



NORTH SEATTLE COLLEGE

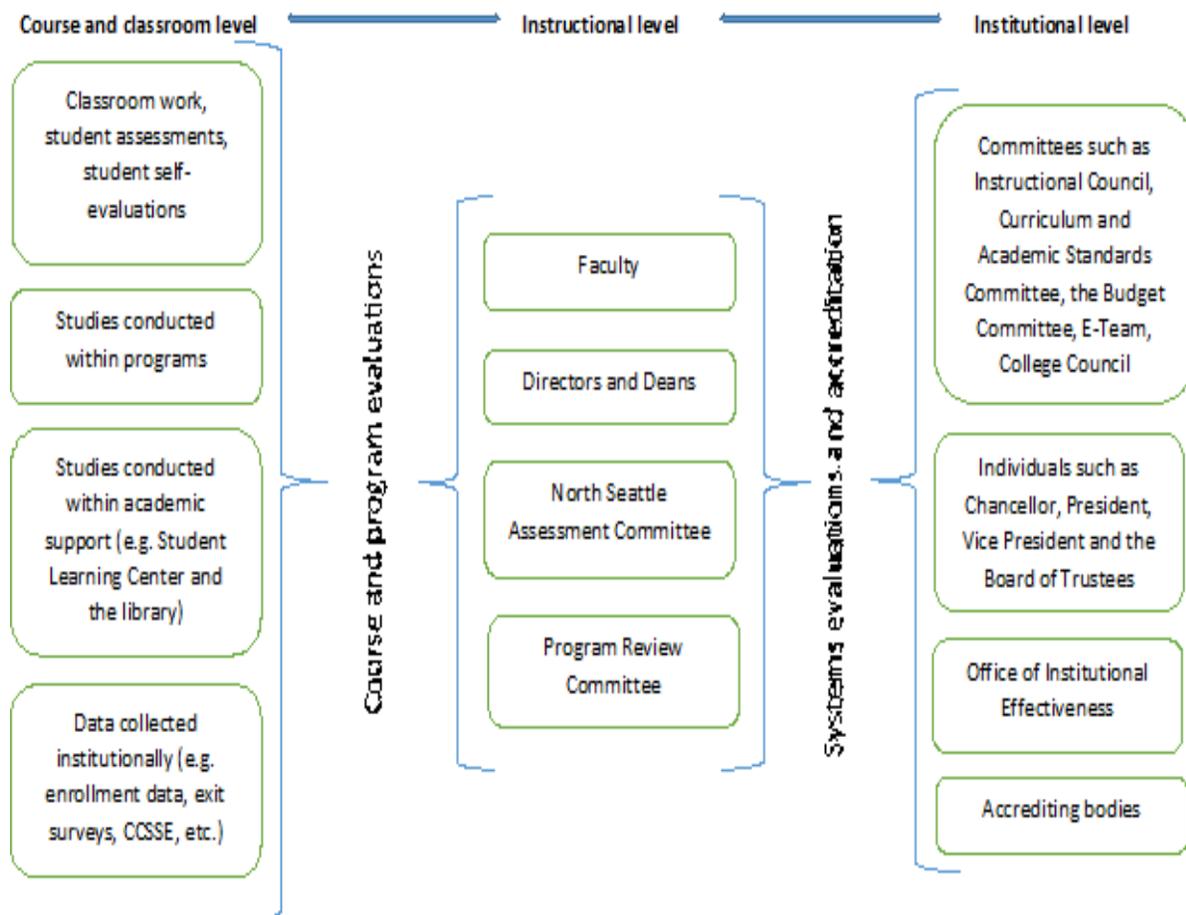
One of the Seattle Colleges

North Seattle College Assessment Plan

NORTH SEATTLE COLLEGE ASSESSMENT PLAN PURPOSE:

The purpose of assessment of learning outcomes at North Seattle College is to improve students' learning. The North Seattle Assessment Plan is a document that outlines the student learning outcomes, assessment methods used to demonstrate the attainment of each outcome, the timeframe for collecting and analyzing the data, and responsibilities for the collection and review of data. This plan will help coordinate appropriate recommendations and procedures facilitating ongoing assessment activities in order to measure and enhance the quality of the educational experience.

