

A First Look at General Education Program Learning
Outcomes Assessment Data:
Lessons Learned from a College-wide Assessment Project

Roberta Brown

State Assessment Meeting 2010

Valencia Community College

30-second introductions

- Your name?
- Your institution?
- Your position/title?
- Why did you come to this session?

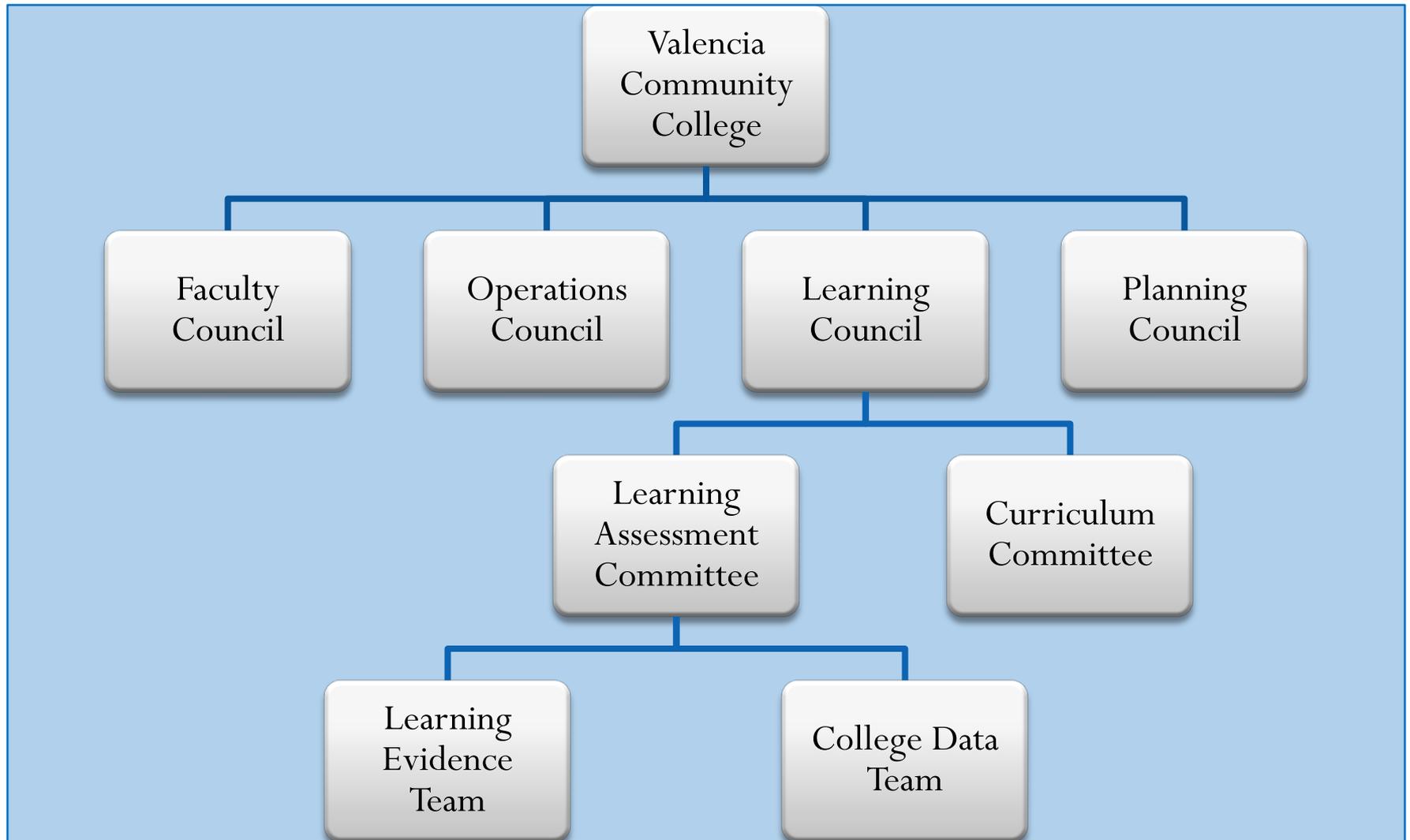
Valencia Community College now has four major campuses, two academic and administrative centers, and two more major campuses in the planning stages.



