backgrounds and representing various genres of music and entertainment. Additionally, the students involved are expected to develop communication skills through writing press releases, developing promotional materials, and public speaking (in the form of performer introductions). Students also must work cooperatively with one another in the decision making process, establish effective problem solving and critical thinking, whether for effective entertainment programs, in the case of the Heartland Activities Committee, or to
effectively represent Heartland students through involvement in the Student Government Association.

A Leadership Development Program that will also address the four Learning Outcomes is currently being developed. These programs will be open to all Heartland students, with a focus on the student leaders of the various student clubs and organizations, to develop effective skills to lead their clubs and organizations, as well as serve them effectively in any leadership role they encounter beyond Heartland Community College.

Our third action project related to the HLC Assessment Academy is to develop specific co-curricular outcomes and find a mechanism to allow these outcomes to be printed on the official College transcripts. This effort is in the planning stages.

1P17. Degrees and certificates expectations
The higher education system, in general, in the United States relies on course achievement to signal graduation eligibility. By designing a course-embedded approach to assessment based on the Alverno College model, Heartland believes that course grades are reflective of student mastery of course outcomes. Thus, if a student has earned successful grades in the required courses to earn an associate degree or certificate, then that student has met our expectations. Additionally, some occupational programs have licensing tests.

1P18. Assessing student learning
Our approach to assessment begins with the design of the course. Each course syllabus must address the range of assessment methods that may be used in sections of that course. For example, the table below is from the ENGL 101 course revision that was presented for approval to the Assessment Committee on May 1, 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE OBJECTIVES (Learning Outcomes)</th>
<th>General Education Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish and maintain a voice that is appropriate to the selected rhetorical context</td>
<td>PS4 Portfolio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate theoretical and practical understanding of the relationship between audience and purpose, and produce texts that address a variety of audiences effectively</td>
<td>CO5 In-class assignments, Portfolio, Quizzes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage inquiry in evaluating differences in perspectives and opinions—including critical self-assessment of one’s own perspective and its relationship to the perspectives of others</td>
<td>DI1 In-class assignments, Class discussion, Portfolio, Quizzes, Annotated working bibliographies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop an essay that demonstrates effectively organized and presented reasoning and supporting evidence</td>
<td>In-class assignments, Portfolio, and Quizzes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact effectively with multiple sources,</td>
<td>CT2 In-class assignments, Portfolio, and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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subordinating them to the writer’s purpose; creating confidence that they have been represented fairly; and documenting them in MLA style

| Develop an effective writing process that includes successful strategies for inventing, choosing, and narrowing a topic; exploring and developing ideas through research and critical reading; and employs global and local revision and editing strategies | CT3 | In-class assignments, Portfolio, and Quizzes |

PS4 (Problem Solving Outcome 4): “Student analyzes the situation, explores different outcomes from multiple frameworks, applies the appropriate solution, analyzes the results, and refines the solution.”

DI1 (Diversity Outcome 3): Domain Level—Valuing; “Students reflect upon the formation of their own perspectives, beliefs, opinions, attitudes, ideals, and values.”

CO5 (Communications Outcome 5): “Students communicate ethically through monitoring their behavior and interactions with others.”

CT2 (Critical Thinking Outcome 2): “Students determine value of multiple sources or strategies and select those most appropriate in a given context.”

CT3 (Critical Thinking Outcome 3): “Students generate an answer, approach, or solution through an effective synthesis of diverse sources and arguments, and provide a rationale.”

Our approach to assessment continues with individual faculty. As of FY 2009 each full-time faculty members must submit two assessment forms as part of the annual self-evaluation process. Part-time faculty members also are encouraged to complete the form.

The assessment form was developed in the ASC to allow faculty members to reflect on their assessment activities. The intent was to allow faculty to make curricular changes based on their investigations of one learning outcome each semester. The questions behind the creation of the form were basic. Are the students learning? How do you know?

By completing the form each semester, the faculty were indeed reflecting on their practice and using their professional judgment to assess student learning. One primary goal was to have faculty link graded and non-graded assignments to the course outcomes. Another goal was to have faculty discuss their “findings” with another faculty member, an IDC staff member or their Associate Dean. This goal was loosely based on the scholarship of teaching literature that advocates making classroom research public.

