

# Committee for Assessing Student Learning (CASL) - Minutes

Meeting Held Friday, November 18, 2022, from 12:30 – 1:30pm – via Webex

**-Approved-**

## Team Members:

### Present:

Brenda Brown, Timothy Deines, Melinda Hernandez, Karen Hicks, Heidi Jordan, Mark Kelland, Mark Khol, Rob McLoone, Tracy Nothnagel, Chuck Page, Danielle Savory, and Kara Wiedman.

### Absent:

Zack Macomber, and Rafeeq McGiveron.

### Guest:

Cheryl Garayta

## Approval of 11/18/22 Agenda

* Call for approval of agenda.
* Hearing no objections, the agenda stands approved.

## Approval of 11/04/22 Minutes

* Call for correction/approval of minutes.
* Hearing no objections, the minutes stand approved.

## CASL vision and feedback – Tim

### Background and questions posed by Tim

* Intent of CASL to become more present in Academic Senate.
  + Opening for CASL to emphasize the need to create a certain quality level for intellectual environment of classrooms
    - How we talk about assessment is a part of that
    - Done through ELOs but many people do not understand them
* Thinking of playing more of a role during PA days. What if CASL became a standing item on that?
* Should we aim to get additional information in faculty onboarding courses that emphasizes assessment?
* What are ways we can include student voices in the discussion?
* Be sure co-curricular programs are included in our discussions
  + Perhaps bring in co-curricular representatives to Senate to speak to how they incorporate assessment into their student offerings?
* How could we approach a college wide discussion on assessment and ELOs?

### Group Discussion

#### ELOs

* Originated from the [American Associate of Colleges and Universities (AACU)](https://www.aacu.org/trending-topics/essential-learning-outcomes).
* Technically we are allowed to rewrite if desired.
* LCC adopted our existing ELOs in 2015 and CASL needs to review them every 4 years.
  + Last review was 2019 when rewrote items to make them clearer for faculty use
  + Upcoming review in 2023
  + Current ELOs can be found here: [Provost Website](https://www.lcc.edu/provost/essential-learning-outcomes.html) with document located: [ELO document](https://www.lcc.edu/academics/catalog/general-education/documents/essential-learning-outcomes-chart.pdf%23search=elo)
  + During CASL review process can look at other MI university outcomes and see if we are in alignment and/or missing any
* ELOs explain the reason a college education is valuable.
  + This does not take away from the classroom but instead answers the larger question of why students are required to take various courses in pursuit of various degrees
  + Some courses may be lulled into thinking they don’t need to provide a larger context but ELOs are there as a reminder it is also important
* Full time faculty are making sure ELOs are embedded in courses as part of the review process when a course is proposed.
  + When reference an 80% adjunct teaching base at LCC important to remember they often rely on their full time colleagues to take care of some of the course establishment procedures
    - Links between course, program, and ELOs are baked into the system
* If program review and course creation process cover ELO work is there any value in CASL discussing this with Senate?
  + Perhaps we discuss systematic assessment instead?
  + CASL Senate time should be used to gain faculty advice and feedback for proposed CASL assessment work
    - CASL presents idea, “Here’s what we think is best and why;” Senate gives feedback and determines the best way to accomplish the task
    - Also recognized that to have good conversations sometimes a bit of education is needed

#### CASL’s Senate and CTE Presence

* Group agreed CASL should play a more prominent Senate role than current monthly updates.
  + Do not want to just “present information” or “teach senator’s” but rather use this time to gather important feedback from senator constituents to inform CASL actions
  + In essence CASL helps guide Senate in areas of assessment
* Want to have practical actions/conversations, professional development can happen outside of the Senate meetings.
* Important to communicate need for senator’s to take information and communicate it to their department/divisions then return with feedback from those areas and how they are responding to the information.
* CASL could create assessment content for onboarding new faculty in conjunction with CTE.

#### What does CASL need from Senate? What are some projects to focus on?

* Ways to standardize assessment information entered in the gradebook to optimize creating the annual assessment report.
  + This is not an attack on academic freedom but a tool to make assessment reporting more accurate and complete
    - A rubric tool for assessment could be standardized without impeding academic freedom
    - Need to convince faculty of two things

1. Having a system in place is best for students
2. Assessment is tied to accreditation which is tied to Federal law and financial aid
   * Right now “cleaning data” takes so much time that all of it cannot be analyzed
     + Simple as a standard way of noting a grade for a chosen assessment indicator within the D2L gradebook
   * Ramifications of this would be felt every single day – goes to the Board of Trustees who in turn approve program budgets
   * Strong CASL group approval for working on this issue
   * Simply having grade labels be consistent between sections within a course would be fantastic

