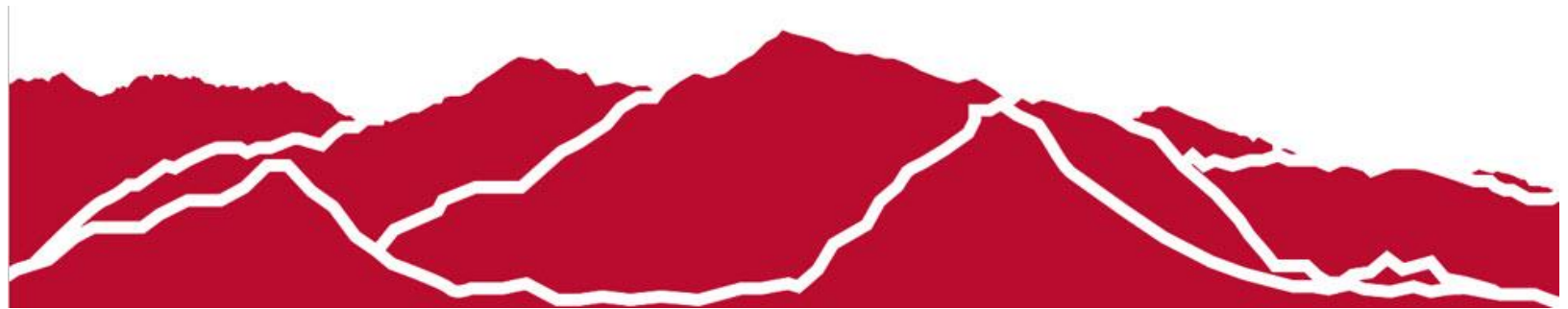




2023-2024 Arizona Western College Assessment Report



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Prepared by:
Elaine Groggett, M.Ed.
Director of Curriculum, Assessment, and Scheduling

Arizona Western College
2020 S. Avenue 8 East
P.O. Box 929
Yuma, AZ 85366-0929

(928) 317-6043
(928) 317-6267

www.azwestern.edu

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Introduction and Background

The Assessment Report is published annually by the Director of Curriculum, Assessment, and Scheduling under the guidance of the Associate Dean of Instructional Development and Student Learning Experience at Arizona Western College. The Director of Curriculum, Assessment, and Scheduling also serves as a member on the Curriculum Committee, the Assessment Committee, an ex-officio member on both the General Education Curriculum and the Writing Intensive Committees, and as the Chair of the Governance Assessment Committee.

Faculty and staff have long sought to advance the academic achievement of students and the services provided at Arizona Western College (AWC) through a variety of programs, services, and activities. AWC's student learning outcomes are defined by the faculty and the instruments used to measure student success are selected and/or developed by the faculty. Institutional departments define and analyze the results of their goals to improve services for students, faculty, staff, and the community. AWC promotes continual assessment to ensure the institution is providing quality services and preparing students to be successful in critical inquiry, communication, quantitative analysis, digital literacy, scientific literacy, and civic discourse.

The Curriculum, Assessment, and Scheduling Office help district-wide assessment efforts by sharing results among members of AWC and Yuma and La Paz County and encouraging new ways to improve teaching and learning and improving institutional services.

Organizational Structure for Assessment

Although the success of course and program level assessment, as well as institutional assessment activities and initiatives, is dependent upon the participation and collaboration of faculty and administration, the following committees exist to assist the faculty and staff in their assessment efforts and ensure educational quality:

- The Assessment Committee is charged with providing support, resources, and opportunities for faculty, staff, students, and administrators to discuss, conduct, and share thorough, thoughtful, critical analysis and reflection of student learning, services, and business practices provided at Arizona Western College and to encourage students to become agents in their own learning.
- The General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) is charged with making decisions and recommendations related to all aspects of general education outcomes assessment at Arizona Western College. The faculty driven committee is chaired by a faculty member.
- The Writing Curriculum Committee (WCC) is responsible for the ethical and informed creation, implementation, and revision of WI curriculum requirements, ongoing WI instructor professional development, and WI program assessment at the college level. A secondary, but equally important, mission of the WCC is fostering healthy and productive cultures of writing instruction at AWC.

Assessment Activities

Student Learning Outcomes Review

This year the Assessment Committee implemented a new three-year assessment plan (Appendix A). During this first year the Assessment Committee encouraged academic departments to work together to review course learning outcomes (LOs) to ensure they reflected the current curriculum and that each outcome was clear, observable, and measurable. The Assessment Committee members were provided training on writing measurable learning outcomes before they began working with their colleagues. If course syllabi had minor word smithing revisions, the syllabi were edited, sent to the Curriculum office, and posted online. If a course needed major modifications (removing, adding, significant changes to LOs) the course had to be submitted through the Curriculum Committee for review and approval.