The North Seattle College Assessment Committee (NSAC) has worked with deans, chairpersons, divisional liaisons, faculty and staff in promoting, developing and implementing outcomes assessment and related activities. Planning in assessment may occur at the institutional, division, department, and course levels. Assessment information collected at the course and classroom level contributes to decision making at all levels of the institution.



ASSESSMENT TERMINOLOGY DEFINED:

Action Plan: The action plan is the end result of the assessment process, designed to help an entity better accomplish intended outcomes/objectives. An action plan may identify steps to be carried out over a short timeframe (one year) or over a longer period.

Assessment Loop Form (ALF): (Now known as Teaching Improvement Practice (TIP)): Historically, ALFs served as a means by which to record your process for assessing student learning and responding with changes in your teaching practice when you determine that some type of problem exists. See *Teaching Improvement Practice* for more detailed definition on the current formatting.

Assessment: Assessment is the process of understanding and improving student learning. It involves setting goals and standards for student learning and then systematically gathering and analyzing evidence to determine how well student performances match those expectations and standards. The main goals in the assessment of student learning are: 1) to document what learning is taking place; and 2) to use the results of assessment activities to improve student learning.

Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee (CAS): CAS serves as the college governance committee responsible for curriculum and academic standards. Yes, this means that if you, as a faculty member, want to add or modify a course or degree or certificate, this is the committee whose approval you need. CAS meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, as needed to carry out its duties.

Essential Learning Outcomes (ELO): See definition for *Outcome*. North Seattle College serves a diverse student population with a wide variety of educational backgrounds and goals. The ELOs are the learning outcomes determined by North Seattle College as goals for students' learning across the institution, regardless of program of study. They are as follows:

- *Knowledge*
 - Facts, theories, perspectives and methodologies within and across disciplines
- *Intellectual & Practical Skills, including*
 - Critical thinking and problem solving
 - Communication and self-expression
 - Quantitative reasoning
 - Information literacy
 - Technological proficiency
 - Collaboration: group and team work
- *Personal & Social Responsibility, including*
 - Civic engagement: local, global and environmental
 - Intercultural knowledge and competence
 - Ethical awareness and personal integrity
 - Lifelong learning and personal well-being
- *Integrative & Applied Learning*
 - Synthesis and application of knowledge, skills and responsibilities to new settings and problems.

Goals: Goals are broad, general statements of what the entity intends to accomplish. Goals describe broad learning outcomes and concepts (what you want students to learn) expressed in general terms (e.g., clear communication, problem-solving skills, etc.). Goals are usually not measurable, but they provide a framework for determining the more specific objectives, which are measurable. Goals should be consistent with the mission of the entity and the mission of the College. A single goal may have many specific subordinate objectives.

Mapping: Mapping is a means by which to track students' learning trajectories from individual class sessions, which are situated within courses (and which may or may not have explicitly stated objectives), to course objectives, which are situated within programs, to program outcomes and ultimately to institution-wide ELOs. In principle, an instructor should be able to map a particular learning activity within a class session all the way up to a relevant ELO.

Measure: A measure is the method or approach used to evaluate whether the target was achieved (e.g., pre- and post-tests, interviews, evaluations, standardized tests, comparison to standards, surveys, etc.).

Mission/Purpose: A mission statement is a general, concise statement outlining the purpose guiding the practices of an entity. It describes the aims, intentions, and activities of the entity.

North Seattle Assessment Committee (NSAC): NSAC serves as a central reflective space where assessment committee members collect, synthesize and disseminate information to the college and the VP of Instruction for future actions regarding student learning. NSAC meets on a monthly basis and is open to membership from both faculty and staff.

