Design, Analysis, and Assessment of Learning Workgroup Recommendations – DRAFT

Goal Statement
The **competencies** and **critical thinking skills** we want our program graduates to develop should be relatively constant over time. However, the **methods** by which they achieve these competencies have to be flexible and attentive to the changing **content or skill knowledge-base** students have when we encounter them and the changing realities of the world outside the classroom.

Currently, academic programs tend to engage in program design and assessment that gets hindered by content revisions that change over time, rather than focusing on making sure that program design and assessment primarily serve the competencies and critical thinking elements of our curriculums. An effect of this was seen during the campus-wide program mapping effort in January 2019. Many courses, course sequences, or course content had changed over time so mapping course learning outcomes (also Student Learning Outcomes or SLOs) back to Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) was difficult. Content in courses that mapped back to the program outcomes had been changed, or had disappeared completely. This is especially apparent when the assessment plans are based on the original program outcomes.

Because we have always treated curriculum and assessment as two different things, programs are approved by the curriculum committee with a tacit understanding that the program level, or course level learning outcomes have been reviewed and approved by an Assessment Liaison. After CWCC approval, the Programs Outcomes Assessment Report (POAR) template is made from the original learning outcomes. Over time, as changes to the program, or changes to the courses are made, there is a disconnect between what we have stated the program does and what we are measuring/assessing. In other words, the actual program (the courses and sequences within the program) are adrift from the goals, objectives, and assessment of the program.

We are recommending a set of processes for curriculum development and assessment that ensures:
A. **Changes to curriculum and changes to assessment are tied together**.
B. MVCC Core Competencies are the consistent basis that underlies program and course development and assessment and the MVCC Core Competencies should be reviewed periodically. For example, review of the competencies could occur in conjunction with Middle States Review.
C. The **content or skill knowledge-base** of the program, or course serve as a way to embed the MVCC Core Competencies in the program.
D. The process for change still has to have some flexibility to allow for the ability to make changes to established programs at an acceptable pace.
E. The overall process should become routine within academic schools so that regular participation becomes the norm but should not be so burdensome that that it overwhelms participants.

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Main Recommendations
1. The College-Wide Curriculum Committee (CWCC) should be the main entity that drives curriculum development and a new Program Assessment Committee (PAC) should be formed to drive program assessment. The PAC should be similar in structure to CWCC so that each school is represented. If this is the case, then each school has an embedded committee member that can help with curriculum development and another member that can help with curriculum/program assessment.
2. New programs and heavily revised programs (programs that have to be submitted for SUNY/SED review) should go through a dual development/review process that includes some version of the following process of backwards design (or design with the end in mind):
   a. Members from the school meet with a small group to develop the idea for the new program that should specifically include the development of specific and measurable Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). This initial work should include some designated representative that specializes in program development and some designated representative that specializes in program assessment. These meeting should also include AVP and Dean level support.
   b. After program outcomes have been approved, development should include a program mapping process within the academic school that includes development of both a curricular plan for students and a program assessment plan.
   c. After programs have been approved within schools and prior to VPLAA approval, there should be concurrent CWCC and PAC review. CWCC should conduct the first review to confirm that the curriculum meets and supports the PLOs. After that approval, the PAC would confirm that the Assessment Plan will be effective in measuring the PLOs.
3. Existing programs should be subject to an ongoing, concurrent review process where the CWCC continually evaluates that the program curriculum matches the PLOs and the PAC evaluates the Program Assessment Plan to make sure that PLOs are being adequately measured.
   a. Both committees should be able to make recommendations to the VPLAA, AVPs, Deans, and Schools.
   b. This ongoing review should occur based on the SUNY mandated APR schedule so that 20% of programs are reviewed every year.

New Program Planning & Development
The following recommendations are made to support the planning and development of a new program and may include overlap of recommendations for program assessment. As a process for program development is defined during the implementation phase, these recommendations should be incorporated to the process:
1. The purpose of the program should be defined first. This means defining Career (AOS/AAS) from Transfer (AS/AA) pathways.
2. Development of a program should include an analysis of demand in the area for that program. This is a requirement for SUNY approval, but there should be some process to

quantify internal demand (students who are requesting a certain type of program we do not offer) and external demand (EMSI, NYS Department of Labor Data, SUNY Transfer Data) to support the planning process.

3. Establish cost and career/earnings analyses of the new program
   a. This could be used to create a decision tree for program clusters (Business Common first year – what questions might help determine which path to take)
   b. Clarity for time or "commitment" in program before career (e.g. 1-year certificate means this job and salary, 2-year AAS means these jobs and salaries, AS + BS, AS+BS+Grad etc)
   c. Develop a cost of program vs time to completion vs economic benefit description
4. Consider the use of a "metamajor pathway," a common first year/semester to help students with decision making?

After program analysis is completed, design the curriculum for the program:
1. Review PLOs and make sure they still meet the original intent of the program after the above analysis.
2. Design coursework based on PLOs instead of starting from courses.
   a. Apply backwards design to identify how Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) would be created to support the PLOs.
      i. Select courses that support your SLO/PLO combinations.
         1. Adapt or update SLOs for a course that might fit with changes to PLOs.
         2. We recommend finding a solution for this potential problem: If a course exists but requires additional SLOs, developing creative solutions like cross listed sections or adding a 1 credit supplement course when needed.
      ii. Create courses if the need exists.
   b. Use and conform to SUNY Transfer Pathways
3. Consider the following areas intentionally during the program development process:
   a. Design for Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Intentionally
      i. Identify the target audience
      ii. Analysis of barriers for the target audience
      iii. Planning for support connected to those barriers
      iv. Develop a plan to assess equity and incorporate changes into the curriculum
   b. Design with an Understanding of the Cost of the Program Outside of Tuition
      i. Identify costs of textbooks vs OER
      ii. Identify costs of tools and implements
      iii. Identify the unintentional costs created when other programs require coursework in your program
4. Use a Structured Instructional Activity Form (like one already used for Online and Hybrid Development) to define activities in all courses.
   a. Develop a template for reporting instructional activities similar to Online SIA form with a table that addresses time for activities.

