

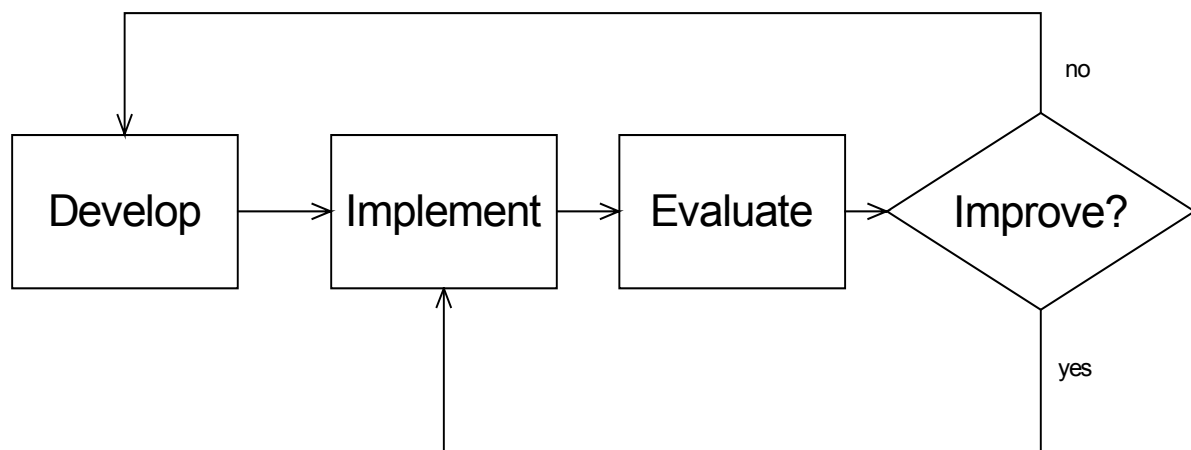
Barton County Community College

Monitoring Report on the Assessment of Student Learning

Prepared for
The Higher Learning Commission
North Central Association

December 15, 2004

The Assessment Process



BARTON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING
HLC-NCA MONITORING REPORT
December 15, 2004

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In October of 2002, Barton County Community College completed its accreditation process with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC-NCA). As a condition of continuing accreditation, the Commission required that Monitoring Reports be submitted in three areas of concern: Developmental Education, Assessment of Student Learning, and Operational Planning. In their Preliminary Report, the Site Team recommended that all of the Monitoring Reports be due in December of 2006; however, the Team's Final Report stipulated that the Monitoring Report for the Assessment of Student Learning be submitted by December 2004. Thus, this Monitoring Report is being submitted in partial fulfillment of Barton County Community College's continued accreditation.

The Report is divided into five sections. The first, Background Summary, addresses HLC-NCA's questions regarding the institution's efforts to assess student learning and briefly describes Barton's progress since the Site Team visit. In the second section, HLC-NCA Comments and Concerns, HLC-NCA comments relative to assessment have been extracted from the final Site Visit Report and addressed. Section three includes a detailed description of Barton's assessment program, including progress made and obstacles encountered since the HLC-NCA Site Team Visit. The Conclusion section offers the Highlights, Lessons Learned and the Future of Assessment at Barton County Community College. Appendices referenced in the body of the report are included in the final section.

The process of writing the Monitoring Report has provided those responsible for its creation, the Dean of Learning and Instruction, the Assessment Coordinators, and the Outcomes Assessment Committee, with the opportunity to comprehensively evaluate Barton's assessment program and to scrutinize its strengths and weaknesses. Although only two years have passed since the HLC-NCA Site Team Visit, this report will show that Barton has made significant progress, not only in its implementation of assessment plans, but also in its understanding of the nature and purpose of assessment of student learning.

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

The plans and processes developed for the assessment of student learning at Barton County Community College are the result of years of work on the part of many dedicated and determined faculty, staff, and administrators. Much has been learned from both setbacks and successes, and the College remains collectively committed to the principles and purposes inherent to the assessment of student learning.

From the beginning, efforts have centered on the words of Ted Marchese, former vice-president of the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE), who described assessment as **“a rich conversation about student learning informed by data.”** At Barton, the ultimate goal of the program for the assessment of student academic achievement is to improve student learning and facilitate student realization of their academic goals. Therefore, the Outcomes Assessment Committee (OAC) has written and adopted a mission statement which affirms the members’ collective sense of purpose:

The Barton County Community College Outcomes Assessment Committee is enthusiastic about the creation of a systematic, continuous process for gathering and using information about student learning as it happens at Barton. This process is used primarily to improve student learning through making positive changes in the Barton curriculum. With the establishment of an assessment process, we hope to provide a guide for individual instructors and departments to make the daily decisions that working with curriculum necessitates. The assessment process provides information that allows students, community members, state and federal agencies, and the North Central Association to recognize that Barton is fulfilling the promises of the College's mission. Although implementing an assessment process has provided many challenges and the changes have been difficult at times, the Committee strongly believes that by working together, all members of the Barton community have the potential to make an excellent institution even better. While the assessment of student learning has been mandated by the accrediting associations, we believe that the process is valuable to the College and leads to each of us accepting more responsibility for Barton County Community College evolving as a learning institution.¹

Additionally, the Committee has adopted Guiding Principles that guide its efforts. These are:

¹ Proposed August 5, 1999, adopted September, 1999. Revised September 25, 2000 and reaffirmed August 14, 2001 and October 26, 2004

Barton County Community College is committed to quality education and to the assessment of student learning for the purpose of improving students' academic experiences at the course, program and institutional levels.

The Outcomes Assessment Committee supports the College's goals of providing high quality, continually improved education that meets the needs of its students. Thus, the assessment of student learning and academic achievement at Barton

1. serves primarily to improve student learning and development;
2. is comprehensive and is based upon the educational values reflected in the mission of the College;
3. involves a variety of assessment methods;
4. is a formative, continuous process driven by the sharing of assessment results for the purpose of institution-wide improvement;
5. confirms the attainment of students' goals and objectives for all of their courses, programs, and degrees;
6. measures both the outcomes and the experiences that lead to those outcomes;
7. is an integral part of the College culture;
8. is supported through on-going training and budgeting process.²

Over the past four years, the College's Outcomes Assessment Committee has written several assessment plans (dated 2002-2005, 2003-04 and 2004-05). During that period, the plans were presented to members of the faculty during professional development meetings and distributed to all members of the faculty in the College's Faculty Handbook, 2002. They are now posted on the College website³. The evolution of these plans clearly demonstrates an increased understanding of assessment of student learning. The latest plan is significantly simplified and more focused than its predecessors. It focuses explicitly on the levels of assessment of student learning, differentiating between the five levels at which assessment of student learning can occur. Specifically, these include the following: (1) class, (2) course, (3) program (department), (4) degree, and (5) institutional.

Typically, five evaluative questions, suggested by the Higher Learning Commission, a commission of the North Central Association (HLC-NCA), frame the evaluation of an institutional assessment plan. These questions and the College's responses follow.

² Proposed August 5, 1999. Adopted September, 1999. Reaffirmed September 25, 2000, August 14, 2001, and revised October 26, 2004

³ <http://www.bartonccc.edu/learningandinstruction/plans.htm>

To what extent has the institution demonstrated that the plan is linked to the mission, goals, and objectives of the institution for student learning and academic achievement, including learning in general education and in the major?

- The College's Assessment plans have always stressed the importance of the connection between the College's mission statement and assessment efforts (Appendix 1). The Roles and Responsibilities document (Appendix 2), adopted by the OAC states that it is the responsibility of the Dean of Learning and Instruction (DLI) to "Ensure that the Assessment Plans support the College's Mission, Linking Themes, and Ends' Statements."
- The Linking Themes were originally proposed by the OAC and later adopted by the Barton Board of Trustees.
- A subcommittee of the College's OAC attended the AAHE/NCA Workshop in Omaha, Nebraska in June 2003 in order to respond to the HLC-NCA recommendation to "simplify" the College's Assessment Plan. The team's project mentor, Dr. Gail Mee, reminded participants that assessment of student learning at the degree and program level must reflect the essential mission of the institution; specifically, for community colleges.

What is the institution's evidence that faculty have participated in the development of the institution's plan and that the plan is institution-wide in its conceptualization and structure?

- The OAC membership includes faculty, administration, and instructional staff employees. It is co-chaired by a member of the faculty and a member of the administration. Representatives from both campuses (Ft. Riley and Barton County) sit on the Committee. Membership consists of representation from the College's academic, vocational, and developmental disciplines as well as off-campus and online delivery programs and student support services.
- The assessment program reflects the efforts of faculty members from specific curricular disciplines who have designed and authored assessment plans to address student learning at the class, course, and program levels. Members of the faculty have been directly involved in the training of off-campus and associate faculty and recommending professional development activities designed to address and improve assessment of student learning activities.
- Further, the OAC has been responsible for the implementation of Assessment Day activities and the development of assessment instruments, training for assessment administration, as well as scoring and evaluating the results.
- At the degree-level, faculty developed instruments to assess student learning in the areas of math, writing, reading, humanities, social science and ethics/values. Generally, faculty in the above disciplines participated in the development of instruments and scoring guidelines, including answer keys and rubrics. Currently, a faculty sub-team of the OAC is working on the development of a degree-level assessment plan. The sub-team is charged with presenting three options to faculty for assessing student-learning at the degree level. Faculty approval and instrument development are planned for spring/summer 2005 with piloting in 2005-06.

How does the plan demonstrate the likelihood that the assessment program will lead to institutional improvement when it is implemented?

- The current assessment program intentionally includes feedback loops to ensure that the assessment of student learning will result in institutional improvement.
- The faculty at all locations have been closely involved in the assessment of student learning on a classroom level and have documented their assessment activities and the resultant curricular improvements.
- Course-level assessment is ongoing and data collected this year will result in faculty driven curricular improvements.
- At the program level, data have already resulted in increased tutoring and expanded assessment.
- A faculty sub-team of the OAC is currently working on the development of a degree-level assessment plan. The sub-team is charged with ensuring that feedback loops for the sharing of assessment results, benchmarks for comparing student performance, and processes by which curricular and/or instructional improvements can be made and tracked are built into the degree-level plan.
- At the institutional level, Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)⁴ results have been discussed at the All-Faculty meeting held in fall 2004, and a curricular mapping survey has been completed. In addition, the 2004-05 Annual Plan (Appendix 5) includes the incorporation of assessment-related Board of Trustees Monitoring Reports and the exploration of methods for measuring the College's Mission, Linking Themes, and Ends' Statements.

