Learning Excellence Committee Assessment Guidance

Originally the Assessment Participation document, created March 2014

Revised to Learning Excellence Committee Assessment Guidance, passed May 13, 2026

- If you would like to read only the assessment requirements, review pages 2-3.
- If you would like more details or to understand the complete assessment process, review the rest of the document.

Requirements

Deadlines

1. Assessment deadlines will be:
    a. Disseminated to lead faculty by the division chairs and the assessment coordinator in multiple ways including:
        i. Email
        ii. Division meetings
        iii. Mail
        iv. Individual meetings as necessary
    b. Listed in Canvas
    c. Placed on instructional calendars
2. Assessment deadlines will be set to recur consistently:
    a. Assignment Linking is due by census day of each term
    b. Course Narratives are due the same date as grades are due each term
    c. Program Narratives and Lead Instructor Course Narratives are due October 1 for the previous academic year's data and improvements (Fall, Spring, and Summer)
    d. Assessment Office: May 31 deadline for disseminating Course and Program Data and Narratives

Requirements – Division Chairs

To meet assessment participation requirements, Division Chairs will:

1. Assign full-time faculty (including themselves) as lead faculty to each course and program within a division.
    a. Lead Instructors will be assigned to new courses prior to the first reading of the new course by the Curriculum Committee.
    b. Program Coordinators will be assigned to new programs prior to the first reading of the new program by the Curriculum Committee.
2. Develop a Lead Instructor assessment rotation plan for courses that are taught by multiple full-time faculty and/or courses that are not part of programs and/or courses that are taught by adjunct faculty or dual credit faculty only.
    a. Division Chairs will include all full-time faculty in the Lead Instructor assessment rotation plans.
    b. Division Chairs will submit the Lead Instructor assessment rotation plans to the Assessment Office annually by the grades due date in May. (The Assessment Office will begin prompting in March.)
    c. Division Chairs will distribute Lead Instructor assessment rotation plans to all faculty within their respective divisions on Fall Semester Opening Day.
3. Disseminate information regarding assessment deadlines to division faculty.
4. Monitor assessment participation status regarding Assignment Linking and Lead Instructor/Program Coordinator Narratives.

Requirements – Faculty

To meet assessment participation requirements, faculty will create and implement assessment activities for courses, programs, and cocurricular activities, which include:

1. Develop outcomes and review the assessment communication from the Lead Instructor
2. Select the assignment and artifact for measure and complete Assignment Linking for data collection:
    a. One course outcome and one program outcome are required to be assessed based upon accreditation or program needs.
    b. Each class will have two Laker Learning Competencies linked.
3. Assist the Lead Instructor or Program Coordinator in analyzing the data and reporting the results (Course Narrative each semester or department meeting) by October 1
4. Review the annual assessment report and communicate the assessment plans with faculty (full-time, adjunct, and dual credit) who teach sections of the course
    a. Any campus courses taught by Department of Corrections (DOC) instructors will be communicated through the DOC Office.
    b. If approached to share resources because DOC is teaching a campus course, we ask that you share assessment resources with them to ensure consistent alignment across the college.
5. Implement courses/program changes and continuous improvement process

General Timeline Guidance for Instructors and Lead Instructors Each Semester

- By Census Day:
    - Lead Instructors communicate Assignment Linking and Course Narrative suggestions
    - Instructors look for communication about assessment from Lead Instructor
- Full-term/Module 1 Census Day: Instructors complete Assignment Linking and capture information for the Course Narrative provided by the Lead Instructor communication
- End of Mod 1: Instructors complete Course Narrative
- October 1: Lead Instructors/Program Coordinator complete annual Course Narrative
- Module 2 Census Day: Instructors complete Assignment Linking and capture information for the Course Narrative provided by the Lead Instructor communication
- Staff Development Day(s): Assessment Response, Data Team, and Laker Learning Competencies Teams offer assessment sessions
- Last week of semester: Instructors review your data and complete Course Narrative

Accountability

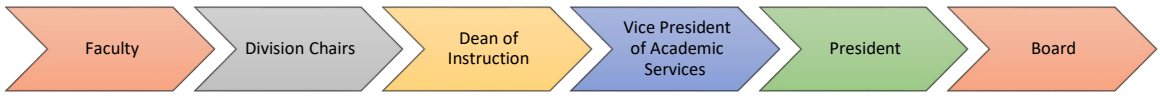
Faculty are expected to meet assessment requirements. See the article from the contract.

