ASSOCIATE IN ARTS

Outcomes Assessment Report for the Associate in Arts Degree Program
Palm Beach State College
Executive Summary

The 2015-2016 process for the associate of arts (AA) degree included a multi-faceted approach that combined faculty-developed scenarios assigned to a random representative sample of students, assessment in all academic programs, the Graduating Student Survey, and state accountability measures.

Scenarios assessment included 613 artifacts were collected from students in a random sample to measure four institutional outcomes of Critical Thinking, Ethics, Global Awareness, and Information Literacy as well as the general education learning outcomes of Communications and Mathematics. Scenarios are faculty-developed situations for which students provide a written response to demonstrate the skills associated with one of the learning outcomes. Responses are scored with a 5-point rubric where "3" is considered competent. Evidence from scenarios assessment indicated that students are achieving competency on the outcomes at varying rates (from 62% in Ethics to 85% in Mathematics).

A summative measure of successful AA degree completion is student performance of AA graduates in the State University System (SUS). Palm Beach State College AA degree graduates perform well when they transfer to state universities. State accountability reports show that nearly 90% of associate of arts degree students from PBSC are successful, meaning they graduate, leave in good standing, or are still enrolled in good standing. Associate of arts degree students who transfer into the SUS have about that same grade point average (GPA) as students who transfer from other colleges in the Florida system (2.8 for PBSC students compared to 2.9 statewide). In 2015, 72% of students at PBSC had a GPA of at least 2.5, lower than the statewide percentage of 75%.

Program learning outcomes (PLO) assessment indicates that academic programs effectively support institution-level outcomes with 81% of PLO achievement targets reached this cycle. Specifically, these PLOs are those outcomes in the programs that support institutional learning outcomes.

Most students in 2015-2016 reported the College did “much” or “very much” to increase their achievement on institutional-level outcomes (ranging from 76% of students for Global Awareness and 85% for Communications selected these ratings on the Graduating Student Survey). Six of seven related benchmarks were met for critical thinking in the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

These results are reviewed annually by faculty, staff, and administrators, and improvement strategies are developed in these reviews. This process help the College better understand student achievement on institutional learning outcomes and what can be done to improve that achievement. This report provides a snapshot of learning; the assessment and review process ensures a continuous endeavor to improve both learning and the methods by which we assess learning at Palm Beach State College.

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1 Additional learning outcomes assessment results for general education learning outcomes are reviewed by faculty as the AA degree program is assessed and evaluated. Results are reported separately for general education and are available on the Palm Beach State College "College Data" web page.
1: CRITICAL THINKING

Outcome
Engage in purposeful reasoning to reach sound conclusions.

Learning Outcome: Yes

Related Items
1.1: Critical Thinking Scenario

Measure
The scenario is a problem-based assessment developed by the General Education and Assessment Committee and graded with a 5-point rubric. Scenarios are administered in a random sample of classes where the median number of credits completed is 30 or greater.

Achievement Target
At least 70% of students will score a "3" or higher on the 5-point scale.

Findings
In 2015, 110 students responded to the critical thinking scenario; 83 students (75%) scored at least "3" out of 5 possible points.

Target Met?: Met
Targeted for Improvement?: Yes

1.1.1: Critical Thinking Action Plan

Action Plan
Critical Thinking remains a focus for improved student learning via the College’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). Through the QEP, the College will increase the number of Professional Learning Groups (PLGs) in which participants will focus on the instruction and assessment of critical thinking. Additionally, the QEP manager will continue to work with faculty in general education and in career-oriented programs regarding best practices and faculty use of
the Critical Thinking Quick Guide. Faculty will be recruited to implement strategies to teach critical thinking in the classroom and report results in 2016-2017, and a Math Critical Thinking Quick Guide will be developed. Electronic access to QEP assessment (rubric) will be added to Blackboard and made available in all courses, and a web application of the Quick Guide will be developed.

1.2: Program Learning Outcomes - Critical Thinking

Measure
Student achievement on program learning outcomes (PLOs) that support the institutional learning outcome related to critical thinking.

Achievement Target
Students will meet the achievement target for at least 70% of program learning outcomes that support the institutional learning outcome related to critical thinking.

Findings
Students met the achievement target for 81% of the PLOs that support critical thinking.

Target Met?: Met
Targeted for Improvement?: No

1.3: Graduating Student Survey - Critical Thinking

Measure
Percentage of graduating students who select a rating of "4" or "5" (excellent) on the Graduating Student Survey when they rate the extent to which the College helped them achieve the Critical Thinking learning outcome.

