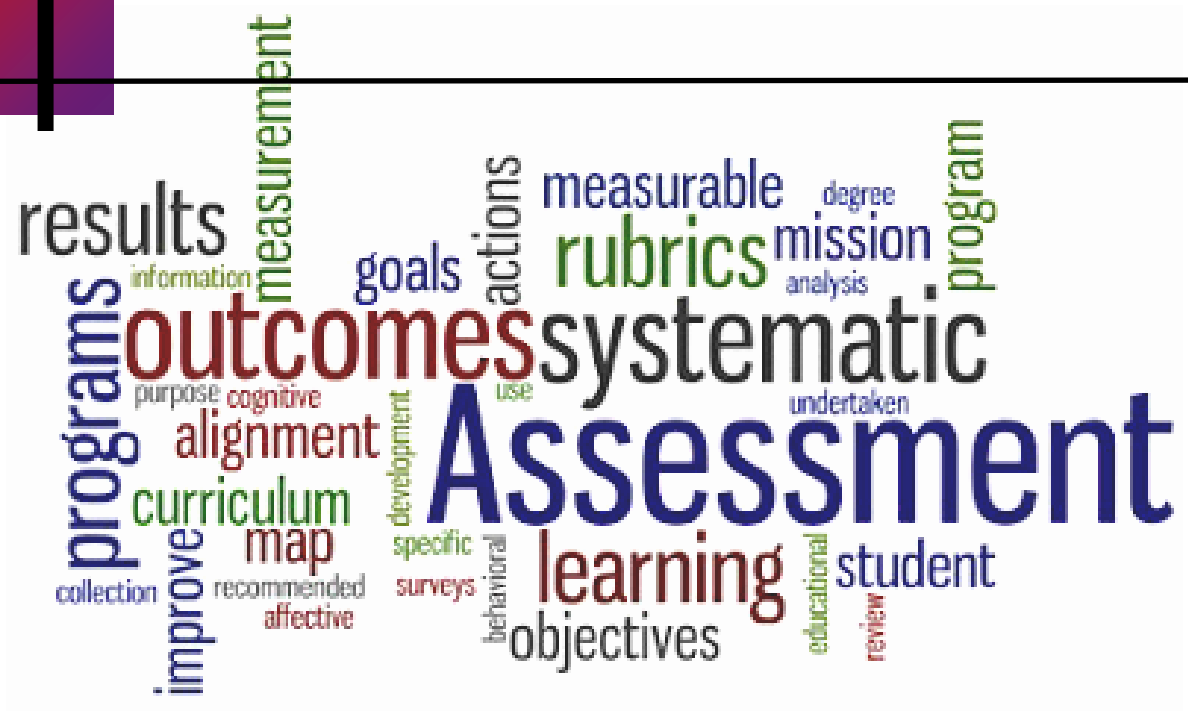

SANDBURG'S CAR MANUAL

Your Guide to Understanding and Enhancing the Classroom Assessment Report

Updated Fall 2019

ASSESSMENT CONTACTS

Kylie Price, Assistant Dean of Assessment
C-108, kprice@sandburg.edu, 309.341.5239

Ellen Burns, Dean of Career Technical Education
CME, 113, eburns@sandburg.edu, 309.341.5274

Kristina Gray, Dean of Heath Professions
A-104, kgray@sandburg.edu, 309.341.5456

Ellen Henderson-Gasser, Director of the Branch Campus
Carthage, ehenderson@sandburg.edu, 217.357.3129x7247

James Hutchings, Associate Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts
C-118, jhutchings@sandburg.edu, 309.341.5317

Lara Roemer, Associate Dean of Social and Business Sciences
C-116, lroemer@sandburg.edu, 309.341.5219

Marge Smolensky, Associate Dean of Math and Natural Sciences
C-207A, msmolensky@sandburg.edu, 309.341.5306

Carrie Hawkinson, Vice President of Academic Services
E-205, chawkinson@sandburg.edu, 309.341.5360

Michelle Johnson, Dean of Institutional Planning
D-203, mjohnson@sandburg.edu, 309.341.5258

Misty Lyon, Associate Vice President of Academic and Student Planning
E-112, mlyon@sandburg.edu, 309.341.5422

This document is designed to guide Carl Sandburg College faculty through the outcomes assessment process as it pertains to the annual Classroom Assessment Report (CAR). It is useful to new instructors who are developing assessment strategies for their courses, but it can be equally helpful to instructors seasoned in assessment procedures. For convenience, a glossary that defines assessment terms is located at the end of the document.

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INTRODUCTION

Defining Assessment

While the term "assessment" might mean a great many things to many people, for the purposes of this document and the assessment process at Carl Sandburg College, the term "assessment" simply means gathering information to improve instructional practices for the student population.

Sandburg's CAR Manual Outcomes

The purpose of this document is to educate faculty about outcomes assessment at Carl Sandburg College as it pertains to the Classroom Assessment Report (CAR). The CAR is a requirement of all faculty, both full-time and adjunct, and should be submitted once every academic year on the Monday after Spring Break.

Upon successful completion of this document, faculty will be able to…

1. Identify outcomes assessment characteristics that define the process,
2. Understand classroom-level assessment,
3. Apply appropriate outcomes assessment techniques in an annual Classroom Assessment Report (CAR) to submit to the Outcomes Assessment Committee (OAC), and
4. Share data with colleagues to analyze and evaluate best practices at the classroom, programmatic, and/or institutional levels of assessment.

STEP ONE: IDENTIFYING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Explanation

There are many characteristics that define the outcomes assessment process, but the four primary characteristics that are fundamental for understanding and completing Sandburg's CARs involve focus, purpose, timeliness, and evaluation. Outcomes assessment focuses on students' final products rather than teachers' pedagogy: this student-centered approach is driven by the students' efforts to meet course objectives and is a continuous process that utilizes set criteria to measure students' successes. Figure 1 further explains these characteristics.

Figure 1. Outcomes Assessment Key Characteristics

Outcomes assessment does…	**Outcomes assessment does not…**
focus on our students' final products	focus on pedagogy
serve the purpose of gauging students' mastery of course content	serve the purpose of evaluating our courses' content or our knowledge of that content
exist without interruption because it is a continuous process in an effort to better understand where our students are	repeat sporadically unchanged for the sake of compliance
utilize techniques of evaluation, like rubrics, to measure student work against set criteria	measure student work against other student work

Figure 1. This chart explains the four primary characteristics in outcomes assessment. It is constructed with information from Rhodes University (2012).

Focus. Perhaps the biggest misconception about assessment regards its focus. Novice and even seasoned faculty members might perceive the focus of an assessment to be on them and their teaching capabilities, but that perception is a misinterpretation or misunderstanding of outcomes assessment's actual focus.

In 1995, Sandburg adopted the outcomes-based approach to assessment, and the overarching characteristic of this type of assessment pertains to focus. The focus of an outcomes assessment report is not on the individual faculty member but rather the student's outcome, or performance, in a particular class, course, program, or even at the institution itself.[+]

[+] These levels of assessment will be further explained in the next section, "Step Two: Understanding Classroom Assessment."

Purpose. The purpose for outcomes assessment is to gauge how successfully students can utilize or apply the information that is taught to them. It is intended to provide insights that allow changes to be made that enhance the learning process for students.

Outcomes assessment techniques are not intended to make faculty members defend their credibility or pedagogical successes; to the contrary, these techniques are intended to aid faculty members in enhancing the learning process for Sandburg's primary stakeholders—the students.

Timeliness. Once the focus and purpose are clarified, one can consider the timeliness associated with the outcomes-based approach.

This continuous process is an essential one for outcomes assessment, and Figure 2 demonstrates how Sandburg incorporates that continuous process into teaching practice. Assessment that is done sporadically or simply repeated for the sake of compliance does not benefit the faculty member, the program, the institution, or more importantly, the students. The best assessments are completed on a continuous cycle to enhance the learning environment for all students.

FIGURE 2. SANDBURG'S ASSESSMENT CYCLE

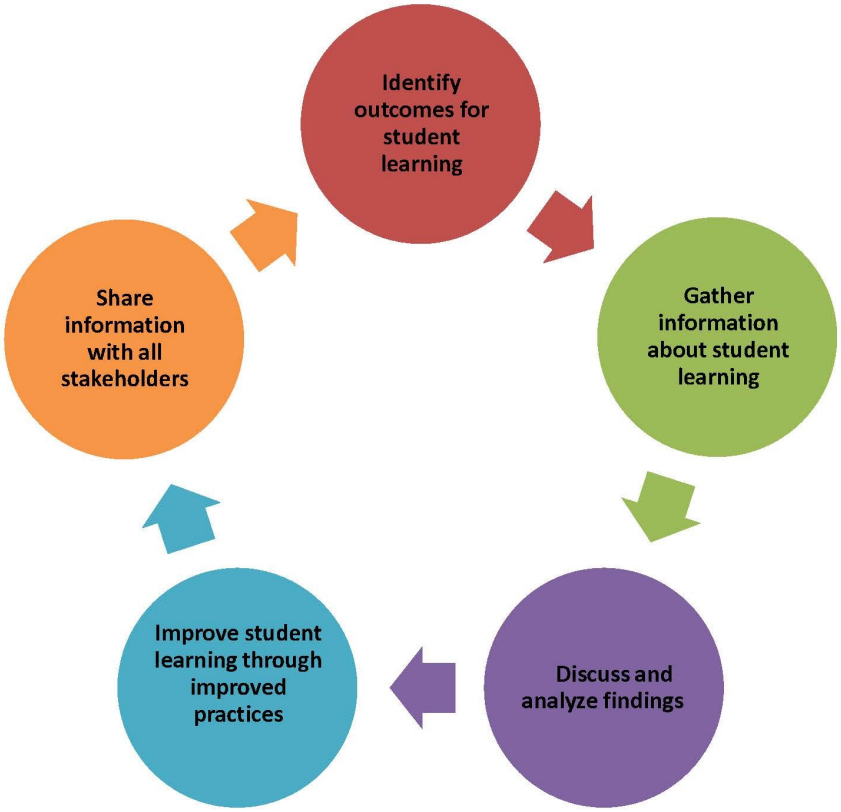


Figure 2. This chart summarizes the outcomes assessment process at Sandburg—starting with faculty identifying outcomes they believe will demonstrate student learning and ending with sharing assessment information with all stakeholders, including the student population.

