Community College of Philadelphia

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OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

ASSESSMENT PLAN: *AN OVERVIEW OF EFFORTS TO UNDERSTAND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF PHILADELPHIA*

Introduction

Efforts to understand and report on institutional effectiveness have traditionally been coordinated by the Office of Institutional Research. In 2008, the Academic Assessment and Evaluation Office was established to support the assessment of academic programs; general education/core competencies; and other student learning outcomes. While these two offices coordinate many institutional assessment activities, the collection of information and assessment of effectiveness is a College-wide effort.

The purpose of this document is to provide a conceptual overview of the approaches the College uses to describe and assess institutional effectiveness. This plan identifies the principles that guide assessment at the College; a description of the conceptual base from which the College's approaches to assessment have been developed; data collection and reporting strategies; and a description of the institutional mechanisms used to circulate assessment information throughout the institution to encourage informed decision making throughout the College.

Principles That Guide the College's Effectiveness Assessment Process

The following principles guide the institution's efforts to understand College effectiveness:

1. Effectiveness information will be presented in formats that easily support institutional planning and decision-making efforts. Where appropriate, reports and data have been prepared to support and inform current planning priorities and facilitate decision-making with respect to key institutional issues. The College's efforts to understand its effectiveness have been based upon the College's goals and objectives as defined in its mission and current planning documents. External accountability standards have also shaped institutional assessment strategies.

2. In order to recognize and factor into assessment information the diverse educational objectives of the College's students, Institutional Research has developed student outcomes from an equally diverse perspective. In addition to applying global performance standards to all students, customized performance measures have been developed for different student cohorts based on their educational objectives in order to provide a more meaningful assessment of effectiveness. The College's Institutional Effectiveness Reports (e.g. https://www.myccp.online/institutional-research/select-institutional-research-reports-and-presentations) show some of the measures the College uses to track performance

3. Where possible and desirable, institutional effectiveness studies have attempted to control for entering student abilities, both to understand and explain the differences in outcomes that are experienced by different student groups, and also to understand the extent to which the College

is able to successfully remediate the deficiencies with which students enter the College. Many institutional research efforts have explored the disparity in student outcomes based on student characteristics and entering academic abilities with the goal of providing information that could be used to remediate the disparities and ensure more equitable success outcomes for under-performing students.

4. A commitment has been made to assess effectiveness at the institutional, administrative department, academic program, and classroom/course level. Assessment strategies based on the mission and goals of academic programs and administrative departments have been developed to respond to the information and research issues associated with each of these levels within the organization. Assessment efforts at the institutional level have been coordinated with those taking place at the department and program level to ensure that standardized information focused on critical institutional issues is available.

5. In describing and assessing institutional effectiveness, both internal and external standards are utilized. The College has used a wide range of benchmarking strategies to develop an understanding of institutional effectiveness relative to peer institutions. The College participates in several national data collection efforts in order to build external comparisons into assessment initiatives. The College has also developed extensive time series data for many of its effectiveness measures, in some cases providing decades of assessment measures. The use of this information has allowed the College to assess the impact of programmatic and service-delivery changes over time and to monitor evolving patterns in institutional effectiveness with respect to the many different student groups served by the College.

6. The College has a long history of maintaining extensive databases to support institutional inquiry into its effectiveness. The Office of Institutional Research made a strong commitment of staff resources to ensure consistency of measurement over time, an especially challenging standard to uphold when the College converted from legacy main-frame-based student systems to SCT Banner Student in fall 2005. To ensure the reliability and validity of assessment outcome measures over time, the Office has developed a student database that serves as a data warehouse for student information. The cross-validation of findings has been a continuous priority through the use of multi-methods and multi-measures approaches to building assessment data.

7. A broad range of campus constituents has been involved in the process of data collection and interpretation in order to ensure the relevancy of assessment information and promote ownership of institutional effectiveness data and informed decision-making. CCP‟s participation in the national Achieving the Dream initiative, which strongly encourages information-based decision making, reinforces a College- wide commitment to consistent, accurate information in all strategic areas needed to assess effectiveness. In building assessment databases, the Institutional Research Office and the Academic Assessment and Evaluation Office encourage staff and faculty to identify critical issues and recommend relevant data elements.

Development of customized reports that address specific departmental or programmatic assessment needs are an on-going part of the work of the offices of Institutional Research and Academic Assessment and Evaluation.

8. Multiple reporting formats are used to try to ensure broad-based institutional understanding of the effectiveness information and its potential implications for the College. A range of formal Institutional Research reports, In-Briefs, Fact Sheets and interactive downloadable reports are published each year and widely-distributed to all faculty and staff. Reports are written in non-technical language to encourage readership. College-wide access to institutional information has been ensured through the utilization of on-line resources. The Institutional Research Office maintains a website that provides easy access to reports; assessment information; and College Planning documents. In 2014-2015 the College developed an electronic repository for assessment documents using SharePoint.

9. A continuing effort has been made to anticipate the institution's future information needs. The College maintains environmental scan procedures which are intended to sensitize the College to emerging external issues that will require an institutional response and may redefine the standards by which institutional effectiveness is assessed by external audiences.

10. The College has been committed to using current technology in data collection and delivery. Through the use of technology, the College has been able to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its research staff which now have direct access to institutional data in Banner-created Oracle tables and the ability to write queries to address assessment needs with minimal support from the College's Information Technology Services staff.