Assessment Roles and Responsibilities

The Assessment Participation agreement documents the assessment requirements for each group. Additional guidance is provided below.

Accountability

Accountability for completing assessment is achieved through Faculty, Division Chairs, Dean of Instruction, Vice President of Academic Services, President, and Board of Trustees.



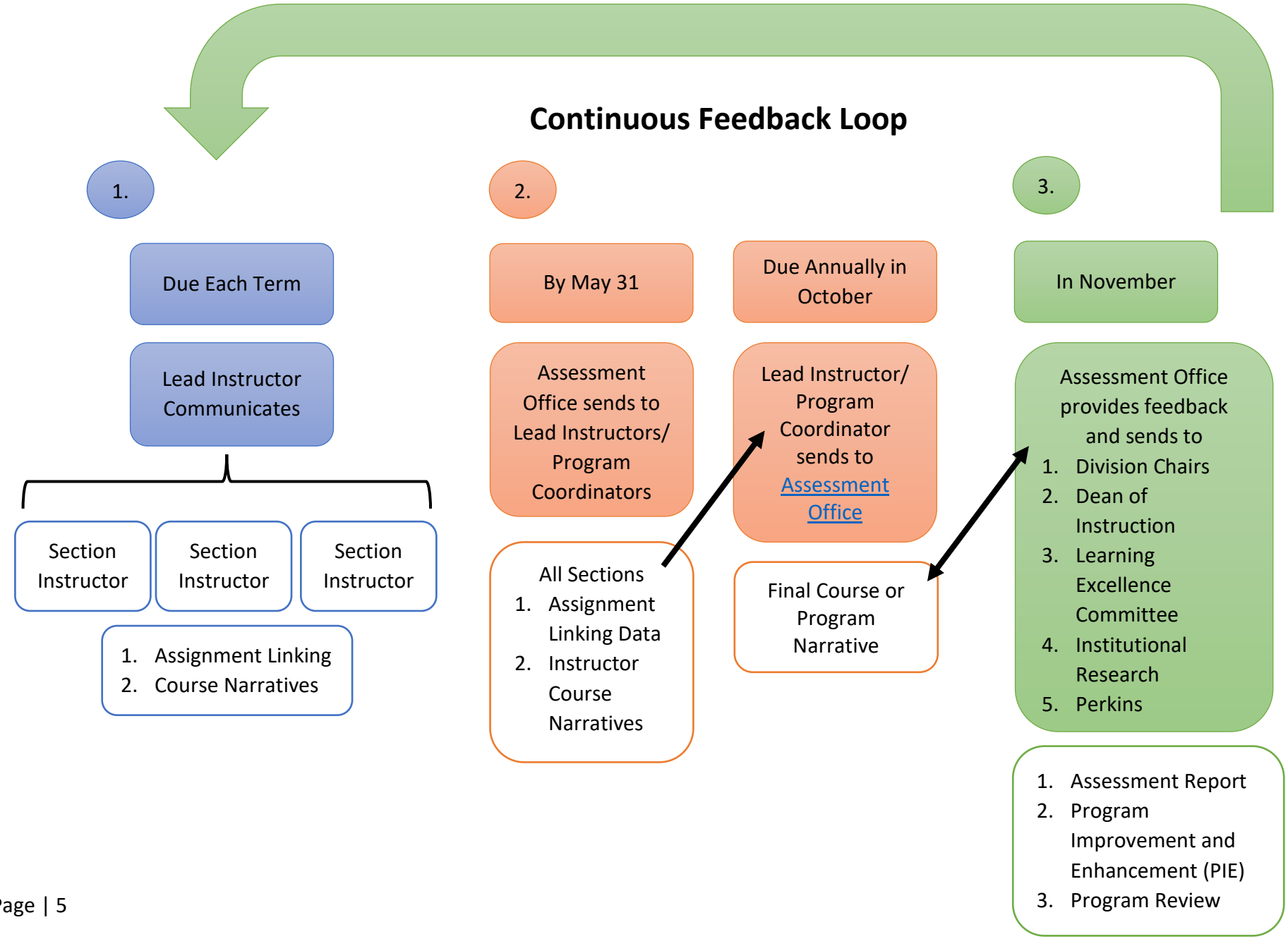
The Learning Excellence Committee is responsible for *guiding* and *fostering communities of practice*. It takes a collaborative atmosphere of faculty learning more about their disciplines, andragogy (adult learning), and student feedback to create a documented environment of learning excellence. The Learning Excellence Committee will guide faculty in researching assessment best practices (quantitative and qualitative studies) and peer review processes and provide professional development.

