# A Guide to the Assessment of Student Learning at Lincoln College

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"That some achieve great success, is proof to all that others can achieve it as well."

"If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do, and how to do it."

- Abraham Lincoln

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# I. The Lincoln College Philosophy of Assessment of Student Learning

### A. Lincoln College Assessment Philosophy Statement

Lincoln College is committed to assessment as a means to improve student learning and institutional effectiveness. This commitment is demonstrated through faculty involvement in academic assessment and the integration of student services staff and faculty in the assessment of co-curricular and non-academic programs. In this manner, the College fosters a culture of assessment of student learning throughout the College community to improve student learning and success and to measure the institution's effectiveness in achieving its mission.

Lincoln College strives for transparency with all interested constituents in the assessment process by:

1. Encouraging critical reflection and self-examination of all aspects of campus operations;
2. Providing information on learning outcomes and goal achievement to decision-makers and interested constituents of the College community; and
3. Promoting regular review of curricula, programs, and student learning resulting from assessment data.

### B. Brief History of Assessment of Student Learning at Lincoln College

The overarching goal of our assessment of student learning program at Lincoln College has been the development and maintenance of a unified culture of assessment at the entire College in all degrees, programs, delivery methods, and locations. The foundation of a more unified culture among faculty is the result of the achievement of a variety of more specific assessment practices and strategies that have been accomplished since 2010.

Our most celebrated accomplishments have combined to help establish this newly budding culture including:

1. *The adoption of a simplified and easily accessible Assessment Model based on Huba and Freed (2000) as described later in this guide.*

2. *The Revision of the General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) for the Institution to more realistic and mission/values-based institutional outcomes approved by a full faculty vote.*

3. *The Establishment of GELO Rubrics (developed by the full faculty at an Assessment Workshop) for Assessing the New General Education Learning Outcomes as a Direct Measure.*

4. *The alignment of Course Learning Outcomes across campuses and the expansion of those course learning outcomes to the development of Master Syllabi by the divisions and departments for all courses.*

5. *The development of clearly stated student learning outcomes for every academic program (see College catalog) including associate degrees, baccalaureate degrees, and certificate programs.*

6. *The development and implementation of curriculum maps (identifying courses which introduce, reinforce, and master learning outcomes) for general education and academic programs which allow faculty members to analyze and evaluate the sequencing of courses in delivering the student learning outcomes.*

7. *The establishment of an institutional structure for assessment of student learning which integrates a new Dean of Assessment and Academic Planning with the established Assessment Academy Team, the faculty Assessment Committee, and the Academic Committee.*

8. *The development of a faculty Resource Guide for Assessment of Student Learning providing suggestions of direct and indirect assessment measures and defining Lincoln College's Institutional Assessment Vocabulary.*

In order to ensure that the accomplishments and excellent work of all faculty members continues in the development of our assessment program, this Resource Guide is intended to assist faculty members (both full-time and adjunct faculty) in identifying the processes used at the College for assessing student learning to engage in continuous improvement of student achievement in their chosen academic programs.

### C. The Purpose of Assessment of Student Learning at Lincoln College

The sole purpose of the Lincoln College assessment program is to ***advance student learning*** in their chosen academic program. It is NOT designed to improve instruction, evaluate teaching, or determine the level of academic rigor at the College.

Assessment data gathered by faculty members in their courses is used by the whole faculty through their divisions, the Assessment Committee, and the Academic Committee to make adjustments to the delivery of the courses (course learning outcomes and sequencing of courses) in a manner consistent with intentionally designing a program which ***helps the student achieve the desired learning outcomes*** of the program and the College upon their graduation.

As a faculty member, the College recognizes that your principle ***goal in teaching a course is to have students learn*** the content and skills necessary to be successful upon completion of the course! The Lincoln College Assessment Program is designed and structured in such a way as to ensure that we, as a community of faculty members, have ***designed a curriculum which allows the student to learn*** that which is needed to be successful after graduation from the College. In short, faculty members view the curriculum as being collectively owned by all faculty members!

### D. The Structure of the Assessment of Student Learning at Lincoln College

The essential structure of the assessment program is centralized through a Dean of Assessment and Academic Planning and committees comprised of various stakeholders in the assessment process (almost exclusively full-time faculty members at the College). ***Ultimately, faculty members own, design, and deliver the curriculum of the College***. Consequently, the Lincoln College structure of assessment is designed to provide resources to faculty members in determining how to best effect student learning at the College through the development of master syllabi and a curriculum map which aligns learning outcomes from the courses through the academic programs up to the institutional outcomes (referred to at the College as GELOs).

Table 1.1 - The Current Structure of Assessment Processes at Lincoln College (Fall 2015)

