ILEARN

IMPROVING THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE
ACROSS RED ROCKS NOW

RRCC Assessment Manual
August 2017

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Why Assessment?

Understanding why we participant in assessment processes is an important part of starting the assessment journey. As we all juggle multiple and sometimes competing priorities in our roles at RRCC, it may seem at first glance as though this piece isn't as important as the day-to-day tasks and needs of our areas. However, assessment helps us to do our jobs better and ensures that we are all working in support of the institution.
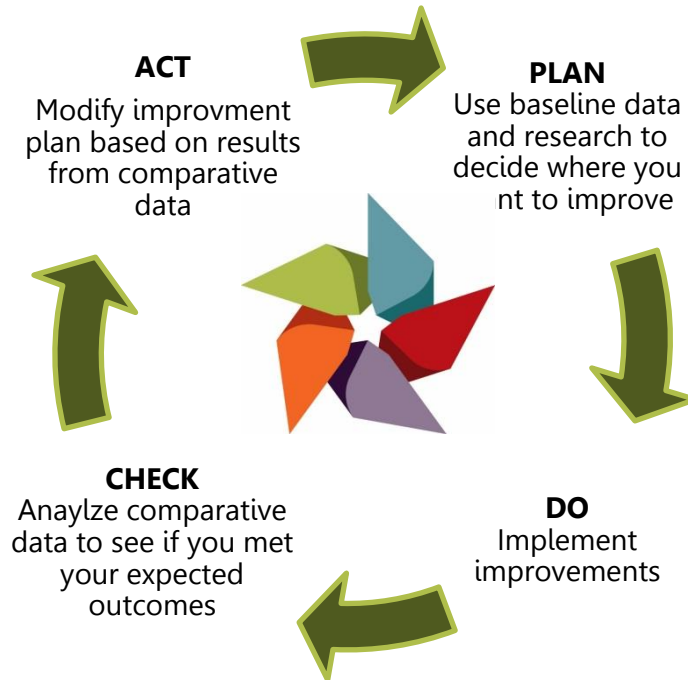
At RRCC, we engage in assessment for a myriad of reasons, but the primary four are these:

1. **We are committed to putting our students first.** Assessment efforts, at their heart, are aimed at improving our institution to increase the quality of the student experience. By assessing both operational aspects as well as student learning, we take a two-fold approach to finding the best and most innovative ways to consistently monitor and improve how we do our work. Whether looking at student learning outcomes in the classroom or in co-curricular programming, or finding more efficient ways to reach our students and provide them with support, the assessment process serves as a map pointing us to our students' needs and areas where our efforts to improve would have the most impact. If all other factors fell away, it is this commitment to student success that drives our commitment to assessment.
2. **We need to connect the operations of individual areas to the larger mission.** A high-functioning institution of higher education is mission-driven. We want to ensure that as we progress we are always keeping this in mind, and connecting our work to a larger purpose outside of our functional areas.
3. **We must make the most of limited resources.** In a climate where public funding of higher education is declining, we will continue to have ongoing tensions between providing the highest quality instruction and services possible, with efforts to keep tuition and costs to our students low. By connecting our budget processes to assessment, we can ensure that those programs and resources providing the largest impact to students are supported, and that we can continue to provide professional development and funding for initiatives that have proven to contribute to student success and classroom achievement.
4. **We are accountable to external stakeholders.** As is the case with all institutions receiving Title IV funding (Financial Aid), we are required to maintain accreditation through our regional accrediting body. RRCC is accredited through the Higher Learning Commission based out of Chicago, IL. Accreditation has multiple components—specific criteria is one piece, but the other is a commitment to continuous quality improvement. We must demonstrate that as an institution we are assessing our processes, collecting data, and making decisions and improvements based on those results. In addition to accreditation, assessment will help us to provide the best outcomes for students, which is important for performance-based funding at the state level. We are held accountable

for the retention and completion rates of students, and assessment will be the key to identifying where we can improve our efforts for student success.

What Is Assessment?

In the simplest terms, assessment is a continuous improvement cycle which utilizes data to inform decisions and actions.

ACT
Modify improvment plan based on results from comparative data

PLAN
Use baseline data and research to decide where you nt to improve

CHECK
Anaylze comparative data to see if you met your expected outcomes

DO
Implement improvements

What Is ILEARN?

ILEARN is Red Rocks take on a guided, formalized, and comprehensive, program review. Guided means that a framework has been mapped out with specific tasks to be completed over the course of four years. Formalized means that there will be a systematic process of informed decision making, communication, and documentation. By comprehensive, it means that instruction, student success, business services, student organizations, administrative units, special projects, etc. will participate in the evaluation process together. Comprehensive also means that the evaluation process will explore departmental growth, student learning, and budgetary needs.

In ILEARN, you will engage in two different types of assessment. The first begins with a self-assessment similar to a program review. From this snapshot, you will develop a Continuous

Improvement Plan for your Operational Unit (OU)[1]. This plan will focus on how you are serving students and how you operate as an OU. The second type of assessment is all about student learning, and will result in the creation of a Student Learning Assessment Plan. This plan will focus on measuring what students are learning as they engage in your classroom or with services offered by your OU. Student learning assessment should consider both content knowledge as well as RRCC's common learning goals.

The diagram below shows how both of these plans will support the overall mission of the institution, but how they are also separate in function.
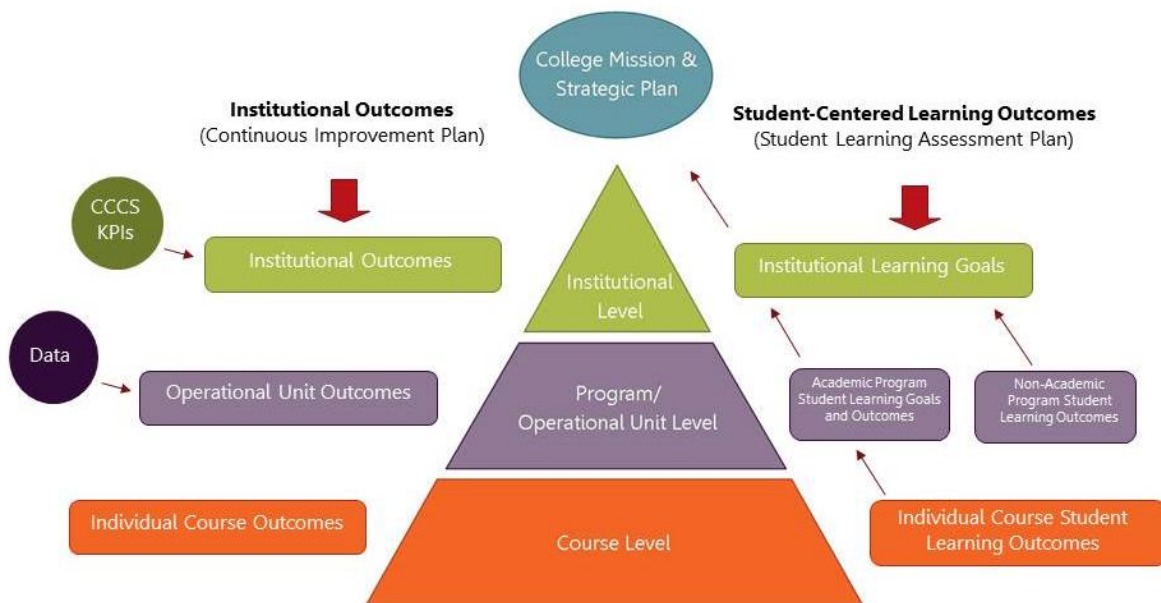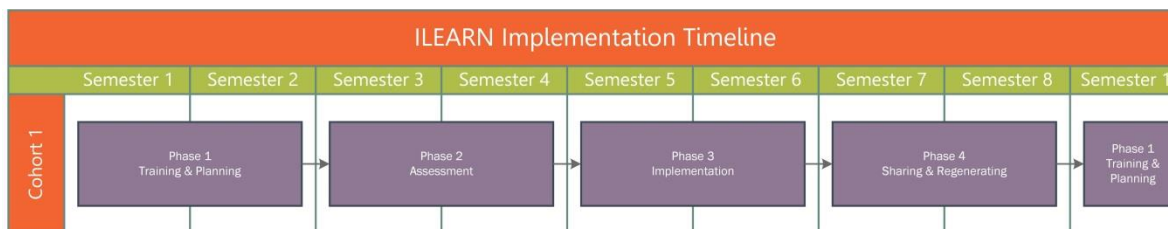

Mission

The mission of ILEARN is to improve the learning experience across Red Rocks by providing a guided, formalized, and comprehensive framework for program review leading to continuous improvement and renewal of the institution.