The goal of accumulating assessment data and narratives is to recommend course and program improvements across campus (general education and Laker Learning Competencies) and advocate for change on behalf of the faculty, students, community, and college. The committee is not responsible for *evaluating* assessment.

Faculty Assessment Roles

Faculty	• HelioCampus Assignment Linking (each section of a course each semester) • Course Narrative (courses or sections -- instructor choice) • not required if contributing information at a department meeting
Lead Instructors	• Lead Instructor Narrative (each course) • uses Course Narratives or dialogue from department meeting from all instructors
Program Coordinators	• Program Narratives (all courses in program, including general education)

Lead Instructor Assessment Process



Description of Faculty Assessment Roles

1.

Who Completes What?

Instructors (full-time, adjunct, and dual credit) complete:

1. **HelioCampus Assignment Linking and Course Outcome Scoring (Quantitative Data)** will be completed each semester for each section.
    a. **Purpose:** completed by each instructor as a source of data on student performance that is outcome-based
    b. **Value:**
        i. serves as **data source** and **documentation** on student performance for HLC
        ii. provides **quantitative insights** for you as the instructor to guide future enhancements
        iii. once linked, it automatically pulls results
    c. **Format:** Link the assignment and HelioCampus does the rest
    d. **Oversight:** The Assessment Office runs the report on who has/has not completed Assignment Linking and sends to the Division Chairs to monitor
    e. **Assessment and Artifact Selection**: can create common departmental assessments and artifacts or individual – department choice
    f. **Process:**
        i. Develop outcomes and review the assessment communication from the Lead Instructor
        ii. Select the assignment and artifact for measure and complete Assignment Linking for data collection:
            - One course outcome and one program outcome are required to be assessed based upon accreditation or program needs.
            - Each class will have two Laker Learning Competencies linked.
                - We encourage you to complete Assignment Linking for all of your outcomes so that you do not have to worry about Assignment Linking each semester.
                - When you copy your courses each semester, the links should remain intact.
                - Plus, you will have more robust, longitudinal data to review over time.
        iii. Assist the Lead Instructor or Program Coordinator in analyzing the data and reporting the results (Course Narrative each semester or department meeting) by October 1
        iv. Review the annual assessment report and communicate the assessment plans with faculty (full-time, adjunct, dual credit, and DOC) who teach sections of the course
        v. Implement courses/program changes and continuous improvement process
2. **Course Narratives (Qualitative Data from Course)** assist the Lead Instructor in analyzing the results and implementing changes by either writing and submitting a Course Narrative or by participating in departmental discussions. The narrative and departmental discussion will be compiled into one reflective Course Narrative that the Lead Instructor will submit by October 1.
    a. Purpose: completed by each instructor as a reflection on the changes made throughout the semester and insights into student learning