| Position | Contact | Responsibilities to Assessment of Student Learning |
|---|---|---|
| **Dean of Assessment & Academic Planning** | Jeff Kratz <br> jkratz@lincolncollege.edu | • Chair, Assessment Academy Team & Academic Committee <br> • Co-Chair, Assessment Committee <br> • Work with faculty members to design curriculum, assessment of programs, and master syllabi <br> • Produce General Education assessment reports for faculty evaluation <br> • Act as resource for all assessment stakeholders in aligning learning outcomes to the institutional outcomes |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Assessment Academy Team** | Jeff Kratz (Chair) jkratz@lincolncollege.edu<br><br>VPAA, Dean of F&I, Director of ABE Fac. Dev., Co-Chair of Assess Comm., Faculty member | • Implement strategic plan for expansion of assessment of student learning (Assessment Sustainability Plan)<br>• Assess and evaluate the Assessment Program at Lincoln College |
| **Assessment Committee** | Karin Wright (Co-Chair) kwright@lincolncollege.edu<br><br>Jeff Kratz Jkratz@lincolncollege.edu<br><br>Division Representatives (chosen by Division each fall) | • Act as liaison to the academic divisions regarding assessment program<br>• Produce and evaluate assessment reports for general education<br>• Evaluate curriculum map of general education and associate degree learning outcomes using master syllabi developed by divisions/departments<br>• Implement General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO) rubric assessment<br>• Evaluate the process and conduct of the annual academic program reviews<br>• Suggest changes to the curriculum based on assessment reports |
| **Academic Committee** | Jeff Kratz (Chair) jkratz@lincolncollege.edu<br><br>Division Chairs, Lead Faculty, Division Representatives and 2 at-large faculty representatives | • Approve curricular changes and new curricula including learning outcomes of programs<br>• Approve academic policies for the catalog<br>• Evaluate petitions for waiver/substitution of general education and associate degree curricular requirements |
| **Lead Faculty** | **Theatre** – Doug Rosson<br>**Jazz Studies** – Scott Woger<br>**Radio, TV, New Media** – John Malone<br>**CJS** – Katie Culotta<br>**Bus. Mgt.** – Jonathan Pierce<br>**Sport Mgt.** – _Vacant_<br>**Health Services Ad.** – _Vacant_ | • Develop and implement assessment models for the academic program (curriculum map, direct/indirect measures of student learning, master syllabi in the program)<br>• Produce assessment reports for the program<br>• Conduct 5-year program reviews<br>• Serve on the Academic Committee |
| **Division Chairs** | **Lang/Hum/Soc. Sciences** Karin Wright<br><br>**Math, Science, and PE** Teresa Saner<br><br>**Fine Arts & Communication** Scott Woger<br><br>**Business Programs** Jonathan Pierce | • Assist in the development of master syllabi for academic programs and general education<br>• Work with faculty to develop course syllabi consistent with the master syllabi<br>• Conduct division meetings and votes on curricular changes emanating from the divisions prior to proposal to the Academic Committee<br>• Encourage faculty to complete GELO rubric assessments<br>• Work with Lead Faculty to implement academic program assessment within the division |
| **Director of ABE Faculty** | Kelly Lynn Smith klsmith@lincolncollege.edu | • Work with ABE faculty to develop course syllabi consistent with the master syllabi<br>• Assist ABE faculty in designing assignments and assessments consistent with course learning outcomes.<br>• Encourage ABE faculty to complete GELO rubric assessments<br>• Work with Lead Faculty to implement academic program assessment in ABE courses |

# II. The Lincoln College Model of Assessment

### A. Assessment Vocabulary at Lincoln College

Every institution in higher education has a specific set of terms used in their unique assessment processes. Such terms as objectives, goals, and outcomes can be distinct at one institution and interchangeable at another. The following is the basic glossary of terms related to assessment used at Lincoln College:

- ***GELO*** **(General Education Learning Outcome):** One of the five ***institutional*** outcomes identified by the College which **ALL** students should demonstrate upon graduation regardless of their program of study.  All academic program outcomes are aligned to these 5 GELOs. The Five GELOs are:

    Upon completion of their academic program at Lincoln College, students are able to:
    1. Effectively communicate in oral and written forms. (***Communication Skills***)
    2. Produce solutions to problems using critical reasoning. (***Analytical Skills***)
    3. Critique and evaluate diverse perspectives/ideas. (***Appreciate Diversity***)
    4. Articulate core values in making ethical choices. (***Ethical Decision-Making***)
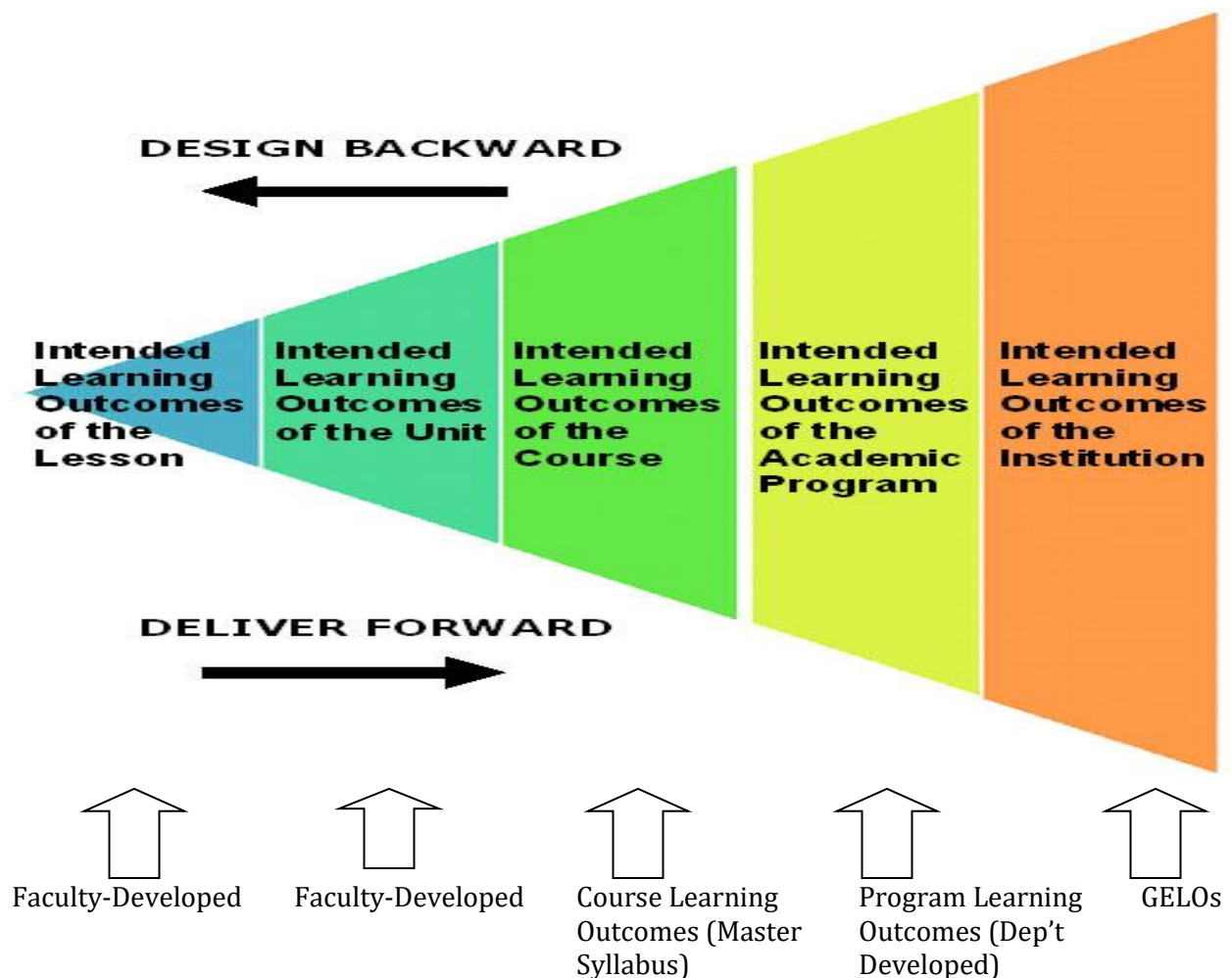    5. Recognize one's accountability to a larger community. (***Responsible Citizenship***)

- ***GELO Rubric*****:** The direct measure of assessment of the General Education Learning Outcome (GELO) completed by the faculty member on an assignment or course activity which aligns to one of the GELOs. The GELO rubrics were developed by the full-time faculty members within each division at an Assessment Workshop in 2013. Based on the AAc&U Value Rubrics, the GELO rubrics provide the elements and characteristics which define each of the GELOs indicated above. Available in MyLynx, faculty members send the rubric scores (determined after grading the assignment) on an identified assignment in the course to gelo@lincolncollege.edu so that the data can be analyzed for the GELO being assessed in order to make changes to the curriculum. (See the *Measures of Assessment of Student Learning* later in this Guide for more information on completing GELO rubrics).

- ***Master Syllabus:***  The document developed by the division, department, and/or academic program which indicates the minimum course learning outcomes, the minimum course objectives and/or topics, and any required assessments established by the department, division or program which are gathered for assessment purposes. Master syllabi allow the College to map the curriculum so that there is an intentional design to the student's learning as they progress through the curriculum.

- ***Program Learning Outcome*****:**  A measurable student performance result identified by the specific academic program for which the student is enrolled (e.g., Business Management, Sport Management, Associate of Arts, GELO, etc.)  Program Learning Outcomes are aligned to GELOs but are specific to the academic program in terms of content and subject matter.

- ***Course Learning Outcome*****:**  A measurable student performance result identified by the specific course for which a student is enrolled. The master syllabus includes and identifies the minimum, common course learning outcomes across delivery modalities and locations at the College. Course learning outcomes are aligned to Program Learning Outcomes by the academic department or program.

- ***Course Objective***:  A <u>goal of the course</u> which identifies those <u>content/subject area</u> activities, attributes, abilities, and/or knowledge a student should engage in and achieve in a specific course.  Course objectives are content specific to the course within a discipline.

- ***Direct Measure***:  Assessment measures which evaluate student performance in meeting the established and specific learning outcomes of an academic program or course and result from analysis of <u>student behaviors or products</u> in which students demonstrate how well they have mastered learning outcomes.

- ***Indirect Measure***:  Assessment measures which evaluate <u>feelings, perceptions, thoughts, and opinions</u> of student learning and the programmatic institutional environment which supports learning.

## B.  The Lincoln College Assessment Triangle for Student Learning

The model of assessment at Lincoln College is adapted from Huba and Freed's (2000) model for assessment in their work, *Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses: Shifting the Focus From Teaching to Learning*.  Huba and Freed's assessment triangle (pictured below) indicates that the curriculum is designed backward (determining the learning outcomes first) and then delivered forward by faculty members (through course assignments and the sequencing of courses). The model is based on alignment of learning outcomes from the course level through the program level up to the overall institutional learning outcomes (GELOs). In this manner the faculty can assess the institutional level of learning by students through the program assessments completed by the different academic programs and departments.