Valencia Profile

- **Sites: 4 (+1) campuses, 3 centers**
- **Total Student Enrollment 2009: 62,930**
- **FTE 2009: 26,147**
- **FT Faculty 2009: 439**
- **PT Faculty (Adjuncts): 987 per major term**
- **Academic Divisions: 18**
- **Graduates by Degree 2009: AA (49.9%), AS/AAS (11.6%), Technical Certificate (34.0%), Vocational Certificate (3.4%), EPI (1.1%)**

Shared Governance at Valencia



Muddiest Point

What do you find least clear or most complex about planning program level assessment of student learning?

A little bit of history

Early attempts . . .

Why do we need to do this?

- Valencia is a learning centered institution guided by two questions
 - How will this impact Student Learning?
 - How will we know?
- Goal Two of our Strategic Plan – Learning Assured
 - *Objective 2.1 - Develop, align, and review program learning outcomes to assure a cohesive curricular and co-curricular experience that enhances student learning.*
- The 28 Community Colleges have articulated General Education Learning Outcome Categories for which we are expected to provide assessment results

Statewide General Education Outcome Categories

- **Communication**
 - Effective reading writing, speaking, listening
- **Critical Thinking**
 - Reflection, analysis, synthesis, application
- **Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning**
 - Understand and apply mathematical and scientific principles and methods
- **Information Literacy**
 - Find, evaluation, organize and use information
- **Global Socio-cultural Responsibility**
 - Participate actively as informed and responsible citizens in social, cultural, global and environmental issues

General Education Learning Outcomes

Time Line

- **January / February 2007** – Gen Ed plan presented to the CLC and the Faculty Council for consent / approval
- **March 2007** – Survey faculty about the skills our General Education Program ought to focus on as learning outcomes
 - 130 Faculty Participated

General Education Learning Outcomes

In the year 2000 the League for Innovation in the Community College identified a list of 21st Century skills that ought to be included in a list of outcomes for community college education.

How would you rank the skills identified by the League for Innovation in terms of their importance as General Education learning outcomes?			Very important	Somewhat important	Not Very important
1.	Collaboration / Teamwork		<input type="radio"/> [72]	<input type="radio"/> [46]	<input type="radio"/> [9]
2.	Communication (Written / Oral)		<input type="radio"/> [125]	<input type="radio"/> [3]	<input type="radio"/> [0]
3.	Creativity		<input type="radio"/> [69]	<input type="radio"/> [55]	<input type="radio"/> [4]
4.	Critical Thinking / Problem Solving		<input type="radio"/> [122]	<input type="radio"/> [6]	<input type="radio"/> [0]
5.	Cultural / Global Studies / Diversity		<input type="radio"/> [79]	<input type="radio"/> [40]	<input type="radio"/> [9]
6.	Humanities		<input type="radio"/> [52]	<input type="radio"/> [65]	<input type="radio"/> [11]
7.	Information Management		<input type="radio"/> [54]	<input type="radio"/> [66]	<input type="radio"/> [7]
8.	Learning Skills		<input type="radio"/> [100]	<input type="radio"/> [27]	<input type="radio"/> [1]
9.	Mathematics		<input type="radio"/> [76]	<input type="radio"/> [47]	<input type="radio"/> [5]
10.	Personal Responsibility / Management		<input type="radio"/> [97]	<input type="radio"/> [25]	<input type="radio"/> [6]
11.	Technology Literacy		<input type="radio"/> [89]	<input type="radio"/> [37]	<input type="radio"/> [2]