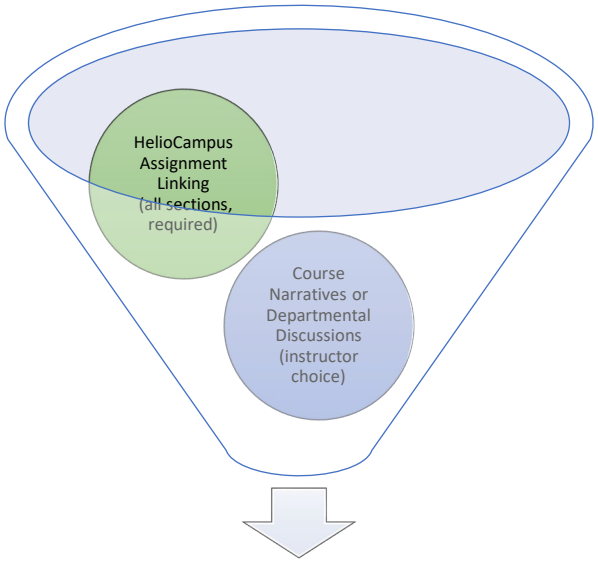
b. Value:

i. Serves as documentation for HLC to demonstrate continuous improvement by all instructors
ii. Provides **qualitative insights** for you as the instructor to guide future enhancements
iii. Can be used for non-tenured faculty in the tenure portfolio or for tenured faculty in the biennial written summary
iv. Complete at the same time grades are due while thoughts are fresh
v. Faculty-owned and used to enhance course instruction and reviewed by Lead Instructors to compile annual narrative

c. **Format:** think of it as a journal for your course—informal and reflective
d. **Oversight:** not monitored, stored in HelioCampus for easy retrieval and sharing with Lead Instructor
e. **Process:**

i. If completing the Course Narrative, please include all course sections in one narrative and upload it to the Canvas Course Narrative Assignment. (This will eventually move into HelioCampus only.)
ii. In lieu of a Course Narrative, an instructor can attend a meeting, offer input, and present data during a departmental discussion of that course. The meeting should occur before the October 1 deadline each year.

Lead Instructor (Course Data and Narratives) completes:



1.

1. **HelioCampus Assignment Linking (Quantitative Data) for the course:**
    a. **Purpose:** ensure instructors know what outcomes and assignments to link
    b. **Timing:** communicate the assessment plan each semester by census day
        i. Assignment Linking completed by week four
        ii. Course Narratives completed by grade due date
    c. **Process**: can be completed via email discussions or group meetings
        i. As necessary, review and update course information forms, course outcomes, assignment linking instructions, rubrics, Laker Learning Competencies, or other resources**.**
        ii. If you have changes to make in the course information form, send changes to Shannon McGregor.
        iii. The Assessment Office will send instructions on Assignment Linking via email each semester for you to use and forward.

2.

2. **Lead Instructor Course Narrative (Quantitative and Qualitative Summary) – common in transfer and some CTE programs:**
    a. **Purpose:** consolidates Assignment Linking data from all sections of a course (including adjunct and dual credit) and provides a comprehensive Course Narrative with suggestions for improvements

b. **Timing:** The Assessment Office will send a compiled Assignment Linking data and Course Narrative report to Lead Instructors by May 31; Lead Instructor Course Narratives are due by October 1

c. **Process:**

i. Using the report from the Assessment Office, meet, review, and analyze assessment data with teaching faculty