Assessment Form Quickview

| Name:       | List faculty name |
| Semester   | List semester and year |
| Course     | List course and section(s) |
Our approach to assessment is evolving through the HLC Assessment Academy Project called the Gradebook Project. This project was developed because in many ways faculty members "do" assessment as part of their normal teaching each semester. The question was how to take the grading efforts of faculty and link them to the learning outcomes of the course/College.

There were three primary goals of the project. First, we wanted to see the links between our assessments and our learning outcomes. Second, we wanted to see how well students perform across the learning outcomes. Third, we wanted to give faculty a way to share assessment methods that appear to be working. More than 20 faculty have created initial gradebooks in Excel that allow them to track how each student performs across all the learning outcomes of the course. Students will not only be able to see an overall course grade, but they will be able to see their performance by learning outcome of the course. The gradebook can also aggregate the data and indicate the outcomes that students appear to master well and those that appear to be more challenging.

1R1. Measures of student learning and development
The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Report is an annual summary of key indicators of Heartland Community College’s (HCC) overall institutional effectiveness. Performance indicators are quantitative measures of success for various aspects of the College. The College considers certain measures to be Key Indicators that denote particular areas of significance related to the operational and strategic goals. In addition, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) has adopted six strategic goals as part of its Illinois Commitment, with associated statewide performance indicators.

Here are the some of the data captured each year:
- Ethnicity of Credit Students
- Age of Credit Students
- Student Credit Load
- Success Rates in Developmental Courses
- Success Rates in English 101 by Developmental Status
- Success Rates in College-Level Math by Developmental Status
- Success Rates in First Reading-Intensive College-Level Courses by Developmental Status
- Retention Rates of New Students
- Retention Rates of New Students by Ethnicity
- Retention Rates of New Students by Age
1R2. Performance results for common student learning and development objectives

Given the College’s course embedded assessment design, one of the primary indicators of success is achievement within a course. The table below includes the percentages for the Fiscal Years 2004-2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Success Rate (A, B, C final grades)</th>
<th>Failure Rate (D, F, R, X final grades)</th>
<th>Withdrawal Rate (W final grades)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Sections</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid Sections</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Sections</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A second important indicator is success through a course sequence. As part of the AQIP Tracking Developmental Education Student Success Action Project and our National Association for Development Education (NADE) Certification Self-Study process, the Office of Institutional Research produced flow charts for each developmental education course in reading, math and English that tracks student success from course of entry through the remaining course sequences for those enrolled in FY 2004-FY 2006. The Developmental Education Coordination Team, which is made up of faculty course coordinators for each developmental education area, will be using this data to find ways to improve our student success. For example, we have three levels of developmental reading. Of those new students (n=59) starting in READ 070, 34 (58%) passed, and 20 students enrolled in READ 090. Of those students, 12 passed READ 090, and 10 enrolled in READ 091. Of those students, eight passed READ 091. Thus, of the original 59 students starting in READ 070, eight (14%) successfully completed all three levels of developmental reading coursework in a three-semester sequence.

A third important indicator is success at the next level of courses. We have tracked this indicator with Reading 091 completers. Although the subsequent course success of students completing reading courses is even more complex to evaluate, success in many courses depends on the student’s ability to comprehend written material. A “reading intensive” course is one in which students gain most of the information they are expected to learn from reading expository texts and demonstrate what they have learned in reading-based activities. Four high-enrollment reading-intensive courses were selected to gauge the subsequent success of the developmental reading program. Students who successfully completed the reading program (A, B or C in READ 091) were compared to students who were exempt from taking any developmental reading.
Success Rates in First Reading-Intensive College-Level Courses by Developmental Status

Reading students were as successful as their peers who did not need developmental reading in Business 110 and Humanities 101, but not as successful in Psychology 101 and Sociology 101. While we do not yet have a systematic objective assessment across sections of any given course, the Cornerstone Project is working toward this end. The College is working on a plan to aggregate the faculty assessment forms, use The Gradebook Project and conduct transcript analyses to measure student mastery of our general education learning outcomes. A preliminary transcript analysis of a handful of graduates indicated that each graduate had been asked to demonstrate mastery 26 times within each of our four areas (Communication, Diversity, Problem Solving and Critical Thinking).

