

General Education: Institution- and Program-Level Assessment

Through its twenty-two years of development, Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College has built a significant tradition of excellence, as demonstrated by the success of our graduates and programs. Achieving some of the highest rankings in the State and in national competitions, however, is only an indirect measure of student learning. Evaluators from the Higher Learning Commission noted specific concern that the college lacked a formal assessment plan and that its data collection and data-driven decision mechanisms were not adequate.

The Higher Learning Commission has placed FDLTCC on notice in this area of operations, specifically with regard to Criterion 3, Core Component 3A: The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible, and Criterion 4, Core Component 4C: The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who live and work in a global, diverse and technological society.

To adequately resolve this area of concern, FDLTCC must take the following necessary actions: "The development of an Assessment of Student Learning Plan and demonstrated progress on full implementation, data collection, and appropriate attention to instructional and college decision making based on assessed outcomes. In addition, the college needs to provide evidence that it has embraced the value of the assessment of student learning and has integrated it into their overall curriculum and instructional processes" (p. 27, Assurance Section, *Final Report*). The college also needs "demonstrated evidence that general education and program outcomes have been fully integrated into program development and the evaluation of programs is driven by data informed decisions" (p. 27, Assurance Section, *Final Report*).

The college's primary actions and the results of those actions from January through May 2010 are summarized below.

FDLTCC's Primary Actions: January – May 2010

- Completed the Assessment Plan 2009 – 2012
- Prioritizing Educational Strategies work group and Managing Enrollment work group reported their 2008 – 2009 progress on the 2008 – 2013 Strategic Plan
- Began conversation of facilities/academic planning, taking place during fall 2010
- Based on budget data, and in alignment with institutional plans, created positions matched with priority areas, including planning, assessment of student learning, retention and completion, student preparedness, and building collaborations with external stakeholders
- Created and posted Director of Institutional Research and Planning position
- Created Director of Athletics and Student Preparedness position
- Created Interim Dean of Student Services position
- Did not renew two probationary faculty positions
- Appointed one probationary faculty as unlimited full-time faculty
- Complied with MSCFA bargaining unit requirements, and posted three new unlimited full-time faculty positions
- Began discussions of improving online course offerings
- Attended and made presentation at the Minnesota Institute on Student Engagement
- Attended two MnSCU-initiated events on assessment and student learning outcomes
- Held three teaching and learning seminars devoted to classroom assessment and using data for classroom decision making
- Continued to work, report, and monitor the academic alert process
- Embedded core competency learning goals and outcomes in approximately 90% of course outlines
- Reported and discussed results of CCSSE 2009 and CCFSSSE 2009 at campus-wide duty day
- Reported and discussed results of Competencies Across the Curriculum (CAC) general education assessment at February 2010 Duty Day
- Discussed classroom-based rubric project at February 2010 Duty Day faculty meeting and explored rubrics and competency features in Desire 2 Learn online course software
- Completed classroom-based rubrics for two core competencies
- Piloted classroom-based rubrics for two core competencies: Information/Technology Literacy and Communication

Results of Actions, January – May 2010

- Positioned the college to focus more effectively on priority areas, including data-driven decision making and planning, student preparedness, retention and completion, fiscal health, and building collaborations with external constituencies

- Aligned faculty hiring with priority areas, including planning, assessment of student learning, retention and completion, and student preparedness
- Revised position postings to include attention to priority areas, including planning, evaluation, and improvement based on evaluation
- As a “pre-planning” activity, began collecting ideas from faculty for facilities and academic planning in fall 2010
- Proposed, wrote, and submitted three projects related to “intrusive advising” and retention projects for potential funding through MnSCU-led initiatives
- In partnership with FDL tribal college education director, submitted portions of retention-related projects for AICF funding
- Conducted Employer Survey of area health care providers
- Began review of regional workforce trend data with program coordinators
- Reviewed and updated FDLTCC’s MnSCU Program Inventory
- Reviewed FDLTCC articulation agreements
- Pulled outdated articulation agreements from MnTranser.org website and determined agreements to be added
- Continued preparation for fall 2011 HLC focus visit and possible HLC comprehensive site visit in 2013 - 2014
- Created a research and planning position to specifically focus on rooting data-driven decision making, evaluation and assessment, and planning
- Purchasing Camtasia software to assist improvement efforts in online learning
- Purchasing twenty laptops for classroom use at Red Lake outreach site
- Reduced reports of logistical frustrations at Red Lake outreach site from many in fall 2009 to zero in spring 2010
- Eliminated late arrival of textbooks at Red Lake outreach site
- Maintained visits to Red Lake outreach site every three weeks
- Jointly coordinated contacts with students on academic suspension at Red Lake outreach site
- Attended 2010 graduation celebration at Red Lake outreach site
- Based on MnSCU system-wide comparative data and input from program coordinators regarding program plans and needs, set special fees for designated courses that meet student, program, and institutional needs
- Invited and collected “Ah Ha” moments from faculty regarding learning-as-teachers and classroom assessment
- Received \$435,000 Minnesota Department of Energy grant to become the lead BPI (Building Performance Inventory) train-the-trainer certification site in Minnesota
- Adopted broad-based A.S. in health sciences
- Hosted national American Indian Business Leaders meeting
- Based on discussion of CCSSE 2009 and CCFSSSE 2009 results, registered to deliver SENSE survey of first-year students during fall 2010
- Included in AICF proposal a request for phase two funding of Noel Levitz managing enrollment and recruitment services