DESIGN BACKWARD

| Intended Learning Outcomes of the Lesson | Intended Learning Outcomes of the Unit | Intended Learning Outcomes of the Course | Intended Learning Outcomes of the Academic Program | Intended Learning Outcomes of the Institution |

DELIVER FORWARD

| Faculty-Developed | Faculty-Developed | Course Learning Outcomes (Master Syllabus) | Program Learning Outcomes (Dep't Developed) | GELOs |

### C. Lincoln College Master Syllabi

Master syllabi at Lincoln College have been developed for all courses by the faculty members in each discipline, division, and academic program in an effort to align course learning outcomes with the program learning outcomes and/or GELOs. The purpose of the master syllabi is to ensure that the curriculum has been designed backward in order to be delivered forward by the faculty members teaching the courses. The master syllabi for each course are thus faculty-developed and driven in the academic departments.

Master Syllabi include the following elements which are considered the minimum requirements of each course as determined by the academic departments:

- **Course Number and Name, Course Description, and Pre-requisites**
- **Course Definition:** Some courses include a definition such as writing intensive, quantitative intensive, oral presentation intensive, etc. A course definition lets the student and faculty member know what types of activities will be focused on in the course.
- **Program Learning Outcomes:** The master syllabus will indicate which programmatic learning outcomes the course is designed to meet to inform the student and faculty member of the course's place in the overall curriculum.
- **Course Learning Outcomes:** The master syllabus will indicate the minimum course learning outcomes the student should meet and the faculty should deliver (as determined by the department and divisions at the College). Faculty members may add to the course learning outcomes in delivering their course, but must minimally deliver those course learning outcomes identified by the department/division in which the course resides.
- **Course Objectives/Topics:** The master syllabus will indicate the minimum goals of the course as determined by the department and/or division. The course objectives will indicate the minimum content/subject matter knowledge students should achieve in the course as determined by the academic department/division.
- **Required Assessments:** Some courses (for example, program capstone courses) indicate assignments which are REQUIRED to be delivered by the department and/or division. These assignments are specific artifacts used by the department/division to gather assessment of student learning data in adjusting, revising, or re-designing the curricula. Such assignments are linked to the programmatic learning outcomes and the course learning outcomes.
- **Suggested Assessments:** Suggested assessments are merely suggestions which have been gathered from prior faculty members who have taught the course which were found to be appropriate and effective methods of assessing the achievement of course learning outcomes. Suggested assessments may guide faculty members in designing the course around the required course learning outcomes OR faculty members may develop their own assessments.
- **Required Textbook(s):** Some courses may indicate a REQUIRED textbook used in the program/division to deliver the course and achieve the course objectives and course learning outcomes. In such cases, the textbook has been selected by the department/division to ensure that the course aligns with the program's and College's overall design of the curriculum.
- **Suggested Textbook(s):** If there is no required textbook, the program/division may include a list of suggested textbooks from which a new faculty member could use in designing their course. While the College has a textbook rental system in its traditional programs, the ABE program on the Normal campus uses a purchase method and thus faculty members are often free to select the textbook they deem to be the most aligned with the course learning outcomes. This section simply provides new faculty with a ready-made list of suggestions so they need not start from scratch.

Master syllabi for your course can be obtained by your academic program head: Division Chair, Lead Faculty, or Director of ABE Faculty Development. The College is currently in the process of developing a centralized, electronic location for all master syllabi for ease of access by students and faculty members.

*A note on Academic Freedom*:  the College supports and recognizes the academic freedom of faculty members to explore ideas, determine topics and issues to be discussed with students, and to determine the best manner in which deliver courses. The master syllabi are NOT designed to infringe on such freedoms. Rather, the intent of the master syllabus is to ensure that common LEARNING OUTCOMES are achieved and evaluated in courses. The manner in which those outcomes are assessed on the course level (assignments and topics) are still largely in the judgment of the individual faculty member teaching the course.  As indicated above in the Assessment Triangle, faculty members develop the outcomes of the lessons and units in a course and most often develop the most appropriate course assessments for determining student achievement of course learning outcomes. Finally, course learning outcomes identified on the master syllabus are the minimum course learning outcomes which must be delivered and assessed in a course. Faculty members remain free to add additional course learning outcomes provided those identified by the department/division as minimal are included in the course.

### D.  The Lincoln College Curriculum Map: I-R-M Taxonomy

The College has been (and is continually) developing and refining a curriculum map for each academic program and the GELOs.  Working collectively and within each department, the Lincoln College faculty has identified initial curriculum maps of each program in order to evaluate the manner in which the student learning outcomes are delivered and achieved through the requirements of the curriculum.

To assist departments and divisions in defining the curriculum maps, the College has created a *Curriculum Mapping Resource Guide* available to faculty members from the Dean of Assessment and Academic Planning or the faculty member's division chair. For the purposes of understanding the curriculum map and its concomitant effect on the faculty member's role in assessment of student learning, important excerpts from that *Guide* are included below:

*Purpose of Developing and Using a Curriculum Map:*
- Acts as a visual representation of the logic and unity of the curriculum for students, faculty and advisors to achieve the learning outcomes of the program/institution
- Assures that learning outcomes (programmatic/GELOs) are being developed and evaluated in an appropriate sequence for the students
- Allows faculty to identify possible holes in the curriculum which inhibit students from achieving the intended learning outcomes of degree, program, or institution (GELOs)
- Faculty members can more accurately apply data points from the assessment evidence to the "map" to adjust curriculum to advance student learning
- Ensures intentional, regular and inclusive assessment of student learning in the curriculum

*The Role of Faculty Members in Assessment of Student Learning:*
The curriculum map ensures that we, as a community of faculty members, move from just examining student learning in "MY course" (course learning outcomes) to also examining student learning in "OUR curriculum" (programmatic/general education learning outcomes).

