

CARROLL COLLEGE

Helena, Montana

NWCCU PROGRESS REPORT

APRIL 17, 2009

Table of Contents

Recommendation #1.....	1
Recommendation #2.....	3
Background	3
Program Review.....	5
Direct Assessment of Student Learning.....	6
Indirect Assessment of Student Learning and Experiences.....	8
Core Curriculum Assessment.....	9
Summary/Conclusion.....	13
Appendix A: External Speaker Events Policy	14
Appendix B: Accounting Assessment Matrix	16
Appendix C: Example of Program-Level Assessment.....	17
Appendix D: Academic Program Review.....	20
Appendix E: Administrative Unit Program Review.....	23
Appendix F: Six Goals for Carroll Graduates.....	25

Overview

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities requested that Carroll College prepare a progress report to address Recommendation 1 and 2 of the Fall 2007 Focused Interim Evaluation.

Recommendation #1

It is recommended that the Carroll College community continue dialogue on appropriate structures and processes, including completion of an external speaker event policy, to ensure academic freedom and the institution's "commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge consistent with the institution's mission and goals" (Standard Nine – Institutional Integrity, 9.A.5; Policy 9.1; Standard Four – Faculty, 4.B.7).

Recommendation #2

It is recommended that Carroll College complete the task of identifying measurable goals and objectives for student learning in its general education program, systematically assess the results of student learning in ways consistent with the College's mission, values, and strategic goals, and make regular use of departmental and general education assessments in the improvement of its academic programs (Standard Two – Educational Program, 2.B.1 and 2.B.2; Policy 2.2).

Recommendation #1

In the Fall 2007 Focused Interim Evaluation, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities requested that Carroll College prepare a progress report to address the following recommendation relating to academic freedom:

It is recommended that the Carroll College community continue dialogue on appropriate structures and processes, including completion of an external speaker event policy, to ensure academic freedom and the institution's "commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge consistent with the institution's mission and goals" (Standard Nine – Institutional Integrity, 9.A.5; Policy 9.1; Standard Four – Faculty, 4.B.7).

Background

First, some background information: A series of events have transpired over the past decade that bear on the college's attempt to clarify and affirm our commitment to academic freedom as a Catholic liberal arts college. In March of 2001, after a survey revealed that 24% of the full-time faculty expressed concern about academic freedom at the college, the Faculty Assembly voted to approve a change to the Faculty Handbook relating to the process for dealing with concerns or grievances about academic freedom. The Board approved the Assembly's action in April 2001. This was received as a positive step in supporting academic freedom on campus.

Then, in September 2005, President Trebon withdrew the invitation of a representative from Planned Parenthood, who was scheduled to be a member of a panel addressing "end of life" issues. Many members of the faculty, as well as others, voiced their concern that this act limited academic freedom. This conflict spurred numerous discussions about the relationship between academic freedom and the college's Catholic identity.

In October 2005, President Trebon appointed an ad hoc Task Force on Institutionally Sponsored Events and Speakers, with members from faculty, staff, and Board. The Faculty Council conducted detailed research on the nature and meaning of academic freedom that appeared in two reports during 2006 and was the basis of several Faculty Assembly discussions. That same year, Sr. Annette Moran directed a faculty research group who wrote papers about Carroll's mission and identity and its relation to academic freedom, from the perspectives of their disciplines.

In 2006, the Task Force recommended an external speaker events policy to the Board of Trustees, which the Board amended. The Faculty Assembly then passed a resolution that called for the Board to reconsider its amendment. The Board responded by agreeing, at its October 2006 meeting, to hold its amendment in abeyance for 18-24 months, to provide time to work out mutually acceptable language and to see if the Task Force external speaker events policy, as originally proposed, proved useful when applied. Over the next year, several proposed external speakers were evaluated through the process set by the Task Force policy.

Report on Progress: External Speaker Events Policy Completed

At the time of our Focused Interim Visit in 2007, the college was still in this trial period, so the issue had not been resolved. In October 2008, the Board voted to approve the External Speaker Events Policy as initially recommended by the Task Force (see Appendix A). This specific conflict has thus been positively, collaboratively concluded, with a policy that has been discussed, tested, and formally adopted by the college. What we stated in our 2007 Focused Interim Report bears repeating here: “Carroll has struggled diligently and authentically with issues of academic freedom, external speakers policies, appropriate consultation and the meaning and applications of the College’s Catholic mission and identity” (2). The process we used to work through this issue was broadly inclusive even while tension-filled; this has resulted in many members of the college developing a deeper understanding and appreciation of academic freedom as it relates to our Catholic identity.

Recommendation #2

In the Fall 2007 Focused Interim Evaluation, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities requested that Carroll College prepare a progress report to address the following recommendation relating to assessment of its academic programs:

It is recommended that Carroll College complete the task of identifying measurable goals and objectives for student learning in its general education program, systematically assess the results of student learning in ways consistent with the College's mission, values, and strategic goals, and make regular use of departmental and general education assessments in the improvement of its academic programs (Standard Two – Educational Program, 2.B.1 and 2.B.2; Policy 2.2).

Since 2007, the College has taken numerous steps to improve our framework for assessing Core, our general education program, and to further develop and use systematic assessments of student learning to improve all academic programs. Our activity has resulted in significant progress. This report provides background information on Carroll College's department and general education assessment as well as information about the new college-wide program review, program and Core assessment processes, and collaborative plans for oversight and accountability coordinated through our new Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Background

Assessment activities at Carroll are not new; beginning around 1980, these activities have included academic program reviews, end-of-program capstone assessments of students, and periodic surveys of entering students, returning students, and alumni. Until about 2001, these activities were sporadic, conducted by a number of individual offices, and not well coordinated. The coordination of assessment related activities improved significantly with the appointment of Carroll's first Director of Academic Assessment, Dr. Gerald F. Shields. He was followed in 2005 by Dr. Jim Trudnowski. In May of 2008, Dr. Dawn Gallinger was hired as the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, and she now oversees assessment across the campus.