Is the timeline for the assessment program appropriate? Realistic?

- Members of the OAC concede that original assessment plans were more ambitious and complex than necessary. Specific HLC-NCA recommendations to "simplify" and "improve the focus" of the Assessment Plan resulted in considerable conversation and effort among OAC members and faculty members in general. The assessment plan has "purposefully narrowed the scope of activities" to a limited number of assessment goals. These revisions include timelines for assessment implementation that are both realistic and appropriate.
- The College now has assessment coordinators to direct the process.
- The Office of Institutional Research assists committee members and faculty members with support for assessment activities (by refining and/or piloting assessment instruments, developing scoring strategies, collecting data, etc.) while the Office of Learning and Instruction manages the support systems necessary to implement the assessment program.
- Future assessment activities will continue to involve both the Barton County and the Fort Riley campuses, as well as other non-traditional, online, and off-campus delivery venues.
- Timelines for most assessment activities are flexible, allowing time for reflection and re-creation

⁴ <http://www.ccsse.org/>

What is the evidence that the plan provides for appropriate administration of the assessment process?

- Currently, Assessment Coordinators located at the Fort Riley and Barton County campuses support the ongoing management of assessment activities.
- Since the HLC-NCA Site Visit in 2002, the Dean of Learning and Instruction has taken a more proactive role in the administration of Barton's assessment program, including setting goals and timelines and authoring the annual plans and reports.
- Since May 2004, as part of a Task Force on Instructional Organization, teams have been meeting to develop a new organizational structure for Instruction at Barton. These teams were charged by the President to propose a new structure that would help the College to move towards a "one College" system as recommended by the HLC-NCA Site Evaluators. The process is not complete, but each of the plans includes either an Assessment Coordinator or an Associate Dean whose primary responsibility is assessment. The Charter for this task force is found in Appendix 3. Further, on August 9, 2004, Barton President Dr. Veldon Law issued to the College community his vision for "one-college," thereby laying the foundation for Barton employees' efforts in this regard. A copy of this declaration is found in Appendix 4.
- The College has invested significant resources to date to support assessment activities. This has included the following:
 - stipends for faculty members to serve as Assessment Liaisons (2001-02),
 - a variety of workshop/conference and professional development activities held over the past four years,
 - consultative services for the development of departmental assessment plans (2001-02),
 - the purchase of CCSSE survey participation (spring, 2003),
 - professional development activities for both full – and part-time faculty members (summer, 2002) and the development of an assessment training video (spring, 2003),
 - the establishment of a budget provided resources to support on-going assessment activities (summer, 2003).
- The former Director of Institutional Research recently resigned to return to the classroom; however, remaining IR Office staff continue to assist faculty and the OAC with assessment-related research. A new Coordinator of Instructional Research position has been approved to assist faculty and the OAC with assessment- and other instructionally-related research projects. It is expected that this position will be filled early in spring 2005.

Progress Since the Higher Learning Commission Site-Team Visit

Barton County Community College was aware of the need to revise its assessment program prior to the HLC-NCA Site-Team visit. As part of that visit, the College's Self Study Team requested that the evaluator/consultants pay special attention to assessment. Since that time, assessment of student learning at Barton County Community College has progressed in many ways. Perhaps the most important is a deeper understanding, for those involved, of the levels of assessment and the various ways data can be gathered. The College has maintained its strategies for both classroom assessment and program assessment and has begun to implement course-level assessment. Institutional assessment has been ongoing at Barton for many years. Students have been surveyed and a considerable amount of data are collected annually in the form of monitoring reports. However, feedback loops that lead to recommendations for institutional and curricular improvements have yet to be established.

To clarify the College's Assessment Program, several documents have been created. In addition to the Annual Plans for 2003-04⁵ and 2004-05 (Appendix 5), a Five-Year Strategic Plan (Appendix 6), and Annual Assessment Calendar (Appendix 7) serve to guide Barton faculty and administration as well as the Outcomes Assessment Committee and Course Assessment Project (CAP) Course Coordinators.

PROGRESS OF THE FIVE LEVELS OF ASSESSMENT

A brief overview of each assessment level follows. A detailed description of the progress made at each level of assessment follows later in this document, including any relevant data.

Class

Instructors use class-level assessment to monitor the day-to-day learning of their students. Most faculty members have been trained in the use of Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs) using a variety of methods, including workshops and training materials developed in-house.

⁵ <http://www.bartonccc.edu/learningandinstruction/documents/collegeassessmentplan03.pdf>

Faculty at both campuses and associate faculty who teach at night and in outreach sites are involved in class-level assessment.

For the 2004-05 academic year, instructors were also asked to include on their form how they closed the loop and used the data to improve learning. Data showing CAT use over the last two years are included in Appendix 8, along with a sample reporting form (Appendix 9). The data demonstrate that the documented number of faculty using CATs has increased at all venues. It also shows that faculty have embraced this method of improving student learning.

Course

The most significant progress since the HLC-NCA Site-Team Visit has been made in the area of course assessment. In fall 2003, ten courses were chosen for the Course-level Assessment Project (CAP) with ten additional courses chosen in spring 2004. Initial plans called for the faculty who teach these courses to align their syllabi, to determine how they would assess student learning, and to develop an instrument which would be used in all sections of the course during spring 2004. These discussions, facilitated by Course Coordinators (course faculty members) involved faculty at each campus, as well as outreach and night faculty. The meetings have not always been harmonious, but the resulting increase in understanding has been important. There has been considerable debate over common course competencies. In the summer of 2004, president Dr. Veldon Law advocated the adoption of common course competencies (Appendix 10), beginning with course outcomes and competencies developed by discipline-specific faculty groups for the State Core Outcomes Project⁶.

Program

The Career and Technical Division (CTE) has developed an assessment plan for program/department assessment. Over a two-year cycle, the plan targets students enrolled in vocational courses and/or programs. This plan uses two nationally-normed tests: Wonderlic and WorkKeys. Each program has set benchmarks for its students; data collected during the 2003-04 academic year are found in Appendix 11. In addition to the standardized tests, CTE faculty

⁶ http://www.kansasregents.org/download/aca_affairs/core2003.pdf

members have developed in-house instruments to assess student learning specific to their programs.

The CTE assessment plan features built-in feedback loops as well as intervention strategies to effect improvement in individual student learning. Using an “assessment day” to manage the administration of the various assessment instruments, the CTE division has collected data each semester since fall 2003.

Degree

Degree-level assessment is the last level to reach maturity at Barton. Different approaches have been tried, including Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) and assessment instruments developed in-house. The College has adopted seven fundamental outcomes and 39 specific outcomes Appendix 12. Assessment tools developed in-house were designed to test student achievement for some of the seven fundamental outcomes, including analytical skills, writing, reading and critical thinking. Subject areas assessed included Social Sciences, Fine Arts, and Values and Ethics. As a result of the assessment, Initial Action Plans were produced. The plans for Social and Behavioral Science, Mathematics and Associate of Arts Degree Assessment are included in Appendix 13. The Initial Action Plans laid out a timeline for the faculty to produce a basic plan for assessment in their area. In 2004-05, the Associate of Arts Degree and/or Transfer Degree Assessment Plan will be fully developed for piloting in Fall 2005.

Institutional

The fifth level of assessment involves assessment of the institution as a whole. This is being achieved in a variety of ways using national surveys and in-house data gathering.

- Levels of Implementation – this is an annual survey completed by employees of the College. Its purpose is to measure the climate of assessment at the College.
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was administered to a sample of students at the Barton County Campus, the Fort Riley Campus and some Outreach Sites.
- Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) data have been collected for several years including spring 2004. Longitudinal data from 1998 to 2002 are found in Appendix 14. In spring 2003, CCSSE data were collected. SSI and the CCSSE surveys are administered in alternate years.
- The institution collects data for a variety of internal monitoring reports on an annual basis. Data from these reports have been shared with the Board of Trustees, but little effort has been made to share the information with other constituents of the College. Board of Trustees’ monitoring reports contain many elements that will be part of both degree and

institutional assessment, including the results of surveys, placement data, student success, etc. In 2004-05 these reports will be reviewed by the OAC.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The final advance made since the HLC-NCA Site-Team visit is the creation of a strategic plan. In spring 2004, a sub-team of the OAC developed a Five-Year Strategic Assessment Plan which the OAC approved in the fall of 2004 (Appendix 6). This plan addresses all five levels of assessment, including feedback loops that will result in curricular improvements and enhanced student learning. Included with the Strategic Plan are flowcharts for each of the levels of assessment (Appendix 15).

HLC-NCA COMMENTS AND CONCERNS AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

Barton County Community College completed its accreditation visit in October 2002. Following the visit, visiting team members provided the College with a report that reflected the team’s findings. The College, under the direction of the DLI and the OAC, has made diligent efforts to address the concerns expressed in that report. The progress is set forth in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1 Assessment Concerns Extracted from the Site Evaluators’ Report

Concerns	Response
<p>The College has made commendable progress over the previous two years in developing a plan to assess student learning; however, the current structure of the OAC may not be sustainable. In the 2000-01 academic years, nine faculty were given release time to serve as assessment liaisons; however, these positions are no longer in place.</p>	<p>With the adoption of the 2003-04 Annual Assessment Plan, “course coordinator” positions were created and authorized to begin the process of designing assessment plans at the course level. Ten courses were selected for the fall 2003 with 10 new courses added in spring 2004. Initially, these positions were uncompensated; however, for the 2004-05 plan year, the Dean of Learning and Instruction (DLI), together with the Outcomes Assessment Committee, has proposed release-time or paid compensation for future course coordinators.</p>
<p>Currently, the faculty leaders on the OAC are full-time faculty with full-time (or more) teaching loads.... Meetings with the OAC confirm that faculty leaders are feeling overwhelmed and need assistance in further developing and implementing the plan. In addition, the assessment plan (p. 12) describes a support position for assessment whose responsibility it is to facilitate improved communications across campus. This position is not currently staffed.</p>	<p>Beginning with the 2003-04 academic year, the faculty contracts for the two leaders/facilitators of the Outcomes Assessment Committee were split between 60% instruction and 40% assessment. Further, neither of the faculty leaders was asked to teach additional (overload) classes.</p>
<p>The senior academic leadership currently provides the support that is requested by the OAC. <i>The Handbook for Accreditation, 2nd Edition</i> states that senior executive officers will provide leadership and support for assessment (p. 53) and that there should be an individual, either administrator or coordinator, that is held responsible for the oversight of the</p>	<p>Following the HLC-NCA Site Visit, the Dean of Learning and Instruction worked closely with the College’s President, President’s Staff, and Planning Implementation Council (PIC) to clarify the relationships between the leadership roles being assumed by the Dean, the Outcomes Assessment Committee Co-Facilitators, and</p>

