

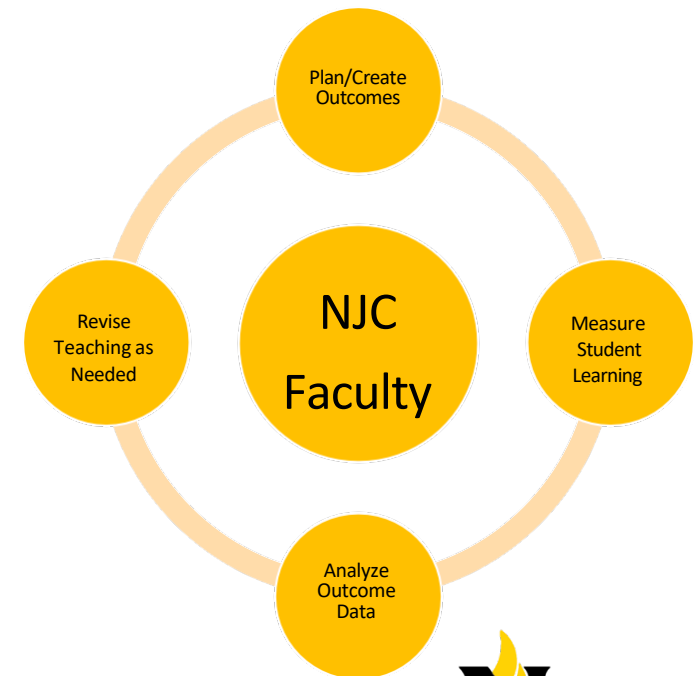
# Institutional Student Learning Outcomes: ZERO to SIXTY: How Northeastern Completed FIVE Rubrics in FIVE Months

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And invaluable input from NJC Faculty.



# Agenda

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- Background: NJC Assessment Through 2021
- Rubric 1: Communication Rubric
- Fall 2022 In-Service: ISLOs and PSLOs
- Fall 2022: Assessment Leadership Team PSLO Work
- Spring 2023 In-Service: NJC Assessment Plan
- Spring 2023: Assessment Leadership Team Diversity Rubric Work
- Fall 2023 In-Service: Five New ISLO Rubrics
- Fall 2023: Assessment Leadership Team Rubric Work
- Spring 2024 In-Service: Reviewing 5 Rubrics
- Looking Ahead: Where We Go From Here

# Background: NJC Assessment Through 2021

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- I was hired as the Director of Academic Excellence and started at NJC in October 2021.
- At that time, NJC had three goal areas: Communication, Thinking, and Career & Life Skills.
- Each goal area had a corresponding competency:
  - Students will communicate effectively.
  - Students will think critically and/or creatively.
  - Students will demonstrate marketable behavior for the workplace and/or transfer institution.

# Background: NJC Assessment Through 2021

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- NJC had chosen to focus on course-level assessment reports. So, while there were institutional-level goal areas and competencies, most of the assessment was at the course level.
  - Every course has course-level outcomes as NJC follows the Common Course Numbering System and its corresponding course-level outcomes.
- While there were goal areas/competencies, there were no rubrics to allow for large-scale assessment of the goal areas.
- Many programs also did not have Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs).

# Background: NJC Assessment Through 2021

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- So, to recap, no ISLO rubrics, very few programs with PSLOs, assessment mainly focused on the course-level rather than programmatic or institutional . . .
- And a HLC 4-Year Review with a lock date of February 6, 2023.
- Yikes!

# Rubric 1: Communication Rubric

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- I realized that we needed to have some sort of institutional-level assessment deliverable for our HLC review, so, after consulting with the Assessment Leadership Team, I opted to begin drafting a rubric for the Communication goal area.
- I chose Communication for a couple of reasons:
  1. My MA and Ph.D. are in Communication, so I have a lot of experience with Communication assessment.
  2. A few programs, including Ag, EMT, and English, were doing solid Communication assessment using rubrics their programs had created, so this allowed me to mainly focus on synthesizing their rubrics and, if needed, add any additional criteria based on my experience in Communication assessment.

# Rubric 1: Communication Rubric

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- The rubric draft was shared with the Assessment Leadership Team and revised based on feedback from the Assessment Leadership Team.
- I then took it to every program and explained how it could be used to assess nearly every program.
- Here is the rubric and the unique required/optional criteria that allow it to work in some way for nearly every program:
  - We will briefly discuss the first two criteria.



Communication  
Rubric

# Fall 2022 In-Service: ISLOs and PSLOs

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- NJC's new VPAA and HLC ALO, Sam Soliman, started on July 1, 2022. He and I worked together throughout July and early August to figure out how to maximize in-service time to create additional deliverables for our HLC 4-Year Review.
- We started with the three goal areas and told the faculty we would like to have Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs) rather than goal areas as ISLOs tend to be more specific and measurable.
- We had the faculty break into groups and brainstorm a list of 5 things that they felt all students graduating from NJC, regardless of program or credential, should be able to know or do by graduation.
  - Sam and I asked that the faculty add a diversity-related outcome as equity is a key part of the strategic plans for both CCCS and HLC.
- *We wanted to maximize faculty buy-in with the process, so we asked them to create the outcomes.*



# Fall 2022 In-Service: ISLOs and PSLOs

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- By lunch, the faculty had drafted ISLOs. We compiled them, wrote them on the board, and had full faculty approval.
- NJC now has five Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs).
  - Upon graduation from Northeastern, students will be able to:
    1. Think critically and creatively to solve problems.
    2. Communicate ideas, values, and perspectives effectively.
    3. Demonstrate skills to fulfill professional expectations and prepare for chosen career.
    4. Recognize the interconnectedness of global, national, and local concerns in regards to cultural, political, social, and environmental issues. (*Note: This is our diversity-related outcome.*)
    5. Apply scientific and mathematical concepts.

