# ASSESSMENT: DOODLING OUR WAY TO IMPROVED STUDENT LEARNING

Why it is necessary to enter and map assessment results in Taskstream? The answer, provided by expert doodler Steve Juenemann, has two parts.

First of all, we want to see if our students have reached their learning targets. If they haven't, we need to take action in order to improve their learning. This is why we create action plans. Then, we revisit our action plans, via a status report, to update our implementation of the actions and their impact on student learning. Did the students reach the learning target after the proposed actions were implemented? We don't create action plans, however, just to document the plans in Taskstream. We do so because we genuinely care about student learning. By entering our learning targets and action plans into Taskstream, we have a continuous record of what we've done to support student learning.
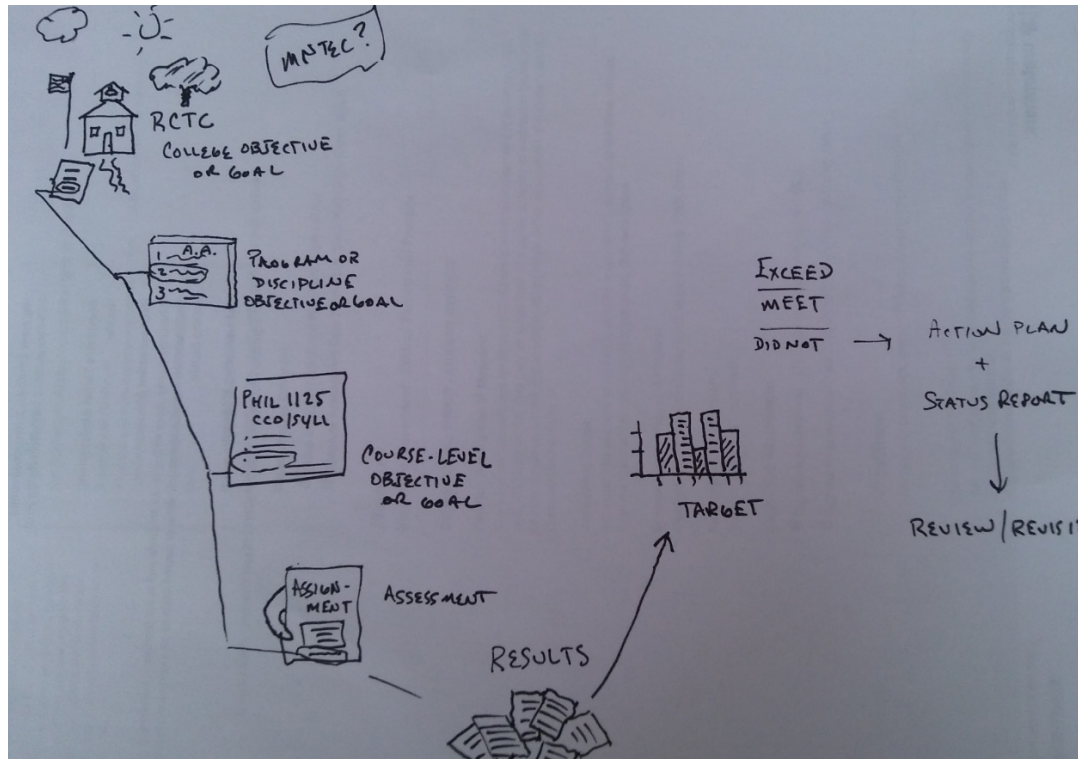
Second, we are part of a community college whose mission is to serve our community through quality education. It's why we're here. By mapping our assessments in Taskstream at the course, program, and college level, we make that mission clear to ourselves, our

students, and our community. We know we are part of a purpose-driven college.

To find out more about Taskstream, check out the videos at the bottom of the RCTC Assessment web page.

ESSENTIAL LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK
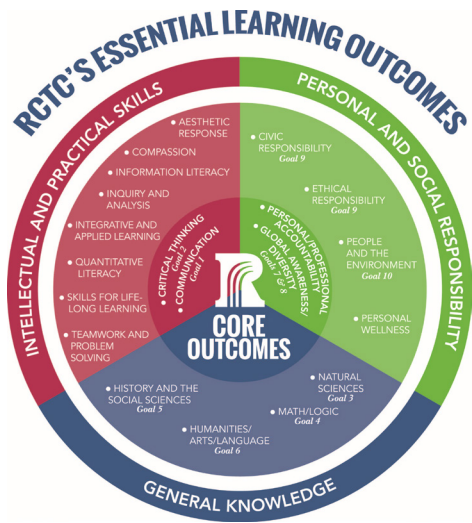
RCTC has an Essential Learning Outcomes (ELO) structure in place to describe the skills and abilities we want our students to achieve. Understanding the ELO structure is as easy as counting to four.

