

St. Petersburg College
Educational Outcomes Assessment:
General Education Outcomes Assessment
Action Plan Follow-Up and Evaluation Report

Current Date: December 05, 2006

Program/Option: Critical Thinking: Think logically, critically and creatively to solve problems and make decisions;

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Date of Original Assessment Activity: 2004-2005

I. Status of each Action Plan items identified in original assessment activity:

	ACTION PLAN ITEMS	Original Date to Accomplish	Current Status	Explanation of Current Status
A	Enable Greater Student Success			
A1	Identify needs and address ways to improve overall student success			
	MLO #1 - Emphasize critical thinking throughout the course with multiple opportunities for activities and feedback	05/2006	Completed	5/2006. We now offer multiple opportunities for students to practice, refine, and demonstrate critical thinking skills. Our textbook has been revised to upgrade the critical thinking skills being taught through the use of SPC's original E.T.H.I.C.S. model for ethical decision-making. There are written assignments, such as the Critical Thinking & Application Paper, the Code of Ethics Paper, and website reports. In addition, Analysis Questions at the end of each chapter require analysis and application skills. In-class activities such as small-group projects and student presentations also provide such opportunities to reinforce the critical thinking skills that we are teaching.
	MLO #1 - Identify special needs of ESOL students and encourage them to read, write and speak in class	05/2006	Completed	5/2006. Discussions among the faculty indicated that this was not the problem we had thought. Our ESOL students to participate in all aspects of the Applied Ethics courses. The central role of our textbook in our courses requires a great deal of reading. The Gordon Rule requirements force students to write, and our students generally write far more words than the minimal requirements of the G.R. Moreover, the discussion-based nature of our course requires that all students participate in class discussions, small-group activities, and various types of class presentations.
	MLO #1 - Focus more on multi-cultural aspects to target students who can read and write English, but are not as confident speaking it in classes	05/2006	Completed	5/2006. The nature of Applied Ethics lends itself to inclusion and discussion of multi-cultural aspects. Our faculty expect and require all students to participate in class discussions. Giving students from other cultural backgrounds the opportunity to discuss the unique ethical aspects of their native cultures is one way that we've found to facilitate this inclusion.
B	Enhance Curriculum & Faculty Development			
B2	Implement professional development for full time and adjunct instructors			
	MLO #1 - Invite presenters with specific expertise to present faculty workshops on topics representing department need	05/2006	Completed	5/2006. This was practiced throughout the 2005-06 academic year. Cheryl Stratton, a representative from OSSD, Janice Thiel, Claire Brantley from Pearson Publishing, and members of our own faculty who shared their areas of expertise with each other.

	MLO #1 - Create a "Starter Kit" for new instructors	05/2006	Completed	5/2006. We accomplished this through the creation of our ANGEL-based Applied Ethics Faculty Resource Library, which quickly became a model for other areas of the College. Our faculty have contributed notes, Powerpoint presentations, sample quiz/exam questions, case studies, writing assignments, and in-class activities to create an invaluable "bank" of ethics teaching resources. In addition, the Applied Ethics office staff has uploaded essential college policies, forms, and other faculty instructions and guidelines. Our goal is to continue to "grow" the library by integrating more of a "WIKI" format and to continue to improve the organization system as needed.
	MLO #1 - Create a CD of sample PowerPoint presentations for new instructors and perhaps to market with our textbook	05/2006	Completed	The decision was made to utilize the ANGEL-based Applied Ethics Faculty Resource library rather than a CD, at least for our new instructors. Discussions continue as to how best to make these resources available to others (outside the College) who adopt our textbook, but the simplest route would be to make these PowerPoint presentations part of the Instructors webpage that already accompanies the textbook.
B6	Delete course(s)			
	MLO #1 - The eventual deletion of PHI 1603, the 2-credit version of the required ethics course at SPC. There are only a few A.S. degree programs still requiring 1603 and Marilyn Ryan is in negotiations with them to require a 3-credit course instead	Ongoing	Completed	C&I approved the deletion of PHI 1603 in October 2006. All A.S. programs now requiring 3 credits of Applied Ethics.
	MLO #1 - With this change will come the eventual deletion of PHI 2621 and 2622, the 1-credit courses necessary for students who take 1603 and then find out they needed a 3-credit course instead	Ongoing	Completed	It has become clear that students will be needed these 1-credit courses for several more years - perhaps 10. No need to delete these courses at this time. 5/2006
B7	Make technology related improvements			
	MLO #1 - Use ANGEL technology with more sections of PHI 1600 to improve teacher/student communication and provide more student support	05/2006	Completed	7/2006. The College is now mandating that all sections of all courses utilize ANGEL, at least for attendance. Many of our instructors go further, utilizing other ANGEL features such as private class email, announcement pages, chats, discussion forums, and the gradebook. In addition, the Applied Ethics Program has now established a college-wide online ethics tutor who offers assistance to any ethics student with course-related questions. This service is also ANGEL-based.
	MLO #1 - Continue to improve technology for student support, including the Applied Ethics Institute website and the Pearson Publishing website that supplements our text	05/2006	Completed	7/2006. Tom Derzypolski is assigned to keep both the Applied Ethics Institute website and the Pearson textbook website current and up to date, and has been doing so very well. We also now offer a College-wide online ethics tutor through the ANGEL system. An additional improvement was the creation of our ANGEL-based Applied Ethics faculty resource library. This site supports our faculty and offers teaching materials and innovative ideas that translate into better learning opportunities for our students.
	MLO #1 - Produce a new series of video lessons to accompany our textbook	05/2006	Completed	Video lessons were completed in December 2005.
B8	Explore marketing initiatives			
	MLO #1 - Exploring the option of marketing our new Applied Ethics video lessons through Pearson Educational Publishing	05/2006	Completed	Copyright issues with the Wikipedia video clips we used in the video lessons has made this impossible. May 2006
B9	Initiate outreach to the community (employers, high schools, etc.)			