North Seattle Program Review Committee: The Program Review Committee provides oversight and peer review of the instructional program review process. The membership of the Committee includes a faculty representative from each of the five academic divisions as well as the Library, a student representative and is co-chaired by a faculty member and the Vice President of Instruction. Program Review is a process in which program faculty engage in reflection about a program's stated goals in relation to the reality of the program offerings and student learning.

Objectives: Objectives are statements that define the expected goal of a curriculum, course, lesson or activity in terms of demonstrable skills or knowledge that will be acquired by a student as a result of instruction. Objectives are brief statements that describe what students will be expected to learn by the end of school year, course, unit, lesson, project, or class period. Also may be known as: Instructional objectives, learning outcomes, learning goals.

Outcome: Outcomes are statements that describe significant and essential learning that learners have achieved, and can reliably demonstrate at the end of a course or program. In other words, learning outcomes identify what the learner will know and be able to do by the end of a course or program.

Program: For the purposes of Program Review per the Program Review Committee, a “program” is a named program offering a degree or certificate, often in professional/technical areas; a unit that exists for the purpose of providing the opportunities designed to help students to achieve certain outcomes in their lives; a group of courses with common goals, methods or scope; a specific course of study often leading to entry into a department at a 4-year institution; or a recognized discipline, department, or major.

Teaching Improvement Practice (TIP) (formerly known as the Assessment Loop Form (ALF)): TIPs provide a means by which to record a faculty’s process for assessing student learning and responding with changes in your teaching practice when you determine that some type of problem exists. This type of assessment is part of our overall program improvement and leads into our accreditation process. There is a Canvas shell available for faculty to submit their TIPs.

WHAT WE DO - ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING AT THE COURSE, PROGRAM AND INSTITUTIONAL LEVELS:

Assessment is the process of understanding and improving student learning. It involves setting goals and standards for student learning, systematically gathering and analyzing evidence to determine how well student performances match those expectations and standards, and then reinvesting the results into the learning environment. The focus of NSAC is assessment of student learning primarily at the course level.

The main goals in the assessment of student learning are:

1. to document what learning is taking place at the course level; and
2. to analyze these documentation activities to improve student learning; and
3. to use the results to promote continued growth.

NSAC will support faculty to engage in these main goals of assessment.

IDENTIFYING GOALS FOR STUDENT LEARNING - COURSE OBJECTIVES:

NSAC's mission is to support faculty to improve teaching and learning primarily at the course level. This begins with course objectives. Course objectives are proposed by faculty and approved through the Committee on Curriculum and Academic Standards (CAS) within each course's Master Course Outline (MCO). Writing course objectives using assessable language is a critical step in the assessment process. Assessable language means statements that identify the knowledge, skills and behaviors students will be able to demonstrate by the end of the course.

NSAC will work with CAS to support faculty who are revising their MCOs in writing course objectives using assessable language.

LOCATING COURSE LEVEL OUTCOMES WITHIN THE INSTITUTION - MAPPING:

Courses are made up of a series of lessons and function within programs (which may consist of sets of courses, certificates, degrees, professional-technical certifications, etc.) and the institution. Although NSAC focuses primarily on courses, it is important to situate courses within their larger context through mapping.

Mapping tracks students' learning trajectories from individual class sessions, which are situated within courses (and which may or may not have explicitly stated objectives), to course objectives, which are situated within programs, to program outcomes and ultimately to institution-wide Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs). In principle, an instructor should be able to map a particular learning activity within a class session all the way up to a relevant ELO.

NSAC will work with faculty to consider how their class sessions and learning activities support the course objectives.

NSAC will work with Program Review to support faculty in linking course objectives to program outcomes and ELOs through this mapping process.

