1999 Institutional Effectiveness Report
Central Carolina Technical College

Introduction

The 1999 summary report for Central Carolina Technical College includes the following components:

> (1) General Education
> (2) Majors or Concentrations

The Commission on Higher Education has either addressed the remainder of the report's components, or the components were not scheduled to be reported this year.

The current status of each component is depicted in the chart below.

COMPONENT	STATUS
1. General Education	Report Included This Year
2. Majors or Concentrations	Report Included This Year
3, Academic Advising	Report Due 2000
4. Achievement of Students Transferring from Two-to Four-Year Institutions	Report Deferred until 2001
5. Procedures for Student Development	Report Due 2002
6. Library Resources and Services	Report Postponed until 2001

1. General Education

Upon completion of an associate degree at Central Carolina Technical College, a student will have acquired general education core competencies necessary for successful employment and/or college transfer as identified through general education program requirements in each major. The general education component includes a minimum of 15 semester credit hours of instruction including at least one credit course from each of the following areas: written communication; oral communication; the humanities and/or fine arts; the social and/or behavioral sciences; and the natural sciences and/or mathematics. The attainment of general education outcomes by individual students is predicated upon successful completion of the courses in this core.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of general education is inherent in Central Carolina's planning and institutional effectiveness system. The College assesses its general education program by using such measures as student success in general education core requirements, survey feedback, and interviews.

A central focus in general education assessment during this reporting period was two-fold: (1) the use of the results of alumni surveys and (2) the evaluation and the use of results of successful completion of general education core requirements. This report summarizes the findings and changes identified as a result of these assessments.

The College found that 65 percent of the alumni surveyed was either very satisfied or satisfied with the curriculum in the general education core, and 69 percent was either very satisfied or satisfied with the instruction provided in the general education core. In each of the core general education courses, students are required to complete a common, comprehensive final examination that is directly linked to the respective course's expected outcomes. The students'

eligibility to graduate is based upon successful completion of core course competencies. Findings revealed that the College experienced a seven percent decrease in the total number of students who met general education core requirements from academic year 1997-98 to 1998-1999.

Having analyzed the results of these assessments, the general education departments identified six discipline areas that were of primary concerns: religion, philosophy, chemistry, biology, mathematics and Spanish. Based on these findings, improvements have already been made, and others will be made in these areas during the next reporting period. Examples of some of these improvements are delineated below.

Adoption of more suitable textbooks and pertinent curricular changes have occurred in appropriate algebra, religion, and philosophy courses. Restructuring of the comprehensive common final examinations in chemistry, biology, and selected mathematics courses has taken place. The results of these changes will be analyzed in the next reporting year.

A dedicated, general education computerized lab with student access to interactive Spanish software is scheduled to be completed no later than Spring 2000. Moreover, factors contributing to a marked increase in attrition in several Spanish courses will be studied further during the summer of 1999, and necessary changes will be implemented in Spring 2000.

Successful completion of general education competencies, as evidenced by completion of core competencies, will continue to be assessed in all degree programs, and improvements will be made based on the results. The College will further incorporate student, faculty, and external feedback into the revision and improvement of general education components during the next reporting year. The study of course grades as a measure of the validity of the general education core component is ongoing and is providing a valid measure of these competencies.

2 Majors or Concentrations

At Central Carolina Technical College a major is defined as the orderly, identifiable sequence of courses leading to a degree, with a minimum of 16 semester hours of instruction in one or more related fields of study, which provides students with specialized knowledge and skills. Central Carolina currently offers 16 majors in nine associate degree programs.

Incorporated into the College's Strategic Planning for Institutional Effectiveness System are annual planning and assessment activities which meet the College's mission, institutional goals, priorities, and academic objectives. Feedback from both internal and external sources has been incorporated into the programs to meet needs of students more effectively. Results of assessment findings are reviewed and used to evaluate and plan for improvements in programs and services.

For example, in response to weaknesses identified in 1997-98, five faculty members from the following areas participated in Return-to-Industry Internships during the summer of 1998: Accounting; Criminal Justice; Humanities; Marketing; and Office Systems Technology. During this reporting year the College also conducted two DACUM's in the following disciplines: Criminal Justice and Marketing.

To maintain excellence in its majors, departments employ a systematic course and program process to measure outcomes. To assess each major, local findings are compared to State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education standards for the Annual Program Review. The review includes evaluation and feedback from students, graduates, business and industry, faculty, and the Academic Management Team. Data is gathered and analyzed to determine the extent to which these standards are met for enrollment, graduation, job placement, and retention. Program and course competencies are analyzed and validated based on both internal and external feedback.

For the purpose of this report, summaries of the assessment reports for three of associate degree majors follow: Computer Technology (CT), Nursing, and Office Systems Technology (OST). College planning and assessment guidelines were followed in each of these majors. Expected educational results were defined for each of these programs.

Findings:

(1) Job placement rates were 100 percent for graduates in all three of these programs.
(2) Graduation rates were as follows: 83 percent in CT; 76.5 percent in Nursing; and 88 percent in OST. (3) Pass rates on graduate exit examinations in Computer Technology and Office Systems Technology were 41 percent and 100 percent, respectively. (4) Overall, employer satisfaction with graduates was rated as follows: CPT - 93.5 percent; Nursing - 100 percent; and OST - 95.3. (5) Although still above the state and national averages, pass rates of nursing students taking the NCLEX-RN fell from 100 percent in AY 1996-97 to 91 percent in AY 1997-98. Findings revealed that of the four students who were unsuccessful in taking the test on the first attempt none of them had completed an NCLEX-RN review course prior to the exam. Further findings indicated that the NCLEX-RN test plan had been revised and increased in difficulty, consequently, national averages declined during this same time period.

Among the weaknesses identified in these programs were:
CT -   CT students were not afforded enough flexibility in the use of electives.
Nursing - The pass rates of nursing students on the NCLEX-RN fell slightly.
OST –   The OST exit examination was not comprehensive enough to assess
               adequately the depth and breadth of the major.

Use of the Results of Findings

As a result of the exit examination pass rates, the CT Department has expanded the composition of the exam to include the multimedia track. The curriculum in the programming courses was adjusted to employ an object-oriented approach rather than a procedural approach. The CT Department reviewed NBEA and ACBSP standards and made modifications in the curriculum accordingly. In addition, the Department will continue efforts to improve retention and quality of student work by adjusting the curriculum in the CT major to provide students with more flexibility in choosing electives in the form of special topics courses that correspond to their interests and career goals.

The Nursing Department will devise strategies to encourage students to complete an NCLEX-RN review course prior to taking the exam. Faculty will participate in the annual Registry Reviews offered throughout the state and region and will review new materials for student use in preparation for the exam. The department has already begun a self-study in preparation for an NLNAC reaffirmation team visit during the next academic year. Faculty members plan to continue to assess and update the curriculum as needed based on the annual program review and upcoming departmental self-study.

The OST Department has redesigned the exit examination to be more comprehensive and will assess the resulting pass rates during the next reporting year. Using the results of the employer satisfaction survey, the Department has revised three exit-level OST courses by adding and/or enhancing the teaching of telephone techniques, customer service and communication skills.