It is common to have embedded an outcomes assessment philosophy into one's pedagogy already: faculty members who revise and update courses to meet students' needs are already demonstrating the fundamentals behind outcomes assessment.

Sandburg just asks for faculty to document one of those revisions or updates per academic year, although of course faculty are invited to assess as often as they see fit. Outcomes assessment is a process that "makes the learning process more effective…, helps instructors become better teachers…, and provides systematic feedback to students" (Stassen, Doherty, & Poe, 2001, p. 6). Thus, continuous assessment can benefit all of those involved, from the student to the institution itself.

Evaluation. In terms of student evaluation, outcomes assessment techniques can be utilized in a way that generates more direct feedback for students through the use of rubrics. These evaluative tools measure students' work against set criteria that faculty members establish at the beginning of an assignment, rather than measuring students' work against other students' work.

Rubrics are tools that can enhance credibility among academic departments and the student population. Using a rubric shows students their grades are not based on abstract whims but established, concrete criteria designed by the faculty, the academic department, or in some cases, even the students themselves.

An analytic rubric needs to break down the criteria of the assignment into specific performance-level measurements, as Figure 3 demonstrates. When students see the criteria for assignments

FIGURE 3. SAMPLE RUBRIC 1

CRITERIA	PERFORMANCE			
	Far Exceeds Expectations 20-18 points	**Exceeds Expectations 17-16 points**	**Meets Expectations 15-14 points**	**Doesn't Meet Expectations 13-0 points**
Thesis Statement 20 pts.	The thesis statement is insightful, interesting, clear, and explicitly stated. The reader can underline the thesis.	The thesis statement is interesting, clear, and explicitly stated. The reader can underline the thesis.	The thesis statement is clear and explicitly stated. The reader can underline the thesis.	There is no identifiable thesis statement. The reader finds no words or phrases that can identify one.
Analysis 20 pts.	The essay uses many specific examples from the text and personal examples to back up the thesis. The writer references a specific quote from the text more than once.	The essay uses several specific examples from the text and personal examples to back up the thesis. The writer specifically references a quote from the text at least once.	The essay uses at least one specific example from the text and one personal example to back up the thesis. The writer does not specifically reference a quote from the text.	The essay was vague and did not mention specific examples from the text and/or personal examples at any point. OR The writer references the text incorrectly more than once.

Figure 3. This rubric sample utilizes two set criteria that are worth the same amount of points. The performance-level indicators identify point range. The original rubric utilizes five criteria, all worth twenty points, for this summary-response essay assignment.

broken down in such a way, they can better understand what the assignment, faculty member, and course are asking of them. Furthermore, when students better understand the expectations of an assignment, their final products are more successful.[+]

The primary benefits of using analytic rubrics "are actually benefits of good pedagogical practices," and ultimately, these types of rubrics will "support student learning and success, support and inform teaching practice, and support specific pedagogical strategies" (Zane, Johnson, & Robison, 2013, p. 4).

The best rubrics are designed by the faculty who utilize them, for they are the ones who can establish exactly what they are trying to measure with an assignment.[++] The criteria in Figure 3 are all worth the same amount of points; however, the criteria in Figure 4 are all worth different amounts of points. Because of the breakdown in these figures, students know the importance of each criterion, and they can identify not only how to earn a passing grade but a superior grade.

FIGURE 4. SAMPLE RUBRIC 2

CRITERIA	PERFORMANCE			
	Far Exceeds Expectations	**Exceeds Expectations**	**Meets Expectations**	**Doesn't Meet Expectations**
Writing Conventions **55 pts.**	The essay contains almost no (0-2) grammatical, punctuation, or spelling errors. Language is clear and precise.	The essay contains few (3-6) grammatical, punctuation, or spelling errors. Language is clear.	The essay contains several (7-11) grammatical, punctuation, or spelling errors. Language may lack clarity.	The essay contains numerous (12+) grammatical, punctuation, or spelling errors. Language consistently lacks clarity.
	55 – 49 pts.	**48 – 44 pts.**	**43 – 38 pts.**	**37 – 0 pts.**
Academic Voice **25 pts.**	The voice created is exceptional for the topic and supports the topic well.	The writer has a strong tone of voice that supports the topic well.	The writer's tone of voice is fairly consistent and appropriate for the topic.	The writer attempts to create a voice, but it is not consistent or not appropriate for the topic.
	25 – 23 pts.	**22 – 20 pts.**	**19 – 17 pts.**	**16 – 0 pts.**

Figure 4. This rubric sample utilizes two set criteria, and each criterion is weighted differently. The performance-level indicators are identified, but the designated points are in appropriate rows since each criterion is worth a different amount of points in this sample. The original rubric utilizes four criteria, all worth different amounts of points, for this film analysis essay assignment.

[+] The difference between analytic and holistic rubrics will be further explained in the section, "Step Four: Analyzing and Evaluating Best Practices."

[++] For further assistance in developing your own rubrics, please refer to the last section of this document, "Resources."

It is important to note that rubrics should only be utilized for assignments that may generate more than one right answer. Fill-in-the-blank or multiple choice questions, for example, would not be able to utilize a rubric for grading because those types of assignments have only one correct answer. Presentations or response essays, on the other hand, are excellent assignments to pair up with rubrics because not only can students generate more than one right answer to the assignment prompt, but the faculty member can also solidify criteria that might have otherwise been subjective and/or difficult for the student to grasp.

In Short

First, the focus of outcomes assessment is on students' final products in the classroom, not the faculty or their pedagogy.

Second, the purpose of outcomes assessment is to see if students can apply the knowledge they are learning in the assessed courses.

Third, outcomes assessment is a continuous process, which means assessment never stops and continues to adapt.

Fourth, outcomes assessment measures students' successes against set criteria, and the easiest, most effective way to do so is by utilizing rubrics.

STEP TWO: UNDERSTANDING CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

EXPLANATION

In order for it to be beneficial not only for the faculty and the institution but for the students as well, the assessment process needs to be an embedded one.

Multiple levels of assessment are embedded into the Sandburg culture, and this section will provide context as to how the annual CAR fits into that culture. More specifically, this section will demonstrate why annual CARs are required.

The four primary levels of assessment at Sandburg are classroom, course, program, and institution.

Classroom-Level Assessment. Classroom assessment can answer important questions for faculty about student learning: "Classroom Assessment is an approach designed to help teachers find out what students are learning in the classroom and how well they are learning it" (Angelo & Cross, 1993, p.4). In other words, incorporating classroom assessments will enhance our students' learning.

Again, outcomes assessment focuses on the output rather than the input, so the purpose of classroom assessment at Sandburg is not to evaluate the faculty member's effort, knowledge, or content but rather the students' final products. The CAR is not an evaluation of or a self reflection on pedagogy; the CAR is an analysis about student performance. The CAR "focuses the primary attention of teachers and students on observing and improving learning, rather than on observing and improving teaching" (Angelo & Cross, 1993, p.4).

Classroom assessment is required of all faculty, both full-time and adjunct: Sandburg faculty members are responsible for completing one CAR per academic year due on the Monday after Spring Break. The CAR form is submitted to the respective Dean or Associate Dean and Assistant Dean of Assessment via a SurveyMonkey link found in Moodle. The OAC then examines the submitted, completed CARs for trends and problems at the course, departmental/programmatic, and institutional/GEO levels. Those trends are reported every year in the *Annual Report*, which is an internal document that chronicles assessment activities.

A CAR might prompt these types of questions:

1. Are my students achieving the course objectives outlined in the course brief?
2. What do my students do well? Conversely, what do my students struggle with?
3. How can I show that my students are achieving (or not achieving) said objectives?
4. What are my next steps? If things are working and students are succeeding, what is my plan for future semesters? If things are not working and student performance is below expectations, what is my plan for future semesters?

The action plan, which outlines the change that one plans to make after the assessment, for a CAR would be made at the classroom level—implementing changes that affect one faculty member's students in one class, perhaps in multiple sections.

