Kansas State University

Focused Visit Report on

Assessment of Student Learning

Prepared for the Focused Visit
February 21-22, 2005

of the
The Higher Learning Commission (HLC)
A Commission of the North Central Association
of Colleges and Schools (NCA)

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I.   Executive Summary

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association (NCA) of Colleges and Schools last visited Kansas State University (K-State) in October 2001, which resulted in the reaccreditation of the university through 2011-12. The site report (see http://www.k-state.edu/provost/academic/nca/index.htm) raised some concerns with the assessment of student learning. A focused visit was scheduled for 2005 to review the university's progress on the recommendations contained within the HLC report. This self-study report summarizes the current status and future directions of the assessment of student learning process at K-State. The self-study report provides evidence that the university is moving toward mature levels of continuous improvement as articulated by the HLC's Levels of Implementation.

What NCA found in 2001 (from HLC, Report of Comprehensive Evaluation Visit, 2001):
- There is not presently a coherent, widespread understanding that the purpose of assessment is the continuous improvement of student learning;
- Moreover, there is not agreement about the types of information that constitute an effective outcomes assessment strategy;
- As a result, the ability to develop effective assessment plans and programs is limited;
- Faculty ownership of assessment in academic programs has not developed consistently across campus, and;
- Assessment in graduate education has not begun;
- No plans have been made to assess the effectiveness and equivalency of student learning in distance learning programs;
- Students have not participated in the development or implementation of the University's assessment program.

What NCA will see in 2005:
- University undergraduate and graduate student learning outcomes (SLOs) have been established. Graduate student learning outcomes were passed by the Graduate Council in December 2003, and the undergraduate student learning outcomes were passed by Faculty Senate in April 2004.
- Most degree programs have identified student learning outcomes for each of their degree programs and have linked them to the university SLOs. Where applicable, the degree programs' SLOs have also been connected to college-level SLOs.
- Departments have submitted three-year plans for the assessment of student learning in each of their undergraduate and graduate degree programs. These plans include direct measures of student learning and strategies for using assessment results to improve student learning.
- Our accredited programs are incorporating their accreditation reviews into the university's assessment process.

- An Assessment Review Committee has been established in each college to monitor the progress of departments in developing and implementing assessment plans.
- An Assessment Facilitators Committee at the university level has been formed to sustain and build on our progress to date.
- Undergraduate and graduate students are involved in many aspects of assessment of student learning across campus, for instance they serve on departmental advisory committees, on curriculum committees, on the Office of Assessment and Program Review (APR) Advisory Committee, and on the HLC self-study committee.
- Faculty members have attended both K-State training sessions and workshops and national conferences to learn about assessment measures, assessment plans, and how to use assessment to improve student learning. A monthly *Assessment Updates* newsletter provides information on assessment activities at K-State and assessment resources.
- Implementing both an annual and periodic reporting system to help sustain the continual and on-going process of assessing student learning. The reporting system will also inform internal constituents about the progress degree programs are making in improving student learning and the additional training that might be needed.
- Many administrators and faculty members are conversant about the importance of assessment to the continuous improvement of student learning.
- Conversations are underway related to the assessment of student learning in distance learning programs and in distance courses within on-campus degree programs.
- Plans are underway for the assessment of learning and services offered through the KSU Libraries, Institutional Advancement, Service Learning, and the Division of Continuing Education.

The report provides background and details on each of these features of our assessment initiatives as well as a description of the framework that we have implemented to guide our assessment efforts. We are particularly encouraged by the way that individual faculty members and departments/programs have both embraced the concepts related to assessment of student learning and are applying these concepts within their courses, curricula, and degree programs. The assessment plans that they have developed will result in a better understanding of the alignment between their desired student learning outcomes and what their students are actually learning. Where learning is less than optimal, steps can be taken to improve. Our campus is actively engaged in creating a culture of assessment that we are confident will result in significant improvement of student learning.

II.   Introduction

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) visited K-State for its 10-year review in October of 2001. K-State passed its review and was reaccredited for another ten years (through 2011-12). The site report (see http://www.k-state.edu/provost/academic/nca/index.htm) raised some concerns with the assessment of student learning, and a focused visit was scheduled for 2005 to review the university's progress on the recommendations contained within the 2001 report. Below are the observations made by the HLC:

- The Team finds that K-State is at the beginning level of implementing assessment programs across the University, with little evidence of making much progress beyond the beginning level.

- Structures are needed for:
  (a) educating the University community about assessment
  (b) providing administrative leadership that will lead to embedding the assessment process in the institutional culture, and
  (c) ensuring the sustainability of the assessment program.

- Moreover, there is not agreement about the types of information that constitute an effective outcomes assessment strategy; as a result, the ability to develop effective assessment plans and programs is limited.

- There is not presently a coherent, widespread understanding that the purpose of assessment is the continuous improvement of student learning (although this understanding is reflected in the assessment of the University General Education program).

- There is also some evidence that student learning outcomes assessment is being confused with other forms of evaluation such as academic program review, accreditation, etc.

- Faculty ownership of assessment in academic programs has not developed consistently across campus.

- Students have not participated in the development or implementation of the University's assessment program.

- Assessment in graduate education has not begun.

- No plans have been made to assess the effectiveness and equivalency of student learning in distance learning programs.

- By the time of the focused visit in 2005, there should be evidence that K-State is moving towards maturing levels of continuous improvement and that faculty,

students, and administrators across the University are involved in the assessment process.

Faced with the challenges presented by the HLC in 2001 to enhance our assessment of student learning efforts, K-State has responded by embracing a process of examination and renewal that has engaged the entire university community. Our efforts at capacity building have included informing, educating, and equipping our faculty and administrators with the knowledge and resources to implement effective assessment of student learning.

The Self-study Focused Visit Report provides the HLC of the North Central Association (NCA) with a brief review of the events that led up to the 2001 site visit, the recommendations from the visit, and what we have implemented to enhance the assessment of student learning program at K-State over the last three years. The report summarizes major activities, and includes web links that contain further details on specific topics.

The self-study report addresses the concerns raised after the 2001 site visit, and highlights the steps that have been taken in response to the HLC's recommendations. Throughout the report, details and illustrations are given about how assessment of student learning practices are being incorporated within the university's culture and how various strategies are being used to maintain a continued focus on improving student learning at K-State.

In brief, student learning outcomes have been created and approved by the faculty for both undergraduate and graduate programs. Assessment plans have been developed for almost all of the degree programs, and a review and approval process of these plans has been implemented. An ongoing reporting process is being established that includes submission and review of annual reports of assessment activities and results and integration of these reports into the eight-year cycle for Program Review that is conducted for the Kansas Board of Regents (BOR).

Preparing the Focused Visit Report

The professional staff in the Assessment and Program Review (APR) Office were charged with compiling the relevant information and preparing the initial drafts of the report. To provide guidance and feedback on the report, an Assessment Self-study Committee (ASC) was appointed by the Provost, with nominations from the Faculty Senate President, the Student Senate Chair, and the Director of the APR office. The original ASC

members consisted of one representative from the Dean's Council, three faculty members, one representative from Student Life and Student Services, one undergraduate student representative from Student Senate, one student representative from the Graduate Student Council, and two members from the APR office. The members were, respectively, Dean Steve White (Arts & Sciences), Dr. Kelly Liu (Geology), Dr. Janice Swanson (Animal Science and Industry), Dr. David Pacey (Mechanical & Nuclear Engineering), Dr. Fred Newton (Counseling Services), Mr. Aaron Eastabrook (undergraduate student representative), Ms. Wendy Hanzlik, (graduate student representative), Ms. Connie Manzo (APR office), and Dr. Patricia Marsh (APR office). After the spring of 2004, the undergraduate student representative and one faculty member excused themselves from the committee because of new learning opportunities or new responsibilities. Dr. Cia Verschelden, Director of Women's Studies, was added to the committee because of her earlier and on-going work with assessment at the university. Preliminary drafts of the self-study report were made available to the APR Advisory Committee and the campus community for their input before the report was sent to the HLC.

Structure of the Report

Each section of the report highlights various activities and initiatives at K-State that relate to the assessment of student learning. The first section describes the general framework that is guiding the assessment process at K-State, provides an overview of current assessment activities, describes the various groups and committees that have helped to shape the way assessment is viewed and utilized on campus, and briefly discusses the integration of academic and student life support units into the assessment initiatives. The second section details the strategies used to educate faculty, administrators, staff, and students about the assessment of student learning. The next section covers the history of the university and how assessment of student learning has emerged and evolved over the years. The assessment of the University General Education (UGE) program is presented in its own subsection, and other subsections provide detailed descriptions on how various university units (co-curricular areas) are being integrated within the university's assessment program. The last section summarizes the future directions the university will be following in our assessment process.

III. Guiding Framework and Overview of Current Initiatives

Guiding Framework

K-State is characterized by a very decentralized culture in which departments and units customize general policies to reflect the unique characteristics of their disciplines. The assessment of student learning process at K-State utilizes an innovative structure that capitalizes on this decentralized culture by providing a broad framework and guidance for the process at the central university level along with a partnership at the college-level, and at the same time placing responsibility for the assessment of student learning with the individual units where it must occur. The central administration, with input from faculty members, students and administrators, develops general policy, processes, and procedures to guide and assist the colleges and the departments in their assessment efforts, appoints and monitors committees charged with facilitating communication about assessment among the various university levels, serves as a resource when needed, and holds the departments and colleges accountable for implementing their assessment plans and responding to their assessment results.

Colleges are charged with the review and approval of the individual unit assessment plans and reports and with providing feedback to the central administration on progress and concerns. Departments and programs identify relevant student learning outcomes, design assessment plans that incorporate the specific features of their disciplines into the general guidelines provided for the entire university, and provide feedback to their respective colleges and the university on their assessment results and the actions taken in response to those results. The effectiveness of this model relies on good communication among the various entities, and that is achieved through extensive planning and on-going discussions by the Provost and the APR Office with the Provost's Staff, Deans Council, Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, and the various assessment committees at the university and college levels.

The APR office was created in the summer of 2000 to provide leadership, oversight, and support for assessment initiatives. Some of the services provided by the professional staff in the office include assisting with the review of the University General

Education Program and analyzing the results; administering internal and national university-wide surveys, educating and training faculty about assessment; fostering identification and tracking submission of student learning outcomes; facilitating development of degree program assessment of student learning plans through one-to-one consultations, meetings with department faculty, and campus workshops; coordinating the university's Program Review process in conjunction with the Kansas Board of Regents eight-year review cycle; and assisting with accreditation reviews. Since its creation, the APR Office has undergone several changes in staff. Dr. Ron Downey, former Associate Provost, was the part-time Director of the APR office from 2000-2004. Mr. Kurt Gunnell was the full-time Coordinator of the APR office from 2000-2001, Dr. Patricia Marsh assumed this position in February of 2002. Ms. Nancy Baker, Computer Specialist, provides web and technical support for the APR office. When Dr. Downey stepped down from the Associate Provost and Director position in June 2004, Dr. Ruth Dyer became the Associate Provost and supervisor of this office. At the same time, Dr. Patricia Marsh became the Interim Assistant Director. In anticipation of this transition in leadership, Ms. Connie Manzo was hired for one year in January 2004 as a Research Associate to help with the implementation of various initiatives, workshops, and the preparation for the focused visit in 2005. Two graduate students have been employed each year since the office was established.

Assessment Activities and Initiatives, 2001-2004

The assessment process at K-State has evolved from the work that was begun prior to the 2001 HLC site visit. Since that visit, we have put in place the structure outlined above and accomplished a wide range of objectives. The following describes the various assessment activities and initiatives that have occurred over the last three years, and Appendix 1 contains a summary of our current assessment efforts.

Understanding Assessment

Dr. Cia Verschelden, an influential faculty member and the Faculty Senate President at the time of the 2001 HLC review, became very interested in addressing the concerns raised by the HLC evaluation team, and took the lead in promoting university-wide assessment efforts and paving the way for a new culture of assessment. She proposed

to the Provost a plan for more actively involving the faculty in assessment efforts, and in response the Provost appointed her to work with the APR office to implement this plan. Emphasis was to be placed on the development of student learning outcomes, assessment plans, and assessment matrices, and on embedding assessment practices into existing teaching and evaluation structures.

In June 2002, the Provost sponsored a four-member team of faculty and administrators to attend a workshop offered jointly by the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) and the HLC on "Changing Institutional Priorities: Developing a Shared Understanding of the Value of Assessing Student Learning." Dr. Verschelden was the team chair, and the other members of the team were Dr. Ruth Dyer, Assistant Provost, Dr. Victoria Clegg, Director of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL), and Dr. Jackie Spears, Chair of the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs committee. Utilizing information gained from this workshop and the current literature on assessment, the team refined the plan originally proposed by Dr. Verschelden.

Throughout the summer, fall, and spring semesters (2002-03), Dr. Verschelden facilitated approximately 38 on-campus assessment meetings and made presentations to K-State deans, department heads, and faculty members (see http://www.k-state.edu/ apr/Background/index.htm). Her presentations highlighted the observations made by the HLC accreditation team members, and provided a recommended list of "basic elements" for an Assessment of Student Learning Plan (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/Learning/ASL.htm). Recommendations and guidelines on how to write student learning outcomes also were provided to faculty and posted on the APR website (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/ Learning/HowTo.htm). These one-to-one and group presentations were designed to (1) increase faculty members' and administrators' knowledge and understanding of the changes that have taken place with regards to assessment of student learning; (2) lay the groundwork for establishing a campus-wide "culture of assessment" that emphasized learning outcomes; (3) aid departments in identifying student learning outcomes, and (4) help departments implement an assessment process for their degree programs.

In the fall semester of 2002, the Provost appointed faculty members to two university-wide assessment committees. Dr. Downey and Dr. Marsh from the APR office

served as support staff for these committees. The first group consisted of faculty who were involved in assessment or were interested in learning about assessment and improvement; this committee was called the 'Early Adopters Group' (October 2002 - November 2003, see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/OrgsConfs/EarlyAdopters/index.htm). The objectives for this committee were: (1) to help create models of assessment of student learning programs at K-State; (2) to mentor academic and student service units in their efforts to develop student learning outcomes (SLOs); (3) to help departments and units develop assessment strategies for SLOs; and (4) to aid student service units and other support areas with the development of on-going assessment programs. The objectives were accomplished through sharing of expertise and information among various departments.