ILEARN utilizes a standard assessment cycle to answer key questions and propel the institution forward in continuous improvement and data-driven decision-making.

Timeline

ILEARN is divided into four phases to be carried out over the course of four years.

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[1] Instead of having our various areas divide into "departments" or "programs," we've chosen to allow functional areas to self-identify into "Operational Units." When determining your OU, it is helpful to consider the following questions: Who do I share a mission with? Who would it make sense for me to plan with? Is my work tied intricately with others in such a manner that we need a shared approach in developing a 4 year plan or learning outcomes?

ILEARN Implementation Timeline								
	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4	Semester 5	Semester 6	Semester 7	Semester 8	Semester 1

Cohort 1

Phase 1
Training & Planning → Phase 2
Assessment → Phase 3
Implementation → Phase 4
Sharing & Regenerating → Phase 1
Training & Planning

Who is involved?

Each cohort consists of a combination of departments from **across** campus. Cohort leaders will serve as collaborative mentors meeting regularly to learn about assessment and the ILEARN process. The cohort leaders will then work with their colleagues to develop and implement continuous improvement plans and student learning assessment initiatives. Ultimately, everyone at Red Rocks Community College will be either directly involved in the ILEARN process as cohort leaders or operational unit participants.

How does it work?

ILEARN is divided into five phases to be carried out over the course of four years. Cohort leaders attend monthly training sessions that focus on assessment cycles, mission and goals, data analysis, improvement plans, budget, and student learning assessment. Cohort leaders then take the information back to their constituents to begin planning and implementing improvement plans and student learning assessment.

Phase One: Training & Planning

During the first phase of ILEARN, Operational Units will have an opportunity to dedicate time to two planning processes: Continual Improvement Planning and Student Learning Assessment Planning. Participants will be guided through these processes by facilitators who will break each step down into manageable pieces. Some of these pieces have related resources and worksheets that are included in this manual as well.

Operational Unit Review and Continual Improvement Planning

The Operation Unit Review (program review) starts with a self-evaluation to reassure that the programs mission and goals align with the college's mission and strategic goals. Additionally, each academic/CTE program will be provided a data set typically including enrollment trends, course completion rates disaggregated by demographics, cost per FTE, and course capacity. Operational Units (OU) can also utilize research and trends in the specific field. These data sets or research will be utilized to create a continuous improvement plan (CIP). Participants will work with supervisors to establish improvement plans and budgetary needs. The Continuous Improvement Plan is completed during the first semester of ILEARN.

Phase Two: Assessment of Student Learning, a three step process.

1. **Documenting student learning goals** – Operational Units will identify both the content student learning goals, as well as which of the RRCC common learning outcomes are addressed through their curricular or co-curricular offerings.
2. **Developing an assessment plan** – Operational Units will develop strategies for assessing student learning and identify which methods they will utilize for collection of this data. Additionally, they will map out when and where student learning outcomes will be assessed and establish any budgetary needs in order to carry out their student learning assessment. Steps 1 and 2 of this process are completed during the first year of ILEARN (primarily during the 2nd semester). This lays the groundwork to assess learning and establish baseline data during year two.
3. **Establishing baseline data** – During **year two** of the ILEARN process, operational units will collect initial data on student learning. This will allow them to determine appropriate areas for improvement and identify strategies for improving student learning to carry out in the next phase – Implementation.

Phase Three: Action Plan Implementation

In year three of the ILEARN process, Operational Units will analyze the data collected on student learning during year two and develop strategies to improve student learning. The action plan will depend on identified student learning needs and context (classroom vs. co-curriucular activities), and may include curriculum review, formative assessments, teaching strategies, or modification/development of co-curricular programming. As these new approaches are implemented, OUs will continue to collect student learning data in order to assess the impact of these adaptations and determine their ongoing viability in service of student success.

Phase Four: Sharing & Regenerating

Because ILEARN is a comprehensive and collaborative approach to program review, sharing with the larger community is an imperative part of the process. Participants will have opportunities to present either their continuous improvement results or student learning assessment results with cohort partners, at campus events or through online posts. Documented evidence of ILEARN processes will be posted on the ILEARN page. This sharing of information also serves as a platform for Operational Units to "close the loop."

Before starting the ILEARN process again, Operational Units will have scheduled time to recognize a job well-done, celebrate success and learning, and enjoy time to regenerate before starting the process again.

Where ILEARN and the Budget Meet

During planning phases I, II, and implementation III, Operational Units will request budgetary needs to complete or carry out continuous improvement plans, student learning assessment plans, or action plan implementations. Cohort leaders will discuss budgetary needs with their supervisors who will then forward funding requests by February for the next fiscal year. Not all

requests will be met; however, discussion and negotiation will uncover potential funding sources and align requests with the strategic direction of the college.

Preparing to Begin the ILEARN Process

If you are embarking on ILEARN in an established cohort, there are a few planning items to consider before you begin the process:

Scheduling – ILEARN works best when there is consistent communication between representatives for an operational unit and the rest of their team members. Try to schedule at least one meeting with your operational unit between each large group ILEARN meeting to discuss important questions, establish goals together, and talk through any challenges in the process. Similarly, communication with your supervisor is critical. Establish a meeting schedule with your supervisor up front to discuss your OU's progress through ILEARN and work through any challenges you face. Ultimately, it will be your supervisor who needs to approve your proposal for continuous improvement, and the more they know about your process for developing it, the more likely they are to be in agreement on the end result.

Time Commitment – The first time you go through ILEARN, it can be time-consuming. While quality improvement is an expectation of every member of the college, Phase 1 can be more intense than phases 2 – 4. It is encouraged that you have a conversation with your supervisor to help you prioritize your duties during this first year so that you can dedicate ample time to this process.

Phase 1: Continuous Improvement Plan

Mission

The first step in beginning a new planning process is to review or develop the mission statement for your operational unit. A mission statement is a brief statement of the general values and principles which guide the program curriculum and/or departmental goals of your operational unit. It (1) defines the broad purpose the program is aiming to achieve, (2) describes the community the program is designed to serve, and (3) states the values and guiding principles which define its standards. Your mission statement should answer four questions:

1. **WHO** are we?
   What is the **name** of your operational unit?
2. **WHAT** do we do?
   What are the **primary functions** or activities of the program or unit? What are the most important functions, operations, outcomes, and/or offerings of the program or unit?
3. **WHY** do we do it?
   What is your **purpose**? What are the primary reasons why you perform your major activities or operations?
4. **FOR WHOM** do we do it?
   Who are your **stakeholders**? Who are the groups or individuals that participate in the program and those who will benefit from the program or unit?

When writing your operational unit mission statement, it is also critical to consider how it supports the larger mission of the institution. As we move forward in the planning process, alignment will be demonstrated with the RRCC mission and goals, and this foundation begins with the creation of you OU mission statement. Your statement may not need to explicitly connect with the RRCC mission, but it should do so at least implicitly. During the process of writing your mission statement, you may also want to reflect on the RRCC vision and values, included in Appendix A. OUs, particularly those in instruction, should consider the educational component to their mission as well as their operations.

> *RRCC Mission Statement*
>
> Our mission is to provide students with opportunities for growth and development that set the foundation for self-directed learning, academic achievement, and career accomplishment. We do this through high quality innovative educational programs that convey our passion for learning, our commitment to excellence, our dedication to our students, and the communities we serve.

To aid you in writing your OU mission statement, a sample format and two examples are included below.

Sample Format
The mission of (**name of your program or unit**) is to (**your primary purpose**) by providing (**your primary functions or activities**) to (**your stakeholders**). (Additional clarifying statements, **only if necessary**.)

Sample Instructional Mission Statement
The mission of the **RRCC math department** is **to provide an affordable and rigorous mathematical foundation** to **all students in STEM transfer programs as well as any associates degrees at RRCC**. We do this by **teaching students to think critically and quantitatively in everyday life, by training students to communicate and apply mathematical concepts effectively, and by maintaining high expectations in each course's content**.

Sample Student Success Mission Statement
RRCC TRiO Student Support Services breaks down barriers to education and empowers our participants to be successful in navigating the systems of higher education. We do this by **providing comprehensive support services, utilizing an intentional, strengths-based approach with our participants and by providing them with tools and support to develop skills in resilience and self-advocacy**.

Sample Administrative Mission Statement
The mission of the **Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment** is to **promote institutional effectiveness through ongoing, systematic planning and assessment efforts in order to support faculty and staff in achieving the institutional mission.**

A mission writing worksheet containing this information is included in Appendix B. Once you have your operational unit mission solidified, you are ready to begin establishing goals and objectives.