The curriculum map links all our courses to create an intentional design for the student in which they progress toward achieving the institution's and program's learning outcomes while simultaneously gaining the subject matter knowledge of each course for which they enroll. The distinction in these roles is highlighted in the following table:

| Course Level Assessment of Learning | Institutional/Programmatic Assessment of Learning |
|---|---|
| Faculty are the subject matter/content expert | Faculty are members of a community of experts |
| Faculty are the facilitator of student learning of the subject matter of the course | Faculty are facilitators of student learning by connecting courses and sequences for the student across disciplines/divisions |
| The syllabus determines the COURSE's sequencing of Learning | The curriculum map determines the PROGRAM's sequencing of learning |
| Faculty "deliver" the learning forward through their course | Faculty "design" the curriculum backward from the Programmatic Learning Outcomes – determining the appropriate course connections and courses to ensure opportunity for progressing toward the learning outcomes |

### *The Focus on Levels of Proficiency: The IRM Taxonomy.*

Because the curriculum map's focus is on Programmatic Learning Outcomes rather than Course Objectives (content/subject area knowledge), courses can be identified as I-R-M based on whether they introduce, reinforce, or require mastery of those *PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES* (e.g., the GELOs)

The Table below indicates the definition of **Introductory, Reinforcement, or Mastery**.

| Introduce (I) | <ul><li>Courses in which the students develop knowledge and competencies that enable them to perform the programmatic learning outcome at an introductory level</li><li>Introductory courses should be *REQUIRED* courses for all students to ensure that all students are exposed to the programmatic learning outcome or GELO.</li></ul> |
|---|---|
| Reinforce (R) | <ul><li>Courses in which the students practice the programmatic learning outcome through activities that continue to develop the outcome-based abilities which were introduced in a prior course</li><li>*MULTIPLE* courses in the curriculum may **REINFORCE** the program learning outcome</li><li>Reinforcement courses may be **REQUIRED ELECTIVES** (courses in which the student may choose a list of courses which are identified as reinforcing earlier introduction to the learning outcome) or may be required specifically.</li><li>Reinforcement courses often have course prerequisites which are introductory level courses.</li></ul> |
| Master (M) | <ul><li>Students perform the learning outcome independently at a higher level (since it was reinforced in at least two other classes)</li><li>**ONLY ONE** course is needed to demonstrate mastery of the learning outcome (two courses COULD be used).</li><li>Mastery Level courses should be *REQUIRED* in the curriculum.</li><li>Mastery level courses should have course prerequisites (at minimum courses which served to reinforce the learning outcome).</li></ul> |

Integration of learning outcomes should occur near the end of the program of study (general education or specific academic program), but it is not necessary to have a capstone course which tries to measure all outcomes. Faculty members will use the I-R-M Taxonomy to design and reassess the curriculum through the map to ensure that outcomes move through all stages (introductory, reinforcement, and mastery) so that student learning is advancing and building toward integration of the learning outcomes.

***Using the emerging curriculum map to Assess and Advance Student Learning***
- The curriculum map can be used to recognize "holes" in the curriculum in which students are not required or can avoid certain programmatic learning outcomes without the need to actually gather data (i.e., it is a form of assessment in and of itself).
- The GELO rubric assessment data can be more accurately applied to the curriculum to determine possible changes needed because:
   a. 1 (Benchmark) would be expected in an Introductory course to the GELO
   b. 2 and 3 (Milestone) would be expected in the Reinforcement courses to the GELO
   c. 4 (Capstone) would be expected in the Mastery courses to the GELO
- The curriculum map can assist in determining revisions to master syllabi or the need to create a master syllabus for a course.
- Faculty Members teaching the courses are BEST equipped to determine through the curriculum map revisions to be made to the curriculum (which means the learning outcomes are truly being delivered forward to the students).

# III. Measures of Assessment of Student Learning at Lincoln College

### A. Direct vs. Indirect Measures of Student Learning

**Direct Measures of Assessment:** Direct measures evaluate student performance in meeting the established and specific learning outcomes of an academic program. Allen (2008) indicates that direct measurement is assessment "based on an analysis of student behaviors or products in which [the students] demonstrate how well they have mastered learning outcomes" (p. 1). Direct measures require students to produce artifacts which demonstrate their achievement of the student learning outcomes expected by the academic program. In this respect, direct measurement examines the cognitive nature of student learning.

**Indirect Measures of Assessment:** Indirect measures evaluate feelings, perceptions, thoughts, and opinions of student learning and the programmatic and/or institutional environment which supports their learning. Allen (2008) indicates that indirect measurement is assessment "based on an analysis of reported perceptions about student mastery of learning outcomes" (p. 1). Such reported perceptions and attitudes regarding student learning may emanate from the students themselves, faculty members, and/or external constituents such as employers. In this respect, indirect measurement examines the affective nature of student learning.