Dr. Shields and Dr. Trudnowski laid much of the groundwork for comprehensive assessment at Carroll by working with department chairs and individual faculty to develop assessment plans and strategies for each program. As of 2007, all programs have developed mission and goal statements that are aligned with the mission of the college and the Six Goals for the Carroll Graduate; these are published in the College Catalog. All programs have completed a matrix to show specifically how courses address program student learning outcomes (see Accounting Program example in Appendix B).

At Carroll, all departments require a senior experience (e.g. capstone course, research paper, comprehensive examination), which is used to assess student learning outcomes at the program-level. An example of objectives and student learning outcomes assessed by senior experience measures is available in Appendix C. Additional examples of specific senior-experience program-level assessment materials will soon be available on individual Carroll College academic program websites and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) webpage. <http://www.carroll.edu/about/oie/assess.cc>

The Core, our general education program (implemented in 2003), continues to evolve under the direction of a standing committee and appointed Chair, Dr. Debra Bernardi. Core goals are also aligned with the mission of the college and the Six Goals for the Carroll Graduate. Over the past five years, the Core committee has reviewed and approved a wide variety of writing intensive, global diversity, and national diversity courses on the basis of specific criteria that link to expected goals for student learning. It also created a distinctive Core capstone experience; while the committee hoped initially to require this experience for all seniors, it encountered too many logistical obstacles to make that possible. Still, this elective capstone accommodates 50-60 students (about one-fifth of our graduating class); other such Core capstones are still under discussion. While departments are still primarily responsible for assessing the student learning outcomes for their courses that meet Core requirements, the program is also moving towards more systematic assessment of its specific goals and outcomes through a number of integrative assessment efforts using both direct and indirect measures.

In Fall 2008, under the leadership of Dr. Gallinger, all programs, academic and non-academic, engaged in a new Program Review process. This includes completing a template (see Appendix D) that links program goals and student learning outcomes to the Six Goals for Carroll Graduates and to specific assessment measures and benchmarks. While programs are using a variety of measures - direct and indirect, quantitative and qualitative – suited to their student learning outcomes, this review process is moving all academic programs toward more systematic and ongoing assessment planning and evaluation. The template and process are designed to create a seamless transition into assessment management software. Funding is available next year through a Title III Grant - *Improving Institutions* - to purchase the management system. Carroll is currently considering the TracDat product and WEAVEonline product.

Efforts over the past nine years have resulted in several iterations of assessment plans and a significant assessment database at Carroll College. The new Office of Institutional Effectiveness, supported through the Title III Grant, is helping the college to coordinate and build upon these past efforts to create a truly systematic, on-going assessment process that will be integrated with planning and budgeting. The infusion of personnel and funding provided by Title III enables a wide range of institutional effectiveness and assessment activities, including, for example:

- Creating in June 2008 of the Office of Institutional Research to gather, analyze, and report on a variety of institutional research issues of interest to College decision-makers;
- Funding faculty and staff travel to assessment conferences and workshops;
- Establishing program level, department, and institutional metrics to support program review and assessment efforts;
- Publishing a monthly newsletter with articles related to institutional data, self-study process, assessment techniques, and best practices;
- Creating a framework for an Institutional Effectiveness cycle linking assessment, planning, and budgeting into an annual process;
- Purchasing SPSS statistical software and Qualtrics survey software to collect and analyze course evaluation data and graduate data;
- Funding department/program retreats focused on assessment and program review;

- Converting nearly all college data systems into one unified format under a new Datatel/Colleague product.

Program Review

Although not completely new to Carroll College, our current program review process is more systematic, comprehensive, and collaborative than before. It is designed to provide an in-depth study of departments and programs at Carroll. The process involves administrators, staff, students, and faculty in:

- Gathering information about a department/program
- Reviewing and analyzing that information
- Making judgments about overall department/program quality
- Making recommendations for department/program improvement
- Monitoring department/program accountability for improvement
- Supporting the department/program in implementing recommendations.

Using CAS guidelines, standards, and an assessment handbook, each department/program is required to prepare a self-study that includes the following topics (see Appendix D):

- Program Mission
- College Mission
- Carroll College Goals (see 2002 Strategic Plan)
- Six Goals of Carroll Graduates
- Organization and Management
- Human Resources
- Financial Resources
- Facilities, Technology, and Equipment
- Program Development 1, 3, and 5 years
- Assessment and Evaluation

Program Review is currently an annual process for all academic and non-academic programs. Program Review submissions are evaluated by a committee of peers, the corresponding Vice President, and the OIE. This is the first time in Carroll's recent history that all programs – academic and non-academic – are participating in a similar review process. From the November 2008 program review submissions, it is clear that all academic and non-academic departments used appropriate language to describe how they contribute to the institutional mission. For example, the sociology programs contributes to the mission by offering, "...a diverse array of course offerings that are constitutive of a liberal arts education in general...to provide students with the necessary knowledge base and intellectual skills that will enable them to find meaningful employment and/or enroll in graduate school in their chosen fields...to provide students with the kind of hands-on, practical experience...to provide students opportunities to participate in events that assist the community overall and those less fortunate specifically."