Theoretical Framework for Assessment Research

Many institutional effectiveness studies have been constructed within recognized theoretical constructs and frameworks. The Office of Institutional Research has used scholarly research from other settings to formulate the hypotheses and methods of inquiries that are employed by the College. The models that have shaped assessment research undertaken at the College have their roots in persistence models developed by Tinto, Bean, and Pascarella.[1] While the models were originally developed to understand persistence, they also have been useful in understanding dynamics associated with a broad range of educational outcomes including student learning. Since the principle focus of these models is on the interaction between students and the college environment rather than student pre-entry characteristics, they imply that college practices and pedagogical methods can be influenced by educational institutions in directions that lead to improved achievement by students. This focus is congruent with the open access dimension of the community college mission.

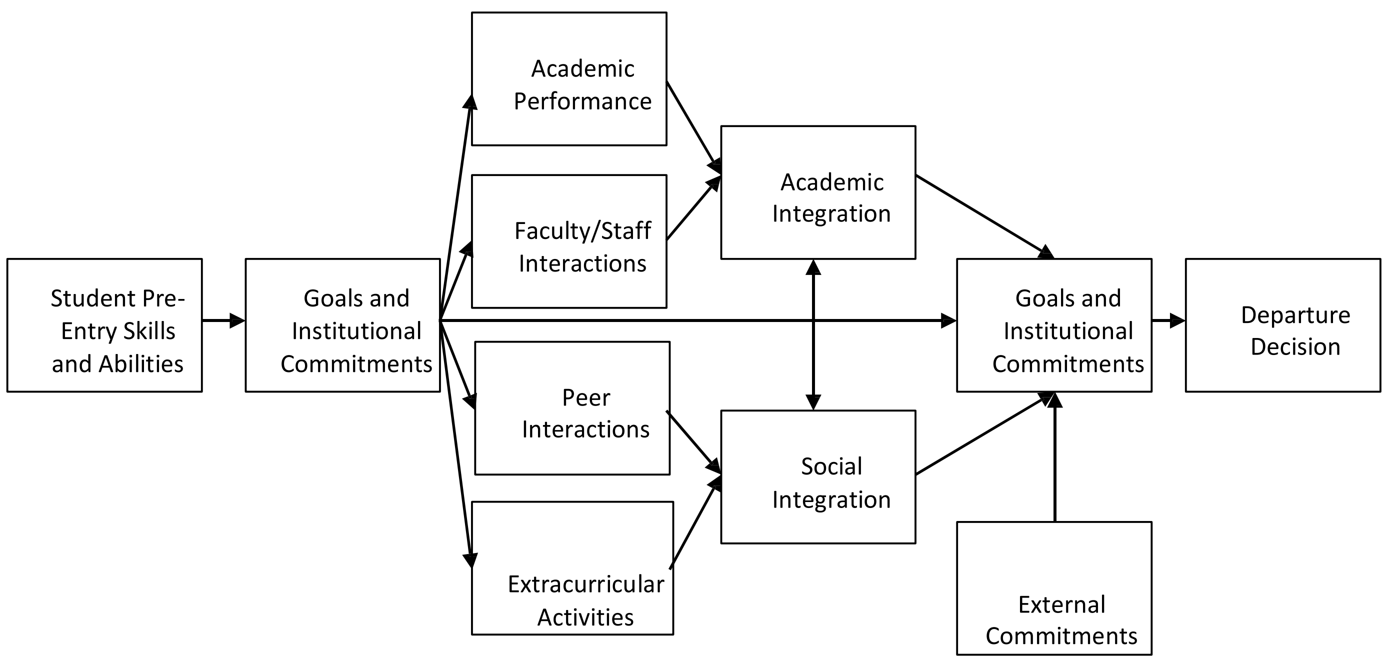
Specifically, the theoretical framework that guides much of the assessment research at the College posits that student growth and development result from a longitudinal process of interaction between

[1] IR Report #77, titled *A Review of the Higher Education Literature Related to Student Outcomes*, contains a detailed description of these models.

an individual with certain attributes, abilities, intentions, and commitments and other members of the academic and social systems of the college. Positive experiences lead to increased intellectual and social engagement, which positively impact intentions and commitments to the learning process and the College. Conversely, negative experiences within the College lead to disengagement from the intellectual and social life resulting in reduced commitment to the learning process and the College (see Figure 1).

As previously mentioned, this approach to assessment accommodates the College's diverse mission. This diversity is reflected in the College's heterogeneous student body, which is characterized by a wide range of educational and career objectives, educational backgrounds, college-readiness and personal backgrounds. In addition to contributing to a heterogeneous student body, the broad mission has resulted in an equally broad range of educational experiences planned to respond to students' needs.

Figure 1: A Longitudinal Model of Departure from the College



Assessing educational quality against this complex backdrop runs a risk of producing invalid conclusions if student pre-entry characteristics and educational experiences are not incorporated into assessments of student academic achievement. As a result, the assessment model used at the College is sensitive to differences among student groups and flexible enough to be applied across a diverse set of student and institutional interrelationships such as those possible at the College.

Indicators that Support Assessment Research

In support of the model, student information is systematically gathered from the time the student applies for admission to the College and continues after their departure from the institution thereby providing access to valuable longitudinal assessment data representative of three important points-in- time: Input Process Outcomes.

Input information, which is typically gathered throughout the enrollment intake process, includes demographic background characteristics, placement test scores, limited high school and transfer school information, and student educational goals and objectives.

Process information is related to the student's experiences while at the College and is principally available from institutional databases. Program of study, participation in academic support programs, financial aid support, 20% and 50% attendance and grade reports, and course taking patterns have been built into assessment initiatives. In recent years, this information has been supplemented with student feedback from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey, several national survey data collection initiatives which are based on student samples and therefore not available for the student population.

