

Essex County College

# INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT PLAN

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December 2009

# ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE

## INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT PLAN

### 2009 - 2012

#### Introduction

The first Institutional Assessment Plan was prepared by the Office of Institutional Research and distributed in February, 2006. Since that time the college has taken a little over three years to evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the assessment plan. Also, in the last three years, significant changes have taken place at Essex County College that affect how the college will conduct assessments. For example, with regard to general education requirements in the state of New Jersey, all two-year colleges have adopted the same nine general education goals. On site, the enrollment at ECC has increased 27 percent (from 10,249 to 13,314) and the number of full-time faculty has decreased 27 percent (from 162 to 118). In addition, the college also restructured the governance committees changing the Academic Standards and Assessment Committee (ASAC) to the Standards and Academic Assessment Council (SAAC). These factors directly affect how the college assesses general education and student learning.

The first Institutional Assessment Plan served the college well and helped establish the fact that the college had developed a culture of assessment and was working diligently to establish a culture of evidence. Essentially, the college established four major outcome assessment goals: to conduct institutional assessment, program evaluation assessment, general education assessment, and student learning assessment. The college is able to strongly document its success in evaluating its programs and routinely reports summative institutional outcomes. The efforts to document the assessment of general education and specific learning assessment are priorities in this new Institutional Assessment Plan.

In writing this new plan, the college is able to take advantage of the fact that the college is preparing for its decennial Middle States Association visit. Therefore, this new four-year assessment plan will emphasize some of the outcome concerns and use of assessment results as specified in the *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*. This will help the college to improve student learning and our programs and services. This plan will help guide the college to gather and use information as a basis for assessing the institution's effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals, monitoring and improving the environment for student learning and

overall student success. This assessment plan is designed to meet college goal VI in the new Strategic Master Plan, “Promote a culture of assessment.”

### **Background**

Essex County College was established in 1966 and accepted its first class in 1968. Institutional assessment at that time primarily consisted of placement and exit testing of students. In early 1974, the college’s Long-Range Planning Advisory Council proposed the development of assessment procedures and designated several studies as necessary for “periodic objective assessment.” This study effort was discontinued with the abolishment of the Office of Institutional Development in July, 1974. It was not until 1978 that policies, regulations and procedures were established that required and specified the responsibility of institutional research, planning and development. Most of the assessments and evaluations from 1974 to 1978 were determined and undertaken departmentally. In June, 1979, the Office of Institutional Research was established and a permanent director appointed in November, 1979. The November, 1980 Middle States Association report to the college reported that, “Despite the amount of evaluative activity . . . information on program effectiveness is spotty and has not been collected in a systematic fashion.” As a result of this finding and the college’s own concern for program assessment, a formal program assessment process was established. This process, established in 1980-81 and continuously refined and improved, is a milestone for the college’s assessment plan.

### **Culture of Assessment**

In order to initiate and implement an effective assessment plan, it is necessary to build an institutional culture of assessment. In the past, the college had more of a departmental level culture of assessment. In 1996, the Academic Standards Committee was restructured at the request of the Director of Institutional Research to accept the responsibility of coordinating program evaluations. This new committee, the Academic Standards and Assessment Committee (ASAC), was fortunate to have had the leadership of dynamic faculty members who understood the importance of assessment. They accepted a major role in guiding and implementing the college’s assessment plans. In 2006, all college governance committees were restructured and the ASAC name was changed to the Standards and Assessment Advisory Council (SAAC).

Another important change was undertaken as a result of one of the major recommendations of the Middle States team report in 2001. This recommendation was to place more of an emphasis on planning. A Director of Planning was hired in late 2001, and the institution’s master plan and requisite assessment also helped to establish a culture of

assessment at the institutional level. In 2008, the relationship and importance of assessment as it relates to planning was recognized and the Planning and Institutional Research Office title was changed to Office of Planning, Research and Assessment.