To varying degrees, academic and non-academic departments also addressed the Carroll College goals. For example, the Psychology program supports the third college goal, "Integrate

Community Life, of the strategic plan through a variety of course and program activities. The report states, “The sociology program requires students to participate in a community sponsored internship or practicum experience. These experiences allow for ongoing interaction between the program and various agencies in the community that employ the services of psychology professionals. Also, the program supports a study abroad program to India and has been integral to the development of diverse programming in gender studies. Lastly, the program sponsors the student led psychology club which is responsible for fundraising activities in support of student attendance at regional psychology conferences and the dissemination of mental health information on campus. The psychology club has also been active in the Up till Dawn fund raising efforts in support of St Jude’s Hospital.” The Carroll College Strategic Plan is found at: <http://www.carroll.edu/about/president/plan.cc>

The Six Goals of Carroll Graduates are also addressed in the program reviews (see Appendix E). As of November 2008 all degree programs had reviewed their mission statements, specified their student learning outcomes and linked their course-level learning outcomes to the program learning outcomes and Six Goals for Carroll Graduates. Finally, each has specified the means by which the program will assess and gather evidence of learning outcomes. In a few instances (e.g., biology, theology, communications) the very work of setting up the structures of assessment led the faculty to make changes to the curriculum consistent with the learning outcomes desired. Typically, programs have found that, as they actually gather and reflect on both writing the outcomes and collecting the evidence, they discover not only concerns about the program but also limitations in how the assessment has been structured. Thus, structuring assessment itself becomes a part of the learning and is an iterative process.

To better link the College’s strategic planning and budgeting processes, academic and non-academic units are expected to submit 1, 3, and 5 year budget plans as part of their program reviews. The budget documents make clear both current and new costs associated with the program, as well as current and additional resources. The budget committee makes funding recommendations concerning resource requests derived from these plans. This process is particularly important at Carroll because the college budget is not developed annually from a zero base but is instead largely carried over from year-to-year. By placing more emphasis on assessment and results, departments and programs are better informed and prepared to present their resource needs.

Direct Assessment of Student Learning

The new Program Review process focuses significantly on the assessment of student learning outcomes. Department chairs are asked to think about the assessment of student learning by identifying both indirect and direct indicators of student learning. More emphasis is being placed on the latter, to facilitate our attempt to balance out assessments that relied more heavily on inputs and indirect measures than on outcomes and direct measures.

At Carroll, the direct assessment of student learning provides a means for every academic program to address three critical questions (per Assessment Guidelines):

- What learning outcomes - - knowledge, skills, and values or attitudes - - do we expect?

- What evidence do we have about how well our program is achieving these outcomes?
- How can we use this evidence to improve program quality and student learning?

Each academic department and support program is responsible for developing its own assessment plan, including goals, objectives, measures, benchmarks, and procedures for evaluating assessment data. It is an essential feature of Carroll's Assessment Plan that these departments also have the autonomy to determine their own program goals, student learning outcomes, measures, and benchmarks with the support and guidance of the OIE, Institutional Effectiveness Committee, and knowledgeable and experienced faculty, as desired.

Therefore, assessment is driven by faculty and staff. It is the goal of OIE to provide integrative guidelines that unify assessment activities based on best practices and NWCCU Standards.

These elements of an acceptable assessment plan include:

- Articulation of desired student learning outcomes;
- Identification of benchmarks;
- Description of methods, criteria, and schedule of assessment for each outcome;
- Description of the process of interpretation of assessment results;
- Description of how resulting program changes will be assessed.

What general outcome do we seek?	How will we know this outcome when we see it? That is, what will students know and be able to do upon graduation?	How will students learn these things (in or out of class)?	What evidence can we provide to demonstrate what students know and can do? That is, how can we assess student learning?	What are the Assessment findings?	What improvements have been made based on assessment findings?
----------------------------------	---	--	---	-----------------------------------	--

Pursuant to its charge, within the past two academic years, Carroll has developed assessment planning documents and gathered data on student learning outcomes and indicators from 34 academic areas across the College. Carroll has a number of accredited professional programs, including Nursing, Education, and Engineering. In addition to meeting their specialized accreditation standards they are also expected to address the Carroll elements of an acceptable assessment plan. Again several of these documents may soon be found at: <http://www.carroll.edu/about/oie/assess.cc> or on the department websites.

The OIE and Academic VP have analyzed the first round of data on student learning outcome statements and measures and have provided feedback and departmental and institutional metrics to relevant programs. In general, the program reviews and assessment plans were thorough and attainable. Several programs have been asked to re-work their overly ambitious plans and to focus on just a few outcomes. For several departments, the student learning outcome matrices seem overwhelming and not set to a regular cycle.

In summary, over the last two years, Carroll has made significant progress identifying, measuring, and systematically incorporating the assessment of student learning outcomes into the curricular revision and improvement process, the budget and planning process, and program development processes. Many departments need to continue to work on program-level student learning outcomes – especially the programs that provide a greater proportion of courses that support the Core and other majors. To fully “close the loop” of the assessment cycle and increase the meaningful nature of the assessment process, all programs are expected, by next February, to post their program-level student learning outcomes on their departmental website and to post the results of their assessments. The web report will show what each program has accomplished in the way of assessing program outcomes and using that information within the department and program. Programs are asked to respond to: According to your assessment plan, what were the programs planned assessment activities for this cycle? What are the results of the planned activities listed above? What conclusions or discoveries were made from these results? What changes, if any, were made based on the assessment results? If none, describe why changes were not needed. How and with whom were the results shared?

This summer, the OIE along with Carroll’s Title III consultant, Dr. Robert Rutter are facilitating a three day summer assessment workshop. The workshop is designed to help departments with their assessment plans. Four faculty members who recently attended the IUPUI Assessment Conference and NC State Undergraduate Assessment Symposium will help facilitate these workshops.

While not dismissing course-level assessment, Carroll’s focus must continue to shift to program level assessment. The OIE and others with extensive assessment training will continue to offer encouragement (and prodding) to department chairs as they have worked to prepare relevant, measurable student learning outcomes, and specify evidence to be collected. Areas of continued discussion include ensuring adequate measures, interdisciplinary measures, and identifying collection points of direct assessment data on entering students.