Course-Level Assessment. Course assessment is not required of all faculty, but many faculty members contribute to this type of assessment. This level of assessment is the next step up from the classroom level. The previous level assesses a particular section of a particular course: for instance, a CAR might assess a specific comma review activity in an English 101, section 107 class during the Spring 2015 semester. Course-level assessment, however, might assess whether all students taking all sections of English 101 during the Spring 2015 semester are ready to progress to English 102—as demonstrated by the English 101 Proficiency Exam.

Course-level assessment might prompt these types of questions:

1. Are all sections of students in a specific course collectively achieving the course objectives in the course brief? Are different sections providing a consistency of learning so that all sections of students in a specific course can achieve those course objectives?
2. What do all sections of students in a specific course do well? Conversely, what do they struggle with?
3. Are all sections of students in a specific course well prepared for the next level?
4. What are my department's next steps? If things are working and our students are succeeding, what is our plan for future semesters? If things are not working and our students are below expectations, what is our plan for future semesters?

The action plan for course-level assessments influences change at the next level. If problems occur in an English 101.107 class, for example, that might prompt a faculty member to complete a CAR and change the order of essays or the time span on one particular activity; if problems occur in all English 101 classes, on the other hand, all faculty who teach composition might review said difficulties and change textbooks or prerequisites.

Program Assessment. Program assessment is required of all programs as outlined by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). Programs at Sandburg complete multiple reports each year that contribute to an official ICCB report that is on a rotational five-year cycle.

It is this level of assessment Sandburg is focusing on improving for the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) visit in 2020. All institutions of higher learning are required to submit a Quality Initiative Project, and Sandburg chose to improve program assessment.

Ideally, the classroom and course assessments that are conducted can be aggregated, or utilized, when assessing programs: "Outcomes-based assessment provides the impetus for continuous improvement of programs, [and faculty members] can play an important role in providing direction and support for that improvement" (Carter, 2003, p.27-28). Course-level assessment and program-level assessments take longer to see the results than do classroom-level assessments,

but faculty members can nonetheless contribute to the data that is utilized and even the action plans of program-level assessments.

A program assessment might prompt these types of questions:

1. Are our classes contributing to the purpose of the program? Does the order in which the courses progress make sense? Are some courses superfluous in terms of the program's objectives?
2. Are our students achieving the program outcomes and/or goals?
3. What are our program's next steps? If things are working and our students are succeeding, what is our plan for future semesters? If things are not working and student performance is below expectations, what is our plan for future semesters?

The action plan for program-level assessments deals with more aspects than just pedagogy, including but not limited to budgeting and staffing.

Institutional Assessment. Institutional assessment, in some capacity, is required of all Sandburg employees. Particularly for faculty, the institutional assessment that is required is embedded into the annual CAR as a form of General Education Outcome (GEO) assessment.

GEOs are the institution's educational outcomes: once students complete Sandburg, they will be articulate in communication, critical thinking, cultural diversity, information technology, and quantitative skills. Figure 5 thoroughly explains the five GEOs and the specific learning outcomes associated with them.

FIGURE 5. GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOME CRITERIA

General Education Outcome	Students will be able to…
GEO 1, Communication: Demonstrate proficiency in speaking, writing, reading, and listening.	– Demonstrate focused, innovative, critical thought that is adept for a variety of communication purposes and audiences. – Organize ideas logically and coherently to communicate effectively for a number of purposes. – Utilize a clear style and diction in all modes of communication by using proper, edited grammar and mechanics.
GEO 2, Critical Thinking: Demonstrate critical thinking skills and problem solving skills.	– Evaluate ideas, detect arguments, discriminate rationally, and refute bias. – Synthesize data, use information critically, and justify conclusions. – Organize and logically support expression of reasoning.
GEO 3, Cultural Diversity: Demonstrate an awareness of human values and diverse cultures.	– Acknowledge differences among people and stereotypes and prejudices they hold regarding people who are different. – Build knowledge of diverse ideas, perspectives, and experience. – Engage others with civility, empathy, honesty, and responsibility, and work well in an environment with a diverse population.
GEO 4, Information Technology: Demonstrate understanding and skills to function in a technological society.	– Evaluate information, its credibility, and its sources critically, and incorporate selected information into their knowledge base and value system. – Understand many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, access the uses of information ethically and legally, and frame ideas within a larger context. – Demonstrate proficiency in the uses of a variety of standard computer technologies and software specific to the field of study.
GEO 5, Quantitative Skills: Demonstrate use of quantitative analytical skills and processes to interpret, evaluate, and solve problems.	– Use logical skills and reasoning to develop a strategy to find solutions. – Carry out strategies, develop solutions, and evaluate solutions. – Interpret and justify solutions logically and critically.

Figure 5. Sandburg's GEOs are established on the left-hand side of this table. The three measurable student learning outcomes for each GEO are identified on the right.

Once faculty members have established which course objective they are going to link their classroom assessment to, they are also establishing which GEO they will link their classroom assessment to. In each course brief, all course objectives are tied to at least one GEO. If the objective faculty members choose has more than one GEO listed, the faculty members choose the best GEO for them and their assessment purposes.[+]

A GEO assessment might prompt these types of questions:

1. Are our students achieving the GEO linked to the course objectives in the course brief?
2. Do our students fare better in higher-level courses in terms of GEO assessment? Does that indicate a progression of learning over students' educational careers?
3. Is Sandburg preparing students well for academic and/or professional careers in the twenty-first century?
4. What are our next steps? If things are working and our students are succeeding, what is our plan for future semesters? If things are not working and student performance is below expectations, what is our plan for future semesters?

The action plan for GEO assessment impacts courses campus-wide, ensuring that students are achieving Sandburg's five GEOs.

It is important to note that Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are also being assessed at the institutional level through the *Strategic Plan*.

In Short

Classroom assessment looks at one section of a particular class and analyzes what works and/or what does not. The action plan is localized to the individual faculty member's classes, specifically targeting and enhancing one faculty member's section.

Course assessment's scope is a bit broader and looks at all sections of one particular course to analyze what works and/or what does not. The action plan is broadened to include the department, implementing changes to enhance all sections of the course.

Program assessment looks at an entire program, as outlined by the ICCB, and analyzes what works and/or what does not. The action plan includes faculty and administrators in a particular program and enhances all courses in that program.

Institutional assessment, as it primarily relates to faculty, is embedded into the classroom assessment process to analyze what works and/or what does not at the institutional level. Individual faculty members collect data in their annual CARs, and that data is aggregated up to enhance student learning at Sandburg.

[+] GEO assessment and how to utilize the GEO Rubrics will be further discussed in the next section, "Step Three: Completing the CAR."

STEP THREE: COMPLETING THE CAR

EXPLANATION

Getting Started.[+] Before completing a CAR, or attempting to complete a CAR, faculty members should go to the OAC's Moodle page and print out an updated CAR form:

1. Login to MySandburg, and click on "Moodle Home Page."
2. Scroll your Moodle courses to find "Assessment Resources," and click on the link.
3. Scroll to the "Curricular Assessment: CARs 2019-2020" section, and click on the "Printable CAR Form."
4. Print out this document prior to filling out the form on SurveyMonkey.

Applying an Outcomes Philosophy to the CAR. All the research on outcomes assessment identifies one key to the process: the students. Outcomes assessment requires the faculty, the program, and the institution to put the students at the center of the assessment process. After all, every assessment that is conducted is done so as to enhance student learning.

For students, "assessment can mean clarifying their instructors' expectations for them; focusing more on learning as they come to see the connection between learning and course content; becoming more self-reflective learners; [and] understanding their own strengths and weaknesses as students" (Stassen, Doherty, & Poe, 2001, p. 7).

Quite simply, "Outcomes-based assessment ... begin[s] with outcomes" (Carter, 2003, p. 8). Therefore, in order to apply an outcomes philosophy to assessment, faculty must begin with the outcome: what should students be able to do after completing the class? That answer will lead the assessor to the prompt for assessment.

Identifying the Prompt (and the Course Objective) for Assessment. The definition component of the CAR will ask faculty what motivated the assessment. Ask yourself, "What do I want to find out about my students' performance in this course?" Low test scores from an exam or low class participation could both be prompts for an assessment. Implementing a change to the curriculum with technology could also be a prompt for assessment. Anything that influenced the faculty member to investigate the need to make some sort of a change to the curriculum or to the instruction will work.

Ideally, most faculty want to see some sort of improvement, but it is very important to understand that a great assessment is not analogous to showing improvement. Sometimes, we, as faculty members, have a great idea, and we try it out, but it just does not work. That is assessment, and it is a good assessment. When assessing, the faculty member might also discover that there was not any change. Again, it might not be the intended result, but it is nonetheless assessment. Many educators feel like assessment is only supposed to highlight the good, but no one expects those prompts for assessment to turn out successful all the time.

[+] You can find updated CAR examples on the OAC Moodle page, and an example is also included in one of the appendices of this document, "Appendix A: A CAR Model."

Identifying the course objective has always been a part of the CAR in some capacity, but the OAC has made that identification process a bit more specific now. Instead of tying your assessment to a course objective OR a GEO, it is asking faculty to definitively tie the assessment to a specific course objective. Course objectives should already be on your syllabi, and each course objective should be tied to at least one of the GEOs. If you are unsure about what your course objectives are for a particular course, be sure to talk to your supervisor, so that he or she can pull the current objectives from the course brief. This step encourages faculty to look at their course objectives a little bit more critically.

