

First Year Experience Assessment Plan

Developed Summer 2009

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About this Plan

The First Year Experience (FYE) Assessment Plan was collaboratively developed by the Title III Internal Evaluation Committee and the directors of the FYE course during the Spring of 2009. The purpose of the plan is to develop a comprehensive and organized plan of assessment activities related to the FYE course in order to:

- Identify and align intended outcomes of the FYE course at the student, program, and institution level
- Identify and align strategies to achieve these outcomes
- Identify assessment measures that will provide the most value to key stakeholders and ensure in advance that the appropriate data are collected to produce these measures
- Identify resources needed to accomplish assessment activities (e.g., staff, money, etc.)
- Identify offices responsible for the collection and analysis of assessment data
- Identify a timetable for the initiation of various assessment activities
- Easily monitor assessment activities and results by tracking them in a single document
- Facilitate the utilization of assessment data by identifying how assessment results lead to specific recommendations and actions taken
- Reduce “data fishing” by specifying assessment measures and analyses in advance
- Prevent duplication and omission of assessment activities
- Assist with College-wide survey planning and coordination
- Aid decision-making and continuous quality improvement
- Fulfill external reporting needs (e.g., Title III grant reporting, accreditation reports, reports to state and federal legislatures and other government bodies, applications for future grants/awards, etc.)

This document should be reviewed, updated, and adjusted regularly (at least once per year) in response to assessment results, program modifications, and the identification of new institutional strategic goals.

Data Limitations and Issues

- This plan is intended to track outcome measures that have been identified for the FYE course and monitor progress in meeting those outcomes. By establishing comparison groups and other controls, it may be possible to identify *associations* between the course and particular outcomes, while ruling out the effect of a limited number of extraneous variables. However, given inherent limitations in the data (e.g., they are correlational in nature) and given that it is not possible to control for all of the variables that might influence a student’s academic performance, **it cannot be concluded that FYE caused these outcomes.**
- The plan was developed during the early implementation of the FYE course. In response to assessment results, curricular changes, and the identification of new goals or issues, it may be necessary to modify the plan periodically.
- The College does not currently have individual-level data on students who transfer to another institution of higher education. Consequently, these students will appear as not being retained or not completing. Although this is a limitation of the data, it applies to students in the comparison groups as well.

Terms and Definitions

Actions Taken: Actions that have been taken in response to assessment findings and recommendations.

Frequency: How often the measure will be tracked.

Institutional Goals: Goals for entire institution tied to Strategic Plan (e.g., increase *institutional* enrollment, retention, completions, etc.). Institutional goals for this plan were identified in the Title III grant proposal.

Learning Objectives: Specific student learning objectives that will help lead to the attainment of program goals (e.g., improve study skills, develop academic plan, etc.). These should be SMART: Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-delimited.

Measures: How achievement of goals and objectives will be documented. These should be specific, observable, and standardized. They can be quantitative or qualitative and direct or indirect. Quantitative measures place data on a numeric scale while qualitative measures classify data according to coding schemes and rubrics. Direct measures provide concrete evidence that some piece of information has been learned or some ability has been gained (e.g., a correct answer to a question, demonstration of a skill or ability, test scores) while indirect measures provide second-hand evidence (e.g., students' perceptions, survey data, etc.).

Method of Attainment: How goals and objectives will be attained (e.g., strategies, specific activities, assignments, projects, etc.).

Plan: The first five columns of the template represent what we plan to assess, how, and why. This portion is completed before data are collected.

Program Level Goals: Goals for program participants that will help the institution meet its goals (e.g., higher retention/completion rates for *program participants* than non-participants).

Recommended Actions: Future changes or improvements that might be made based on assessment findings. It is important to note that a mismatch between intended goals/objectives and actual results could lead to (a) changes in the program, (b) a fine-tuning of assessment measures, or (c) a re-articulation of intended goals and objectives. It is important to keep potential recommendations in mind when deciding what measures to collect and how frequently to collect them. Data should not be collected just because they can be collected. Instead, it is important to think through what the data will be used for and how different results might lead to different recommended actions.