The second group consisted of faculty and administrators who were charged with developing recommendations for new assessment policies and procedures for the university. This group was called the 'Student Learning Outcomes Task Force' (December 2002 – April 2003, see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/OrgsConfs/SLOT/index.htm). The Task Force, jointly appointed by the Provost and Faculty Senate President, produced three policy documents recommending that: (1) university-wide student learning outcomes be adopted to replace the existing University Educational Objectives (seehttp://www.k-state.edu/apr/UnivAssessment/ UGradObjArch.htm; (2) student learning outcome statements be identified for all degree programs, approved by departmental faculty and the dean, and submitted to the Provost by December 1, 2003; and (3) that two reporting systems for assessment be created, one a brief update sent annually by each department to its dean, and the other a formal assessment report that would be integrated into the existing program review process as of January 2005 (see – http://www.k-state.edu/apr/OrgsConfs/SLOT/cia03.pdf). The Provost implemented the first two recommendations and discussions were started in Spring 2004 to address the third recommendation (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/process/reporting/memos/070103.pdf).

Developing Student Learning Outcomes

A major component of K-State's assessment framework is the promotion of student learning outcomes as the beginning point in the assessment process. In order for faculty to determine what decisions and actions are to be made to improve student learning, there

must be some agreement on what knowledge, skills and attributes students are expected to have as a result of completing a given degree program. Our efforts have included a shift from looking at the quality of teaching and educational inputs, to looking at outcomes (i.e., what students are able to do as a result of those inputs.) The importance of student learning outcomes has been affirmed in policies developed at the administrative level (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/process/reporting/memos/index.htm), in educational materials distributed to university units, and in discussions and workshops conducted across campus. Thus, most of the assessment efforts at K-State in 2003 were focused on the development of student learning outcomes at the university and degree program levels.

In early November 2003, a sub-committee of the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs (FSAA) Committee was created to facilitate campus-wide feedback on the proposed university-wide student learning outcomes (SLOs). An electronic message board was created to facilitate and document discussion of these SLOs (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/discussion/OfficialSummary.htm). In February and March of 2004, the APR staff summarized the comments and the FSAA sub-committee revised the SLOs before presenting them to the full FSAA committee. On March 16, 2004, the FSAA Committee approved the revised draft of university-wide undergraduate learning outcomes (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/ UnivAssessment/UGradObj.htm) and forwarded them on to the Faculty Senate for their vote. The Faculty Senate approved the undergraduate SLOs at their April 13, 2004, meeting. The undergraduate SLOs were included in the updated Undergraduate Catalog 2004-06 (see http://courses.k-state.edu/catalog/undergraduate/ aboutkstate/). The five approved university-wide undergraduate SLOs are: **Knowledge**, **Critical Thinking**, **Communication**, **Diversity** and **Academic and Professional Integrity**.

During the Fall 2003 semester, the Graduate Council worked in parallel to create, revise, and approve university-wide student learning outcomes for graduate students (see http://www.ksu.edu/grad/gc/gradSLO.htm). A summary of their actions is available in their meeting notes (see http://www.k-state.edu/grad/gc/2003min.htm). The graduate SLOs were approved at their December 2, 2003 meeting (see http://www.k-state.edu/grad/ gc/minagen/12_03min.pdf). The three approved university-wide graduate SLOs are: **Knowledge**, **Skills**, and **Attitudes and Professional Conduct**.

During this same period of time, individual departments were creating degree program-level learning outcomes, and as part of the process they revisited the university mission, their college and department mission and goals, and the requirements of accrediting agencies (where applicable). Faculty aligned their learning outcomes to reflect the university, college and departmental missions and goals. Faculty members endorsed program-learning outcomes before they were sent to their dean and then on to the Provost.

As of December 2004, program-level student learning outcomes had been submitted from 83% of the Associates, 91% of the Bachelors, 91% of the Masters, and 97% of the Doctoral degree programs. Student learning outcomes for the secondary majors, minors, interdisciplinary and certificate programs have been begun to be formulated and submitted. Degree program student learning outcomes at K-State can be viewed under the Reports tab on the APR website (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/majorfield/ index.htm).

Developing Assessment Plans

To sustain the on-going assessment process, degree program assessment plans for each of the undergraduate and graduate degree programs were developed or improved in 2004. The plans are built upon the student learning outcomes that were developed for each degree program.

In workshops offered in 2002 and 2003, Dr. Verschelden shared information with faculty on developing and implementing an assessment plan. Additional workshops were offered by the APR office in 2004. The following basic outline was provided to faculty both in hard copy and electronic form (see http://www.k-state. edu/apr/Library/steps.pdf). Note that the university, as a whole, is responsible for the first item in the outline, and degree-programs are then responsible for the other aspects.

1. Establish university learning outcomes, which are linked to our mission statement.
2. Identify and link degree program learning outcomes to University and college-wide learning outcomes/ mission and goals.
3. Identify the points in the curriculum or in co-curricular activities at which the

learning outcomes are expected to be learned or reinforced.

4. Identify the components of successful achievement of the outcomes.
5. Identify the evaluative criteria for effective, accurate, and successful performance for each component.
6. Identify the assignments and activities that promote the achievement of the outcome.
7. Identify the assessment points in the curriculum or co-curricular activities at which the learning outcomes are to be assessed.
8. Select multiple and appropriate methodologies and measures.
9. Construct, review, pilot test measures and implement the assessment plan.
10. Summarize results.
11. Degree program faculty reflect on results.
12. Identify changes needed to improve student learning.
13. Implment the changes.
14. Communicate results and maintain efficient feedback loops.

In the Spring of 2004, a draft template was developed by the APR Office to aid departments and units in preparing the assessment plans for their degree programs. This template was placed online, and deans and department/unit directors were provided with copies. Additional workshops on developing assessment plans, led by professional staff in the APR Office, and key faculty from various colleges, were held during the spring, summer, and early fall of 2004. These workshops were specifically designed to provide information on items to be included in the assessment plans, to share key memos and due dates, and to clarify the types of assessment methods that are appropriate for inclusion in the plans. The template, along with example assessment plans that utilized the template, were shared with workshop participants.

The template was revised several times over the summer and early fall, based on input received from faculty members and administrators who either attended these workshops, reviewed the template, or were employing the template. Throughout the revisions, however, the same four key sets of questions remained the same. The final version of the template for assessment plans is available online at http://www.k-state.edu/apr/Library/templatew.doc and is included in Appendix 2 of this report. The key items in the template that all departments must address in their assessment plans are:

1. **Identify at least 2 to 5 learning outcomes that will be assessed by the unit over the next three years**.
2. **How will the learning outcomes be assessed? What groups will be included in the assessment?**
3. **When will these outcomes be assessed? When and in what format will the results of the assessment be discussed?**
4. **What is the unit's process for using assessment results to improve student learning?**

At least 50% of the assessment methods used by departments and programs in their three-year assessment plans must be direct measures of student learning. In the past, departments at K-State have relied primarily on self-report measures of student learning and student satisfaction. This new requirement will help departments, and the campus as a whole, to move beyond these indirect measures. By allowing both direct and indirect measures to be included in the assessment plans, departments will have the flexibility of utilizing past methods while infusing new measures that more directly assess student knowledge, abilities, and attributes. Individual faculty members who have attended the workshops and members of department and college-wide assessment committees are helping their colleagues to choose appropriate measures. Please refer to Appendix 4 for some examples of assessment measures being used by faculty. Please see Appendix 5 for some examples of assessment results being used for improving student learning. Collection of data and use of results will continue as departments implement their assessment plans.

By the end of December 2004, departments and programs had developed and submitted assessment plans for 83% of the Associates, 76% of the Bachelors, 87% of the Masters and 91% of the Doctoral degree programs. As noted above, these plans specify how the degree program SLOs will be assessed over the next three years and the process by which the unit will use the assessment results to improve student learning.

In the summer of 2004, Dr. Dyer and the APR Office, in consultation with the Provost and the Deans, developed a review and approval process to ensure that critical features were incorporated into the assessment plans and to provide oversight and accountability. As part of that process, each college has appointed a College Assessment Review Committee (CARC). This committee assists the Dean with the review of the

undergraduate program assessment plans and reports, provides feedback and suggested revisions to the departments and programs, and recommends approval of assessment plans and reports from departments/programs within the college. The Graduate School's CARC performs this function for all assessment plans and reports from graduate programs (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/Library/charges.pdf for the charge to the CARCs).

Drs. Verschelden, Dyer, and Marsh developed a rubric for reviewing and scoring the assessment plans (see Appendix 3 or http://www.k-state.edu/apr/Library/rubric.pdf), and Dr. Marsh trained the members of each CARC in the use and application of the rubric. Each CARC will forward to the APR office its recommendations for assessment plans to be approved, and the professional staff in the APR Office will review these recommendations for consistency and submit to the Provost a final list for approval. The approval process will ensure a degree of consistency among the plans across campus, while allowing departments flexibility in how they approach assessment within their programs. Approved plans will be posted to the APR web site (http://www.k-state.edu/apr/majorfield/index.htm) as they become available.

Dr. Marsh shared the template and rubric with participants in the session she presented at the Midwest Association of Institutional Research (MidAIR) Conference in November 2004. We have already received requests from two institutions to adapt these documents for their own use. Thus, other institutions in the North Central region are facing similar challenges of developing, implementing, and sustaining an assessment process. The sharing of assessment tools and measures will be mutually beneficial to K-State and surrounding institutions. These tools plus additional materials will be presented at the 2005 Higher Learning Commission Annual meeting, along with a fuller discussion on the steps K-State has taken to establish a culture of assessment.

Reporting Progress on Assessment of Student Learning

An on-going reporting process is being created in which an Annual Assessment of Student Learning Report will summarize the status and progress related to assessment in each degree program. The information from the annual assessment reports will also be included as a component of the Program Review reports that are part of the Kansas Board

of Regents (BOR) current eight-year reporting cycle. This internal annual reporting system will ensure oversight of the assessment plans and hold the departments and programs accountable for the implementation of assessment plans and the application of the results to the continuous improvement of student learning.

The APR Office is in the process of finalizing a template for aiding the departments/programs in the preparation of these annual reports and a rubric for reviewing them. The template for the annual reports reflects the items that appear in the template for the assessment plans, and the rubric for reviewing the reports is aligned with the items included in the template. Once the reporting template and rubric are finalized, they will be posted on the APR web site (anticipated for early Spring 2005). The College Assessment Review Committees will be responsible for reviewing and providing feedback to the departments on their annual assessment reports. From the department reports, each dean will prepare and submit to the Provost a brief summary of the status and progress made on assessment within the college each year.

College and University Assessment Committees

The Early Adopters Groups and the SLO Task Forces have dissolved since their original charges have been completed. Importantly, though, faculty and administrators on these committees continue to serve as valuable assessment leaders and advocates within their respective departments and colleges. As the assessment process continues to evolve into a more mature stage, new committees have been formed to address new oversight needs. In addition to the College Assessment Review Committees described above, two other new committees were formed in the Fall of 2004: the University Assessment Surveys Committee and the University Assessment Facilitators Committee.

The Provost and the Chair of the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee jointly appointed the University Assessment Surveys Committee, which has been charged to:
- Revise, update, or replace the existing Senior, One-year Alumni, and Four-year Alumni surveys, with attention paid to the purposes each survey is intended to serve;

- Revise the data collection procedures in the light of technological advances and new research on survey design;
- Review the frequency and timing of the surveys to avoid counterproductive duplication of other campus-wide surveys; and
- Determine whether to revise or retain the current procedures for dissemination of survey results.

The professional staff in the APR office serve as resources to this university committee and provide information on the current survey system. The APR staff also provide suggestions for improvement in and modification of the administrative aspects of the survey system (e.g., development of web surveys and the reporting process of results). Though this is an ad hoc committee, it will play an important role in improving one of the assessment tools that will be available for use by departments and programs.

The University Assessment Facilitators Committee was appointed by the Provost and is comprised of representatives from the Assessment or Assessment Review Committees from each academic college, the Division of Continuing Education, the Graduate School, the Libraries, and Student Services. The Assessment Facilitators Committee will build the university's capacity to effectively assess student learning within a culture of continuous educational improvement. The charge to this committee is to:

- Gain a university-wide perspective on the assessment of student learning (ASL) and use that perspective to view the work in their own colleges and units.
- Function as a conduit between the Provost/APR offices and the college assessment committees to share information on assessment of student learning at K-State.
    - Communicate expectations, information, etc. to college committees from Provost/APR offices.
    - Communicate questions, concerns, needs from the college committees to the Provost/APR offices.
- Share ideas about effective approaches to assessment of student learning that are being used in the colleges.
- Seek counsel from university committee members about specific issues in their own colleges and return the advice/assistance back to the college committees.

This newly formed, standing committees will enhance communication about assessment across our campus, will move forward the various assessment initiatives, and will facilitate the institutionalization of assessment at our university.

Integration of Assessment beyond Academic Degree Programs

Although the assessment process at K-State was originally focused on the academic degree programs, the goal is for eventual integration of other service and support units into the process. As of 2004, the following major units/initiatives have started developing student learning outcomes and are working on assessment plans that parallel and integrate with the process being followed by the academic programs. These units are working with the APR Office during the review, revision, and approval process.

- Hale Library (has developed an initial focus on defining expectations and assessing information literacy)
- Institutional Advancement (has developed assessment strategies within the Student Affairs and Student Life areas)
- Division of Continuing Education (assists programs in the distribution and collection of student learning information, student and departmental evaluations; assessment of student services related to distance education)
- Service Learning (supports faculty and administration in the design, organization and conduct of service learning activities)
- Diversity Assessment Facilitators (Diversity is an important priority of the university, as reflected in its inclusion among the five undergraduate university student learning outcomes, and the assessment of diversity is being approached through multi-dimensional but coordinated efforts including partnerships with the Tilford Group, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, the Assessment & Program Review office, and academic colleges.)

Details about these assessment initiatives are included in Section V of this report in the subsection on Assessment of University-wide Programs and Support Units.

Linking Student Learning Outcomes to Curriculum and Co-curricular Activities

Through the workshops, faculty have been encouraged to identify the places, both

in the curriculum and through extra-curricular student life experiences, where student learning may occur.   This process has spurred lively discussions among faculty about, for instance, the degree of coverage of important learning outcomes by their courses, internships, study abroad and other curricular experinces, appropriateness of certain curricular requirements, and the importance of establishing linkages with other departments that provide courses for their majors. Discussions also have considered the effects of co-curricular activities on student learning, such as in the areas related to diversity and academic and professional integrity. As faculty become more involved in the assessment process, they are discovering and sharing with one another practical examples and models of assessment approaches.