	MLO #1 - Partner with the Safe and Drug Free Schools office of the Pinellas County School system on a character education grant for the school system, as well as other possible projects	01/2006	Completed	August 2006. The Office of SDFS invited the SPC Applied Ethics Institute to be their grant partners for the federal character education grant. This grant was awarded and begins in the fall of 2006-07. SPC will receive \$20,000 per year for the four years of the grant. Our responsibilities are to create a Pinellas County High School Ethics Bowl, to create a leadership workshop for the middle and/or high school levels, and to conduct a series of parent/community workshops relevant to character and ethics.
	MLO #1 - Partner with SPC's Center for Teacher Transformation to create a state-wide ethics course for teachers who get into professional trouble and have their licenses suspended	01/2006	Completed	The foundation was laid for this course throughout 2005-06. The partnership with Dr. Odutola and the NCTC was established. Numerous discussions were held with the staff of the Department of Education to ensure that we produce a course that best meets the needs of Florida K-12 teachers. JoAnne Hopkins (Ethics-CL) was chosen to create the online course. The course content was completed in August 2006 and course development and marketing efforts continued through fall 2006-07. The first class is scheduled to start in January 2007.
	MLO #1 - Partner with SPC's corporate training office to create a partnership wherein the Applied Ethics Institute could provide corporate ethics training in the community	01/2006	Not Completed	Discussions were held throughout 2005-06 with leaders from corporate training. Progress was made in identifying the type of organizational ethics training that best suited the strengths of the Applied Ethics Institute, with the end result being a consulting-based product - Ethics Beyond Compliance: Enhancing the Ethical Culture of Your Organization.
C	Improve Teaching and Learning Throughout the College			
C1	Provide cross-discipline professional development			
	MLO #1 - Request professional development seminars on teaching Critical Thinking	05/2006	Not Completed	We did actually make this request, and tentative approval has been given. However, the SACS schedule dictates that efforts like these wait until after the QEP has been submitted and approved. In addition, we have yet to identify a training source for such seminars and workshops.
C2	Communicate & collaborate with other areas of the college (eg. Counseling, library, etc.)			
	MLO #1 - Partner with the 4-year Nursing program to sponsor the Forum "Ethics in Healthcare: End of Life Issues"	12/2005	Completed	This continuing education workshop was held in December 2006.
	MLO #1 - Partner with SPC's Legal Assisting program to sponsor a Forum on ethical issues for paralegals and attorneys	05/2006	Completed	This Ethics Forum was conducted in March 2006.
	MLO #1 - Work with library staff to provide more of our students with an orientation to online library services	05/2006	Completed	5/2006. Discussions among the ethics faculty indicated that there were other higher and more important concerns, and this action item has been deleted.
D	Improve Assessment Methodology			
D3	Review, revise Assessment Specifications Plan			
	MLO #1 - Separate data by campuses especially noting eCampus	12/2005	Completed	1/2006. This was accomplished with the transition of our pre/post survey from Scan-Tron to WITS.
D4	Improve method of data collection & analysis			
	MLO #1 - Conduct assessment for and gather data from ALL students in the sample population each session; Include all sections of PHI 1600, 1602, 1603, and 1631	05/2006	Completed	1/2006. This was accomplished through the transition of the pre/post survey from Scan-Tron to WITS, and through better record keeping by the Applied Ethics office staff.