Achievement Target
70% of students will give a rating of "4" or "5" on a 5-point scale.

Findings
84% of 713 students who applied for graduation between June 2015 and May 2016 gave ratings of at least a 4 on the 5-point scale.
2: ETHICS

Outcome
Demonstrate the ability to make informed decisions based on ethical principles and reasoning.

Learning Outcome: Yes
Related Items
2.1: Ethics Scenario

Measure
The scenario is a problem-based assessment developed by the General Education and Assessment Committee and graded with a 5-point rubric. Scenarios are administered in a random sample of classes where the median number of credits completed is 30 or greater.

Achievement Target
At least 70% of students will score a "3" or higher on the 5-point scale.

Findings
In 2015, 93 students responded to the ethics scenario; 58 students (62%) scored a "3" or higher out of 5 possible points.

Target Met?: Not Met
Targeted for Improvement?: Yes

2.1.1: Ethics Action Plan

Action Plan
Strategies to improve student performance on the Ethics outcome will be addressed through the College’s Center for Applied Ethics (CAE), a state-sanctioned entity to contribute to improved ethical behavior to the communities served by the College. Improvement strategies include the following.

- Extend outreach to students and add a student member to the Ethics Partnership Council.
• Invite students to participate in an “Ethics Bowl” in 2015-2016.
• Integrate a guest lecturer to the medical assisting program to address the topic of ethics in the medical field.
• Develop student-specific curriculum for ethics as soon as staff can be contracted.

2.2: Program Learning Outcomes - Ethics

Measure
Student achievement on program learning outcomes that support the institutional learning outcome related to ethics.

Achievement Target
Students will meet the achievement target for at least 70% of program learning outcomes that support the institutional learning outcome related to ethics.

Findings
Students met the achievement target for 78% of program learning outcomes that support the institutional learning outcome related to ethics.

Target Met?: Met
Targeted for Improvement?: No

2.3: Graduating Student Survey - Ethics

Measure
Percentage of graduating students who select a rating of "4" or "5" (excellent) on the Graduating Student Survey when they rate the extent to which the College helped them achieve the Ethics learning outcome.

Achievement Target
70% of students will give a rating of "4" or "5" on a 5-point scale.

Findings
82% of 710 students who applied for graduation between June 2015 and May 2016 gave ratings of at
least a 4 on the 5-point scale.

Target Met?: Met
Targeted for Improvement?: No

3: GLOBAL AWARENESS

Outcome
Exhibit a sense of social, cultural and global responsibility.

Learning Outcome: Yes
Related Items

3.1: Global Awareness Scenario

Measure
The scenario is a problem-based assessment developed by the General Education and Assessment Committee and graded with a 5-point rubric. Scenarios are administered in a random sample of classes where the median number of credits completed is 30 or greater.

Achievement Target
At least 70% of students will achieve a score of "3" or higher on the 5-point scale.

Findings
In 2015, 96 students responded to the global awareness scenario; 68 students (71%) scored at least "3" out of 5 possible points. Although the target was not met, this outcome will not be targeted for improvement in the next cycle; other measures of global awareness were met, and the College is targeting four other outcomes in general education or for the associate in arts degree for improvement.

Target Met?: Not Met
Targeted for Improvement?: No

3.2: Program Learning Outcomes - Global Awareness

Measure
Student achievement on program learning outcomes that support the institutional learning outcome related to global awareness.
Achievement Target
Students will meet the achievement target for at least 70% of program learning outcomes that support the institutional learning outcome related to global awareness.

Findings
Students met the achievement target for 86% of program learning outcomes that support the institutional learning outcome related to global awareness.

Target Met?: Met
Targeted for Improvement?: No

3.3: Graduating Student Survey - Global Awareness

Measure
Percentage of graduating students who select a rating of "4" or "5" (excellent) on the Graduating Student Survey when they rate the extent to which the College helped them achieve the Global Awareness learning outcome.

Achievement Target
At least 70% of students will give a rating of "4" or "5" on a 5-point scale.

Findings
76% of 710 students who applied for graduation between June 2015 and May 2016 gave ratings of at least a 4 on the 5-point scale.

Target Met?: Met
Targeted for Improvement?: No

4: INFORMATION LITERACY

Outcome
Demonstrate the ability to find, evaluate, organize and use information.

