

Resolution # 3 1990-91

*Faculty Senate*



TO: President John E. Van de Wetering  
FROM: The Faculty Senate Meeting on 10/1/90 (Date)

RE: X I. Formal Resolution (Act of Determination)  
II. Recommendation (Urging the fitness of)  
III. Other (Notice, Request, Report, etc.)

SUBJECT: Resolution on Assessment of Learning Outcomes in Academic Programs and Assessment of Student Social, Personal and Career Development

Signed *Thomas L. Keller* Date Sent 10/3/90  
(For the Senate)

TO: The Faculty Senate  
FROM: President John E. Van de Wetering  
RE: I. Decision and Action Taken on Formal Resolution  
a. Accepted. Effective Date 10/10/90  
b. Deferred for discussion with the Faculty Senate on \_\_\_\_\_  
c. Unacceptable for the reasons contained in the attached explanation

II, III.  
a. Received and acknowledged  
b. Comment:

DISTRIBUTION: *See*

Distribution Date 10/10/90 Signed: *[Signature]*  
(President of the College)

# ROCKPORT

State University of New York  
College at Brockport  
Brockport, New York 14420

Faculty Senate  
(716) 395-2586

TO: John E. Van de Wetering, President  
SUNY College at Brockport

FROM: Thomas Kallen, President  
Faculty Senate

RE: Resolution #3 (1990-91), "Assessment of Learning  
Outcomes in Academic Programs and Assessment of  
Student Social, Personal and Career Development."

DATE: October 9, 1990

Attached is Faculty Senate Resolution #3 (1990-91), a conditional endorsement of the assessment plan of the college passed by the Faculty Senate on October 1, 1990. Your approval of the resolution constitutes (1) administrative acceptance of the conditions set for endorsement and (2) activation of the Faculty Senate's endorsement.

The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate will present a resolution to the Senate, establishing the Assessment Advisory Council as a committee of the Faculty Senate and establishing the charge to this committee, after you have approved Resolution #3 (1990-91). Following passage and approval of this second resolution, the members and chair of the committee will be appointed and the Faculty Senate Assessment Advisory Council will assume control of the assessment oversight process.

I recommend that implementation of the assessment plan commence with your approval of Resolution #3 (1990-91). The current Assessment Advisory Council may serve as an interim oversight body until the Faculty Senate Committee is impaneled and charged by the Senate.

Finally, I must emphasize that a large number of our most thoughtful and most active faculty and professional staff do not endorse the concept of formal assessment as a means of effecting change in academic and student development programs. Resolution #3 (1990-91) is a pragmatic one. In the most accurate analysis, the Faculty Senate has expressed its need to act as a governance body in matters bearing on the curriculum in response to a mandate that formal assessment shall take place on this and every other campus of SUNY.

lmh

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RESOLUTION  
ON ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES IN ACADEMIC  
PROGRAMS AND ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT SOCIAL,  
PERSONAL, AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

**WHEREAS** assessment of learning outcomes in academic programs and assessment of student social, personal and career development are required by the State University of New York,

AND

**WHEREAS** it is appropriate for the Faculty Senate to participate in the development and implementation of the assessment process,

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Faculty Senate endorses the assessment plan described in the document, "Assessment at Brockport - A Five Year Plan," under the conditions that -

- the Assessment Advisory Council be a committee of the Faculty Senate.
- the Chair and members of the Assessment Advisory Council be appointed by the President of the Faculty Senate in consultation with the administrative director of the assessment effort and subject to confirmation by the Senate.
- the Assessment Advisory Council be a broadly representative, twelve-member committee including two (2) members from each School, two (2) members from the Division of Student Affairs, one (1) member from the Division of Administrative Services, one (1) member from the Division of College Relations and Development, one (1) member from the Alumni Association, and one (1) student member whose appointment is to be recommended by the Brockport Student Government.
- the Chair of the Assessment Advisory Council report at regular intervals to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.
- the Assessment Advisory Council be provided with resources sufficient to fulfil its charge.

