



## ***Spring 2013 Assessment Project Summary and Outcomes: Engaging Faculty Teams in Student Learning Assessment***

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### **Executive Summary**

The [Discipline Rubric Project](#) links Core Learning Outcome (CLO) assessment practices to meaningful learning assessment within disciplines. Lane's Assessment Team (A-Team) gathered input from faculty to develop CLOs, and furthered this successful engagement approach by inviting faculty teams to translate CLOs into



discipline-specific rubrics that can be used for assessment. The outcome is 8 rubrics developed by 25 faculty (full and part-time) for systematically assessing CLOs and documentation of the team process. These rubrics may be reused, adapted, and applied to outcomes reporting. Additionally, the project furthers the aim of increasing the visibility of a culture of assessment at LCC, which informs teaching and learning.



## *Spring 2013 Assessment Team Projects: Engaging Faculty Teams in Student Learning Assessment*

### **Background**

Beginning in 2008, Lane's A-Team began to develop opportunities for faculty to systematically assess our effectiveness in developing our students' core abilities. Faculty applied for funding to assess two of our then core abilities—"Communicate Effectively" and "Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving"—in their courses using a rubric developed by the A-Team.

As we evaluated the outcomes of course-level assessment and scoring projects, we came to realize that Lane's Core Abilities were challenging, at best, to systematically assess and that two of them—"Explore Disciplines" and "Increase Understanding of Relationship Between Self and Community"—were excessively broad and did not invite assessment of learning. We recognized we needed to shift our language about student learning outcomes from nouns to verbs, so students, faculty, graduates, and our community could affirm transferable skills gained at Lane through a liberal education approach to student learning.

In fall 2011, Lane Community began campus-wide conversations about re-envisioning student learning at Lane. We asked the questions:

"What should students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century know and do?"

"How do we communicate this message to students in our courses?"

We then analyzed feedback from faculty, derived common themes, and translated these themes into actions (Breaden, 2012).

In spring 2012, we introduced five core learning outcomes derived from faculty input: [Think, Engage, Create, Communicate, and Apply](#). Approximately 19 departments from across campus worked together during this spring conference to refine descriptions and language to preserve Lane's identity, reflect timeless goals, and reflect national standards (Breaden, 2012). The culmination of this collaborative and forward-thinking work resulted in a [Core Learning Outcomes Conference](#) where we presented clear, outcomes-based language representing transferable skills LCC students will learn across general education and career technical disciplines.

We continued our conversation with faculty [through a faculty survey](#). We asked faculty to provide feedback about current CLO assessment practices and their confidence interval in student learning outcome attainment at course, discipline, and program/degree levels. Faculty reported confidence within their own course assessments, but less confidence in systematic assessment at the discipline and program levels. Additionally, faculty who scored artifacts for "[Communicate Effectively](#)" suggested that scoring may be confounded if the rubric does not include a discipline context. Therefore, the A-Team developed a [funded, assessment project](#) to help engage faculty in meaningful assessment within their discipline and to

develop methods to integrate and assess CLO attainment in their courses and programs. Language from our request for funding proposal is included below:

### **Project purpose**

- Develop rubrics to assess student learning outcomes that are meaningful to faculty within disciplines
- Promote part-time and full-time faculty professional development in assessment within disciplines
- Provide resources for faculty (part-time and full-time) within disciplines (funding, professional development) to reflect and collaborate on discipline practices for student learning assessment
- Facilitate interdisciplinary conversations about how the core learning outcomes are assessed within various disciplines
- Share project outcomes with faculty and the college

### **Outcomes and Benefits**

- 25 faculty from 8 disciplines completed a rubric to assess a core learning outcome within their discipline
- All rubrics are editable and available for download from the [college's A-Team website](#)
- Each core learning outcome has at least one Lane-generated example of how to approach systematic assessment within a discipline context
- [Qualitative improvements in the value and culture of assessment](#), including additional requests from faculty and departments to initiate or continue CLO assessment

**Effectiveness** – The outcomes of our project provide strong evidence of its effectiveness in engaging faculty, within disciplines, to define core learning outcome assessment at program, course sequence, and course levels. The combined efforts of full-time and part-time faculty in rich and meaningful conversations about student learning assessment resulted in a tangible work product for implementation in the classroom and in program assessment practices. We had balanced participation from general education and career technical programs that reinforces the shared understanding of transferable skills for students across the college.

**Efficiency** – The final rubrics are available for download and editing through the program website. Each rubric is attributed to specific group of faculty members, documentation which allows other faculty to easily inquire or seek additional input into the process for peer-to-peer mentoring. The Faculty within disciplines and across disciplines can retrieve samples of work. [The Discipline Rubric Project Summary](#) lends transparency to the processes and procedures developed by faculty colleagues and can be referenced by others who are beginning to engage in systematic assessment.



***Affordability*** – Faculty received up to 10 hours of curriculum development funding to develop a rubric. An outcome of the project is making these rubrics “open source” to the college and to the public.

***Replicability***–We have posted our project proposal form on our website for reference and reuse (see ["Previous Projects"](#)) by other institutions. We have recently engaged in conversations with the University of Oregon and have shared our process and materials as they develop general education assessment projects.

***Creativity*** – Perhaps the most creative element of this project was that faculty were allowed to frame Core Learning Outcomes in language meaningful to their respective disciplines. The result is a rubric that allows faculty to assess student learning at strategic points in time. Final rubrics are diverse, reflecting the level of rich diversity of how our faculty assess learning outcomes within disciplines.