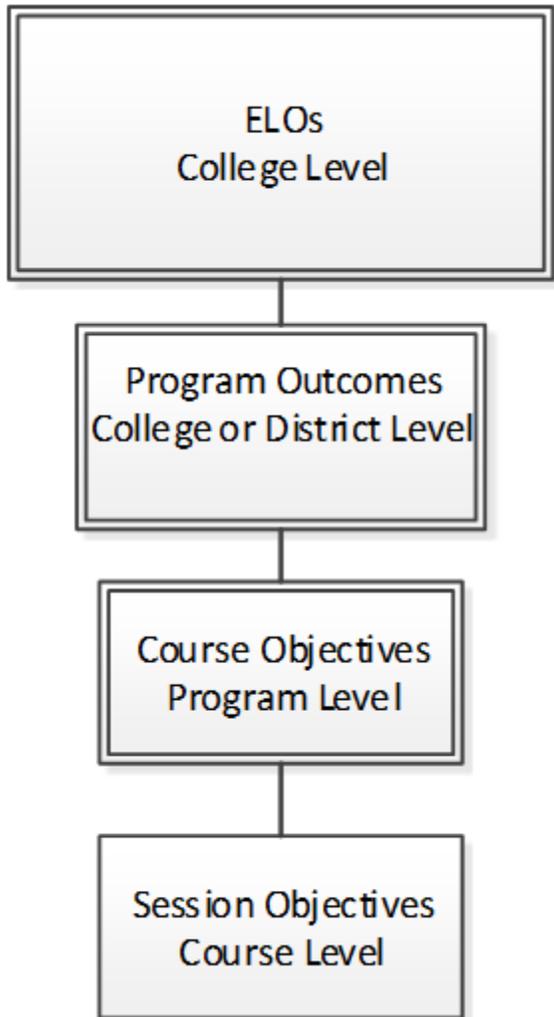


Figure 1. Mapping from session to ELO.

GATHERING INFORMATION ABOUT STUDENT LEARNING:

Instructors gather information about student learning in many ways, both formally and informally, formatively and summatively. Beyond the typical assessments of students in classes such as quizzes, tests, written and practical assignments, instructors rely on their professional

skills to assess student learning in real time in the classroom. For example, teachers monitor students' morale, interest level, and involvement. Student attendance also serves as a gauge of how a course is going. For courses that function in cohorts, instructors may consult with one another about progress. For courses that work in series, instructors may rely on their colleagues to let them know how their course is doing within the sequence. For courses that belong to professional-technical domains, instructors also rely on industry standards and watch how the students perform to meet those standards. Instructors being intentional about gathering information about student learning is a critical part of the assessment process.

NSAC will support faculty to document information they are already gathering or could be gathering about student learning.

ANALYZING THE INFORMATION:

North Seattle College has historically done a much better job of collecting information than analyzing and disseminating it. While we have improved in the last couple of years, we have further to go. Understanding what the information means is important both within and across courses. Faculty may already be analyzing their own assessment information within their courses but we also need to make sense of this information in a larger context.

NSAC will take the lead on analyzing assessment information across courses and producing clear, usable reports.

REINVESTING INTO COURSES AND CLASSROOMS:

The most important step in the assessment process is one that frequently gets the least attention. Reinvesting the information, once it is analyzed and disseminated, is the way improvement actually happens. This process also needs to be documented and tracked so that we can recognize our growth over time or make changes to our approaches. Individual instructors are constantly updating and refining their course materials, class activities and assessments and their approach to teaching. They are engaging in the assessment cycle on their own, and our hope is to help them capture that effort and expand it to the Instructional or Institutional level.

NSAC will support faculty to document how they are reinvesting assessment information into their courses and classrooms and compile this information across Instruction.

