

Name of the Institution:

Valencia College
190 S. Orange Avenue
Orlando, FL 32801

Date of On-Site Review:

November 15-16, 2011

Nature of the On-Site Visit

Level Change (From Level I to Level II)

Nature of Report:

Response to the Recommendation of the SACS-COC Visiting Committee

COC Staff Member:

Dr. Robin W. Hoffman
Dr. Steven M. Sheeley

Chair of Committee:

Dr. Colleen Smith
Collin County Community College District
McKinney, TX

Person Preparing the Institutional Response:

Mr. Kurt E. Ewen
Assistant Vice President, Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness
Accreditation Liaison
Valencia College

Recommendation 1:

Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1

The institution identifies college-level competencies within the general education core and provides evidence that graduates have attained those competencies. (College-level Competencies)

Committee Recommendation:

The committee recommends that the institution demonstrate the extent to which graduates have obtained college-level general education competencies.

Institutional Response:

Valencia College has reviewed the report of the visiting committee and is in agreement with its recommendation. While we have identified college-level competencies within the general education core, developed college-wide assessment procedures, and used these procedures to improve our assessment process, we are not yet in a position to provide evidence of graduate attainment of those competencies. Valencia is currently in partial compliance with the CR 3.5.1 and is working to come into full compliance.

The faculty of Valencia College have established four Core Competencies that describe the learning outcomes for a Valencia graduate. They are: THINK, VALUE, COMMUNICATE, ACT. These general competencies can be applied in many contexts and must be developed over a lifetime. They were intended to specify how learning can be expressed and assessed in practice. They were intended to enable students and faculty to set learning goals and assess learning within and across the many disciplines of human inquiry.

- [Think](#)
 - Think clearly, critically, and creatively, analyze, synthesize, integrate and evaluate in many domains of human inquiry
- [Value](#)
 - Make reasoned judgments and responsible commitments
- [Act](#)
 - Act purposefully, effectively, and responsibly
- [Communicate](#)
 - communicate with different audiences using varied means

Early attempts at college-wide assessment of the Core Competencies revealed that the competencies were not easily measurable. In December 2007, the faculty at Valencia College began a process of developing program specific learning outcomes starting with General Education – the General Education Student Learning Outcomes (and all program learning outcomes articulated for Valencia students) are understood to be tangible / measurable manifestations of the more global Core Competencies.

The General Education at Valencia is an integral part of the A.A. and A.S. Degree Programs and is designed to contribute to the student's educational growth by providing a basic liberal arts education. A student who completes the General Education Core should have achieved the following outcomes:

- Cultural and Historical Understanding: Demonstrate understanding of the diverse traditions of the world, and an individual's place in it.
- Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning: Use processes, procedures, data, or evidence to solve problems and make effective decisions.
- Communication Skills: Engage in effective interpersonal, oral, and written communication.
- Ethical Responsibility: Demonstrate awareness of personal responsibility in one's civic, social, and academic life.
- Information Literacy: Locate, evaluate, and effectively use information from diverse sources.
- Critical Thinking: Effectively analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and apply information and ideas from diverse sources and disciplines.

The assessment of the General Education Learning Outcomes occurs on a yearly basis. Assessment plans are developed in the Summer/early Fall, approved by faculty in the Fall and implemented in the Spring.

In May of 2010 – 7 college-wide assessment plans were implemented focused on General Education Learning Outcomes– student artifacts were collected, reviewed by faculty and staff who developed formal and informal plans for improvement in both program content and the assessment process. The following General Education outcomes were assessed:

- English Composition – *Written Communication*
- Humanities – *Cultural and Historical Understanding*
- Mathematics – *Quantitative Reasoning*
- New Student Orientation (Student Affairs) – *Critical Thinking*
- Science – *Scientific Reasoning*
- Political Science – *Ethical Responsibility*
- Speech – *Oral Communication*

In May 2011, the following General Education outcomes were assessed.

- Science – *Scientific Reasoning*
- History – *Cultural and Historical Understanding*
- Math - *Quantitative Reasoning*
- Student Affairs – *Ethical Responsibility*
- English Composition – *Information Literacy*

Assessment Plans for May 2012 include the following:

- Humanities – *Cultural and Historical Understanding*
- History – *Cultural and Historical Understanding*
- Library – *Information Literacy*
- Math - *Quantitative Reasoning*
- Political Science – *Ethical Responsibility*
- Science – *Scientific Reasoning*
- Speech – *Oral Communication*
- English Composition – *Information Literacy*
- Economics – *Scientific Reasoning*

Copies of assessment plans for 2012 (and the assessment plans for all programs of study at Valencia) can be found at

http://valenciacollege.edu/instassess/PLOA/assessment_plans.cfm

To date, the majority of our work on the assessment of general education has focused on the development of commonly accepted indicators of student performance for each outcome and on faculty agreement on the nature of student artifacts allowing for a shared understanding of student competence. We have developed procedures for the collection of

student artifacts college-wide and have used college-wide assessment activities to improve our process. The nature of our general education assessment efforts thus far has not yet yielded data on generalizable student competence.

By May 1, 2013, Valencia will have finalized interdisciplinary faculty agreement on the indicators of student competence for each general education learning outcome. Also completed, will be the curricular map detailing the placement of general education learning outcomes within general education courses. The curricular map will ensure that each student will have at least two intentional (assessable) experiences of each outcome by the time they complete their general education requirements. The completion of these two activities, in conjunction with our annual Spring assessment of general education outcomes, will allow us to come into full compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1.

Complicating our planned efforts is the passage of Florida House Bill 7135. When signed by Governor Rick Scott, HB 7135 will reduce the general education requirements for the Associate and Bachelor of Arts degrees from 36 to 30 hours. The adjustment in hours will coincide with the identification of a maximum of 5 courses per discipline area (Communication, Humanities, Mathematics, Science and Social Science), with common competencies, to be shared by all State institutions. The implication of these changes is not yet clear and until they are clarified, Valencia will proceed as described above. When the implications of HB 7135 are clear, Valencia will notify the Commission and will provide additional information on our efforts attain and document full compliance with CR 3.5.1.