Institutional documents, such as *The CCP Mission Statement, The Strategic Plan*, *The Facilities Master Plan*, *The Enrollment Management Plan, The Academic Master Plan*, and *The Technology Plan,* have served as sources for defining appropriate outcome measures. (Planning documents are available at https://www.myccp.online/institutional-research). Assessing outcomes against the backdrop of the College's diverse mission goals and planning initiatives presents a challenge. Data that are routinely available for examining and assessing institutional effectiveness fit into the following broad areas: 1) workforce development; 2) transfer preparation; 3) student persistence, goal attainment, and assessment of collegiate experiences; 4) community outreach; and 5) financial support and resource usage patterns. Workforce development measures include job placement rates, starting salaries, license and certification pass rates of graduates, and student assessment of the preparation received for employment while at the College. College transfer measures include: transfer rates, indicators of academic performance and persistence, degree completion at transfer institutions, student assessment of transfer preparation, and transfer opportunities based on articulation agreements. In some cases, this information has been supplemented with detailed academic and persistence outcomes from transfer institutions. Examples of student achievement measures that are routinely included in assessment efforts include: GPA, course grades, successful completion of gatekeeper courses; successful completion of a sequence of courses in a particular subject matter, graduation rates, short-term and long-term persistence rates, student success at departure from the College, and student assessment of goal completion and personal growth. Community outreach measures include indicators of responsiveness to community needs and participation rates in the service area. Financial support and resource usage measure examples include: trends in cost and resource usage per FTE student, revenue disbursement, faculty and staff productivity, and expense category trends.

The measures that are presently part of the assessment process have evolved as a result of ongoing evaluation activities designed to ensure the quality of assessment findings. In order to ensure reliability and validity, outcome information is represented by multiple measures gathered through multiple methods across multiple samples and populations. Assessment measures are not static. In order to ensure a measure's internal consistency with the mission and present institutional direction as specified in the College's plans, the indicators are reviewed routinely to determine if they are effectively measuring achievement of College goals and objectives. Based upon this review, measures are accordingly redefined, eliminated, and added.

Data Collection Approaches That Support Student-Related Assessment Activities

Qualitative and quantitative data collection methods inform assessments at the College. Focus groups are typically used for issues identification purposes to explore new areas of inquiry that may contribute to or impede student learning and growth. They are also helpful in the design of questions that subsequently are included on student questionnaires and for special topics discussions with students participating in grant funded programs/projects. Focus groups/ round tables are also used in attempts to reach consensus with staff on institutionally important issues. For example, focus groups are often used as a component of the administrative unit evaluation procedures to determine if the approaches and directions being pursued by the administrative unit are generally viewed as the most effective and important directions for the unit to take. Focus groups/ round table discussions among internal and external constituencies have also helped to shape and clarify strategic planning initiatives for the College.

Surveys of graduates and non-graduates elicit from former students information concerning their short-term transfer and career experiences and their judgments of the efficacy of their educational experience at the College in helping them to achieve their educational goals. In order to be able to assess change over time, similar methods have been used to gather the annual survey of graduates and former students from year to year and a core set of questions have been asked consistently. The survey process is flexible and has been adapted to address newly emerging planning issues. Over time, new survey methods have been introduced to improve response rates and to provide more timely access to survey information.

In addition to gathering feedback from alumni and other former CCP students, current students provide information concerning their college experiences through the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and The Noel Levitz Survey of Student Satisfaction which are undertaken approximately every three years. Various other student and staff surveys are undertaken throughout the year to support the assessment of special topics associated with administrative audits and committee/task force information needs.

There are a number of secondary external data sources that are used for assessment purposes at the College including: IPEDS, U.S. Census, National Community College Benchmarking Project, and Achieving the Dream. In recent years, the National Student Clearinghouse database was used to develop a longitudinal transfer report that tracks the enrollments of all students who began at CCP since fall 2005 and subsequently left the College, either with a degree or without. These interactive assessment reports provide transfer rates; transfer school graduation rates and a list of transfer institutions for each academic program at CCP for each fall and spring student cohort starting in Fall 2005.

In order to efficiently respond to student-related assessment requests, the Institutional Research staff merges most of the student information into a student data warehouse environment which Institutional Research staff use for assessment purposes. The file structure, which is longitudinal, contains records that track students throughout their enrollment history at the College. Based upon informational needs, student records on this file are supplemented with additional assessment and student characteristic information from internal and external databases to create a student record that enables the College to track a student from entry to the College through their post-CCP experiences. In addition to accommodating institution-wide assessments, the file is easily adapted to meet the data needs for academic program and smaller student-cohort assessments.

The extensive historical information that is available on this longitudinal student database provides reference points for assessing student change over time and the impact of new policies and procedures on student enrollments and outcomes. Additionally, participation in national data exchanges and national survey initiatives provides a means to assess the College's performance across a broad range of effectiveness indicators relative to peer institutions throughout the city/state/country.