Differences Between Direct and Indirect Measures of Assessment

| Direct Measures | Indirect Measures |
|---|---|
| • Assessment of student's **cognitive** learning | • Assessment of student's **affect** regarding learning. |
| • Students **produce artifacts** that can evaluated | • People may report their **attitudes and perceptions** regarding how well they feel students are learning |
| • Directly assesses **student performance** in | • Assesses perceptions of the **student** |

| achieving learning outcomes | **experience** of learning |
|---|---|
| • Data gathered directly from **enrolled students** in the program | • Data may be gathered from a variety of constituencies including **enrolled students, alumni, employers, and/or transfer institutions** |
| • Students **demonstrate** what they learned | • Students **report** what they learned |
| • Evidence of learning is directly linked to **program/department student learning outcomes** | • Evidence of learning may be linked to **program/department and/or institutional expectations** regarding learning |
| • Acts as **primary assessment** of student learning | • Acts as **supportive assessment** of student learning |

It is important to note that the focus of all assessment of student learning should be placed on direct measures of assessment since such assessment provides direct evidence of mastery of the learning outcomes expected by the program. Indirect measures of assessment should serve as supporting evidence of student learning when coupled with direct measures. In this respect, indirect measures provide additional data in which to evaluate the overall student experience in mastery of the learning outcomes. However, when indirect measures are solely used in the absence of direct measures, the program will have no direct evidence of student mastery of the intended learning outcomes. Thus, the focal point of assessment of student learning must first begin with direct measures.

**Examples of Direct Measures for Program-Level Assessment possibly used at Lincoln College**
Direct Measures directly evaluate student performance and achievement of the program's stated learning outcomes and can are evidenced by artifacts or rubrics assessing actual student work. Examples include:

- **Scores and pass rates on external standardized tests. Examples include:**
   - Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP)
   - Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)
   - **Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) – Used at LC for Gen. Ed**
   - iSkills
   - **Major Field Achievement Test (MFAT) – Used by Business Management and CJS**
- **External Licensure exams/certifications for specialized programs – Used by Cosmetology and Massage Therapy**
- **Writing samples using a pre-determined rubric – Used for GELO Assessment**
- **Score gains** indicating the "value added" to the students' learning experiences by comparing entry and exit tests (either published or locally developed) as well as writing samples
- **Locally designed quizzes, tests, etc.**
- **Portfolio artifacts – Used by Sport Management and Liberal Arts**
- **Capstone projects – Used by Criminal Justice Studies**
- **Case studies**
- **Capstone presentations – Used by Criminal Justice Studies**
- **Oral examination**
- **Internships or other professional/content-related experiences** engaging students in hands-on experiences in their respective fields of study (accompanied by ratings or evaluation forms from field/clinical supervisors) – **Used by Sport Management**
- **Service-learning projects or experiences**
- **Student Performances**

- **Authentic and performance-based projects or experiences** engaging students in opportunities to apply their knowledge to the larger community (accompanied by ratings, scoring rubrics or performance checklists from project/experience coordinator or supervisor)
- **Graduates' skills in the workplace rated by employers**
- **Online course asynchronous discussions** analyzed by class instructors


**Examples of Indirect Measures for Program-Level Assessment used by Lincoln College**

Indirect Measures assess student and other constituency attitudes and perceptions of student achievement of learning outcomes. Examples include:
- **Course grades** provide information about student learning *indirectly* because of a series of reasons, such as: a) due to the focus on student performance or achievement at the level of an individual class, such grades do not represent an indication of learning over a longer course of time than the duration of that particular class or across different courses within a program; b) grading systems vary from class to class; and c) grading systems in one class may be used inconsistently from student to student
- **Grades assigned to student work in one particular course** also provide information about student learning *indirectly* because of the reasons mentioned above. Moreover, graded student work in isolation, without an accompanying scoring rubric, does not lead to relevant meaning related to overall student performance or achievement in one class or a program
- **Comparison between admission and graduation rates**
- **Number or rate of graduating students pursuing their education at the next level**
- **Reputation of graduate programs accepting graduating students**
- **Employment or placement rates of graduating students into appropriate career positions**
- **Course evaluation items related to the overall course or curriculum quality**, rather than instructor effectiveness **- Used by Business Management**
- **Number or rate of students involved in faculty research, collaborative publications and/or presentations, service learning, or extension of learning in the larger community**
- **Surveys, questionnaires, open-ended self-reports, focus-group or individual interviews** dealing with *current students'* perception of their own learning
- **Surveys, questionnaires, focus-group or individual interviews** dealing with *alumni*'s perception of their own learning or of their current career satisfaction (which relies on their effectiveness in the workplace, influenced by the knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions developed in school)
- **Surveys, questionnaires, focus-group or individual interviews** dealing with the *faculty and staff members*' perception of student learning as supported by the programs and services provided to students
- **Quantitative data**, such as enrollment numbers
- **Honors, awards, scholarships, and other forms of public recognition earned by students and alumni**
- **Alumni, employer, and student surveys – Used by Lincoln College (Divided by Program)**
- **Exit interviews of graduates and focus groups**
- **Interviews of instructors, program coordinators, residence halls leaders, and others who have direct contact with students**
- **Graduate follow-up studies**
- **Retention and transfer studies**
- **Length of time to degree**

- **SAT/ACT/GRE scores**
- **Graduation rates and transfer rates**
- **Job placement data**
- **Satisfaction surveys – Used by Lincoln College (Student Satisfaction Inventory)**
- **Observing and recording students' behaviors**

    B. **General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) Assessment at Lincoln College: A Direct Measure of**

The primary direct measure of student achievement of the GELOs is the GELO rubric assessment program.  The GELO rubrics directly measure student performance related to the GELOs through embedded course assessment of student produced artifacts. Faculty members determine scores on applicable GELO rubrics from assignments they deliver in the course. ***The scores are INDEPENDENT of the grade assigned on the assessment in the course***.