Concerns	Response
<p>institution's academic assessment program (p. 44). It was not clear to the team that on-going leadership was being provided by the academic leadership team or that there was a single person held accountable.</p>	<p>the Outcomes Assessment Committee itself. The result of these consultations is included in the 2003-2004 Assessment Plan, <i>Implementation: Roles, Responsibilities, and Timelines</i>. The 2004-2005 Assessment Plan contains a revised section of <i>Roles and Responsibilities</i> (Appendix 2).</p>
<p>The College is in the beginning stages of assessment. Although some departments have made progress, others are still in the planning states. Assessment lacks consistency and coordination across the district (referred to in this document as "one-college.") In fact, the team sees no sustained commitment since the last visit. Although individual faculty members have taken responsibility for assessment, there is little evidence of student involvement or administrative guidance and organization to provide a sense of shared responsibility across the curriculum to ensure quality as a way of life.</p>	<p>Since the HLC-NCA Site Team Visit, Barton faculty have become more involved in assessment efforts at the four lower levels. Appendix 16 demonstrates the percentage of faculty who have participated in classroom-, course-, program-, and degree-level assessment since the HLC-NCA Site Team visit. In addition, Barton's administration has become more involved in guiding the College's assessment efforts. Evidence includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dean of Learning and Instruction authoring the annual assessment plans (Appendix 5) • The inclusion of assessment initiatives in the Planning Implementation Council's 2003-04 Strategic Plan - Goal 3.2 (Appendix 17) • Revision of Learning and Instruction Curriculum Committee's and the Outcomes Assessment Committee's charters to clarify the link between the two teams (Appendix 18) • The College's President charge to the Dean of Learning and Instruction to make a recommendation regarding the assessment of course outcomes or competencies • The College President's subsequent determination that all sections of any course should follow the same core competencies (Appendix 10) • The College President's statement of an institutional position on the issue of course competencies (Appendix 10) • Attendance by a team of Fort Riley and Barton County campus faculty and administration, including the Dean of Learning and Instruction, to the AAHE/NCA 2003 Summer Assessment Workshop in Omaha

Concerns	Response
<p>Assessment at the Ft. Riley campus, at the Great Bend Campus, at the outreach sites, and in the various distance learning, courses are [sic] neither consistent nor coordinated; as a result, the report of the assessment committee does not provide meaningful, predictable data to effect changes for instructional improvement as an institutional prerogative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several recent assessment initiatives have been designed specifically to address the disconnection between assessment at the Barton County and Fort Riley campuses as well as Barton’s Outreach sites. • A Fort Riley faculty member now serves as one of the two assessment coordinators. • Two Fort Riley faculty members and one administrator now serve on the Committee. • At the course-level, all instructors who teach a course chosen for the Course Assessment Project have been invited to participate. In addition to the 38 Barton County faculty members who have participated in the project, 18 Extended Learning Programs faculty, 29 Fort Riley faculty, and 2 evening associate faculty have participated in the project to date. Course Coordinators for the project have been chosen from among the ranks of full-time and associate faculty at the Barton County and Fort Riley Campuses. In part, project participants are responsible for aligning course outcomes and competencies so that meaningful, predictable data may be gathered. • At the classroom level, all faculty, regardless of location or mode of instruction, are asked to submit documentation of Classroom Assessment Techniques (CAT) administered in their classes. Based on the results of their CATs, they are also asked to report on subsequent efforts to effect improved student learning. During the 2003-04 academic year, faculty submitting CATs included 48 full-time and 14 associate Barton County faculty, 103 Community Education associate faculty, 12 full-time and 6 associate Fort Riley faculty. • As the HLC-NCA Site Team noted throughout their report, Barton County Community College suffers from a lack of coordination and consistency with many of its instructional issues. To address those challenges, Barton president Dr. Veldon Law established a task force to

Concerns	Response
	<p>redesign the College's instructional organization. Members of the Instructional Organization Task Force (IOTF) have submitted three distinct plans for creating a one-college instructional infrastructure. Faculty from both campuses will review these plans in late fall 2004. A summary of the IOTF's efforts are described in Appendix 20. The Task Force's Charter is found in Appendix 3.</p>
<p>The assessment plan for Ft. Riley appears to have been developed independently of the plan on the Great Bend campus, and there does not appear to be any provisions in the current plan for including assessment of student learning for those students enrolled in BartOnline. It was not clear to the team how the assessment of students in online programs figures into the overall assessment plans beyond the scope of classroom assessment.</p>	<p>At the course level, online instructors in the EduKan program are using Course Competency Profile sheets to document student learning and subsequent improvements to curriculum and/or instruction. Once Barton faculty have aligned their syllabi, all course instructors, including those who teach within the BartOnline (BOL) program, will document learning at the course level. During the 2005-06 Academic year, faculty will explore ways to accomplish this task, with the completion of Course Competency Profile sheets being one option. If adopted, Course Competency Profile sheets could be tied to Barton's General Education Outcomes, making it possible for BartOnline instructors to participate in degree-level assessment as well. A sample Course Competency Profile sheet is included in Appendix 31. The section describing Course Level Assessment begins on page 22.</p>
<p>Without clearly identifying student learning initiatives in the Strategic Plan, and tying responsibility for the success of those initiatives to the academic administration of the College, Barton may have difficulty embedding a culture of assessment of student learning throughout the institution.</p>	<p>Assessment of Student Learning has become part of the Planning Implementation Council's (PIC) planning grid (Appendix 17), as well as an annual monitoring report given to the Board of Trustees (Appendix 21). PIC's planning grid names the Dean of Learning and Instruction as the administrator with primary responsibility for the success of Barton's assessment program.</p>
<p>Although 39 specific outcomes are identified in the general education outcome areas, it is not clear how the College plans to assess each</p>	<p>The 2004-05 Annual Plan proposes to design a Degree-Level Assessment Plan that will incorporate assessment of student</p>

Concerns	Response
of the outcomes at an aggregate level.	learning of the General Education Outcome Areas (Appendices 5 and 12).
<p>The biggest challenge to the institution will be in the area of Shared Responsibility-Students, an area in which the institution rates itself as demonstrating a pattern of characteristics consistent with Level 1.</p>	<p>During the 2003-04 academic year, the Outcomes Assessment Committee (OAC) was successful in having consistent student representation at Committee functions. In 2003-04, two students, one traditional and one non-traditional, regularly attended meetings, provided input, and reported to the student body about assessment activities. Both students wrote for the student newspaper, <u>The Interrobang?</u>. Because of their association with the paper, assessment news was regularly reported (Appendix 22). For 2004-05, one of these students has continued her role as student representative; a non-traditional student from Fort Riley will join the Committee in December 2004.</p> <p>During spring 2005, Outcomes Assessment Committee will draft assessment questions to be added to the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) instrument completed by Barton students. These questions will be submitted to the Learning, Instruction, and Curriculum Committee and the Faculty Council for approval prior to administration of the survey in late spring 2005.</p>
<p>In informal interviews with faculty and staff, the Team did not perceive a clear, cohesive connection among the OAC, the L&I Integrity (Curriculum) committee, and the L&I Instructional Staff (meetings). As a result, assessment efforts lack coordination and direction.</p> <p>Note: L&I Integrity Committee is now called Learning, Instruction, and Curriculum Committee (LICC).</p>	<p>Team charters for the Outcomes Assessment Committee and the Learning, Instruction, and Curriculum Committee have been revised to clarify the relationship between the two teams (Appendix 18). Additionally, regular joint meetings of the two committees have been scheduled for the 2004-05 academic year, with the first joint meeting held 26 August 2004. The associate deans serve as ex-officio members of both LICC and OAC and also meet regularly as instructional staff. Additionally, one of the Assessment Coordinators has been appointed to lead the Syllabus Content Review Subteam of the Learning, Instruction and Curriculum Committee.</p>
The institution must develop and sustain a	The Dean of Learning and Instruction,

Concerns	Response
coordinated, consistent, manageable, and meaningful assessment plan.	working with the members of the Outcomes Assessment Committee, has written an Annual Plan that clarifies the levels of assessment and simplifies the processes by which assessment is conducted and resultant improvements are documented (Appendix 5). In addition, the Five-Year Strategic Assessment Plan lays out the future goals, related tasks, and flexible timeline for developing, implementing, and improving assessment plans at the five levels (Appendix 6).