The Nature and Scope of Assessment

Given the comprehensive set of institutional plans supported by assessment activities, assessment efforts at the College are far-reaching and diffused throughout the campus environment. The flow chart on the next page demonstrates the relationship among the Mission, institutional plans and assessment and the following list represents areas of assessment routinely addressed by the College as a foundation for planning, assessing institutional effectiveness, institutional improvement and self-study:

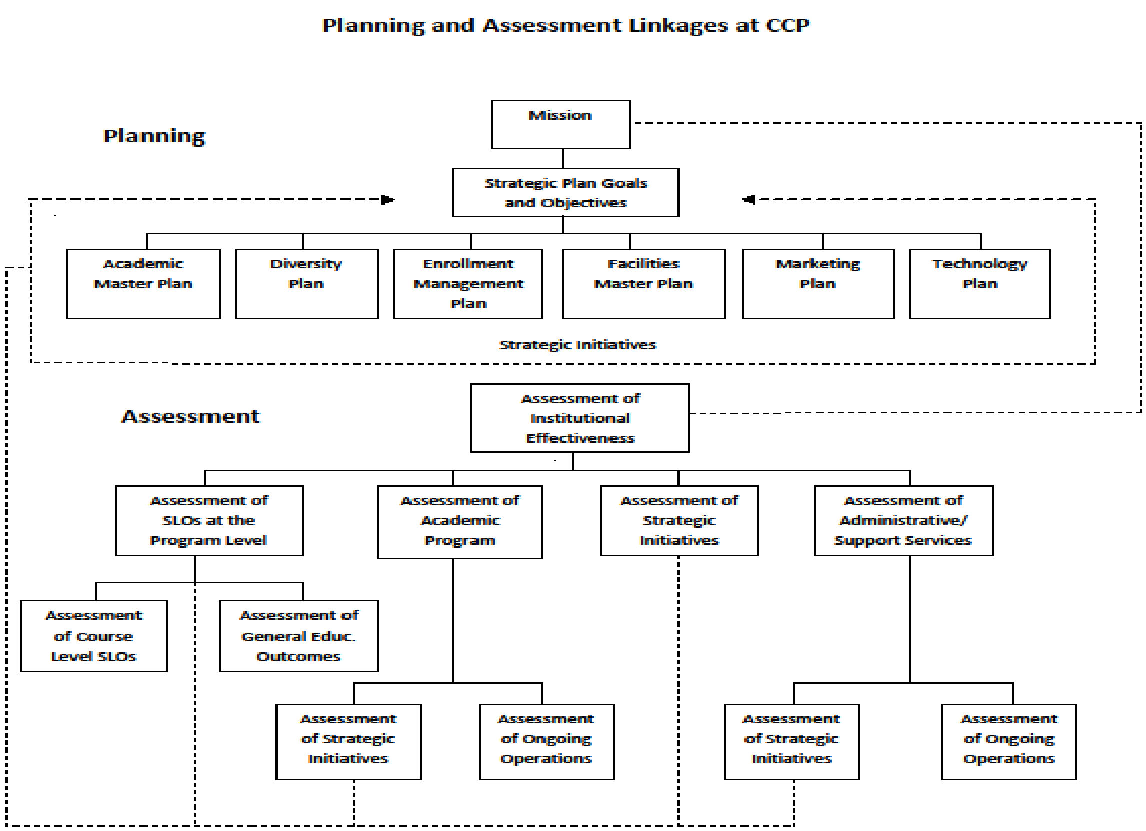
- Institutional/College-wide Effectiveness
- Course Level
- Academic Program Level
- General Education/Core Competencies
- Administrative/Support Unit
- Financial and Operating Effectiveness

An Institution-Wide Assessment Committee was created in 2011 with the following goals:

- Facilitate the achievement of consistency and alignment across the College for assessment efforts;
- Facilitate college-wide use of metrics for continuous improvement;

- Identify and assist in the establishment of best practices in the use of assessment for institutional improvement;
- Monitor college-wide efforts to help ensure a cohesive and comprehensive assessment effort across the College;
- Develop recommendations for needed resource allocations to achieve College-wide assessment goals.

Figure 2: Diagram of Planning and Assessment



Institutional Effectiveness

Much of the assessment research that addresses institutional effectiveness is intended to improve instruction and learning; facilitate the achievement of the institution's mission and planning objectives; and demonstrate the educational and economic impact of the College in the service area. Key institutional documents, such as the Strategic Plan, Academic Master Plan, Enrollment Management Plan, and Facilities Master Plan, Mission Statement, and Annual Divisional and Departmental Goals/Objectives, shape the research agenda for the Institutional Research Office. The expectations and needs of external constituencies, such as Middle States, Pennsylvania Community College Commission; State and National Departments of Education, specialized accreditors and funding sources, also inform research priorities.

A significant amount of data reports and research supports the assessment of institutional effectiveness. The information is both summative and formative and includes longitudinal and cross-sectional analyses. Effectiveness evaluations are based on the achievement of institutionally defined benchmarks; comparisons across time; comparisons across subgroups of students within the College; and peer comparisons within the higher education community.

A number of institution-wide assessments are systematic undertakings that are part of the annual goals for the Institutional Research Office while other assessments are based on ad hoc requests that are reported in a less formal fashion. An annual assessment undertaking for the Institutional Research Office is a College- wide Institutional Effectiveness study which serves as a report card for the College. The study contains a set of institutionally sanctioned performance indicators related to five areas of mission and institutional effectiveness: 1) workforce development; 2) transfer preparation; 3) student persistence and academic achievement; 4) community outreach; 5) cost efficiency, resource usage and resource development. Effectiveness indicators are monitored overtime in order to identify emerging areas of strength and weakness. A subset of measures in this report serves as key performance indicators that are used by the College's Board to assess institutional performance.

On a parallel track, a set of performance measures was developed to inform academic program assessment. These indicators include measures related to enrollment levels, student demographics, graduation rates, academic performance, persistence behavior, program cost, and transfer and workforce development outcomes. These performance measures, which are presented as time series data for the most recent five fall and spring semesters, are updated annually. The structure of this report allows academic program assessment across time and/or across peer programs for all academic programs offered at the College. These measures are used to inform full academic audits and annual program reviews using the Quality/Viability Indicators (QVI) rubric developed by the College.