IV. Educating the K-State Community and Faculty Training

One of the major objectives of improving our assessment efforts has been to help faculty understand more about assessment, develop their ability to design and implement effective assessment plans and programs, and improve communication and sharing of assessment experiences among academic departments and student service units.   Various assessment retreats, workshops, meetings, discussions, conversations, and presentations have been held around campus over the past three years (2002-2004). Based on faculty needs, these presentations have revolved around:

- Understanding the nature and purpose of assessment
- Historical context, assessment efforts, charges of assessment committees at K-State
- Creating and revising university-wide student learning outcomes for both undergraduate and graduate programs
- Guidelines and best practices for the assessment of student learning
- Identifying elements of an assessment plan and recommended assessment procedures (e.g., degree program level)
- Identifying appropriate direct and indirect measures
- Using results from assessment activities to improve programs and student learning
- Communicating assessment results (e.g., to students, faculty, program committees, planning groups, administrators, accreditors)
- Clarifying frequently asked questions (e.g., shift from assessing quality of teaching and educational opportunities to student learning; why grades are not enough; reviewing and making use of what faculty are currently doing to improve student learning; relationships among institutional effectiveness, program review, accreditation, and assessment; expectations for faculty involvement; audience for assessment results; and difficulty in measuring some learning outcomes)

- Providing examples of assessment activities from other departments
- Articulating K-State's reporting system and recommended guidelines/templates
- Providing an overview of assessment resources

The initial communication efforts with faculty and administrators were led by Dr. Verschelden and Dr. Downey (see earlier section on Understanding Assessment), and more recently by Dr. Dyer, Dr. Marsh, and Ms. Manzo. Assessment presentations have been given at the Deans and Department Heads annual retreats and regular meetings over the past two years. Senior faculty, assessment committee members, and the professional staff in the APR office all facilitate communication on assessment among individuals, committees, departments, colleges, and university units. The assessment experts at these presentations have disseminated guidelines that include principles of good practice, characteristics and benefits of an effective assessment plan, and the process for approval of these plans through venues such as retreats, workshops, meetings, the "Assessment Updates" newsletter, and the APR website (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/index.htm).

Online Assessment Resources

To guide degree programs in developing student learning outcomes and assessment plans, an on-line Assessment Manual (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/manual/index.htm) was developed by Dr. Verschelden and the professional staff in the APR Office. Both the members of the Early Adopters Work Group and the APR Advisory Committee have assisted with on-going revisions. Other on-line resources also are available to enhance the general understanding of assessment and to share with faculty the tools that are available for designing and implementing assessment of SLOs (see Resources at http://www.k-state.edu/apr/resources/index.htm and External Resources at http://www.k-state.edu/apr/extres/index.htm). These resources assisted departments as they developed, prepared, and submitted student learning outcomes for each of their degree programs (December 2003) and their assessment plans (November 2004). Departments also will use these resources as they prepare future assessment reports (i.e., annual progress reports and periodic program review reports.) The APR website (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/index.htm) is continuously updated, and it was restructured in the fall of 2004 for better navigation and to accommodate the increasing number and type of assessment reports and activities that are needed by faculty, students, and the public.

Assessment Workshops and Conferences

K-State faculty members continue to take advantage of opportunities to learn more about assessment practices from other institutions and by attending assessment conferences. The following describe some of the recent workshops and conferences in which K-State faculty and administrators have participated.

Academic Chairpersons Conference

In February 2004, a 10-member team from K-State, with representation from most of the colleges, attended both the 21ˢᵗ Annual Academic Chairpersons Conference and the daylong pre-conference Assessment Workshop, held in Orlando Florida, that addressed developing departmental assessment plans. The pre-conference workshop presented methods for identifying and measuring student learning outcomes, as well as various ways to interpret assessment data and use data in the decision-making process.   Representatives who attended the Academic Chairpersons Conference and Assessment Workshop were: Dr. Susan Siepl-Coates (Architecture, Planning & Design), Dr. Troy Harding (Techonology & Aviation, Salina Campus), Dr. Kristina Boone (Agriculture), Dr. Cia Verschelden, Dr. Kelly Liu and Dr. Stephen Kiefer (Arts & Sciences), Dr. Carmel Parker White (Human Ecology), Ms. Tara Baillargeon (Hale Library), Dr. Ron Downey and Ms. Patricia Marsh (APR Office). The Provost, the APR Office, and college deans jointly covered the team's travel expenses.

Dr. Susan Hatfield, the assessment workshop leader and a nationally-recognized assessment expert, has allowed K-State to use her materials for our workshops, meetings or retreats, as we work to strengthen our assessment program. K-State participants at this conference shared their learning with colleagues at home by hosting at least two on-campus workshops in their respective departments and colleges after their return, and the APR office also offered additional campus-wide workshops. The joint efforts of the conference participants and the APR Office staff have focused on building understanding and "buy in" among the faculty.

Kansas Board of Regents Assessment Conference

The Kansas Board of Regents and the system-wide Council of Chief Academic Officers (COCAO) sponsored their first annual Regents Assessment Conference, which was held at Fort Hays State University on April 8, 2004. Members of K-State's APR office were involved with the conference. The former Associate Provost, Dr. Downey, served as a member of the planning committee, and Dr. Marsh was one of the presenters at the conference. A team of K-State faculty attended the conference, and one of our extension agents also was among the presenters. The Provost provided funds for attendance for the first 25 K-State participants who signed up for the conference. The conference brought together experts on and practitioners of assessment from various colleges and universities around Kansas, and participants were able to gain insights from Dr. Peter Ewell, the workshop keynote speaker and a recognized expert on assessment. The broad range of topics presented at the conference allowed faculty members to learn about the types of assessment plans that have worked and those that have not worked at other institutions (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/resources/rac04.pdf).

Attendees of the state-wide assessment conference noted that they enjoyed the "opportunity to network with other universities" and were able to see the "different levels of assessment at various colleges." For future conferences, the K-State participants would like to "see more specific examples of comprehensive assessment plans, finished cycles that discuss assessment results, the changes or actions made to improve student learning, and online assessment". These comments highlight the positive changes taking place in the culture on our campus for comprehensive assessment and reflect our progress toward a more mature stage of development in assessment.

K-State Assessment Workshops

The workshops conducted in spring, summer, and fall of 2004 were designed to assist departments and degree programs in developing comprehensive and effective degree program assessment plans. These workshops were jointly hosted by APR staff and key faculty members who served as assessment representatives from their colleges; they also were part of the K-State team who attended Dr. Hatfield's assessment workshop in

February 2004.   They covered the following themes: common language and approaches to identifying student learning outcomes, developing a plan for the assessment of student learning in a degree program, identifying tools for assessing student learning outcomes, and the interpretation, use and communication of results. More recent workshops (Fall 2004) have covered the recommended templates for the submission of assessment plans, the use of the scoring rubric in evaluating the assessments plans, and the reporting and feedback process established at K-State (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/resources/workshops.htm).

Participants at the K-State hosted assessment workshops commented on the overall usefulness of the materials, handouts, hands-on exercises, and practical tips on improving student learning outcome statements. They mentioned that the workshops enhanced their understanding of the assessment process, and that they found immediate applicability of the materials to their present assessment activities. The participants enjoyed interacting with faculty from other departments and learning about assessment efforts in other units, and they were enthusiastic about the increased communication and shared knowledge among departments related to the development of assessment plans. The workshops continue to be revised and used to address faculty requests for assessment information and resources.

Assessment Newsletter

A more systematic method of informing and involving individuals in assessment is provided monthly by the "Assessment Updates" Newsletter published by the APR office (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/resources/newsletter.htm). Appendix 6 includes the first issue of this newsletter, published in February 2004. The newsletter contains articles on assessment, information about assessment activities at K-State, best practices from K-State and other institutions, and discussions related to relevant assessment issues.   The monthly publication is distributed to more than 400 faculty and staff members who are currently involved in developing and implementing assessment programs in their respective departments. Leaders of Student Senate and Graduate Student Council also receive copies of the newsletter.

V.   History and Review of Assessment Work at K-State

University History

K-State began as a four-year college, earning its place in history as the first college to achieve all requirements for land-grant stature through the Morrill Act of 1862.   It has grown and evolved into a major student-centered research extensive university since opening its doors in 1863. By the early 1930s, the college emerged as an agriculturally intensive land-grant institution. In the late 1950s, the school's focus was broadened with the addition of a College of Arts and Sciences, and its stature was changed from college to university by a unanimous vote of the Kansas State Legislature and became Kansas State University. In 1991, the Kansas legislature incorporated the Kansas College of Technology (Salina, KS) within K-State as the College of Technology and Aviation. Prior to 1991, the school was known as the Schilling Institute (1969) and as the Kansas Technical Institute (see http://www.sal.ksu.edu/campusoffices/pr/guide-about.html for additional history on this college). With the addition of a new college, K-State revised its mission statement to more fully encompass the growing scope of the university as a major land-grant institution.

The university's mission statement (see http://www.k-state.edu/provost/planning/mission.html) emphasizes the learning opportunities that are provided to students to help them develop the knowledge, understanding, and skills characteristic of an educated person. The university prepares its students to be informed, productive, and responsible citizens who participate actively in advancing cultural, educational, economic, scientific, and socio-political undertakings.

The University Today

K-State has broadened its scope far beyond that of a land-grant institution focused primarily on agriculture and applied sciences. Today, the university stands as a comprehensive student-centered research-extensive institution where students may pursue a variety of degrees in the professional programs, basic and applied disciplines, natural sciences, social science, arts and humanities, and in the fine and performing arts.   The instructional dimension of the university continues to be a top priority, with students

enrolling from across the state, the nation, and internationally from approximately 100 foreign countries. K-State has distinguished itself by creating a learning environment where there is concern for the individual and by providing a caring, friendly atmosphere for its students. Such an atmosphere has led to tremendous alumni loyalty, as reflected in K-State ranking first nationally among all public universities and colleges in percentage of alumni who give back to the institution.

K-State has a broad range of degree offerings in its nine colleges and the Graduate School, with 6 associates, 82 bachelors, 62 masters programs, and 39 doctoral programs. In FY 2004, 4,400 degrees were awarded, including nearly 860 from the Graduate School (IPEDS Degrees Conferred Survey, 2004). The College of Arts and Sciences is the largest academic unit, with offerings ranging from liberal studies to cutting-edge science. K-State's teacher education program is the largest in Kansas; the university's College of Engineering provides the broadest range of programs in the state; and the programs in the College of Architecture, Planning and Design are highly ranked (among the top 10 in the nation). Our technology and aviation program has one of the largest and best university-based pilot programs in the country. The university also offers innovative programs in the College of Business Administration, as well as unique and internationally recognized programs in the colleges of Agriculture, Human Ecology, and Veterinary Medicine, all of which play an important role in the state of Kansas and its economy. Advances in interactive technology have allowed K-State to offer more courses and programs at a distance, making the university an even more vital contributor to the state, the nation, and the world.

Research endeavors at K-State have returned significant dividends to students and to the people of Kansas. Graduate students are traditionally major contributors to research projects, but K-State also encourages and provides opportunities for undergraduates to become significantly involved in research, as early as during the freshman year in many cases. Total competitive research funding from Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 exceeded $105 million, and overall research expenditures exceeded $180 million.

<u>Importance of Teaching</u>

K-State has a strong commitment to and tradition of providing excellence in undergraduate teaching. This commitment is apparent in the current mission statement as well as through the recent adoption of university-wide student learning outcomes. To help foster these ideals, various programs have been developed to assist faculty in their teaching and to reward them for achieving excellence. In 1993, the university established the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL, see http://www.k-state.edu/catl/) to help improve teaching abilities (see next section for more details), and in 1995, created the University Chair for Distinguished Teaching Scholars (now called the Coffman Chair for Distinguished Teaching Scholars in honor of former Provost James Coffman; see http://www.k-state.edu/provost/academic/ scholars/index.htm) to recognize scholarship in teaching and promote advancements in teaching and learning. The College of Education offers a graduate course, "Principles of College Teaching," for graduate students as well as faculty, to promote and develop strong teaching skills. The Information Technology Assistance Center (iTAC see http://main.itac.ksu.edu/) provides assistance to faculty in the use of technology for enhancing the learning environment for students in the classroom and through on-line courses.

The importance of excellent teaching is recognized through several university-level awards, each of which includes a monetary reward (see http://www.k-state.edu/provost/ academic/awards/index.htm). These include the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, the Presidential Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising, the Commerce Bank Undergraduate Outstanding Teaching Awards, and the Distinguished Graduate Faculty Awards. There also are many awards for teaching and advising given at the department and college levels.

K-State's traditional commitment to excellent teaching provides a solid foundation upon which to build a strong culture of assessment that emphasizes improvement of student learning. Our goal is to make excellent teaching and improvement of student learning synergistic core components of our academic programs.

History of Assessment of Student Learning to 2001

Prior to 2000

The original foundation for setting forth clearly stated university-wide goals for providing students with the best learning opportunities was the "Objectives of the Educational Program" (Undergraduate Catalog 2002-2004. Over the years, these 'educational objectives' have been revised on numerous occasions as the university made improvements to its programs and worked to enhance opportunities provided to its students for a more engaged learning environment. A brief history on the evolving 'educational objectives' can be found at http://www.k-state.edu/apr/UnivAssessment/index.htm.

The educational objectives and mission statement were primarily internally driven policies. External forces, however, have also helped to frame the continued improvements of university programs and learning objectives. In addition to the discipline-specific accrediting agencies, the Kansas Board of Regents (BOR) has played an important role in the university's involvement with assessment of academic programs. Beginning in the late 1980s, the BOR required that a 'Major Field Assessment Report' (program review report) be completed for all undergraduate programs offering a major or secondary major. In 1997, in consultation with the BOR, K-State established an eight-year review cycle for all undergraduate and graduate programs. These reports were to be used for developing and improving program quality. The following criteria were adopted by the BOR in 1997 to evaluate the quality of the academic programs at K-State (Self-Study Report, 2001):

- Centrality of the program to fulfilling the mission and role of the institution;
- The quality of the program as assessed by the strengths, productivity, and qualifications of the faculty;
- The quality of the program as assessed by its curriculum and impact on students;
- Demonstrated student need and employer demand for the program;
- The program's service provided to the discipline, the university, and beyond; and
- The program's cost-effectiveness

The criteria listed above provided the basis upon which programs have been assessed, reviewed, and evaluated for institutional effectiveness. Information regarding the program review process for K-State can be found on the web at http://www.k-state.edu/apr/programreview/History.htm. A process is being established by K-State to integrate

assessment of student learning plans, activities, and reports into this eight-year program review cycle (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/process/reporting/memos/070103.pdf). This integration will help connect assessment of institutional effectiveness with the assessment of student learning.

In the 1980s, the university developed a series of questionnaires to obtain feedback from graduating seniors, one-year alumni, and four-year alumni on their educational experiences at K-State. The Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee was charged with the creation of these student feedback questionnaires. A sub-committee carried out the charge, with assistance from survey experts. During the 1987-88 academic year, the university-wide questionnaires and process for administering the survey results were accepted by Faculty Senate (personal communication with Dr. Gerald Hanna, 2004). Since the early 1990s, many departments and colleges have been using the university-wide survey results as part of their assessment plans.