* Create an Assessment webpage.
  + Repository for information that adjuncts, and full time, faculty can use that shows relationships between ELOs, assessment tools, and pedagogy
  + Vibrant page in collaboration with CTE and other areas as needed
  + Could include dashboards
  + Link to existing sample website: [Cuyahoga Community College Assessment Website](https://www.tri-c.edu/administrative-departments/learning-outcomes-assessment/index.html)
* Create survey for faculty, asking how they develop assessment in their courses.
  + College may be surprised at the disorganization of current assessment tool use
  + Required program review every 4 years is not enough to keep assessment strategies and necessities front and center
* Investigate D2L “competencies” function to measure the way artifacts are related to the program learning outcomes (PLOs).
  + Current system is not user friendly, are there other options?
  + Pointing to specific artifacts in a course would greatly speed up Karen’s assessment report process as well
    - Would also help with reporting accuracy.
      * Currently reporting on assessment method but in future could report on the outcome.
      * Example: Currently reporting 80% on the final exam, optimum reporting would be matched between outcome and method so the report would instead say there was 80% competency in critical thinking
      * This is a difficult thing to do but is worthy of whatever CASL can do to help move it forward
  + Kara to talk with system administrators to investigate possibilities
    - Wants folks to keep in mind the systems being discussed would all require someone to maintain
  + Link to an example system: [Cuyahoga Community College - Aligning Course Assignments with ELOs in Blackboard](https://www.tri-c.edu/administrative-departments/learning-outcomes-assessment/documents/how-to-align-assignments-with-essential-learning-outcomes-2020.pdf)
* Other D2L issue is extracting course information regarding rubrics and surveys.
  + At moment hard to extract information stored there, such as rubrics and surveys, so not sure it is in best interests to have faculty use those tools for assessment needs
  + Yet if they are using them elsewhere in the course, hard to ask them to change tools for assessment
  + Rubrics don’t impede academic freedom
    - A tool to fairly assess student learning
* Master course concept discussed
  + Many concerned that it limits academic freedom
  + Many others pointed out that adjuncts tend to like them as a base to build from, so when they are starting a new course they are not starting from scratch
    - Seemed to be department level discussions that were more upset with this idea not on the individual level
    - Important to remember these are not cookie cutter courses but have leeway for change
  + Can include only simple rules such as naming assignment conventions

#### Next Steps

* Tim and discussed with President Jon TenBrink that CASL would present an update at the next Senate meeting (in 2023) suggesting where CASL is heading in the new year, 10-15 minutes.
  + Mark Kelland willing to give update
    - He would like to remind people that the HLC reaffirmation is less than 2 years away and assessment is the number one place colleges have problems passing in their review
    - Aggregating assessment and using that feedback to set a 10 year plan of continuous quality improvement would be a great thing to have in place for HLC review
    - Mark can set the context and other CASL members can step in to explain an approach where senators take information from the meeting to their constituents and then give feedback for CASL’s use
  + Karen would like to emphasize faculty’s use of assessment data to inform pedological decisions.
    - Provide resources for review, prior to the meeting, to share and solicit constituent feedback
    - Discuss need for calibrating assessment data
* Potential to create a survey that senators could give their constituents to learn how faculty develop assessment methods for their courses.
* Share records various programs use when making pedagogic decisions from student assessment.
  + CHDV, BUSN, LEGL all have systems in place they use and can share
  + “Tiller Notebook” mentioned that can also be looked at for organizational ideas
  + Records can be both hard and electronic in nature

## Possible anonymous survey of senate members

Future agenda item – ran out of time.

## Professional Development and Collaboration Opportunities follow-up discussion

Future agenda item – ran out of time.

Update Note: 11/18/23, Tim sent email to group to gather their ideas after the meeting. He will compile replies and bring to December 2 CASL meeting.

## HLC Quality Initiative: Co-curricular assessment plan update – Karen

Noted that the plan was passed as part of the consent agenda of the Academic Senate meeting earlier that day.

## Future Agenda Items

Will keep next meeting focused on what to present/discuss at January Academic Senate meetings.

## Meeting Adjourned at 2:00pm with no objections

* Next Meeting Friday, December 2, 2022 from 12:30pm to 2:00pm, via Webex.
  + Last one for Fall Semester
  + Focus on CASL 2023 focus and Senate presentation on 1/13/23
  + Discuss Compilation of Professional Development and Collaboration ideas, that were collected between meetings

*Respectfully submitted by Terri Christian*

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