

Planning the Assessment Program: Community Involvement

Goal: To create a strategic plan for EPortfolio assessment that is tailored to local post-secondary needs.

Outcome: To use planning matrix tables to identify strategic planning elements and the responsibilities of stakeholder networks of parents and guardians; teachers and administrators; legislators; and workforce leaders.

Activity 1: Let's begin by using the table below to identify the mission and priorities of a writing assessment program. The accompanying figure (5.1 from White, Elliot, and Peckham) provides an example of a finalized plan.

- **Mission**: What is the mission of the assessment program, and how does that mission align with the mission of the institution? How does the mission of the program align with national initiatives sponsored by NCTE and CCCC, such as the WPA Outcomes Statement 2.0?
- **Strategy Priorities**: How will you achieve your mission? How do these strategies and priorities advance the aims of localism and community involvement?
- **Impact**: What do you anticipate as the risks and rewards of these strategic priorities?
- **Targets**: What are the targets of the assessment in curricular terms that are quantifiable?
- **Assessment**: Can you briefly express the essence of the assessment program?
- **Communication**: What strategies will you use to build community involvement?
- **Priorities**: Can you determine each of your priorities so that the overall mission can be broken down into achievable aims?

Table 5.1. Brick City College Department of English Five-Year Strategic Plan.

Our Mission: The Department of English is committed to the study of writing, literature, and the cultures in which both exist. Our aim is to ensure that Brick City students are able to communicate compellingly in order to play productive roles in their disciplines and in their communities.

Our Strategy Priorities: We will achieve our mission through strategic priorities aimed to help students succeed in their transitions to Brick City, to document their academic and student success through ePortfolios, to enhance their roles as global citizens through exposure to contemporary world literature, and to encourage multidisciplinary collaboration through writing in the disciplines.

Our Impact: In terms of consequence, we anticipate that over the five years of the strategic plan, we will provide all Brick City undergraduate students with hallmark experiences in writing, literature, and culture that will transform their undergraduate experience and strengthen their societal commitment.

Our Targets: We have identified four targets: to eliminate basic-skills classes for first-year students; to use ePortfolios for instruction and assessment across the curriculum; to offer a contemporary world literature elective in a digitally supported learning environment at the sophomore level; and to offer course-embedded writing-in-the-disciplines support for all senior students in their capstone seminars.

Our Assessment: Using a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods, we will document our curricular efforts, chart the work of our students, and use the information we gain to improve our instruction and deepen our knowledge about student learning.

Our Communication: To strengthen community involvement, we pledge to report our work to our constituencies—advisory boards, administration, faculty and instructional staff, parents, students, professional societies, and the public—in ways appropriate to each.

Priority 1: Transitions: First-Year Writing

- Eliminate basic writing through rapid course assessment and writing center support
- Implement advanced placement for proficient students

Priority 2: Student Achievement: ePortfolios across the curriculum

- Establish and use core competency proficiencies to document academic success
- Coordinate with departments and Office of Career Development to prepare students for workplace and graduate-school success
- Assess in first year, sophomore year, and senior year, with skill levels documented

Priority 3: Digital Learning: World Literature

- Feature contemporary authors including selections from fiction, poetry, stage, and film
- Offer digitally supported classes, including faculty podcasts for lectures

Priority 4: Writing in the Disciplines: Capstone Seminars

- Ensure student writing proficiency in genres required in the major
 - Ensure both print and digital writing exposure
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Activity 2: Now, let's concentrate on ways to build community based on the priorities of your assessment program. The accompanying figure (5.2 from White, Elliot, and Peckham) provides an example of a finalized plan.

Strategic Priority	Objectives	Responsible Groups	Targets	Communication	Impact

Table 5.2 Priority: Student achievement: ePortfolios across the curriculum.

Strategic Priority	Objectives	Responsible Groups	Targets	Communication	Impact
Priority 2: Student Achievement: ePortfolios across the Curriculum	<p>Objective 1: Instruction: To ensure ePortfolios are designed to reflect core cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal skills necessary for success</p> <p>Objective 2: Assessment: To assure ePortfolios are evaluated on recurrent cycles in valid ways with Phase 2 assessment processes</p> <p>Objective 3: Sustainability: To ensure that results from assessment are used to improve student learning</p>	<p>Faculty and instructional staff within and beyond the department; students</p> <p>Office of Institutional Research</p> <p>Office of Career Development/Alumni</p>	<p>First year: 100 percent of first-year writing classes use ePortfolios; sampling plan to assess ePortfolios at 95% CI</p> <p>Sophomore year: 50% of world literature classes use ePortfolios; sampling plan to assess ePortfolios at 95% CI</p> <p>Senior year: 50% of targeted capstone seminars use ePortfolios; sampling plan to assess ePortfolios at 95% CI</p>	<p>Department advisory board: spring meeting</p> <p>Administration: monthly dean briefings</p> <p>Faculty and instructional staff: collaborative wiki</p> <p>Parents: department web page</p> <p>Students: podcast series</p> <p>Professional societies: regional conference; national conference; peer-reviewed publications</p> <p>Public: department web page</p>	To provide students with hallmark experiences in writing, literature, and culture that will transform their undergraduate experience and strengthen their societal commitment

Reference

White, Edward M., Norbert Elliot, and Irvin Peckham. 2015. *Very Like a Whale: The Assessment of Writing Programs*. Logan: Utah State UP.