2000 - 2001

The former office of Educational Resources was originally given the responsibility of overseeing the BOR program review process and university-wide surveys. Over the years, the functions and duties of that office were divided into separate units. The office of Planning and Analysis now addresses university planning and evaluation functions, along with fulfilling internal and external data requests. In the summer of 2000, the APR office was created and now handles the Regents' program review process, accreditation reviews, university-wide surveys, and assessment initiatives such as general education, basic skills, and university and degree program assessment of student learning plans.

Historically, K-State's approach to assessing student learning has been heavily reliant upon self-report data. These indirect measures of student learning remain important, but they offer an incomplete picture of what students are learning. Newer initiatives have been evolving at K-State over the last three years to assess more directly what students are learning.   The Provost expressly established the APR office to evaluate educational outcomes and to support colleges and departments in their assessment activities. Additional responsibilities of the professional staff in the APR office include (1) consulting with faculty

and academic units in planning, conducting, and maintaining college/department assessment initiatives; (2) supporting and coordinating the university-wide academic assessment activities; (3) serving as a resource on assessment issues; (4) supporting and coordinating the university's program review and assessment reporting processes; (5) serving on various committees that address assessment issues; and (6) working to establish assessment feedback loops throughout the university. Although a number of processes predated these newer initiatives, including regents-specified reviews, there was a continual evolution in the types of assessment activities that were being implemented at the time of the 2001 accreditation visit by the HLC.

As requested by the BOR and in preparation for the 2001 accreditation visit, graduate programs were integrated into the program review cycle and assessment practices were infused into the Graduate School. Several steps were taken to increase faculty knowledge and awareness of assessment in preparation for the 2001 self-study and in reaction to the accreditation team's preliminary observations. These steps facilitated the university's growth toward a more advanced level of assessment, as outlined by the HLC. For example, mini-grants (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/mini-grants/index.htm) were awarded to faculty members who were preparing plans for assessing student learning. Funds were utilized to send faculty and administrators to assessment conferences and training workshops. A general education assessment pilot project (see http://www.ksu.edu/catl/uge/facsen.htm) also was funded by the Provost and conducted by the APR office to better assess the university's general education program.

An Advisory Committee with representatives from units across the campus (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/OrgsConfs/AdvCom/index.htm) was formed in the Fall of 2000 to obtain feedback from faculty and students regarding assessment practices of the APR office, and to gather faculty and student concerns about assessment. The major tasks of the committee were to: (1) advise the APR staff in the development of a short-range agenda for assessment efforts; (2) advise the APR staff in the development and maintenance of the APR website and newsletter, which are informative tools and resources for students, faculty, department heads, university administrators; (3) provide guidance on the review of assessment materials for past and future HLC accreditation visits; and (4) consult with APR staff in the review of final reports such as from the mini-grant program and other

efforts to increase faculty involvement in assessment activities.

Assessment of University-wide Programs and Support Units

K-State's faculty and administrators realize that many of the learning outcomes that they expect students to achieve by graduation are, in fact, derived from the total college experience (i.e., involving both academic and co-curricular experiences). There is emerging agreement that significant learning occurs not only in the classroom, but also in the co-curricular arenas. Thus, the assessment of university-wide learning outcomes can be shared across the various academic departments and support units within the university. Below are examples of programs and support units that have made significant progress in developing integrated approaches linked to the university's assessment program.

University General Education (UGE)

Since the 1992 NCA accreditation site report, the faculty and administration of the university have made continual improvements in our general education program. The Faculty Senate approved a general education program in 1994 (see http://www.ksu.edu/catl /uge/welc5.htm). The most recent University General Education (UGE) program was implemented during the Fall of 1997 (for a more in-depth history, see http://www.ksu.edu /catl/uge/welc3.htm). As part of the degree requirements in each undergraduate program at K-State, each student must take at least 18 credit hours of approved UGE courses, of which at least six hours are in 300-level courses or above.

The key elements of the UGE program (see http://www.ksu.edu/catl/uge/ welc0.htm) are:

- The ability to think critically and analytically;
- The ability to read, write, and speak so as to enhance accurate and thoughtful communication; and
- A commitment to intellectual curiosity, to lifelong learning, and to acquiring a broad range of knowledge.

These criteria are embedded in every course approved for the UGE program. Each college and its departments contribute to the UGE program by designing UGE courses that fit the

needs of students within and outside of the college. The broad participation among departments helps to provide breadth of knowledge to students at K-State.

Courses approved for general education are not intended to add additional hours to degree requirements, but instead they replace elective or other non-major requirements that are already contained within the degree programs. The UGE requirements are in addition to the required basic skills (core) courses in English and public speaking. For most programs, mathematics is also a required core course. Certain pedagogical techniques are required for all general education courses, specifically providing an active learning environment, an experiential context, and an opportunity for students to connect ideas across courses or disciplines. Special provisions are made in the number of UGE courses required for transfer students.

Approval of UGE courses occurs through a three-step process. Courses that are proposed for the UGE program are reviewed by the UGE Council, which is made up of a representative group of faculty from each of the colleges. Courses that are approved by the UGE Council are sent to Faculty Senate Academic Affairs (FSAA) for their approval and then sent to Faculty Senate for final approval. To ensure the continued quality of courses, each course is reassessed every five years following each approval decision (e.g., reviews for a course approved in 1997 would occur in 2002-03 and then again in 2007-08). The review process and reapproval are the responsibility of the UGE Council. A Provost designee (Dr. Victoria Clegg) and a staff person from the APR office help to facilitate the UGE Council's review of UGE courses.

The Inter-College Coordinating (ICCP) Panel is composed of associate and assistant deans who assist the deans with the administration of the undergraduate programs of the Colleges.   The ICCP is responsible for inter-college communication concerning the following UGE matters: course/experience development and assessment, program development and assessment, resource allocation, and course scheduling. While the approval of UGE programs and courses/experiences remains within established faculty channels, the Inter-College Coordination Panel works with the UGE Council and the provost's office on related issues (http://www.k-state.edu/catl/uge/coord.htm, 12/21/04).

The APR office facilitates the five-year review process by administering survey packets to faculty, students, and department heads; analyzing the data and generating reports; and providing feedback to the Council on ways to improve the review process. One of the main objectives of the review process is to reassess and evaluate the extent to which the key elements and pedagogical techniques of the UGE program are still part of the instructional process in the course.   This objective is achieved through feedback from department heads, instructors, and enrolled students.

Assessing General Education

In 2000-01, a plan with two phases was implemented for assessment of the UGE program (see http://www.ksu.edu/catl/uge/facsen.htm for the historical development of this plan). Phase I consisted of a pilot study to assess student learning in the UGE program. Phase II (UGE Course Survey process) included reviews of individual UGE courses to ensure the key UGE components were still incorporated in these courses (see previous section for a description of the approval process for new UGE courses).

Phase I. Both indirect and direct measures of student learning were used in the pilot study. These measures included surveys (e.g., alumni and course surveys), interviews with freshman and seniors, examinations of critical thinking (i.e., Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency—CAAP), student transcript analysis, and writing samples from freshmen and seniors. The APR office professional staff compiled and summarized the results of these assessment measures and provided a report to FSAA in the Fall of 2001. The APR staff concluded that is would not be feasible to implement a larger-scale version of the pilot study because of administrative difficulties and inconsistencies in collecting samples of student work (see http://www.ksu.edu/apr/UGEAssessment/0001.htm for report summary). The FSAA Committee concurred that a different approach needed to be considered.

Phase II.   In the summer and fall of 2004, the APR office analyzed data collected (2001-03) from the UGE Course Survey Review process (i.e., the five-year reassessment of approved UGE courses). The process involves self-report perceptions from department heads, instructors, and students about the UGE components covered in the course (see

http://www.ksu.edu/catl/uge/welc0.htm for more information on the components). This process provides faculty, Department Heads, Deans, and the Provost with course-based assessments of the quality of the UGE program. In addition, as part of our ongoing analysis of the UGE program, the UGE Council engages in constructive discussions with faculty and the Provost designate (Dr. Victoria Clegg, Director of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning) about solutions that will strengthen the UGE program's offerings.

The APR office staff analyzed the trends in the perceptions of students about learning and pedagogy within UGE courses for each semester over a three-year period (2001-03). In each semester and for the three-year average, there was high agreement among students that 'active learning' techniques were being used within the UGE courses. Students also strongly agreed that 'experiential learning' was taking place in the UGE courses. They were in slightly less agreement that the UGE courses fostered the development of academic skills such as critical thinking, writing, and discussion skills (see Appendix 7 for illustrative figures). Further comparisons are being made based on class size, teaching staff (graduate student vs. faculty), content/discipline areas, and class level (e.g., 100- and 200-level vs. 300 level and above courses). Even though some evaluators would caution against using self-report data for evidence of direct learning, trend analysis of evaluation data can offer important information related to student learning across large cross-sectional groups of students (Lopez, 1997).

The data analyses, as applied to the five-year reassessment reports, are providing a more informed understanding about the types of learning and skills students see themselves acquiring within UGE courses. We also are examining the relationship between pedagogical techniques and learning as perceived by both students and instructors. Both the results from the assessment pilot (Phase I) and the results from the trend analysis are providing new directions for directly assessing and improving student learning within the general education program. These results have been shared with the Provost and the chair of the UGE Council, with further discussions and sharing of the results planned for Spring 2005.

New General Education Committees. In the Fall of 2003, two committees were formed to consider new approaches to the future of general education at K-State. One committee was to identify the problems with the current system and to provide effective solutions that could be quickly implemented, and the other was to solicit and discuss ideas about possible new directions for general education at K-State (see http://www.ksu.edu/catl/GenEd/).

The first committee (Procedures) provided a list of recommendations to the UGE Council, the ICCP, and to the Provost for changes to the current system. The recommendations were discussed by each of these groups during the 2003-2004 academic year, and modifications to some were proposed. Several of the recommendations that came from this committee were implemented in the Fall of 2004, and others are still under consideration.

The second committee (General Education Steering Committee, see http://www.ksu.edu/catl/GenEd/index.htm) engaged the faculty, students, and administrators in discussions concerning the future of general education at K-State. To facilitate campus-wide discussion, a campus forum was conducted at the end of the Spring 2004 semester. A survey was administered in the Fall 2004 to obtain information from faculty members about definitions, approaches, and criteria for general education. Results from the committee's efforts, surveys, and forum were summarized in a report sent to the Provost and the Faculty Senate President on November 30, 2004. A copy was also sent to the APR office.

Student Services & Student Life

K-State takes great pride in offering services that promote an atmosphere for academic success. This process begins with the recruitment of students and continues through their tenure with the university. After enrolling at K-State, students have access to a number of resources that can make the transition to college smoother. The Office of Institutional Advancement (IA) oversees the resources and programs that are located in the Office of Student Services and Student Life. Students enjoy living experiences, both on

and off campus, which promote academic, social, and leadership success. The university also provides programs and services on medical care (see http://www.k-state.edu/lafene /index.htm) as well as counseling (see http://www.k-state.edu/counseling/) and recreational activities (see http://www.recservices.ksu.edu/). Students enrolled at K-State have the option to enhance their academic success through participation in programs sponsored by the Academic Assistance Center (see http://www.ksu.edu/aac/) as well through those offered by the Career and Employment Services Center (see http://www.ksu.edu/ces/). Adult Student Services (see http://www.k-state.edu/adult/) and Disability Support Services (see http://www.k-state.edu/dss/) provide services to students with special needs, to make their experience at K-State as successful as possible.

In recognition of the importance of out-of-the-classroom experiences in student learning, the IA office formed a committee to create student learning outcomes for their services and programs. In the fall of 2003 the following draft of the learning outcomes was developed by the IA office:

Students, through the utilization of services and programs offered in the Division of Institutional Advancement*, will have demonstrated:

1. Ability to think critically and resolve problem situations in daily life decisions;
2. Awareness of ethical and community-accepted values as practiced through personal behavior and actions;
3. Understanding and appreciation of human differences in order to respect others and work together in a diverse world;
4. Skills to communicate clearly and effectively in relationships with others;
5. Transferability of knowledge and skills as applied to career opportunities.
6. Intra-personal development through an articulated sense of values, appreciation of aesthetics, self-esteem, and purpose;
7. Knowledge and utilization of good physical and mental health through exercise, nutrition, social support, and self-management behavior;
8. Ability to apply successful study methods and persistence in order to achieve satisfactory academic progress;
9. Capacity for leadership in groups, organizations, work, and team situations.

* Institutional Advancement Student Services units include Academic Assistance Center, Academic and Career Information Center, Admissions, Adult Student Services, Career Employment Services, Counseling Services, Office of Student Life, Disabled Student Services, Educational Supportive Services, Financial Assistance, Greek Affairs, Housing and Dining Services, Lafene Student Health Center, International Students, Minority Student Services, Recreation, Religious Activities, Student Activities, Student Union, Trio Programs, and Women's Center.

These objectives were modified this semester (Fall 2004), and the revised learning outcomes state that students will demonstrate:

- Awareness of ethical and community accepted values as practiced through personal behavior and actions;

- Understanding and appreciation of human differences in order to respect others and work together in a diverse world;

- Transferability of knowledge and skills as applied to career opportunities;

- Intra-personal development through an articulated sense of values, appreciation of aesthetics, self-esteem and purpose;

- Knowledge and utilization of good physical and mental health through exercise, nutrition, social support and self-management behavior; and

- Capacity for leadership in groups, organizations, and work or team situations.

Discussions about assessment initiatives among the staff members from the IA and APR offices remained on-going during the Fall 2004 semester. For example, recent discussions involved the review of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) as one means of assessing student learning across the programs offered under the IA office. In addtion, IA's strategies for the assessment of student learning will be included on the APR web site along with assessment plans submitted for each of the degree programs.

K-State Libraries

In the Spring of 2004, members of the K-State Libraries' staff met with the APR office to begin incorporating the Libraries into the university's assessment program. The Libraries' Assessment of Student Learning Plan was created and submitted to the Provost in Fall 2004. Although K-State Libraries do not grant degrees, librarians and staff members do provide support to the university community by way of resources, reference services, library and research instruction, and partnerships in academic pursuits. The Libraries' assessment plan reflects their mission to promote information literacy and critical thinking. The Libraries have appointed an active Information Literacy Task Force, and this group has proposed a definition of information literacy for adoption by the university:

Information literacy is the ability to recognize when information is needed; to effectively locate, evaluate, use and assimilate information; and to apply information to facilitate lifelong learning. Awareness of associated ethical, social, and economic considerations is essential to information literacy. (Approved by K-State Libraries Faculty, October 2004)

Through a partnership with Kent State University and the Association of Research Libraries, the K-State Libraries will utilize the SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills) survey as the primary instrument to assess information literacy of K-State students. The Libraries assessment plan will be posted on the APR web site along with the approved degree program assessment plans.   Librarians and staff at K-State Libraries will help degree programs assess information literacy and are collaborating with programs to develop assessment instruments.