1R3. Performance results for specific program learning objectives
Other measures of student success from the 2008 CQI Report include:

- About 60% of students enrolled in developmental education successfully complete their courses.
- Students who successfully complete their developmental requirements succeed in the subsequent math and English courses at a rate equal to or greater than that of their peers who did not require developmental courses.
- 60% of new students in the fall re-enroll the following spring; 40% re-enroll the following fall.
- Ethnic minority students re-enroll at a slightly lower rate than white non-Hispanic students.
- Students age 25 and older re-enroll at a lower rate than younger students.
- The percentage of new students who have graduated, transferred or are still enrolled exceeds the state average.
- HCC transfer students perform at a level comparable to other transfer students at Illinois State University.
- HCC nursing graduates pass the national licensure exams at a higher rate than the state and national averages.
- More than 90% of career graduates are employed or continuing their education in the year following their graduation.

1R4. Evidence that the students acquired the knowledge and skills required
The most concrete measure we have is for the Nursing programs, where we are able to obtain licensure exam results for program graduates. Pass rates for both Practical Nurse and Registered Nurse licensure exams have been higher than 90% for most recent years and compare favorably with state and national averages. Few career/technical programs have this kind of systematic external validation, however. Informal feedback from employers through advisory committees and other community contact is probably the norm for most occupational programs. Pass rates for the Registered Nurse (RN) and Practical Nurse (PN) exam are shown in the figures below.

Nursing Exam Pass Rates (RN)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heartland Community College</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide Average</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Average</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HCC nursing students exceeded the state and national pass rates on both exams for the last five years, with the exception of the 2003 RN graduates. All of the PN graduates have passed the licensure exam for the last five years.

The College does receive reports from Illinois public universities about the transfer success of HCC students. Generally, there is a decline in GPA during the first semester after transfer, but HCC transfer students’ GPAs usually recover to a level close to that of native students who started their education at the transfer school.

**1R5. Performance results for learning support processes**

Advisement and Enrollment services have a long history of evaluating student satisfaction with an Advisement and Enrollment Survey. These surveys were constructed and completed in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research. A summary of results from the most recent “home grown” survey:

**Satisfaction with Services – Descending order**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>AB</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advising front desk staff is courteous and friendly</td>
<td>95.8%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data entry assistant is courteous and friendly</td>
<td>92.9%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashier communicates effectively with you</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCC website provides accurate and useful information about enrollment</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashier is courteous and friendly</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor respects you, your opinion, and your circumstances</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor communicates effectively with you</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online tuition payment via the HCC website is convenient and secure</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor is knowledgeable about services and programs</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor is knowledgeable about educational and career opportunities</td>
<td>89.6%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor is knowledgeable about four-year college requirements</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor is knowledgeable about resources available in the community</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor shows genuine interest and concern</td>
<td>86.6%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With the implementation of AQIP, the College conducted a national student satisfaction survey (SSI). Results showed that HCC students rated academic advising/counseling services equal to that of other community colleges.

In the FY 2008 Annual Report, the Library Services documented the quantity of their efforts. In the first chart, bibliographic instruction sessions increased to a five-year high of 178. Database searches also reached a five-year high at 156,000. Circulation of Heartland materials to Heartland patrons also reached a five-year high of 10,149. Interlibrary loans coming into Heartland also reached a five-year high of 3,116. These numbers demonstrated how much the Library Services are used.

In the FY 2008 Annual Report, the Tutoring Services reported there had been a significant increase in the number of sessions offered in the Normal campus, with a 28% increase in fall and an almost 10% jump in the spring over the previous year’s semesters. Both Pontiac and Lincoln extensions centers, on the other hand, experienced a decrease in their total number of sessions for the year. However, due to the relatively small population in those campuses, this decrease did not greatly impact the total annual percentage increase across all sites, which stands at 14.42%. One possible reason for this significant increase is the more concerted effort by Tutoring Services to advertise and be more visible on campus as well as the strong endorsement and referral by the English and math faculty.