Interactive transfer outcome reports, which are available on the IR website are also valuable sources of assessment information for evaluating institutional effectiveness and academic program effectiveness with regard to the transfer function. The information in the reports, which is based on the National Student Clearinghouse Transfer database, is updated annually and provides the ability to track transfer rates, degree achievement and transfer institutions over time by academic program and the student's persistence status at time of departure from CCP. Transfer information at the program level is used to inform full academic audits and program QVI

In addition to providing information at the institutional and academic program level, assessment data is available at the course level. Grade Distribution Reports, which are provided for each semester/term, contain various summaries of grades awarded and course completions in all credit courses. In addition to a report that is based on the individual course and discipline summary, there are reports that provide grade comparisons for: developmental/100 level/200 level course; course length (ex. 7/10/14/15 weeks); day/evening/weekend/internet course; and gatekeeper course summary.

The *Fact Book* provides a comprehensive set of trend data describing institutional operating characteristics in the following areas:

- Enrollment Trends
- Credit Instructional Offerings and Educational Support Services
- Revenue and Expense Patterns
- Sections Offered by Discipline, Average Class Size and Faculty Workloads
- Faculty, Administrators and Classified Employee Demographics
- Student Demographics – Gender, Race, Age and Financial Status
- Student Academic and Persistence Patterns

Information in the report is updated annually and, in some cases, is available for several decades. This resource, along with the previously mentioned reports, provides a broad set of assessment information for the College as a whole and for academic programs.

The aforementioned reports are supplemented annually with two comparative reports that derive from the College's participation in the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP). This collaborative effort focuses on effectiveness benchmarks in the following areas:

- Institutional Enrollments
- Funding Sources
- Persistence
- Course Outcomes
- Minority Access
- Market Share
- Faculty Resources
- Distance Learning
- Costs
- Human Resources

The CCP effectiveness data gathered through the NCCBP is compared with data at the national and state level and compared with a customized set of peer institutions that share key characteristics with the College. Similarly, IPEDS information has been used as a source of peer effectiveness information that has been used for inter-institutional comparisons.

Other collaborative data sharing efforts the College participates in are the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Noel Levitz Survey of Student Satisfaction. Both surveys provide valuable comparative assessment information related to classroom and non-classroom student experiences. Several Institutional Research reports provide comparative information about CCP and its peers in the areas of inquiry represented in these surveys.

The Survey of Graduates is an assessment strategy that has a long history at the College. The Institutional Research Office also conducts a similar survey of non-graduating, former students approximately every three years. The results of these surveys, which are routinely merged with institutional data concerning student experiences while at the College and background characteristics, are used extensively in assessment of effectiveness. They inform academic program audits and have been used to assess institutional progress related to planning objectives focused on strengthening the College's higher education partnerships; supporting workforce development in the City; improving the quality of student services and facilities; and assessing achievement of general education skills. Several reports on transfer and career outcomes; student progress along a variety of general education dimensions; and student satisfaction with in-class and out-of-class experiences, are issued annually.

As alternative strategies for instructional delivery are developed and implemented, they are assessed along several dimensions of effectiveness. In recent years, assessment reports related to the effects of course length, class size and alternative delivery of developmental writing instruction on course outcomes have been issued to evaluate the effectiveness of these new approaches to instructional delivery.

A large amount of institutional research examines a number of dimensions related to student persistence behavior. Comparative studies of persistence rates are studied over time, within courses, across programs and special projects, and across peer colleges. Graduates are asked to describe personal and institutional barriers they perceived to interfere with their progress toward earning a degree at the institution. Former students are also asked to describe the institutional barriers and personal circumstances surrounding their decision to discontinue their enrollment at the College. In turn, this information is used to identify new or redesign existing intervention strategies designed to encourage long-term student persistence at the College.

Collaborative data exchanges with other higher education institutions have provided the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the College's transfer function beyond student self- reported information. For example, outcome information related to student persistence and academic performance at Temple and Drexel universities, the two institutions that the College's students are most likely to transfer to after CCP, provides an opportunity to assess both effectiveness related to longer-term, post-CCP student outcomes and effectiveness of articulation agreements designed to enhance transfer student success at these institutions.

Beyond the benefits that the College provides to the many students it serves is the economic impact that the College has on the City and the region as a whole. The direct and indirect economic benefits that accrue to the City and to the State as a result of the College's educational programs and economic activities are periodically documented. In addition to issuing reports that highlight the economic outcomes of the College's operations as a whole, the IR office also compiles reports that document the impact of the College's Allied Health programs on the Philadelphia region and the impact of CCP's transfer function on Philadelphia-based baccalaureate degree granting colleges and universities. The

College also participates in regionally-based economic impact studies that are designed and managed by external constituencies.

In addition to actively using Enrollment Statistics reports to monitor student registration activity, the Office of Student Affairs works collaboratively with Research staff to conduct evaluation research that focuses on the effectiveness of student support initiatives such as the Early Alert Student Success initiative. The assessment plan for this student support has built in both formative and summative measures which are used by Student Affairs staff to manage and refine the initiative in light of outcome information. The Office of Student Affairs actively uses information from the Noel Levitz Survey of Student Satisfaction to assess student satisfaction with their-non-classroom experiences at the College and pinpoint potential problem areas to be addressed in the Enrollment Management Plan.