One of the major strengths of Essex County College is the awareness by the college's administration that, in order for assessment to be effective and to be used to guide decision making at the college, accountability policies and assessment processes had to be owned by those participating in the process. This ownership is encouraged by the college's governance structure. As mentioned above, the Standards and Assessment Advisory Council (SAAC) leadership has accepted overall responsibility for the development and implementation of program assessment. Overall institutional outcomes assessment, including the assessment of administrative and educational support services, is currently the responsibility of the Deans' Council. As the college prepares for the decennial Middle State visit it was decided that much of the work for outcomes assessment regarding general education and assessment of student learning would be assigned to our Task Force concerning standards 7 and 14 (Institutional Assessment and Assessment of Student Learning) and their subcommittees.

The importance of assessment has been emphasized by the college president on numerous occasions. The focus of the 2008 college Convocation was "Assessing Student Learning Outcomes and Enhancing Student Services." Workshops on classroom assessment that day featured a presentation by Dr. Virginia Anderson from Towson University. In 2009 the college Convocation focus was on the evaluation and review of our college mission, goals and objectives. As a result of these activities the college modified its strategic plan.

Basically, the college has determined what will be assessed, who will do the assessment and when. The development of this *Institutional Assessment Plan* is a college-wide effort. The Office of Planning, Research and Assessment accepts the responsibility for assuring that this assessment plan is implemented and that the results are used to guide the decision making process. Essentially, a culture of assessment has been established at Essex County College. Now is the time to look at establishing what Alicia C. Dowd at the University of Massachusetts in Boston refers to as a "culture of inquiry," i.e., a culture that emphasizes not merely data but also the use of the data for decision making by college constituents.

### **Assessment at ECC**

Essex County College's academic assessment process appears to model closely the assessment movement phases described by Peter Ewell in a 2005 interview with Catherine Kirby (Catherine Kirby, 2005, -*Academic Assessment: An Interview with Peter Ewell*, Update On Research and Leadership, Vol. 16, No. 2). That is, the assessment movement could be divided into two phases, Round One and Round Two. In Round One, reports on undergraduate

education led to a number of states enacting assessment mandates. In New Jersey, this was the case with the establishment of the Basic Skills Council and a number of mandated assessments of college basic skills programs. Round Two (in the mid 90's) is a period in which the accreditation community became more involved in assessment. More specifically, at this time the accreditation community began to focus on the assessment of student learning. One of the current primary assessment concerns at Essex is the outcomes assessment of student work.

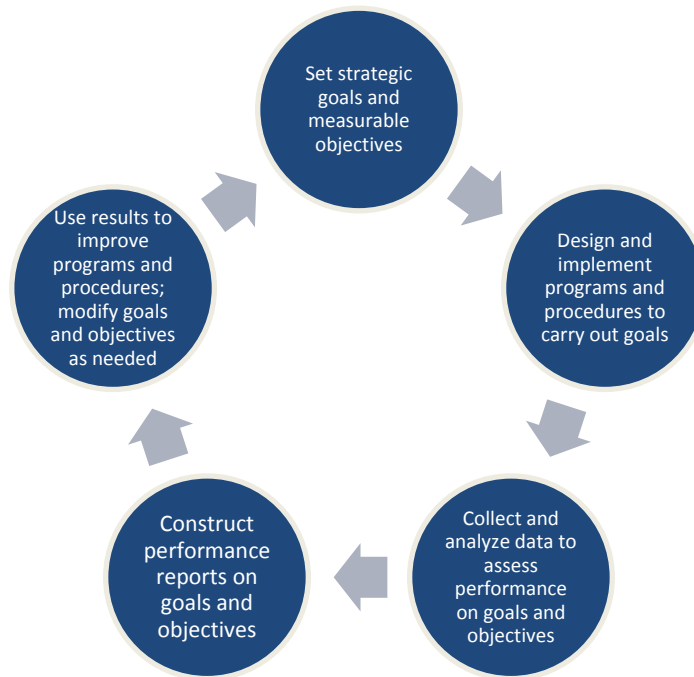
One of the major assessment related documents since the last institutional assessment plan was the September 2006 Action Plan of Secretary Spellings (Spellings, 2006) and its emphasis on accessibility, affordability, and accountability. This report influenced Educational Testing Service (ETS) to use its resources to determine how best to address the need for assessing student learning outcomes. One result was the ETS publication *A Culture of Evidence: Critical Features of Assessments for Postsecondary Student Learning* (Millett, 2007). This practical publication contained suggestions for assessments in four areas: workforce readiness/general educational skills, domain-specific knowledge, soft skills, and student engagement.