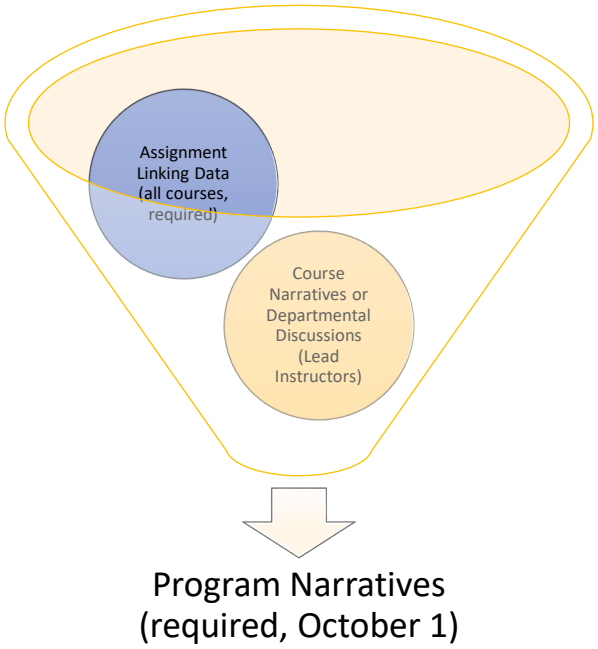
- Discuss what worked well, areas of struggle, new ideas, and upcoming changes
- Capture the textbook, budgets, instructional design, and other resources needed

ii. Document the improvements to instruction and artifacts/assignments into one final Course Narrative due October 1

Potential Scenarios

- If you are Lead Instructor for a course that has multiple sections taught by other instructors but do not have a program, then complete the Lead Instructor Course Narrative, combining all sections in one narrative.
    - For example, BIO 100, ENG 120, and COM 111 would fall into this category.
    - Lead Instructors of these types of courses might be asked to participate in Program Narrative discussions if their courses are used in other programs.
- For Lead Instructors who are not Program Coordinators and are the only instructor of the course, then complete either the Course Narrative or the Lead Instructor Course Narrative and include all sections in one narrative.
    - For example, LIT 147, BIO 050, BIO 160, BIO 235 would fall into this category.
    - Lead Instructors of these types of courses might be asked to participate in Program Narrative discussions if their courses are used in other programs.
- If you are the Lead Instructor within a program but are not the Program Coordinator, then you can either complete the Lead Instructor Course Narrative or work with the Program Coordinator to include those courses in the Program Narrative.
    - For example, Rachel Young is the Program Coordinator for accounting, and Sarah Wright is the Lead Instructor for Fundamentals of Accounting (BUS 095). Sarah could either complete the Lead Instructor Narrative or participate in the accounting program discussions, whichever Rachel, the Program Coordinator, prefers.

Program Coordinator



2.

Program Narrative (Quantitative and Qualitative Summary)

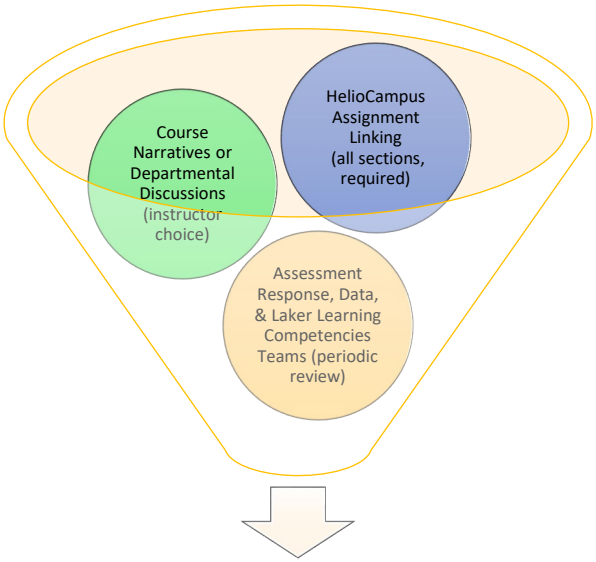
- **Purpose:** consolidates Assignment Linking data from all sections of a program and provides a comprehensive course narrative with suggestions for improvements
- **Timing:** The Assessment Office will send a compiled Assignment Linking data and Course Narrative report to Program Coordinator by May 31. Program Coordinators should meet with the advisory board, connect with other instructors, and compile one Program Narrative, which is due by October 1.
- **Process:**
    - Using the report from the Assessment Office, meet, review, and analyze assessment data with teaching faculty
    - Discuss what worked well, areas of struggle, new ideas, and upcoming changes
    - Capture the textbook, budgets, instructional design, and other resources needed
    - Document the improvements to instruction and artifacts/assignments into one final Course Narrative due October 1
    - Provide a copy to the Perkins Specialist and Institutional Research for the PIE Process