The GELO rubrics define the learning outcomes of the general education program. For example, Lincoln College faculty members have identified three characteristics/elements of EFFECTIVE written communication in GELO I. The characteristics/elements on the rubric define what the faculty have determined would make a student an effective writer according to our College's learning outcomes.

Using Lincoln College's General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) as a guide, the table below indicates the GELO, the specific outcome-based skill associated with it, and the manner in which the full faculty members define that skill (through the GELO rubric assessment measure as identified by the Lincoln College Faculty at the Fall 2013 Assessment Workshop).

| GELO | Outcomes-Based Skills | Definition of Outcome through GELO Rubric |
|---|---|---|
| Ia: Communication Skills | Communicate Effectively in Oral Forms | • Organization<br>• Delivery<br>• Supporting Materials |
| Ib: Communication Skills | Communicate Effectively in Written Forms | • Context and Purpose<br>• Content Development<br>• Genre/Disciplinary Convention |
| II: Analytical Skills | Produce solutions to problems using critical reasoning | • Critical reasoning<br>• Data Interpretation<br>• Analysis of Data |
| III: Appreciate Diversity | Critique and evaluate diverse perspectives/ideas | • Community Diversity<br>• Cultural Diversity<br>• Cultural Self-Awareness<br>• Empathy |
| IV: Ethical Decision-making | Articulate core values in making ethical choices | • Ethical Issue Recognition<br>• Core Value Development<br>• Value Articulation |
| V: Responsible Citizenship | Recognize one's accountability to a larger community | • Civic Action and Reflection<br>• Personal and Social Responsibility<br>• Application of Civil Knowledge |

Note: The specific GELO rubrics are available in MyLynx under the faculty tab and at the end of this *Guide.*

Available in MyLynx, faculty members send the rubric scores (determined after grading the assignment) on an identified assignment in the course to [gelo@lincolncollege.edu](mailto:gelo@lincolncollege.edu) so that the data can be analyzed for the GELO being assessed in order to make changes to the curriculum.

# GENERAL APPLICATION OF GELO RUBRICS

## When Should a GELO Assessment Rubric Be Completed?

- The official schedule of Regular General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment is currently as follows and will include courses specifically identified by the College's Assessment Committee which must complete a GELO:

| | |
|---|---|
| GELO Ia (Oral Communication) | 2013/2014 |
| GELO Ib (Written Communication) | 2013/2014 |
| GELO II (Analytical Skills) | 2014/2015 |
| GELO III (Appreciate Diversity) | 2014/2015 |
| GELO IV (Ethical Decision-Making) | 2015/2016 |
| GELO V (Responsible Citzenship) | 2015/2016 |

- Because ALL the GELO Rubrics will be available in the Faculty Tab in MyLynx for all faculty, faculty members who desire to complete a GELO Assessment for courses in a year in which that GELO is not being assessed may do so by simply following the procedures and process for GELO assessment.
- Faculty Members may complete a GELO Rubric at *any time throughout the semester* after an applicable assignment has been graded. In this manner, faculty members may complete a GELO assessment in one class within the first month of the semester, in another class during the second month, and in a third class in the third month. (It just depends on when the applicable assignment is turned in and graded.)
- Faculty members need only complete the GELO assessment *ONCE per course*.

## Using the Lincoln College GELO Assessment Rubrics

- The Rubrics were created by the Lincoln College faculty members in fall 2013 to define the specific components of the College's general education learning outcomes(GELO) (i.e., what do we mean by "effective written communication?") using elements of the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Value Rubrics for Assessing general education.
- Each Rubric identifies 3-4 "definitions" of the specific GELO for which it applies. The Rubric defines key words which must be considered when applying the Rubric. (For example, "Organization" on GELO Ib is defined as: "specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions").
- Each "definition" is subdivided into a description of a Benchmark (1), Milestone (2) or (3), and Capstone (4). There is also a score of zero (0) for students who do not meet the Benchmark.
- To earn the score associated with each category (Benchmark, Milestone, or Capstone) the student's work must demonstrate *every aspect* of the description in that category.
- Each category is in *NO WAY* associated with the grade the student received on the assignment. In other words, a 4 is not an A, 3 is not a B, 2 is not a C, 1 is not a D, and 0 is not an F. A student could earn an A on a paper in ENG 101 but the application of the assessment GELO rubric requires that they receive a 1 (Benchmark). Such discrepancies are not actually discrepancies!!! The requirements for an A paper in ENG 101 logically should be lower than the requirements for an A paper in a 400 level course.

- Another note on grading: The categories and their scores (1, 2, 3, and 4) are more closely aligned (if there is a logic to the curriculum) to the student's class-level (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior.)
- STUDENTS DO NOT SEE THE COMPLETED RUBRIC! The rubric application is for assessment of the curriculum and student learning only. As such, students do not receive copies of the assessment rubric though assignments could be designed around it!
- ***The assessment data gathered through the GELO Rubrics is used solely to determine student learning in the overall curriculum and NOT the level of student learning in a particular course from a particular faculty member***. In other words, the data is used to make adjustments to master syllabi (if need be), curriculum requirements, course sequencing, etc. It is NOT used as a method of evaluating faculty performance.