Other ideas and recommendations in this ECC assessment plan reflect the work and recommendations from various publications of Peter Ewell, Peter Herson, Terry O'Banion and James Nichols. In evaluating the previous Institutional Assessment Plan, it was found that it was nearly impossible to implement just one model. Specifically, the Five-Column Model described by James O. Nichols and Karen W. Nichols in their book *A Road Map for Improvement of Student Learning and Support Services Through Assessment* was strongly suggested as a model for the college. However, in practice, the assessment leaders in the college and the faculty never fully adopted the model. One of the most recent documents reviewed regarding assessment in the community college is a report to the College Board by Kevin J. Dougherty, *Performance Accountability Systems for Community Colleges: Lessons for the Voluntary Framework of Accountability for Community Colleges* (2009). This report is a review of accountability systems in ten states and contains many practical recommendations for the improvement of assessment at ECC. The major thrust of this national study was to ensure that the effectiveness and contributions of community colleges are properly measured. These documents have all shaped the ideas and recommendations in this Institutional Assessment Plan.

The following pages contain specific information regarding institutional assessment, program assessment, general education assessment and student learning assessment. For each section, a brief statement regarding the college's philosophy of assessment is made followed by examples of methods to be used to effectively and efficiently accomplish our assessment goals.

Each of the assessment areas (institutional, program, etc.) are related to specific objectives in the college’s strategic plan. Also presented are **sample action items** which serve as specific examples of what will be done the first year of the plan.

In general, the assessment model used can be summarized in the schematic below:



Based on presentation by Jodi Levine, Temple University

### **Institutional Assessment (Objective 7.2)**

The overall purpose of institutional assessment is to determine the degree to which the institution has been able to meet its mission and goals.

The college’s *Strategic Plan 2009 – 2012* contains the goals of the college as they relate to the mission and value statements of the college. Each goal has measurable objectives and specific strategies to accomplish the objectives. This strategic plan reflects the efforts of many college stakeholders who provided input during the year through various governance committees. In addition, the college’s 2009 convocation was dedicated to reviewing and recommending changes to the college’s goals, objectives and strategies.

As in the past, each of the college Deans assumes responsibility for reporting on the extent to which each objective was met. This reporting takes place every year and our computerized reporting format allows for easy input and compilation of data. A summary report is prepared after the input is received from the various areas. The data is then used to improve teaching, learning and student support.

While the *Strategic Plan 2009 – 2012* contains the goals, objectives and suggested strategies of the institution, other administrative and educational support services have their own plans. These plans relate directly to the college mission and goals but also contain objectives and strategies related to the administrative function of that office. For example, the plan for the college’s Community and Continuing Education Division is a compilation of objectives and strategies from 13 areas (e.g., adult learning centers, customized training, EOF, Police Academy, West Essex Campus etc.). Student Affairs and Academic Affairs also have plans with goals and objectives that are tied to the *Strategic Plan 2009 - 2012* but reflect the administrative functions of those areas. Finally, the college has a Facilities Master Plan and Technology Master Plan both of which contain measurable outcomes. All of these areas prepare annual reports to the President’s Cabinet.

Middle States Standard 7 (*Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*) refers to the need for colleges to engage in institutional assessment: “The institution has developed and implemented an assessment plan and process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards”. (p. 25) The standard also requires that the institution: implement planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal processes; use institutional resources efficiently; provide leadership and governance; provide administrative structures and services; demonstrate institutional integrity; and assure that institutional processes and resources support appropriate learning and other outcomes for its students and graduates.

This standard clearly indicates that the institution’s overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals should be evaluated. The continued implementation of this *Institutional Assessment Plan* will assure that the college periodically reviews its overall effectiveness in planning, resource allocation and institutional renewal processes and that it uses institutional resources efficiently.