RATIONALE FOR ADOPTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
RESOLUTION ON ASSESSMENT

At this stage in the development of an assessment plan for the SUNY-College at Brockport, we the members of the Faculty Senate are in no position to argue the wisdom or utility of assessment, or to quibble with the details of the assessment plan before us. The College at Brockport is required by the Provost of the University to be in the process of implementing its assessment plan at this moment and should not now be in the early stages of development of such a plan.

Several options are available to us at this stage: we may refuse to endorse the assessment plan (implementation must then occur without our "approval" or oversight); we may endorse the plan without reservations (implementation will then occur with our blessing but without our oversight); or we may endorse the assessment plan with reservations expressing our concern that implementation commence with Faculty Senate oversight.

The resolution reported from the Executive Committee represents the third of the three options - endorse, but express concern that implementation commence with Faculty Senate oversight. Passage of this resolution by the Senate and approval by the President of the College would signal a formal beginning to the assessment process. It would also constitute the basis upon which the Senate may establish, select and charge a committee to oversee administrative decisions and actions with respect to assessment.

TWK  
9/25/90

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\*ASSESSMENT AT BROCKPORT - A FIVE YEAR PLAN\*  
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GOAL: To implement by June, 1995 a comprehensive system that assesses learning outcomes in academic programs (General Education, Major, Certification, Interdisciplinary, and Graduate) and student social, personal and career development.

The units responsible for assessment are:

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CATEGORY	ASSESSMENT UNIT
General Education	General Education Coordinating Committee, Directors of Composition and Developmental Math, CAI Staff
Majors, Graduate	Academic Departments
Interdisciplinary, Certification	Dean, Director of program and involved departments.
Student social, personal, and career development	Student Affairs, Alumni Affairs, Academic Departments
College-wide	Assessment Advisory Council

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The principles that guide assessment at Brockport are attached as Appendix #1.

## THE FOUR STAGES OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment can be defined in four stages:

### Stage 1. Define Learning Outcomes.

This stage is intended to specify what students are expected to learn. Learning takes place through the formal college curriculum and through the co-curriculum, and assessment is thus the responsibility of all divisions of the College. The learning outcomes represent the minimum requirements for the program, and are derived from the mission of the program. The outcomes must be stated in ways that allow measurement of the degree to which they have been achieved.

### Stage 2. Evaluate Prior Learning.

To assess what students learn from their Brockport education, it is necessary to understand what knowledge and skills students possess before they begin a program of study. The direct measurement of student learning at the point of entry to an academic program and the student development experiences sets a base line for placing students in appropriate entry-level courses, experiences, etc., and provides a benchmark to evaluate gains in knowledge and skills. An accurate understanding of what learning students bring to college should stimulate a reexamination of learning outcomes to insure compatibility between the abilities of the students and the expectation of the program. It would be just as inappropriate to place a freshman with a ninth grade reading level into ENL 204 American Literature I as it would be to place a freshman who has completed AP Biology into BIO 110 Principles of Biology.

### Stage 3. Development of Assessment Methods (see Appendix #2 for Guidelines).

Assessment of College-level learning must be complex because the abilities and skills that students should learn from their college education are complex. Such learning cannot be fully assessed with trivial, simplistic measures. Assessment methodologies including tests, portfolios, performances, capstone experiences, internships, theses, etc., should be derived from

the learning outcomes. Standardized tests should only be used when they are fully congruent with a program's learning outcomes, and, then, they should be supplemented with methods that assess more complicated knowledge and skills. After all, one could hardly discuss the social injustices of apartheid with a multiple choice exam.