**General Principles of GELO Assessment Rubrics**
- The most important thing to do is to be honest about the student's work you are reviewing. Remember, GELO is *NOT a grade or associated with grades*.
- Ratings are a reflection of the student's knowledge, skills, and abilities ***at the moment of assignment completion*** as explained by the Rubric. (For example, a student could be a "4" for Organization in a 100-level course, but another student could be a "1" in a 400-level course.) Apply the rubric requirement AS WRITTEN in the rubric to determine the score.
- One of the primary purposes for GELO assessment is to help identify the gaps or inconsistencies in the curriculum, course sequencing, or curricular requirements at the COLLEGE (for example, could a student avoid writing papers after ENG 102?) in order to adjust requirements

Questions regarding the GELO assessment process can be directed to the Co-Chairs of the Assessment Committee through the email gelo@lincolncollege.edu.

# LINCOLN COLLEGE ASSESSMENT REPORTING PROCEDURES
**Email the final completed Spreadsheet to** gelo@lincolncollege.edu**.**

*To access the GELO Reports/Spreadsheets for reporting student learning scores:*
1. Login to MyLynx and open the "Faculty Tab" at the top of the page.
2. Open the "GELO Assessments" Link in the upper, left corner of the Faculty Portlet.
3. Open the appropriate Rubric Definitions document for the course you are completing an assessment for (GELO Ia, GELO Ib, GELO II, GELO III, GELO IV, or GELO V).
4. Open the spreadsheet associated with the rubric you are using.

*To enter the GELO Rubric Rating via the Lincoln College GELO Reports:*
5. Fill in the appropriate fields at the TOP of the spreadsheet including entering the description of the assignment (e.g., "Final research paper: 5-7 pages long, APA-style citations"). **Include the Course Learning Outcome the assignment meets**.
6. **FOR Written Assessment**: Indicate the page length requirement of the writing assignment.
7. **FOR Oral Assessment**: Indicate the length of the presentation/speech.
8. Enter the STUDENT ID in the Student ID field. Student IDs can be obtained from the course roster by going to the "Course Management" link and selecting the "Class List" drop down which will show all students registered for the course with their name and ID number.
9. NOTE: The spreadsheet includes a column for student name in order to make it easier for you to align student ID with the student who you are assessing through the assignment.
10. Using the Rubric available in the MyLynx Portal described above, enter the GELO rubric score for the student in each field for Definitions 1-3 or 4. The spreadsheet will auto

calculate total score and mean score.

<mark>***NOTE: If student DID NOT complete or submit the assignment DO NOT enter anything for the student. (There is no N/A option and DO NOT select "0.") Leave their entry entirely blank.***</mark>

***NOTE: If a student plagiarized the assignment, you may enter a "0."***

11. When complete, save the spreadsheet and email to [gelo@lincolncollege.edu](mailto:gelo@lincolncollege.edu) with a subject line of GELO ASSESSMENT data and the course and GELO you assessed.

### C. Academic Program Learning Outcomes Assessment

Each academic program at the College has developed student learning outcomes specific to the program of study which are also aligned with the overall GELOs (as indicated in the College's Assessment Triangle Model). Each program has also developed master syllabi aligned to those learning outcomes. As such, please see your academic program head (division chair or Lead Faculty) for the specific Direct Measures of Assessment of Student Learning in the program.

Assessment data gathered through direct measures in academic program can be used to assess GELOs since the learning outcomes are aligned. In this manner, assessment of academic programs follows the same process as the assessment of GELOs though each program may use different direct measures. For example, Business Management uses the capstone course (BUS 413) to administer the Major Field Achievement Test and gather data from student performance on the BSG Simulation administered in the class.

Program Learning Outcomes are available in the current College catalog, from your program head (Lead Faculty or Division Chair), and are included on the master syllabus. Additionally, each program includes an emerging curriculum map indicating the sequencing of courses in the curriculum.

# IV. Evaluation and Use of Assessment Data at Lincoln College

The gathering of assessment data in each program is determined by a scheduled cycle of A-E-C for the particular program and for GELO assessment. The A-E-C cycle is a yearly cycle in which GELOs (for example) are Assessed (A) one year, Evaluated (E) the next, and curriculum is Changed (C) the following year to reflect advancement of student learning at the College. In short, we gather data in the first year (assess), evaluate the meaning of the data in the second year (evaluate), and make the appropriate changes to the curriculum (change) in the third year. In year four, the process starts all over again for that particular learning outcome.

The following is the current table of the A-E-C cycle for assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs):

| GELO | Assess (gather data) | Evaluate | Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ia: Oral Communication | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
| Ib: Written Communication | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
| II: Analytical Skills | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| III: Appreciate Diversity | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| IV: Ethical Decision Making | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| V: Responsible Citizenship | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |

**Assess** = GELO rubrics submitted by faculty for assignments related to the rubric. (faculty members)

**Evaluate** = Data is examined and interpreted by divisions and faculty members who make recommendations for change (Divisions and Assessment Committee)

**Change** = Proposals for altering curriculum based on the evaluation are enacted (Academic Committee)

Changes may include alterations to: (a) the learning outcomes (course, program, or GELO), (b) GELO rubrics, (c) requirements of the master syllabi, (d) curriculum map and sequence of courses, etc.

In this manner, the College and our faculty are committed to continuous evaluation of student learning to advance the student experience!

# Appendices

# The GELO Rubrics

**Please note: rubrics may be found in MyLynx under the Faculty Tab**