Division of Continuing Education

Assessment of Student Services in Distance Learning

Beginning in the Spring of 1998 and continuing into the Spring of 2001, distance students at K-State were given surveys, administered by the Individual Development & Educational Assessment (IDEA) Center, to assess the services offered by the K-State Division of Continuing Education (DCE). Since the fall of 2001, DCE has administered an online survey, which is typically given to all distance students during the last two weeks of the fall semester. All distance students are alerted to the survey and encouraged to participate.

Services that are assessed are:
  ➢ Registration and enrollment
  ➢ Textbook purchasing and delivery
  ➢ Sending and receiving course materials from the Facilitation Center
  ➢ Library access and services
  ➢ The K-State Online course management system
  ➢ The services of Telenet 2 synchronous audio/video teleconferencing system if this system was used in the student's courses
  ➢ IT Help Desk
  ➢ All other technologies that were available to the student
  ➢ Overall experience with distance learning

A series of specific questions is included for each of the services listed above. Other data relevant to marketing, demographics, and reasons for enrolling also are

included. The online survey system is set up to aggregate, separate, and analyze survey answers in many different ways, so questions are designed so they can be used for study and comparison from year to year.

After the results are analyzed each year, specific findings are addressed in order to identify areas that need improvement. From these findings several topics are chosen each year for further analysis. For example, many students have indicated that they had little or no familiarity with library services, or that they did not have to use the library services. In response, a very active working group of staff from DCE and staff from the KSU Libraries have been constructively addressing these issues. The KSU Libraries have now launched a full-scale digital library, and its services for distance students are highlighted on the library web sites as well as on the DCE website. The KSU Libraries staff are also assisting faculty in understanding and using all the digital services. Student survey results on these items can now be compared over time to track longitudinal changes in the targeted topic areas.

Other outcomes from this assessment process have focused on student orientation and the need for an online handbook for distance learners, the need for a faculty handbook for those teaching distance courses, and the need for a more active system of hotlinks to other student services available to all students. These items are now included for priority attention in the DCE annual planning materials. Student feedback through this system helped to justify the expansion and unification of help desk services under the auspices of the Information Technology Assistance Center (iTAC) about a year ago.

DCE serves as a delivery and promotional partner for the academic programs of K-State. The assessment of student academic achievement through its courses falls to the individual degree programs for implementation. DCE assists in the distribution and collection of information about student learning, student evaluations of instruction, and any other departmental evaluations, but DCE does not directly receive any of this information.

For non-credit offerings and conferences, DCE conducts evaluations of events in cooperation with the offering agency or instructors, and these may include evaluation of the instructors, the content, and the services provided by DCE. In the case of offerings that meet continuing education requirements, the evaluations are aligned with the approved

content and outcomes, and summative information is provided to the specific agency or the individual instructor, as appropriate in each case.

[Center for Advancement of Teaching and Learning](#) (CATL)

The CATL, formerly the Office of Educational Advancement, was charged in 1993 by Provost James R. Coffman to maintain undergraduate teaching and learning as the highest priority for K-State. CATL champions these themes centrally and coordinates the exchange of ideas on undergraduate teaching and learning among faculty and administrators across our campus community.

CATL supports several active initiatives on campus through forums, presentations, and roundtable faculty discussions. The Faculty Exchange for Teaching Excellence plans and hosts teaching-related workshops and seminars for faculty on campus. The Tilford Group, an inter-disciplinary team of faculty, administrators, and students, is developing and helping faculty implement a multicultural curriculum model consistent with the diversity learning outcome. The Instructional Design and Technology (IDT) Roundtable hosts conversations among faculty members using various forms of mediated instruction.

Providing faculty members with student feedback on courses and instruction is a major effort that is administered by CATL. Two evaluation systems (TEVAL and IDEA) developed at K-State are offered, and the director consults with faculty members and departments about the interpretation of results.

As a member of the Provost's staff, Dr. Victoria Clegg, the director of CATL, collaborates with faculty groups and individuals to enhance instruction at K-State. She facilitates the support and governance for the University General Education (UGE) Program. She often serves on university-wide committees that focus on issues of teaching and learning, and is currently serving on the General Education Steering Committee and the Honors Task Force. She is collaborating on a project to assist faculty with the assessment of diversity student learning outcomes, and she teaches *Principles of College Teaching*, a graduate-level course offered each semester through the College of Education to graduate students and faculty.

Tilford Group

The Tilford Group (see http://www.k-state.edu/catl/tilford/) is a research and development group consisting of an interdisciplinary team of faculty, administrators, and students who are creating a multicultural curriculum model to facilitate the total student experience.   A primary focus of their efforts has been to identify multicultural competencies (see http://www.ksu.edu/catl/tilford/Competencies.htm) that are needed by K-State graduates to live and work in a diverse world.   K-State faculty, students, adminstrators, alumni, and employers recognize that it is important for students to "demonstrate awareness and understanding of the skills necessary to live and work in a diverse world," as stated in one of the university student learning outcomes (see http://www.k-state.edu/apr/UnivAssessment/UGradObj.htm). To advance and clarify this important learning outcome, the APR staff matched student learning outcomes for each academic unit with corresponding multicultural competencies identifed by the Tilford Group. This process indicated that the multicultural competencies could be assessed within the existing assessment processes.   A document (see http://www.ksu.edu/catl/tilford/ Diversity_SLOs.pdf) was created that summarizes the match between these competencies and the diversity learning outcomes of these degree programs.

The Tilford group continues to work on ways to help faculty develop and utilize multicultural competencies in their curriculum, and has started discussions and projects on ways to assess SLOs linked to diversity. Future directions for the Tilford Group include continued refinement of the student learning outcomes related to diversity, development of assessment measures, and integration of measurement tools for diversity into new or existing courses or educational modules.

Service Learning at K-State

The Community Service Program (CSP), the university's service learning program, was founded in 1987 in the first round of community service funding from the Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education (U.S. Dept. of Education). Since its inception, the K-State CSP has organized carefully designed service learning experiences that provide

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students with (1) preparation through academic course work, (2) meaningful service experiences that address expressed community needs, and (3) structured reflection following their service. At K-State, students and faculty play a major role in community service project development and program administration, while the CSP acts as a facilitator and provides support for project implementation. The CSP not only supports the community service activities of students and organizations throughout campus, but also is the home of a full range of service learning activities. These activities are embedded in two courses (a 3-hour and 1-hour credit course offered in the spring and fall respectively) that are designed to provide the preparation and reflection for both the Kansas and International Teams.

CSP Administration and Leadership

The structure of the CSP is designed to promote interdisciplinary interaction and teamwork among students and faculty. A full-time director, Dr. Carol Gould, reports directly to the Provost and manages the program (www.ksu.edu/csp).   All CSP activities are administered on a daily basis by highly skilled Student Coordinators, who are current and past participants of the program activities. The success of this program relies heavily on the direct involvement and leadership of Deans, Department heads, and faculty.

Student and Community Outcomes

Student Outcomes. Expected cognitive and affective learning outcomes from CSP program activities are outlined in the syllabi of the service learning courses, and in the guidelines provided to faculty teaching these courses. The learning outcomes include:

- Developing an awareness and appreciation for the principles of service learning;
- Learning the ethics and principles of community development;
- Developing cultural awareness and sensitivity and cross cultural communication skills;
- Understanding the culture, history and current situation of the host site;
- Learning and applying project-specific skills and planning for project work; and
- Learning leadership and interpersonal skills.

Community Benefits and Outcomes. As a result of the purpose and principles upon which the CSP is founded and organized, Kansas communities receive many significant benefits.

- ➢ *Relevant Projects.* Because the CSP addresses the needs that the community itself identifies as being important, projects are relevant and significant. Activities are pertinent to the development of each specific community.
- ➢ *Quality.* Based upon the past six years, communities received a minimum 1,200 hours of direct service during the time they hosted students. Communities benefit from the high caliber of student participants combined with the experience and expertise of the program staff and K-State faculty.
- ➢ *Ownership of the Project.* By involving the community in the design and implementation of the project, the CSP fosters a sense of community ownership in the development project. Thus, the community reaps direct benefits from its involvement.
- ➢ *Tangible Results.* The CSP helps to bridge the gap between ideas and action. Communities are assisted in implementing an important project, which results in tangible products for the community to use after the team completes its work. Further, many projects continue to provide long-term benefits to the community by strengthening local capacity for continued community development.

Assessment of Impact on Students

All students participating in CSP activities are asked to participate in structured critical reflection activities that demonstrate the impact of the experience. The intensity of the reflection activities corresponds to the level of involvement of the student ranging from simple evaluation and reflective essays to a credit-bearing seminar. One of the major activities of the CSP is the International Summer Teams, a year-long co-curricular service learning process that involves students in preparation, meaningful service, reflection, and evaluation. One validated method used to assess student learning is critical reflection skills analysis. Students are asked to read an essay that poses an ethical dilemma related to international service. They respond to this essay in a structured format that requires them to demonstrate critical thinking skills and understanding related to the stated learning objectives. Following the service, they repeat this exercise and the two responses are compared. In addition, the reflection seminar following service involves students in several thoughtful reflective exercises.

Utilizing and Integrating Additional Data on Student Learning Experience

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Data associated with the NSSE were collected from samples of freshmen and seniors at K-State during the Spring 2001 and 2004 semesters. The APR office staff have reviewed and analyzed the data from these samples. Based on this analysis, several key

areas of improvement (increase of at least 5% associated with engagement) have been identified, along with those areas where improvement in engagement could occur (see Appendix 8 for figures). Both freshmen and senior groups reported an increase from 2001 to 2004 in the type of mental activities they have engaged in at K-State. That is, on average, a 5% to 10% increase occurred for mental activities involving synthesizing, making judgments, and applying information. There was a dramatic increase among freshmen in 2004 in their intention and actions to engage in study aboard opportunities (approximately a 20% increase). Data collected from this cohort of freshmen in 2007 (i.e., when they will be seniors) will provide further evidence of the impact of campus-wide initiatives to encourage students to participate in study abroad programs.

Student perceptions were increasingly more positive over the past three years related to their critical thinking, effective writing, job knowledge and skills, and utilization of computers and technology in their program of study. Although, the length and frequency of written reports required of freshmen and seniors is gradually increasing, as indicated by the NSSE results from 2001 to 2004, there is still need for improvement in the frequency in which students write while at K-State. One of the proposed changes in the UGE program is the identification of upper level courses in a major in which more intensive writing can be incorporated. As this proposal is approved and put into place (anticipated for Spring 2005), writing improvement could be tracked through a re-administration of the NSSE instrument in 2007 (i.e., tracking improvement over another three-year period).

Areas needing improved engagement based on the 2004 NSSE findings are centered on in-class student projects, integrating ideas from various sources, personal code of ethics, understanding yourself, and analyzing quantitative problems. Small drops in engagement (averaging 5%) occurred in these areas since the 2001 survey, and further discussion with faculty and student affairs are warranted to identity ways to address the emergent trends.

VI. Future Directions

We have made progress in a number of areas in the last three years, but we also recognize there are additonal initiatives that we will need to implement to further our work in assessment. Following are examples of the areas on which we will focus over the next few years. These efforts and the resulting improvement will be documented and shared throughout the campus community, and the information will contribute to our next full accreditation visit from HLC scheduled for 2011-12.

One of our key initiatives will be to continue collaborative efforts among university units to enhance the assessment of student learning (e.g., development of tools for assessing university student learning outcomes, and collaboration with student affairs and K-State Libraries). The implementation of the assessment plans for all degree programs also will provide needed information about distance education at K-State. The initial insights will be provided by those colleges with distance degree programs (e.g., the colleges of Arts & Sciences, Agriculture, and Human Ecology). The roles of the various assessment committees on campus will evolve as assessment matures at K-State, and faculty involvement with these committees will help direct changes and improvements of student learning and the assessment process at the university.

Providing timely and accurate results and information to key stakeholders such as faculty, students, employers, the public, legislators, and accrediting agencies will continue to be addressed by more efficient and complete feedback loops (e.g., annual progress reports, integration of assessment with institutional processes such as program review, accreditation of programs, and development of new courses). Students will continue to be involved with university-wide assessment committees (e.g., APR Advisory Committee), and there is growing interest across the campus in enhancing student understanding of their role in department and college-wide assessment activities.   For instance, we will encourage the inclusion of students as members of department or college curricular committees, and sharing broadly with both undergraduates and graduate students the degree-program SLOs, the assessment plans, and the results of assessment.

Assessment results from the current three-year assessment plans are likely to result in changes in curricula and instruction; greater collaboration among faculty; reallocation of resources; and budgetary revisions. Consequently, assessment efforts will need to be linked closely with the university operational planning and budgeting processes. New three-year assessment plans are to be submitted in 2007, and we expect these to reflect more advanced assessment strategies and measures. Appendix 9 provides an overview of our future assessment efforts.

In summary, we have created and implemented a framework for the integration of assessment into the fabric and culture of the institution that includes more open communication among faculty regarding teaching pedagogy and developing innovative approaches for assessing student learning. We anticipate reaping the benefits of our efforts in the coming years as our degree programs use their assessment results to guide and make improvements in student learning at Kansas State University. There are still challenges we will need to address as we enhance and expand our assessment process, but the intellectual discoveries and opportunities for exploration can make this journey a very exciting and worthwhile endeavor for faculty, administrators, and students. We anticipate that our faculty will advance their own scholarship of teaching as they work to meet these challenges and achieve our goal of making assessment an integral and everyday component of our academic culture.

