

# OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT UPDATE

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*I would like to offer a warm thank you to all the academic departments and programs that have submitted their annual reports, and that have met with me regarding student learning outcomes assessment. Since assuming the Assessment Coordinator role from Pat Thomas in January 2012, I have been fortunate to learn a great deal from departments about their programs, and I look forward to continuing to be of assistance.*

*Please call or email me with any comments, suggestions, or questions about outcomes assessment.*

*Sincerely,*

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## General Education Assessment Colloquium

On Wednesday, November 13th, 12:30-2:00 p.m., in The Faculty Center, South Dining, RIC will host the second RIC Outcomes Assessment Colloquium. The event will be sponsored by COGE and the Assessment office.

Presentations will be made by: Ron Pitt, Vice president for Academic Affairs; Jim Magyar, Chair COGE; Dan Weisman, Coordinator, General Education Outcomes Assessment;

Becky Caouette, Chair, Written Communication Committee; Quenby O.



Hughes, Chair, Critical and Creative Thinking Committee; and Gale Goodwin Gomez & Shani D. Carter,

Co-Chairs, Research Fluency Committee.

Presenters will discuss the process used to create the 3 rubrics. They also will present the results of using the rubrics to rate student work from first year courses.

Please attend to learn about this important project and to provide suggestions for improvement.

RSVP to:

[Assessment@ric.edu](mailto:Assessment@ric.edu) or

[COGE@ric.edu](mailto:COGE@ric.edu)

## Feedback on Departmental Annual Assessment Reports

During May, June, and July, academic departments and programs submitted their annual assessment reports for review.

All of reports are under review by CASO, and departments will receive detailed feedback, using a rubric developed by CASO.

The feedback will cover programs' stage in the assessment process, and will compare this year's reports with last year's reports.

Of the reports CASO has reviewed to date, the reports indicate that departments are making im-

provements in their assessment plans and are using the results to inform changes in their curriculum.

Faculty are encouraged to contact CASO members for guidance with assessment.

## CASO - The Committee on Assessment of Student Outcomes

The mission of CASO is to identify and evaluate the measures that will be used to assess achievement of College-wide goals, which are derived from the Col-

lege Mission and the College Strategic Plan. In addition, CASO serves as resource for assessment information. CASO meets twice per semester, and

input is welcome from everyone. Contact [scarter@ric.edu](mailto:scarter@ric.edu) or [Assessment@ric.edu](mailto:Assessment@ric.edu) for more information.

### *Did You Know*

In February 2013, the U.S. Department of Education released the College Scorecard, which is an interactive tool to help students obtain information about college costs and graduation outcomes. The College ScoreCard also contains links to career-related information, such as skill requirements, job outlook, and salaries.

<http://collegecost.ed.gov/scorecard/index.aspx>

## External View of RIC: NEASC & Other Accreditors

### NEASC

In its March, 2012 reaccreditation letter to RIC, NEASC indicated that RIC should give emphasis to, “further assessing student learning for all levels of programs (bachelor’s master’s and Ph.D.). In the Fall, 2016, RIC will provide an interim report to NEASC, including its progress on outcomes assessment.

### Discipline-Based Accrediting Agencies

RIC’s progress on assessment is aided by the many academic programs that are reviewed by discipline-based accrediting bodies, including:

CCNE: Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education

CSWE: Council on Social Work Education

NASAD: National Association of Schools of Art and Design

NASDTEC: National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification

NASM: National Association of Schools of Music

NCATE: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

CASO is always pleased to receive portions of discipline-based self-study reports in lieu of the regular annual department assessment reports.

### Who Accredits the Accrediting Agencies?

The U.S. Department of Education’s promulgates standards that permit NEASC, other regional accrediting bodies, and Discipline-Based Accrediting Agencies to review programs.

The DoED standards permit accreditors to require colleges and universities to address outcomes assessment, but also permit institutions to set their own assessment standards and methods.

Specifically, the DoED standards permit colleges and universities’ “developing and using institutional standards to show its success with respect to student achievement, which achievement may be considered as part of any accreditation review” (section 602.16, (f), (2)).

[http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation\\_pg13.html#RecognitionCriteria](http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg13.html#RecognitionCriteria)

## Focus on Departments: Closing the Loop

In the Outcomes Assessment field, the term, “Closing the Loop” refers to the process by which departments *measure* student progress toward meeting department learning outcomes and subsequently *change* curriculum based upon assessment results.

### Learning Outcomes.

All academic programs and co-curricular programs have developed student learning outcomes, with the academic learning outcomes being published on department web pages and in the college catalog. Most majors list six to

eight learning outcomes, which can be updated by department faculty at any time based upon faculty beliefs about the body of knowledge in their fields.