Indirect Assessment of Student Learning and Experiences:

With increasing experience in assessment, Carroll has identified a number of ongoing, cyclic assessment research events which form the core of its database, and which provide valuable information for detailed assessment of student learning and experiences. Annually, incoming students complete the Admitted Student Questionnaire and exiting students complete a graduate survey. Bi-annually, students complete the Student Satisfaction Inventory and, beginning in 2007, first-year and senior-year students completed the National Survey of Student Engagement. This spring, select faculty members are also participating in the Faculty Survey of the Student Experience. Beginning in 2010, the Title III Grant will provide Carroll with the necessary funding and personnel to conduct comprehensive surveys of graduates one, three, and five years after graduation. Although several programs currently administer surveys to their graduates (e.g. nursing, engineering, business) this funding will support a campus-wide effort to collect and, most importantly, analyze this valuable information. The surveys are currently in the design stage and will include several items related to Core learning outcomes and the Six Goals for Carroll Graduates.

Non-academic programs that support students and affect the learning environment, such as student services, library, advising, tech support, health and wellness, residences, dining halls, athletics, also completed program reviews. Most plans include goals and measurable outcomes that address the quality of the student experience, criteria for assessing outcomes, and procedures for program improvement; a few of the plans (residence life and activities) include direct measures of student learning in addition to their indirect measures. See Appendix E for an example of the Administrative Unit Program Review.

The new NWCCU self study and program review processes encourages Carroll to identify benchmarks and means to track these indirect measures of student learning and experiences. Faculty and staff committees are currently developing benchmarks for our institutional indicators as well as the indicators for our core themes. These indicators of effectiveness and benchmarks will be key components of future program reviews.

General Education Assessment

The Core program has been moving steadily, if not as swiftly as we would like, towards more systematic assessment of its specific goals and outcomes through a number of assessment efforts. One question raised in the 2007 Focused Interim Evaluation concerned the alignment between Core goals and the Six Goals for Carroll Graduates. The following diagram shows how these four goals align with both Carroll’s Mission Statement and the Six Goals for Carroll Graduates:

Core Goals	Carroll Mission Statement	Six Goals for Carroll Graduates
1. Prepare students to understand the diversity of the contemporary world	The mission affirms Carroll College’s service to the “worldwide human family” and “continuing efforts to guarantee to individuals, to groups, and especially to minorities the right to life, to personal and social dignity, and to equality of opportunity.”	Graduate Goal #1: “recognizes the search for Ultimate Truth and Ultimate Good,” which must acknowledge diversity in the world; Graduate Goal #3: “possesses full range of skills ... for effective communication,” which must acknowledge cultural diversity in the 21 st century; Graduate Goal #6: “possesses skills and attitudes...to pursue a vocation,” which also now requires understanding cultural diversity.
2. Help students to acquire aesthetic, scientific, quantitative, ethical, and religious insights	Carroll College “affirms the traditional role of providing for the expansion of the intellectual, imaginative, and social awareness.”	Graduate Goal #1: “recognizes the search for the Ultimate Truth and Good,” which involves all these insights; Graduate Goal #2: “has acquired the aesthetic, scientific, and religious insights required to solve normative and factual problems”; Graduate Goal #5: encourages “physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual

		health,” which such insights would surely aid; Graduate Goal #6: “possesses skills and attitudes...to pursue a vocation,” in which such insights surely play a key role.
3. Aid students in developing a full range of communication skills	Carroll College is “dedicated to...dual goal of vocation and enlightenment.”	Graduate Goal #3: “Possesses the full range of skills necessary for effective communication.”
4. Help students to appreciate the interrelationships among branches of knowledge	Carroll College “expects all students to participate in a broad spectrum of academic disciplines” and is committed to “investigating, understanding, critically reflecting upon, and finally judging reality and truth in all fields of human knowledge.”	Graduate Goal #4: “Appreciates the interrelationships among branches of knowledge.

Most generally, the relationship between the four Core goals and the overarching Six Goals for Carroll Graduates is similar to that of any other program at the college—that is, the Core contributes to those six goals in specific and more focused ways; the six goals depend upon the integration of all college programs—academic and non-academic alike—for their support.

The 2007 Focused Interim Evaluation also indicated some uncertainty about the relationship between the Core goals and the courses that meet Core requirements offered by various programs. This relationship has become more clearly articulated through several recent processes. As a starting point, the Core committee distributed a questionnaire in Spring 2008 asking faculty to briefly describe their courses taken by students to fulfill Core requirements; they were asked to indicate which of the four Core goals their course most addressed and to comment on how their teaching and assignments addressed those specific goals. While the number of responses to this questionnaire was unsatisfactory, it provided one nudge to faculty to explicitly state the connections between their course goals and Core goals. In addition, as faculty submit courses for designation as Writing Intensive (WI), National Diversity (ND) or Global Diversity (GD) courses, their syllabi must show how courses meet specific Core learning objectives; for example, Writing Intensive Courses must offer students instruction and practice in the process of writing; Diversity courses must include significant representation of under-represented or non-Western perspectives. The Core review process for WI, ND and DG courses has resulted in more discussion across campus regarding the importance of articulating and teaching common learning objectives within these designated Core courses. The effort to create clearer links between Core goals and courses that fulfilled Core requirements was reinforced by the program review process as individual program reviews indicate where student learning outcomes for those courses “map” to Core goals. Making these links effective is still a work in process, but it is underway.

Our efforts to date demonstrate that our academic programs’ “inputs” into Core goals are substantial and well aligned with our institutional mission and goals. Our on-going efforts have

also enabled us to create a useful framework for strengthening the assessment of student learning outcomes. The Core Committee intends to continue to develop this framework, encouraging more course- and program-specific assessment work as it relates to Core goals as well as phasing in more integrative assessments of Core student learning outcomes.