Appendices

1. Overview of Current Assessment Efforts
2. Template for Assessment Plans
3. Rubrics for Assessment Plans
4. Examples of Measures Used
5. *Examples of Use of Results*
6. Assessment Updates Newsletter, February 2004 Issue (PDF)
7. University General Education (UGE) Three-year Trend Analysis
8. Some Results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
9. Overview of Future Assessment Efforts, 2005-2010

Appendix 1
Overview of <u>Current</u> Assessment Efforts
Kansas State University

	Department/ Unit or Center	College	University
Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)	• Degree Program SLOs developed and informed by university SLOs/mission, college SLOs/mission, and accreditation standards	• College SLOs developed, where applicable (e.g., College of Business)	• Undergraduate SLOs passed by the Faculty Senate • Graduate SLOs passed by the Graduate Council • University SLOs replaced 'Educational Objectives' in university catalog
Assessment in the Degree Program	• Develop 2005-2007 assessment plans • Implement assessment plans • Review and document assessment efforts, implement changes, and use results on assessment to improve student learning	• Review, provide feedback, and make recommendations on assessment plans (by the College Assessment and Review Committees (CARCs), and annual progress reports (review committee to be confirmed in 2005) • Provide assessment resources, hold workshops, be an advocate of assessment and serve on College Assessment Committees	• Develop policies, timelines, procedures, templates, rubrics for evaluation of plans and reports • Develop and provide guidelines, assessment resources, a manual, newsletters, retreats, workshops, and consultations • Share best practices • Re-organize Assessment and Program Review (APR) website
Assessment of UGE and in the Co-curricular Areas (Student Affairs, Hale Library, Division of Continuing Education, Tilford Group)	• Starting to develop strategies to assess university student learning outcomes or to address assessment/student learning issues or problems		• Collaborate with units and assist in the development of strategies for integration within general framework of assessment of student learning • UGE – Review current K-State UGE courses and review the current UGE assessment process
Assessment -Related Surveys (Senior, Alumni, Employer Surveys)	• Develop and conduct surveys of students or graduates of the degree program • Use results improve student learning		• Review and revise senior, alumni and employer surveys by the University Assessment Survey Committee • Develop and conduct surveys of students or graduates of K-State • Analyze university level data, interpret and disseminate results

	Department/ Unit or Center	College	University
Reporting	• From Department Heads to Deans or Accreditation Agencies	• From Deans to Provost • Kansas Board of Regents (as part of Program Review)	• From Provost to University Constituents • HLC of NCA • Kansas Board of Regents (Performance Agreements)
Assessment Support	• Department Assessment Contacts	• CARCs • College Assessment Committees, when existent	• University Facilitators Committee • APR Advisory Group • APR Office • Provost Office
Student Participation	• Membership in department committees, e.g., curriculum, academic	• Membership in College Assessment Committees, when existent	• Membership in APR Advisory Group • Membership in Self-Study Focused Visit Report Committee • Included in the APR mailing list, e.g., newsletters

Appendix 2

<div align="center">

Template
Degree Program
Assessment of Student Learning Plan
Kansas State University

</div>

Instructions:

This template is a suggested guideline for creating three-year plans to assess degree-level student learning outcomes. The order and format of the information does *not* need to follow the template exactly, however the four key sets of questions (D1-D4) do need to be addressed in the three-year assessment plan.

If your program has been successfully accredited within the last four years (2000-2001 academic year or after), and if your accreditation report includes sections that specifically address the information requested in questions 2 – 4 below, then you may attach those relevant sections in lieu of providing separate responses to these questions. Please attach only the relevant sections and be sure to indicate which section(s) of the accreditation report addresses each of the questions 2 – 4. Alternatively, you may cut and paste into the template information from your accreditation reports(s) that answers these questions.

Assessment information/data needs to actually be collected within the three-year span (2005, 2006, and 2007) covered by this first round of the assessment plans. Since not all of the accrediting agencies have incorporated assessment of student learning within their approval policies, only certain sections of your reports may be applicable.

If you have any questions, please contact the Assessment and Program Review Office at apr@ksu.edu or 532-5712.

Last updated 10/04/04

Template
Degree Program
Assessment of Student Learning Plan
Kansas State University

☐　　　Check the box if your program's student learning outcomes have been modified since November 2003. If so, please email (apr@ksu.edu) or attach a hard copy to this document.

A.　College, Department, and Date

College:　　　*[Insert College Name]*
Department:　　*[Insert Department Name]*
Date:　　　　*[Insert current date]*

B.　Contact Person(s) for the Assessment Plans
[Insert each person's name and title]

Degree Program

[Insert degree level and name of degree program. Example: B.S. in Secondary Education]

Assessment of Student Learning Three-Year Plan

1.　　　**Student Learning Outcome(s)**
[Insert at least **2-5 learning outcomes** that will be assessed by the unit over the next three years. Each unit will select which of its learning outcomes to assess.

Special rationale for selecting these learning outcomes (optional):
[If applicable, provide a brief rationale for the learning outcomes that were selected]

Relationship to K-State Student Learning Outcomes (insert the program SLOs and check all that apply):

	University-wide SLOs (**Undergraduate Programs**)					Program SLO is conceptually different from university SLOs
Program SLOs	Knowledge	Critical Thinking	Communication	Diversity	Academic / Professional Integrity	
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						

Last updated 10/04/04

	University-wide SLOs (Graduate Programs)			Program SLO is conceptually different from university SLOs
Program SLOs	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes and Professional Conduct	
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

2.   **How will the learning outcomes be assessed? What groups will be included in the assessment?**

[Briefly describe the assessment tools, measures, or forms of evidence that will be utilized to demonstrate students' accomplishment of the learning outcomes selected in the three-year plan. Also indicate whether each measure is direct or indirect. If you are unsure, then write "Unsure of measurement type". There is an expectation that **half of the assessment methods/measures** will be <u>direct</u> measures of student learning (see **Measures, Rubrics, & Tools for Assessing Student Learning Outcomes** on the APR website for examples of direct and indirect measures).]

3.   **When will these outcomes be assessed? When and in what format will the results of the assessment be discussed?**
[Briefly describe the timeframe over which your unit will conduct the assessment of the learning outcomes selected for the three-year plan. For example, provide a layout of the semesters or years (e.g., year 1, year 2, and year 3), list which outcomes will be assessed, and which semester/year the results will be discussed and used to improve student learning (e.g., discussed with faculty, advisory boards, students, etc.]

4.   **What is the unit's process for using assessment results to improve student learning?**
[Briefly describe your process for using assessment data to improve student learning.]

Last updated 10/04/04

Appendix 3
Evaluative Rubrics for Assessment Plans

Department: _____

Degree Program Title: _____

Assessment Plan Elements	Very Good 4	Acceptable 3	Developing 2	Undeveloped 1	Score For Each Element
Student learning outcomes	At least two SLOs are clearly stated using the proper format.	At least two SLOs are stated but with some lack of clarity.	SLOs are stated but unclear regarding one or more critical aspects.	SLOs are not stated in an acceptable format.	
Assessment method for each outcome	Multiple assessment measures are identified for each outcome.	At least one assessment measure is identified for each outcome.	Assessment measures are identified for some outcomes.	Assessment methods are not identified or inadequately described.	
One-half or more of the methods are direct measures	At least one-half of assessment measures are direct.			Fewer than one-half of the measures are direct measures.	
Groups to be included	Groups are clearly identified.			Groups are not identified.	
Timeline for assessment implementation for next three years	There is a clear plan for assessment implementation over each of the next three years.	The plan is somewhat clear but has some areas that are incomplete.	Some parameters have been established but a clear timeline is not evident.	There is not a stated implementation plan.	
Process for data presentation and discussion	The process for the interpretation, presentation, and discussion of the data is clearly described, including who will be involved and timing.	The process is addressed but is unclear or incomplete in some aspects.	Some aspects of the process are described.	There is no stated plan.	
Process for implementing revisions based on assessment results	The process for implementing revisions based on assessment results is clearly described.	The process is addressed but is unclear or incomplete in some aspects.	Some aspects of the process are described.	There is no stated plan.	

Department: _____

Degree Program Title: _____

Action Decided by the College Assessment Review Committee (CARC):

    Date of Decision: _____

    Decision (check one):

        ☐ Revision Needed (*see first feedback section below*)

        ☐ Assessment Plan Approved

Feedback on immediate actions that are needed before approval:

Recommendations and feedback for the future (e.g., reporting assessment activities and results):

Appendix 4

Examples of Measures Used

Direct Measures:

- Capstone experience (e.g., design projects, field projects and experience, practicum, thesis, strategic plans, oral presentations, written products, student teaching portfolio, course exams, and course assignments)
- Portfolio (e.g., major projects, examples of student work in various courses)
- Locally developed tests or selected key questions on exams or quizzes
- Case analyses, studies or reports
- Laboratory exercises, practicals, or reports
- Standardized tests (e.g., Principles of Teaching and Learning, PRAXIS II Standardized Test, Grable and Cantrell test assessing four domains of student achievement)
- National licensure, certification or professional exams (e.g., Education of Young Children state licensure exam, National ServSafe Certification Exam)
- Internally and externally reviewed exhibition or product of student work (e.g., architectural design project)
- Employer evaluation of performance during internships, based on program objectives and student learning outcomes

Indirect Measures:

- Senior exit surveys and focus groups
- Alumni surveys
- Employer, company, or industry advisory group surveys
- Placement in national and international competitions and awards programs
- Student perceptions of their learning, experience or satisfaction in the degree program
- Level of student engagement on practices related to high levels of learning and development (NSSE)

Appendix 5

Examples of Use of Results

Example #1

Degree Program
Interior Design

Type of Change:
Changes in Learning Experiences of Specific Courses

Forms(s) of Assessment Evidence:
Rubric (portion) covering graphic communication skills [direct measure]
Faculty Team review and assessment of sampling of final projects [indirect measure]

Conclusion:
Based on the general scores under the criteria for graphic communication for project requirements, it was determined by faculty teaching ID345, Space and Activity Planning I Studio, that overall students were demonstrating "acceptable" but "average" graphic communication skills. The entire ID Faculty Team was asked to meet and review a sampling of student work from the final project in the course. Upon this team's review and assessment it was decided that more students should be performing at a higher skill level.

Change:
It was determined that additional attention to hand graphic skills should be given in ID315 Advanced ID Graphics (prerequisite graphics course to ID345) to better prepare future students. Additional learning experiences (hand graphic exercises) would be inserted into ID425, Space and Activity Planning II Studio, to increase skills of existing students.

Example #2

Course:
Counseling Strategies in Dietetics (HRIMD 515)

Type of Change:
Revising teaching to more effectively address a learning outcome

Forms(s) of Assessment Evidence:
A self-assessment questionnaire was administrated to measure student confidence on achieving the 23 student learning outcomes for the HRIMD 515 course. This indirect measure was given at the beginning and end of the course (pre/post design) in Spring 2003. The rating scale was anchored from 1 = no idea how to do this (very low confidence) to 7 = ready for the real world. I'm able to demonstrate my mastery.

Conclusion:
The pre-test confidence scores ranged from 2.90 to 4.50, with one exception of 5.20.
The post-test confidence scores ranged 5.40 to 6.80, except for one outcome where the mean was 4.40 ("Advocate wellness and wholeness across the weight spectrum in weight management"). Although there

was an overall improvement in confidence with achieving the learning outcomes, the instructor concluded that changes were needed for the 'Advocate wellness and wholeness' learning outcome.

Change:
The instructor re-evaluated the written and lecture materials for the course. In addition, a list of expected competencies for the profession was incorporated into the course. Since Spring 2003, student learning outcomes (SLOs) for the program and the university have been created. These were examined in relation to the profession's competencies, and significant changes were made to the course SLOs and content to reflect the new focus on program SLOs, professional competencies, and connections with the university-wide SLOs. A few course-specific outcomes remain, such as the "Advocate wellness and wholeness" that is now a Module outcome, a short-term outcome that is one of several focal points for a newly created course outcome.

Example #3

Pilot Project
This project will work to:

- Assess student written communication skills across different disciplines (e.g., engineering technology, humanities, and social science courses).
- Develop tools for assessing writing that function across the different disciplines.
- As the new writing center at KSU-Salina opens, rubric evaluation tools will be created to assess student writing across the different disciplines.

Rationale for Project:
A recent Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) review at KSU-Salina highlighted the need to create methods for assessing and gathering information about student communication skills, especially in writing.

Forms(s) of Assessment Evidence that will be used:
As part of the on-going assessment process within the College of Technology and Aviation, the faculty are working to develop and share: (1) a basic writing rubric designed to assess communication skills across disciplines using five criteria: focus, purpose, development, organization, and language conventions; (2) custom rubrics designed by individual faculty for cross-curricular writing projects, utilizing the five basic criteria; and (3) a system to gather empirical research data to illustrate student outcomes, according to the five criteria. The data fall into 3 categories:
- insufficient / unsatisfactory (below average)
- sufficient / average
- excellent / above average

Implementation:
This assessment approach (faculty training, tool development, and creation of writing assignments) will be combined with existing portfolio reviews of student work. The involvement of different disciplines will provide a more efficient and effective way for faculty to assess and improve student writing, especially in the more technological courses.

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Assessment Updates

Newsletter from the Office of Assessment & Program Review

"Each institution that responds to the call for assessment of student academic achievement seizes the opportunity to more fully achieve its unique mission and educational goals." (Lopez, 1996, p.20)

Please provide your opinion on the concept of *'Assessment of Student Learning'* to ngnair@ksu.edu
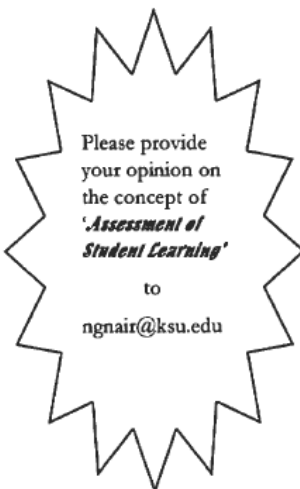
What is Assessment of Student Learning?

Judgments made about assessment programs by Consultant-Evaluators from the Higher Learning Commission (e.g., North Central Association) are very similar across types of institutions (Lopez, 1996). The similarity in judgments still occurs regardless of the evaluator's home institution: "public-private, size of student body, number of years, level or kinds of degrees awarded, level of financial resources, or geographical location" (pg.19). This trend indicates that faculty within the North Central Accreditation (NCA) region, "collectively and as individuals share an understanding of what constitutes good practice in programs for the assessment of student learning. This shared understanding also reflects an underlying agreement on the meaning and value of assessment congruent with the following recently published definition of assessment drafted by the Director of the Assessment Forum at the American Association for Higher Education and refined by educators across the nation:

Assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning. It involves making our expectations explicit and public; setting appropriate criteria and high standards for learning quality; systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards; and using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance. When it is embedded effectively within the larger institutional systems, assessment can help us focus our collective attention, examine our assumptions, and create a shared academic culture dedicated to assuring and improving the quality of higher education (Angelo, 1995)." (Lopez, 1996, p.19-20)

Source:

* Lopez, Cecilia L., Opportunities for improvement: Advice for Consultant Evaluators on Program to Assess Student Learning" *March 1996, pg.18-20;*

http://www.ncacihe.org/resources/assessment/

* Angelo, Thomas A., AAHE Bulletin, November 1995, p.7 (seondary source)

♠ Have an interesting assessment story to share?

♠ Need more information on assessment?

♠ Need to contact us?

Please call or email

Patricia Marsh

(Coordinator, Office of APR)

at

pmarsh@k-state.edu

or

785-532-5712

NCA: Expectations for K-State

In 2002, K-State was reaccredited by the North Central Association (NCA) of the Higher Learning Commission for another 10 years, however, two main areas that need improvement are: (1) Assessment of student learning, and (2) Diversity education. Thus, the institution was granted reaccredidation with the *condition* that an Assessment Focused Visit will be conducted in spring 2005.

NCA's observations in the 2001 Site Visit

"The K-State assessment program is in its infancy; the supporting infrastructure has not been fully developed. A year ago, the provost appointed the associate provost for Planning and Analysis to the position of director of the newly created Office of Assessment and Program Review. The director's role is to coordinate and monitor assessment efforts on a half-time basis.