General Education Learning Outcomes

Time Line

- **Late March / Early April 2007** – Faculty Forums on the nature of our General Education Program
 - A total of Eight Faculty Forums
 - Forums focused on Faculty survey responses and the relationship between Gen Ed Outcomes and TVCA
- **Summer 2007** – An Interdisciplinary team of 14 faculty selected by the Faculty Council drafted general education learning outcome statements
- **Late August / Early September 2007** – Draft Gen Ed Outcomes distributed college-wide for feedback
 - 130 participated in the survey

Draft General Education Learning Outcomes - Fall 2007

A task force representing different disciplines of the college worked together to synthesize faculty responses to a survey on General Education and campus based faculty forum responses to create this draft list of General Education outcomes. As a reminder, General Education is "the part of a liberal education curriculum shared by all students. It provides broad exposure to multiple disciplines and forms the basis for developing important intellectual and civic capacities (Association of American Colleges and Universities)." Please review these outcome statements with an understanding that each academic division will be responsible for discussing how it contributes to all outcomes. Your feedback will be essential to making Valencia's General Education Outcomes meaningful to our students' learning.

Draft General Education Learning Outcomes - Fall 2007		I agree that this item should be included in our list of General Education Learning Outcomes as it is currently written	I do not agree that this item should be included in our list of General Education Learning Outcomes	I believe that the articulation of this Learning Outcome needs improvement (Please suggest alternative wording below)	
1.	Cultural and Historical Understanding: Understand oneself and the diverse traditions of the world through aesthetic, historical, social, and cultural perspectives.		<input type="radio"/> [112]	<input type="radio"/> [10]	<input type="radio"/> [14]
2.	Quantitative Literacy: Use data and mathematical reasoning to solve problems and make decisions.		<input type="radio"/> [117]	<input type="radio"/> [6]	<input type="radio"/> [12]
3.	Communicative Ability: Engage in effective interpersonal, oral, written communication.		<input type="radio"/> [109]	<input type="radio"/> [3]	<input type="radio"/> [21]
4.	Ethical Responsibility: Engage responsibly and collaboratively in civic, social, and personal life.		<input type="radio"/> [108]	<input type="radio"/> [12]	<input type="radio"/> [13]
5.	Information Literacy: Access, evaluate, and apply different sources of knowledge and information.		<input type="radio"/> [122]	<input type="radio"/> [5]	<input type="radio"/> [7]
6.	Critical and Creative Thinking: Synthesize knowledge from different sources and disciplines into a personal understanding and action.		<input type="radio"/> [107]	<input type="radio"/> [4]	<input type="radio"/> [24]
7.	Scientific Reasoning: Use scientific reasoning and methods to solve problems and make decisions.		<input type="radio"/> [118]	<input type="radio"/> [7]	<input type="radio"/> [8]

General Education Learning Outcomes

Time Line

- **Late September**– Revise Gen Ed outcomes based on College wide survey feedback
- **October / Early November**
 - Forums sponsored in collaboration with Faculty Senate Presidents
- **Early November**
 - The revision team revise the outcomes a second time based upon input from Faculty Forums
- **November**
 - Revised Gen Ed Outcomes are distributed College wide for review and vote by faculty

			I fully support this student learning outcome.	I support this student learning outcome but have some concern about its content.	I do not support this student learning outcome.
1.	Cultural and Historical Understanding: Demonstrate understanding of the diverse traditions of the world, and the individual's place in it.		<input type="radio"/> [82]	<input type="radio"/> [26]	<input type="radio"/> [10]
2.	Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning: Use processes, procedures, data, or evidence to solve problems and make effective decisions.		<input type="radio"/> [105]	<input type="radio"/> [11]	<input type="radio"/> [2]
3.	Communication Skills: Engage in effective interpersonal, oral and written communication.		<input type="radio"/> [115]	<input type="radio"/> [3]	<input type="radio"/> [0]
4.	Ethical Responsibility: Demonstrate awareness of personal responsibility in one's civic, social, and academic life.		<input type="radio"/> [90]	<input type="radio"/> [20]	<input type="radio"/> [8]
5.	Information Literacy: Locate, evaluate, and effectively use information from diverse sources.		<input type="radio"/> [108]	<input type="radio"/> [7]	<input type="radio"/> [3]
6.	Critical Thinking: Effectively analyze, evaluate, synthesize and apply information and ideas from diverse sources and disciplines.		<input type="radio"/> [111]	<input type="radio"/> [4]	<input type="radio"/> [2]