1. Our one ELO framework captures the skills and abilities we want to impart to our students.
2. Student learning occurs in two places, inside and outside the classroom.
3. Look at the outer ring of the ELO framework. Our students should achieve three skill sets: Intellectual and practical skills, general knowledge, and personal and social responsibility.
4. Look at the inner circle of the ELO

framework. As a college we intentionally, collectively assess four core learning outcomes that we feel are central to student success.

This framework is derived, in part, from the Association of American Colleges and Universities Value Rubrics Project and the Liberal Education America's Promise project. As a college, last year we went through an extensive feedback and review process with faculty and staff to modify the framework to fit our unique assessment needs.

So, when you think of the ELOs, just count to four. You've got it!

THE ASSESSY'S ARE BACK

This is the second annual Assessy issue. Read on to discover who looks good in a wig, which Game of Thrones characters lurk in Student Affairs, why you should seize a carp, and how you can find Robert Redford/Paul Newman imitators. Here at RCTC, we believe in assessment to improve student learning, but also making it fun!

STUDENT AFFAIRS ASSESSMENT:
SUCCEEDING AT THE "GAME OF THRONES"

The Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management has been proactive in advancing the assessment efforts of the College. Just as any good Lannister "pays their debt", Student Affairs staff understand the important role assessment plays with accountability for continuous improvement of the resources, services, and programs to support the success of our students.

Collaboration is a consistent theme for assessment within Student Affairs this past year. Staff participated in the GAD Scoring Event with Academic Affairs. Additionally, Student Affairs developed outcomes related to GAD in Fall 2018 with staff from Student Life and the Office of Equity and Inclusion. Staff from these offic-

es received training on how to write a student learning outcome and develop an assessment plan that would measure student learning for different programs and activities within their offices. Another exciting area of collaboration was the Semester of Self Care: Year of Wellness program from College Counseling, Student Health Services, and Student Life. These offices worked together to develop a PPA Outcome based upon helping students learn about two methods/and resources for their self-care.

Student Affairs and Services assessment liaisons have been busy reaching out across the Minnesota State system to identify best practices and approaches to assessment within Student Affairs. This benchmarking has provided new and exciting methods that can be adapted to measure co-curricular student learning. Student Affairs and Enrollment Management is in the process of creating two new divisional student learning outcomes. The new student learning outcomes will be focused on how the division helps students find their purpose and establish goals on campus while identifying and accessing resources/support to achieve those goals.

ASSESSY FOR OUR DIVERSITY PARTNER

Kate Slisz is no stranger to RCTC! She currently serves as the EquityLogic™ Core Training for the Diversity Council of Rochester. In December 2018, Kate joined faculty and staff members from RCTC in an off-campus retreat to score over 560 Global Awareness and Diversity student artifacts from the Fall 2018 GAD collection period. As a result of these efforts to continuously improve, **the Assessy goes Kate Slisz from the Diversity Council.**
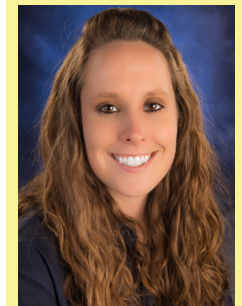
Kate says, "Scoring Global Awareness and Diversity artifacts gave me a deeper understanding and appreciation for all of the hard work that goes into the assessment processes at RCTC. It was great to see the strides the college has made towards infusing topics of diversity into the curriculum, and I am excited to see how the college builds upon this success in its quest for inclusive pedagogy."
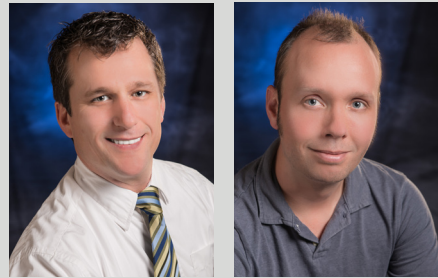
> "I have always depended on the kindness of strangers."
> Blanche Dubois in A Streetcar Named Desire

COMMITMENT TO STUDENT LEARNING IN A GATEWAY COURSE

The Assessy goes to…

Much like Robert Redford and Paul Newman in The Sting, Tim O'Neill and Brendan Shea work well together. They also spend a lot of time standing in hallways.

In the philosophy division, Ethics has been designated as a gateway course. The signature assessment developed for Ethics is associated with the division's learning outcome that states students should be able to apply the tools of philosophical inquiry to real-world ethical, social, scientific, or personal issues. Their rubric focuses on (1) understanding of concepts, principles and theories, (2) argumentative structure, and (3) self-awareness (i.e. objectivity). As part of the assessment, all students had access to a guide they created entitled "How to Write a Philosophy Paper".

Tim says, "Speaking just for myself, I made several changes to my teaching this year that I hope will improve writing scores. First, I assigned the RCTC Philosophy Department's How to Write a Philosophy Paper to my Ethics students. To this assignment, I attached a critical reading quiz to reinforce the points that could most improve their writing. I also assigned a draft self-assessment for the first two of three papers which guided the students through the main points of assessment. And, finally, I assigned a feedback self-assessment designed to ensure that students had read and considered my feedback on the first two papers. The data set is too small to claim any serious success, but I am hopeful that we will see improvement down the road."