Essex County College uses many methods to assess the degree to which it has met its goals and objectives. These include benchmarking comparisons, formative and summative data and both direct and indirect measures. The most common indicators used by community colleges (Dougherty, 2009 p.i ) and historically used at ECC for overall Institutional assessment are:

1. Input indicators, such as total enrollments; populations served (e.g., the proportion of area adults enrolled); and enrollments disaggregated by student demographics.
2. Process indicators, such as tuition and fees; expenditures; faculty characteristics; and the extent of vocational, remedial, preparation for transfer as well as the provision of quality learning and degree of student academic engagement.

3. Output indicators, such as rates of remedial and developmental education success; graduation and transfer rates; and employment after leaving ECC.

One of the recommendations of the Report to the College Board was “performance indicators for community colleges need to be contextualized or benchmarked, either by comparing colleges to relevant peer groups or by statistically adjusting performance data for the entry characteristics of students” (Dougherty, 2009, p. iv). Without such contextualized benchmarking, ECC and other urban colleges in particular might appear to be performing badly despite the fact that the college may be actually doing comparatively well on a value added basis. With regard to benchmarking, the college will continue to use benchmarking activities that fall into the three categories explained in the January 2006 *Leadership Abstract* (Volume 19, No. 1) from the Lumina Foundation for Education which includes:

1. Performance benchmarking – also called metric benchmarking is simplest and takes place through the straightforward comparison of performance data. The college will compare such statistics as graduation and retention rates with those of peer institutions.

2. Diagnostic benchmarking – a health check that seeks to characterize an organization’s performance status and to identify areas that need improvement. These efforts employ surveys of community college student experiences, behaviors and attitudes. This diagnostic system views the student-college relationship as an interactive process. For example, ECC students participated in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in March 2006. As a result, the college prepared a study *Report of Data from Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)* (Meltzer, 2006) which was used to help our students better meet their learning goals and better cope with their educational challenges. During Fall 2009 the college participated in the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE).

3. Process benchmarking – This involves an in-depth, comparative examination of a specific core practice at two or more institutions. The college has not yet made a commitment to pursue this type of benchmarking.

The plan for assessment at ECC also includes direct and indirect measures. The following are useful definitions of direct and indirect measures of assessment from James O. Nichols, *A Road Map for Improvement of Student Learning and Support Services Through Assessment*.

1. Direct means of assessment provide evidence of outcome accomplishment that is observed without the possibility of influence by another source of student achievement. A test including math questions would be direct evidence or assessment of knowledge regarding mathematics; a design project at the end of their program is direct evidence of engineering ability.

2. Indirect evidence of assessment is based upon the perception that because an event transpired that it was based upon another event. For example, if graduates are employed after graduation, employment is an indirect measure of their attainment of skills. (p.85)

The college is routinely required to submit summative data to the state and federal government each year. In New Jersey all institutions of higher education have to submit enrollment and completion data (via the Student Unit Record Enrollment system) and complete all required Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) reports. Some other outcome measures to be used for institutional assessment include student satisfaction survey results, Employee Attitude Survey CCSSE and SENSE results, assessment of satisfaction of advisement, results of standardized and departmental final tests, evidence of institution-wide assessment efforts (e.g., SAAC minutes), as well as a review of outcome measures from the college's administrative and educational support services reports. These measures will be used to produce periodically formative and summative reports.

**Sample Action items:**

- Review, prepare and distribute SENSE data.
- Help conduct the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory.
- Use results of the Employee Attitude Survey for Middle States.
- Prepare all sources for the self-study in a PDF format.
- Change the format for collecting race/ethnicity data for SURE and IPEDS.
- Provide outcomes data to all self-study task forces.
- Administer a questionnaire for governing boards to our Board of Trustees.

**Program Effectiveness (Objective 7.3)**

One of the greatest assessment success stories at ECC pertains to program assessment efforts. The college's Standards and Assessment Advisory Council (SAAC) developed program assessment guidelines that state:

- Assessment should be consistent with the mission of the college, which is to provide a comprehensive, quality, and affordable education to students with a wide range of abilities and backgrounds.
- The purpose of assessment is to improve student learning and development by creating methods to (a) articulate the goals of each program, (b) obtain feedback on the progress toward these goals, and (c) use the feedback to implement necessary changes in the program to ensure goals are being achieved.