Identifying the GEO and Tool for Assessment. In addition to identifying the course objective for the assessment, faculty need to identify the GEO as well. Again, the GEO that the course objective ties to should be identified on the course brief. Some course objectives might link to more than one GEO, but for the purpose of this assessment, the OAC would like faculty to zero in on one specific GEO.

In order to assess the GEO you have identified, you will need to utilize the corresponding GEO Rubric.[+]

Closing the Loop and Making an Action Plan. The CAR is going to ask faculty what the action plan is in the thirteenth question: "What future changes will be implemented based upon the results?" Essentially, you need to explain what you plan to do in the future about the issue that prompted your assessment. For instance, the assessor might scrap an essay, add an additional unit, rearrange a study guide, and so on. The action plan should help alleviate the issues that prompted the assessment or facilitate the same results that prompted the assessment. "The main advantage of this outcomes [assessment] perspective is that it provides data for closing the educational feedback loop…" (Carter, 2003, p. 5).

Submitting the CAR. Once you have completed your printable form, you are ready to submit your assessment via the SurveyMonkey link on the OAC's Moodle page:

1. Login to MySandburg, and click on "Moodle Home Page."
2. Scroll your Moodle courses to find "Assessment Resources," and click on the link.
3. Click on "Curricular Assessment: CARs 2019-2020," and click on the "CAR Survey Link."
4. Use your printed version to answer the questions as directed, and click the "Next" button upon completion of each page. It is important to note that SurveyMonkey will not save your draft as you go along: in order for your assessment to be considered complete, you must continue until the final page and answer questions 14 and 15.
5. You will NOT be notified by email that your assessment was received; however, you can check the OAC Moodle page under the section "Submitted CARs" to confirm your assessment was received. These departmental folders are not updated automatically, but they are updated continually.

[+] You can access these rubrics on the OAC Moodle page, and they are also included in the appendices of this document, "Appendix B: The GEO Rubrics."

Once your CAR is submitted, please notify your Dean or Associate Dean upon completion. The completed reports are utilized to document trends at the classroom, course, programmatic, and institutional levels and make changes apropos.

Resources. The OAC developed a tutorial video to explain the CAR process, which is also accessible on the OAC Moodle page. Faculty have found this video to be useful in helping them through the process when they are stuck.

The OAC will host CAR workshops each semester where the Assistant Dean of Assessment and OAC representatives mentor faculty through the process. These workshops are designed for you to complete your CAR before you leave.

You can always contact the Assistant Dean of Assessment or your Dean/Associate Dean if you still have questions. For your convenience, all these contacts are located in the prefatory section of this document.

In Short

Faculty members need to submit one CAR per academic year via the SurveyMonkey link on the OAC's Moodle page. The prompts for assessment are tied to individual course objectives and GEOs in order to document trends and aggregate data for other levels of assessment. Figure 6 illustrates how the CAR development cycle is similar to KPI development.

Figure 6. Sandburg's CAR/KPI Development Cycle

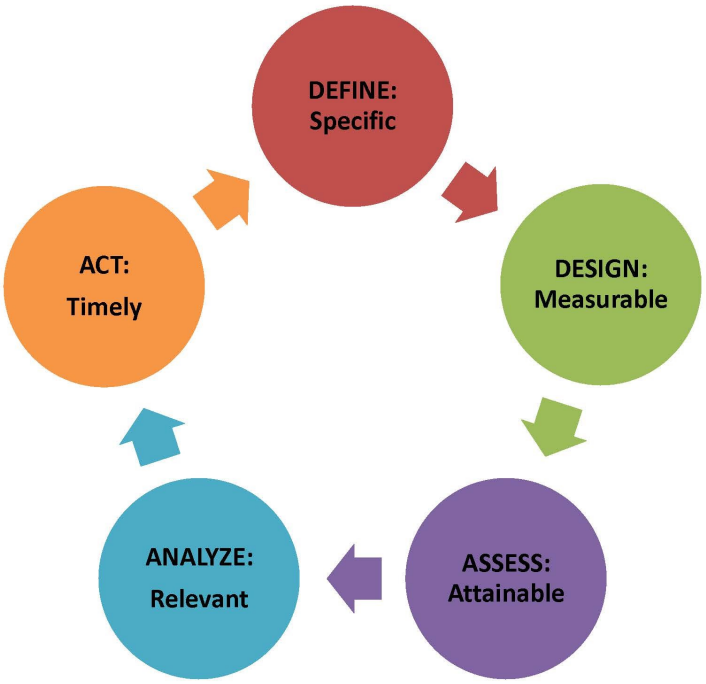


Figure 6. This chart summarizes the development process for both CARs and KPIs at Sandburg, first defining the prompt for assessment and then following through to close the loop and thus act in a timely manner.

STEP FOUR: ANAYLZING AND EVALUATING BEST PRACTICES

Explanation

Sandburg initiated a culture of assessment by embedding assessment topics into Faculty Assembly and all department meetings circa 2008. Also, the Assistant Dean of Assessment publicly shares the *Annual Report* and distributes an assessment newsletter at the beginning of each fall semester: both documents highlight assessment stories, trends, and activities for all stakeholders. Faculty members can work to enhance these assessment discussions by sharing data, assessment trends, and ideas at these meetings or with the Assistant Dean of Assessment directly.

One of the faculty's best tools in the assessment process is each other. Sandburg faculty have led workshop sessions about syllabi templates, rubric construction, CAR tutorials, and so on. The first semiannual CAR Workshop that the OAC hosted in Spring 2016 was primarily intended for adjunct faculty members—to assist them in the new process. The workshop snowballed into something much bigger, and in the future, these workshops will not only be able to foster faculty CAR completion but also more connection between full-time and adjunct faculty.

The OAC and Institutional Effectiveness (IE) teams are both working to include the student population more in the assessment process. One way you can include students in the assessment process is to simply share your data with them. Once you have completed your annual CAR, sharing the data you have collected with your students could be potentially beneficial for them. If your CAR measured your students' ability to communicate effectively, for example, and all of them met or exceeded the expectations on the GEO Communication rubric, that information could be helpful to the students because it would illustrate to them that they are succeeding in a particular area in your class. Likewise, if they were all below expectations, while they might find the information uncomplimentary, they would know the specific area they needed to improve upon to succeed not only on the assignment but also in your class. If you have additional ideas on how to promote that student involvement initiative, please contact the Assistant Dean of Assessment or Dean of Institutional Planning.

The Culture of Assessment at Work: GEO Rubrics. The OAC has already designed rubrics for you to utilize when completing your CAR and assessing the GEO identified with your chosen course objective. These rubrics were first established in Spring 2012 and have been continually updated to enhance the assessment process.

During Spring 2016, the OAC sent out a link to all faculty members for a CAR Satisfaction survey.[+] In this survey and through other modes of communication, faculty conveyed one of three specific concerns about GEO assessment: one, they did not know how to make their assignment fit into the boxed-in categories of the analytic rubrics; two, the analytic rubrics did not help them to assess

[+] This survey is explained at length in one of the appendices of this document, "Appendix C: The OAC's Feedback."

their initial prompt; and three, they did not know how to weigh the assessed assignment. During Summer 2016, the five GEO Rubrics were updated with these three concerns in mind to make the process easier and more effective for the faculty using them.

Understanding How the GEO Rubrics[+] Work. In order to understand how to use the updated GEO Rubrics effectively during your classroom assessment process, it is important to be able to differentiate between analytic and holistic rubrics.

Analytic rubrics[++] are "designed to score criteria independently" (Zane, Johnson, & Robinson, 2013, p. 3). These types of rubrics are best used when the faculty want to break down complex assignments into smaller criteria, thus generating useful data on specific tasks to enhance the learning process for students in specific areas. Furthermore, analytic rubrics provide students with very specific feedback on which area they need to target to improve upon for an assignment and/or the class as a whole.

Holistic rubrics, on the other hand, are "designed to provide a single decision based on an integrated description of student submission" (Zane, Johnson, & Robinson, 2013, p. 3). These types of rubrics are best used when the faculty want to see more of a snapshot of student progress, thus generating useful data on a broader scope to enhance the learning process for students. Therefore, holistic rubrics provide students with broader feedback on whether they are achieving a particular objective or not.

Furthermore, holistic rubrics tend to work better for multiple assessors rather than analytic rubrics. Since all faculty members, both full-time and adjunct, utilize the GEO Rubrics, the holistic rubric tends to make more sense with so many educators utilizing the same tools.

The five GEO Rubrics have been modified to be more holistic than in the past, and thus hopefully alleviating the first two faculty concerns. Faculty struggled with making their assignments fit into the boxed-in categories of the analytic rubrics, but holistic rubrics will provide more of a snapshot of student performance so as to not box faculty into certain criteria they did not establish. Additionally, the analytic rubrics did not help faculty to assess their initial prompt, but holistic rubrics are designed with a larger scope in mind and can fit more types of assignments.