As a result of these efforts to continuously improve, the **Assessy for Commitment to Student Learning in a Gateway Course goes to Philosophy!**

ASSESSY FOR BEST *CLOSING THE LOOP* PARTNERSHIP

"Carpe diem! Seize the day. Make your lives extraordinary!"
ROBIN WILLIAMS IN *DEAD POETS SOCIETY*

Through their collaboration, Jennifer Rubin and Diane Pollock have definitely made an extraordinary student assessment. In the Biology division, Jennifer Rubin designed an assessment in BIOL 1220-General Biology I. Jennifer's Closing the Loop addresses the course learning outcome that states students should be able to define and apply comprehensive biological terminology. The assessment is a quiz taken by students on D2L before and after the librarian presents information on library literacy and scientific research components.

In the Library, Diane Pollock designed her Closing the Loop submission to address the learning outcome that states students should be able to identify and find relevant materials. A 1-1/2-hour library instruction session presented to 3 groups of 24 Biology 1220 students. A pre-test was administered through D2L.

After several weeks, the instructor will administer the same test to measure improvement after hearing the instruction session and having a chance to use the information to seek relevant resources.

As a result of these efforts to continuously improve, the **Assessy for Unique Integration of Closing the Loop Assessment goes Jennifer Rubin and Diane Pollock!**

COLLEGE CORE OUTCOME ASSESSMENT:
THE CINDERELLA STORY

We do want our students to have their own Cinderella stories, their own successes, just like Bill did. That's why we are currently assessing two core outcomes at the college level: Global Awareness and Diversity and Personal and Professional Accountability.

Global Awareness and Diversity (GAD)

Global Awareness and Diversity (GAD) is in its last assessment collection period. After this collection, three semesters worth of assessment data will be compiled and analyzed. While we will not be collectively assessing GAD next year at the college-wide level, we will turn our focus to the "So What" of the data and will continue conversations regarding the value statements, assessment method, and improve upon how we address Global Awareness and Diversity at RCTC. As the Fall 2018 preliminary results show, overall non-Caucasian students continue to slightly out-perform Caucasian students. However, there is a noticeable gap in performance between Caucasian males and African American or black males.

So, what do these results mean? These results could be interpreted as reflecting the diversity of RCTC's wonderfully diverse student population. We have students from all over the world at our campus, in great numbers. It should be no surprise to us that our Somali, Hmong, Cambodian, Sudanese, Hispanic, Vietnamese, Iraqi, African-American, LGBQT, and Cuban students—to name just a few of our student populations—do well on global awareness/diversity assessments.

Personal and Professional Accountability (PPA)

The PPA value statements were revised Fall 2018 with input from students, faculty, and staff at several Student Success Days, Employee Development Days, and Faculty Duty Days. Feedback sessions were also held on both the Heintz Center and main campus. Along with the revised value statements, the feedback indicated that the former PPA Responsive Rubric was still a valid assessment tool for this core learning outcome. The tool has been updated to a more sustainable and reliable application. If you teach one or more of a PPA course and want additional assistance with the assessment or application, please contact Tricia Olinger at tricia.olinger@rctc.edu. As of 4-4-19, 10 (or 13%) of identified instructors have assessed 254 unique students in 14 different course sections using the PPA rubric in the new application.

Anne High, assessment enthusiast, says, "I just entered my PPA data…great tool, easy to work with!"

Cinderella story. Outta nowhere. A former greenskeeper, now, about to become the Masters champion. It looks like a mirac…It's in the hole! It's in the hole! It's in the hole!
BILL MURRAY IN *CADDYSHACK*

ASSESSY FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

During our March Employee Development Day, Guy Hamernik steadfastly remained in character during "Assessment Family Feud" despite intense heckling from two rowdy teams.
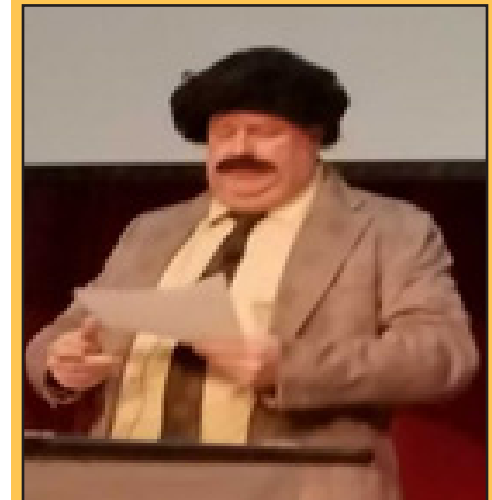
For looking handsome in a wig, and for guiding the audience through the intricacies of the Essential Learning Outcomes Framework, the College Core Outcomes, and assessment challenges, **Guy Hamernik wins the Assessy for Staff Development Day Assessment Guidance!**