- Assessment of student learning should be based on how well students meet the objectives of the courses in the curriculum. The objectives should be well defined and identify not just the quantity (result-oriented approach) but also the quality of the student learning (process-oriented approach).
- The assessment model should reflect the diversity of programs at Essex County College and recognize the individual aspirations of students enrolled at this institution.
- Criterion-referenced instruments should be used in the assessment process. Student performance on norm-referenced exams can be used to supplement the assessment of a program.
- Assessment practices should be multidimensional and student cognitive development should be only one of several components.

All programs undergo a comprehensive evaluation, including an evaluation by an external evaluator, every five years. Each program must demonstrate that it meets four standards, which are that the program: (1) has an identified plan (and implemented plan) for evaluation (of program goals and objectives) and feedback to strengthen its educational outcomes; (2) has the appropriate number of qualified faculty to accomplish its purposes and ensure its educational effectiveness; (3) has the resources necessary to accomplish its goals; and; (4) provides a teaching and learning environment conducive to student achievement. The program evaluation process is explained below:

1. The program evaluation is completed by faculty in each discipline on a schedule determined by Academic Affairs and Institutional Research.
2. The evaluation document is then sent to an external evaluator who reviews the document and comes to the college to meet with students and faculty.
3. The external evaluator submits a written report to the college and discusses the report with faculty and appropriate administrators.
4. A subcommittee of SAAC examines all documents and makes further comments and recommendations to augment the report.
5. Any recommendations are followed-up by Academic Affairs and a report is made to Deans' Council and Cabinet.

This program evaluation process demonstrates that the college has a framework for continuous program improvement. See Appendix A for the program assessment schedule.

Some of the direct measures to augment program evaluation include capstone projects, comprehensive theses and pass rates on licensure tests. Indirect measures include focus group interviews, job placement data and student perception surveys as well as demographic statistics such as graduation and retention rates and course passing rates.

### **Sample Action items:**

- Establish and approve new program evaluation schedule.
- Encourage faculty to complete program evaluations on-time.
- Hire external evaluators to review programs.
- Provide data and in-service training to faculty evaluators.
- Review recommendations from external evaluators and review follow-up actions by departments.
- Examine passing rates in developmental education programs.
- Establish a subcommittee to review all general education courses to assure that they have measurable performance objectives which are stated in the course syllabus.

### **General Education Effectiveness (Objective 7.4)**

In order to review our general education outcomes assessment it is first necessary to understand the history of general education at Essex County College.

In response to action taken in 1983 by the New Jersey Department of Higher Education, Essex County College's Academic Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) convened a task force to establish a statement of philosophy of general education and provide a list of specific general education courses. The goal established at that time was to offer programs which:

assist in the development of broadly educated persons with the skills to understand the relationships of fields of knowledge, think and express themselves effectively, make relevant judgments, discriminate among values and make appropriate applications of knowledge.

This was revised into more specific goals and objectives in 1992-93 in the areas of communications, mathematics and science, social science, humanities and health and well-being. Measurable objectives for each of these were established. For example, the goal in communication was "students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing" and a sample objective was "students will summarize and paraphrase what they read and hear." Even though the college had these measurable objectives, assessment of general education was not conducted in any formal manner.

In 2007 the State community colleges Academic Officers Association recommended the establishment of the General Education Coordinating Committee (GECC) to establish common general education goals across the sector. This assured that the general education foundation provided by the colleges is consistent and would transfer in full to state public four-year universities. As a result, in 2008, the following general education goals were established:

### General Education Goals:

- Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.
- Students will apply appropriate mathematical and statistical concepts and operations to interpret data and to solve problems.
- Students will use the scientific method of inquiry, through the acquisition of scientific knowledge.
- Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.
- Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.
- Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; and philosophy and/or religious studies; and will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.
- Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.
- Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples.
- Students will understand ethical issues and situations.

At ECC the establishment of these common general educational goals led to the establishment of a common format for each general education course syllabus. Specifically, each syllabus now contains outcome objectives and goals which indicate which general education goals are met by the course. In addition, each syllabus contains measurable performance objectives.

Previous efforts to evaluate general education at the college were not successful. The plan to use nationally standardized assessment instruments such as the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) or Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) did not prove practical as the college could not identify a method to motivate students to take the tests. It was decided to form a committee to study and recommend a different approach to general education assessment.