In addition to the concerns cited by HCL-NCA as a result of their site visit, the Site Team’s report listed a number of challenges and conditions which the College must meet to fulfill its accreditation requirements. The College has made the following progress in addressing these items as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 Challenges and Conditions

Challenge/Condition	Evidence
Provide human and financial resources to sustain guidance for <i>coordinating and simplifying the assessment plan</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding for attendance at the AAHE/NCA Summer 2003 Assessment Workshop ▪ Establishment of an assessment budget in 2003-04 (Appendix 23) ▪ Funding Assessment Coordinator positions whose responsibilities are split 60% teaching duties, 40% assessment duties ▪ Increased involvement by the Dean of Learning and Instruction in assessment-related work ▪ Strengthened connection between the Outcomes Assessment Committee (OAC) and the Learning, Instruction, and Curriculum Committee (LICC)
Conduct consistent and manageable assessment of student learning across the district (sic), regardless of location and modality of instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inclusion of Associate Faculty from the College’s Outreach, College Advantage, ITV, and Evening Programs and Fort Riley full-time and associate faculty in class- and course-level assessment conversations and activities ▪ Barton representation on the EduKan

Challenge/Condition	Evidence
	<p>Assessment Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessment Co-Coordinator located at Fort Riley ▪ Increased Fort Riley representation on both the Outcomes Assessment Committee and the Learning, Instruction, and Curriculum Committee, including the assistant director of BartOnline (Barton's online delivery component)
<p>Demonstrate understanding of levels of assessment, including course, general education, degree programs/certificates, and institutional levels and establish specific corresponding benchmarks for acceptable levels of performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simplification of the 2003-04 and 2004-05 Annual Plans ▪ Creation of a Five-year Strategic Plan that delineates assessment at the five defined levels of student learning ▪ An Assessment Calendar that frames the timing of assessment activities ▪ Increased faculty participation at all levels and venues ▪ Setting of benchmarks at the class-, course-, and program-levels ▪ 2004-05 plans to define benchmarks for degree- and institution-levels
<p>As data become available, demonstrate use of that data to improve subsequent instruction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On CAT forms submitted for 2003-04, instructors reported changes made as a result of using the CAT (Appendices 8 and 9) ▪ Course-level assessment projects from 2003-04 are currently under review. In some cases, course faculty will be revising the assessment instruments; in others, data have resulted in an increased emphasis on a particular competency in the course presentations (College Algebra). Other changes are discussed in detail in the Course-Level section beginning on page 22. ▪ At the program level, review of data from Wonderlic and WorkKeys resulted in the implementation of tutoring in math and reading using Keytrain software. ▪ Degree-level assessment has been conducted, and faculty have reviewed results. Faculty are now focusing on refining the scope and methodology for assessing student learning at the degree level. ▪ CSSEE data was collected in spring 2003 (Appendix 25)

Challenge/Condition	Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ CCSSE results were discussed by faculty from all venues on September 10, 2004 at the All-faculty meeting – as a result a curricular mapping survey has been administered (Appendices 25 and 26).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE LEVELS OF ASSESSMENT

Class-Level Assessment

The mission statement of the College expresses a commitment to putting learners and learning first in all matters concerning the operation of the College (Appendix 1). Whether the course is delivered electronically or in more traditional classrooms, the learning process begins in the environment in which course material is presented. If question guiding assessment at Barton County Community College is "As a result of their educational experiences here, to what degree have students learned what we expect them to learn?" then the assessment process should begin at the classroom level and focus on classroom assessment and its results as the foundation of that process.

Conducted by the individual instructor in his/her classroom, class-level assessment activities are purposefully designed to take a "snapshot" of student learning. Instead of attempting to measure his students' learning of an entire course's content, the instructor gathers information about his students' learning of a skill, concept, learning unit, lecture, reading assignment, or other short-term lesson. The assessment activity is the choice of the instructor, selected to assess the particular learning outcome he/she has identified. The assessment device may be of the instructor's own creation or one suggested by the course textbook or by a colleague.

Since the fall of 2001, Barton faculty have been encouraged to incorporate Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs) into their instructional delivery. Relying on the work of Thomas Angelo and Patricia Cross, the Outcomes Assessment Committee has offered numerous training opportunities for learning about CATs. A copy of Cross and Angelo's handbook, Classroom Assessment Techniques is available in faculty office complexes at both campuses with additional copies located in the library, the Office of Learning and Instruction, and at Outreach sites.

Aside from the benefits to the individual instructor, the process of classroom assessment engenders changes within the culture of the College. When conducted regularly, CATs provide individual instructors with a wealth of meaningful information about their students' learning. Furthermore, information gleaned from CATs may be used to effect real-time adjustments designed to improve student learning. For many faculty, CATs provide an

introduction to the nature of assessment, laying the foundation for understanding assessment in the broader perspective. As Barton’s assessment efforts evolve and become more sophisticated and engrained, the faculty’s work with classroom assessment will undergird future initiatives at the course, program and degree levels.

In the summer of 2002, the Outcomes Assessment Committee and the Community Education Division sponsored a series of workshops for Outreach associate faculty. Intended to acquaint Outreach faculty with the Barton’s assessment initiatives and to provide some practical knowledge of CATs, the workshops were well-received, with over 100 of approximately 166 Outreach faculty attending. Subsequently, the Outcomes Assessment Committee created a training video and handouts to acquaint all faculty with Barton’s assessment program, with particular emphasis on class-level assessment (Appendix 27). These materials have been incorporated into new-faculty orientation and are used for continuing training of veteran faculty. To date, 100% of Outreach faculty have received class-level/CAT training.

Outreach, College Advantage, and evening associate faculty have actively participated in the documentation of their CAT activities. The Associate Dean of Community Education has diligently communicated with these faculty, providing substantive feedback on their CAT reports, sending out reminders, offering assistance and reassurance when needed, and connecting them with full-time faculty for discipline-specific support. With the encouragement and assistance of Fort Riley’s Assessment Coordinator, faculty from the Fort began submitting documentation of CATs in the spring of 2004. Overall, documentation of class-level assessment increased significantly from 2002-03 to 2003-2004 academic year, as evidenced by Table 3.

Table 3 Percentage of Faculty Participation – Class Level Assessment

	Barton Campus Full Time	Barton Campus Part Time	Community Education	Fort Riley Full Time	Fort Riley Part Time
2002-03	81.13 %	20.6 %*	42 %	0 %	0 %
2003-04	94.02 %	28.3 %	69 %	60 %*	20 %*

*Percentages are approximate

Classroom Assessment Techniques are considered formative assessment measures. As such, information derived from classroom assessment is to be used only by the instructor to improve learning as she/he sees fit. The CAT report provides documentation that assessment

was done, not whether it meets a standard. In 2003-04, associate deans began to document changes to instruction and/or curriculum that faculty have made to improve student performance.

Beginning with the fall of 2002 semester and every semester thereafter, each faculty member (associate and full-time) is asked to conduct and document at least one classroom assessment activity each semester.

Expected Actions

- Faculty members are asked to conduct that classroom assessment early enough in the semester to be able to effect improvements and to informally share the results with students, as appropriate.
- Faculty members are urged to discuss results of the classroom assessments and subsequent improvements with colleagues as a means to collectively improve student performance.
- Faculty members are expected to submit a CAT Report (Appendix 9) for at least one classroom assessment activity each semester (fall/spring/summer) to their associate dean, program coordinator, or person responsible for gathering assessment in their area.

Course-Level Assessment

Course-level assessment involves measuring student learning as it occurs within the context of outcomes and competencies of individual courses. While this assessment naturally takes place within individual departments, programs or disciplines, there is a need for increased communication between faculty at the Barton County and Fort Riley campuses as well as those teaching in the Outreach, evening, and online programs.

As the HLC-NCA Site team noted in their Comprehensive Evaluation Visit Report, “Assessment at the Fort Riley campus, at the Barton County campus, and at the outreach sites, and in the various distance learning courses are neither consistent nor coordinated.” In fact, the Site Team made numerous references to Barton’s need to unify its programs, working toward becoming “one district” or “one College.” Following the Summer 2003 AAHE/NCA Summer Workshop, the Dean of Learning and Instruction and the Outcomes Assessment Committee set about designing a project that would allow faculty to discover whether (and to what degree) their students were mastering the course content. With Barton’s two campuses being separated by distance, such a project would also need an infrastructure by which faculty

from Barton's many teaching venues could communicate, sharing experiences, expertise, and philosophies, thereby becoming, in essence, one-district. ITV technology has enhanced the infrastructure needed for the Course Assessment Project, allowing participating faculty to meet without losing valuable time traveling between the two campuses.

Thus, in the fall of 2003, ten courses were selected to begin the process of designing a common assessment instrument. In order to create a common assessment instrument, course faculty were first asked to reach consensus on the course description and outcomes. Only after the course faculty had reached this consensus could the work of creating a common assessment instrument begin. The Associate Deans selected the first ten courses piloted in fall 2003, using as the primary selection criterion general education courses offered at multiple venues. These courses are listed in Table 4, along with the particular method that the faculty chose to use for assessing student learning of the course outcomes and each project's current status.

After selecting the pilot CAP courses, the Associate Deans designated Course Coordinators from among the active pool of full-time and associate course instructors at both the Fort Riley and Barton County campuses. Course Coordinators were responsible for facilitating discussions regarding the course descriptions and outcomes, gaining consensus, and facilitating the creation of the common assessment instrument. Course faculty were free to design an instrument that would provide them with information about their students' attainment of the course outcomes.

Intended to serve primarily as a communication conduit between faculty, administration, and the Outcomes Assessment Committee, the Course Coordinator position has become the lynchpin of course assessment at Barton. The position was initially conceived to be short-term, lasting at most two semesters until the course faculty had developed the course assessment instrument, piloted it, and made preliminary adjustments to the instrument, curriculum and/or instruction. Originally, the Course Coordinators' responsibilities included only scheduling meetings, facilitating discussions, and communicating with course colleagues. As the project has progressed, the Course Coordinators have become responsible for a myriad of tasks related to the creation, administration, and evaluation of the assessment instrument as well as the analysis, dissemination, and understanding of assessment results. Knowing that this position will continue to evolve, the Dean of Learning and Instruction and the Assessment

Co-Coordinator have formally requested the allocation of financial and work-load resources in the form of compensation and/or release time and training to be committed to those assuming the duties of Course Coordinator.

All of the fall 2003 courses have completed the initial phase of their work; all have piloted their assessment instrument in at least one section of the course. Depending on the results of their pilots, the course groups are refining their instruments, preparing to administer the instrument to multiple sections, or analyzing data to determine what, if any curricular and/or instructional changes are needed.

In the spring of 2004, ten additional courses were selected to begin the course assessment project. These are listed below in Table 4 with their assessment instruments and current status.