The next step in the assessment plan, during 2024-2025, will be for faculty to add the course LOs to Canvas, the College's learning management system, and then align the learning outcomes with assignments, exams, and or other activities. After a semester or two of collecting data on the LO results, each department should work together to set departmental benchmarks for each course. In following years faculty will be asked to link general education LOs, program LOs, and institutional LOs and set benchmarks for each to provide a complete picture of how AWC students are meeting all College LOs.

Institutional Department Assessment Plan Template

Many years ago the institution had an annual assessment process for both academic and institutional departments. Eventually the focus was shifted to academics and the institutional departments were only engaged in the 5-year program review cycle. Several institutional departments asked if they could once again be engaged in the assessment process and discussions. To better serve all of the College departments, the Assessment Committee worked to develop a new institutional department assessment template that can be used by traditionally non-academic departments to assess their goals and or student LOs each year (Appendix B). The yearly process of engaging in assessment is not only beneficial for departments to set and assess their yearly goals, but the documentation also aids departments when it comes time for them to develop a five-year program review.

General Education Redesign

In February 2021, the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) approved a new policy regarding general education at the three state universities in Arizona (www.AZTransfer.com, 2024), shifting a 30-year-old general education model into the 21st-century. The changes at the universities then led to changes at the state Community Colleges. During the 2023–2024-year, various AWC faculty and staff engaged in statewide and College level discussions to determine how to move AWCs general education to the new model. Although there is still work to be done in 2024-2025 for a full implementation in the 2025-2026 academic year, the faculty and staff completed a significant amount of work mapping current general education course LOs to the new Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) categories. Each category required a course to meet a specific number of criteria to be included in the category (Appendix C).

- Written & Oral Communication (6-10 credits; the first 6 must be composition/technical writing, and the remaining 3-4 credits can be in communication studies or languages)
- Arts & Humanities (6-9 credits)
- Quantitative Reasoning (3-4 credits)
- Natural Sciences (4-8 credits)
- Social & Behavioral Sciences (6-9 credits)
- Institutions in the Americas (3 credits)

Retention, Persistence, and Completion Goals

In spring 2024 the Assessment Committee was tasked with developing institutional goals for retention, persistence, and completion as well as a dashboard for public viewing of the data. The Assessment Committee was able to develop three draft goals and the strategic plans to meet each goal. The goals and plans were submitted to the President's Cabinet for their review and approval. The Assessment Committee, in collaboration with the Strategic Enrollment Planning Committee, will actively monitor the goals and the progress of each over the next few years. As needed, adjustments will be made to the strategic plans for each goal. They are:

- X
- Y
- Z

To better understand how the College can support students, the Committee developed a student survey to collect student feedback on how faculty and staff can help them be successful in College. Another survey was conducted for faculty and staff to provide ideas on how the institution can improve student success and retention (Appendices D & E).

Program Reviews

Program Reviews provide departments with an opportunity to reflect on the performance of a department or program, document what is being done well, identify areas where things need improvement, and plan for the future. The following program reviews were completed this year.

- Accounting and Bookkeeping
- Air Conditioning and Refrigeration
- Business (AAS, ABus)
- Business Administrative Services
- Career and Advisement Services
- College Assistance Migrant program (CAMP)
- Computer Security
- Computer Science
- Electrical Technology (Automation, Basic Electrical, Basic Power Generation, Apprenticeship)
- Prison Programs
 - Basic Plumbing
 - Foundations of Construction
 - Masonry
- Retail Management
- Student Support Services, Talent Search, and Upward Bound (TRIO) Programs
- Welding (AAS, Welding GMAW, Welding SMAW, Welding Entry Level 1)
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Excellence in Assessment

The Curriculum, Assessment, and Scheduling Office established an Excellence in Assessment Award as a way to publicly acknowledge the efforts of the faculty, administrators, and staff in assessment to improve student learning and/or services. The 2023-2024 Excellence in Assessment recipients are the committee members who developed the Career and Advisement Services Program Review.

Cristina Gonzales, Associate Dean of Advisement and Student Success

Eva Aviles, University Partnership Manager

Isaac Ceja, Campus Life Administrative Assistant

Joseph Wharton, Professor of Drafting

Julissa Vargas, Academic Restart Coordinator

Reflection and Next Steps

AWC faculty and staff were engaged in many different activities throughout the 2023-2024 year that focused efforts on improving teaching, learning, and services for our current and future students:

- Reviewing course level learning outcomes
- Developing a new institutional department annual assessment plan template
- Aligning general education courses to a new statewide general education model
- Developing retention, persistence, and completion goals; the strategic plan to achieve the goals, and working to post the information on a living dashboard
 - Asking students how the College can support them, to help them be successful in College
 - Asking faculty and staff for ideas to support student success and retention
- Completing XX academic and institutional department program reviews

Next year assessment activities will include training faculty to input and align LOs to assignments, quizzes, etc. in Canvas; training institutional departments how to use the new institutional department annual assessment template; shifting the general education model to the new statewide model for the 2025-2026 academic year; monitoring the new retention, persistence, and completion goals and associated strategic plans; providing training on completing program reviews using the appropriate templates and process for feedback during the development of the program reviews.