Assessment Activities at Montgomery College
What is Montgomery College doing about Assessment?

What is the difference between program review and program assessment?

Program review assesses all aspects of an academic area or administrative unit, through a self-evaluative process. Program assessment focuses on student learning in a given course, certificate, or degree program.

College Area Review for Academic Areas

A comprehensive self-evaluation of an existing coherent set of academic activities (discipline and special programs) that is design to foster improvements and demonstrate accountability *(Suskie, 2009).* Program review is used to enhance the quality of an academic program by pointing out strengths and weaknesses and by providing recommendations for targeted allocation of resources and discipline improvements. MC CAR process is systematic, comprehensive, and ongoing. For the academic areas, key benchmark data regarding faculty/student ratios, ft/pt faculty ratios, faculty release time, student enrollments, program awards, and transfer summaries are provided to each discipline. The review process includes the examination of academic areas' curriculum, assessment activities, licensure, articulation agreements, advisory committee, enrollment, faulty needs and the strengths and opportunities of each discipline. At the conclusion of the review, recommendations for academic improvements are approved and implemented within a five year review cycle. As budgets will allow, external peer reviewers are invited to participate in the process.

College Area Review for Administrative Units

A comprehensive self-evaluative process that all administrative units engage in to assess the alignment of their unit's goals, mission, and functions with the College's mission and goals. Administrative units also examine the strengths, challenges, and opportunities, the resources need to function as a unit, and provide benchmarks for unit effectiveness. At the conclusion of the review, recommendations for unit improvements are approved and implemented within a five year review cycle.

Outcomes Assessment

Outcomes Assessment focuses on student learning outcomes. **Student Learning Outcomes** directly describe what a student is expected to learn as a result of participating in academic activities or experiences at the College, in particular, knowledge gained, skills and abilities acquired and demonstrated and, attitudes, values, behaviors developed or changed *(MC Website).* Is the student prepared for maturation to a four year program or the work environment as a result of the educational experience in the classroom, course work, certificate, degree programs, and student services interactions?

Formative Assessment-the assessment of student learning and progress while the student is engage in the learning activity be it in the course, certificate or degree program *(Maki, 2010).*
Summative Assessment-the knowledge, skills, habits that students take with them as a result of successfully completing a course, certificate, or program *(Suskie, 2004).*

General Education Assessment

General Education assessment entails the assessment of certain key competencies and skills that student will need in the workplace and beyond. MC students are expected to practice and or master the competencies as a result of taking a particular general education course(s). MC has five general education competencies (Written and Oral Communication, Critical Analysis and Reasoning, Information Literacy, Technological Competency, Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning) and two areas of proficiency (Arts and Aesthetic Awareness and Personal, Social, and Civic Responsibility). MC has developed a general education assessment plan/process/timeline and identified rubrics for each of the competencies and proficiencies.

Program Assessment

Program assessment is assessment of student learning outcomes for a given program which includes all certificates and degree. Program assessment is extremely important because of the current focus on college completion and student success. In order for America to maintain its global competiveness, national benchmarks are in place at the state level to increase the number of college completers by 2025. The goal in the state of Maryland is 55% of the state residents, ages 25 to 64 will hold an associate's or bachelor's degree by 2025. In 2012, MC shifted its primary focus to program assessment and begin to collect assessment matrices that aligned course outcomes with program outcomes. Disciplines are developing program assessment plans and identifying course(s) in which to assess these program outcomes.

What is a….

Culture of Inquiry asks the questions needed to conduct assessment activities and to hold ourselves accountable. How, what, when, where, why, and how well are our students learning? What are the appropriate assessment plans, methods, tools, and what data are needed are a few examples of how our institution is always thinking and raising questions about what to assess and how to assess it to meet students' educational goals and for advancement of institutional improvements.

Culture of Assessment focuses on student learning outcomes and the value of teaching and learning that uses outcomes assessment results to improve curricula and pedagogy *(Suskie, 2004 & Ewell, 2002)*.

Culture of Accountability focuses on our external audiences and uses institutional assessment results to tell our stories using qualitative and quantitative data and benchmarks.

For additional and more specific detail information, please refer to the Montgomery College Websites below:
College Area Review: www.montgomerycollege.edu/car
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: www.montgomerycollege.edu/outcomes
General Education Assessment: www.montgomerycollege.edu/gened
The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness: www.montgomerycollege.edu/planning