General Education Learning Outcomes

Time Line

- **January 2008**
 - Gen Ed Outcomes and Faculty voting results are presented to the Curriculum Committee for consideration and recommendation to the Learning Council
- **February 2008**
 - Learning Council Approves Gen Ed Outcomes

Valencia's General Education Student Learning Outcomes

- **Cultural and Historical Understanding:** Demonstrate understanding of the diverse traditions of the world, and the individual's place in it.
- **Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning:** Use processes, procedures, data, or evidence to solve problems and make effective decisions.
- **Communication Skills:** Engage in effective interpersonal, oral and written communication.
- **Ethical Responsibility:** Demonstrate awareness of personal responsibility in one's civic, social, and academic life.
- **Information Literacy:** Locate, evaluate, and effectively use information from diverse sources.
- **Critical Thinking:** Effectively analyze, evaluate, synthesize and apply information and ideas from diverse sources and disciplines

Fall 2008: Big Meeting!

- College-wide meeting with faculty and deans
- Explained progress
- Described three options
- Mixed response from faculty

Curriculum Committee: General Education Principles and Procedures

Principles: Courses within the General Education Program will:

1. be able to meet the A.A., A.S., and A.A.S degree requirements;
2. significantly contribute to Valencia's general education outcomes;
3. not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession;
4. be transferrable for all programs
5. contribute significantly to breadth of knowledge

Gen Ed Design 3 Basic Options

Discipline Based Gen Ed Requirements

1. Maintain the current distribution of Gen Ed hours, identify measurable contributions to the Gen Ed learning outcomes in curricular and co-curricular areas , establish a multi-year college-wide assessment plan
 - Keep compliant with state requirements for Gordon Rule
2. Adjust the distribution of required Gen Ed Hours based on assessable discipline contributions to Gen Ed Outcomes, identify measurable contributions to the Gen Ed learning outcomes in curricular and co-curricular areas , establish a multi-year college-wide assessment plan
 - New Discipline areas may need to be added to address all of the Outcomes (Information Technology, for example)
 - Keep compliant with state requirements for Gordon Rule

Outcomes Based Gen Ed Requirements

3. Redesign of General Education Program requirements based on measurable, course specific contributions to the General Education Learning Outcomes.
 - This determination would be based upon faculty agreement on the common course outlines
 - Keep compliant with state requirements for Gordon Rule

First Round of Planning

Making significant progress . . .

Destination 2009

- 13 disciplines/programs
- Created Assessment Plans for General Education Program Learning Outcomes
- Articulated implementation timeline
- Vetted plans with discipline faculty – Fall 2009
 - Academic Assembly
- Implemented – Spring 2010
 - *Program Assessment Workshop*
 - *Learning Day Discipline Meetings*

Assessment Day 2010

- May 6th 2010: 9am-12noon
- **120 participants! (faculty and deans)**
- Discipline faculty:
 - Scored student artifacts
 - **Discussed results**
 - Made plans to reflect within discipline and share
 - Plans for improvement
 - To assessment plans
 - To assignments
 - To assessment process
 - Discussed next Learning Outcome

Moving Forward

Summer 2010 and next steps . . .

Destination 2010

- 30 disciplines/programs!!!
 - General Education Program Learning Outcomes
 - A.S. and Technical Program Learning Outcomes
- Many new participants
- Extensive involvement and collaboration with Faculty Development
- Consistent language, continued refinement of our understanding as well as theirs

Next Steps

- Learning Evidence Team
 - Redesign
 - Lead Faculty
- Learning Assessment Committee
 - Approval Process
 - Assessment Plan Template
- Using Destination for Faculty Development support
 - Examples:
 - Training on Rubrics/Rubric Development
 - Writing Program Learning Outcomes

Reflections

Lessons learned . . .