Currently, course-embedded Core outcomes assessment is happening to varying extents in all courses that fulfill Core requirements. Assessments include the evaluation of responses to common examination questions, the examination of written work with rubrics, and the assessment of student presentations. Our first round of programs reviews, which ask for examples of the methods used to assess student knowledge and skills in the Core, reveals:

- Final design projects
- Lab exercises and exams
- Exams and quizzes
- Research assignments and projects
- Written assignments
- Performance Evaluations
- Data interpretation, synthesis and choice of models (applications)
- Exercises in logic, fallacy
- Argumentation support/data analysis

As one example of a fledgling program-based assessment project, the English faculty are collecting and assessing samples of writing from all sections of College Composition (one of four Core “foundations courses”) to analyze how well the papers demonstrate the student learning outcomes articulated for that course. The program faculty will discuss the results of this direct assessment and use it as a starting point for future semesters as well as a possible point of comparison with writing samples from our upper-division WI courses. The English faculty is coordinating with the Core committee as they implement this assessment strategy.

While individual faculty and programs are still primarily responsible for assessing the student learning outcomes for their courses that meet Core requirements, more integrative assessment tools, using both direct and indirect measures, are being developed to address Core goals. Last fall, the Alpha Seminar Coordinator collected a sample of papers addressing the topic of diversity from freshman in Alpha Seminar; these are assessed by a rubric that tallies references to different aspects of diversity. This will be repeated with another group of Alpha Seminar students in the upcoming academic year as well as expanded to include mid-program assessments involving embedded questions in national and global diversity courses. These will be linked with a senior writing sample in a subsequent year. This direct assessment intends to discover how our students’ understanding of and attitude towards diversity, our Core goal #1, changes during their years at Carroll. At this point, we are following a model developed by University of Michigan-Flint, but we are still refining the exact tools and timing we will use in our upper-division ND and GD courses and in the senior year.

Additional indirect assessments of Core work and student perceptions of their learning in Core are employed, such as student grades or passing rates in Core courses, course evaluations, survey of Alpha Seminar by juniors and seniors, and graduate surveys. Just this spring the Core

Committee launched a longitudinal analysis of the Core Curriculum. First year students were asked to participate in a focus group, in which members of the Core Committee ask them a series of questions about the Core. These same students (when they are sophomores, juniors, and seniors) will be invited to participate each spring in a follow-up focus group. The students invited to participate were randomly selected; the individuals who show up for the interviews, of course, are self-selected. Still, we believe that this promises to be a useful indirect assessment of the Core in that these students will demonstrate how they understand and experience the Core curriculum, and the extent to which even self-selected students articulate and reflect the four Core goals. We have conducted our first round of interviews; Core committee members will write up and then meet to discuss the students' comments. Our chair will create a formal report of this first step in our study.

The college plans to continue building a useful assessment plan for Core by developing student learning outcomes for the Core goals. This is a process that, to be truly useful, takes time and discussion across the whole faculty. We are further down the road on developing student learning outcomes for two of the four goals. They are, to a good extent, already in place for Goal #3—"Aid students in developing a full range of communication skills"—because these are already articulated as basic outcomes for the English and Communications programs, which each provide one basic Core course required of all students. In addition, the criteria that qualify a course for a Writing Intensive designation bear a close relationship with student learning outcomes for writing. Because all major programs must offer one WI course for their majors, these outcomes have been most widely discussed. Still, these outcomes and their most effective measures require more discussion to produce shared understanding and coherent practices among the various courses that address this goal. Student learning outcomes for Goal #1—"Prepare students to understand the diversity of the contemporary world"—have also received some attention as a result of the Core committee's developing criteria for approving National Diversity and Global Diversity courses. Yet these criteria turned out to be more controversial than expected. So, as we prepare to work on our assessments that will reflect the outcomes related by those criteria, we will have to explore just what outcomes we expect our students to achieve as a result of taking our diversity courses. Core Goals #2 ("Help students to acquire aesthetic, scientific, quantitative, ethical, and religious insights") and #4 ("Help students to appreciate the interrelationships among branches of knowledge") do not as yet have clearly articulated student learning outcomes. The Core committee intends to move forward with this work early next fall semester. More integrative assessments—using initial, mid-program, and senior-level direct measures—for each of the goals will follow from firming up our student learning outcomes.

Another opportunity for strengthening our assessment of Core involves integrating our four "foundations courses" (Alpha Seminar, College Composition, Basic Communication, Foundations of Theology), which students are expected to take within their first three semesters of college. Faculty who teach these courses have met already and agreed on the advantages of coordinating our efforts, language, and directions in these first crucial, common Core requirements. Discussing student learning outcomes and integrated assessment—perhaps through embedded questions or with a writing assignment—could help us support student learning more effectively relative to the Core goals.

Summary/Conclusion

Carroll College is well aware of the importance of outcomes assessment at the program-level and in the Core curriculum. The development of benchmarks for success, assessment activities, tools, schedules, and feedback reporting mechanisms are all critical keys to improvement of College offerings and to higher rates of student success. As reported in this document, there are currently intensive survey, planning, and assessment efforts underway which focus on the general education program and related competencies as well as competencies in areas outside of the Core. The results of these assessment activities will be documented, and through the collaborative efforts of institutional units such as the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the Office of Institutional Research, Core Committee, and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, the assessment activity results will feedback to faculty and academic units to strengthen the process of teaching and learning at the College.

FINAL DRAFT

10/23/08

Policy for External Speaker Events

When the Public Is Invited

Introduction

Carroll College is committed to providing a **campus-wide intellectual** environment in which faculty, students and **other members of the College community** are encouraged to seek truth, develop critical thinking, and make responsible decisions. To achieve these objectives, members of the college community must be free to engage the full range of views on a variety of subjects. Even unwelcome or controversial views need to be heard, discussed and analyzed. Therefore, neither agreement with Catholic teaching nor the desire to avoid offense should be the guiding principles for the invitation of speakers to campus or in the organization of campus programs by academic departments, organized faculty groups and **other College organizations***. In extending such invitations, however, members of the College community have an obligation to respect the special aims and objectives of Carroll College as described in the statement of mission.

Application

This policy applies only to off-campus persons or organizations that will speak or make presentations on campus to which the public has been invited. This policy does not apply to speakers invited by faculty to address students enrolled in a course they are teaching, or to internal faculty, student or staff seminars, workshops or colloquia.