Potential Scenario

Program Coordinators, who are sole instructors/lead instructors (common in CTE programs), complete the Program Narrative, not the Lead Instructor Narrative.

- For example, Sarah is Program Coordinator for Medical Coding (MCS) and Lead Instructor for Fundamentals of Accounting (BUS-095). Sarah will complete the Program Narrative for ALL MCS courses and will complete the Lead Instructor Course Narrative for BUS-095.

Learning Excellence Committee Teams



3.

Learning Excellence Committee: Team Responsibilities

Assessment Response Team (Qualitative)

1. Receives an aggregated study of the Lead Instructor Course Narratives and Program Narratives from the Assessment Office
2. Analyzes narratives to identify recurring themes (students struggle with technology, old textbooks, AI issues, etc.) for campus-wide improvements, not to evaluate individual narratives
3. Reports overall qualitative findings and suggestions to Cabinet through the annual Assessment Report

Data Team (Quantitative)

1. Receives the aggregated report of Assignment Linking Data from the Assessment Office
2. Analyzes HelioCampus Data for courses and programs (students struggle with critical thinking, professional ethics)
3. Reports overall quantitative findings and suggestions to Cabinet through the annual Assessment Report

Laker Learning Competencies Team (Quantitative & Qualitative)

1. Enacts norming, rubrics, and artifact alignment training and revisions, reviews assessment trends from the other teams college-wide, and applies them to general education courses across transfer and CTE
2. Works with faculty to ensure support of Laker Learning Competencies
3. Reports to cabinet as needed

Assessment Office Responsibilities

2. 3.

As part of the continuous improvement process, the Assessment Office will

1. Provide feedback to Lead Instructors and Program Coordinators,
2. Send resource requests to the appropriate department (i.e., Lead instructor, Curriculum, Assessment Office, Canvas Support, Instructional Design, Budgetary Guidance from Division Chair)
3. Compile and send the Course and Program Narratives and Assignment Linking Data to Division Chairs, Dean of Instruction, Learning Excellence Committee, Institutional Effectiveness, and Perkins.

Learning Excellence Resources

Best Practices and Advice

Create Overarching, General Departmental Outcomes that Fit More than One Class

As a department, consider simplifying your course outcomes across all courses so that you are measuring something similar as a department. You could create signature assignments, or assignments that you would hand to new faculty or the entire department. Doing so would help you target instructional revisions and know whether your changes are improving student learning within your majors and across the whole college.

1. Composition and communication might use an overarching, general communication outcome that fits the needs of both departments. If that is not possible, one for composition and one for communication might do. The example outcomes below might fit English or speech.
   - Compose an informative work, encompassing effective content, organization, audience awareness and delivery.
   - Compose a persuasive work, encompassing effective content, organization, audience awareness and delivery.
2. Any discipline might (e.g., LIT, ART, BUS, SOC, EDU, etc.) courses might have the same outcomes to measure that fit any assignment type. This might allow a department to see patterns across the discipline. For example, would the following outcomes be applicable across any LIT course:
   a. Examine symbolic communication.
   b. Explore the roles of culture and the arts within civilization.
   c. Survey major human value and belief systems.
3. Math and Physics might adopt an overarching, general outcome that could cover a mathematical or scientific processes. Could it work more broadly in life sciences, too? Or, would life sciences need a different outcome? This might allow the department to work toward common outcomes and focus on assignments and assessments more closely.
4. In the Agriculture department, they considered the core principles taught in the department to create overarching, general outcomes for the department that assess any non-John Deere, Horticulture, or Diesel & Ag Power programs. The four outcomes include:
   - Basics of Livestock: Show the basics of livestock, including breeds, selection, genetics, reproduction, products, nutrition, and health
   - Farm Operation: Demonstrate how a farm operates, applies skills and knowledge, and uses technology
   - Ag Bus Software: Use Ag business software to create documents for accounting and financing
   - Sum the Material: Summarize the material and concepts taught in agronomy classes