Resource Needs & Sources: Money, time, and staff needed to do the assessment and where these resources will come from.

Responsible Office: Office responsible for collecting and analyzing data.

Strengths/Weaknesses: Strengths or weaknesses of the assessment after it is complete that qualify results or impact the recommended actions.

Course Description: Course designed to assist students with a successful transition to college. Students will learn and develop an understanding of the language, culture, and resources of Owens Community College, identify and begin to develop skills needed for college success, and examine their reasons and goals for attending.

Plan

Summary of Report

Institutional Goals

Institutional Goal #1: Increase student retention and success.								
Method of Attainment	Measures	Resource Needs & Sources	Responsible Office	Frequency	Results	Strengths / Weakness	Recommended Actions	Actions Taken
1. Institute a Student Success Mentor program 2. Institute a First Year Experience Seminar 3. Provide Supplemental Instruction	1. By Sept. 30, 2011, increase the number of students who complete their developmental studies enrollments with a grade of C or higher by 20% from 2,546 (Fall '05) to 3,055. 2. By Sept. 30, 2011, increase the number of students who complete their first college credit math and composition courses with a grade of C or higher by 20% from 2,492 (Fall '05) to 2,990. 3. By Sept. 30, 2011, increase the number of first-time degree-seeking students who complete their associate's degree in 3 years by 20% from 175 (Fall 2003) to 210.	Banner data	Institutional Research	Every fall				

Program Level Goals

Program Level Goal #1: Increase retention of students who complete the FYE course.								
Method of Attainment	Measures	Resource Needs & Sources	Responsible Office	Frequency	Results	Strengths / Weakness	Recommended Actions	Actions Taken
Through their participation in small friendly sections with lots of discussion and group activities, students will develop a connection to their instructor, other students, and the college. They will learn skills that are necessary for college success and become familiar with college resources that can support their studies and persistence.	1. The percentage of freshmen FYE course completers who re-enroll (less graduates) will be tracked after 1 term, 1 year, 2 years, 3 years, and 4 years. Data will be compared with freshmen who have never taken FYE but who have completed at least one graded 100-level course (excluding SKT) during the same time period.	1. Banner data 2. SPSS Logistic regression and Complex Samples statistical software add-on modules.	1. Institutional Research	Descriptive data collected every term and reported every summer. Summative evaluation with statistical controls for background characteristics conducted at completion of grant.				

Program Level Goal #2: Increase degree/certificate completions among students who complete FYE.

Through their participation in small friendly sections with lots of discussion and group activities, students will develop a connection to their instructor, other students, and the college. They will learn skills that are necessary for college success and become familiar with college resources that can support their studies and persistence.	1. The percentage of freshmen FYE course completers who receive a degree or certificate will be tracked after 3 years and 4 years. Data will be compared with freshmen who have never taken FYE but who have completed at least one graded 100-level course (excluding SKT) during the same time period.	1. Banner data 2. SPSS Logistic regression and Complex Samples statistical software add-on modules.	1. Institutional Research	Descriptive data collected every term and reported every summer. Summative evaluation with statistical controls for background characteristics conducted at completion of grant.				
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Program Level Goal #3: Increase academic success of students who complete FYE.

Baldwin text chapters 6-10 present strategies to help boost students' learning, memory, thinking, reading, note-taking, studying, and test-taking skills.	1. The term GPA and percentage of earned to attempted credit hours of freshmen FYE course completers will be tracked for 3 terms (i.e., FYE term plus 2 additional terms). Data will be compared with freshmen who have never taken FYE but who have completed at least one graded 100-level course (excluding SKT) during the same time period.	1. Banner data 2. SPSS Complex Samples statistical software add-on module.	1. Institutional Research	Descriptive data collected every term and reported every summer. Summative evaluation with statistical controls for background characteristics conducted at completion of grant.				
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Specific Student Learning Objectives

Learning Objective #1: Students will successfully transition to Owens Community College by knowing and experiencing the College culture, learning key terms and offices, and learning about and accessing various college teaching and learning resources.