Tutoring Services also implemented a number of new initiatives during the 2007-2008 school year, and the total number of hours tutored reflect those efforts. Apart from increasing the number of in-class tutoring hours, a significant number of tutor support hours were provided during Student Orientation, Advisement, and Registration (SOAR), the new college registration program implemented in the summer of 2007 to help incoming freshmen transition to HCC. It constituted 15.15% of the total tutoring hours provided for the year. Some in-class support was provided for the Chinese students from Liaoning Normal University in the fall. Finally, in close
cooperation with Heartland’s Athletic Director, Athletic Study Tables were started in an effort to help Heartland athletes stay on top of their academic goals.

These annual reports demonstrate the increased use of Academic Support services, and while the numbers of students served continues to rise across all our services, we are still struggling to measure our services’ direct or indirect impact on student learning. Another next step may be to process map our services as was done in Advising this year.

**1R6. Results for the performance of your processes in Helping Students Learn**

As an institution participating in Title IV Higher Education Act programs, Heartland Community College is required by federal law to disclose graduation and transfer-out information in compliance with the Student Right-to-Know Act. Information on program completions and transfer to other institutions by Heartland students is provided by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB).

A cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate seeking students was tracked by ICCB from 2005 to 2008. The table below displays the graduation and transfer-out rates of Heartland's cohort and all Illinois community colleges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2005 Cohort</th>
<th>Heartland Number</th>
<th>Heartland Percentage</th>
<th>All Illinois Community Colleges Number</th>
<th>All Illinois Community Colleges Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time, first-time, degree/certificate-seeking students</td>
<td>1,216</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26,973</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation Rate: Completed degree or certificate within 150% of scheduled time (3 years)</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>5,746</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer-Out Rate: Transferred to another school within 150% of scheduled time (3 years); did not complete degree or certificate</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>8,428</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still Enrolled:</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>5,186</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Progress Rate: Includes graduated, transferred and still enrolled</td>
<td>929</td>
<td>76.4%</td>
<td>19,360</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ICCB Statewide and HCC Graduation Rate Reports, June 2009

The College has just joined the National Community College Benchmark Project, and our first submission is due June 17, 2009. The Illinois Community College Board maintains an excellent set of data and characteristics on all public Illinois community colleges. However, there is not a good set of data specifically related to student learning outcomes.

**II. Recent improvements for Helping Students Learn**
The most recent improvements that will have the greatest impact on helping our students learn are the Faculty Academy Project, the Cornerstone Project, and the Gradebook Project.

The most recent improvement that will have the greatest impact in retaining students is the Student Orientation, Advisement and Registration process. Before SOAR, only 37% of the fall 2006 new student cohort returned to Heartland in fall 2007. The first SOAR cohort of new students had a 53% retention rate from fall 2007 to fall 2008. Certainly we need to fully research the reasons for increased retention, but the initial findings are positive.

112. Culture and infrastructure to improve and to set targets for improved performance
From the beginning we have had a commitment to continuously improve. Our stated values do reflect our ideal culture. The College may not live up to all the values each moment of each semester, but there is still a very strong commitment that:

1. We are student-centered.
2. We prize an upbeat, can-do attitude.
3. We support, and expect, professional growth of all employees.
4. We are all partners in the success or failure of the organization.
5. We salute tradition, not adulate it.
6. We respect the dignity of all individuals; civility, collegiality and the highest standards of professionalism should characterize HCC.
7. We are proud of the quality of the College but always seek improvement.
8. We practice ethical decision-making and responsible use of environmental, financial and community resources.

The College campus is first-rate. We have been given the physical infrastructure to serve our students and communities at the highest level. The College is in the process of completing the Beyond Buildings project that will accommodate a growing population and help the College remain a valuable asset and a critical resource for the community.

Category Two: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

2P1. Key non-instructional processes to serve significant stakeholder groups
Through Continuing Education, we serve a number of distinct stakeholder groups. These include but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- District residents wishing to pursue enrichment, professional development and other lifelong learning goals through Community and Corporate Education classes;
- Non-native English speaking adults who want to improve their English language proficiency through Adult Education ESL;
- Unemployed and underemployed district residents who participate in vocational and career development opportunities in Adult Education;
- Individuals who wish to prepare for the GED exam through Adult Basic Education;
- District employers that wish to develop and train employees through customized training with the College;
- District youth seeking enrichment opportunities through Community Education;