#### Stage 4. Use of Assessment Methods

Departments and units must decide for themselves just how assessment results will be used. Two commonly used approaches assess program effectiveness and/or certification of student competency. In both cases students complete assessment activities at prescribed times during their college years, typically at the start of a program and at the end. When assessment of program effectiveness is the primary objective, a representative sample of students needs to participate in the assessment process. However, if assessment is to be used as a requirement for certifying that students are, for example, ready to achieve junior status, competent writers in the major, or knowledgeable about central theories and practices of the discipline, then it is necessary to assess all students. During this five-year period, program assessment is required and assessment of all students for competency and progression towards graduation is optional.

#### **LEARNING IMPROVEMENT**

Assessment provides an understanding of the degree to which students have achieved what is expected. This knowledge permits a careful analysis of the effectiveness of all elements of the college experience, and reveals programmatic strengths and weaknesses. Strengths can be reinforced and weaknesses corrected. The result is improvement of student learning.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The following plan outlines the objectives, procedures, and resources needed to implement a comprehensive assessment system over the next five years.

For assessment of academic learning outcomes, YEAR 1 begins in September following the year when program review has been completed. The schedule for program review is included.

For assessment of student development outcomes, Year 1 begins in September, 1990.

#### ROLE OF THE ASSESSMENT COUNCIL

The Council will serve as a facilitating agency for assessment. In so doing it will:

1. Keep current in the theory and practices of assessment.
2. Keep the College aware of developments in assessment at the National, State and local level.
3. Provide assistance to programs as they develop and implement their assessment plans.
4. Collate data from a variety of sources for programmatic use.
5. Review policies and procedures on assessment and make recommendations for change, if necessary.
6. Prepare an annual report on the status of assessment.

Effective membership on the Assessment Council will constitute in and of itself "at-risk performance" in university service.

ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

YEAR 1:

OBJECTIVES

1. Student learning outcomes will be defined for:

- 1.1 Academic Programs
  - 1.1.1 General Education
  - 1.1.2 Major
  - 1.1.3 Graduate
  - 1.1.4 Certification
  - 1.1.5 Interdisciplinary
- 1.2 Student Development Programs
  - 1.2.1 Social
  - 1.2.2 Personal
  - 1.2.3 Career

PROCEDURES

1.1 Each academic and/or student development program will create a committee to define student learning outcomes.

1.2 A first draft of the student learning outcomes will be discussed with the entire faculty/staff involved in the program and consensus achieved. A second draft will be developed.

1.3 Outcomes will be reviewed by external reviewers (perhaps the same ones used for program review) to confirm their appropriateness to the discipline. Revised outcomes will be developed. Reviews may take place without site visits by reviewers.

1.4 Outcomes will be reviewed by the Council, Dean, Vice President, and President to confirm their compatibility with College Mission.

RESOURCES

1.1 Faculty/staff will carry out assessment as part of AND governance (faculty) and job performance (staff). The Assessment Council will provide funds for department/unit on-campus retreats/extended meetings. The council will assist departments/units in identifying models of student learning outcomes.

1.3 External reviewers will be hired.

1.4 Administrators will carry out assessment as part of their job performance.

ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

YEAR 2:

OBJECTIVES

1. Develop methods (see Appendix #2) to assess the entry-level knowledge, skills and attitudes of freshmen and transfer students to create a base line for comparison at appropriate points (to be determined by the department/unit) in their college experience, to place them in appropriate courses, and to prescribe and developmental support.

Major, certification and graduate programs may develop methods to assess specific knowledge, skills and attitudes of their entering students. Such assessment may require participation in SOAR.

PROCEDURES

- 1.1 Programs will establish committees to review commercially available assessment materials to determine their adequacy for Brockport. Where appropriate, the committees will develop local assessment materials. Guidelines for appropriate assessment materials are included as Appendix #2.

- 1.2 pilot entry-level assessment methods with a sample of freshmen and transfers entering in fall, 1992. For entry-level assessment it will be necessary to conduct the assessment during summer, 1992.

- 1.3 Use the results of the pilot to advise and register students for appropriate courses and to prescribe appropriate support where indicated.