However, a year is not enough time to develop the structures needed for (a) educating the University community about assessment, (b) providing administrative leadership that will lead to embedding the assessment process in the institutional culture, and (c) ensuring the sustainability of the assessment program.

In terms of the Higher Learning Commission's Levels of Implementation in Assessment Matrix, K-State is functioning primarily at level one, Beginning Implementation of Assessment Programs. In some areas, the institutions are showing some characteristics of level two, Making Progress in Implementing Assessment Programs,

NCA: Expectations for K-State *(from page 1)*

(e.g., Shared Responsibility—Administration, Institutional Support—Resources). However, these characteristics result from recent changes in the University's assessment program, and they are not typical of overall functioning.

Rationale and Expectations

The team recognizes and commends the many accomplishments in assessment found in various disciplines/departments at K-State. Nevertheless, in evaluating the matrix of assessment characteristics, the Team finds that K-State is at the beginning level of implementing assessment program across the University, with little evidence of making much progress beyond the beginning level. There is also some evidence that

student learning outcome assessment is being confused with other forms of evaluation such as academic program review, accreditation, etc.

The team recommends a focused visit to evaluate whether the institution is making progress in implementing a program to assess student learning outcomes. By the time of the focused visit in 2005, there should be evidence that K-State is moving toward maturing levels of continuous improvement and that faculty, students, and administrators across the University are involved in the assessment process."

Source:

NCA's Final Report for K-State, 2001, Section 2, pp. 11-14 http://www.k-state.edu/provost/academic/nca/

Related articles:

"Levels of implementation" guidelines (in Addendum to Handbook of Accreditation, Second Edition)
Lopez, Cecilia L., Assessing Student Learning, Using the Commission's *Levels of Implementation*
http://www.ncacihe.org/resources/assessment/

> Congratulations to those departments who submitted their Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). As of January 30th, 2004, 82% of Associates, 90% of Bachelors, 86% of Masters, and 94% of Doctorate degree programs have submitted their SLOs

Upcoming Events

** **February 13—27, 2004: GTA Communication Survey:** All Graduate Teaching Assistants –GTAs (and GRAs if they have substantial teaching responsibilities) teaching for the first time at K-State are reviewed to assess their communication skills in the classroom/ lab. The review is conducted early in the semester to detect and address communication difficulties early. Thirty four graduate students (GTAs and GRAs with substantial teaching responsibilities) will be surveyed this semester. For further information on the GTA Communication Survey, contact Patricia Marsh (pmarsh@k-state.edu).

** **February, 2004: NSSE :** A sample of 1,500 freshmen and 1,500 seniors will be electronically surveyed starting February 17th. The email will be from Provost Coffman. The NSSE examines everything from faculty participation in the learning environment to how many papers students write. After the survey is completed and the data analyzed, K-State will be able to compare itself to similar institutions all across the country, and to data collected in 2001. Questions about the survey should be directed to the APR office.

** **February 21-22, 2005: NCA focused visit to K-State:** The North Central Association—NCA's Focus visit will include reviewing and evaluating KSU's progress on assessment. A committee is being formed to advise and ensure that NCA's concerns are being addressed in the self-study report. This report is being drafted by members of the APR office. The committee has representatives from Faculty Senate (3), Student Senate (1), Dean's council (1), and from the Student Services & Student Life (1).

Coming Up   Future Newsletters will focus on:

"Principles of Good practice of Assessing Student Learning."
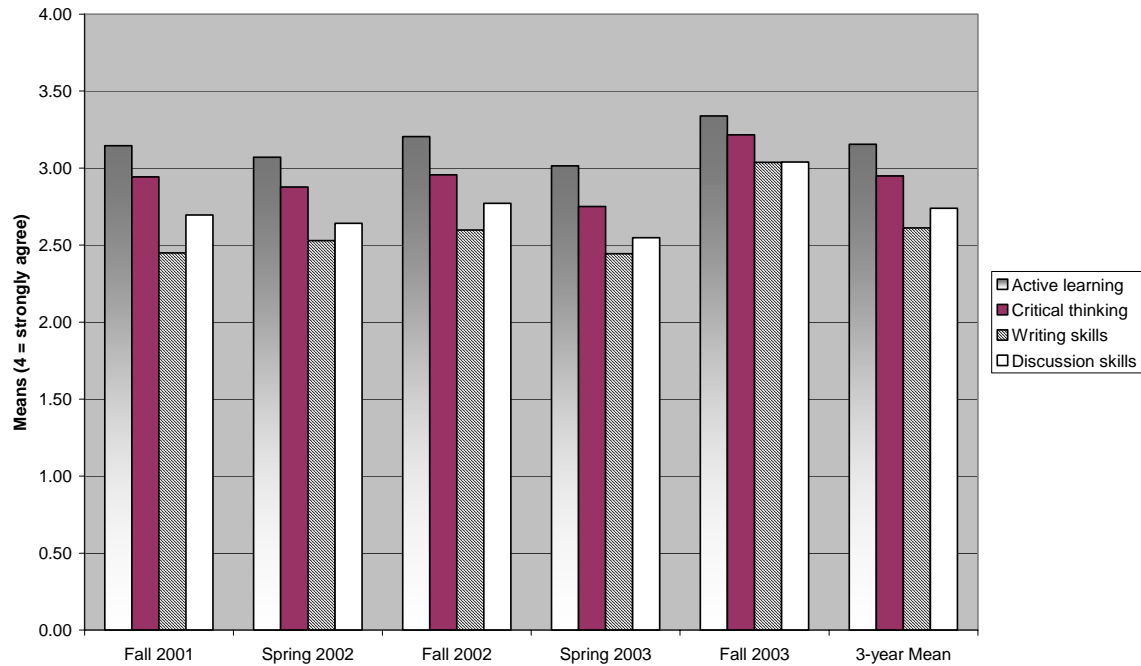
American Higher Association of Higher Education

"Some characteristics of a good assessment plan." Concordia College;
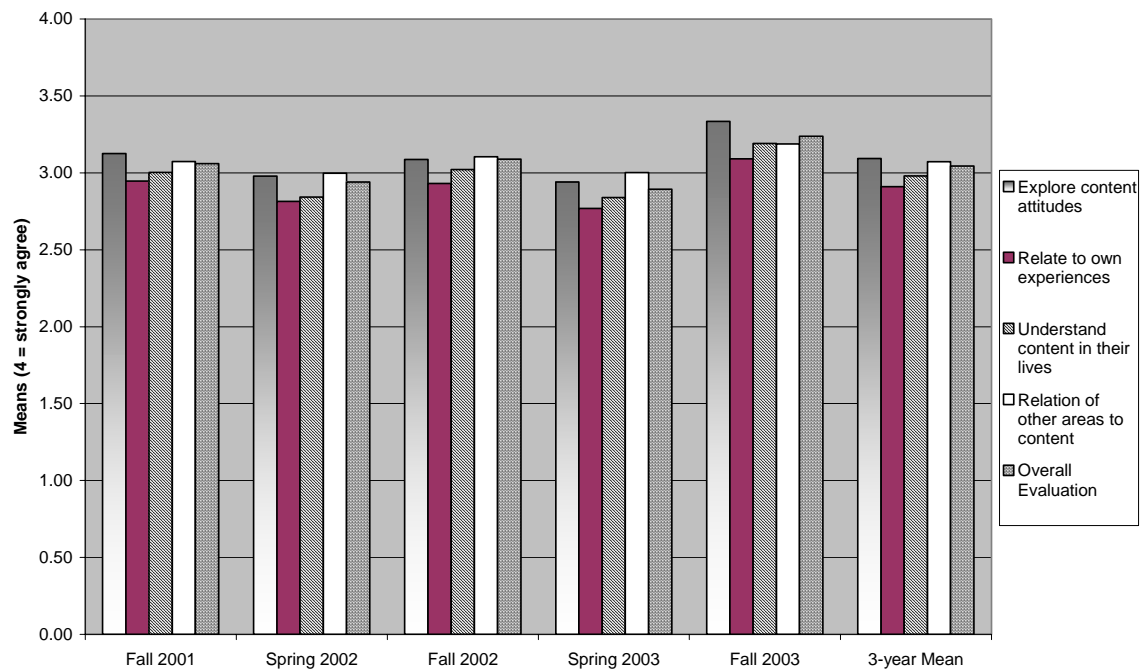Ball State University; Higher Learning Commission (NCA)

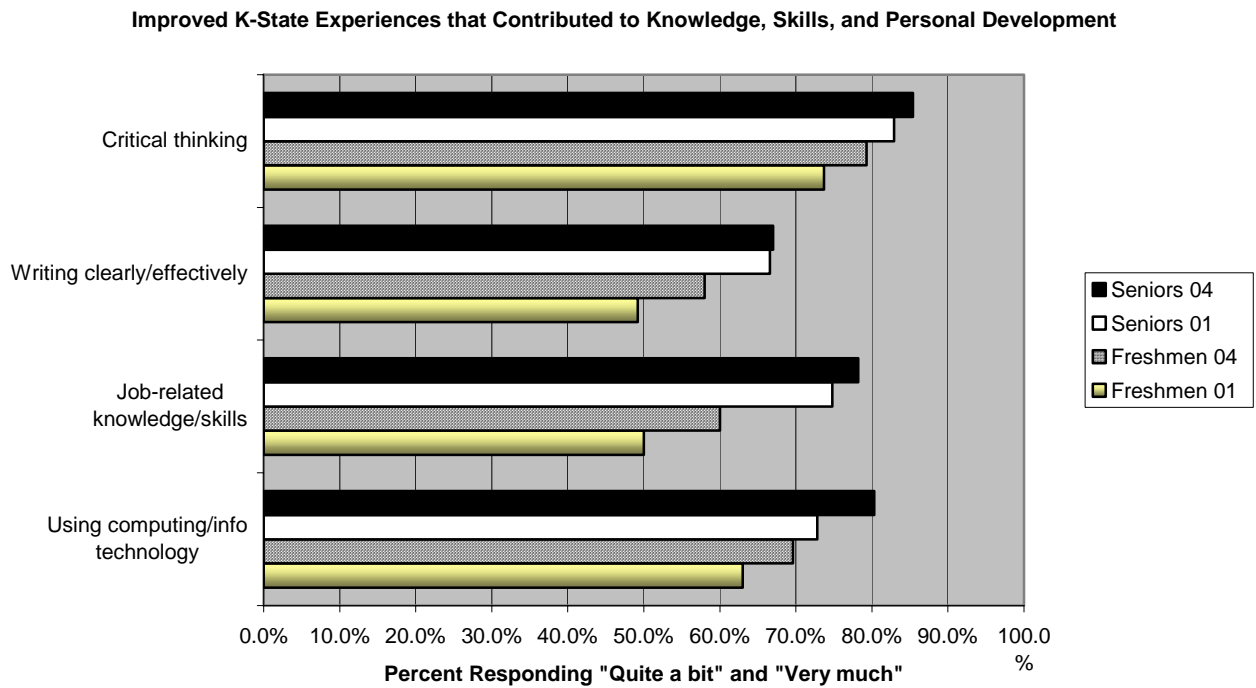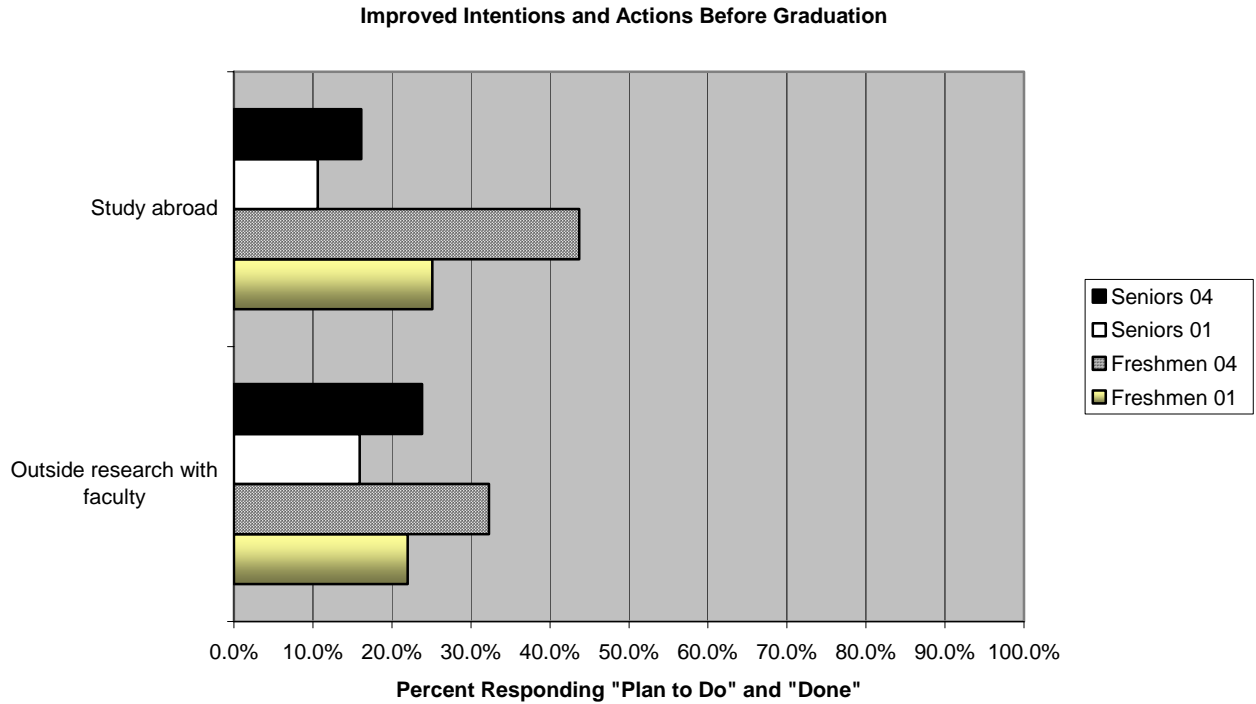# University General Education (UGE) Three-year Trend Analysis