Goals and Objectives

There are multiple levels to any planning process. We began by developing operational unit mission statements that align with the institutional mission statement. Now it's time to create some goals for your area. You may have heard the acronym SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) to refer to goals in the past. This actually applies more to objectives than goals. For our purposes here, we define these terms as such:

> **GOALS**: statements which describe broad outcomes and concepts expressed in general terms

> **OBJECTIVES**: are the specific outcomes which support the operational unit goals; these will be measurable and have timelines attached to them

Goals

Keeping in mind that we plan in order to ensure continuous improvement, goals are those broad statements about what we want to accomplish that would support us in realizing our mission and moving forward in our work. When constructing goals, there are several other pieces that should inform the direction we take.

RRCC Goals and Strategic PLan → Operational Unit Goals ← Data

OU Mission Statement → Operational Unit Goals
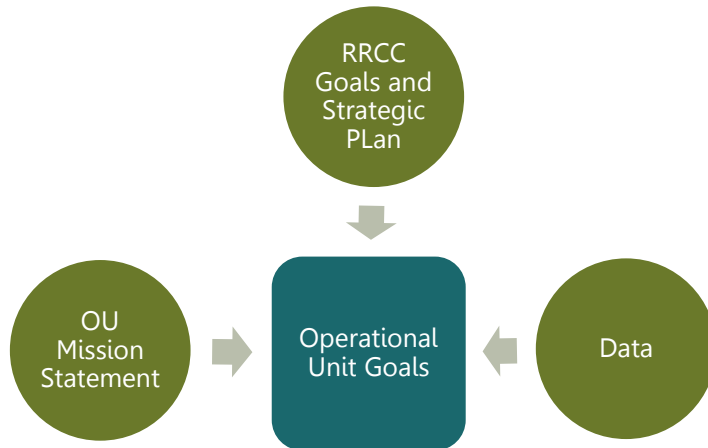
Analyzing Data – Instructional Units

Each instructional OU is provided a data set annually which will typically include the following components:

1. FTE (Full Time Equivalent) Enrollment
2. ABC Completions (students who passed a course with a grade of A, B, or C) disaggregated by race and gender
3. FTE by campus
4. Cost per FTE
5. Prefix and Course Capacity

These data sets are intended to be your foundation for reviewing the current state of your OU. The intention is that by examining these, as well as considering your mission and the RRCC goals and strategic plans, you will be able to identify where improvement is most needed or could make the greatest impact. Using data to make decisions is crucial, and a step that is sometimes forgotten. Anecdotes are wonderful for illustrating our successes or challenges, but when we are making decisions about our goals and priorities, data is our best source of information.

There may be other data points that inform the direction you take in your improvement planning. Some other sources to consider would be best practices and trends in your area or discipline, input from advisory committees, changes in the RRCC service area or industry need, etc. The important part to remember is that your goals for your OU should connect back to the

larger goals of RRCC.   A good starting point may be the Key Performance Indicators from the Colorado Community College System:

1. Number of undergraduate credentials issued
2. Transfer out rate to public and private institutions of degree seeking students both in total and for those with at least twelve credit hours
3. Retention rate across all levels of full and part time students from fall to fall
4. Developmental course completion rates
5. Number of degrees and certificates and transfers of underserved students
6. Overall number of underserved students
7. Levels of resident FTE enrollment.

Some examples of improvement projects reflective of data and institutional goals may include the following:

- Closing the achievement gap (ABC completion rates or credentials awarded) between white students and students of color.
- Increasing enrollment in your program (either overall or underserved students)
- Increasing the transfer out rate for students in your program
- Increasing course or semester to semester retention
- Decreasing or streamlining activities

Again, your goals may be broad, but that is okay. The key at this stage is for the goal to be clear. We will identify the specific objectives required to support the goal in the next section.

Analyzing Data – Administrative and Student Success Units
While common data sets are provided to instructional units, the work of Student Success and Administrative units can be fairly unit specific. Each unit will be provided institutional data sets with information on college retention and completion as these are the broad areas that our work is intended to support. Because the missions vary so widely, in some cases it may be up to the unit to determine what the most appropriate specific data points are to review for goal-setting. As a starting point, these units may want to consider how their work supports the larger institutional mission, goals, and strategic plan.   From there, data points can be establish that would reflect how well they are doing in fulfilling their own mission in that context. As with instructional units, however, it is good practice to begin by considering how your work may support the seven CCCS Key Performance Indicators:

1. Number of undergraduate credentials issued
2. Transfer out rate to public and private institutions of degree seeking students both in total and for those with at least twelve credit hours
3. Retention rate across all levels of full and part time students from fall to fall
4. Developmental course completion rates
5. Number of degrees and certificates and transfers of underserved students
6. Overall number of underserved students
7. Levels of resident FTE enrollment.

It may be appropriate to look at how you are serving students (for student success units) or supporting the infrastructure of the college (for administrative units). Are your interactions prompt? Are students/faculty/staff getting what they need from your OU? Are you running efficiently and completing tasks with accuracy? Are the populations you serve and your practices reflective of institutional goals? You may already collect data that provides insight to some of these questions. A good starting place is always to look at what you have available. In some cases, new data may need to be collected to evaluation how your OU is functioning. In these cases, you can work with the Assessment Committee to narrow the scope of what data would be most appropriate in order to put in a request with Institutional Research.

There may be still other sources of data that can help to guide your goal-setting. Are there established expectations or professional guidance on how your area should function? Organizations such as the Council for the Advancement of Standards, NASPA, or others may have established maps for improvement that could provide a starting place. Research or best practices can count as data, but be sure to cite them as such as you develop your plan. Again, be sure anything you pull from such sources is also in line with the RRCC mission and institutional goals.

Some examples of improvement projects reflective of data and institutional goals may include the following:

- Shorten wait times for students seeking advising services
- Reduce errors in reporting to internal or external agencies
- Increase student use of services in your OU
- Improve processes to increase student or employee satisfaction
- Converting more applicants to students
- Increasing retention rates for students participating in a particular program

Writing Your Goals
How your OU goes about writing your goals is up to you. You may want to consider utilizing the steps on the Goal Writing Worksheet (Appendix C) to assist you in the process. The number of goals will vary by operational unit, as will the types. Your goals should capture the big picture ways your operational unit wants to develop or improve over the next 4 years. It is important to communicate with your OU during the process of goal writing. The more support and collaboration there is in establishing the goals, the more enthusiasm there will generally be for engaging with the changes necessary to reach them.

Objectives & Outcomes
Objectives and outcomes support the operational unit goals. Objectives are specific steps you will take in order to achieve the goal. Outcomes define an end result once objectives are completed. They are measurable and have timelines attached to them.   At this stage it is beneficial to utilize the Proposal Template (Appendix D) to aggregate all the work you've done

so far, as well as to document your plan in an easily readable and editable format.

OU Goal	Objective	Data used to Evaluate (the objective)	Benchmark/ Internal Target Outcome	Deadline/ Date to Assess	Person Responsible
Goal 1:	1a.				
	1b.				
	1c.				
Goal 2:	2a.				
	2b.				
	2c.				
Goal 3:	3a.				
	3b.				
	3c.				

When filling out the line for each objective, consider the following:

1. Goal – make sure each objective is aligned with the goal it is supporting
2. Data – Is there data you can look at to measure progress or completion?
3. Benchmark/Target Outcome– If you have data from other institutions or outside sources to benchmark against, feel free to include it. If you have your own data or are starting from scratch, try to set an internal target. If you miss it, that is okay! The important thing is to have something to shoot for. As your OU gets more comfortable with assessment, deciding on targets will become more comfortable and patterns of growth will be established.
4. Deadline/Date to Assess – Determine when you will evaluate the status of the objective. Is it something reviewed annually? If so, when? Is it something that simple needs to be completed? Set a deadline.
5. Person Responsible – Even for those objectives that may require a team to complete, choose one person for accountability. That way it is much more likely that the task will get done and you'll also know who to check with on progress reports.

Budget
There may be budget requests associated with improvement plans. It is strongly encouraged in the interest of fiscal responsibility to first look at current operating budgets to determine if funds can be reallocated to accommodate needs associated with an improvement plan. If this is not feasible, then a request would be in order. This process would begin in a conversation between an Operational Unit and the supervisor to review their proposal for improvement and any associated costs. Once a proposal is approved by the supervisor, they the supervisor will include any budget requests in their annual budget submission in the spring of the current year. From there it moves up to the executive team for consideration as the budget for the next fiscal year is developed. There is no guarantee for new expenditures. However, RRCC is committed to

aligning our budget with those initiatives which advance the institutional mission and goals, so the documentation you've compiled at this point provides a solid foundation for the request.

