

Stark State College
College Store Assessment Biennial Report

Program/Department Name: College Store
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Program/ Departmental Self-Assessment Procedure and Action Plan

Purpose: To self-identify the status of Program/Department in the outcomes assessment process as well as the action-steps and timetable for the development of assessment processes.

Assessment Criteria

1. Goals

Does the Department have specific student learning or academic/ student service goals which reflect the discipline or service area professional standards?

Yes No

2. Outcome Measures

Are direct and indirect outcome measures identified for each goal?

Yes No

3. Research

Is research systematically conducted to evaluate success or failure in achieving outcomes?

Yes No

4. Findings

Are research results analyzed and interpreted and findings determined?

Yes No

5. Review Process

Are findings are discussed and reviewed by appropriate groups and individuals and recommendations made for action?

Yes No

6. Proposed Actions

Are recommendations acted upon?

Yes No

7. Improvements

Have actions result in documented improvements in student learning or academic/ student services?

Assessment Measures Inventory

Purpose:

To identify benchmarked outcome measures and the benchmarking level (internal, state, national, etc.).

**Type of performance benchmark
(check all that apply)**

Assessment Measures for Goals (Outcome measures from assessment report)	Is trend data available for the measure? (Yes or No)	Has a performance benchmark(s) been identified for the measure? (Yes, No, NA)	SSC (Internal)	State-level (OACC, OBR, etc)	National (Professional Org., accrediting group, etc.)
Goal 1, Industry cost standards – mark up percentage	Yes	Yes			X
Goal 1, cost savings analysis of various modes of materials (e-books, new/used, rental)	Yes	Yes	X		
Goal 2, Faculty survey (NACS)	Yes	NA			X
Goal 2, Faculty focus groups	Yes	Yes			
Goal 3, Board of Trustees Annual Report	Yes	NA			
Goal 4, ACT Student Opinion Survey	No	Yes			X
Goal 4, Faculty survey (NACS)	Yes	Yes			X
Goal 4, Focus group feedback (students)	Yes	NA			

Student Service Goals

Goal 1 To provide students with cost effective options for course material requirements

Goal 2 To support faculty in identifying and selecting appropriate course materials

Goal 3 To support College operations through the general fund

Goal 4 To provide high-quality customer service to students, faculty, and staff

Summary Narrative

The Stark State College Store is an auxiliary enterprise of the College. It works to be efficient for the College as well as effective for the students and customers. The College Store supports the mission of the college by helping to provide students the necessary course materials that will enhance their learning experience at the college. The Store provides products and services to students, faculty and staff such as supplies and imprinted items. After expenses are paid, it is the responsibility of the Store to contribute to the General Fund of the college.

During the previous two fiscal years a number of assessment instruments that have been developed were used to collect both indirect and direct qualitative and quantitative data from two key stakeholder groups of the Store. These include surveys and focus groups. Review of the information indicates that the College Store is doing many things well and has some areas for improvement.

Students are a stakeholder group that support the College Store. The responsibility for providing students with the best choices for course materials is taken very seriously by College Store staff. The goal of the Store is to get students set up for success in their courses by providing them with effective textbook options at the fairest prices. The Store staff uses a mark-up that is less than industry standards. Buying strategies and specialized software (VERBA) allow staff to analyze prices for the maximum benefit to students. As more textbook choices (e.g. e-books) become available the staff will include those. The current choices are used and new traditional textbooks, rental books and some e-books. The Store has worked to grow a rental program that benefits many students. In the past year the program has been expanded to include a larger number of textbook titles which benefit a greater number of students.

Another important stakeholder group is faculty. The College Store staff supports the academic departments by finding the selected required course materials. Results from a Faculty Satisfaction survey indicated that the College Store is doing a satisfactory job regarding having course materials available, having knowledgeable store personnel, and supporting the academic mission of the college. These results were higher than benchmarked levels according to the National Association of College Stores and similar to the results from the same survey two years ago. Though this information was positive it confirmed the importance of maintaining service and repair with faculty. The areas for improvement that were less than benchmarks included timely resolution of textbook-related problems and communication of potential problems. It is noted that these results were also similar to the previous survey which verifies the importance of communication between the Store and faculty. These two areas with lower levels of satisfaction were discussed in a faculty focus group. This allowed staff to get feedback which will help to improve these two areas.

The College Store operation must be efficient and support the overall College operation. After expenses are paid all additional funds are deposited into the College's General Fund. This is a challenge which is met head-on by store staff who are diligent at meeting goals of having affordable course materials for students while having funds left over which will support the college. The past two fiscal years showed fund deposits.