Examples of Strong Narratives and Data Usage

Example 1: Medical Coding

During Summer 2025, Sarah Wright, Business Instructor and Medical Coding Program Coordinator, noted students were struggling in Medical Office Terminology (MCS 041) with a first semester, introductory and central skill. Sarah noted that students were struggling with a chapter 12 assignment related to the course outcome, "demonstrate proficiency in pronouncing medical terminology." In Summer 2025, 50% were achieving proficiency, with the results resting at the developmental levels of proficient or did not meet.

For the Fall 2025 course, Sarah observed how the students were doing and started thinking about how she could scaffold the assignments. The results for the same assignment with these interventions in Fall 2025 improved to 88% proficiency. Twenty-one students reached the proficient level, while three students reached the did not meet level.

In Spring 2026, she increased the support for pronunciation throughout the course, including:

- a course overview that explained the purpose, or the why, of the pronunciation assignments
- embedded word pronunciation exercises where they listen to Sarah pronounce terminology
- instructor- and student-created scenarios that required the students to use the terminology with different audience members, including physicians, patients, and other medical professionals
- embedded feedback loops throughout the course

The results of students reaching the proficient level increased by 20% points from 50% in Summer 2025 to 70% in Spring 2026. Twenty-three of 27 students completed the assignment, and the four students' results were excluded from the data below:

- 69.6% (16 students) reached the proficient level
- 13% (3 students) reached the developing level
- 8.7% (2 students) reached the beginning level
- 8.7% (2 students) reached the did not meet level

After the Spring 2026 changes, she added clarifications to the assignment, noting that students at the developing level did well on it but did not use words from only Chapter 15 but from throughout the semester. Although their scenarios were excellent, they did not follow the instructions.

Sarah plans to continue the embedded support throughout the class and to monitor it as well to ensure her interventions are supporting her students.

Professional Development

- Assessment Group of Illinois Community Colleges (February)
- Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AAHLE, June, in-person and virtual)
- Indiana University Assessment Institute
- HelioCampus Confidence in Practice Webinar Series
- HLC Training (webinars and in-person, ongoing)
- HLC Annual Conference (March/April)
- American Association for Community Colleges Annual Conference (Events)

Glossary of Terms

Course Narratives (currently called Learning Outcomes Map – Program/Course but will change to Course Narrative and Program Narrative for the future): a brief report or summary that tells the story of the data – often includes the data results, a description or an analysis of the data, and a plan for changes that will be made as a result of the assessment.

At Lake Land, we are requesting information that requests information about where the students mastered/struggled with content, instructional changes, resources needed, and a request for guidance.

Outcomes: skills or knowledge students learn, practice and demonstrate as a result of learning and are tied to concept/segment, course or program, located toward the bottom of the course information form

- **learning outcomes**: specific skills and knowledge associated with each segment on the course information form – measured through a variety of assignments (quizzes, drafts, tasks, etc.) and
- **course outcomes**: broader learning outcomes that are more likely demonstrated through a more formal assessment (exam, final paper, reflection assignments, projects, etc.) through the course
- **program outcomes**: broader learning outcomes that are demonstrated through formal assessment (course exams, reflections, projects, etc.), internships, success rates on license/accreditation standards, across an entire program

Laker Learning Competencies (web or s:/drive): eight broad, general student learning outcomes (communication, scientific literacy, etc.) that are measured college-wide across curricular and cocurricular activities, also known as institutional learning goals, located at the bottom of the course information form