Continuous Improvement Plan Summary

Part of RRCC's goal for continuous improvement is to establish mechanisms for all members of the college community to share the ways in which they are working to move the institution forward. As you may imagine, the level of detail mapped in the proposal template is more than the average person needs to get a sense of what you are trying to accomplish. For that reason, we have developed a shortened document to use for sharing on the ILEARN website.

The Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) Summary contains five short sections: (1) focus, (2) data, (3) measures of success, (4) comparative data, and (5) conclusions and future action. In the planning phases, only the first three sections are completed. Sections four and five are completed at the end of Phase 2: Assessment. The CIP Summary can be found in Appendix E.

Your OU may have developed multiple goals as part of your proposal. However, for the purposes of the CIP summary, it is best to focus on one goal per CIP. If you are currently in a cohort completing the first year of ILEARN, the expectation is to complete one CIP summary for your OU.   Choose the goal that seems most important or relevant. This may be the goal with the highest priority, or the one with the strongest tie to institutional goals.

Phase 1: Student Learning Assessment Plan

According to Garfolo and L'Huillier[2], "Assessment is an ongoing, continuing improvement process aimed at understanding and elevating student learning. Assessment involves:

1. Having clear, explicitly and transparent expectations for both the student and the institution.
2. Setting the criteria for learning at an appropriate level to demonstrate quality of learning.
3. Gathering, analyzing, and reflecting on the evidence in a systematic way to determine if student learning has occurred to the depth and breadth stated.
4. Using the information gathered to document, explain, and elevate student learning.

Learning Goals

The first step to assessing student learning is to develop broad learning goals for your operational unit. These goals should be **student-focused**. It's important to note that these goals are also broad—they do not need to be measurable on their own; you will be developing student learning outcomes (SLOs) which are measurable and support these learning goals.

Academic Operational Units

If you are from an academic operational unit (i.e. World Languages, Math, Theatre and Performing Arts, etc.), you'll want to ask yourself these questions as you think about your learning goals:

- Looking at your mission, what should students who take 1 or 2 of your classes learn?
- Looking at your mission, what should students who are seeking a certification or degree in your program/OU learn?

Student Services Units

If you are from a student services unit, your focus will be on co-curricular learning. To begin thinking about your learning goals, consider these questions:

- Looking at your mission, what should students know or be able to do after participating in your programs and/or utilizing your services?
- What are students learning by their interactions with our OU?

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[2] Barfolo, Blaine T. and L'Huillier, Barbara L., "Demystifying Assessment: The Road to Accreditation," *Journal of College Teaching and Learning*, 2015, Vol.12, Number 3.

Administrative Units

Administrative operational units will not necessarily have student learning goals. The way these units support student learning if often by providing the necessary resources, technology, or infrastructure to facilitate the learning process. However, if your area has a large number of student employees, you may want to consider what they are or should be learning from their job duties in your area and establish learning outcomes around those competencies.

Student Learning and Common Learning Outcomes

A **learning outcome** examines cognitive skills that students (or other stakeholders) develop through classroom activities or department interactions. A learning outcome is typically course and/or task specific. Furthermore, learning outcomes:

- Indicate what a participant (usually students) will know, think, or be able to do as a result of an event, activity, program, etc.
- Need to be specific and measurable
- Translate intentions into actions (use action verbs)

An example of a learning outcome would be: Students should will able to locate and identify features on topographic maps by latitude and longitude.

To begin thinking about your OU's learning outcomes, consider the ABCD approach[3].

Audience/Who	•Who does the outcome pertain to?
Behavior/What	•What do you expect the audience to know/be able to do?
Condition/How	•Under what conditions or circumstances will the learning occur?
Degree/How Much	•How much will be accomplished, how well will the behavior need to be performed, and to what level?

Examples

- After attending a financial aid session, students will be able to accurately fill out the FAFSA form.
- As a result of three meetings with an academic coach, students will be able to compare study strategies that are appropriate for their learning style.

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[3] Adapted from "Assessment 101 The Basics of Writing Learning Outcomes," Campus Labs, July 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hP8HirGnVy4

While the first three pieces of the ABCD approach are fairly straightforward, sometimes it can be challenging to determine the level of learning. This may be particularly true for student services units who may have limited time with students in a given context. For some guidance on identifying the appropriate level of learning, you can refer to Bloom's Taxonomy for some guidance.

Writing learning outcomes can be a challenging endeavor. To provide a jumpstart, you may consider looking to professional organizations in your area or discipline as many of these may have established some basic learning outcomes you can use as a starting point and edit to be most appropriate for your students.

Remember: Learning outcomes should always be **meaningful** (How dies the outcome support the departmental mission or goal?), **manageable** (What is needed to foster the achievement of the outcome? Is the outcome realistic?), and **measurable** (How will you know if the outcome is achieved? What will be the assessment method?).

RRCC Common Learning Competencies

Red Rocks Community College has established a set of Common Learning Competencies that we instill in our students regardless of discipline or area of study. These competencies are assessed across the institution, in both instructional and student services contexts. The RRCC competencies are as follows:

- An RRCC graduate is a Critical Thinker.
- An RRCC graduate is Technologically Literate.
- An RRCC graduate is an Effective Communicator.
- An RRCC graduate is Globally Aware and understands and respects Diversity.
- An RRCC graduate is Ethical and Professional.
- An RRCC graduate uses Quantitative Reasoning.

These competencies are not measurable in and of themselves. However, (almost) every competency has pre-written outcomes aligned with it from the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)   Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) Competencies. These outcomes are also part of our agreement for GT Pathways courses, and specific outcomes are required from certain courses as a result. A table with the alignment between the RRCC Common Learning Competencies, the LEAP Competencies, and links to the specific learning outcomes for each competency is provided below. A more detailed document with more descriptive language and alignment with specific GT courses is provided in Appendix F. Competencies may be measured through assignments and activities and directly linked to student learning outcomes; however, RRCC Common Learning Competencies and LEAP Competencies are not intended for grading. Instead, they provide a platform for discussing student learning across the campus.

RRCC Common Learning Competencies	AAC&U LEAP Competencies	Links to LEAP Outcomes & VALUE Rubrics
Critical Thinker	Critical Thinking	Critical Thinking: 2a-c, 5a-b
	Information Literacy	Information Literacy: 3a-b, 4a, 5a
	Inquiry & Analysis	Inquiry & Analysis: 4a, 5a-b, 6a
	Problem Solving	Problem Solving
Technologically Literate		
Effective Communicator	Oral/Presentational Communication	Oral/Presentational Communication: 2a, 3a-b, 4a
	Written Communication	Written Communication: 1a, 2a, 3a, 4a-b, 5a
Globally Aware and understands and respects Diversity	Civic Engagement	Civic Engagement: 2a
	Diversity & Global Learning	Diversity & Global Learning: 1a, 2a, 3a
Ethical and Professional		
Quantitative Reasoning	Quantitative Literacy	Quantitative Literacy: 1a, 2a, 3a-c, 4a-c, 5a (and 6a for Statistics courses)

To ensure that RRCC is addressing our common learning competencies as an institution, assessment data from these outcomes is filtered up from the program level to the Assessment Committee for data analysis and review. As you develop your plan for measuring these outcomes, be sure that this data can be extracted on its own to forward for review. Remember, competencies are not graded, rather performance is identified by the extent to which a competency is met. Rubrics for each competency is provided in the links above.

Measuring Your Outcomes

There are a wide variety of ways to measure student learning outcomes. Most of these methods can be divided into two categories: direct measures and indirect measures[4].

Direct measures are those that measure student learning by evaluating examples of student work, such as oral presentations, writing assignments, theses or dissertations and exams.

Indirect measures are those that measure student learning by assessing opinions or ideas about knowledge, skills, attitudes and perceptions.

Because direct measures are correlated much more strongly with student learning, these types of methods are preferable. However, indirect measures can provide important contextual

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[4] This section taken from https://provost.wisc.edu/assessment/direct-indirect-measures.htm

information and feedback as well; they just shouldn't be the sole source of data collected to establish achievement of student learning outcomes.

Examples of each type of measure are provided below.

