

Philosophy Statement on Assessment and Learning Outcomes

The following is an excerpt from the statement adopted by the Allan Hancock College Academic Senate:

Allan Hancock College is committed to excellence in learning, in teaching, and service in order to enable students to reach their educational goals. Student success is the highest priority at Allan Hancock College. Working with students and the community, all campus constituencies collaborate to provide innovative and comprehensive programs and services to ensure student achievement and meet community needs.

Thus, the primary goal of assessment at Allan Hancock College is to improve student learning. Learning is more than simply acquiring knowledge: "it entails not only what students know but what they can do with what they know; it involves not only knowledge and abilities but values, attitudes, and habits of mind that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom" (AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning). The entire campus, seeking input from the greater community when appropriate, works together in a spirit of continuous improvement to support student growth and development for lifelong learning.

Students learn best when they assume ownership of and responsibility for their own learning; it is Allan Hancock College's goal to provide an environment that best facilitates that learning. Therefore, outcomes assessment not only monitors what and how well students learn, but also measures the success of the institution in providing effective learning opportunities.

Outcomes assessment occurs in both instructional and student service settings. The keys to the process are well-defined student learning outcomes and student support strategies implanted in an environment of high academic standards.

Assessment is the ongoing process of analyzing student academic achievements compared to expected outcomes. Student work may be used as part of the assessment process and will be anonymous. Activities may include, but are not limited to, examinations, performance assessments, written papers, projects, learning journals, portfolios, case studies, questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, interviews, and follow-up studies. Assessment differs from grades in that results are used to understand effectiveness and improve the college's programs and services to support student success.