Providing high quality customer service is paramount to the success of the College Store. The stakeholder groups surveyed were students and college faculty and staff. The ACT Student Opinion Survey 2013 results indicated satisfaction levels that were slightly better than the previous assessment period. A student focus group was formed and feedback was collected to analyze the aspects of the College Store operation and the availability of course materials including the continuation of the rental program for lower-cost

options in course materials. The Support Services Effectiveness Survey results show that college staff and faculty believe the College Store works in an above-average way to support the college. The College Store earned grades of A- to B+ on the eight items relating to quality of services provided.

Overall, the assessments conducted to date confirm that the College Store is doing its best to provide course materials to students that will enhance their learning experience. The Store is operating as efficiently as it can for the sake of supporting the college. Student and employee feedback are positive for the most part.

Assessment Results Report

Purpose:

The report is a summary compilation of key assessment methods, findings, review processes, actions, and improvements related to the academic/ student service or learning goals of the department/ unit on an annual basis. As a historical record of assessment activities, the report provides for and supports the systematic assessment of academic support outcomes.

Goal 1: To provide students with cost effective options for course material requirements

Outcome Measure 1: Industry cost standards – mark up percentage

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall __X__ Spring __X__ Annual _____

Findings: Stark State College Store uses a mark-up that is less than industry standards. Staff uses a more aggressive purchasing process that allows them to buy at a lower cost and pass these savings on to the students. The following table shows the mark-up percentages for the past two academic years:

Mark-Up Percentage

	2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013	
	<i>New</i>	<i>Used</i>	<i>New</i>	<i>Used</i>	<i>New</i>	<i>Used</i>
SSC average mark-up	25%	28%	20%	21%	20%	21%
Industry average mark-up	33%	35%	30%	34%	30%	34%

Review Committee/ Process: Textbook mark-up is reviewed annually with the College Store staff and the COO.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: Mark-up is the key proponent to making sure that the students are paying fair prices for their course materials. Specialized software (VERBA) was purchased in 2011 that allows the staff to analyze individual textbook prices so that the retail prices can be better aligned with the market pricing. Staff will continue to use this software for maximum benefits along with continuation of analyzing buying strategies.

Improvements: To be evaluated in the next 2 year assessment cycle

Outcome Measure 2: Cost savings analysis of various modes of materials (e-books, new/used, rental)

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall __X__ Spring __X__ Annual _____

Findings: The primary goal is provide students with cost effective choices in course materials. The College Store has been providing an in-house rental program for students since 2009 when it received a Textbook Rental grant from the Department of Education. The program has been expanded each year.

Students saved an average \$86,600 per semester in 2012-2013 and \$112,245 per semester in 2013-2014. This significant cost savings makes rental books a primary option for Stark State students. The challenge for the College Store with the rental program has always been the number of rental textbooks that don't get returned to the store at the end of the semester. The extra work involved in charging out the non-returned rental books does provide an important negative aspect to the rental program. Changes have been made to the program so that going forward there will be a transition involving the collateral that is necessary for students to rent textbooks.

Another cost effective choice for students is the large supply of used textbooks available. Used books also offer substantial savings to students who prefer using traditional textbooks. The College Store obtains used books through the Buyback process and also purchases them from non-traditional sources to increase the quantity of good used textbooks that will save students over the prices of other options. E-versions of textbooks are still being developed by publishers and haven't yet been in high demand by Stark State students. Several e-texts have been brought in during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years and less than 3% were purchased. As e-texts become more popular, the College Store will watch for the opportunity to make them available to students. A newer source of no-cost materials known in the industry as Open Source materials is being explored. A presentation to the College Retreat and the Department Chairs brought awareness to those who make course material decisions for their students.

Review Committee/ Process: The rental program is reviewed to make sure that it is working to benefit both students and the college. The course materials options are reviewed each semester with the Textbook Buyer and the College Store staff to make sure that the best options are being offered at the lowest possible prices.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: The rental program will continue to be made efficient for both students and the College Store and Business Office. The College Store staff will continue to explore e-books and open source materials.

Improvements: With the 2011 VERBA software purchase, the College Store staff has continued to use this tool for analyzing prices and making the store more competitive with the online sellers. The software also provides a comparison tool for students to see what course materials they need and the choices they have for where to buy and what to pay. VERBA has changed the way that textbooks are purchased and has provided a more cost effective approach for the store and students as well.

Goal 2: To support faculty in identifying and selecting appropriate course materials

Outcome Measure 1: Faculty survey (NACS)

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall X Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings: A Faculty Satisfaction survey from the National Association of College Stores (NACS) was conducted in the fall of 2013. Faculty rated key factors regarding the College Store by their importance and satisfaction.