Direct Measures	Indirect Measures
Rubrics	Student surveys
Capstone course evaluations	Exit Interviews
Course embedded assessments	Alumni surveys
Tests and examinations	Employer surveys
Performance evaluations	Curriculum and syllabus analysis
Portfolio evaluations	External reviewers
Pre-test/Post-test evaluations	Course evaluations
Thesis/dissertation evaluations	Reflective writing
Direct Observations	

There is also a distinction between formative and summative assessment.

The goal of **formative assessment** is "to *monitor student learning* to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning."[5] Formative assessments allow students and instructors to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement and to address areas of concern immediately.

The goal of **summative assessment** is "to *evaluate student learning* at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark." Summative assessments often come in the form of exams, papers, final projects. Because it measures end result, summative assessment does not intervene with the current students. This isn't to say that summative assessment shouldn't inform our teaching practice. On the contrary, these measures can be used in a formative manner in a full assessment cycle where we utilize the results to improve the delivery of material or strategies for teaching. Operational units may want to start with summative assessment and then include formative measures as part of the improvement plan.

Once you have determined both your course/activity student learning outcomes and which of the common learning outcomes you plan to assess, you can fill out the Student Learning Assessment Plan found in Appendix G and Appendix H. Two options are presented and which one you choose will simply depend on your preferred style of organization and documentation.

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[5] https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/basics/formative-summative.html

Phase 2: Assessment

Once planning is complete, we move into the assessment and data collection phase of ILEARN. During this time, you will be monitoring progress on your Continuous Improvement Plan, as well as collecting (baseline) data for your Student Learning Assessment Plan. Reporting mechanisms for these pieces are still in development, but this section provides some general guidance on how to stay abreast of the process.

Updating Your Continuous Improvement Plan

It is suggested that you review your Continuous Improvement Plan on a quarterly basis to ensure that you are sticking to your timeline and moving forward. It is also important to continue to communicate progress to your supervisor and to work with them to address any hurdles that may arise.

At the end of year two and each subsequent year, you will be asked to submit an updated CIP summary, which will include the status or results from your efforts at that point in time. If you have formative assessment results, it is absolutely acceptable (and encouraged) to take those into consideration and modify your plan accordingly.

Collection of Student Learning Data

In the first cycle of ILEARN, most OUs will be collecting baseline data on student learning during this phase. As such, OUs should take time at the end of each semester to review the data they have collected and determine if it can be used in a formative way to improve learning during the following semester.

Now that baseline data on learning is available, it will be the charge of your OU to identify how you want to approach improving learning for your students. As you think through options in this area, keep in mind the resources available to you at the college.

The Zoo
https://www.rrcc.edu/zoo

The Zoo is a faculty initiative to develop and organize professional development in teaching and learning. Through workgroups, brown bags events, reflective practice groups and more, the Zoo creates opportunities for faculty and staff to learn, share, and promote best practices in education.

ILEARN Work Groups

Your colleagues in ILEARN can serve as a great resource for brainstorming and sharing success and challenges. Particularly because of the synchronistic timing, members of

your cohort will be examining their data and teaching practices when you are, and can provide an excellent sounding board for ideas you are contemplating.

Instructional Design and Innovation Center
http://www.rrcc.edu/instructional-design

Interested in exploring innovations in teaching and learning? Using a new technology? Redesigning your instructional activities? The IDIC is here to help. The mission of the instructional Design and Innovation Center (IDIC) at Red Rocks Community College is to guide and support faculty and staff to integrate technology into the classroom.

Inclusion & Diversity
http://www.rrcc.edu/diversity

The Center for Inclusion and Diversity strives to create a climate of inclusion where students, faculty, and staff are supported and empowered in their personal journeys. If you have goals around equity in outcomes or are looking for ways to support students or provide an equitable classroom environment, Inclusion & Diversity offers training opportunities and consultation.

RRCC Common Learning Outcome Data

Results from your data collection on the RRCC Common Learning Competencies will be transferred to a Common Learning Assessment & Implementation Report that will be provided to the RRCC Assessment Committee. This committee will identify college wide trends in student learning needs, areas for professional development, and synthesize data for a more holistic understanding of learning at RRCC in regards to the Common Learning Competencies.

Phase 3: Implementation

At this point in the process, you've developed your Student Learning Assessment & Implementation Report, and you are ready to improve student learning! It is also at this point that you may be realizing that while this seems simple enough, there are still components that you need to consider.

Communication

- How will you ensure that everyone in your OU knows about the improvement plan and provides any necessary feedback?
- How will you ensure that people outside your OU are aware of significant changes, especially if they will be affected?
- Is there one communication channel that will reach everyone? Often multiple methods of communication will be most effective.
- What approach will you take to communication to ensure buy-in from your OU?
- How will you keep your supervisor informed about improvements and results?

Training for Staff, Faculty, and Adjuncts

- What types of training will members of your OU need in order to implement your improvement plan?
- What costs are associated with any needed professional development?
- Will you need the same training for faculty and instructors?
- Will training needs be universal, or role/course dependent?

Collaboration

Throughout the implementation phase, it is critical to work in a collaborative way both within your OU and across the college. The students in our classes, in our programs, and utilizing campus services do not compartmentalize their experiences. Supporting the work of each other is imperative. If we implement a new piece of technology in the classroom, students will need support to utilize it. If we adapt a process for students, faculty need to be aware so that they can speak to it accurately (or know where to direct the student). We are all working to improve the student experience and student learning outcomes, and therefore need to work together for their best end result.

Phase 4: Sharing & Regenerating

For those who have gone through the ILEARN process in a cohort, you likely have had ample opportunity to share your progress with your colleagues along the way. Because RRCC is an institution committed to continuous quality improvement, we also want to share our assessment discoveries beyond your cohort. The Assessment Committee is the group responsible for designing opportunities for you to share your findings, challenges, and successes. Some possible avenues for sharing include:

- Presentation at RRCC Assessment Conference
- Session for one of the colleges biannual Development Days
- Poster presentation during Work Week
- Blog entry on the ILEARN website

While the precise mechanism you will be asked to share with may vary, plan on presenting your findings during year 4 of the ILEARN cycle. Other than sharing, this year is a year to relax and take a break. We hope that you will reflect on what you have both accomplished and learned, and be ready to embark again on Phase 1 the following year.

Glossary[6]

Assessment: The process of observing learning; describing, collecting, recording, scoring, and interpreting information about courses/programs/services undertaken for the purpose of improving the institution, services, programs, and student learning and development.

Common Learning Competencies: the Common Learning Competencies are the broad learning goals RRCC shares as an institution; they were developed by a committee of faculty with staff representation, and have been adopted as those skills that all RRCC graduates should share regardless of degree program; the Common Learning Competencies are taught both through classroom instruction and co-curricular programming and include: critical thinking, technological literacy, effective communication, global awareness and respect for diversity, ethical and professional behavior, and quantitative reasoning. While the Common Learning Competencies are broad statements about learning, they are measured through specific AAC&U LEAP learning outcomes and the associated VALUE rubrics.

Common Learning Outcomes: Common Learning Outcomes are the AAC&U LEAP learning outcomes which align with the RRCC Common Learning Competencies. (link to outcomes and scoring rubrics)

Goal: an end result written in broad terms; goals need not be measurable on their own, but the associated objectives would be

Student Learning Outcomes: Measurable statements that describe specific student behaviors that provide of evidence acquisition of desired knowledge, skills, or attitudes; learning outcomes are most often attached to specific activities, assignments, or courses

Objective: a specific step intended to assist in the achievement of a goal

Outcome: the result of an action or intended action; outcomes are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely

Formative Assessment: An assessment used during the course of instruction to provide feedback to the teacher and learner about the learner's progress toward desired educational outcomes; the results of formative assessments are often used in planning subsequent instruction.

Summative Assessment: Outcome-based use of assessments, often for decisions such as grading, program evaluation, tracking, or accountability

Evaluation: The use of qualitative and quantitative descriptions to judge individual, course, program and institutional effectiveness. Depending on the level, evaluation information is used

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[6] Glossary definitions adapted and/or borrowed from the following sources: http://www.cal.org/flad/tutorial/resources/7keyterms.html, https://www.mvcc.edu/institutional-research-and-assessment/glossary-of-assessment-terms-pdf,

for making decisions about individual performance review, student grades and course, program and institutional changes for improvement.