The holistic rubric might also be the solution to the third faculty concern, weighing the assignment. It is important to note, however, that the OAC never wanted to dictate to faculty how to grade or weigh assignments. Even the analytic rubrics were designed with that philosophy in mind. It is the faculty's, or the assessor's, responsibility to weigh the assignment. The GEO Rubric is only supplied to be a tool for the faculty/assessor: it specifies what Sandburg is looking for in terms of academic performance when it comes to GEO assessment, but it does not dictate how a student is graded in your class.

[+] These rubrics can be found on the OAC's Moodle page and in one of the appendices of this document, "Appendix B: The GEO Rubrics."

[++] These types of rubrics were illustrated in the second section of this document, "Step One: Identifying Outcomes Assessment."

Each GEO Rubric is designed with the corresponding specific learning outcomes in mind.[+] Again, the GEO Rubric is not intended to grade, or evaluate, students with specific criteria but rather to assess their academic performance through a broader lens. Since the GEO Rubrics are holistic, the descriptor, rather than criteria, is established on the left-hand side, and the score is established on the right-hand side, rather than establishing multiple performance levels for each criterion as with analytic rubrics. Figure 7 further illustrates this differentiation.

FIGURE 7. HOLISTIC AND ANALYTIC RUBRICS

CARL SANDBURG COLLEGE

GEO 1: Communication Rubric
Demonstrate proficiency in speaking, writing, reading, and listening

DESCRIPTOR	SCORE
The assignment explains a well-articulated position through sophisticated style and diction.	**A Excellent**
The assignment clearly describes an insightful position through adept style and diction.	**B Good**
The assignment describes an appropriate position with adequate style and diction.	**C Average**
The assignment attempts to describe a position with adequate style and diction.	**D Poor**
The assignment does not describe a position with adequate style and diction.	**F Failing**

CARL SANDBURG COLLEGE

GEO 1: Communication Rubric
Demonstrate proficiency in speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

CRITERIA	PERFORMANCE LEVELS					POINTS
	A Excellent	**B Good**	**C Average**	**D Poor**	**F Failing**	
Content	Explains a well-articulated position.	Clearly describes a cogent position.	Describes an appropriate position.	Attempts to describe a position.	Does not describe a position.	
Organization	Amplifies and unites points to optimize understanding.	Discusses and integrates points in a meaningful way.	Describes and organizes points clearly.	Attempts to describe and organize points.	Does not describe or organize points.	
Diction	Applies sophisticated style and diction.	Applies adept style and diction.	Applies adequate style and diction.	Attempts to apply adequate style and diction.	Does not apply adequate style and diction.	
					Total Points	

Figure 7. The holistic rubric, pictured on the left, is the current rubric for GEO 5, Communication, and provides a much broader scope on students' academic performance with descriptors and scores. The analytic rubric, pictured on the right, is the former **2015-2016** version for the same GEO and breaks down assignments into specific criteria with corresponding performance levels.

If you find any weaknesses or discrepancies with the GEO Rubrics during the assessment process, please notify the Assistant Dean of Assessment, and the committee will work to fix those issues for the next academic year.

IN SHORT

Sharing assessment information with all stakeholders is a crucial piece of the outcomes assessment process. Sandburg embedded a culture of assessment nearly a decade ago, and while faculty collaboration has been a strong component of that process, Sandburg is working to include the student population more.

[+] These learning outcomes are described in Figure 5 in the third section of this document, "Step Two: Understanding Classroom Assessment."

With shared feedback about the CAR process, the Assistant Dean of Assessment has revised the GEO Rubrics to be more holistic. This revision was initiated by faculty commentary in order to provide a snapshot of student performance, fit more assignments, and weigh assignments easier.

Holistic rubrics generate data on a broader scope, whereas analytic rubrics generate data on specific tasks. Both types of rubrics can be useful for educators and can enhance the learning process for students, but the holistic rubric is a better fit for GEO assessment because it assesses the assignment as a whole with broader feedback that is more easily used by multiple assessors.

If you have any ideas or suggestions on how to enhance the assessment process at Sandburg, please notify the Assistant Dean of Assessment, your Dean or Associate Dean, the Vice President of Academic Services, the Associate Vice President of Academic and Student Planning, or the Dean of Institutional Planning.

CONCLUSION

Sandburg's Assessment Background and Timeline

Assessment at Carl Sandburg College has never been a stagnant process. In fact, the dominant trend in assessment at Sandburg is one of continuous improvement, one that never pauses and is perpetually improved upon by all stakeholders, as demonstrated in Figure 8 below, which chronicles the significant assessment activities at Sandburg over the past three decades.

Figure 8. Sandburg's Assessment Timeline

Year	Assessment Activity
1993	Five-year rotation for program review established
1994	Faculty-driven assessment committee established
1995	Assessment plan initiated, focusing on classroom-level assessment
	Educational outcomes established
2000	Classroom-level assessment flourishes with Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs)
	Assessment committee reorganizes the Assessment Cycle
2008	Assessment is incorporated into all department meetings and Faculty Assembly
2009	Shift from using the term "goal" to "outcome"
2011	CATs converts to Classroom Assessment Reports (CARs)
	Assessment committee begins implementing workshops during Faculty In-Service days
	Assessment committee changes its name to Outcomes Assessment Committee (OAC)
	OAC restructures to include one faculty representative from each department
	Educational Outcomes revised to be General Education Outcomes (GEOs)
2012	Assessment newsletter is first published
	Assessment website is launched
	OAC representatives compile CARs narratives to gather data
	OAC develops GEO rubrics
2013	CARs revised to be more data-driven rather than narrative focused
2014	Syllabus template incorporating GEOs created
	GEOs added to course briefs
	GEO assessment pilot
	Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Office established
	OAC Chair serves on IE since its inception
2015	Another OAC member is added to the IE team
	IE submits HLC Quality Initiative proposal: enhancing program review
	Syllabus template revised, utilized campus-wide
	CAR revised to be more streamlined, and embed GEO assessment, pilot
	Program review forms revised to be more similar to a CAR: PAR
2016	Revised CAR implemented campus-wide
	PAR pilot
2017	Co-Curricular assessment pilot
	Program review revised per ICCB Program Review Manual guidelines
	Student representation achieved on the OAC
2018	Dean of Assessment presents Annual Report to BOT

Figure 8. This chart highlights key assessment activities at Sandburg and the year those activities were initiated.

Since the assessment committee's inception, faculty have been the cornerstone supporting the assessment process. Significant strides were made in 2011 to embed a culture of assessment campus-wide.

Another significant moment in assessment began in 2009 when Sandburg began to promote an outcomes-based approach to assessment. This paradigm shift emphasized a student-centered approach rather than a teacher-centered one, thus switching the focus in assessment from the instructor's pedagogy to the student's final product.

The Assessment Committee changed its name to the OAC in 2011 to signify this shift and has since then facilitated and utilized an outcomes-based assessment approach.

One of Sandburg's foremost achievements in assessment pertains to classroom-level assessment. Since 1995, Sandburg faculty have been completing a form that documents classroom assessment. In 2000, Thomas Angelo's Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs) were implemented, and in 2011, the OAC established CARs for faculty who felt too boxed-in with the CATs.

General Education Outcome (GEO) assessment has been implemented since 1995, but this process was really refined in 2011 when the OAC condensed the original nine educational outcomes down to five more measurable outcomes: communication, critical thinking, cultural diversity, information technology, and quantitative skills. In 2012, the OAC created GEO Rubrics to measure these five GEOs. In 2014, GEOs were added to course briefs and linked to corresponding course objectives, and in 2015, GEO assessment was embedded into the annual CAR. In 2016, the GEO Rubrics were converted to be more holistic to make the process easier and more effective for faculty.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness was established in 2014. Currently, the Assistant Dean of Assessment and others serve on the IE team. IE's primary initiative is to enhance and support Sandburg's commitment to quality improvement. That commitment to quality improvement is based on Sandburg's mission statement, core values, priorities, goals, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and the vision statement.

APPENDIX A: A CAR MODEL

CAR Example

This example was based on a real assessment in Kylie Price's Summer 2016 ENG 098.106 class but is not intended to contribute to assessment data in any way. It is simply a model to help faculty through the process. The annotations in the pink boxes explain assessment-based commentary; the annotations in the blue boxes explain SurveyMonkey-based commentary.

The first page of the CAR form follows.

The first two questions ask you to identify your name and department. If you do not know which department you are in, contact your Dean or Associate Dean for clarification.

* 1. Instructor's Name

Kylie Price

* 2. Instructor's Department

- Career Technical Education
- Health Professions
- Humanities and Fine Arts
- Math and Science
- Social and Business Sciences

The next two questions ask you to identify the semester you are performing the assessment and the course name and section number. You can find your course name and section number in multiple places, including on your class roster.

* 3. Semester

- Fall 2019
- Spring 2020

* 4. Course Name and Section Number

ENG 098.106

This last question asks you to identify the class modality. Check all that apply.