Research staff work with the directors of grant-funded special projects to develop assessment models that address the specific objectives of their projects. For example, one of the goals of the Achieving the Dream initiative is to improve student success through the use of informed decision making; consequently the Office of Institutional Research has had a pivotal role in supporting the College's participation in this grant-funded project. Initial involvement by the IR Office was in the identification of student groups who were not meeting with the same level of success as other students at the College. After the design and implementation of strategies that were designed to close the gaps in student performance, IR designed and implemented an assessment plan to provide information intended to evaluate the effectiveness of the Achieving the Dream (AtD) strategies in reducing gaps in performance. Several Achieving the Dream performance measures were developed and are monitored throughout the year to determine progress in improving student success. To enhance communication with the rest of the College about AtD-related assessment information, the Office developed AtD Fact Sheets which are distributed to all College staff.

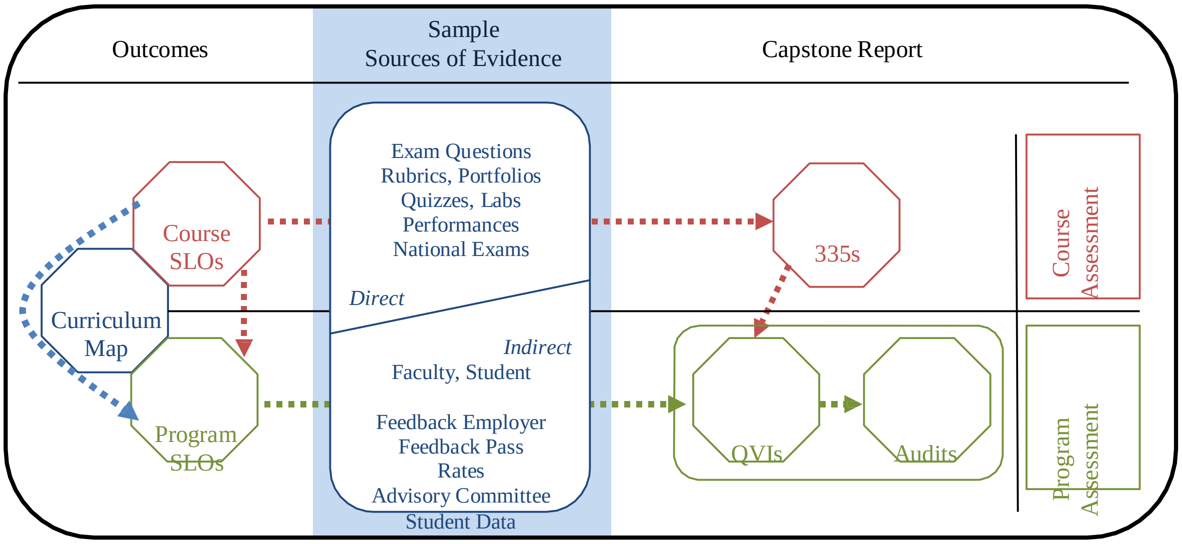
Academic Assessment and Evaluation

"A quality educational institution must be committed to assessing student learning and using the results of that assessment to improve the educational experiences of its students. A plan to assess student learning should be rooted in the College's mission and its core values--specifically, integrity, academic excellence and commitment to teaching and learning." (*Academic Master Plan* 2010, p. 32)

The College is engaged in assessment of student learning at the course, program and institution levels. Assessment of courses and programs is linked by design as illustrated in the figure below.

Starting in 2014-2015 information about assessment activities and evidence is located in the College's SharePoint electronic repository. To assist faculty and administrators with assessment work, an assessment manual was created. Faculty are also supported through resources available on the Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation web site.

Figure 3: Connections between Course and Program Assessments



Assessment at the Course Level

There are two aspects to course level assessment, Chapter 335 required assessment and assessment of student learning outcomes. It is a Pennsylvania state requirement (Chapter 335) that all courses be evaluated on a five year cycle, using specific criteria determined by the State. Chapter 335 documentation is completed by department heads based on a department review of course information. The Chapter 335 documentation must be approved by the appropriate division dean and then by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The documentation is maintained by the Curriculum Facilitation Team (CFT). Information on compliance is updated regularly and Academic Affairs deans and the Vice President for Academic Affairs get reports on the status of the Chapter 335 documentation.

In 2010, the Chapter 335 document was modified to include a requirement to report on student learning outcomes at the course level. Each department is required to identify the student learning outcomes for each course and is required to have an assessment plan to ensure that course learning outcomes are being measured and used for decision-making.

When courses are developed or revised, course writers use a College approved course development model. The course evaluation section of the course development/revision model requires a description of the assessment tools and processes that will be/are used to evaluate the course and assess student learning outcomes. The curriculum development process is therefore closely linked to the assessment process at the course level.

Assessment at the Program Level

Similar to the course development process, the program level development process is coordinated by the Curriculum Facilitation Team. The program development documents include required statements of program level outcomes. The documents also include a curriculum map that shows how program level outcomes are achieved in courses across the program.

Annual Program Review

Effective 2010-2011, each year each academic program is required to complete an Annual Program Review, using the Quality/Viability Indicators (QVI) rubric. The data collected from the course and program outcome assessments being conducted in a given year are reviewed for the Annual Program Review. Starting in academic year 2013-2014, departments who completed an audit, a modified audit, or a QVI the previous year had to complete a mini-QVI. The mini-QVI consists of five indicators related to enrollment management and learning outcomes assessment. Based on the successful use of the mini-QVIs in terms of ease of use and supplying the most needed information, all programs who are not doing a full audit will complete the mini-QVI for 2014-2015. By completing the QVIs on an annual basis, the College is in compliance with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's requirement that every credit certificate and program be reviewed at least once every five years.