In Fall 2009, the responsibility for general education assessment was assigned to a subcommittee of Middle States Task Force 7 and 14 (Institutional Assessment; Assessment of Student Learning). The first responsibility of this subcommittee is to assure that all general education courses have outcome objectives and measurable performance objectives. After this is verified, the plan is to conduct embedded assessment in certain general education courses each semester. This will provide formative outcomes to allow for the adjustment of the curriculum and pedagogy as well as summative data for the college. A three-year schedule for the assessment of all general education goals (similar to the five-year schedule for program evaluation) is currently being established (see Appendix B).

### **Sample Action Items:**

- Establish a subcommittee to review all general education courses to assure that they have measurable performance objectives which are stated in the course syllabus.
- Present the schedule for the evaluation of general education courses to the faculty.
- Establish a process with Information Technology to collect outcomes data at the course and section level.
- Where warranted and possible, use capstone course assignments.
- Help departments establish a set of general evaluation rubrics where necessary.
- Explore the use of portfolios evaluations.

### **Student Learning (Objective 7.4)**

In the Report to the College Board, *Performance Accountability Systems for Community Colleges: Lessons for the Voluntary Framework of Accountability for Community Colleges*, the difficulty in obtaining an indicator for general student learning was noted (Dougherty, 2009, p. 6). They report that only one state, Florida, had an indicator for general student learning over the course of the college (they used the College Level Academic Skills Test). The other nine states in the study (Massachusetts, Maryland, North Carolina, Illinois, Ohio, Louisiana, Texas, Oregon, and California) did not have any such measure.

At ECC the major goal in assessing student learning is to be able to demonstrate that our students have knowledge, skills and competencies consistent with the college's institutional mission and goals. The college also must demonstrate that students who graduate have achieved appropriate higher education goals. However, as in other states, the college has not yet found an appropriate indicator for general student learning. Nevertheless, ECC will work to assure, as is recommended by Middle States (Standard 14), that statements of expected student learning will be reviewed in order to assure that learning outcomes are interrelated and integrated at the course, program and institutional levels. The goal is to assure that the assessment of student learning is an ongoing, cyclical process at every level. The collected information will be used to guide discussions about improving student learning.

At the course level the college currently relies on the traditional system of grading. This is an effective measure as there is a demonstrable relationship between the objectives in the course and the outcomes measured by a test or project. In the college's developmental education courses, rubrics exist that are used by faculty for outcomes assessment. For example, in English a final essay is graded by the English Department Testing Committee using a

holistic scoring method. The committee's results are given to the faculty member and must be considered in the calculation of the student's final grade. In Mathematics, departmental finals are required in all developmental courses. Almost all courses at the college have measurable objectives and requirements that must be met. During the next few semesters it is a goal of the college to review more systematically these specific objectives in order to better assess the degree to which individual students have achieved appropriate higher education goals. Direct measures such as course and homework assignments, examinations, standardized tests, research papers and case studies are some of the outcome measures that will be used. Indirect measures include course evaluations (student opinions) and focus groups. The college is also reviewing student level Learning Management Systems (LMS) which include Sakai, SnapGrades, Engrade, as well as Google Groups.

Evaluation of student learning at the program level involves the assessment process mentioned on page 8 in Program Effectiveness (Objective 7.3). The guidelines and standards refer to educational effectiveness and student achievement. For each program, summative assessment measures such as graduation rates, retention, and employment are considered. In many of the engineering programs, samples of students' projects and tests are reviewed for each course in the program. Student learning at the program level will be assessed by such direct measures as capstone projects, comprehensive theses and pass rates on licensure tests (where appropriate). Indirect measures such as job placement and student perception surveys will continue to be a major assessment tool.

Evaluation of student learning at the institutional level involves a synthesis of the methods used at the course and program level. Aggregate statistics pertaining to graduation rate, retention, scores on standardized tests, and job placement, are all examples of measures of student learning at the institution level. These statistics summarize the degree to which the college has meaningful and appropriate goals for its students which are based on valid, reliable and effective means of measuring student learning. From individual course goals to general education and program goals the college is able to gather outcomes data, share it with faculty and administrators and use it to effect change where necessary. The evidence that this has occurred exists in the annual evaluation of our strategic plan and in our program evaluations. Evidence is now also being collected at the department level to assure that outcome measures and appropriate assessment strategies are used to evaluate courses. Also being evaluated is the degree to which individual students have met their general education goals.