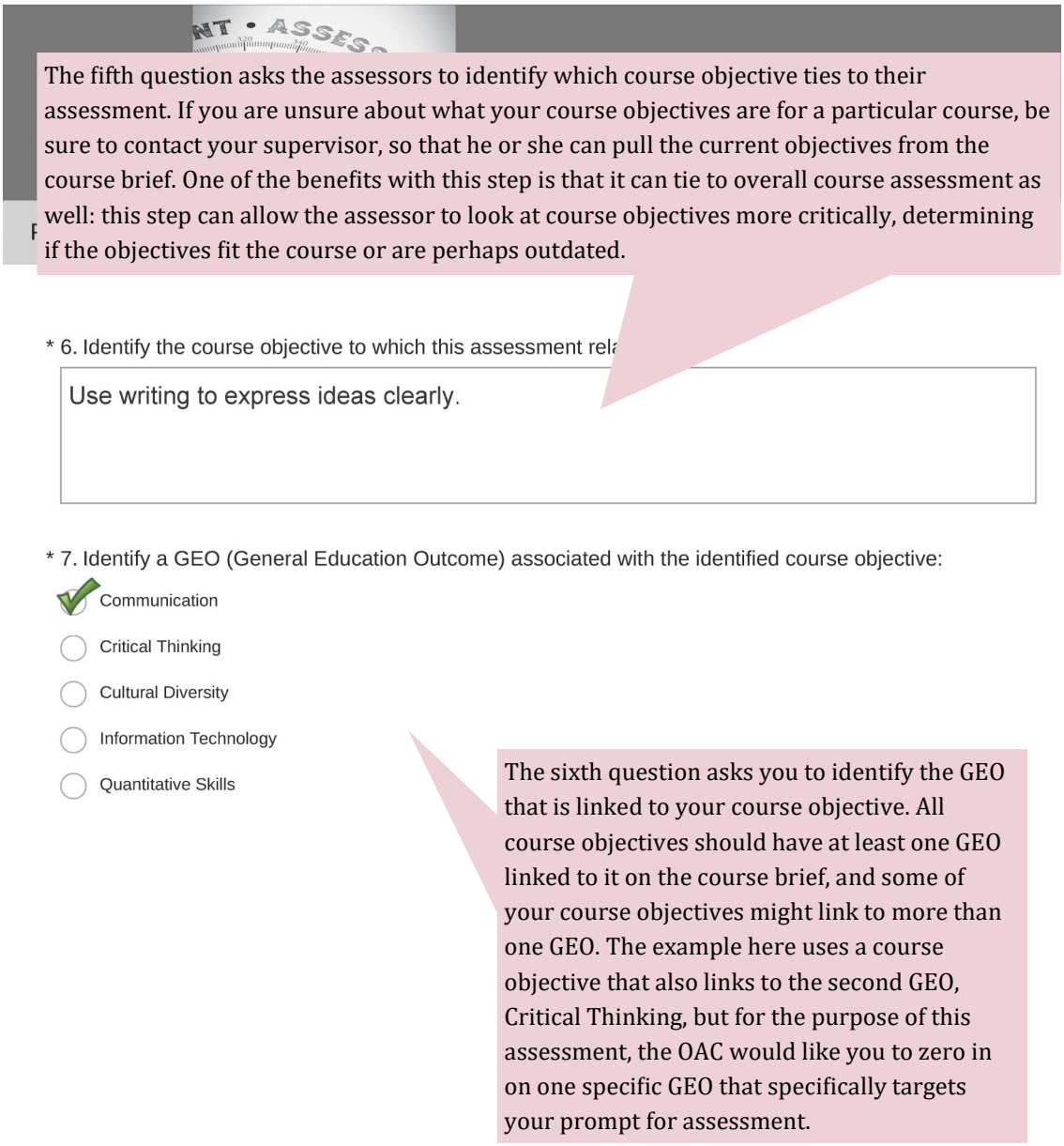
* 5. Class Modality (Check All that Apply)

- Face-to-Face
- Online
- Hybrid
- Dual Credit

At the end of each page in the SurveyMonkey form, you will need to click the "next" button to continue. SurveyMonkey does not save your progress. Be sure to fill out a hardcopy first.

CAR Example

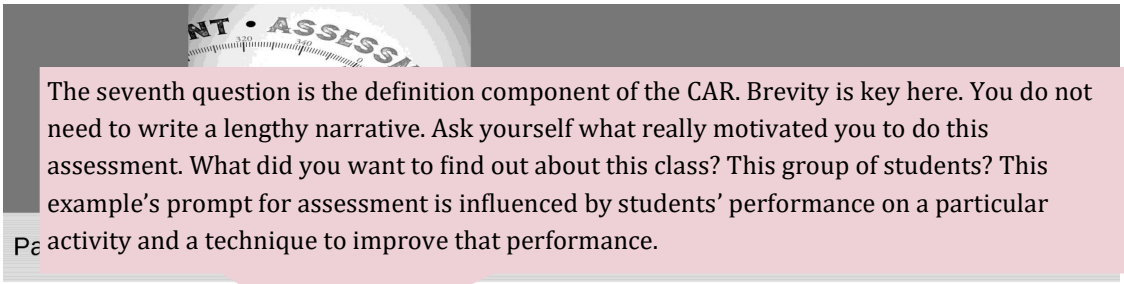
The second page of the CAR form follows.



When you have completed this page, click the "next" button to continue. Remember, SurveyMonkey does not save your progress.

CAR Example

The third page of the CAR form follows.



The seventh question is the definition component of the CAR. Brevity is key here. You do not need to write a lengthy narrative. Ask yourself what really motivated you to do this assessment. What did you want to find out about this class? This group of students? This example's prompt for assessment is influenced by students' performance on a particular activity and a technique to improve that performance.

* 8. DEFINE: Describe the scenario that surrounds the prompt for assessment.

Students struggled with the process writing assignments. Specifically, students did not convey complete thoughts about their writing processes or explore their successes or struggles with clear, focused language.

* 9. DESIGN: Describe the technique used to collect data. Include the data collected.

I used the updated holistic communication rubric to clollect data. In the first porcess writing assignment, no students earned a 90% or higher, 1 student earned a grade in the 80-89% range, 4 students earned a grade in the 70-79% range, and 8 students earned a 60% or below.

The eighth question asks you how you collected data. This example shows data collection with the one of the GEO Rubrics that was designed by the OAC.

When you have completed this page, click the "next" button to continue. Remember, SurveyMonkey does not save your progress.

CAR Example

The fourth page of the CAR form follows.

The ninth question wants you to discuss the types of changes you made after collecting the data you discussed in the previous question. Essentially, you are closing the loop here. The way this CAR is set up, that loop is closed within the current semester—this example discusses how the second process writing assignment initiated an instructional change for the rest of the semester. But you could certainly use data from a previous semester to discuss why you're implementing changes in the current semester; just be sure to utilize the same tool for measurement.

Page 4

* 10. ASSESS: Discuss instructional changes made based upon the data collected.

Since so many students performed below expectations for the assignment (more than half), I decided to weigh the assignment differently. I made the process writing assignments worth more points. Initially, the process writing counted as an in-class activity, worth 10 points, but I increased its status to the response category, worth 25 points. The responses are normally graded with analytic rubrics (which I did in addition for the second process writing).

* 11. ANALYZE: Discuss the impact of the instructional changes described previously. Include data.

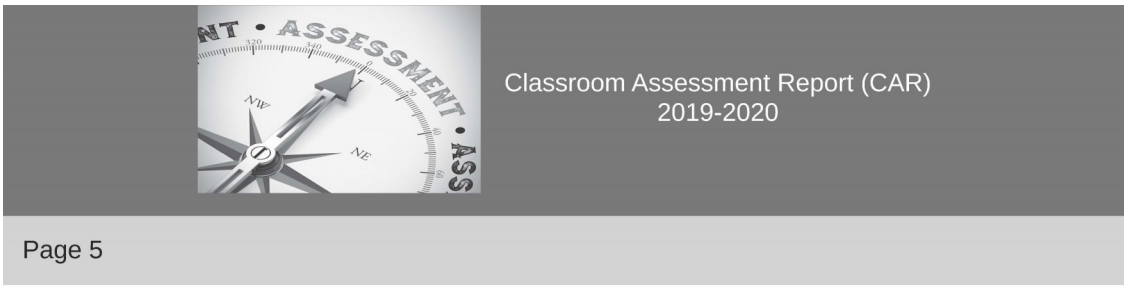
Once I weighed the assignment more and formalized the process more (all responses must be typed whereas in-class activities can be handwritten), students improved. Again, I utilized the updated communication rubric to collect data. In the second process writing assignment, 3 students earned a 90% or higher, 7 students earned a grade in the 80-89% range, 3 students earned a grade in the 70-79% range, and no students earned a 60% or below.

The tenth question asks you for more data. In this example, you can see the data for the second assignment, whereas in the eighth question the data included only pertained to the first assignment. After the instructional change was made (that is, after the process writing assignment was categorized differently), student performance was more successful.

When you have completed this page, click the "next" button to continue. Remember, SurveyMonkey does not save your progress.

CAR Example

The fifth page of the CAR form follows.



* 12. In Question #5 a course objective was identified. What percent change can be documented for the stated course objective?

(Your response to Question #5: [Q5].)