	MLO #1 - Identify other disciplines in which Critical Thinking can be assessed	05/2006	Completed	7/2006. The College has decided to put critical thinking at the core of the Quality Enhancement Plan. This will result in a College-wide shift toward "critical thinking across the curriculum" over the next few years. Since all academic areas will be responsible for teaching and reinforcing critical thinking skills, this action item is no longer viable for our program.
	MLO #1 - Change Pre/Post Test to new SPC WITS online survey format	05/2006	Completed	This transition was made in 1/2006.
D5 Revise assessment instruments				
	MLO #1 - Fine tune General Education Objectives assessment instrument	05/2006	Completed	1/2006. This is an ongoing process, of course, but the pre/post survey was fine-tuned when the transition was made from Scan-Tron to WITS. Our other primary general education assessment, the Critical Thinking & Application Paper was also revised and improved to incorporate ethics cases from the National Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl. These replaced the faculty-written hypothetical scenarios that we had utilized in the past. While the faculty is pleased with progress made on the CTAP, the consensus is growing that our pre/post surveys are not statistically valid or reliable and that we cannot have much confidence in the data that results. In 2006-07 we are researching other assessments, especially the D.I.T. from the University of Minnesota.
D6 Improve communications and instructions for faculty				
	MLO #1 - Provide better communication and instructions for campus representatives and participating instructors	12/2005	Completed	5/2006. Our communications to faculty about the gen ed assessments have improved, as we are now utilizing printed, oral, and emailed instructions to faculty. New adjunct instructors are being partnered with experienced faculty mentors from within the department, and we are getting much better follow-up from the Applied Ethics academic staff assistant.

II. Plan for completing each action plan item that is not currently complete (include timeline):

	ACTION PLAN ITEMS	Current Status	Plan for Completion	Intended Completion Date
B Enhance Curriculum & Faculty Development				
B9 Initiate outreach to the community (employers, high schools, etc.)				
	MLO #1 - Partner with SPC's corporate training office to create a partnership wherein the Applied Ethics Institute could provide corporate ethics training in the community	Not Completed	Planning meetings are continuing in the fall of 2006-07. The product has three parts. First, a WITS-based pre-survey to all members of the organization to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of the organization's ethical culture. Second, a 4-hour workshop (or series of them if needed) to improve areas of weakness. Third, follow-up as needed to ensure that the identified areas of weakness are being addressed and that improvements continue. Our goal is to pilot the product - perhaps with the Greater St. Petersburg YMCA - in the spring of 2006-07.	5/2007
C Improve Teaching and Learning Throughout the College				
C1 Provide cross-discipline professional development				
	MLO #1 - Request professional development seminars on teaching Critical Thinking	Not Completed	The Applied Ethics Program will continue to work with SPC administration to identify the best source of training on teaching and assessing critical thinking skills, and to determine a schedule for such training that falls in line with the QEP schedule.	12/07

III. Evaluate the impact of the implementation of action plan items on program quality

The overall impact of the implementation of these action plan items was to help identify strengths and weaknesses in the content and delivery of course content relevant to critical thinking, as well as in the way these skills are assessed and evaluated. Once perceived weaknesses were identified, we began moving toward making improvements. Examples of these improvements include:

- Our primary student assessment tool, **the Critical Thinking & Application Paper**, is now a much stronger tool. Based on student data and faculty suggestions, we have revised the grading rubric for clarity and consistency, and moved from hypothetical scenarios to ethics cases from the National Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl competition.
- The long-sought deletion of the 2-credit version of our course (PHI 1603) has now been approved for fall 2007. This process will ensure that all SPC students receive the same instructional quality and depth in their general education ethics course.
- Previous chronic problems with data collection and interpretation have led to changes in both. Our student pre-survey is now conducted online through SPC's WITS program. This ensures better student participation, the ability to sort the data by campuses (including E-campus) and other factors, more accurate data compiled automatically with very little staff time involved, and more accurate interpretation of this data for program improvement.
- The continued utilization and improvement of the Applied Ethics Institute website, our custom-published textbook website, SPC's ANGEL online learning management platform, and our SPC-produced Applied Ethics video-lessons enable us to incorporate technology into both course content and delivery, and to provide students with opportunities to use technology for better content mastery, online research, and supplementary application and enhancement. All instructors now utilize one or more ANGEL components in all of our classes.
- Our Applied Ethics Faculty Resource Library, also in ANGEL format, now provides instructors with essential instructional resources and guidance in College policies and procedures. This resource has been especially helpful for new faculty and has been used as a model by other SPC programs and departments.
- The continued development of the Applied Ethics Institute allows us to provide additional opportunities for application and enhancement of course content for our Applied Ethics students, as well as students in other academic programs. Some Institute programs even provide opportunities to reach beyond the College's borders to promote critical thinking and ethical decision-making skills to business and professional organizations, and to the community at large.
- Student-based data has helped us to conclude that our faculty are not receiving adequate training in teaching and assessing critical thinking skills. We are currently working with College administrators to find ways to provide better and ongoing training in this area.
- This data has also made it clear to us that we need to keep searching for better, more valid and reliable assessment instruments to measure student learning in the area of critical thinking and ethical decision-making. Those efforts are ongoing.

Approvals

Educational Outcomes Coordinator(s): Carol Weideman, Jesse Coraggio, Magaly Tymms - November 27, 2006

Director of IRE: Carol Weideman - November 27, 2006

VP Educational and Student Services: Stan Vittetoe - December 5, 2006