**Sample Action items:**

- Assure that all courses have measurable performance objectives.
- Review the use of various Learning Management Systems.
- Sponsor workshops for faculty regarding classroom evaluation techniques.

- Evaluate CCSSE and SENSE data as related to classroom evaluations.
- Examine the possibility of using IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction.

## Summary

The college is committed to implementing this assessment plan which will produce clear evidence of student learning. The goal of assessment is to assure that the college is able to create the best conditions for learning. In addition, it is important to provide feedback to faculty that will allow them to strengthen and improve the educational process.

The purpose of this document is to serve as a guideline for institutional, program, general education, and student assessment. Specific assessment techniques are mentioned, some of which have long been in use and some of which are new. Even though assessment has been a priority of the college since its opening, there are some areas which have not been thoroughly evaluated. The most recent comprehensive and candid review of ECC's assessment strategies indicate that the college has effectively evaluated its previous institutional goals and conducted effective and worthwhile program evaluations. More needs to be accomplished with regard to general education and student learning assessments.

To be effective, this assessment plan calls for the continued production of many outcomes assessment reports. The first is an institutional assessment report. This assessment contains mostly summative outcomes to enable the college to determine the degree to which the college has met its mission and *Strategic Plan 2009 – 12* goals, objectives and strategies. Also included in this overall assessment will be a summary of the accomplishments of all administrative and educational support unit goals and objectives.

The second report is actually a collection of individual program assessments. All academic programs conduct some kind of assessment activities each year. However, programs have a comprehensive evaluation every five years that includes a report from an external evaluator as well as a report from a peer group of faculty from the Standards and Assessment Advisory Council (SAAC). Recommendations from these reports go to the Dean of Faculty to assure that recommendations are seriously considered and acted upon to effect institutional change.

During the 2009 - 2010 academic year, the college will conduct its first formal assessment of its general education curriculum. Currently the responsibility for general education assessment is assigned to a subcommittee of Middle States Task Force 7 and 14 (Institutional Assessment; Assessment of Student Learning). The first responsibility of this subcommittee is to assure that all general education courses have outcome objectives and

measurable performance objectives. After this is verified, the plan is to conduct embedded assessment in certain general education courses each semester.

Also during the 2009 – 2010 academic year, the college will collect evidence of student learning at the course, program and institution levels. Currently, a repository of examples of individual student learning does not exist. The organization and content of such a repository is now being discussed and will be implemented during the 2009 – 2010 academic year.

In conclusion, assessment is a process of self-evaluation and self-reflection with an outlook towards improvement. This plan will guide the college for the continuous improvement of student learning through a culture of evidence and inquiry.

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# APPENDICES

**Appendix A                      ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE**  
**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE**  
**As of November 2009**

<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>DEGREE/CERT.</u>	<u>CURR. CODE</u>	<u>DIVISION/DEPT.</u>
<b><u>2007-2008</u></b>			
Environmental Science	AAS	2107	Biology and Chemistry Engr. Tech. & Comp.
Architectural Technology	AAS	2301	Sci.
Liberal Arts: Communications Option	AA	019C	Humanities
Art	AA	0401	Humanities
Digital Media and Electronic Publishing	C	3071	Humanities
Nursing: Licensed Practical Nurse*	C	3307	Nursing
Physical Education	AS	0899	Social Sciences
Massage Therapy	C	6013	Social Sciences
<b><u>2008-2009</u></b>			
Health Science	AS	2114	Allied Health
Biotechnology	AAS	2311	Biology and Chemistry
Biotechnology	C	3311	Biology and Chemistry
Biology, Pre-Medicine	AS	0601	Biology and Chemistry
Accounting	AAS	2000	Business
Accounting	AS	2001	Business
Energy Utility Technology (w/PSEG)	AAS	2308	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Human and Social Services	AAS	2202	Social Sciences
Human and Social Services	C	3057	Social Sciences
<b><u>2009-2010</u></b>			
Radiography*	AAS	2105	Allied Health
Chemistry	AS	0602	Biology and Chemistry
Chemical Technology	AAS	2306	Biology and Chemistry
Chemical Technology	C	3306	Biology and Chemistry
Liberal Arts	AA	0199	Humanities
Liberal Arts: Journalism Option	AA	019J	Humanities
Music	AS	0409	Humanities
Social Science	AS	0710	Social Sciences
<b><u>2010-2011</u></b>			