Method of Attainment	Measures	Resource Needs & Sources	Responsible Office	Frequency	Results	Strengths / Weakness	Recommended Actions	Actions Taken
Baldwin Text Chapters 1 & 3. In class guest speakers, student services scavenger hunt activity, and campus tour.	Pre-test 3-14 Post-test 3-14 & 17y-ee	1. FYE pre- and post-test surveys (web survey-no cost)	1. Institutional Research will collect and analyze data.	Data collected every term; analyses conducted and reported every summer.				

Learning Objective #2: Students will gain knowledge of expectations that the college has for its students but also of what they should expect from their college experience.

Baldwin Text Chapters 1, 2 & 3. Student and/or instructor interview assignment. In class review of Student Code of Conduct and Owens College Catalog.	Pre-test 11a-g & 12; Post-test 11a-g, 12, 17m, 17y-ee	1. FYE pre- and post-test surveys (web survey-no cost)	1. Institutional Research will collect and analyze data.	Data collected every term; analyses conducted and reported every summer.				
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Learning Objective #3: Students will identify, develop, and then apply problem solving skills and critical thinking processes in their decision making.							
Entire Baldwin Text is complete with critical thinking and chapter review activities. More specifically, Baldwin Text Chapter 6, textbook case scenarios and chapter review activities tied to discussion board assignments.	Pre-test 13m-n, 13s-x; Post-test 13m-n, 13s-x17d-e, 17k-l	1. FYE pre- and post-test surveys (web survey-no cost)	1. Institutional Research will collect and analyze data.	Data collected every term; analyses conducted and reported every summer.			
Learning Objective #4: Students will use skills learned and other college resources to develop a comprehensive academic plan that reflects their goals and experience at Owens Community College.							
Baldwin Text Chapters 2, 6, 11, 12 and academic and career plan/resume development assignment.	Pre-test 15a-g; Post-test 15g-n	1. FYE pre- and post-test surveys (web survey-no cost)	1. Institutional Research will collect and analyze data.	Data collected every term; analyses conducted and reported every summer.			
Learning Objective #5: Students will understand and identify the key Core Competencies of the college and how they apply and direct their experience, and will develop their own e-Portfolio to showcase their development.							
Students are required to save a hard copy and electronic copy of all assignments within this course. Currently, there is no e-portfolio software to house all student assignments.	Pre-test 16; Post-test 16	1. FYE pre- and post-test surveys (web survey-no cost)	1. Institutional Research will collect and analyze data.	Data collected every term; analyses conducted and reported every summer.			
Learning Objective #6: Students will gain knowledge and experience using a computer environment to communicate effectively.							
Use of Blackboard and use of computer labs for this course. Use of Blackboard for discussion boards, journals, and career planning websites.	Pre-test 13o; Post-test 13o	1. FYE pre- and post-test surveys (web survey-no cost)	1. Institutional Research will collect and analyze data.	Data collected every term; analyses conducted and reported every summer.			
Learning Objective #7: Students will gain knowledge of ethical and responsible computer usage and electronic communication.							
In class review of computer use policy at Owens. Introductory email assignment. Review of netiquette.	Pre-test 11a-c; Post-test 11a-c	1. FYE pre- and post-test surveys (web survey-no cost)	1. Institutional Research will collect and analyze data.	Data collected every term; analyses conducted and reported every summer.			
Learning Objective #8: Students will become engaged learners by taking an active role in their own education.							
Baldwin Text Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10 coupled with cooperative learning techniques in class and/or reflective essay of the first-year experience as a result of taking the course.	1. FYE pre-test and post-test questions 14a-i.	1. FYE pre- and post-test surveys (web survey-no cost)	1. Institutional Research will collect and analyze data.	Data collected every term; analyses conducted and reported every summer.			