Baseline data: data collected to provide an information base against which to monitor and assess an activity's progress and effectiveness during implementation and after the activity is completed

Comparative data: data collected after an activity or intervention which is compared to baseline data in order to assess the success of the improvement strategy

Assessment cycle: a series of recurring steps in which information is gathered and actions are taken in order to improve outcomes; at the most basic level, this cycle can be described as plan-do-check-act

Cohort: a group of people who move through a process or series of activities together; in ILEARN this refers to the group of people beginning the process at the same time (Cohort 1 – Fall 2017, Cohort 2 – Fall 2018)

Test development: Process of creating a test; steps of test development (Hughes, 2003): (1) State the goals of the test, (2) Write test specifications, (3) Write and revise items, (4) Try items with native speakers and accept/reject items, (5) Pilot with non-native speakers with similar backgrounds as the intended test-takers, (6) Analyze the trials and make necessary revisions, (7) Calibrate scales, (8) Validate, (9) Write test administrator handbook, test materials, (10) Train staff as appropriate.

Program Review: a process that provides the opportunity for operational units to reflect on their work to re-align with the college's mission and strategic plan, engage in dialogue to determine strengths, areas of improvement, aspirations, current research, and budgetary needs, and to establish a continuous improvement plan. Program reviews should be completed every four years and focus on both operational and student learning assessment. ILEARN is RRCC's take on program review.

Annual Data Review: Starting Fall 2017, academic units will review various data sets typically including FTE trends, student demographics, course completion rates, certificate or program completion, course capacity, and cost per FTE. The data can be used to guide the program review process.

Additional Terminology Resources

Common Assessment Terms. Carnegie Mellon University, Eberly Center.
Key Assessment Terms. Understanding Assessment: A Guide for Foreign Language Educators, Center for Applied Linguistics.

A Glossary of Assessment-related Terminology. Mohawk Valley Community College.

Resources

Mission Statements

- [How to Write a Program Mission Statement](). Uconn.
- [Writing an Effective Mission Statement](). Texas Tech University.

Operational Goals & Objectives

- [Assessment Primer: Goals, Objectives and Outcomes](). UConn.
- [Creating Measures of Success for Your Plan](). University of Wisconsin, Madison.
- [OAPA Handbook - Program Based Review and Assessment](). UMass Amherst.
- *Example*s
    - Department of Mathematics. Pacific Lutheran University. https://www.plu.edu/math/mission-goals/

Student Learning Goals and Outcomes

- Beasley, J. *Writing learning outcomes*. Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Center for Teaching and Learning.
- *Guidelines for well-written student learning outcome statements*. Office of Academic Assessment, Texas Woman's University.
- *How to write program objectives/outcomes*. University of Connecticut.
- Kennedy, D., Hyland, A., & Ryan, N. *Writing and using learning outcomes: a practical guide*.
- *Learning outcomes assessment planning guide*. (2013). California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California. http://www.academicprograms.calpoly.edu/content/assessment/assessplanguide
- Miller, R., & Leskes, A. (2005). *Levels of assessment: From the student to the institution*. Association of American Colleges and Universities: Washington, D.C.
- Stassen, M.L.A., Doherty, K., & Poe, M. (2001). *Program-based review and assessment: Tools and techniques for program improvement*. Office of Academic Planning & Assessment, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
- *Student learning outcomes*. Tulane University.
- *Developing & writing course-level student learning outcomes*. University of Rhode Island.
- *Developing & writing program-level student learning outcomes*. University of Rhode Island.
- *Structuring an outcome statement*. Student Affairs Assessment & Research, University of Oregon.

- *Writing effective learning outcome statements*. Texas Tech University.
- *Writing learning outcomes*. The Florida State University, Office of Distance Learning.
- *Writing student learning outcomes*. Office of Institutional Assessment, Texas A&M University.
- *Writing student learning outcomes for course syllabi*. University of West Florida.
- *Writing SMART Learning Objectives*. Office of Experiential Learning, University of Central Florida.
- *Examples of Student Learning Goals*:
    - History Department. Niagara University.
      https://www.niagara.edu/history-mission-and-goals/
    - History Department. Presbyterian College.
      https://www.presby.edu/academics/undergraduate/academic-departments-programs/history-department/values-goals/
    - Teacher Education Program. University of Mount Union.
      http://www.mountunion.edu/mission-and-goals-7
- Bloom's Taxonomy

Measuring Outcomes
- Assessment Methods
- Direct vs. Indirect Assessment Measures. Community College of Aurora.
- How to Use Assessment Strategies. The Science Education and Resource Center at Carleton College.

Program Review
- Program Review. Mesa Community College.

Appendix A: RRCC Annual Implementation Goal Planning for 2017 - 2018

RRCC Mission

Our mission is to provide students with opportunities for growth and development that set the foundation for self-directed learning, academic achievement, and career accomplishment. We do this through high quality, innovative educational programs that convey our passion for learning, our commitment to excellence, and our dedication to our students and the communities we serve.

RRCC Values

1. Integrity
2. Collaboration
3. Learning
4. Inclusiveness
5. Communication

2013-2018 RRCC Strategic Plan Goals

- Student Success
- Community Engagement
- Institutional Renewal
- A Culture of Inquiry and Evidence

2017-2018 Quality Indicators/CCCS System Indicators

1. Increase the number of undergraduate credentials issued by 2% (+61).
2. Increase the transfer out rate to public and private institutions of degree seeking students, both in total and for those with at least twelve credit hours by 1% (+10).
3. Increase the retention rate across all levels of full and part time students from fall to fall by 1% (+40).
4. Improve remedial course completion rates by 1% (65%).
5. Increase the number of degrees and certificates and transfers of underserved students by 3% (+20).
6. Increase in the overall number of underserved students by 2% (+57).
7. Maintain current levels of resident FTE enrollment (5,038).

2017-2018 ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION GOALS

1. Expand the pilot of First Year Experience (FYE) by developing a peer mentoring program, redesigning new student orientation and embedding FYE material into gateway courses. (Key Budget Initiative for FY 2017-2018)
2. Guided Pathways/EAB Navigate. Ensure students are given tools to help them determine the pathway best suiting their educational, degree and career goals. Establish Student Success Navigators improving onboarding and enhance career services and internships. (Key Budget Initiative for FY 2017-2018)
3. Increase institutional focus in STEM education and providing experiential learning for students. Opportunities include IDEA - Institute for Design Engagement and Action, STEM Scholars, increasing civic engagement through service learning, study abroad, and connecting with business coaches in the center for entrepreneurship. (Key Budget Initiative for FY 2017-2018)
4. Integrate the professional development activities of the College to align with the College's strategic objectives. (Key Budget Initiative for FY 2017-2018)
   a. Centralize the professional development functions of the College and utilize a Teaching Learning Center workgroup to identify and coordinate comprehensive development opportunities for faculty and staff
   b. Develop a mentoring system for all employees and incorporate performance management practices that are centered on supervisors serving as mentors and coaches.
   c. Implement individual employee development plans (IDP).
   d. Develop an employee training and development series.
5. Operate a student-run clinic in partnership with local government and non-profit organizations that support services to strengthen families during times of crisis. RRCC Physician Assistants will provide patient centered care with the supervision of senior family medical residents. (Key Budget Initiative for FY 2017-2018)
6. Increase resources that support high quality learning experiences (Key Budget Initiative for FY 2017-2018):
   a. Bring the Lakewood Recreation Center in service and upgrade science labs providing resources that support student success
   b. Complete the design phases for renovations on the Lakewood Campus backfilling spaces vacated by programs relocated to the newly expanded Arvada Campus.
   c. The College fundraising goal through the office of Institutional Advancement is $1M in grants and $1M cash for a total of $2M.
7. Continue to develop the new Honors Program.
8. Continue to build the new Innovation Hub to support new initiatives.
9. Continue building International Education and Globalization of the Curriculum and Campus.
10. Prepare for the November 2018 Comprehensive Quality Review visit to continue HLC/AQIP accreditation.

Appendix B: Mission Writing Worksheet

MISSION DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET

RRCC Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide students with opportunities for growth and development that set the foundation for self-directed learning, academic achievement, and career accomplishment. We do this through high quality innovative educational programs that convey our passion for learning, our commitment to excellence, our dedication to our students, and the communities we serve.

Questions to ask

Who are we?

What do we do?

Why do we do it?

For whom do we do it?

Sample Structure

The mission of (name of your program or unit) is to (your primary purpose) by providing (your primary functions or activities) to (your stakeholders).

Draft Mission Statement

Use additional paper as necessary. Drafting on a computer can also be helpful to get ideas down quickly and to cut and paste as you edit the statement.

Remember these tips for a great mission statement:

A well written mission statement:
- Leads with the educational purpose distinctive to the degree and field of study (this applies mostly for academic units)
- Identifies the signature feature of the program
- Defines clarity of purpose and sticks in your mind after one reading

- Explicitly promotes the alignment of the program with the RRCC and unit or departmental missions
- Is an expanded statement of purpose which explicitly states vision and values that are realistic and achievable, and based on expressed understanding of students served and interests of other important stakeholders

Once you have what you believe to be your final draft, write it here:

Who was involved in writing your mission statement?