Table 4 Summary of Course Assessment Project 2003-04

Fall 2003 Courses	Assessment Instrument Chosen	Project Status
College Algebra	Common Final	2, 3, 7, 10, 12
English Composition II	Pre/post test	2, 6, 7
General Psychology	Pre/post test	2, 7, 9, 12
Introduction to Philosophy	Pre/post test	2, 3, 8, 9
Introduction to Sociology	Pre/post test	2, 7, 10, 11
Microcomputer Repair/Upgrade	Pre/post test	2, 8, 9
Spreadsheet Applications	Pre/post test	2, 3, 8, 10, 12
Website Construction	Common Final & Project/Performance	2, 5
Western Civilization to 1500	Essay	2, 5, 9
Word Processing	Pre/post test	2, 8, 10, 11

Spring 2004 Courses	Assessment Instrument Chosen	Project Status
Business Law	Pre/post test	2, 8, 9
English Composition I	Essay	1
General Accounting	Pre/post test	2, 5, 6, 10, 12
Income Tax Preparations	Pre/post test	2, 3, 6
Introduction to Music	Pre/post test	2, 7, 9
Medical Terminology	Common Final	2, 3, 5
Physical Science	Embedded questions on the final	2, 3, 6, 7
Public Speaking	Speech	2, 3, 6, 7
World & Regional Geography	Pre/post test	2, 3, 7, 9, 11

Status Legend:

- 1 = Faculty in preliminary conversations
- 2 = Course Description/Outcomes aligned
- 3 = Course Competencies aligned
- 4 = Instrument in development
- 5 = Instrument developed and piloted
- 6 = Instrument being revised

- 7 = Instrument partially implemented
- 8 = Instrument fully implemented (all venues, including online)
- 9 = Data being analyzed
- 10 = Data analysis complete
- 11 = Faculty deciding on improvements
- 12 = Curricular/Instructional improvements being implemented

Overall, the Course Assessment Project has not progressed as quickly as initially planned. Those responsible for Barton's assessment program have learned that the nature and scope of the project demand time for faculty to meet, discuss philosophical and logistical differences, and reflect before consensus can be gained and the actual work of the project begun. The Strategic Plan (Appendix 6), as well as the 2004-05 Annual Assessment Plan, takes these factors into consideration. CAP has involved numerous individuals and departments, making communication essential to its success. To assist the Course Coordinators and course faculty, the Outcomes Assessment Committee has drafted a Course Assessment Project Flowchart (Appendix 15), Checklist and Timeline, Detailed Task List, and Guidelines for Communicating with Course Faculty (Appendix 28). (Upon final approval by the OAC, these documents will be shared with the Course Coordinators.)

As anticipated, the Course Assessment Project has brought several issues to the forefront. From the outset, the Project's focus was on assessing course outcomes. As the first ten groups began their work, the faculty began to realize that despite the fact that they taught the same course with the same outcomes, some covered the depth and breadth of course content differently. In other cases, the content itself varied significantly. These issues related not to course outcomes, but rather, to course competencies. Having made a commitment, at least for 2003-04, to assess outcomes, the Dean of Learning and Instruction and the Outcomes Assessment Committee decided not to make a mid-stream correction. This decision allowed CAP groups to finish their work of designing a common instrument that assessed course outcomes.

At the Barton County campus, full-time College Algebra faculty have involved Barton's day, evening, and Community Education associate faculty in the creation and administration of a common final since the spring of 2001. Data from this project can be found in Appendix 29. The data show individual competencies that were assessed by the final, along with aggregate data for the two general education outcomes IIA and IIC. Faculty involved with this project, both full-time and associate, have met regularly to discuss the data. Each instructor was provided with his or her individual statistics along with the composite data for all sections for College Algebra offered that semester. The faculty set the benchmark at 70% for individual competencies and then discussed overall student performance and brainstormed ideas for curricular/instructional changes.

With the success of this project, it was natural that College Algebra was selected as one of the ten original courses for the Course Assessment Project. However, the College Algebra Course Assessment Project exemplifies what has become known as “the great competency debate.” Under the project’s guidelines, the College Algebra course coordinator invited Fort Riley’s math faculty to participate in the conversations. Differences between the two campuses’ approaches to the course content (competencies) became immediately apparent; however, the faculty were able to reach consensus on an assessment instrument and administration guidelines that reflected reasonable compromises. Specifically, full-time and associate faculty would continue to administer the common final while Fort Riley faculty agreed to embed common final items into their existing post-test. After adopting the State core outcomes in fall 2004, all College Algebra faculty teaching in traditionally-delivered classes agreed to administer the common final. The College Algebra common final and an example of results are included in Appendix 29.

Faculty groups from other Course Assessment projects reported similar experiences. At the root of the debate are two different philosophies regarding the Barton syllabus. Fort Riley faculty have operated under the belief that as long as they follow the course outcomes, competencies remain the domain of the individual instructor. In contrast, faculty associated with the Barton County campus, including evening, Outreach and College Advantage associate faculty, believe that they are responsible for following not only the course outcomes but also the “core” competencies. Furthermore, they understand that additional course content beyond the core competencies are to be stated as “supplemental” competencies on the course syllabus.

With the competency debate threatening to become a polarizing issue for faculty at the two campuses, Barton’s President, Dr. Veldon Law, commissioned the Dean of Learning and Instruction, Dr. Gabelmann, to recommend a definitive position. Thus, Dr. Gabelmann surveyed community college deans across the state of Kansas, asking them 1) if their colleges filed a master syllabus for each course they offered, 2) if so, if faculty were expected to follow the outcomes and competencies stated on the master syllabus, and 3) if so, how the deans managed issues of academic freedom. All of the deans who responded reported that faculty were expected to follow both the outcomes and competencies on the

course syllabus. In addition, several noted that individual instructors were free to approach the course content with whatever instructional methods they preferred (Appendix 30).

In late spring 2004, following her research, Dr. Gabelmann recommended that all syllabi for a given course have common outcomes and competencies. Further, she charged the Learning, Instruction, and Curriculum Committee (LICC) with formalizing a syllabus format to be applied uniformly in all Barton courses. LICC approved a syllabus template which takes effect in January, 2005. The template requires common outcomes and core competencies while allowing for supplemental competencies.

Dr. Law followed the Dean’s recommendation by publicly advocating the adoption of the core outcomes and competencies developed by discipline-specific groups at the Kansas Core Outcomes meetings (Appendix 10). Clearly, Barton has been aided by the State’s college and university deans in its efforts to resolve the competency debate. Beginning in fall of 1999, the Kansas Council of Instructional Administrators initiated the Kansas Core Outcomes Project. The purpose of this project was “to develop core outcomes and competencies for general education courses at the state’s colleges and universities.”⁷ Since its inception, the project has grown to include twenty-four general education courses, twenty-three of which are offered at Barton. With the inclusion of four new courses for 2004-05, twelve of those twenty-three, highlighted in gray, will have participated in Barton’s Course Assessment Project.

Table 5 General Education Courses Involved in the Kansas Core Competency Project

Discipline	Barton Course(s)
Art	Art Appreciation
Biology	Principles of Biology
Chemistry	Chemistry I Chemistry II
Computer Science	MicroComputer Applications
English	English Composition I English Composition II
History	American History to 1877 American History 1877 to Present Western Civilization to 1500 Western Civilization 1500 to Present
Mathematics	Intermediate Algebra

⁷ http://www.kansasregents.org/download/aca_affairs/core2003.pdf (page 3)

Discipline	Barton Course(s)
	Intermediate and College Algebra College Algebra Trigonometry
Physical Science	Physical Science and lab
Psychology	General Psychology Developmental Psychology Abnormal Psychology
Sociology	Introduction to Sociology Marriage and Family Contemporary Social Problems
Speech	Public Speaking

In May of 2004, the Kansas Council of Instructional Administrators (KCIA) recommended that the Project focus its efforts on nine classes: American History, Chemistry, College Algebra, English Composition I and II, General Psychology, Introduction to Sociology, Principles of Biology, and Trigonometry. At the fall 2004 gathering of the State Core Outcomes groups, faculty who represent these disciplines reviewed and revised the course outcomes and competencies. Their recommendations will be forwarded to the state deans and posted on the Kansas Board of Regents web pages.

At the course level, the 2004-05 Annual Assessment Plan reflects a union of the State Core Competency Project and Dr. Law's directive to align common competencies for all courses. Faculty in nineteen of the twenty courses chosen in the 2003-04 academic year will continue their work on the project, first working to gain consensus on the core competencies. Refinement of the assessment instruments will follow. In addition to the nineteen courses already participating, American History, MicroComputer Applications, Principles of Biology, and Trigonometry have been added for 2004-05.

Expected Actions

- During the 2004-05 academic year, faculty who teach active courses will meet to discuss and to gain consensus on course descriptions, outcomes, and competencies.
- During the 2004-05 academic year, faculty involved in the Course Assessment Project will refine their assessment instruments to link directly to the agreed-upon course competencies.
- Where applicable, faculty involved in the Course Assessment Project will indicate how their assessment instruments link directly to the State's Core Competency Project.

- Course faculty involved in the Course Assessment Project will participate in course-level assessment activities, including attending course faculty meetings, administering assessments according to guidelines (pre-determined by course faculty), submitting appropriate documentation to the course coordinator, participating in the analysis of assessment results, and documenting changes in curriculum and/or instruction for the purposes of improving student learning.
- Course Coordinators will report assessment results and subsequent plans for modifying curriculum and/or instruction to the Outcomes Assessment Committee vis-à-vis the Learning and Instruction Curriculum Committee.
- EduKan faculty will continue using competency profile sheets such as the example in Appendix 31. Each faculty member documents student learning of the course content and describes plans for modifying curriculum and/or instruction to improve student performance.
- During the 2004-05 academic year, Barton faculty, working with the Outcomes Assessment Committee, will develop a uniform methodology for documenting student learning at the course level.
- During spring 2005, OAC and eCollege (Barton's online class delivery platform) representatives will meet to explore methods for administering CAP assessment instruments to online students enrolled in EduKan and BartOnline classes.
- During the 2005-06 academic year, course faculty are to collaboratively evaluate the validity and reliability of course assessment instruments.

Program-Level Assessment

Understanding that formal assessment of students is a crucial step in gaining feedback for improving instruction, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Division has made a conscientious effort to develop a division-wide assessment model to evaluate progress of students throughout their studies at Barton County Community College. Barton's CTE Division is committed to quality academic endeavors in teaching.

With the development of a College-wide assessment plan and the establishment of an "Assessment Day," instructors in various programs within the CTE Division started meeting during the summer of 2002 to develop the CTE Assessment Plan. These meetings were designed as brainstorming sessions to establish a comprehensive assessment model based on a four-semester vocational program within the CTE Division. (Two additional

semesters have been included in order to assess high school students enrolled in Barton’s vocational programs.) The CTE Division finalized and piloted its assessment plan in the fall 2002 semester and fully implemented it in fall 2003.

