Core Competency Assessment Plan

A core competency describes what students are able to do upon graduating or transferring from El Camino. Assessing core competencies gives faculty, staff, and managers at the college a broader view of the college as a whole and how their area or program fits into it than they would get from program-level or course-level assessment. El Camino College’s Core Competencies are as follows:

Students completing a course of study at El Camino College will achieve the following core competencies:

I. **Content Knowledge**: Students possess and use the knowledge, skills and abilities specific to a chosen discipline, vocation or career.

II. **Critical, Creative and Analytical Thinking**: Students solve problems, make judgments and reach decisions using critical, creative and analytical skills.

III. **Communication and Comprehension**: Students effectively communicate in written, verbal and artistic forms to diverse audiences. Students comprehend and respectfully respond to the ideas of others.

IV. **Professional and Personal Growth**: Students exhibit self-esteem, responsible behavior and personal integrity. Students are reflective and intellectually curious; they continue to improve themselves throughout life.

V. **Community and Collaboration**: Students appreciate local and global diversity and are respectful and empathetic during personal interactions and competitions. Students effectively collaborate and resolve conflicts. They are responsible, engaged members of society, who are willing and able to assume leadership roles.

VI. **Information and Technology Literacy**: Students locate, critically evaluate, synthesize, and communicate information in various traditional and new media formats. Students understand the social, legal, and ethical issues related to information and its use. (Pending Academic Senate approval.)

In a process starting in the Spring semester of 2010, ECC will begin assessing these core competencies. The first core competency assessment will be the “Communication and Comprehension” competency. Every year, the college will assess one core competency in the following order:

1. Communication and Comprehension (Fall 2010)
2. Critical, Creative, and Analytical Thinking (Fall 2011)
3. Professional and Personal Growth (Fall 2012)
4. Community and Collaboration (Fall 2013)
5. Information and Technology Literacy (Fall 2014)
6. Content Knowledge (Fall 2015)

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1 According to the California state Academic Senate’s “SLO Terminology Glossary,” “core competencies are the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in complex ways that require multiple elements of learning which are acquired during a student’s course of study at an institution. Statements regarding core competencies speak to the intended results of student learning experiences across courses, programs, and degrees. Core competencies describe critical, measurable life abilities and provide unifying, overarching purpose for a broad spectrum of individual learning experiences. Descriptions of core competencies should include dialogue about instructional and student service competencies.”
Then, the order will repeat starting in Fall 2016. Thus, core competency assessment will take place in a six-year cycle. Other core competencies may be added later on as needed; if this happens, the core competency assessment cycle will be lengthened.

Mapping Course- and Program-Level SLOs to the Core Competencies

In order to start the process of assessing core competencies, during spring flex 2010, the college will map their courses and programs to the core competencies. That is, for each course, the faculty will determine which core competencies match up with the outcomes for that course; at the program level, the faculty will determine which core competencies match up with the outcomes for their program. This will accomplish several things:

1. One of the ways that the college plans to assess these core competencies is by survey. Thus, the mapping will help the college determine which courses may be targeted for administering the survey.
2. An additional way that the college plans to assess the core competencies is by matching the survey results to student grades in the courses which align with the core competency being assessed. Thus, mapping will help the college determine which course grades should be included.
3. A third way that the college plans to assess these core competencies is by having the faculty rate how their students did on the assessments. Thus, the mapping will help the college determine which course and program assessments need to be rated for which core competency.
4. The mapping will help faculty determine whether or not they have a complete list of SLOs for their courses and programs and whether the SLOs they currently have match up with the college’s core competencies.

Methods for Assessing the Core Competencies:

The college will collect data for each of the core competencies in three ways:

1. **Survey:** For each core competency, the Assessment of Learning committee will develop a survey to assess to what extent students feel they have met the core competencies. Students particularly targeted for the survey will be ones who are about to graduate with a degree or certificate from the college; however, in the process of administering the survey, students at various stages of their studies will be surveyed. This will give the college a good means to compare achievement of core competencies between students at various stages.
2. **Course Grades:** In the process of surveying students, the college will collect the identity numbers of these students and match them to their course grades. Then the college will pull out only the grades from courses where the core competency being assessed played a significant role (determined by mapping). The college will average these grades in order to compare them with the survey averages. The college will not look at grades of individual students nor will it disaggregate
grades based on individual instructor. In this way, the college insures the privacy of students and instructors.

3. **Assessment Rating:** The Assessment of Learning Committee will develop a rating scale and then ask the faculty to rate their students’ assessment results based on this scale. The scale will be used by faculty to rate how their students did on the outcomes assessment for the course (e.g. “our students did extremely well on the assessment” to “our students did poorly on the assessment”). The college will then average these ratings to come up with an institution-wide score.

**Reporting the Results:**

After the data is collected, a core competency summit will be planned to bring together faculty, staff, and managers from various parts of the college to reflect on the data. These summits will take place on the Friday of the Assessment of Student Learning Week. After reflection and input from summit participants, the Assessment of Learning Committee will be responsible for writing and disseminating a report.

**Timeline for the First Core Competency Assessment (“Communication and Comprehension”):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring Flex Day, 2010</td>
<td>Mapping of courses, programs to core competencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring 2010</td>
<td>Survey instrument for “Communication and Comprehension” developed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rating scale for rating assessments developed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Flex Day, 2010</td>
<td>Survey planned and administered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment of Student Learning Week, Fall 2010</td>
<td>Assessment rating takes place</td>
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<tr>
<td>End of Fall 2010</td>
<td>Core Competency Summit takes place</td>
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<tr>
<td>End of Fall 2010</td>
<td>Report written and disseminated</td>
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