Briefly describe process you went through to develop and revise the statement?

Mission Statement Checklist:

❑ Is the statement clear and concise?

❑ Is it distinctive and memorable?

❑ Does it clearly state the purpose of the program?

❑ Does it indicate the primary function or activities of the program?

❑ Does it indicate who the stakeholders are?

❑ Does it support the mission of the department and college as a whole?

❑ Does it reflect the program's priorities and values?

Appendix C: Goal Writing Worksheet

GOAL WRITING OVERVIEW

MISSION
The goals you develop for your operational unit should support your mission. Make sure to keep your mission nearby as you write your goals.

GOALS

Goals describe broad outcomes and concepts expressed in general terms.   They provide a direction or aspiration for your unit. The specific ways that you implement and assess these goals will come later in the ILEARN process when you will write your objectives and outcomes. Each operational unit will likely have a different approach to writing their goals, but here is a list of steps to go through to get you started.

1. Review current RRCC goals, initiatives, or directions and evaluate where your OU fits in.
2. **Review any available data on how your unit is currently functioning**. Data sets for instructional services will be provided. Student Success and Administrative Services may utilize a combination of internally collected data and/or data and reports from Institutional Research.
3. Review current trends in your area/field/discipline and established best practices from your field.
4. Have an open dialogue with your unit.
    a. **Start talking to people.** Below are some questions to discuss with your operational unit to get you all thinking about what goals you would like to establish.   These will be the goals that drive your 4-year operational unit plan proposal. Please see the attached page for some sample questions to help you start the conversation. This list is in no way comprehensive, but rather provides a jumping off point.
    b. **Collect and review documents that describe your operational unit.** Look at any brochures, catalogue descriptions, past evaluations, or program reviews from your unit to look for consistent themes and messaging.
    c. **Review and react to goals from other similar units.** Find goals for a similar unit (financial aid department, biology program, etc. and discuss as a group. Ask yourselves:

        Does your program need to look at guided pathways? Are there exceptional experiences that you could incorporate? Are there new approaches to teaching or serving students that you'd like to incorporate? How are you collaborating with other areas of the college?

5. Draft your goals.

After a group discussion, it generally works best for one OU member to draft the goals and send them out to the group or come back together for discussion.

6. Allow space for feedback.

    Getting feedback from members of your operational unit is very important. Don't assume that after the initial discussion that everyone is still on the same page. Often times asking the types of questions goal-writing necessitates can spur lots of new ideas and contemplation.

How many goals should we have?

The number of goals will vary by operational unit, as will the types. Your goals should capture the big picture ways to way your operational unit to develop of improve over the next 4 years.

Does your unit have too many goals?

This can be one of the problems we run into when we start to think about all the things we do and people we serve. You will, however, want to keep your list of goals manageable. If you have too many, try imagining if you wanted to reduce material or costs by 25 percent. What goals would you keep? Which ones would you discard?

GOAL WRITING CHECKLIST

For each goal, make sure you can affirm that these items apply:

❑ Does the goal support our operational unit mission?

❑ Does the goal fill a demonstrated need or address the data we have reviewed for our area?

❑ Does the goal reflect trends or best practices in our area?

❑ Does the goal support student learning or success?

❑ Does the goal make sense considering the students you currently serve or hope to serve?

❑ Does the goal describe a higher level of functioning for our unit?

❑ Does the goal seem attainable based on current resource allocation? *(This one isn't a deal-breaker, but like all elements will require discussion with your OU's leadership.)*

Questions to Ask when Setting Goals

	Operational Goals	Service Goals	Student Learning Goals
Administrative Units	How does our office function? What are the internal processes we have and what would success look like for us and those we serve? What external process do we contribute to and what does success look like for those processes?	What areas of the college do we support? What areas outside the college do we support? What would excellent service to these areas look like? How can we support an inclusive college environment?	N/A - (Since administrative units are focused on supporting the other areas of the college , you most likely will not have any student learning goals.
Student Services Units	How does our office function? What are the internal processes we have and what would success look like for us and those we serve? What external process do we contribute to and what does success look like for those processes? How can we contribute to diversity and equitable outcomes for students?	What services do we provide and who do we provide them to? What would excellent service to these customers look like? How can we support an inclusive college environment?	Who are our students? What should our students know or be able to do after participating in our programs? What is our role in contributing to the common learning outcomes?
Academic Units	How does our office function? What are the internal processes we have and what would success look like for us and those we serve? What external process do we contribute to and what does success look like for those processes? What are the trends in our discipline? Are there best practices we should be incorporating? What college goals or initiatives do we support? How do we plan to move those initiatives forward? How can we contribute to diversity and equitable outcomes for students?	What services do we provide and to whom? Does our operational unit provide a primary service outside of teaching and student development? What are those things we must do well to contribute to the institution in terms of process and procedures? (Since academic units are focused on teaching, you may very well not have a service goal.)	Who are our students? What should our students know or be able to do after completing our program? How does our curriculum support our mission?

GOAL WRITING WORKSHEET

Operational Unit Mission Statement

Operational Unit Goal	How the goal supports the Operational Unit Mission	What data supports the need for this goal?

People involved in writing these goals:

Briefly describe the process you used to arrive at these goals:

ILEARN

IMPROVING THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE
ACROSS RED ROCKS NOW

[Name of Operational Unit]

Continuous Improvement Plan

[Date}

Contributors

[Name]

[Name]

RRCC Mission

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RRCC Goals[7] & Objectives

Goal 1 – Student Success
1. Increase remedial completion
2. Improve retention and completion rates
3. Develop innovative academic programming
4. Develop ongoing program review for all programs
5. Expand innovative use of instructional technology
6. Upgrade facilities to resolve space issues
7. Improve advising and "smart scheduling"

Goal 2 – Community Engagement
1. Increase access for underserved students
2. Increase attainment for underserved students
3. Lower student debt load and default rates
4. Build programs and services that benefit community
5. Build enrollment through community partnerships
6. Build international education and global programs
7. Higher education marketing in West Metro

Goal 3 – Institutional Renewal
1. Digitize and share student information for advising
2. Develop technological and facilities infrastructure
3. New methods and platforms for instruction
4. Increase diversity through hiring
5. Develop health and wellness services and training
6. Expand professional development opportunities
7. Implement Process Improvement Team findings

Goal 4 – Culture of Inquiry & Evidence
1. Develop Common Student Learning Outcomes
2. Develop co-curricular learning goals
3. Establish clear pathways to completion
4. New instructional delivery centers and options
5. Complete an Academic Master Plan
6. Develop career planning and experiential education
7. Develop systemic data collection and dissemination

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[7] For more information, see the RRCC Strategic Plan: http://www.rrcc.edu/sites/default/files/strategic-planning-RRCCStrategicPlanFinal.pdf

Operational Unit Mission Statement

Operational Unit Goals & Objectives

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Goal 3:

Goal 4:

Evidence & Supporting Documentation

[This section will require some narrative on your part; attempt to answer the following questions, using graphs and charts where appropriate]

- How did you go about determining your goals utilizing data?
- What data points, research, or best practices did you look at to determine your OU goals?
- What did the data tell you?
- Why did you decide on this specific quality improvement plan?

What do you hope to accomplish?

Implementation Timeline

Spring 2018	Summer 2018	Fall 2018

Spring 2019	Summer 2019	Fall 2019

Spring 2020	Summer 2020	Fall 2020

Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Fall 2021

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Anticipated Challenges

[Include here any challenges you anticipate in reaching your goals and how you plan to address those challenges]

Resources

[This section is for a narrative of what resources (human, monetary, etc.) you would need to accomplish your goals.]

Use the chart below to outline any budgetary needs you foresee.

Budget

Item	Cost	How the resource supports the Operational Unit goals
Total Request Amount	$0.00	

OU Goal	Objective	Data used to Evaluate (the objective)	Benchmark/ Internal Target (Outcome)	Deadline/Date to Assess	Person Responsible
Goal 1:	1a.				
	1b.				
	1c.				
Goal 2:	2a.				
	2b.				
	2c.				
Goal 3:	3a.				
	3b.				
	3c.				

Appendix E: Continuous Improvement Plan Summary
CIP: ILEARN Fall 2017 – Spring 2021

QUESTION 1

At this point, you should be able to articulate your ILEARN, Operational Unit, improvement plan. The questions below are three ways to ask the same thing.

