Assessment Project Results: Reading at College of Lake County
2015-2016 Academic Year

Overview of Accomplishments

- Designed and implemented a comprehensive faculty survey that helped us learn about instructors’ practices, needs, and concerns related to assigning reading in their classes.

- Designed and implemented a student survey that corresponded to the faculty survey in order to identify areas for improvement between faculty and student perceptions and practices related to assigned reading.

- Designed and implemented an institution-wide Curriculum-Embedded Reading Assessment (CERA) to measure students’ abilities to summarize, paraphrase, and make inferences from authentic reading assignments. Over 250 students were assessed across 27 class sections representing all four of the academic divisions of the college.

- As part of the Curriculum-Embedded Reading Assessment, surveyed students about reading habits as well as reasons for not completing readings in order to identify practices associated with higher reading assessment scores.

- Analyzed the assessment process and prepared recommendations for ongoing institutional assessments.

- Strengthened the role of the Reading Specialist as a resource for all faculty at CLC.

Reading Project Deliverables

Goal #1:
Understand faculty expectations of student reading at CLC by surveying faculty to explore how much emphasis is placed on learning from text, the challenges they face, and collecting samples of the types of text used in a classroom.

Deliverables:

- A faculty development plan (general and/or discipline specific) to address faculty. We used the information from the faculty survey, student survey and classroom assessment to develop a plan.

- A current measurement of the type, quantity, and frequency of reading assignments and reading materials used at CLC. This did not exist before this project. We used the surveys and classroom assessment to gather this information as a baseline for reading activity at CLC. This also helped inform the professional development plan.
- A plan for ongoing measurements of type, quantity, and frequency of reading assignments and reading materials. The committee was satisfied with the results of the surveys and classroom based assessments. We plan to regularly assess student success with Reading according to the cycle developed by our college’s Assessment of Student Learning Committee. Reading assessment will be integrated into the regular college-wide assessment processes in future years.

- Talking points for discussing alignment regarding text expectations both within the college and high school to college. This information will be used to develop Professional Development and department outreach and consulting by the Reading Specialist. The Reading Specialist position was created to assist with college-wide reading instruction and to raise awareness of literacy issues in the college. We will also use it in the preparation of our high school outreach materials and summer bridge programs.

**Goal #2:**

Understand the reading culture at CLC. Collect baseline data to assess how well our students are meeting the demands of reading at CLC as well as data about student practices while reading and barriers to completing assigned reading.

**Deliverables:**

- A rubric to be used for the assessment project, made available to faculty who want to modify it for their courses, and publicized in support of the Reading CLC Learning Outcome.
- A baseline measurement of students’ abilities to summarize, paraphrase, and make inferences from assigned reading, to be compared to future measurements.
- A plan for regular campus-wide student reading assessments, integrated into the ongoing process of assessment at CLC.
- A plan for faculty development that addresses student challenges, as shown through assessment data.
- A collection of reading assignment samples for internal use in faculty development, text analysis, and future studies.
- A series of communications to faculty about the assessment results and future actions, including a standing agenda item for the Assessment of Student Learning Committee, professional development and information sessions during the spring 2017 faculty orientation week, memos in a monthly faculty development email to all faculty, and a video summarizing key findings from this AQIP project.

**Reading Assessment Results:**

Overall, students achieved assessment scores on the reading rubric that place them between “proficient” (score of 3 out of 4) and “advanced” (score of 4 out of 4) in each reading category (see table below). Students performed the best on paraphrasing assigned reading, and struggled the most with making inferences from the assigned reading. These results provide a baseline measurement for how well students are meeting the demands of reading at CLC. Further detailed analyses have informed action items moving forward (referenced below) to
improve students’ reading skills. Assessment of students’ reading skills will become integrated into the college’s regular assessment of student learning processes.

### Overall Reading Category Scores (N = 271)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Category</th>
<th>Average Score (out of 4)</th>
<th>Average Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>65.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inference</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>59.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Primary Action Items Moving Forward

1. Continue to communicate survey and assessment results to the campus community via professional development sessions, the TLETC blog, faculty email communications, the CLC Assessment website, and more.

2. Plan and execute new faculty development for AY16-17 focused on the following areas based on research findings:
   a. Selecting texts / reading assignments: About 80% of CLC faculty are using textbooks and much of the reading is assigned to familiarize students with topics so they can follow class lecture and discussion (73% of faculty indicated this as a reason for assigning reading). Based on these findings and national research, professional development will focus on:
      i. Developing purposeful reading assignments.
      ii. Connecting reading assignments to follow-up learning activities like discussions, study guides, quizzes, etc. (based on CLC survey results, students were more likely to read most or all of the time when these types of activities were present).
      iii. Department consultations will be offered for evaluating and choosing reader-friendly textbooks or Open Education Resources.
   b. Helping students become more effective readers: From our research we have identified practices that encourage higher rates of students choosing to read, barriers students face that prevent them from completing readings, and techniques students can use while reading that are associated with higher assessment scores. Based on these findings, professional development will focus on:
      i. Classroom techniques faculty can use to encourage reading for their students, including what to do when assigning reading as well as how to discuss and engage students in assigned reading.
      ii. Teaching students how to read like an expert in a particular field.
      iii. Student reading techniques for advancing skills in summarization, paraphrasing, and making inferences. Results from the student survey connected to the CERA
identify several practices students used that were associated with higher assessment scores in each area.

3. Communicate relevant project findings directly to students and develop student-facing interventions focused on:
   a. Work with Counselors, Advisors, and Academic Coaches to help communicate expectations for reading at CLC and balancing time for reading with other obligations. Based on our research, among students who did not complete reading assignments, 66% of students cited work schedules, and 43% cited family obligations as a reason for not completing readings.
   b. Develop a plan for communicating effective reading strategies identified through the CERA directly to students. These include putting ideas in one’s own words while reading, making connections or asking questions in the margins of the reading, and connecting new information to something already known while reading.

4. Increase the visibility of and faculty access to the Reading Specialist
   a. Coordinate faculty development efforts with the Assistant Vice President of Educational Affairs and the Writing Across the Curriculum Coordinator.
   b. Include the Reading Specialist as a resource in the Academic Department Review process.

5. Provide recommendations to the Assessment of Student Learning Committee for future institutional assessments of student reading based on review of the CERA process by AQIP team members who participated.