Purpose

The purposes of this policy are: 1) to encourage the college community to provide a diversity of issues and perspectives, including the Catholic intellectual tradition, for consideration by its constituents on and off campus; and 2) to ensure that all members of the college community have the opportunity to freely engage those issues and perspectives.

Arrangements

In accordance with applicable college policies, the academic program, organized faculty group or **other College organization** wishing to extend an invitation to an external speaker or organization must make arrangements for necessary facilities, funding, and/or personnel prior to extending the invitation. The College's control of campus facilities and resources will not be used as a device for censorship. However, the College reserves the right to control the time, place and manner of such speeches and events on campus to maintain safety and order.

* The Student Handbook speakers policy (p. 129) governs Carroll student organizations that sponsor external speakers on campus.

Circumstances Necessitating Consultation

Where the perspective of the speaker, program or event might appear to be in opposition to the mission statement of the College or is so controversial as to arouse emotions or create unnecessary turmoil, the academic department, organized faculty group or **other College organization** proposing the event will consult with appropriate members of the college community before extending the invitation. For example, if the speaker program or event might be considered contrary to Catholic teaching, consultation will include those with special competence in Catholic teaching. In all cases, the vice president of academic affairs should also be kept apprised of possible controversial issues and involved in the consultative process. After due consultation and good faith efforts to reconcile differences that may arise, a decision concerning the disposition of the event will be made by the sponsoring academic department, organized faculty group or **other College organization**, in light of their academic expertise and professional responsibility for the College's mission.

Disclaimer

The invitation, sponsorship, or hosting of guest speakers, programs and events does not imply that the College, or any of its organizations or units, approves or endorses the views or ideas expressed. This position must be made clear to the invitees. Disclaimers shall be routinely issued in promotional materials and/or at the speech or event, but the College also accepts the responsibility for educating campus constituents and the public concerning the meaning of academic freedom and the consultative process through which a public event is reviewed before being accepted for presentation.

Appendix B

Selected Courses –
Accounting

A Successful Graduate in the Department must be able to:

Use data and stats in order to understand and analyze relevant problems.

Understand and analyze financial statements of economic entities.

Read and understand publications covering topics discussed in the various majors in the department.

Organize / present ideas and information orally in small group settings.

Design and carry out both independent and collaborative settings.

Use contemporary information technology effectively including the library, the internet, and computer software

Write essays and short papers in a clear and concise fashion with emphasis on content, style, and analytical ability.

	BA 203	BA 204	BA 303	BA 304	BA311	BA 315	BA 405	BA 406	BA 407
Use data and stats in order to understand and analyze relevant problems.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Understand and analyze financial statements of economic entities.	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Read and understand publications covering topics discussed in the various majors in the department.	X		X		X		X	X	X
Organize / present ideas and information orally in small group settings.					X		X	X	
Design and carry out both independent and collaborative settings.	X				X		X	X	
Use contemporary information technology effectively including the library, the internet, and computer software					X		X	X	X
Write essays and short papers in a clear and concise fashion with emphasis on content, style, and analytical ability.	X						X	X	

Appendix C

Biology Department Example of linking objectives, student learning outcomes, and senior-experience measures:

LEARNING OUTCOMES BY OBJECTIVES:

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Goal 1, Objective 1:

Outcome: Demonstrates knowledge of biology vocabulary, concepts and principles.

Outcome: Demonstrates comprehension of biology vocabulary, concepts and principles.

Outcome: Demonstrates application of biology vocabulary, concepts and principles.

Goal 1, Objective 2:

Outcome: Correctly analyzes and evaluates scientific data in tabular and figure format.

Outcome: Competently synthesizes information to solve open-ended problems.

Goal 1, Objective 3:

Outcome: Demonstrates appropriate use of laboratory equipment to perform experiments.

Outcome: Correctly uses spreadsheets and other software for data analysis.

Goal 2, Objective 1:

Outcome: Writes clearly and effectively in a scientific format.

Outcome: Demonstrates effective scientific communication through oral and poster presentations.

Outcome: Demonstrates an ability to communicate scientific material to non-scientists.

Goal 2, Objective 2:

Outcome: Demonstrates knowledge of collaborative efforts leading to solutions.

Outcome: Has practiced the application of collaboration leading to solutions.

Goal 3, Objective 1:

Outcome: Demonstrates knowledge of biological, physical and cultural geography.

Outcome: Demonstrates application of concepts and principles in biological, physical and cultural geography.

Goal 3, Objective 2:

Outcome: Demonstrates knowledge of humanistic vocabulary, concepts and principles.

Outcome: Demonstrates application of humanistic vocabulary, concepts and principles.

METHODS OF ASSESSING LEARNING OUTCOMES:

MEASUREMENT TOOLS FOR EACH LEARNING OUTCOME:

Goal 1:

Learning Outcome 1.1.1: Knowledge questions

1. Internally developed (course specific), embedded, objective questions.

2. External Standardized achievement exams.

Learning Outcome 1.1.2: Comprehension questions

1. Internally developed (course specific), embedded, essay questions.

2. External Standardized achievement exam.

3. Capstone courses with embedded questions.

4. Case studies (in any particular course) with embedded questions.

Learning Outcome 1.1.3: Application problems

1. Internally developed (course specific), embedded, application problems.

2. Capstone courses with embedded application problems.
3. Case studies with embedded application problems.
4. Embedded laboratory assignments that require applying scientific knowledge.
5. Undergraduate research.

Learning Outcome 1.2.1: Data evaluation

1. Internally developed (course specific), embedded, data questions from tables and figures
2. Capstone courses with embedded data questions from tables and figures.
3. Case studies with embedded data questions from tables and figures.
4. Laboratory assignments that included embedded data questions from tables and figures.

Learning Outcome 1.2.2: Open-ended questions and/or problems

1. Internally developed (course specific) embedded open-ended problems.
2. Capstone courses with embedded open-ended problems.
3. Case studies with embedded open-ended problems.
4. Embedded, open-ended laboratory assignments.
5. Undergraduate research.