Academic Program Audits

Every five years, each academic degree and academic certificate program undergoes an academic program audit. The purposes of the academic program audit process are:

- To ensure curriculum relevancy
- To ensure student achievement goals, student enrollment goals, teaching and learning goals, and programmatic goals are achieved
- To evaluate the assessment of course and program outcomes and assessment practices
- To assist in meeting compliance standards and requirements
- To recognize program strengths, and yield recommendations for program improvements, changes, and (in some cases) termination

As of Fall 2010, the audit model includes a description of and summary of results of assessments of student learning outcomes at the course and program level, as well as changes made based on the assessment results. As of Fall 2010 the College also adopted a format for review of those programs which have an external accreditation or reapproval process. The Modified Audit model aligns our internal process with the external standards. In 2014-2015, modifications were made to the audit guidelines in response to feedback from the Student Outcomes Committee of the Board and from the Middle States visiting Team (2014).

Academic program audits are presented to the Academic Affairs Council for review and then to the Student Outcomes Committee of the Board of Trustees, who make a series of recommendations and a timeline for their completion based on the presented data.

Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes

Each program has identified student learning outcomes at the program level and each program is required to have a plan for assessment of program level outcomes. The assessment of program outcomes may be staggered on a five year cycle so that not all program outcomes are assessed in a given year, but insuring that each program outcome is assessed once during a five-year program audit cycle. (The number of outcomes is divided by five if there are more than five.)

Program outcomes are assessed in courses with a variety of direct and indirect measures of student learning, as well as in cross-course assessments which may include evaluation of artifacts of student work, course level assessment results, grade distribution reports, current student surveys or focus groups, employer and graduate surveys.

Assessment of the General Education/Core Competencies

The Office of Institutional Research provides periodic reports on general education outcomes. For example, CCSSE data has been used to identify areas where students report that the College contributed to their academic development. These reports use categories of general education that are commonly accepted across a variety of higher education institutions.

The College's specific general education requirements are nested under seven core competencies: Communication, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Competency, Scientific Competency, Information Literacy, Technological Competency, and Responsible Citizenship. A major tool for assessment of the core competencies has been the use of faculty-developed rubrics.

The Office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation collects the core competency assessment data. The academic department heads serve as a General Education/Core Competency oversight group. Department Heads review results of the assessments and make decisions about follow-up based on the data after consulting department faculty. In 2014-2015, the department heads started the process of determining if there is a need to change any parts of the General Education/Core Competencies structure.

Summary of Academic Assessment

1. Each year, each program completes an Annual Program Review, using data from the Quality/Viability Indicators rubric.
2. Academic course data is assessed in two ways: 1) annually using the 335 documents form, and 2) assessment of departmentally approved student learning outcomes.
3. Every five years degree and certificate program undergo an academic program audit.
4. Each program outcome is assessed at least once during the five-year program audit cycle.
5. Courses that meet a General Education requirement are mapped/aligned to the relevant core competencies and become part of the assessment of core competencies.
6. Each core competency is assessed at least once every five years.
7. All assessment include a cycle of planning, collection of data, analysis of data, discussion and implementation of changes to improve teaching and learning (closing the loop).

Administrative Unit Assessment

The 2004-2008 Strategic Plan included a goal to systematically assess organizational unit effectiveness. The goals of this process were to enhance quality, innovation, and effectiveness in the delivery of administrative and support services. In 2004, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education encouraged the College to maintain mission-focused evaluations of the College's non-instructional organizational units, which include both administrative and support services.

The College undertook the administrative audit process as a means of self-study to assist organizational units to become more effective and to help ensure that their mission, goals and objectives are aligned with the College's strategic priorities. The core components of the administrative and support services audits include:

- Assessment of effectiveness in meeting the unit's mission– achievement of organizational unit goal and objectives
- Contributions of the unit to the achievement of College wide Mission and Strategic Plan goals
- Identification of critical issues facing the unit
- Development of a multi-year plan to address critical issues confronting the administrative unit
- External peer evaluation validation of the findings and recommendations

Members of CCP's Cabinet coordinate the identification of the units to be audited and the schedule for the audits. Organizational units are defined as a group of services performed or implemented by a specific group of employees with a common set of goals and objectives. In some cases this definition will encompass an entire division or department, while in other areas it will represent a subset of a larger division or department.

Work teams consisting of organizational unit managers and representatives from key offices throughout the College help guide each unit's assessment process and help bring broader institutional perspectives to the audit process. An Administrative Audit Oversight Team manages the process at an institutional-level. The latter Team includes:

- General Counsel and Vice President for Human Resources (Chair)
- Vice President and Chief Information Officer
- Vice President for Business and Finance
- Vice President for Student Affairs
- Director of Institutional Research
- Director of Academic Assessment and Evaluation

Financial and Operating Effectiveness Assessment

Maintaining an affordable tuition and fee structure and making effective and efficient use of available resources are critical goals for the College. The continuing decline in the percentage of the budget that is funded from the City and State allocations is forcing a larger dependence on student revenues. Balancing institutional expense growth requirements with the need to prevent barriers to student access through annual large tuition and fee increases requires a comprehensive understanding of institutional resource usage patterns.

The College has assessed its financial and operational effectiveness using two key methodologies: tracking key internal resource usage measures over time, and benchmarking college performance to appropriate external standards, e.g. those in place at similarly sized two-year colleges. Examples of internal measures that are tracked range from average class size and faculty productivity measures to facility and resource use measures to program and discipline cost data. Many of these key indicators are reported in The Fact Book and annual financial reports. Others are reported in Institutional Research reports, are available in the College's facility and financial planning databases and/or are included in the College's planning reports.