High levels of importance and satisfaction were found for items such as:

- Course materials available when classes start
- Knowledgeable store personnel
- Store support of institution academic mission

Lower levels of satisfaction were found for items:

- Timely resolution of textbook-related problems
- Communication of potential problems (e.g., out-of-stock)

Review Committee/ Process: The results were reviewed with College Store staff, Director of Institutional Research and Planning, and presented at academic division meetings.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: A focus group was conducted during the spring 2014 semester to explore issues around lower rated items.

Improvements: The Textbook Buyer and College Store Manager are committed to making sure any textbook information is conveyed directly to faculty and students involved.

Outcome Measure 2: Faculty focus groups

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring X Annual _____

Findings: As a follow-up to the NACS Faculty Satisfaction survey, two negative aspects from the survey were discussed in a faculty focus group. A list of specific questions was asked during the session and feedback was recorded. Those involved in the focus group came from a cross-section of departments. The overall comment from them was stressing the importance of communication. The consensus was that e-mail is the most effective communication and that consistent e-mails should be sent to address any textbook concerns/issues that may occur. Textbook shortages should be brought to attention immediately and communication to Department Chairs should remind them also to notify their faculty who are affected. The participants agreed that e-book options should be made available but they also said that they are not seeing the big demand by students. The timely resolution of textbook issues is something that we can all work on together so that the time that students are without a textbook is minimal. The other point discussed was the desire for the textbook adoption information be sent electronically instead of the paper form that has been sent each semester. The College Store will work with their software provider to see if this can be an option in the future.

Review Committee/ Process: The feedback was discussed with the Textbook Buyer and College Store staff.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: Textbook Buyer and Store Manager will make communication with the faculty a priority each day for every textbook issue/concern.

Improvements: Focus Group discussion and suggestions were discussed with College Store staff. Ways to improve communication were discussed and put into place.

Goal 3: To support College operations through the general fund

Outcome Measure 1: Board of Trustees Annual Report

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual X

Findings: The annual report shows that \$250,000 was transferred from the College Store to the general fund for fiscal years 11-12 and 12-13. The overall college store fund balance is used at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

Review Committee/ Process: Reviewed with the Vice President for Business and Finance and the Comptroller. Ongoing reviews throughout the year with the Director of Budget and the Comptroller.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: None at this time

Improvements: NA

Goal 4: To provide high-quality customer service to students, faculty, and staff

Outcome Measure 1: ACT Student Opinion Additional Items Survey

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall X Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings: The ACT Additional Items Survey includes two college store-specific questions. The information posted in the chart below shows that the satisfaction level established in the survey for three survey years is very similar and that it is a high level of satisfaction.

		2008		2011		2013	
		Pct Very Satisfied/ Satisfied	Pct Dissatisfied/ Very Dissatisfied	Pct Very Satisfied/ Satisfied	Pct Dissatisfied/ Very Dissatisfied	Pct Very Satisfied/ Satisfied	Pct Dissatisfied/ Very Dissatisfied
Students were asked to select the most appropriate response for each item. Does not apply and blank responses were excluded from satisfaction percentages.							
College Store	Availability of course materials	75	3	69	6	72	11
	Hours of operation	76	4	70	5	75	8

Review Committee/ Process: The results were reviewed with College Store staff and Director of Institutional Research and Planning.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: Continue to make customer service a priority. Training of employees will include additional information on how to make good customer service a priority.

Improvements: Expand customer service training in the new student worker training.

Outcome Measure 2: Faculty survey (NACS)

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring X Annual _____

Findings: Faculty responded positively on the following items:

- Personnel who are helpful and friendly
- Convenient store hours
- Course materials available when classes start

In addition, 15 out of 20 comments related to the friendliness of the college store staff. The College Store came out highly rated on the interaction between College Store staff and faculty.

Review Committee/ Process: The results were reviewed with College Store staff, Director of Institutional Research and Planning, and presented at academic division meetings.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: None necessary but continue to reinforce the importance of customer service with college store staff.

Improvements: NA

Outcome Measure 3: Focus Groups (student)

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring X Annual _____

Findings: A student focus group was conducted in the spring of 2014. Student feedback included positive comments regarding the availability of course materials. Rental options are preferred and this confirmed the need to continue the rental program. Students like the organization of the textbook room.

Feedback pertaining to e-books as an option was minimal since the students prefer rental at this time. Negative aspects mentioned were shortage of larger sized clothing and buyback communication to students.

Review Committee/ Process: Reviewed with College Store staff

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: Continuation of in-house rental program and keep focus on maintaining good supply of books that are able to be rented. Clothing sizes reviewed for quantity of larger sizes. Discussion of future Buyback communication.

Improvements: Plan for conducting student focus groups on a regular basis to continue to collect feedback from students about preferred course material choices.