Learning Outcome 1.3.1: Experience with laboratory equipment

1. Embedded laboratory assignments requiring the use of lab equipment.
2. Capstone courses with embedded assignments requiring the use of lab equipment.
3. Embedded, case studies requiring the use of lab equipment.
4. Undergraduate research.

Learning Outcome 1.3.2: Data analysis

1. Embedded laboratory assignments requiring data analysis.
2. Capstone courses with embedded assignments requiring data analysis.
3. Case studies with embedded assignments requiring data analysis.
4. Undergraduate research.

Learning Outcome 2.1.1: Scientific writing

1. Embedded laboratory assignments requiring scientific writing.
2. Capstone courses with embedded assignments requiring scientific writing.
3. Case studies with embedded assignments requiring scientific writing.
4. Undergraduate research.

Learning Outcome 2.1.2: Oral communication

1. Embedded laboratory assignments requiring oral or poster presentations.
2. Capstone courses with embedded assignments requiring oral or poster presentations.
3. Case studies with embedded assignments requiring oral or poster presentations.
4. Undergraduate research.

Learning Outcome 2.1.3: Communication with non-scientists

1. Embedded laboratory assignments requiring 'outreach' (presentations) to non-science majors.
2. Capstone courses with embedded assignments requiring 'outreach' (presentations) to non-science majors.
3. Case studies with embedded assignments requiring 'outreach' (presentations) to non-science majors.
4. Undergraduate research (poster presentations to non-scientists during spring honors ceremony).

Learning Outcome 2.2.1: Knowledge questions on cooperative, collaborative solutions

1. Internally developed (course specific), embedded, objective questions.

Learning Outcome 2.2.2: Application problems on cooperative collaborative solutions

1. Internally developed (course specific), embedded, application problems.
2. Capstone courses with embedded application problems.
3. Case studies with embedded application problems.
4. Embedded laboratory assignments that require applying scientific knowledge.
5. Undergraduate research.

Learning Outcome 3.1.1: Knowledge questions on biogeographical/cultural gradients

1. Internally developed (course specific), embedded, objective questions.

Learning Outcome 3.1.2: Application problems on biogeographical/cultural gradients

1. Internally developed (course specific), embedded, application problems.
2. Capstone courses with embedded application problems.
3. Case studies with embedded application problems.
4. Embedded laboratory assignments that require applying scientific knowledge.
5. Undergraduate research.

Learning Outcome 3.2.1: Knowledge questions on humanistic values

1. Internally developed (course specific), embedded, objective questions.

Learning Outcome 3.2.2: Application problems on humanistic values

1. Internally developed (course specific), embedded, application problems.
2. Capstone courses with embedded application problems.
3. Case studies with embedded application problems.
4. Embedded laboratory assignments that require applying scientific knowledge.
5. Undergraduate research.

Appendix D

Academic Program Review answers the question: “Is quality and continuous improvement an integral component of all Carroll academic programs?”

Academic Program Review is an ongoing process for monitoring the status, effectiveness, efficiency, and progress of academic programs and refining Carroll’s programmatic directions and priorities, which then shapes resource allocations and other academic and administrative decisions. Program review also allows faculty to assess workload and plan for new program opportunities.

PART I (A-E) (Complete by November 15, 2008)

Program Mission Statement

How does this Program help Carroll College fulfill its mission?

What specific Carroll College Goals (see 2002 Strategic Plan) does this program help to achieve?

Discuss the qualifications, productivity, and workload of the faculty and how they relate to the quality of the academic program under review.

How does faculty research productivity impact this program?

Discuss the advising loads of faculty.

Analyze the average student credit hour production for faculty involved in this program and compare this information to college and national norms (data provided by IE Office).

How many students complete/persist in the program each year and how does that compare to college and national norms (data provided by IE Office).

Complete PHASE 1 of the ASSESSMENT REPORTS (SEE GUIDE)

Program Goals

Educational Objectives

Learning Outcomes

Complete Curriculum Map (SEE GUIDE) - What is the rationale for the current curriculum and how does it relate to the key student learning outcomes?

Review CORE courses, electives, and major courses and their relationships to the program learning outcomes.

Six Outcomes for Carroll Graduates

Measurement Tools (Including benchmarks and timeline)

PROGRAM REVIEW PART II – GUIDELINES

Complete Phase II of ASSESSMENT REPORTS

In Part I of the Program Review you identified (1-5) key STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES you expect of students by the completion of their major.

1. Review your key Student Learning Outcomes, refine their measures (e.g., test, paper, project, portfolio) and plans (benchmarks and timelines) for collecting and analyzing the data.
2. Collect and analyze the data. What strengths and weaknesses in student learning do the data show?

NOTE: You can focus on a few of your outcomes for this report; this makes sense if you are developing and implementing some new measures.

*A full analysis and implementation of assessment findings will be expected as part of the June 2010 Program Review submission.

Plan for Program Improvement:

What revisions in courses, teaching or the broader curriculum, if any, would improve students' achievement of your program's student learning goals?

What other plans do you have for enhancing your program—revisions, restructuring, discontinuing, or new additions—in the next five years? What is your rationale for proposed changes? How do they derive from your assessment results or from other driving factors in your discipline? What are the current opportunities and challenges?

How does your program planning address faculty workload along with student learning outcomes?

Resources:

Each requested item should be addressed for the short term (1 year), midterm (3 years) and long term (5 years). Please use the attached Excel Spreadsheets for section H.

On the attached Excel spreadsheets, list and explain program resource needs for years 1 through 5. Please provide rationale for each request and link to your program goals.

Sheet 1 – Wages, postage, copying, memberships, furniture, supplies, etc.

