**ASC Assessment Plan/Report UPDATE—May 21, 2010**

NOTE: this update includes the following new information relative to the March 2010 ASC assessment report:

1. Analysis of additional program assessment data—from QSC and WC session reports—collected through the end of spring semester 2010.

2. New information about Learning Support Center (LSC) assessment, along with relevant data and analysis from the pilot LSC assessment.

*PLEASE NOTE: Previous ASC assessment plans/reports (plus annual program reports) have presented substantial* indirect *student learning data (including longitudinal data for some areas/aspects of the program), gathered from student usage patterns and student surveys, grade and retention information, etc. The current ASC assessment plan is an effort to assess student learning* directly *and across all (or nearly all) of the programs and services included within the ASC.*

**1. MISSION STATEMENT**

The Academic Skills Center helps students who use our services improve their learning process.

(Improvement of learning process might include one or more of the following actions: gain awareness of learning strategies and learning skill sets, assess learning style preferences and strengths, assess attitudes toward learning and studying, assess time management and/or other factors inhibiting learning, etc.).

**2. Learning Outcomes**

* Students will be aware of decision options that can improve their learning process, production, and/or products (i.e., students will gain metacognitive awareness and understanding of their own learning).

* Students will be able to apply better decision making in/to their learning process (i.e., students will apply metacognitive awareness of own learning styles, strengths, and strategies, etc. as appropriate to meet particular learning goals, needs, or situations).

**3. Program Components**

* Students gain awareness of, and practical experience with, learning process options through their use of ASC services: individual consultation with ASC professional staff, individual consultation with ASC peer tutors/writing consultants, group consultation with academic help room tutors, group or classroom workshops developed by the ASC, and other learning process/strategy sessions developed by the ASC.

**4a. Data Sources and Instruments**

* The primary source of data will be ASC consultation/meeting reports for student use of services (individual, group, help room, workshop session).
* Individual consultation/meeting reports are currently produced and maintained for each area within the Academic Skills Center (Disability Services, Learning Support Center, Quantitative Skills Center, and Writing Center).
* To date, Quantitative Skills Center (QSC) and Writing Center (WC) report forms have been revised and adapted to include direct evidence of student learning: the revised forms have been piloted during the academic year, and data from these forms is included and analyzed in this assessment report/update.
* The Learning Support Center (LSC) has piloted assessment this year using individual student meeting reports over the course of the academic year. (Given that LSC learning support specialists often meet multiple times with individual students, LSC meeting reports provide a measure of student learning during a semester and/or academic year.)
* Other ASC report forms will be revised/adapted in the near future (based on feedback regarding pilot use of forms in other divisions), and then implemented/integrated into ASC assessment procedures, as feasible.
* Group, help room, and workshop session consultation/meeting reports have been less consistently produced in the past, so reports for these areas will likely prove especially challenging as we move forward.
* Finally, ASC staff and student tutors/consultants have received specific training about program consultation report methodologies and formats—and we will continue providing ongoing feedback and support as we continue piloting and adapting program assessment.

**4b. Methods**

* Review and analysis of ASC consultation/meeting reports for the following general patterns:

A) evidence of student awareness of learning process options;

B) evidence of student decision making regarding learning process;

C) evidence of student application of *improved* decision making in/to learning process.

**5. Analyze and interpret the data**

A. QSC and WC consultation/meeting reports

Responses to direct assessment questions on the pilot QSC and WC consultation/meeting reports for the academic year were reviewed (separate from the context of other report information) and each set of responses was coded as one of the following categories.

A = indicates evidence of student awareness of learning process options.

B = indicates evidence of student decision making regarding learning and/or learning process.

C = indicates evidence of student application of *improved* decision making in/to learning and/or learning process.

D = no clear evidence indicated and/or incomplete data.

**Analysis of the data from QSC and WC consultation/meeting reports yields the following student learning outcomes for the reported tutoring sessions**.

**OVERALL QSC/WC SESSIONS** (N = 696 report forms)

**Category of**

**Student Learning Evidenced Percentage of Sessions**

A 10.7

B 35.9

C 35.6

D 17.7

The report coding process presumed that a tutoring session labeled C entailed both A & B as well (that is, student learning that evidenced *improved* decision making in/to learning and/or learning process necessarily included student awareness of learning process options [A] and student decision making regarding learning and/or learning process [B]).

Thus, based on the data reported above, the following general picture of student learning becomes apparent: 82.2% of reported sessions indicate evidence of student awareness of learning process options; likewise, 46.6% of reported sessions indicate evidence of student decision making regarding learning and/or learning process; and 35.6% of reported sessions indicate evidence of *improved* decision making in/to learning and/or learning process. The data discussed here is presented in table format just below.