RESOURCES

- 1.1 Faculty/staff will develop assessment methods as part of governance (faculty) and job performance (staff). The Assessment Council will provide funds for department/unit on-campus retreats/extended meetings. The Council will assist departments/units in identifying models for entry-level assessment. The Council will provide funds to purchase necessary assessment materials. External reviewers may be useful in this process and will be funded by the Council.

- 1.2 The President will direct the college to create a pilot SUMMER ORIENTATION, ADVISEMENT AND REGISTRATION (SOAR) program. Financial resources will be generated by a fee to students. Faculty will be paid a stipend for participation in SOAR; calendar year staff will participate as part of job performance.

ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

YEAR 3:

OBJECTIVES

1. Develop methods to assess student learning outcomes.

PROCEDURES

- 1.1 Faculty/staff will develop assessment methods.

RESOURCES

- 1.1 Faculty/staff will develop assessment methods as part of governance (faculty) and job performance (staff). The Assessment Council will provide funds for department/unit on-campus retreats. The Council will assist departments/units in identifying models of assessment. The Council will provide funds to purchase necessary assessment materials.

- 1.2 A first draft of the assessment methods will be discussed with the entire faculty/staff involved in the program and consensus achieved. A second draft of the methods formulated.

- 1.2 Faculty and staff will review assessment methods as part of governance and job performance.

- 1.3 The assessment methods will be reviewed by external reviewers (perhaps the same ones used for program review) to confirm their appropriateness to the discipline. A revised draft will be formulated.

- 1.3 The Assessment Council will provide funds to hire external reviewers.

- 1.4 The assessment methods will be reviewed by the Council, Dean, Vice President, and President to confirm their compatibility with College Mission.

- 1.4 Administrators will carry out assessment as part of their job performance.

ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

YEAR 4:

OBJECTIVES

1. Pilot assessment methods.

PROCEDURES

1.1 Faculty and staff will specify a time-table and methods to assess appropriate student groups to determine the degree to which learning outcomes have been achieved. It is possible that students will be assessed at varying intervals during their tenure at Brockport to determine progress towards learning outcomes. Some learning outcomes may be best assessed before students complete their entire plan of study, e.g. assess writing competency during junior year.

1.2 Students will be assessed by May of the fourth year.

1.3 Results of the pilot will be evaluated by the department and unit, and an assessment report will be written and shared with the administration and Assessment Council. Guidelines are included as Appendix #3.

1.4 Revision of the assessment methods will be completed by August of YEAR 4.

RESOURCES

1.1 Faculty will participate as part of governance, and staff as part of job performance.

1.3 Faculty will participate as part of governance and staff as part of job performance.

1.4 Faculty will participate as part of governance and staff as part of job performance.

ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

YEAR 5:

OBJECTIVES

- 1. Implement the comprehensive assessment system.

PROCEDURES

- 1.1 Faculty as part of governance and staff as part of job performance will specify a time-table and methods to assess appropriate student groups to determine the degree to which learning outcomes have been achieved.
- 1.2 All appropriate students will be assessed by May of the fifth year.
- 1.3 Results of the comprehensive assessment will be evaluated.
- 1.4 Based on the results of assessment, departments and units will write an assessment report according to the guidelines specified in Appendix #3.

RESOURCES

- 1.1 Faculty will participate as part of governance, and staff as part of job performance.
- 1.3 Faculty will participate as part of governance and staff as part of job performance.
- 1.4 Faculty will participate as part of governance and staff as part of job performance.

## ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES

1. Assessment will be for the sole purpose of improving institutional effectiveness and promoting student learning within the context of the College Mission.
2. Assessment will be **constructive** and will not be used to reduce resource allocation, nor to make personnel decisions or invidious comparisons between programs.
3. Assessment will be predicated upon the goals and objectives contained in the College Mission Statement.
4. Assessment will be **collegial** and incorporate active faculty, staff, student, alumni, and community participation.
5. Assessment will be **comprehensive** and include institutional and student performance in at least the following areas:
  - A. Academic Preparation upon admission

Students' knowledge, skills and values will be determined upon entry into the College in order to match their capacity to be educated with the College's capacity to provide and assess a "value-added" education.
  - B. Academic Programs
    - 1.) General Education including communication and quantitative skills, computer literacy, breadth component, and contemporary issues.
    - 2.) Academic Majors
    - 3.) Academic minors, certification programs and other special programs
  - C. Student Social, Personal and Career development
  - D. Student and alumni attitudes about their educational and career experiences
6. Assessment will be **complex** and use multiple approaches and multiple indicators that reflect the diversity of our goals, programs and students (e.g. part-time, adult, special admit, EOP, etc.)
7. Assessment will be a **longitudinal** process comparing past performance with current performance.
8. Assessment will be **cost effective** and use, where appropriate, existing data bases and evaluation processes and sampling techniques.
9. Assessment will not replace or duplicate current accreditation requirements.

GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSMENT  
INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES (APPENDIX #2)

1. Departments and Programs will select/construct, administer assessment methodology and interpret the degree to which the students achieve the objectives.

Assessment methodologies may include a combination of the following:

- 1.1 Licensing/certifying exams
  - 1.2 Nationally available standardized tests such as NTE, AICPA achievement tests, ETS-UAP, ETS-MPAT...etc.
  - 1.3 End of programs measures such as comprehensive exams, senior seminars, senior theses, projects, performance, portfolio, practicum/internships, etc.
  - 1.4 Culminating measure in a cluster of courses (i.e., a minor, set of pre-requisites, track, etc.)
  - 1.5 Common exams for introductory courses
  - 1.6 Course embedded assessment where program objectives are evaluated within the context of a specific course(s)
  - 1.7 Current Students Surveys
  - 1.8 Alumni Surveys
  - 1.9 Employers Surveys
  - 1.10 Statistical data and analysis current available
  - 1.11 Measures like the GRE, LSAT, MCAT may be used in conjunction with locally developed measures. The GRE and other such tests when used alone may not be capable of evaluating the programs' specific mission.
2. Departments and Programs will use the results of assessment to improve student learning and department and program effectiveness.
  3. Assessment should begin with currently available procedures and data until new assessment instruments are developed.
  4. Assessment outcomes may be used as competency evaluation to determine whether individual students achieved learning objectives specified by the individual department or program.
  5. The results of assessment will be reported through the usual lines of communication. Reports should indicate absolute levels of performance and trends or value added, in accordance with the reporting guidelines presented herein.

ASSESSMENT REPORTING GUIDELINES (APPENDIX #3)

Departments/Programs/Units, in their reports, should indicate:

1. The basic goals of the Department/Programs/Units and how these goals relate to the College mission.
2. The desired outcomes which derive from these goals, criteria of success.
3. How each desired outcome can be measured.
4. The specific procedures used in assessing outcomes including:
  - a. Approach adopted
  - b. Timeframe of the assessment, especially for "value-added" measures.
  - c. How each desired outcome was measured.
  - d. Description of how each unique segment of the constituency was analyzed e.g. traditional/nontraditional students, transfers, freshmen, adult, minority, handicapped, male/female, etc...)
  - e. How the participants in the assessment were selected.
  - f. How the information was collected, e.g. methodology, rate of return, sources, etc...
  - g. Cost of the assessment.
5. Results of the assessment, i.e. actual vs. expectations:
  - a. Outcomes and goals realized satisfactorily.
  - b. Outcomes and goals not realized satisfactorily.
  - c. Description of how the above conclusions were reached.
6. Implications for the College or Department/Program/Unit policy:
  - a. Proposed modifications in program and/or policy to achieve desirable goals, and their expected effect on the outcomes.
  - b. Summary of resources needed to effect positive change.
7. Follow-up:
  - a. Summary of modifications proposed in prior period's reports
  - b. Modifications implemented and their effect on outcomes.
  - c. Modifications proposed but not implemented, and reason for lack of implementation.