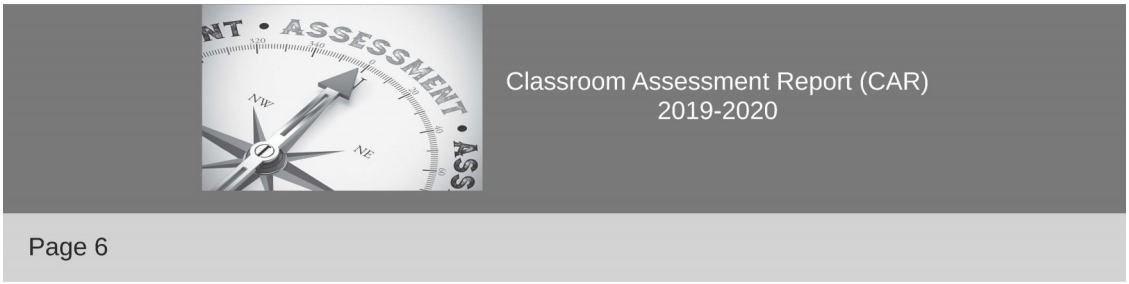
- ○ -90 to -100%
- ○ -80 to -89.99%
- ○ -70 to -79.99%
- ○ -60 to -69.99%
- ○ -50 to -59.99%
- ○ -40 to -49.99%
- ○ -30 to -39.99%
- ○ -20 to -29.99%
- ○ -10 to -19.99%
- ○ <0 to -9.99%
- ○ 0%
- ○ >0 to 9.99%
- ○ 10 to 19.99%
- ○ 20 to 29.99%
- ○ 30 to 39.99%
- ○ 40 to 49.99%
- ○ 50 to 59.99%
- ✓ 60 to 69.99%
- ○ 70 to 79.99%
- ○ 80 to 89.99%
- ○ 90 to 100%

The eleventh question asks you to utilize that course objective you identified earlier in the fifth question and to document a percentage of improvement. This example uses the percentages with the first assignment and the second assignment, all within the same semester, and the difference of success between those two assignments is articulated here. Specifically, the percentage of students who performed average or higher on the first assignment (which is articulated as a C grade or 70% or higher) was subtracted from the percentage of students who performed average or higher on the second assignment. Ultimately, this step is asking you to look at your data through a pre- and post-test type of lens.

When you have completed this page, click the "next" button to continue. Remember, SurveyMonkey does not save your progress.

CAR Example

The sixth page of the CAR form follows.



* 13. In Question #6 a GEO was identified. What percent improvement is documented by the corresponding rubric?

(Your response to Question #6: [Q6].)

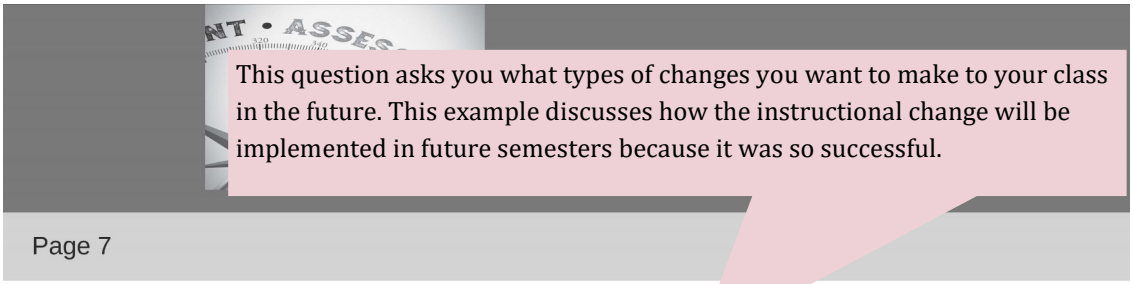
- ○ -90 to -100%
- ○ -80 to -89.99%
- ○ -70 to -79.99%
- ○ -60 to -69.99%
- ○ -50 to -59.99%
- ○ -40 to -49.99%
- ○ -30 to -39.99%
- ○ -20 to -29.99%
- ○ -10 to -19.99%
- ○ <0 to -9.99%
- ○ 0%
- ○ >0 to 9.99%
- ○ 10 to 19.99%
- ○ 20 to 29.99%
- ○ 30 to 39.99%
- ○ 40 to 49.99%
- ○ 50 to 59.99%
- ✓ 60 to 69.99%
- ○ 70 to 79.99%
- ○ 80 to 89.99%
- ○ 90 to 100%

The twelfth question asks you to utilize the GEO you identified earlier in the sixth question along with one of the GEO Rubrics. This assessment uses the same tool, that GEO 1, Communication rubric, to identify the percentage of improvement in the last question, so the same percentage of improvement is noted here. Many faculty members find using the same tool to assess the course objective AND the GEO makes the process easier, but you might be utilizing a different tool in the previous step. That technique would require you to evaluate/assess the same assignment twice (with different tools), but that technique might make more sense for your assessment.

When you have completed this page, click the "next" button to continue. Remember, SurveyMonkey does not save your progress.

CAR Example

The seventh page of the CAR form follows.



This question asks you what types of changes you want to make to your class in the future. This example discusses how the instructional change will be implemented in future semesters because it was so successful.

Page 7

* 14. ACT: What future changes will be implemented based upon the results?

Since this change in evaluation was so successful this semester, I intend to classify future process writing assignments in future classes as responses, thus weighing and formalizing them more.

These last two questions ask you whether you are being factual to the best of your knowledge and have documentation if someone were to ask for clarification. Your document is not considered complete until you have completed these two questions.

* 15. The information completed in this report is complete and accurate.

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

* 16. Documentation to support the information presented in this report is on file and available upon request.

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Once you are finished filling out your CAR with SurveyMonkey, click the "done" button. Your CAR is now complete. Please notify your Dean or Associate Dean upon completion. Also, please note that you will not be notified via email that your CAR has been completed/received. On the OAC's Moodle page in the folder titled "Submitted CARs," you can find your submitted CAR. This folder is not updated constantly, but it is updated frequently, which means you will not be able to access a printed copy of your CAR immediately after completing your assessment. The date of the last update is included in the title of this folder for your convenience. If you have any questions about whether your document was received, please notify the Assistant Dean of Assessment.

APPENDIX B: THE GEO RUBRICS

GEO 1: Communication Rubric

This rubric measures students' ability to demonstrate proficiency in speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

GEO 1: Communication Rubric
Demonstrate proficiency in speaking, writing, reading, and listening

DESCRIPTOR	SCORE
The assignment explains a well-articulated position through sophisticated style and diction.	**A Excellent**
The assignment demonstrates an insightful position through adept style and diction.	**B Good**
The assignment describes an appropriate position with adequate style and diction.	**C Average**
The assignment attempts to describe a position with adequate style and diction.	**D Poor**
The assignment does not describe a position with adequate style and diction.	**F Failing**

GEO 2: Critical Thinking Rubric

This rubric measures students' ability to demonstrate critical thinking skills and problem solving skills.

GEO 2: Critical Thinking Rubric
Demonstrate critical thinking skills and problem solving skills

DESCRIPTOR	SCORE
The assignment interprets the meaning of critical points or issues.	**A Excellent**
The assignment examines the meaning of critical points or issues.	**B Good**
The assignment explains the meaning of critical points or issues.	**C Average**
The assignment attempts to explain the meaning of critical points or issues.	**D Poor**
The assignment does not explain the meaning of critical points or issues.	**F Failing**

GEO 3: Cultural Diversity Rubric

This rubric measures students' ability to demonstrate an awareness of human values and diverse cultures.

GEO 3: Cultural Diversity Rubric
Demonstrate an awareness of human values and diverse cultures

DESCRIPTOR	SCORE
The assignment validates knowledge of diverse ideas and perspectives.	**A Excellent**
The assignment supports knowledge of diverse ideas and perspectives.	**B Good**
The assignment builds knowledge of diverse ideas and perspectives.	**C Average**
The assignment attempts to build knowledge of diverse ideas and perspectives.	**D Poor**
The assignment does not build knowledge of diverse ideas and perspectives.	**F Failing**

GEO 4: Information Technology Rubric

This rubric measures students' ability to demonstrate understanding and skills to function in a technological society.

GEO 4: Information Technology Rubric
Demonstrate understanding and skills to function in a technological society

DESCRIPTOR	SCORE
The assignment demonstrates superior clarity in the understanding and use of job/industry specific technologies, systems and/or equipment.	**A Excellent**
The assignment demonstrates a solid understanding of job/industry specific technologies, systems, and/or equipment with regular and consistent correct and appropriate usage.	**B Good**
The assignment demonstrates a general understanding of job/industry specific technologies, systems, and/or equipment with mostly correct and appropriate usage.	**C Average**
The assignment attempts to demonstrate sufficient understanding or ability to use industry/ job specific technologies or equipment.	**D Poor**
The assignment does not demonstrate sufficient understanding or ability to use industry/ job specific technologies or equipment.	**F Failing**

GEO 5: Quantitative Skills Rubric

This rubric measures students' ability to demonstrate analytical skills and processes to interpret, evaluate, and solve problems.