Assessment Report Review Rubric

Purpose:

A rubric is a guide that differentiates between levels of development in outcomes assessment. The rubric is designed to clearly show departments/ units how the assessment report will be evaluated and where further action may be needed.

Are the goals for the department/ service area measureable?

Yes No

Is a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures used to assess outcomes for each goal?

Yes No

Was research conducted and findings determined for each goal?

Yes No

Is there a review process in place for the department/ service area?

Yes No

Are action steps outlined where applicable?

Yes No

Was the self-assessment and action plan completed?

Yes No

Was the assessment measures inventory completed?

Yes No

Key Assessment Terms

Competencies/Goals are clear, meaningful statements of purpose or aspirations for the academic program or support service. Programs and services typically have several goals.

Outcome Measures are direct or indirect measures of student learning or of support services. Direct measures provide evidence of actual learning, e.g. paper, exam, and artistic performance. Indirect measures provide evidence about characteristics associated with learning, e.g., student perception surveys, focus group interviews, alumni surveys. See below for detailed examples.

Research is the systematic collection and evaluation of outcomes data.

Findings are the results of research.

Review Process is the method(s) by which findings are discussed and reviewed by faculty, staff, and administrators.

Proposed Actions are the result of the review process and are based on findings.

Improvements are positive changes in student learning or support services as noted through the assessment process. It takes at least two iterations of the research and review process to document systematic improvement.

Examples of *Direct Measures of Student Learning/Services*

- **Scores and pass rates on standardized tests** (licensure/certification as well as other published tests determining key student learning outcomes)
- **Writing samples**
- **Score gains** indicating the “value added” to the students’ learning experiences by comparing entry and exit tests (either published or locally developed) as well as writing samples
- **Locally designed quizzes, tests, and inventories**
- **Portfolio artifacts** (these artifacts could be designed for introductory, working, or professional portfolios)
- **Capstone projects** (these could include research papers, presentations, theses, dissertations, oral defenses, exhibitions, or performances)
- **Case studies**
- **Team/group projects and presentations**
- **Oral examination**
- **Internships, clinical experiences, practica, student teaching, or other professional/content-related experiences** engaging students in hands-on experiences in their respective fields of study (accompanied by ratings or evaluation forms from field/clinical supervisors)
- **Service-learning projects or experiences**
- **Authentic and performance-based projects or experiences** engaging students in opportunities to apply their knowledge to the larger community (accompanied by ratings, scoring rubrics or performance checklists from project/experience coordinator or supervisor)
- **Graduates’ skills in the workplace rated by employers**
- **Online course asynchronous discussions** analyzed by class instructors

Whenever appropriate, scoring keys help identify the knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions assessed by means of the particular assessment instrument, thus documenting student learning directly.

Examples of Indirect Measures of Student Learning/Services

- **Course grades** provide information about student learning *indirectly* because of a series of reasons, such as: a) due to the focus on student performance or achievement at the level of an individual class, such grades do not represent an indication of learning over a longer course of time than the duration of that particular class or across different courses within a program; b) grading systems vary from class to class; and c) grading systems in one class may be used inconsistently from student to student
- **Grades assigned to student work in one particular course** also provide information about student learning *indirectly* because of the reasons mentioned above. Moreover, graded student work in isolation, without an accompanying scoring rubric, does not lead to relevant meaning related to overall student performance or achievement in one class or a program
- **Comparison between admission and graduation rates**
- **Number or rate of graduating students pursuing their education at the next level**
- **Reputation of graduate or post-graduate programs accepting graduating students**
- **Employment or placement rates of graduating students into appropriate career positions**
- **Course evaluation items related to the overall course or curriculum quality**, rather than instructor effectiveness
- **Number or rate of students involved in faculty research, collaborative publications and/or presentations, service learning, or extension of learning in the larger community**
- **Surveys, questionnaires, open-ended self-reports, focus-group or individual interviews** dealing with *current students'* perception of their own learning
- **Surveys, questionnaires, focus-group or individual interviews** dealing with *alumni's* perception of their own learning or of their current career satisfaction (which relies on their effectiveness in the workplace, influenced by the knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions developed in school)
- **Surveys, questionnaires, focus-group or individual interviews** dealing with the *faculty and staff members'* perception of student learning as supported by the programs and services provided to students
- **Quantitative data**, such as enrollment numbers
- **Honors, awards, scholarships, and other forms of public recognition earned by students and alumni**

[Adapted from Maki, P.L. (2004). *Assessing for learning: building a sustainable commitment across the institution*. Sterling, VA: AAHE; and Suskie, L. (2004). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*. San Francisco, CA: Anker Publishing Company, Inc.]