Liberal Arts: Spanish Language Option	AA	019L	Bilingual Studies
Bilingual/ESL		8888	Bilingual Studies
General Science	AS	0603	Biology and Chemistry
Microcomputer Systems Applications	AAS	2007	Business
Information Systems Office Operations	C	3301	Business
Internet-Web Page Design	C	3304	Business
Technical Studies	AAS	5304	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Geographic Information Systems	C	3206	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
New Media Technology	AAS	2071	Humanities
Liberal Arts: Africana Studies Option	AA	019A	Humanities
Fire Code Technology	C	3050	Community and Cont. Ed.
<b><u>2010-2011 continued</u></b>			
Electrical Code Technology	C	3051	Community and Cont. Ed.
Building Code Technology	C	3052	Community and Cont. Ed.
Plumbing Code Technology	C	3053	Community and Cont. Ed.
<b><u>2011-2012</u></b>			
Engineering	AS	0399	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Computer Aided Design Technology	C	3205	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Computer Information Systems	AS	2002	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Computer Science	AS	2302	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Applied Computer Science	AS	2303	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Network Technology	C	3203	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Internetworking Technology	C	3204	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Mathematics	AS	0604	Math and Physics
Nursing*	AAS	2104	Nursing
Nursing: Licensed Practical Nurse Artic. Option*	AAS	6003	Nursing
<b><u>2012-2013</u></b>			
Physical Therapist Assistant*	AAS	2106	Allied Health
Vision Care Technology*	AAS	2120	Allied Health
Business Administration	AS	2005	Business
Business Administration	AAS	2006	Business
Bus. Adm.: Hospitality Management Option	AAS	200H	Business
Bus. Adm.: Bus. Adm. & Micro. Appl. Option	AAS	200M	Business
Bus. Adm.: Office Adm. & Computer Tech.	AAS	2014	Business

Business Adm.: Financial Services Option	AAS	20FN	Business
Bus. Adm.: Office Systems Tech. & Management	AAS	200S	Business
Business Career Development	C	3001	Business
Office Assistant	C	3009	Business
Word Processing	C	3034	Business
Manufacturing Engineering Technology (CIM)*	AAS	5301	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Manuf. Engr.: Mechanical Engr. Tech. Option*	AAS	530E	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Civil Construction Engineering Technology*	AAS	5309	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Civil Constr.: Land Surveying Option*	AAS	530S	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Electronic Engineering Technology*	AAS	2307 0206	Engr. Tech. & Comp. Sci.
Education	AA	(0201/0203)	Social Sciences
Childhood Development Associate	C	0204	Social Sciences
Criminal Justice	AS	0898	Social Sciences
Retail Sales Specialist	C	200R	Business

<b><i>External Assessment</i></b>				
Dental Hygiene	AAS	2108	Allied Health (UMDNJ)	
Respiratory Care	AS	2112	Allied Health (UMDNJ)	
Dental Assisting	C	6005	Allied Health (UMDNJ)	
Legal Assistant Studies*	AS	2013	Social Sciences	
Legal Assistant*	C	3054	Social Sciences	
Legal Specialist*	C	3055	Social Sciences	
Legal Nurse*	C	3056	Social Sciences	

Appendix B

ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE  
GENERAL EDUCATION EVALUATION SCHEDULE

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
<b><u>General Education Goal</u></b>			
1) Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.	X		
2) Students will use appropriate mathematical and statistical concepts and operations to interpret data and to solve problems.	X		
3) Students will use the scientific method of inquiry, through the acquisition of scientific knowledge.			X
4) Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.		X	
5) Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.		X	
6) Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; and philosophy and or religious studies; and will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.	X		
7) Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.			X
8) Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples.			X
9) Students will understand ethical issues and situations.		X	