**% of Sessions Student Learning Evidenced**

82.2 awareness of learning process options

46.6 student decision making regarding learning and/or learning process

35.6 student application of *improved* decision making in/to learning and/or learning process

The student learning data described above (especially in conjunction with specific responses for QSC and WC sessions) continue to provide fun, provocative, and useful information as we consider small and big picture understandings of student academic support programs. In addition, this effort seem to be yielding helpful program information about direct student learning in the ASC (as well as yielding information about tutor teaching and effectiveness in the QSC and WC—factors we plan to include in our assessment efforts at some point in the future).

During the summer months, the QSC & WC Directors will meet to review, analyze, and discuss the full data set. At that time, we will also review and revise/adapt the data collection instruments in each area, as appropriate (and perhaps in collaboration with student tutors).

B. LSC consultation/meeting reports

The pilot LSC consultation/meeting reports for the academic year were reviewed (separate from the context of other report information) and each set of meeting reports was coded as one of the following categories.[[1]](#footnote-1)

A = indicates evidence of student awareness of learning process options.

B = indicates evidence of student decision making regarding learning and/or learning process. (E.g., student may indicate statement of decision or recognition of need to make decision relevant to academic standing; may indicate student follows through with part or all of initial academic plan from meetings.)

C = indicates evidence of student application of *improved* decision making in/to learning and/or learning process. (E.g., student *initiates* and carries through on decisions regarding academic standing; student may indicate continuing to carry through on academic improvement plans or initiating improvements in plans.)

D = No clear evidence of learning indicated OR *student had significant issues (often emotional) impeding ability to deal with academic issues.*

**Analysis of the data from LSC consultation/meeting reports yields the following student learning outcomes for the reported tutoring sessions**.

(N = 109 reports)

**Category of**

**Student Learning Evidenced Percentage of Sessions**

A 11.0

B 46.0

C 38.0

D 5.0

Results of coding for evidence of student learning and academic options indicated that most students who met with a learning specialist endorsed a plan to make changes based on the meeting (*Category B = 46%)* or actually evidenced attempts and follow through of changes through a series of meetings (*Category C = 38%).* Relevant student decisions/actions included the following (*as examples; other decisions, as well as combinations of decisions, also occurred*): withdrawing from class; making course planning decisions; changing study methods; organizing time and priorities more effectively.

**NOTE**: The LSC assessment report coding for *Category D* was adapted to indicate those students who were deemed to be struggling primarily with emotional factors, which prevented them from addressing academic issues. In these cases, the learning support specialist helped the student obtain help from counseling or, in some cases, withdraw from the college.

(*Further analysis and more detailed discussion of LSC report data and narrative information will be included in future ASC assessment reports; the goal for this update was to include some preliminary LSC data/discussion as indication of our assessment plans and progress in this area*.)

**6. How will the data collected be used for decision-making, strategic planning, etc**.

* During fall semester 2009, QSC and WC pilot data collection, analysis, and discussion were initially used to revise and fine tune the relevant consultation/meeting report forms, to revise/update program training and feedback for student-employees (in relation to both tutoring practices and completion of data report forms), and to determine appropriate and efficient means for storing, analyzing, and sharing the collected data.
* As we determined and refined best practices (at least tentatively) for QSC and WC data collection and analysis over the course of the year, we began working toward more systematic data collection and/or analysis for other areas within the ASC.
* The LSC assessment information presented in this update—meeting/consultation report data and preliminary analysis—represents the first of these new program assessment areas, with other program areas to be included in coming semesters.
* The results from LSC assessment of student learning will be used by learning support specialists to gauge the range of student questions and academic issues arising during the year. This exercise allows the learning support specialists to confer on patterns of utilization, issues arising among groups of students, and trends in utilization among groups.
* Based on initial LSC findings, we plan to refine our coding of student learning to reflect variations in student effort level and changes in academic habits. Since the learning specialists work closely with many students over a period of time, more accurate coding should improve our ability to recognize important differences in student behaviors which indicate learning.
* In addition, LSC staff will review/analyze meeting data for the various student groups who seek academic assistance (self-referred students, at-risk students, students on academic probation, etc.), and will also look at categories of student learning based on number of individual meetings. This may provide helpful information regarding effectiveness based on the student’s point of entry.
* All ASC professional staff will be involved in discussions to determine and implement appropriate assessment and/or program revisions and updates; student employees will be involved as well, but in more limited capacities (primarily related to their specific area of ASC tutoring or other work: e.g., writing consultants were asked to provide their feedback about data coding of specific WC sessions).
* In addition, the data collected from ASC consultation/meeting report forms—direct evidence of student learning and/or student awareness of learning process options—will be reviewed in conjunction with other ASC *indirect* student learning measures (post-meeting questionnaires, student usage data, student retention and grade information, etc.) as means to assess effectiveness of ASC program and services, as evidence for continuing or adapting current practices or services, and as evidence for suggesting new areas for ASC programs and services that would fit with our overall program mission.

1. Note that these coding categories are quite similar to, and adapted from, the QSC and WC coding categories presented and analyzed earlier in this report. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)