As outlined on the table below, the Career and Technical Division has set up its assessment plan on a semester by semester cycle:

Table 6 CTE Assessment Plan Cycles

Vocational Students-Semester	Name/Type of Assessment
High School-Fall	Wonderlic (Basic Skills: Verbal & Quantitative)
High School-Spring	Workkeys (Reading & Math)
Freshman Year: Fall	WorkKeys-department dependant (Pre)
Freshman Year: Spring	General Education Assessment Tool
Sophomore Year: Fall	Departmental Assessment
Sophomore Year: Spring	WorkKeys-department dependent (Post)

In the fall, high school students enrolled in vocational programs are given the Wonderlic assessment test, a nationally recognized assessment instrument that evaluates basic verbal and math skills. Freshman vocational students take two specific WorkKeys tests that are pre-determined to meet individual program needs. The tests are as follows:

Table 7 WorkKeys Tests by CTE Program

CTE Program	WorkKeys Test
Child Care & Guidance	Reading for Information and Applied Math
Criminal Justice	Reading for Information and Applied Math
Automotive Technology	Applied Math and Locating Information
Agriculture	Applied Math and Locating Information
Business Technologies Networking Specialist Accounting/Technical Accounting Office Technology Graphic Design Specialist	Reading for Information and Applied Math Applied Math and Locating Information Reading for Information and Applied Math Reading for Information and Applied Math

Sophomore vocational students take a department-specific assessment that includes topics related to their career path, such as ethics, writing, math, social studies and critical thinking. Vocational students enrolled in Agriculture, Automotive, Business, Child Care, Computer Science, Criminal Justice, Graphic Design, Office Technology, and Technical Accounting programs are assessed using these department-specific instruments.

The plan for the Business-Accounting program at Barton County is an example of the program plans that have been developed for each of these programs in the Career and

Technical Division. The plan includes the mission, program goals and expected outcomes for each student. The plan also details how each outcome is assessed using various assessment tools and the feedback loops that are either in place or will be implemented in spring 2005. The plan and associated documents are found in Appendix 32.

During spring semesters, high school students enrolled in vocational programs are given WorkKeys assessment tests in math and reading. They need to achieve the benchmark set by the “specific major” standard. Freshman vocational students participate in the general education assessment test. Sophomore vocational students are given two specific WorkKeys tests, pre-determined to meet individual program needs. These will serve as post-tests, the results of which will be compared to data collected their freshman year. These data will be used to ensure that vocational programs at Barton are providing the necessary instruction to help students meet industry standards. With the exception of the semesters in which WorkKeys pre- and post-tests are administered, students will be exposed to different assessment tools each semester.

By creating such a comprehensive assessment plan, the CTE Division has data from three assessment tools to analyze successful instruction and successful skill building.

1. WorkKeys pre-post test data show any gain in general job skills from the incoming freshman to the outgoing sophomore.
2. Departmental Assessments show gained knowledge in the specific career.
3. General Education Assessments show the level of the student learning in the areas of reading, math and writing.

Barton’s 2004-05 Annual Assessment Plan calls for the CTE Division to review their Assessment Plan for the purpose of ascertaining whether the instruments being used capture what faculty want to know about student learning at the program level. In addition, faculty are setting benchmarks for student learning and building feed-back loops into their department/program assessment plans. Benchmarks allow faculty to compare assessment results against a faculty-determined standard. Further, benchmarks inform faculty of areas that are in need of improvement. Similarly, building in feedback loops ensures that once assessment results have been evaluated, the resulting data are used to stimulate collegial conversations and to make data-driven decisions regarding curricular and instructional improvements.

Finally, two CTE programs, Nursing and Medical Laboratory Technician (MLT), have had assessment plans in place since the mid-1990's.

Nursing: Prospective nursing students are given the Nurse Entrance Test (NET) that assesses math, English, critical thinking, stressors, learning styles, reading ability and test taking ability. Students must score 64 or above before being accepted into the program. (50% is passing.) During their freshman year (fall semester), nursing students are given the Critical Thinking Test (pre-test) that shows five levels of critical thinking. The Practical Nursing exam is given at the end of their first year and the Graduate Nursing exam is given at the end of their second year. These exams help students prepare for and pass State Nursing Exams at LPN and RN levels. At the end of their second year they are again given the Critical Thinking Test (post-test).

MLT: First year MLT students are given Health Occupations Basic Entrance Test (HOBET) that evaluates essential math skills, reading for science textbooks, reading rate, critical thinking appraisal, test-taking skills, stress levels, social interaction profile and learning styles. Due to the nature of the online delivery of most MLT coursework, most MLT students cannot participate in location-based assessment activities. In the past, MLT students were given WorkKeys assessments in addition to HOBET. In 2003, however, MLT students began taking a certification exam simulation assessment. This industry-standard simulation test for Medical Laboratory Technicians is designed to prepare students for national certification.

A sample of assessment data collected by the MLT program is in Appendix 33. The referenced data compare Barton's MLT students' scores to the national norm (mean scale scores) for the Blood Bank subtest, one of the sub-disciplines of the national certification exam. In the case of the MLT program, results from this assessment are routinely shared with the MLT Advisory Committee and faculty for review and recommended improvements. The 2004-05 Assessment Plan calls for all CTE programs, including Nursing and MLT, to incorporate such feedback and reporting loops into their plans.

Changes since 2003 Implementation

- MLT changed from administering WorkKeys to administering a certification standard simulation test.
- Due to low math scores on Wonderlic – all departments administer the Math WorkKeys to assess math abilities of incoming freshmen (so that tutoring can be made available their second semester).
- CTE faculty reviewed departmental developed assessment tests.

Expected Actions

- Review Program/Department Assessment Plans for the following:
 - Assessment instrument(s) that yield meaningful, usable data;

- Existing data collection practices (ease of collection, centralization, evaluation methodology, usefulness);
- Discuss/review plan(s) for closing the loop (action plans for curricular/instructional improvement).
- Modify/create action plans, as needed.

Degree-Level Assessment

Although this level of assessment was the first Barton attempted to implement, degree-level assessment remains at the exploratory, developmental stage. Different approaches have been tried, including use of the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP), as well as assessment instruments developed in-house. The CAAP exam was piloted in spring of 2001 for possible adoption over the longer term. However, Barton faculty and the Outcomes Assessment Committee ultimately rejected the CAAP exam in favor of in-house developed instruments that were thought to better measure Barton expectations for students learning general education outcomes. Furthermore, when CAAP was piloted, students were extremely hesitant to commit to a test time, to show up, and to take the exam seriously, particularly since there was no graduation requirement in place to mandate students taking the CAAP exam.

Thus, faculty began the work of developing in-house instruments to assess Barton's general education outcomes. In fall of 2002, faculty from the Math, English, and Essential Skills (MEES) Division volunteered to create instruments to assess student learning in the realms of quantitative reasoning and reading/written communications. During Barton's first Assessment Day (September 17, 2002), math and English/reading assessments were administered to 443 students; 95 vocational students took the WorkKeys test. While the math and WorkKeys exams provided more immediate results and were less laborious to score, the scoring of artifacts from the writing assessment was more subjective, more challenging, and more time-consuming. Furthermore, because it was expected that in-house developed assessments would require adjustments for improvement to yield more meaningful results, faculty generally found initial result of degree-level assessment of relatively little value for recommending curricular and/or instructional improvements. The Outcomes Assessment Committee recognized that the initial work completed on degree-level assessment was done quite hastily and without thorough, systematic planning and development.

Nonetheless, believing that the creation of locally-developed instruments was the preferred alternative, Barton faculty continued their work on developing and refining general education assessment instruments and methods for administering those assessments. Writing and mathematics assessments again were administered during Assessment Day in spring 2003 (March 25, 2003) to a total of 531 students. As was true of the first Assessment Day activities in the previous semester, assessments in spring 2003 largely were limited to students at the Barton County Campus. The math assessment administered in spring 2003 was very similar to the one that had been used in fall 2002; however, the writing assignment was changed such that social science and fine arts faculty assisted with development of the instrument in an attempt to measure learning in their areas. Writing artifacts, however, also were used to again measure student skills in written communications. Finally, with Barton's third Assessment Day in fall 2003 (September 30, 2003), a much more refined writing instrument and rubric was developed and used to measure written communications skills. The instrument also attempted to assess student ethics and values as related to the topic of writing assignment – namely, an issue related to academic integrity. Although the mathematics assessment was not administered in fall 2003, the writing assessment initiative was broadened to include approximately 620 students, including some from the Fort Riley Campus and Outreach sites, as well as many from the Barton County Campus. For analysis of assessment results, the number of assessment artifacts from the fall 2003 Assessment Day activities selected to be scored included only 200 artifacts that were identified based on the number of general education credits the students had attempted (i.e., 100 from “entry-level” students who had attempted fewer than 15 general education credits and 100 from “upper-level” students who had attempted in excess of 15 general education credits). Various reports that represent different analyses of the data collected during Barton's Assessment Day activities in fall 2002, spring 2003 and fall 2003 are included in Appendix 34. This appendix begins with the Summary Report of the Assessment of Student Learning at the Degree Level with separate reports for math, writing, social and behavioral sciences, fine arts, and ethics and values following respectively.

Faculty from the participating disciplines, humanities, social and behavioral science, mathematics, and written communication, met in focus groups to discuss some of these results and to formulate Initial Action Plans in response to the data. Some of these

plans for the Social and Behavioral Sciences, Mathematics and Associate of Arts degree assessments are included in Appendix 13. The Initial Action Plans established a time line for the faculty to produce a basic plan for assessment in their area.

Faculty at Barton continue to struggle somewhat with the concept of degree-level assessment. While it's obvious that emphasis must be placed on general education outcomes for degree-level assessment for non-vocational students, in-house development of quality instruments to measure such learning clearly will take considerable time and effort. Some clarification and focus has been provided through the development of 2003-04 and 2004-05 Annual Assessment Plans. For example, these Annual Plans define a rotating schedule that would be used to assess different general education outcomes in different years, providing degree-level assessment with a continuous, annual focus. Finally, to help clarify degree-level assessment planning, the Outcomes Assessment Committee commissioned a subteam to revisit degree-level assessment and gather more faculty input.

It is important to note that Barton faculty developed and adopted several years ago seven fundamental general education outcomes and 39 specific outcomes that relate to particular general education outcome areas (Appendix 12). During strategic conversations held in the spring of 2004, faculty reaffirmed their approval for these outcomes. As part of the degree-level assessment work to be accomplished in 2004-05, faculty will continue to explore options for assessing these outcomes. The College Algebra Course Assessment Project provides one model faculty will examine as they decide on measures of assessing Barton's general education outcomes. Specifically, College Algebra faculty have linked items on their common final to specific general education outcomes (Appendix 29).