Ewell: Managing the Tensions

4 four principles to guide institutional responses to external accountability while developing the capacity for evidence-based continuous improvement

1. Respond visibly to domains of legitimate concern
 - Concerns for our “customers”
 - Collective responsibility for Teaching and Learning
 - Focus on Accountability to ourselves
2. Show action on the results of assessment
 - Think about this from the beginning
 - Focus on thoughtful collective reflection about evidence
 - Learning Objectives must be inescapable
3. Emphasize assessment at the major transition points in a college career.
 - Transition out of Development Education
 - The completion of a program
4. Embed assessment in the regular curriculum
 - More authentic evidence

Think, Pair, Share . . .

- How would you describe your institutions assessment efforts?
- What challenges are you facing?
- What opportunities do you have?

Questions???

- Roberta Brown

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Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinators

Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinators are faculty leaders charged with promoting the development and implementation of collegewide or program-wide assessment plans by discipline / program faculty within the following the areas:

- **General Education**
 - Humanities
 - Communications
 - English
 - Speech
 - Science
 - Social Science
 - Other Behavioral and Social Sciences
 - U.S. Government
 - Mathematics
- **Arts and Entertainment Programs**
- **Business Programs**
- **Criminal Justice and Paralegal Studies Programs**
- **Engineering Technology Programs**
- **Health Sciences Programs**
- **Horticulture and Landscape Programs**
- **Hospitality and Culinary Programs**
- **Honors**
- **Information Technology Programs**

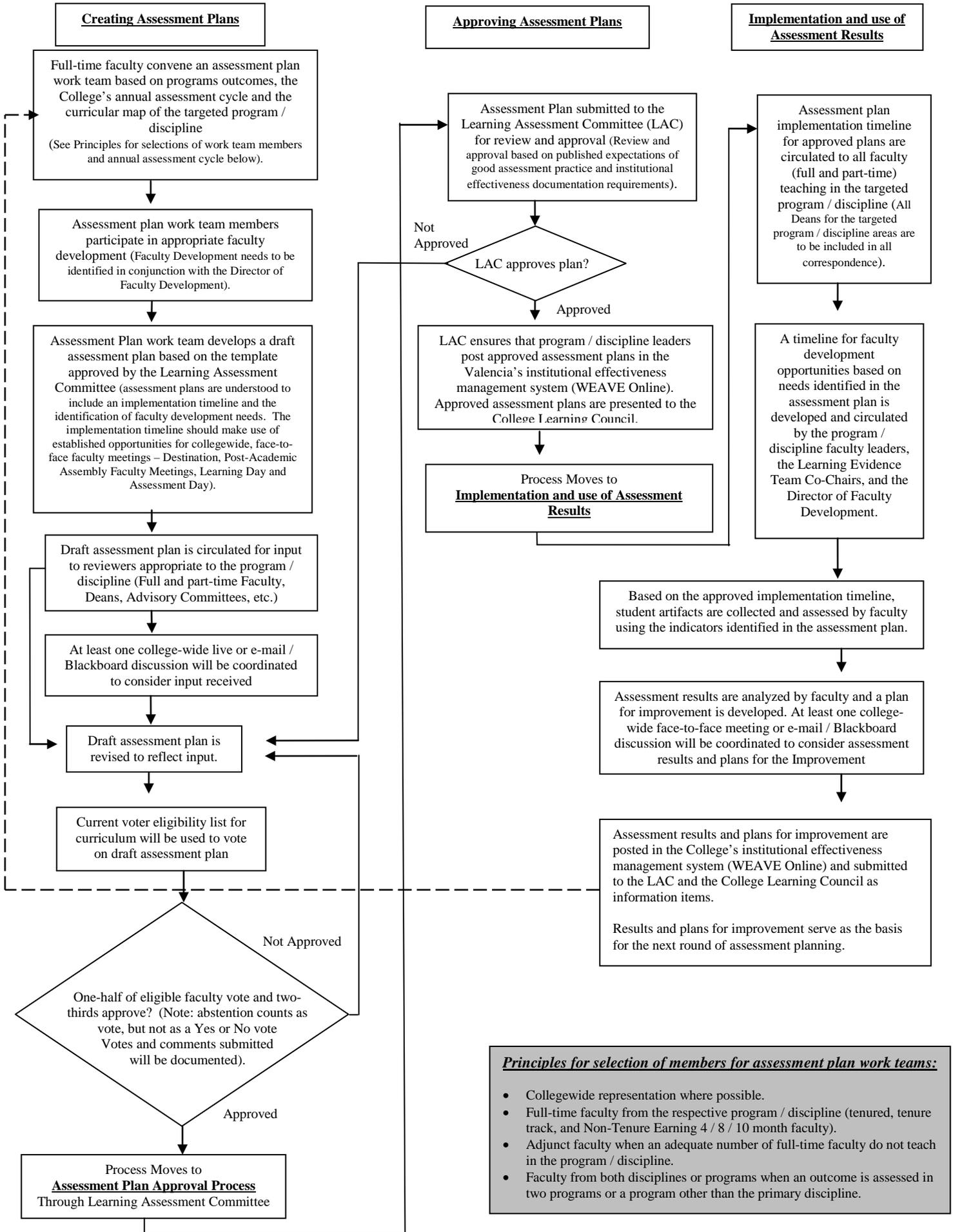
Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinators will be asked to do the following with the support of the Director of Learning Outcomes Assessment:

- Promote the development, approval and implementation of program learning outcomes assessment plans by program/discipline faculty following the approval procedures developed by the Learning Assessment Committee. If assessment plans were developed during Destination 2011, the coordinators are encouraged to collaborate with Destination participants.
- Participate in the monthly meetings of the Learning Evidence Team (The LET currently meets on the third Wednesday of every month from 2:30pm 4:30pm). Working with the LET will allow for a coordinated approach to collegewide communication, faculty development, and the collection of student work.
- Lead collegewide gatherings of program / discipline faculty associated with program learning outcomes assessment plans (Academic Assembly, Learning Day, Assessment Day, etc.).
- Maintain regular communication with program / discipline faculty, program coordinators / chairs and Deans concerning the development, approval, implementation of program learning outcomes assessment plans, assessment results and implications for curricular development.

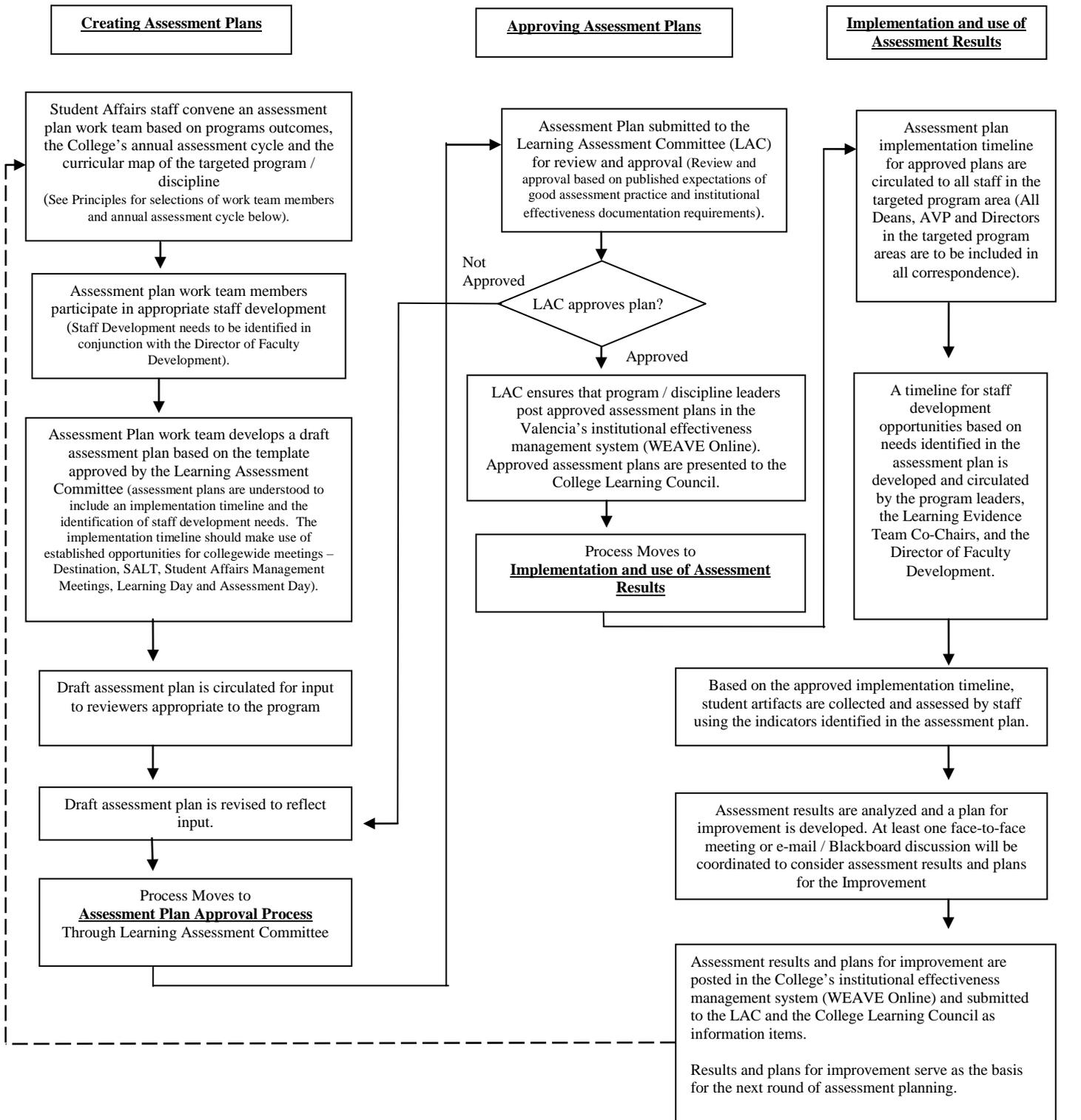
Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinators can expect the following:

- A stipend of \$500 per semester (Fall / Spring)
- Faculty Development support to ensure that Coordinators have all the tools, information and training they need to feel confident leading program / discipline assessment efforts.
- Administrative support from the Director and Staff of the Assessment Office
- Support from the Deans associated with their discipline or program area to ensure the participation of their colleagues.

Program Outcome Assessment Plan Approval and Improvement Process



Program Outcome Assessment Plan Approval and Improvement Process – Student Affairs



Principles for selection of members for assessment plan work teams:

- Collegewide representation where possible.
- Staff from the targeted program area.
- Part-time Student Affairs professionals when an adequate number of full-time staff do not work in the targeted program area.
- Faculty / staff from other program / discipline areas working on the same or similar outcomes
- Students representation when possible

Program Learning Outcome Assessment Plan Template

General Information

Academic Year of Implementation: 2010 – 2011

Academic Program / Discipline Area (for General Education) or Co-Curricular Program Area:

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Planning Team:

Planning Team Leader(s) ¹	Campus	E-mail Address	Phone Extension	Mail Code
Planning Team Members ²	Campus	E-mail Address	Phone Extension	Mail Code

¹ Planning Team Leaders assume the responsibility for coordinating activities associated with the expectations for the design, approval and implementation of Assessment Plans. See the attached documents entitled **Program Outcome Assessment Plan Approval and Improvement Process** and **Program Outcome Assessment Plan Approval and Improvement Process – Student Affairs**