CARL SANDBURG COLLEGE

GEO 5: Quantitative Skills Rubric

Demonstrate use of quantitative analytical skills and processes to interpret, evaluate, and solve problems

DESCRIPTOR	SCORE
The assignment applies logic to develop a strategy to find solutions.	**A Excellent**
The assignment uses logic to develop a strategy to find solutions.	**B Good**
The assignment considers logic to develop a strategy to find solutions.	**C Average**
The assignment attempts to consider logic to develop a strategy to find solutions.	**D Poor**
The assignment does not consider logic to develop a strategy to find solutions.	**F Failing**

APPENDIX C: THE OAC'S FEEDBACK

CAR Satisfaction Survey Results

The OAC received positive feedback from faculty who responded to the CAR Satisfaction Survey in Spring 2016: 87.27% say submitting the CAR via SurveyMonkey is easier; 92.59% say the CAR instructions are clear; 90.91% say adequate training was available; and 74.08% say they understand how to use the GEO Rubrics. Figure 9 identifies faculty recommendations for the CAR process.

Figure 9. Faculty Input

Figure 9. Faculty recommendations are color-coded to identify trends to be further discussed. The key is located below.

Understanding the Process

The CAR process has, indeed, changed. If you are finding the process difficult and overwhelming, please know you have faculty dedicated to help you. You can contact the Assistant Dean of Assessment or your Dean/Associate Dean with any questions regarding your CAR. Furthermore, the OAC continues to provide tutorials in multiple mediums—like videos, workshops, and even this document—to help you during your assessments. You are not in the process alone.

The CAR is completed for a few reasons: one, these assessments should serve as tools in understanding your students' application of key concepts; two, these assessments foster a student -centered pedagogy rather than a teacher-centered one; and three, these assessments fulfill accreditation criteria. The OAC understands that faculty are busy, and thus, the OAC strives to make the reporting process as easy and useful as possible.

The assessment process is embedded and is more of a culture than a task. Your CARs, feedback, discussions, and questions are analyzed by the OAC, and those committee members strive to educate fellow faculty members about the assessment process. Quite simply, faculty assess to ensure outputs (or end products) are meeting expectations.

Training, Instruction: Video, Workshops

Six references were made about this specific area. Overall, faculty found the CAR Tutorial Video on the Moodle page and the multiple workshops during the past year (specifically the first semianual CAR Workshop in Spring 2016) to be extremely helpful. The OAC is dedicated to providing ongoing training to ensure faculty understand the process.

GEOs and GEO Rubrics

Five suggestions were made about GEOs and the corresponding rubrics. The newest facet of the most recent CAR update (other than the online component) is the inclusion of GEO assessment.

The OAC will plan to incorporate further training geared toward utilizing the GEO Rubrics.

You can help as well. If you find one of the rubrics is unclear or inaccurate in some way, please notify the Assistant Dean of Assessment immediately. We want your feedback, recommendations, and revisions to ensure the GEO Rubrics are useful and accurate. GEO Rubrics will henceforth be revised and updated continually.

The Online Component and Printing Availability

In two responses, faculty asked for printed copies and confirmation of/access to completed forms. Unfortunately, SurveyMonkey does not allow for email confirmations after you have completed your CAR. The OAC has added a new folder in the "CARs" section on the Moodle page: look for the folder titled "Submitted CARs." This folder is not updated constantly, but it is updated frequently—which means you will not be able to access a printed copy of your CAR immediately

after completing your assessment. The date of last update is included in the title for your convenience.

One response specifically suggested going back to a Word Document for CARing purposes. The OAC understands your need to work on the report gradually—which is why a printable form is also available in the "CARs" section on the Moodle page—but the OAC made the transition to SurveyMonkey to ensure more accurate data collection. Every year, faculty representatives who serve on the OAC are responsible for reporting on the data collected from their individual departments. This process was very cumbersome for the OAC representatives when CARs were in the Word Document form. SurveyMonkey makes the reporting process easier, and much more accurate, for OAC representatives—thus enhancing the assessment process as a whole.

Timing

One response pointed out that the classroom assessment takes place too early in the semester. Faculty are not required to complete a CAR every semester but annually. If you felt rushed during the spring semester, try to assess in the fall instead.

The collection date is set for the Monday after Spring Break to ensure OAC members have the ability to collect and analyze data before faculty leave for summer.

No Concerns

The OAC is pleased if you have no concerns at this time; however, if you discover you have questions anytime during the assessment process, please ask the Assistant Dean of Assessment or your Dean/Associate Dean.

GLOSSARY

Action Plan	An action plan outlines the change that one plans to make after the assessment, and perhaps even what the desired outcome will be. Depending on the level of assessment, the action plan can impact one classroom or the entire institution.
Analytic Rubric	This type of rubric breaks down complex assignments into smaller criteria and generates data on specific tasks to enhance students' learning processes.
Annual Report	This document is created by the Assistant Dean of Assessment and published internally every year in August. It highlights assessment trends and activities at Sandburg.
CAR	This term is an acronym for the Classroom Assessment Report. All faculty members are required to complete one CAR every academic year, always due the Monday after Spring Break.
Classroom Assessment	This level of assessment is the primary level that faculty members contribute toward. It assesses one section of a particular class and analyzes what works and/or what does not. The action plan is localized to the individual faculty member's classes, specifically targeting and enhancing one faculty member's section.
Course Assessment	This level of assessment looks at all sections of one particular course to analyze what works and/or what does not. The action plan is broadened to include the department, implementing changes to enhance all sections of the course.
Course Brief	This document identifies a specific course's description and objectives. Your Dean or Associate Dean will be able to provide you with this document.

Criteria	Criteria are specific standards that matter most for a particular assignment and are used to build analytic rubrics. When utilizing an analytic rubric, each assignment is evaluated by set criteria that the faculty member establishes, such as presentation, writing conventions, or organization.
Descriptors	Descriptors are the general characteristics that convey academic performance for a particular assignment and are used to build holistic rubrics.
GEOs	This term is an acronym for the General Education Outcomes. Sandburg has established five GEOs: communication, critical thinking, cultural diversity, information technology, and quantitative skills. When students complete Sandburg (with a degree, certificate, or credits for transfer), they should be successful in these five areas.
HLC	This term is an acronym for the Higher Learning Commission. The HLC is responsible for the accreditation of higher learning institutions, including but not limited to community colleges, universities, and tribal colleges. These institutions are all located in the North Central region.
Holistic Rubric	This type of rubric provides a snapshot of student progress and generates data on a broader scope to enhance students' learning processes.
ICCB	This term is an acronym for the Illinois Community College Board. The ICCB is responsible for establishing state-wide policies and ensuring all higher learning institutions in Illinois adhere to them.
Institutional Assessment	This level of assessment, as it relates to faculty, is embedded into the classroom assessment process to analyze what works and/or what does not at the institutional level. Individual faculty members collect data in their annual CARs, and that data is aggregated up to enhance the student experience at Sandburg. This level of assessment also utilizes the Key Performance Indicators that are established in the *Strategic Plan*.

KPIs	This term is an acronym for the Key Performance Indicators. KPIs are established in the *Strategic Plan*, and each department identifies their own set as well. Essentially, the KPIs are goals that the institution and department want to achieve.
Learning Outcome	Learning outcomes are statements that describe or list measurable and essential content-based knowledge. Students will have achieved these outcomes at the end of a course.
Outcomes Assessment	Outcomes-based assessment is assessment that is centered on the student rather than the educator. This student-centered approach is driven by the students' applications of course objectives and is a continuous process that utilizes set criteria to measure students' successes.
OAC	This term is an acronym for the Outcomes Assessment Committee. It is a faculty-driven committee at Sandburg that focuses on enhancing outcomes assessment.
Objectives	Objectives describe the goals and intentions of an educator. These are the goals educators will do.
Outcomes	Outcomes describe what the students will do upon completion of a course. Outcomes must be measurable to ensure accurate assessments.
Performance-level Indicators	These levels are identified on an analytic rubric to communicate precisely to students what they need to do to earn a specific grade on an assignment. Some examples of performance-level indicators might be "far exceeds expectations," "exceeds expectations," "meets expectations," and "does not meet expectations."
Program Assessment	This level of assessment looks at an entire program, as outlined by the Illinois Community College Board, and analyzes what works and/or what does not. The action plan incudes faculty and administrators in a particular program and enhances all courses in that program.

Program Review	This phrase is applied to the program assessment process at Sandburg. In the past, it was also identified as PQPs.
Rubric	This tool is used by educators to evaluate and/or assess student performance on assignments that can generate more than one right answer. Rubrics measure students' work against set criteria, or descriptors, that faculty members establish.
Strategic Plan	This document is created by the President, with contributions from the Institutional Effectiveness office and the Board, to identify Sandburg's current needs and trends as well as identify future necessities and opportunities.

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RESOURCES

http://moodle.sandburg.edu/

Log in to the OAC Moodle page: "Assessments-Faculty Resource (CARs-PARs)," for current CAR forms, GEO Rubrics, examples, and other useful assessment information.

http://assessmentcommons.org/#hbooks

Access general resources, sample students assessments, and other assessment handbooks.

http://www.higher-ed.org/resources/Assessment.htm

Find links to a more thorough glossary of assessment terms, accreditation information, and principles for assessing student learning.

http://www.rcampus.com

Find a plethora of rubrics to share, utilize, and adapt.

http://www.slcc.edu/assessment/examples-of-excellence.aspx

Listen to faculty members at Salt Lake Community College share assessment success stories.