

The Learning Evidence Team

Report to the Learning Affairs Council
Valencia Community College
April 6, 2004
Roberta Vandermast, Co-Chair, reporting

Origin of the Learning Evidence Team

- Rooted in the two questions used to frame decision making at Valencia:
 - How does this enhance learning?
 - How do we know?
- And in Goal 4 of our Strategic Plan:
 - Creating “a culture in which clearly specified learning outcomes and assessments engage students as responsible partners in their learning.”
 - Goal 4 Outcome: assessment strategies that provide clear evidence of mastery of learning outcomes.

Charge to the Learning Evidence Team:

Provide leadership for the college wide initiative to accomplish Goal 4 of the Strategic Learning Plan and foster a “culture of evidence” that improves learning at Valencia.

Team Members

- Drawn from: faculty volunteers solicited by the Valencia Faculty Association; volunteers from among the Deans; and members of Dr. Edward's staff.
- To provide continuity and diversity:
 - One third of team serves one year.
 - One third serves two years.
 - One third serves three years.

Goals for the Learning Evidence Team

1. Foster a “culture of evidence” at the college by answering two key questions:
 - What do we mean by evidence of student learning?
 - How will we document this evidence?
2. Articulate a philosophy of assessment of student learning that will provide direction for the College in creating a coordinated program of learning centering on our core competencies: Think, Value, Communicate, and Act.

Goals for the Learning Evidence Team

3. Envision a long-term plan for the implementation and documentation of learning outcomes (based on the philosophy of student assessment centered on our core competencies) that will improve learning at the College.

Team has begun work on Goal 1 (culture of evidence) and Goal 2 (philosophy of assessment). The team believes these must be completed and ratified by the college community before work can begin on Goal 3.

Progress Since Feb (1st Meeting):

- Assembly of Learning Evidence Team Directory.
- Collaborative development of a set of design principles and procedures.
- Readings on the nature of assessment.
- Consultations with experts in the field of assessment, including Patty Derbyshire, Gloria Rogers, Marjorie Ginsberg, and Steve Ehrman. Peggy Maki will be visiting the team on June 11th as a consultant.
- Formulation of a draft LET Work Plan currently under consideration by the team.

Progress since Feb:

- Under development: a white paper on “Our Vision of Learning at Valencia”.
- Under development: a concept map of “Our Vision of Assessment at Valencia” which will develop into a white paper.
- Under development: a Learning Evidence Team web site.
 - VCC “branded” web site.
 - Shell is under development in Instructional Technology.

Communication Plan for Learning Evidence Team:

- Publication of charge, design principles, work plan, agendas, minutes, readings, and reports on LET web site with email “ticklers” to the college community.
- Regular notifications in the Bulletin about work in progress and solicitation of input.
- Email distribution of all reports and white papers to college community for input and reports back to the community on input received.
- Flashlight surveys to collect direct input from the college community and reports back to the community on input received.
- Ratification by stakeholders of all reports, white papers, plans and procedures at key points in the process.

Questions Yet To Be Addressed:

- What does the scholarly literature say about the effectiveness of outcomes-based assessment?
- What are the most important principles of outcomes-based assessment?
- What are the most successful models of outcomes-based assessment?
- What is the best model of outcomes-based assessment for Valencia?

Currently Under Consideration

- The AAHE Assessment Conference in June in Denver.
- Plan is to strategically “mine” the conference for both knowledge and expertise on assessment integral to the effective performance of the Learning Evidence Team.
- Early registration (reduced price) due by May 21st.
- **Needed: Support of the Learning Council Budget to allow 4-6 members of LET to attend this conference.**



Comments and Questions