      b.   Require submission and planning for new courses
      c.   For existing courses, complete form when accepting and planning for a course the first time or when substantially revising activities in a course.
         i.   These forms could be a means for determining professional development needs for an individual
        ii.   These forms could be used as a mechanism for Planning in Self-Reports

The following are other general considerations for development:

1. Define when during program development the following areas should become involved in the curriculum development process and what their contributions should be:
    1. Student Support Advisors
    2. Admissions
    3. Financial Aid
    4. Marketing
    5. Institutional Research
2. Develop a process guide for Curriculum Development including:
    1. "Steps to Launch" Documentation that shows all of the steps beyond CWCC that are involved in the life-cycle of a program
    2. General Curriculum Rules and Recommendations about timing of certain course work in program:
        - EN1&2 in first year
        - Appropriate Math in 1st year (Selection of appropriate math)
        - Spreading out gen eds vs content courses in program
    3. Define a pathway for non-credit to credit bearing transfer from CCED.

Program Assessment

The following recommendations are made to support the assessment planning for a new program and may include overlap of recommendations for program development. As a process for program assessment is defined during the implementation phase, these recommendations should be incorporated to the process:

1. Change name to Ongoing Program Assessment (OPA)
2. Mechanically, a new College Senate Committee should be seated to fill the role of Program Assessment:
    a. This committee should mirror the structure of CWCC
    b. This committee should be seat Ad Hoc by Fall 2020 for its first iteration. Members should be given random lengths of 3, 4, and 5-year terms for this committee's initiation. After these initial terms, replacement of voting members should become part of normal shared governance
    c. The ad hoc committee should work to define their process within the guidelines of these recommendations
    d. The ultimate goal of this committee would be to define and approve the assessment process for a new program, conduct reviews of the OPA submitted by the schools for each academic program on a rolling basis and make

recommendations for improvement to academic programs, work with IEC, IR and Academic Schools to identify methods of efficient data collection and storage for program assessment, and make recommendations about program assessment in general.

3. Define stakeholders for the program (we identified 5 levels)
    a. Program Level – Program Faculty, Gen Ed Faculty, Student Support Advisors. CCED
    b. Institution Level – Gen Ed faculty, SSAs, Cabinet, IR, Facilities (lab usage and physical space considerations), Admissions, Marketing, Financial Aid, Registrar, CCED
    c. Community Level – Accrediting Bodies, Transfer Partners, Employers, County, Clinical/Internship partners
    d. Student Level – Students, Student Government
    e. Governing Bodies Level – Middle States, SUNY, NYSED
4. Define Assessment goals – This process should be implemented to replace the current APR process.
    a. As previously stated, all programs should be cohesively tied together in that they all support the College Competencies.
    b. PLOs should define how, as students complete the program, they are meeting those college competencies.
        ▪ OPA should measure how students are meeting the PLOs, and therefore the College Competencies, and how effective the program is at developing those competencies
            1. Measure how well students are developing their skills
            2. Provide recommendations about areas for improvement
    c. Define program relevancy and viability
        ▪ Define measures that are consistently updated so the skills/content that are being assessed are current and relevant
            • For employment – are the students acquiring industry relevant skills (also, soft skills?)
            • For transfer:
                ○ Is the pathway accurate (Transfer Pathways)?
                ○ Do the students have transferable academic skills?
                ○ Credit Mobility - Are the credits taken at MVCC transferring course for course and credit for credit?
    d. Cost & Benefit Analysis for Program
        ▪ Cost to college and student compared to Benefit to graduate and community

Other program design, development, and assessment recommendations:
1. General Education Courses and Math Courses should be considered a program in the sense that they are a group of consistent courses that are evaluated not only in meeting the effectiveness of their own learning outcomes, but also, how they are meeting the PLOs of the academic programs that they serve.

- General Education should formalize a plan, based on the OPA structure above and Advisory structure below, to not only assess the effectiveness of the General Education courses, but also, the effect that the General Education courses are having within Academic Schools and Programs.
- Math faculty should work more specifically to determine and assess individual math pathways and how they interact with Academic Schools and Programs. For example, a group of math faculty who teach MA110 should be meeting on a regular basis to assess the effectiveness and goals of that course and its Integrated Learning Sections (ILS), but individuals within that larger group should act as liaisons with each Academic School that has MA110 as part of its math pathways.

2. Data collection should be standardized and ongoing. Programs should work with appropriate entities (Like the IEC or PAC) to develop effective methods of data collection and retention in order to answer questions during the development and assessment of programs.

3. Every Program or Cluster of Similar Programs needs to define a Program Advisory Structure to include:
   - Program Faculty
   - Math faculty involved in the program's Math Pathway
   - School SSA
   - Faculty involved in SUNY Transfer Pathway Discussions
   - Gen Ed Faculty
   - Students?
   - Workforce Programs
     - Career Services
     - CCED when evidenced
     - Regional Employers
   - Transfer Programs
     - Transfer partners/faculty reviewers
     - Career Services
   - When Clear Link is evident
     - CCED
     - Dual Credit
     - OAR
     - Learning Commons
     - Athletics
     - Financial Aid
     - Registrar
     - School counselors or Principals, especially for development of educational pipelines

4. There need to be professional development opportunities for members of the MVCC faculty and staff in order to make program development, review, and assessment an ongoing and normal part of everyone's experience at MVCC. The Professional Development needs to be consistent, current, and ongoing.