The College has availed itself of a wide-range of informational opportunities that permit benchmarking with public two–year colleges and other representative organizations. In collaboration with the Pennsylvania Community College Commission, the College annually participates in the National Community College Bench Marking Project. The College has participated in NACUBO‟s Comparative financial Statistics Project and for several years was a participant in NACUBO‟s Benchmarking Project. National standards developed by the Association of Higher Education facility Officers as well as local building owners (BOMA) are used to assess facility costs and operations. KPMG has developed financial ratios and standards, which are used as a tool to assess the college's financial health. Key business partners such as Willis (insurance broker) provide helpful resources for assessing the College relative to industry and regional standards.

Appendix A: SAMPLE DATA USE MATRICIES

This Appendix provides a few examples showing how some key institutional data elements are used to support institutional decision making. These examples are not intended to be comprehensive – but to demonstrate how data are used by a wide range of institutional constituencies to support institutional decision making in many different settings.

Revenue and Expense Performance Data

Data Examples:

A. Revenues and Expenses relative to Budget.
B. Trends in Revenues and Expenditures categories.
C. Cost per credit hour by discipline.
D. Cost per FTE by program.
E. Net revenues per program.

Usage Examples:

A. Mid-year budget adjustments and decision making on deferred expenditures.
B. Multi-year financial planning.
C. Creation of revenue enhancement strategies.
D. Annual budget development.
E. High cost program determination for funding purposes.
F. Decision making on programmatic expansion and changes.
G. Development on College and State-wide funding-support agenda.
H. Cost/benefit analysis of potential expense reduction strategies.
I. Tuition and fee setting.
J. Contracted education pricing.

Sample Data Users:

A. Board.
B. Cabinet.
C. Department Heads.
D. Finance staff.

Financial Performance Measures

Data Examples:

A. Average monthly cash position.
B. Long-term debt ratios.
C. Financial support levels by source of funds.
D. Unrestricted fund balances relative to budget level.
E. Asset to liability ratios.
F. Student receivables relative to total student revenues.
G. Investment performance.

Usage Examples:

A. Timely management of institutional liquidity to ensure financial viability to meet transactional cash requirements at all times.
B. Long-term debt management and capital project planning.
C. Understanding and managing decisions that could adversely impact institutional financial health.
D. Influencing external opinion with respect to College financial needs.
E. Achieving and maintaining viable bond rating.

Sample Data Users:

A. Board of Trustees.
B. External rating and accrediting agencies.
C. Cabinet and faculty/staff committees.
D. Finance Staff.

Enrollment Performance Measures

Data Examples:

A. Student credit hours taught by term/year – total and by discipline.
B. Total FTEs and FTEs by program.
C. New vs. continuing enrollment trends.
D. Enrollment trends by demographic characteristics.
E. Enrollments by entering ability.

Usage Examples:

A. Financial planning.
B. Departmental budgeting.
C. Assessment of recruitment and marketing efforts.
D. Course scheduling.
E. Faculty planning.
F. Academic and student support service planning.
G. Facility and technology resource planning.

Sample Data Users:

A. Cabinet.
B. Department Heads and departmental faculty.
C. Enrollment services staff.
D. Scheduler.
E. Finance staff.

Student Persistence Data

Data Examples:

A. Course withdrawal rates.
B. Fall to Spring (College-wide by demographic groups and by program level).
C. Fall to Fall (College-wide by demographic groups and by program level).
D. Graduation rates (College-wide by demographic groups and by program level).
E. Percentage of registered credit hours completed.

Usage Examples:

A. Program and course assessments.
B. Enrollment forecasting.
C. Student Services planning.
D. Academic Services planning.
E. Financial planning.

Sample Data Users:

A. Academic Departments.
B. Student Affairs Departments.
C. Academic and Student Affairs Deans Councils.
D. Achieving the Dream Teams.
E. Cabinet.
F. Board of Trustees.

G. Budget Office.

Master Course Schedule Data

Data Examples:

A. Number of sections by discipline, course level, and location (including distance).
B. Total course enrollments by discipline, course level and location (including distance).
C. Average class size by discipline, course level and location (including distance)
D. Number of sections and course enrollments taught by full- and part-time faculty.

Usage Examples:

A. Faculty needs planning and hiring decisions.
B. Departmental Budgeting.
C. Facility Master planning.
D. Insurance reporting and management.
E. Emergency Response planning.
F. Facility Maintenance planning.
G. Technology Resource planning.

Sample Data Users:

A. Academic Departments.
B. Academic Affairs Deans Council.
C. Facilities and Security staff.
D. Budget and Finance staff.
E. Information Technology Services staff.

Facility Operations Data

Data Examples:

A. Utility costs by month/year.
B. Energy units used by month/year.
C. Operating expense (by category) per square foot.
D. Operating expense (by category) monthly and annual trends.
E. Power consumption by hour.

Usage Examples:

A. Budget planning.
B. Energy consumption management decisions.
C. RFP development and contract award decisions.
D. New facility planning (design and operations).
E. Capital equipment planning and decision making.

Sample Data Users:

A. Facilities Staff.
B. Budget Staff.
C. Cabinet Members

Campus Security Data

Data Examples:

A. Daily incident reports.
B. Incident types by location, time and date.
C. Federal and State crime statistics reports.

Usage Examples:

A. Guard deployment and training.
B. CCTV and electronic security systems deployment.

C. Emergency response planning.
D. External compliance reporting.
E. Risk management decisions
F. Facility Master Planning.
G. Building and grounds improvement decisions.

Sample Data Users:

A. Facility and Security staff
B. Safety Committee
C. Dean of Students and staff
D. Risk Manager
E. Emergency Response Management Team
F. Cabinet