**Three-Year Trend of Student Ratings on University General Education (UGE) Components:
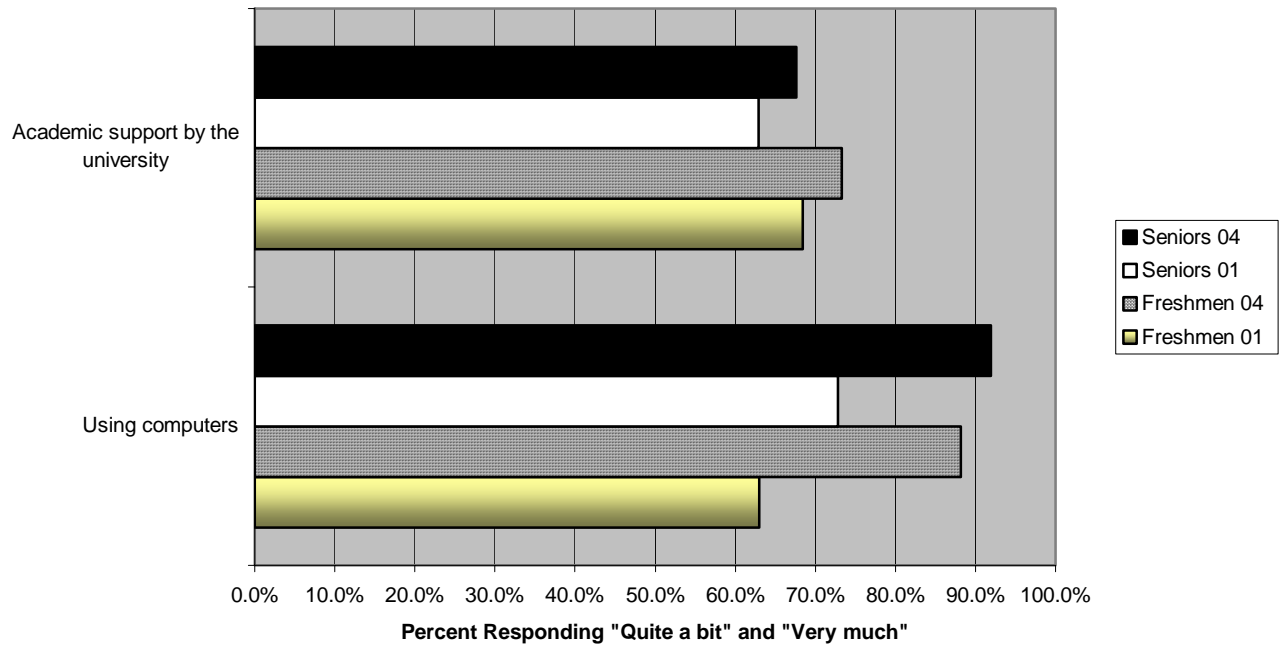Pedagogy & Academic Skills**

**Three-Year Trend of Student Ratings on University General Education (UGE) Components:
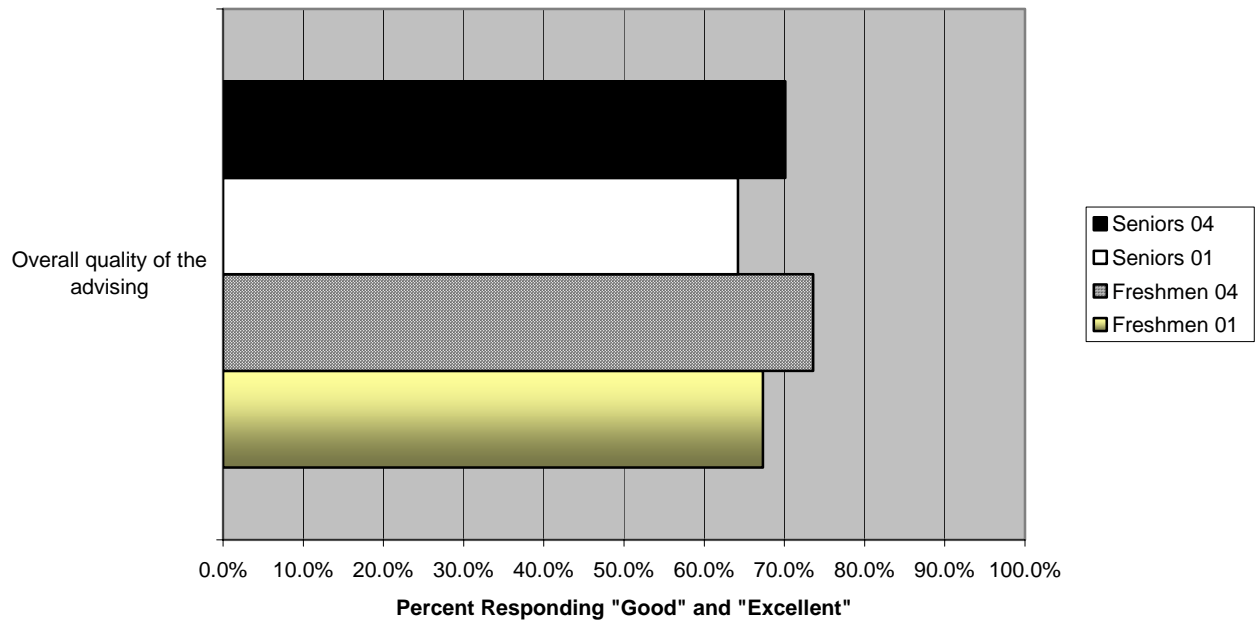Experiential Learning & Overall Evaluation**

Appendix 8

Results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

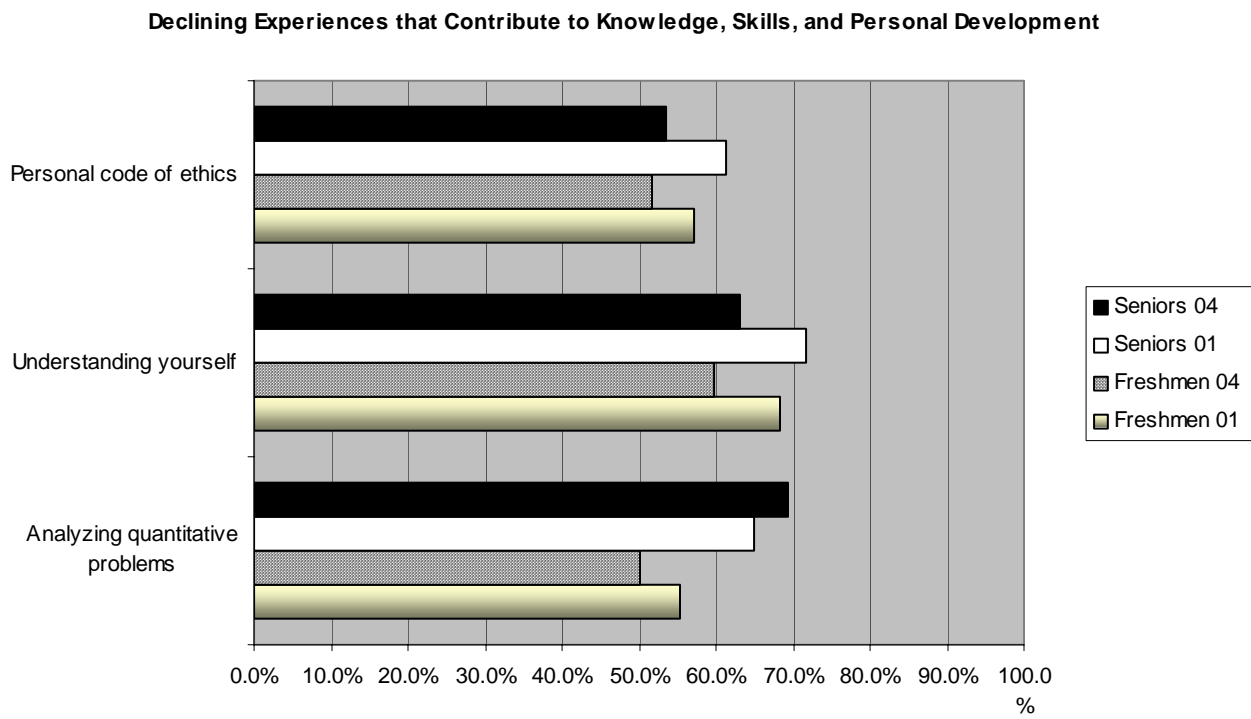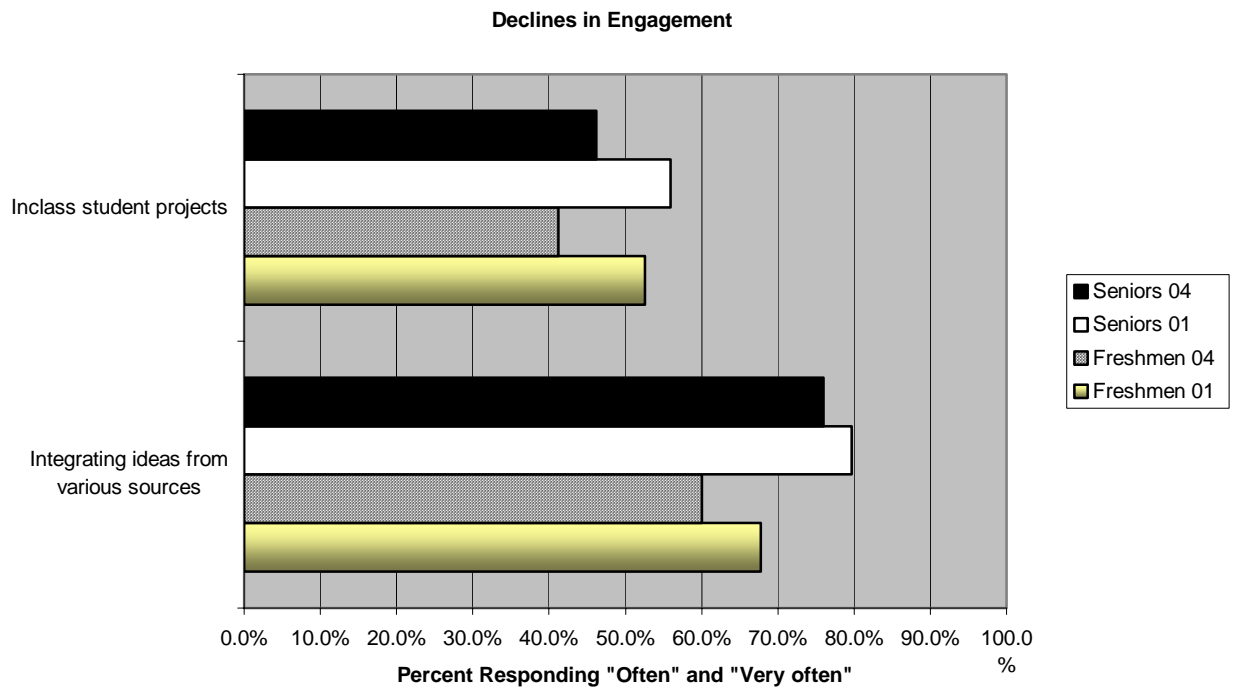## Areas Improved and Areas for Improvement

Improved Intentions and Actions Before Graduation

Improved K-State Experiences that Contributed to Knowledge, Skills, and Personal Development

Improved Emphasis at K-State

Academic support by the university

Using computers

Legend:
- Seniors 04
- Seniors 01
- Freshmen 04
- Freshmen 01

0.0% 10.0% 20.0% 30.0% 40.0% 50.0% 60.0% 70.0% 80.0% 90.0% 100.0%

Percent Responding "Quite a bit" and "Very much"

Improved Quality of Academic Advising

Overall quality of the advising

Legend:
- Seniors 04
- Seniors 01
- Freshmen 04
- Freshmen 01

0.0% 10.0% 20.0% 30.0% 40.0% 50.0% 60.0% 70.0% 80.0% 90.0% 100.0%

Percent Responding "Good" and "Excellent"

Areas for Improvement

Declines in Engagement

Percent Responding "Often" and "Very often"

Legend:
- Seniors 04
- Seniors 01
- Freshmen 04
- Freshmen 01

Declining Experiences that Contribute to Knowledge, Skills, and Personal Development

Legend:
- Seniors 04
- Seniors 01
- Freshmen 04
- Freshmen 01

	Department/ Unit or Center	College	University
Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)	• Degree Program SLOs posted on departmental web sites or in degree program catalogs • Assessment of student learning in Distance programs • SLOs included as part of on-campus request for new degree/program	• College SLOs, where available, posted on college websites or in college literature	• University undergraduate and graduate student learning outcomes are available in the K-State catalogs and included in other promotional literature
Assessment in the Degree Program	• Implement assessment plans • Analyze data, interpret and disseminate results • Monitor whether implemented changes are resulting in improved student learning • Develop 2007-2010 assessment plans (due Nov. 2007) • Collaborate with other departments on identifying or assessing SLOs in inter-disciplinary or service courses	• Review, provide feedback and make recommendations on assessment plans (by the College Assessment and Review Committees (CARCs), and annual progress reports (review committees formed) • Assessment resources, workshops, advocacy provided by College Assessment Committees, where available • Collaborate with peers from comparable departments, colleges or universities	• Update guidelines, assessment resources, manual, and the APR web site • Continue to develop best practices, Assessment newsletters, retreats, and workshops and provide consultation when needed • Assist in the development of appropriate assessment measures and tools • Implement electronic submission and updates of assessment plans and reports, e.g., web-based system • Hold assessment fairs • Hold assessment conference(s) at K-State • Develop Program Review template on assessment
Assessment of UGE and in the Co-curricular Areas (Student Affairs, Hale Library, Division of Continuing Education, Tilford Group)	• Develop assessment plans (in support units, and UGE Council) and implement assessment of student learning outcomes or address assessment/student learning issues • Interpret and use results • Implement assessment of general education • Use results from the assessment of general education	• Collaborate with units in the development or implementation of assessment plans • Implement assessment of general education • Use results from the assessment of general education	• Collaborate with support units and integrate within general framework of assessment of student learning • Develop improved or new framework for general education at K-State, and implement assessment process for general education • Facilitate inter-unit collaboration • Provide resources and assist support units with the development of plans and measures • Develop tools for assessing university-wide SLOs

	Department/ Unit or Center	College	University
Assessment -Related Surveys (Senior, Alumni, Employer Surveys)	• Develop and conduct surveys of students or graduates of the degree program • Use results to focus on how to improve student learning	• Use results to focus on how to improve student learning	• Revise senior and alumni surveys; revise employer surveys • Develop and conduct surveys of students or graduates of K-State • Analyze university level data, interpret and disseminate results • Develop guidelines and provide data for use at degree program or unit level
Reporting	• Department Heads to Deans • Accreditation Agencies	• Deans to Provost • Kansas Board of Regents (upon Program Review)	• Provost to University Constituents • HLC of NCA • Kansas Board of Regents (Performance Agreements)
Assessment Support	• Department Assessment Contacts	• CARCs • Review committees for progress reports • College Assessment Committees, where available	• University Facilitators Committee • APR Advisory Group Committee • APR Office • Provost Office
Student Participation	• Include students as members of department committees (e.g., curriculum, academic) • Promote more awareness of degree program SLOs • Share assessment results	• Membership in College Assessment Committees, where available • Graduate School issues (collaborate with colleges on their graduate programs) • Share assessment results	• Membership in APR Advisory Group • Include in the APR mailing list (e.g., newsletters)