Sheet 2 – New faculty positions and support

Sheet 3 – Technology and equipment needs

Sheet 4 – Facilities improvements

GOAL #1					
Program/Unit Goal: Click here to enter text.			Link to Institutional Goals/Priorities: Click here to enter text.		
	Outcomes	Link to Graduate Outcomes	Measurement/Tools	Benchmark	Timeline
OBJECTIVE 1: Click here to enter text.	OUTCOME1: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
	OUTCOME 2: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
	OUTCOME3: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
OBJECTIVE 2: Click here to enter text.	OUTCOME1: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
	OUTCOME2: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
	OUTCOME3: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Results/Analysis:		Click here to enter text.	Modifications (if any) to program/unit because of assessment:		Click here to enter text.
GOAL #2					
Program/Unit Goal: Click here to enter text.			Link to Institutional Goals/Priorities: Click here to enter text.		
	Outcomes	Link to Graduate Outcomes	Measurement/Tools	Benchmark	Timeline
OBJECTIVE 1: Click here to enter text.	OUTCOME1: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
	OUTCOME 2: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
	OUTCOME3: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
OBJECTIVE 2: Click here to enter text.	OUTCOME1: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
	OUTCOME2: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
	OUTCOME3: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Results/Analysis:		Click here to enter text.	Modifications (if any) to program/unit because of assessment:		Click here to enter text.

Appendix E

ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT PROGRAM REVIEW WORKSHEET

PART I. (A - E) (Completed by November 15, 2008)

The Unit Overview should reflect the consensus of the staff within the unit. It is meant to provide a broad understanding of the unit, current trends related to the unit's mission, and how the unit serves to meet the overall mission or goals of Carroll College.

What is the mission of your unit?

How does this Unit help Carroll College fulfill its mission?

What Specific Carroll College Goals does this Unit help to achieve (*see CC 2002 Strategic Plan*)?

Provide the official Organizational Chart of your unit.

Describe the functions of your unit.

Please use a bulleted list with headings as necessary to make it clear and easy to read

Collaboration with Students and/or Other Units: A progress report

What are the unit's strengths and weaknesses in the area of outreach and collaboration? Did your unit improve since last year?

How effectively does information flow from and to this unit to other units on campus? Identify any areas where communication could be improved. Were improvements made since last year?

What changes in the area of outreach and collaboration are needed to make this unit more effective in its mission? Were changes made since last year and were they effective?

Complete PHASE I of the ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Unit Goals: The goals are brief narratives in which the overarching aim/purposes of the unit are presented which reflect the overall mission of Carroll College.

Unit Objectives: In the chart attached please list your Unit Objectives. The objectives should relate to the stated goal and are viewed as a means to improve the current condition of a unit by providing measurable outputs. By their nature objectives should be dynamic in that they may be replaced with new ones as old ones are met. When preparing the plan 3-5 objectives are sufficient to be address at any given time. These should be concise statements of what you seek to accomplish.

Unit Outcomes: *In the chart attached please list your Unit Outcomes: What the unit wants clients/students to know (cognitive), ways clients/students think (affective/attitudinal), or things clients/students should be able to do (behavioral, performance, psychomotor). Collectively the outcomes reflect the most important purposes of the unit. Outcomes can be about the impacts or quality or effectiveness of the unit's processes, services or programs.*

Six Outcomes of Carroll Graduates: *In the chart attached please indicate how your Unit addresses the Six Outcomes of Carroll Graduates.*

Measurement Tools: *In the chart attached select methods or instruments for gathering evidence to show whether your Unit has achieved the outcomes related to objectives and goals.*

PART II. (F- H) (Completed by February 15, 2009)

Complete PHASE II of the ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Results and analysis of assessment process: *In the chart provide information about specific results linked to the specific outcomes. What can you conclude from the data collected? Be sure to include actual numbers where appropriate. In addition, where necessary, provide a brief summary, including specific examples of qualitative data collected.*

Impact of Results: *In the chart please describe how the data that was collected as a result of your assessments were used to enhance your Unit. You can provide a brief summary of the ways in which the results impacted decision making in your unit. In other words, how can you improve what you are doing or better define your objectives. Include specific examples such as change in hours of operation, addition of a training seminar, etc.*

Plan for Unit Improvement: *Discuss your unit's strengths and challenges and strategies to achieve goals, objectives, and outcomes.*

Program Development Plan: *Resources, equipment, space, staffing and work load changes needs for future growth or continuation.*

Responsibility Alignment Matrix: *Indicate how well the responsibilities within your unit are met. (See below for Matrix)*

Does the staffing structure meet the unit's needs?

If your answer is "no," please consider the following in framing your answer:

The workload of your unit over the past five years: *You may wish to consider the following questions in formulating your response:*

Which aspects of the work are key to the institution's mission?

Has the staff increased, decreased or remained the same to meet those changes?

Has technology made it possible to do more work with the same staff? Or, has technology increased your work load (adding web features which need updating for example)?

Does the workload have significant peaks and valleys during the fiscal year? If so, describe.

Do you anticipate the workload will increase, decrease or remain constant in the upcoming one to three years? Is this a temporary situation?

If your workload is increasing and resources will not allow for increased staffing, how do you anticipate being able to ameliorate the negative consequences of too much work and maintain a positive atmosphere in your unit?

What steps can be taken to improve your unit's organizational efficiency within its current budget?

What strategies have been used to improve delivery of services within the unit (e.g., technology, online options, etc.)?

Appendix F

Six Goals for Carroll Graduates

Indicate how your academic program addresses the Six Goals for Carroll Graduates:
The Graduate:

- recognizes that the search for and sharing of the Ultimate Truths and the Ultimate Good is the primary goal of the Catholic liberal arts education.
- possesses the aesthetic, scientific, and religious insights required to solve normative and factual problems.
- demonstrates the full range of skills necessary for effective communication.
- appreciates the interrelationships among branches of knowledge.
- embraces a strong sense of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health.
- possesses the skills and attitudes necessary to pursue a vocation that is self-fulfilling and community enhancing.