Expected Actions – OAC Degree-Level Subteam

- Review prior efforts at degree-level; explain advantages & disadvantages.
- Review options for degree-level, discuss advantages & disadvantages of choices:
 - Transfer degree or Associate of Arts;
 - Standardized, nationally-normed test;
 - Locally-developed test(s) – (Pre-test & Post-test (gain), or only a Post-test (outcome));
 - Curricular Mapping of General Education Outcomes/Outcomes within Outcome Areas;
 - Embedded artifacts (such as Course Assessment Project instruments);
 - Capstone courses/ Degree Portfolios.
- Decide best method for meeting with faculty:

- By division/discipline;
 - By degree;
 - By design (using curriculum-mapping results).
- Meet with faculty:
 - Review prior efforts at degree-level; explain advantages & disadvantages;
 - Discuss purpose of degree-level assessment, what we want to learn, and what potential changes could be made as a result of what we might learn;
 - Review options for degree-level assessment, discuss advantages & disadvantages;
 - Come to consensus on degree level assessment plan;
 - Write action plan.
 - Identify faculty to assist in creating degree-level assessment plan.

Institution-Level Assessment

Barton has been committed to collecting data at the institutional level for many years. Information about overall student performance has been shared with the Board of Trustees on a regular schedule in the form of internal Monitoring Reports. These Monitoring Reports include data on many aspects of the College including student learning and performance. Reports that particularly pertain to Outcomes Assessment are listed in Table 8.

Table 8 Annual Board of Trustees’ Monitoring Reports

Name of Report	Type/Source of Information
Assessment Results	Annual Report from the Outcomes Assessment Committee
Professional License Pass Rates	Reports from various departments including Community Education and Nursing
Employer Satisfaction with Student Technical Skills	Surveys from Employers of Spring Graduates
Employer Satisfaction with “soft” skills	Surveys from Employers of Spring Graduates Includes: Organizational Time-Management Skills Quantity of Work Accomplished Following Directions Working Independently Working Cooperatively With Others Leadership/Promotion Potential Personal Appearance/Dress Attendance Punctuality
Placement of Students in Field of Study	Data primarily from vocational programs

Name of Report	Type/Source of Information
Placement of Graduates in Field of Study	Data primarily from vocational programs
ABE/GED Graduates and Enrollment	Data from the Adult Education Center on enrollment and graduation
Total Degree/Certificates Awarded by Level	Data collected by the Institutional Research Department and the Technical Division
Student /Faculty Ratio	Data reported by location/venue
Student Success/Completing Remedial Courses	Data reporting pass rates (Grades of C or better) of students enrolled in developmental courses – all locations/venues
Student Performance on Nationally-Normed Exams	Includes: ACT ASSET MLT WorkKeys Nurse Entrance Exam

While this is an extensive list of reports that have been generated over several years, there are certainly other areas that could be included. Table 9 lists internal Monitoring Reports that have been proposed but are not yet included in the annual rotation.

Table 9 Proposed Board of Trustees’ Monitoring Reports

PROPOSED BUT NOT YET COMPLETED
Performance of Graduates in Math, Reading, Writing
Measure of Critical Thinking Skills
Ability to Use Necessary Technology
Ability to Apply General Education Knowledge

Clearly, these particular reports provide excellent guidance for the Outcomes Assessment efforts at the College.

Institutional Assessment at Barton has not been limited to collecting data for these Monitoring Reports. There have been ongoing efforts to obtain data from students, faculty, and staff in a number of areas. Again, nationally-normed instruments have been used to look at both student satisfaction and engagement and to assess whether Assessment has become part of the culture at Barton. Faculty and staff at all locations were surveyed using the Levels of Implementation survey. This survey has been used for the past three years and has shown a steady improvement in the understanding and acceptance of assessment (Appendix 36). Faculty and staff also participate in a Noel-Levitz survey on employee satisfaction.

The instruments used for students include the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The strategic plan for Assessment calls for these surveys to be administered alternately in the spring. Administered through the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas, the CCSSE was used for the first time in spring 2003. CCSSE administrators determined the sample of students to which it was administered. Students from Fort Riley, outreach classes, and night classes were included in the sample. In spring 2004, the SSI was administered to a similar sample of students.

Data from the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) are found in Appendix 14. Students are asked a number of questions which are grouped to review different services offered by the College. The area that pertains to assessment is Instructional Effectiveness. Fourteen questions from the survey are compiled to rank this item in both importance and satisfaction. These questions can be found in the same Appendix. The comparison with the national data shows that, in 2002 for example, Barton's results for all fourteen questions were significantly higher than the national average. In eight questions, the statistical difference was very highly significant. Barton has collected SSI data from 1998-2002, and the data for Instructional Effectiveness have been graphed for these years. The graphs show that Instructional Effectiveness is very important to our students (it ranks the highest in all categories) and the students' level of satisfaction is consistently above the national average. This difference has been statistically very highly significant for each year.

The College received data from the CCSSE in late fall 2003. Due in part to the change in leadership in the Office of Learning and Instruction, sharing of the data with faculty has been delayed. The data were shared with the Board of Trustees in spring 2004, and the results will be the subject of a number of strategic conversations in 2004-2005, starting with the all-faculty meeting on September 10, 2004. The results of these meetings will be curricular improvement plans designed to address the areas identified by CCSSE respondents as being below the national norm (Appendix 24). As part of the curricular mapping survey, faculty identified workshops that they wanted to attend as part of the annual cycle of faculty in-services. These workshops will be included in the February 5, 2005 All-Faculty Meeting. The results of the CCSSE survey have been posted on the college website,

presented to the Board of Trustees and reported in the college newspaper as part of the feedback loop.

Expected Actions

- In late fall 2004, administer Levels of Implementation survey to Barton instructional staff and continue to track Barton's assessment culture
- In 2004-2005, share results of Curricular Mapping survey with faculty and create an improvement plan
- In spring 2005, draft assessment questions for CCSSE survey
- In spring 2005, administer CCSSE to Barton students
- Triangulate results of CCSSE and Noel-Levitz SSI items that relate directly to student learning
- Evaluate Board of Trustees Monitoring Reports for relevance to the assessment of student learning at the institution level

Other Venues and Modes of Delivery

Barton offers courses through a variety of delivery modes, including Interactive Television (ITV), online, face-to-face and hybrid. It offers these classes at the campus in Barton County, the campus at Fort Riley, outreach sites within the seven-county service area and in Junction City. Online and ITV capabilities allow the College to reach students both outside our service area in Kansas⁸ and across the world.

Advances in instructional technology have allowed Barton to reach students who, for a variety of reasons, require flexible alternatives to traditionally-delivered education. Through ITV, classes are delivered using a closed distance-learning network. Students at a remote site view their instructor on a television screen in real-time. The system allows multimedia interaction, including visual and audio. Each ITV classroom comes equipped with a document camera and fax machine so that course materials can be electronically transmitted in both directions. Hybrid courses use online course materials to supplement approximately half of the class time. Students meet face-to-face with the instructor for the other half of the course.

These technologies present significant challenges for assessment of student learning, but also reaffirm the need for it. Assessment of student learning is one way of demonstrating quality and academic rigor for all students, regardless of the instructional delivery mode.

At all five levels of student learning, the College's assessment efforts have continued to broaden, involving full- and part-time students at the both of the institution's campuses as well as

⁸ For example, ITV classes to Victoria and to the Ellsworth Correctional Facility.

students enrolled in the College's off-campus and online programs. EduKan is required by the Higher Learning Commission to have its own assessment plan, and the paragraph below outlines the linkages between the consortium colleges and EduKan. BartOnline has proved to be more challenging. It is one of the goals of the Assessment plan for 2004-05 to develop processes to include BartOnline students at all levels of assessment.

EduKan

EduKan is an educational consortium that involves six western Kansas community colleges: Barton County Community College, Colby Community College, Dodge City Community College, Garden City Community College, Pratt Community College, and Seward County Community College. These six colleges work collectively to offer online post-secondary educational opportunities.

In October 2004, a Monitoring Report on Assessment was submitted to the Higher Learning Commission for the EduKan consortium. It describes the progress that has been made in the EduKan Assessment Plan. The plan requires that the EduKan colleges actively share data with the EduKan Assessment Team, and that the EduKan team shares the data that it collects with the assessment teams of the six consortium colleges. EduKan will rely on the colleges to include those students who take a limited number of courses through EduKan (<30 credit hours), in the colleges' assessment activities for their graduates. Those students who have taken more than 30 hours online through EduKan will be assessed using an online assessment instrument that will be developed by the EduKan faculty during the 2004-05 academic year. In order to demonstrate more clearly the linkages between the various entities involved in assessing EduKan students, the assessment team has developed a series of flow charts. These charts are found in Appendix 37.

For Barton Fall Assessment Day 2003, students enrolled in a 10:00 a.m. class on Tuesday September 30, were given an assessment over writing, ethics and values, known as the WEV assessment. A total of 679 students were assessed at both the Barton County and Fort Riley campuses. Of these students, only fourteen had ever attempted an EduKan class (thirteen had passed the class with a D or better). Unfortunately, this sample is so small that it does not allow any statistically significant comparison to be made between the performance of Barton students who have taken EduKan classes and other Barton students who have not. However, the data will be analyzed and sent to the EduKan office so that it

can be compiled with data from the other six colleges. This data will be collected longitudinally and in time, will provide a statistically significant comparison of the student learning in EduKan classes compared to that in face-to-face classes. When future degree-level assessments are administered, it will behoove the College to ensure that larger samples of students who have taken EduKan classes are included.

Only nine Barton students have taken over 30 credit hours of course work through EduKan. Of those, only two have graduated from Barton in the past two years. They both graduated in December 2002, prior to the implementation of EduKan's assessment plan. Thus, no assessment data are available for them.

BartOnline

BartOnline is Barton County Community College's online instructional delivery system. For purposes of comparison, it has been useful to compare Barton's online students not only with students enrolled in traditionally-delivered classes but also with students enrolled in EduKan classes.

In order to assess whether Barton students are as successful in online courses as they are in face-to-face courses, data have been collected since summer 2002 to compare the success rates of Barton students, aggregated according to the geographical location and delivery modality of the course. These data are found in Appendix 38. The data are sorted into four groups: students who took EduKan classes, students who took BartOnline (BOL) classes, students who took classes at the Fort Riley campus and students who took classes at the Barton County Campus. Success and retention rates are graphed for each group.