² Planning Team membership, whenever possible, should reflect the **Principles for selection of members for assessment plan work teams**. For faculty teams the principles include: Collegewide representation where possible; Full-time faculty from the respective program / discipline (tenured, tenure track, and Non-Tenure Earning 4 / 8 / 10 month faculty); Adjunct faculty when an adequate number of full-time faculty do not teach in the program / discipline; Faculty from both disciplines or programs when an outcome is assessed in two programs or a program other than the primary discipline. For plans developed in Student Affairs planning teams should include the following: Collegewide representation where possible; Staff from the targeted program area; Part-time Student Affairs professionals when an adequate number of full-time staff do not work in the targeted program area; Faculty / staff from other program / discipline areas working on the same or similar outcomes; Students representation when possible.

Learning Outcomes and Performance Indicators

Academic Program / Discipline Area (for General Education) or Co-Curricular Program Area:	
Targeted Program Learning Outcome:	Targeted Course(s), Co-Curricular Program or Student Activity associated with the Academic Program:
	Targeted Outcome(s) within the Course(s), Co-Curricular Program or Student Activity identified above:
Performance Indicators for the Program Learning Outcome(s) selected:	Performance Indicators for Outcome(s) within the Course(s), Co-Curricular Program or Student Activity selected:
Common Assessment (What assessment method (written assignment, speech, test, etc.) will you use to assess student ability related to the program / course outcome(s) selected):	
Description of the Proposed Common Assessment (Common assessments should be designed to ensure a balance between (1) the need for a consistency within the program in order to ensure comparable student artifacts and (2) the need for reasonable flexibility in order to encourage faculty judgment in the design and delivery of learning activities):	
Proposed Assessment Instrument (In some cases the assessment method may not need an associated assessment instrument – e.g., multiple choice tests):	

Implementation Process

Approval Process

Activities Associated with the Approval of Assessment Plans	Proposed Completion Date	Person Responsible
Draft assessment plan is circulated for input to reviewers appropriate to the program / discipline		
College-wide live or e-mail / Blackboard discussion will be coordinated to consider input received		
Draft assessment plan is revised to reflect input		
Current voter eligibility list for curriculum will be used to vote on draft assessment plan		

Faculty / Professional Development Needs Associated with the Proposed Common Assessment

What training / preparation / information will faculty or staff need in order complete the proposed assessment plan?

Collection of Student Artifacts

What information needs to be communicated to students concerning the assessment process (informed consent, etc.)?

How will student artifacts or data associated with student performance be collected?

If student artifacts are to be collected based on a random sample of students registered for the course or participating in the program / activity, what characteristics should the sample include?

How will information about faculty / staff participation in the assessment project be communicated?

Who will be responsible for coordinating the collection of student artifacts?

At what point in the academic year / semester will the student artifacts be collected?

Program Level Assessment / Evaluation of Student Artifacts and Analysis of Results

When will student artifacts be assessed / evaluated (Learning Day 2011 is scheduled for February 11, 2011, Assessment Day 2011 is scheduled for May 5, 2011)?

Which faculty or staff from the program/discipline will evaluate student artifacts?
What training / preparation / information will faculty or staff need in order adequately assess / evaluate the student artifacts collected?
When will the results / data associated with the assessment plan be analyzed?
What training / preparation / information will faculty or staff need in order to analyze the results data associated with this assessment plan?
What additional sources of data might allow faculty / staff to better understand and act on the results of this assessment plan?
In order to ensure curricular and programmatic alignment, who else should be included in this conversation (e.g., faculty from related discipline areas in General Education)?

How will the assessment results be disseminated to stakeholders (Faculty, Staff, Advisory Boards, etc.)?

Improvement Plan and the Use of Assessment Results

What do the results of this assessment plan suggest about changes / improvements needed within the curriculum (targeted course(s), co-curricular program or student activity)?

What changes to the common course outlines, if any, need to be considered?

What do the results of this assessment plan suggest about changes / improvements to the program assessment process?