### Past Assessment Efforts.

Academic departments have been conducting formal student learning outcomes assessment since the 2007-2008 academic year. Many departments measure only a few of their outcomes each year, rotating through their lists of outcomes over a period of several years. Some departments use their self-study for discipline-specific accreditation as their as-

essment reports.

### Collaborative Efforts.

Most academic departments share their results with all department faculty members, and use the results to discuss pedagogy and course content.

### Closing the Loop.

Many departments have changed their curriculum due to assessment results, by adding and deleting courses, changing course content, and increasing the number of course credits from 3 to 4. Also, some departments have updated their learning goals.

### Focus on Careers

*Academic programs can refer students to a user-friendly resource for career-related information, My Next Move, a joint project of the Department of Labor and O\*Net.*

*[www.mynextmove.org](http://www.mynextmove.org)*

*In addition, academic programs can use the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH) to benchmark learning outcomes for academic programs.*

*[www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh)*

*Departments are encouraged to visit the OOH and My Next Move to review occupational skill requirements and to compare these skills to their learning outcomes.*

## NEEAN

The New England Educational Assessment Network (NEEAN) offers workshops and publications on assessment of student learning and development, with an aim to enrich the teaching and learning process for students and faculty.

NEEAN offers three events annually. In November and March, the one-day workshops are held in Worcester, MA and Amherst, MA, respectively. In June, the two-day workshop is held in Keene, NH.

All three events offer faculty and administrators the opportunity to learn about assessment strategies and techniques, and to work on their own assessment projects. Additionally, participants have the opportunity to network with peers and to discuss their institutions' experiences.

Founded in 1995, NEEAN is currently led by a board of faculty, assessment coordinators, deans, associate/assistant provosts, and Director of Institutional Research, from colleges

throughout New England, including: Rhode Island College (Shani Carter); Community College of Rhode Island (Jeanne Mulaney); University of Rhode Island (Libby Miles); Asnuntuck Community College; Castleton State College; Fairfield University; Keene State College; Lasell College; Northern Essex Community College; Southern Connecticut State University; U-Mass-Amherst; and Worcester State University.

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## Upcoming Conferences

There are many conferences offered throughout the year on outcomes assessment, many of which are held in New England. Funding to attend is often available via the office of the VPAA. Send email to Shani Carter at [scarter@ric.edu](mailto:scarter@ric.edu) or at [assessment@ric.edu](mailto:assessment@ric.edu) for information.

### AAC&U—Association of American Colleges and Universities.

General Education and Assessment: Disruptions, Innovations, and Opportunities

February 27–March 1, 2014, in Portland, Oregon, [www.aacu.org](http://www.aacu.org)

Diversity, Learning, and Student Success: Policy, Practice, Privilege

March 27–29, 2014, in Chicago, Illinois

### AACSB—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business

Assessment Conference

March 17–19, 2014, New Orleans, Louisiana, [www.aacsb.edu](http://www.aacsb.edu)

### AERA—American Educational Research Association

Annual Meeting

April 3-7, 2014, Philadelphia, PA, [www.aera.net](http://www.aera.net)

### AAHLE—Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education

Annual Assessment Conference

June 2014, TBA, Lexington, KY, <http://aalhe.org>

### AIR—Association for Institutional Research

AIR Annual Forum

May 26-30, 2014, Orlando, FL, <http://forum.airweb.org/2014/>

### ANNY—Assessment Network of New York

April 28 - 30, 2014, Annual Conference, Rochester Institute of Technology, <http://www.oneonta.edu/anny/>

### Council of Chief State School Officers

National Conference on Student Assessment

Jun 25-27, 2014, New Orleans, LA [http://www.ccsso.org/News\\_and\\_Events/](http://www.ccsso.org/News_and_Events/)

### International Educational Technology Conference

2014 IET Conference

September 3-5, 2014, Chicago, IL, [www.iet-c.net](http://www.iet-c.net)

### National Institute for Testing and Evaluation. International Association for Education Assessment

Assessment Innovations for the 21st Century

May 25 - 30, 2014, Singapore

### NEEAN—New England Educational Assessment Network

Fall Forum: Learning from Assessment

November 1, 2013, Worcester, MA, [www.neean.org](http://www.neean.org)

### NEFDC—New England Faculty Development Consortium

The Interactive Classroom: Collaboration and Learning in Higher Education

November 15, 2013, Worcester, MA, <https://www.nefdc.org/>

## Other Professional Organizations

Assessment Institute in Indianapolis

<http://www.assessmentinstitute.iupui.edu/index.shtml>

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA)

<http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/>

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS)

[www.cas.edu](http://www.cas.edu)

Virginia Assessment Group

<http://www.virginiaassessment.org/>