There is a remarkable similarity between the success rates of EduKan students and those enrolled at the Barton County campus, and between students who took BOL classes and those who took classes at Fort Riley. The same appendix contains a similar comparison of retention rates and also compares the number of incomplete grades given. Again retention rates are similar.

In general, the following statements can be made when comparing online success rates with face-to-face classes.

- Students who take online courses are as successful as or more successful than those who take face-to-face classes.
- Students who take online classes are retained as well or better than students taking face-to-face classes.

The number of incomplete grades, on the other hand, is significantly higher for online delivery via EduKan. This may well be a consequence of the delivery method. Students are required to work more independently, and it is easier for them to fall behind. These data have been shared with EduKan's assessment team, with the request that they follow up to determine if these incomplete grades were converted to passing grades or resulted eventually in an F.

The comparison between Fort Riley and Barton County students is similar except for the peak in the summer semester for the Barton County campus. This phenomenon may very well result from the differences in the way classes are offered at the two campuses. Face-to-face classes at the Fort are offered in consistent cycles of varying lengths throughout the year; for example, Fort Riley students may enroll in class cycles of seven weeks, twelve weeks, or nine weeks. Fort Riley classes are targeted to soldiers stationed at the army base and their immediate families. With these unique circumstances, there is no difference in the length of the session/semester, the intensity of delivery, or the general population to which courses are offered. On the other hand, face-to-face courses at the Barton County campus are offered in the traditional fall-spring-summer format, with the summer session being significantly shorter than the other two semesters. The summer-session student population differs as well. In general, students returning to the area from other universities to pick up college hours or recently graduated high school students just beginning their college careers make up the majority of students who enroll in Barton's summer classes. In addition, summer school students typically take only one or two classes. These factors may play a role in the higher success rates of Barton campus's summer students.

While these results are interesting and will lead to further discussion with faculty at all venues, Barton faculty and instructional staff understand that these analyses do not measure student learning, only student success and retention. During the 2004-05 academic year, plans will be developed to effectively assess student learning at all venues.

Community Education

Finally, it is important to note that data gathered and documented at all levels include assessment data for courses delivered through the Division of Community Education, including Outreach, College Advantage, and ITV classes. Community Education staff and

administration have worked closely with the OAC and Barton County faculty to ensure that education delivered in their programs is assessed under the umbrella of the College's assessment program.

CONCLUSION

2002-2004 HIGHLIGHTS

During the academic year 2003-2004 considerable progress was made in the assessment of student learning at Barton County Community College, including the following:

- In summer 2003, the Dean of Learning and Instruction (DLI) revised the assessment plan to address the concerns of the HLC-NCA evaluation report. A copy of the revised plan is posted on the Assessment website.
- The dean appointed two co-facilitators for the assessment of student learning: one at the Barton County campus and one at the Fort Riley campus. These faculty members received a 40% reduction in teaching load.
- The co-facilitators worked closely with the DLI and the OAC to improve assessment of student learning.
- Assessment workshops were held at three outreach sites and the Fort Riley Campus for full-time, outreach and associate faculty. The main focus of these workshops was to introduce the concept of Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs) and to provide training on their usefulness.
- An assessment video and handouts were produced by the Outcomes Assessment Committee and distributed to new faculty to train them in the use of CATs
- CATs were reported in 167 classes in 2002-03 and 249 in 2003-04. Many faculty regularly use CATs, but they are only required to complete one form per semester.
- Course Assessment Project has continued to progress:
 - 10 courses were assessed in spring 2004 as a result of the work completed in fall 2003;
 - 19 courses will be assessed in fall 2004, including 9 new courses and the 10 courses previously assessed for the first time in spring and summer 2004.
- In June 2004, it was determined to adopt the Kansas State Core competencies for those classes for which they exist. These courses will be the focus of the course assessment project.
- CCSSE results were received and presented to the Board. These results are part of our institutional assessment and were discussed by faculty at the all faculty meeting in September 2004.
- Noel-Levitz Surveys (SSI - student satisfaction inventory) were administered in spring 2004.
- Fall Assessment Day was held on September 30, 2003 and September 20, 2004.
- Spring Assessment Day was held in the Career and Technical Division on March 30, 2004.
- CTE continued to assess students in the vocational areas using Work keys. This year they added Wonderlic to their battery of tests.
- In summer 2004, an assessment web page was created as part of the Barton web-pages www.bartonccc.edu/learningandinstruction/assessment.htm

- Joint all-faculty meetings of Fort Riley and Barton County full-time and associate faculty were held the fall semesters of 2003 and 2004. Faculty members met in discipline-specific groups as well as in larger forums to discuss assessment topics.

LESSONS LEARNED

Barton faculty were asked to share the lessons they've learned from or about the assessment of student learning. What follows are some of the most important lessons, quoted from the faculty members' own words:

- Good planning is very important. Assessment activities can't be over-planned, and the planning involved is time- and labor-intensive.
- Some people are just never going to 'buy in' and are going to fight the assessment process even though they are probably using assessment currently. The idea of extra work or paper work has been imbedded in their minds. We still have work to do.
- Getting equal buy-in from both campuses has been, and continues to be a challenge. Joint faculty meetings and equal representation at the state core competency meetings are steps in the right direction. The more faculty can be supported in the planning, implementing, and evaluating stages, the more they will buy in.
- It is extremely difficult to get all instructors involved in the assessment process. For many, it is a change and some are not receptive to that.
- Training is invaluable.
- Communication is under-rated and needs to be at the forefront of everything we do!
- Patience is essential; assessment cannot be rushed.
- Assessment touches everything and must become part of the fabric of the institution.
- Faculty must be fully involved in the process; as one faculty member stated, *“Assessment can be challenging at times, it is not as scary as I thought, and the resulting information is certainly worth the effort.”*
- Beginning with the “end in mind” means more than merely envisioning what we want to know about our students' learning! It means –
 - ~ envisioning what the results will look like when the assessment activity is complete
 - ~ envisioning whether the results will be meaningful or merely interesting
 - ~ envisioning what improvements we are willing to make as well as what improvements CAN be made
- We learn from every mis-step; making sure we don't make the same mistakes is the trick.
- Other institutions are struggling with the same assessment issues.
- Shifting students' perception from grade achievement to learning attainment is critical and requires communication.
- CATs are becoming part of our culture. All faculty should now be exposed to and know where to find CAT ideas.
- There is such a wide variety of CAT techniques that everyone should be able to use at least one that they are comfortable with. As one associate faculty member noted, “I had no idea that there were so many ways to assess student learning.”
- Using CATs does not need to take up lots of valuable teaching time, and CATs can be used in all types of course including online, but we need to somehow share effective assessment ideas with each other to continue to grow.

- Operational definitions are important; for example, we need to continue trying to define what an Outcome and a competency are. It appears there are several different opinions on how to define them.
- Just because an assessment activity doesn't work well or the way we thought it would the first time we try it doesn't mean we should quit doing it altogether; instead, it needs to be reexamined and improved.
- There has to be a balance between simple and clear AND meaningful and valid/reliable
- Assessment brings up issues that touch the heart of what teachers do: What is academic freedom? What is a Barton course? What should we teach? What is the best way to measure student learning? Who are our colleagues? How do we gain consensus when we are philosophically divided and geographically separated? How do we perceive the relationship between teaching and learning? Who is responsible for student learning? Although challenging, these are questions with which we must wrestle, individually and collectively, as professional educators

During 2003-04 Barton County Community College made significant progress in the assessment of student learning. The OAC and Barton faculty are ready to build on the lessons learned and continue to make progress in 2004-05.

THE FUTURE OF ASSESSMENT AT BARTON

Despite the ongoing progress Barton has made in the assessment of student learning, there are still challenges to meet and overcome. Three areas of concern will be addressed in 2004-05. The first is to develop a coherent plan for degree-level assessment. The second is to ensure that assessment of student learning is occurring at all venues and via all modes of delivery. The third is to begin work on developing and implementing feedback loops at all levels of assessment.

Underlying all three of these challenges is the institutional need to become “one-college,” not only in the policies, procedures, and systems under which College employees operate, but also in the way employees view their distant colleagues and their relationships with those colleagues. This task will take considerable time, effort, communication, and patience before it becomes the culture of Barton.

Regardless of the challenges, Barton now has a firm foundation on which to build, refine, and advance its assessment program. By holding Barton's “feet to the fire,” HLC-NCA's requirement of an assessment monitoring report forced the College and those responsible for assessment of student learning to look closely at the current reality, find its weaknesses, and

address them. As a result, Barton faculty and instructional staff now have a system that allows them to move forward with understanding and confidence.

ITEMS CONTAINED IN THE APPENDICES

- 1. Mission Analysis**
- 2. OAC Roles and Responsibilities**
- 3. IOTF Charter**
- 4. One College Vision Statement by Dr. Veldon Law**
- 5. Annual Assessment Plan for 2004-05**
- 6. Strategic Plan**
- 7. Assessment Calendar**
- 8. CAT Data**
- 9. CAT Reporting Form**
- 10. President's Statement on Competencies**
- 11. Career and Technical Education Data**
- 12. Fundamental Outcomes & General Education Areas**
- 13. Degree Action Plans**
- 14. Noel-Levitz, Student Satisfaction Inventory Data**
- 15. Flow Charts for Assessment at Barton**
- 16. Percent of Faculty Who Have Participated in Assessment Activities**
- 17. PIC Goals for Assessment**
- 18. Team Charters for LICC and OAC**
- 19. DLI response to President's Charge**
- 20. Review of IOTF Activities**
- 21. Annual Report to the Board of Trustees - Internal Monitoring Report**
- 22. Student Newspaper Articles**
- 23. Annual Assessment Budget**
- 24. CCSSE Data**
- 25. Curricular Mapping Survey - Instrument**
- 26. Curricular Mapping Survey - Results**
- 27. Assessment Video Handouts**
- 28. Course Assessment Project Documents**
- 29. College Algebra Common Final (Course Level Assessment Data)**
- 30. Data from Community Colleges on Syllabi**
- 31. Course Competency Profile Sheet**
- 32. Sample Program-Level Assessment Instrument (Business-Accounting)**
- 33. Program Level Assessment Data**
- 34. Data Collected in Degree Level Assessments**
- 35. Summary of Responses to Degree Assessment Data**
- 36. Levels of Implementation Survey Results**
- 37. EduKan Flow Charts**
- 38. Success and Retention Data for Online Courses**