Learning Outcome: Yes

Related Items
4.1: Information Literacy Scenario

Measure
The scenario is a problem-based assessment developed by the General Education and Assessment Committee and graded with a 5-point rubric. Scenarios are administered in a random sample of classes where the median number of credits completed is 30 or greater.

Achievement Target
At least 70% of students will score a "3" or higher on the 5-point scale.

Findings
In 2015, 93 students responded to the information literacy scenario; 65 students (70%) scored at least "3" out of 5 possible points.

Target Met?: Met
Targeted for Improvement?: Yes

4.1.1: Information Literacy Action Plan

Action Plan
Strategies to improve students' information literacy will be addressed through the College’s Library Learning and Resource Centers (LLRC) and will include targeted focus on student engagement with information literacy in ENC1102 (College Composition II) and SLS1501 (Introduction to College Success) courses. Additionally, the LLRC will add the Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills, also known as SAILS, in the next cycle.

4.2: Program Learning Outcomes - Information Literacy

Measure
Student achievement on program learning outcomes that support the institutional learning outcome related to information literacy.

Achievement Target
Students will meet the achievement target for at least 70% of program learning outcomes that support the institutional learning outcome related to information literacy.
Findings
Students met the achievement target for 77% of program learning outcomes that support the institutional learning outcome related to information literacy.

Target Met?: Met
Targeted for Improvement?: No

4.3: Graduating Student Survey - Information Literacy

Measure
Percentage of graduating students who select a rating of "4" or "5" (excellent) on the Graduating Student Survey when they rate the extent to which the College helped them achieve the Information Literacy learning outcome.

Achievement Target
At least 70% of students will give a rating of "4" or "5" on a 5-point scale.

Findings
82% of 708 students who applied for graduation between June 2015 and May 2016 gave ratings of at least a 4 on the 5-point scale.

Target Met?: Met
Targeted for Improvement?: No

5: Associate Degree Graduates' Performance in State University System

Outcome
Palm Beach State Associate in Arts graduates will perform well in their first year in the State University System (SUS).

Learning Outcome: No
Related Items

5.1: Grade Point Average in State University System

Measure
Average grade point average of Palm Beach State graduates in their first year in the State University
System

**Achievement Target**
Palm Beach State College graduates (with an associate in arts degree) will have a GPA greater than or equal to that of the statewide average for Florida College System graduates.

**Findings**
In 2015, the mean GPA of students who graduated with an associate in arts degree from PBSC was 2.83 compared to 2.91 for all students who graduated from the Florida system.

**Target Met**: Not Met  
**Targeted for Improvement**: No

5.2: **Percent of Students with GPA > 2.5**

**Measure**
Percent of PBSC associate in arts degree graduates with a GPA of 2.5 or higher in their first year in the SUS

**Achievement Target**
The percent of associate in arts degree graduates from PBSC with a GPA of at least 2.5 will be greater than or equal to the percent of Florida system graduates.

**Findings**
72% of graduates from PBSC had GPAs of at least 2.5 compared to 75% statewide.

**Target Met**: Not Met  
**Targeted for Improvement**: No

6: **Graduation Rate**

**Outcome**
Associate in arts students will complete their degrees.

**Learning Outcome**: No
Related Items

6.1: Graduation Rate

Measure
Graduation rate for PBSC students who complete their associate in arts degree as published by the State of Florida published graduation rate for each of the 28 FL Colleges based on tracking an FTIC cohort for four years.

Achievement Target
Students will complete their associate of arts degrees from PBSC at a rate greater than or equal to the average for the Florida College System.

Findings
In 2015, PBSC students attained a 45% graduation rate compared to 42% statewide.

Target Met?: Met
Targeted for Improvement?: Yes

6.1.1: Graduation Rate

Action Plan
The College is engaged in ongoing improvement initiatives to improve graduation. The continued action plan has resulted in a graduation rate higher than the state average for three consecutive years (2013, 2014, and 2015).

Initiatives are a collaborative effort among staff in enrollment management and faculty and staff in academics and include, and will continue to include, meetings at regular intervals. Staff in student services host weekly conference calls during peak registration to discuss enrollment trends and the potential impact on graduation. Faculty meet at least twice per major semester to review current data, trends, and best practices to improve student learning and ultimately help students complete their degrees. Administrators meet, and will meet, several times each semester to review current data, trends, and best practices to improve graduation rates.