NSAC ANNUAL GOALS AND DELIVERABLES:

1. NSAC will support faculty to engage in the main goals of assessment.
 - a. Spring 2016--NSAC will put together a one-page summary of what TIPs are and why they are important;
 - b. Summer 2016--Co-chairs will write up a TIP report analyzing assessment trends and goals which will be shared in the TIP courseroom and with the deans;
 - c. Beginning Fall 2016--NSAC will review, analyze and change the TIP process to maximize effectiveness (annual review);
 - d. Quarterly - NSAC members will remind divisions and departments about doing TIPs (can be completed by individuals or groups);
 - e. End of each quarter--The NSAC Co-Chairs will compile a TIP status report for deans;
 - f. End of spring quarter - TIPs due;
 - g. Spring Quarter--NSAC will support and assist with development and promotion of Making Teaching Visible (MTV) as a companion to the Making Learning Visible project; and
 - h. Provide quarterly email about NSAC activities and resources for the North Seattle community.
2. NSAC will work with CAS to support faculty who are revising their MCOs in writing course objectives using assessable language and be known as a resource during the Automated Course Approval System (ACAS) process
 - a. Hold an annual TLC workshop on using assessable language to write course outcomes;
 - b. Fall quarter - new tenure faculty workshop includes NSAC session on assessment;
 - c. Add examples of using assessable language for MCOs to NSAC shell - make sure deans know about it; and
3. NSAC will work with faculty to consider how their class sessions and learning activities support the course objectives.
 - a. NSAC will encourage faculty to participate in the NSC Faculty Academy where they will receive support to look at lessons and activities;

- b. Encourage tenure committees to support probationers to do this: and
 - c. Explore ways to document student evaluation of their own learning linking to course objectives.
- 4. NSAC will work with Program Review to support faculty in linking course objectives to program outcomes and ELOs through this mapping process.
 - a. Annual TLC workshop on linking course objectives to program outcomes and program review - make resources accessible online or remotely;
 - b. Attend a quarterly program coordinator meeting to provide some training on this process; and
 - c. Support and encourage participation in Quality Matters review for online courses (work with new e-learning associate dean).
- 5. NSAC will support faculty to document information they are already gathering or could be gathering about student learning.
 - a. Create a tool for students to evaluate their learning that instructors can use on particular assignments
 - b. Encourage faculty to use the student evaluation tool and report back to NSAC
 - c. Work with faculty one-on-one as needed to complete TIPs
- 6. NSAC will take the lead on analyzing assessment information across courses and producing clear, usable reports.
 - a. NSAC members will provide a one-page summary of assessment activities accomplished in the year from their divisions, including two recommendations - due end of June
 - b. NSAC co-chairs will write up the TIP report during the summer
- 7. NSAC will support faculty to document how they are reinvesting assessment information into their courses and classrooms and compile this information across Instruction.
 - a. NSAC will present the TIP report and the division summaries with recommendations at the fall meetings (President's Day at the start of school)
 - b. NSAC members will encourage faculty to make use of NSAC and build excitement about assessment activities coming up in the year
 - c. Work with division deans to find formal times for faculty to share TIPs throughout the year (possibly at division meetings)

NSAC LOGIC MODEL:

Goal: Excel in teaching and learning and advance student success through course-level assessment across Instruction by developing a “culture of assessment” at North.

Resources (Inputs)	Activities	Deliverables (Outputs)	Results (Outcomes)
NSAC members Accreditation requirements President and VPI support Literature on assessment Paid time for committee co-chair Director of IE Data Analyst Extensive district database Canvas and other software Time at events such as Collaboration Day	Revamp TIP Create toolbox of assessment activities Report to divisions, IC, PR and CAS Receive and act upon reports from divisions, IC, PR and CAS NSAC co-chair report to IC advisory group Analyze data and write annual report on TIP Create and provide professional development at campus events Convene opportunities to discuss assessment and results	A toolbox of assessment activities for faculty to choose from Professional development materials to help faculty learn about assessment Regular, ongoing documentation of student learning by FT and PHL faculty (TIPs, etc.) Regular analysis of collected information by NSAC Regular distribution of analysis reports by NSAC Regular formal faculty and administrator conversations about teaching and learning	NSAC members see themselves as resources to colleagues on assessment Full time and PHL faculty identify the ways in which they participate in assessment at the course-level FT and PHL faculty articulate the usefulness of assessment as a component of their teaching practice FT and PHL faculty see how their courses fit within programs and the institution Faculty can identify members of NSAC and view them as assets for help with assessment