In less than 50 words, please respond to the question that makes the most sense to you.

1. What is the focus of your Operational Unit improvement plan?
2. What problem(s) have you identified in your Operational Unit that you will work to address?
3. What is your Operational Unit's strategic plan for improvement?

QUESTION 2

What data supports the focus of the Operational Unit's improvement plan?

QUESTION 3

By fall 2020, how will you know if your Operational Unit's improvement plan worked? In other words, what are your indicators of success?

QUESTION 4 (comparative data)

What comparative data indicates success or areas of improvement?

QUESTION 5 (conclusions and future action)

What conclusion can be drawn from the results? What action will be taken based on the results?

Appendix F: RRCC Common Learning Competency/ AAC&U LEAP Alignment

RRCC Common Learning Competencies Aligned with LEAP Competencies & Outcomes

RRCC Common Learning Competencies	LEAP Competencies	Specific Learning Outcomes and Rubrics
An RRCC graduate is a Critical Thinker (including information literacy). Students explore and evaluate texts, instruction, research, media, experience and other relevant sources of information from multiple perspectives; they determine the extent of information required to accomplish a particular purpose; they access the required information effectively and efficiently; they evaluate the information and its sources critically, determining credibility and bias; they understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally; they synthesize the information to effectively and creatively define problems or issues; they identify strategies and propose, evaluate and implement solutions; they evaluate outcomes based upon their own insights and original analysis. They draw reasonable conclusions by recognizing assumptions and differentiating factual information from opinion and emotion-based arguments, interpreting data, evaluating evidence, reasoning and arguments, and examining implications and consequences. Students make relevant connections between classroom and out-of-classroom learning.	**Critical Thinking** Competency in critical thinking addresses a student's ability to analyze information and ideas from multiple perspectives and articulate an argument or an opinion or a conclusion based on their analysis.	Critical Thinking: 1a, 2a-c, 3a-c, 4a, 5a-b GT: AH1, AH2, AH3, H1, SS1, SS2, SS3
	Information Literacy Information literacy refers to the set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information. Competency in information literacy represents a student's ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use that information for the task or problem at hand.	Information Literacy: 3a-b, 4a, 5a GT: H1
	Inquiry & Analysis Inquiry is a systematic process of exploring issues/objects/works through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions/judgments. Analysis is the process of breaking complex topics or issues into parts to gain a better understanding of them.	Inquiry & Analysis: 4a, 5a-b, 6a GT: SC1, SC2
	Problem Solving Competency in problem solving represents a student's ability to design, evaluate, and implement a strategy to answer a question or achieve a goal.	Problem Solving GT: MA1 (future)

An RRCC graduate is Technologically Literate. Students exhibit technological literacy and the skills to effectively and ethically use technology; they demonstrate the responsible application of intellectual property and privacy; they use technology ethically and effectively to communicate, solve problems and complete tasks; they remain current with technological innovations.		
An RRCC graduate is an Effective Communicator. Students demonstrate the ability to utilize oral, written and listening skills to effectively interact with others; they construct effective written communication that conveys accurate, concise and complete information to a target audience while observing the conventions of grammar, sentence structure, punctuation and spelling; they construct and deliver clear, well-organized, verbal presentations. Students utilize writing, speaking, or artistic expression that is appropriate for the context and audience. Students understand and apply conventions of effective writing and oral communication in academic, public, personal and professional discourse.	**Oral/Presentational Communication** Competency in oral communication represents a student's ability to deliver a well-prepared and purposeful presentation grounded in credible information and organized effectively.	Oral/Presentational Communication: 2a, 3a-b, 4a GT: AH4, COM
	Written Communication Competency in written communication is a student's ability to write and express ideas across a variety of genres and styles. Written communication abilities develop over time through layered, interactive, and continual processes and experiences across the curriculum.	Written Communication: 1a, 2a, 3a, 4a-b, 5a GT: CO1, CO2, AH1, AH2
An RRCC graduate is Globally Aware and understands and respects Diversity. Students consider the interconnectedness of our community and world; they demonstrate how cultural differences, both locally and globally, including diverse beliefs, traditions, customs, religions, ethnicity, sexuality and gender, impact personal and community participation; they can identify and compare diverse social practices and civic structures; they are aware of the social, environmental and economic impacts of their actions, both on an individual level and globally; they consider multiple perspectives in decision making.	**Civic Engagement** Competency in civic engagement refers to actions wherein students participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both meaningful to the student and socially beneficial to the community. Civic engagement is "working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes." (Excerpted from Civic Responsibility and Higher Education, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000, Preface, page vi)	Civic Engagement: 2a GT: SS1

	Diversity & Global Learning Competency in diversity and global learning refers to a student's ability to critically analyze and engage complex, interdependent structures and constructs (such as natural, physical, social, cultural, economic, or political) and their implications for individuals, groups, communities, or cultures. This competency will introduce students to various concepts toward building their awareness of diversity and the importance of inclusivity. Through diversity and global learning, students should seek to understand how their actions affect both local and global communities.	Diversity & Global Learning: 1a, 2a, 3a GT: SS2, SS3
An RRCC graduate is Ethical and Professional. Students incorporate ethical reasoning into action; they explore and articulate the values of professionalism in decision-making. They understand the importance of dependability, perseverance, integrity and accountability for their choices and actions; they exhibit self-reliant behaviors by demonstrating the ability to plan, organize, manage, and successfully complete projects within defined time lines; they collaborate effectively with others toward the accomplishment of common goals; they accept supervision and direction as needed.		
An RRCC graduate uses Quantitative Reasoning. Students retrieve, interpret and evaluate information and numerical concepts to determine trends, make predictions, and develop informed opinions; they demonstrate mathematical reasoning skills; they use quantitative analytical skills to evaluate and process numerical data.	Quantitative Literacy Competency in quantitative literacy represents a student's ability to use quantifiable information and mathematical analysis to make connections and draw conclusions. Students with strong quantitative literacy skills understand and can create sophisticated arguments supported by quantitative evidence and can clearly communicate those arguments in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc.).	Quantitative Literacy: 1a, 2a, 3a-c, 4a-c, 5a (and 6a for Statistics courses) GT: MA1, SC1, SC2
	Creative Thinking Competency in creative thinking represents both the capacity to combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative way characterized by a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking.	Creative Thinking: 4a GT: AH1

Appendix G: Student Learning Assessment Plan – Narrative Option

Student Learning Assessment Plan *Summary*

Operational Unit:

OU broad learning goals (copy from website):

Step 1: Provide a narrative overview of the assessment process.

1. What course(s) or co-curricular activities will be involved in the assessment?
2. Who will be involved in administering, evaluating, and assessing the results?
3. What professional development will be necessary to start the assessment process?
4. What estimated cost will be associated with the assessment process?

Step 2: Specific Student Learning Outcomes

5. What RRCC Common Learning Outcome will the evaluation measure (other times referred to as CLO, RRCC Competencies, or LEAP standards)?
6. What specific Student Learning Outcomes will be evaluated?

Step 3: Describe the measurement tool.

1. What measurement tool will be used to evaluate each learning outcome? Briefly describe the assignment, quiz, activity, survey, essay, observation, etc.
2. Will the RRCC Common Learning Outcomes and the course or assignment Student Learning Outcomes be blended in the same measurement?
3. What is the timeframe of the evaluation (when will it take place)?

Describe the evaluation tool.

1. Briefly describe how the learning outcomes will be evaluated (rubric, checklist, etc.)

Step 4: Baseline Data

1. Summarize the baseline results
2. Describe the action plan and implementation strategies for improvement
3. How will you know if your improvement plan worked? In other words, what are your indicators of success or benchmark for improvement?

Step 5: Comparative Data

1. Summarize the comparative results

Conclusions and future action

1. What conclusion can be drawn from the results? What action will be taken based on the results?

Appendix H: Student Learning Assessment Plan – Table Option

[OPERATIONAL UNIT] STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT PLAN
Contact: [Contact name] | [contact email] | [contact phone]

Mission: [write your OU mission here]

Student Learning Goal 1:						
Student Learning Outcome	Measurement Tool	Benchmark	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Results	Comparative Results

Student Learning Goal 2:						
Student Learning Outcome	Measurement Tool	Benchmark	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Results	Comparative Results

RRCC Common Learning Competency 1:						
Common Learning Outcome	Measurement Tool	Benchmark	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Results	Comparative Results

Assessment Narrative: As a result of the baseline data, describe the action plan and implementation strategies for improvement. Then summarize comparative results.

Professional Development / Projected Cost	Focus	Timeframe	Estimated Cost	Responsible Party