# Fall 2022 In-Service: ISLOs and PSLOs

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- We then asked the faculty to break into program groups.
- They then drafted Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) for their programs.
  - This took awhile as it required faculty to re-conceptualize what a “program” is
    - As one example, our lone Philosophy faculty is his own program instead of being lumped in with Art
- *By the end of the Fall 2022 In-Service, NJC had 5 ISLOs, and nearly all of our programs had solid PSLOs—all created by faculty!*

# Fall 2022: Assessment Leadership Team PSLO Work

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- The faculty drafted excellent PSLOs during the Fall 2022 In-Service.
- The ALT went over the PSLOs to ensure that all outcomes were measurable.
  - The ALT also began to map each program’s PSLOs to the ISLOs.
- We offered minor feedback where needed and shared our feedback with the programs.
- The programs approved of the ALT’s suggestions, and all PSLOs were approved by the ALT by the end of Fall 2022.

# Spring 2023 In-Service: NJC Assessment Plan

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- Since we had the Communication rubric, we opted to create our first assessment plan based on the Communication ISLO.
- We again grouped the faculty into their program groups and provided them with the ISLOs and PSLOs they drafted at the Fall 2022 In-Service.
- We asked them to figure out which of their PSLOs mapped to the Communication ISLO.
  - The ALT had offered suggestions, but we asked the group to take a look as well and offer any corrections to the ALT's mapping.
- We then asked them to look over the CCNS outcomes for their courses being taught in Spring 2023 and figure out which CCNS outcomes mapped to the PSLO(s) mapped to the Communication ISLO.
- This resulted in our first assessment plan!
- Our IR Director is using the assessment plans to build curriculum maps.



2023 Assessment  
Plan

# HLC 4-Year Review

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- Our HLC 4-Year Review lock date was 2/6/23.
- We were able to provide the following evidence of our assessment processes:
  - 2023 Assessment Plan for Communication ISLO
  - Five NJC ISLOs
  - Rubric for the Communication ISLO
  - Program PSLOs for the vast majority of NJC programs
- We still ended up with a “met with concerns” on Criterion 4B, but the reviewers noted that we had made great progress in the past year.
- We were encouraged to keep improving!
  - Sam Soliman suggested we move the process along more quickly.
    - It took about 4 months to develop the Communication rubric and share out with faculty.

## Spring 2023: Assessment Leadership Team Diversity Rubric Work

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- The ALT decided to work on building a rubric for NJC's Diversity outcome.
- We perused AAC&U VALUE rubrics to draft our criteria for assessment; we ended up borrowing from the Civic Engagement VALUE rubric, the Global Learning VALUE rubric, and the Intercultural Knowledge and Competence VALUE rubric.
- In keeping with suggestions from AAC&U, we used the rubrics as a jumping off point (and re-mixed them as they are OERs), but we made the Diversity rubric work for NJC.
- Here is the draft Diversity rubric:



Diversity Rubric

# Fall 2023 In-Service: Reviewing the Diversity Rubric

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- At the Fall 2023 In-Service, the faculty came in and sat with their departments (not a surprise to most, I am sure).
- I gave them the draft of the Diversity Rubric that the ALT created during Spring 2023.
- I also shared the relevant VALUE rubrics with the faculty and asked them to see if there were any additional criteria we should include.
- I asked them to look over the NJC Diversity rubric and see if it would work for their programs. I also asked them to offer any suggestions for revision.
- After the programs had a chance to look over the rubric, they approved it without any revisions.
- *By August 2023, NJC now had two completely approved ISLO rubrics.*
  - *It took about 4 months to develop the Diversity rubric and share it out with faculty (including summer).*
    - *We decided to speed up the process.*

# Fall 2023 In-Service: 5 New ISLO Rubrics

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- At the Fall 2023 in-service, I randomly assigned every faculty member to a group; there were a total of five groups, one for each of the ISLO rubrics we needed to create.
  - Critical Thinking
  - Creative Thinking
  - Professionalism
  - Science
  - Math/Quantitative Literacy
- Each group was provided with VALUE rubric(s) relevant to their outcome. *Keep in mind they had just approved the Diversity rubric after I had shown them the VALUE rubrics and how we used the VALUE rubrics to help us build NJC's Diversity rubric.*
- They were then tasked with creating a rubric for their outcome.
- We gave them the afternoon to work on the rubrics, and Sam Soliman, the ALT members, and I were there to help answer any questions.
- *Note: If I were to do this again, I would have assigned at least one ALT person to each group. Otherwise, the random assignment went well.*



# Fall 2023: Assessment Leadership Team Rubric Work

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- The Assessment Leadership Team spent the Fall 2023 semester reviewing the faculty-created ISLO rubrics.
- We offered minor revisions on them and opted to standardize the formatting for nearly all of the rubrics to make the rubrics easier for faculty to use. With the exception of the professionalism rubric, which is formatted in a way that allows it to align with disciplinary accreditation in our CTE programs, the rubrics all follow the same formatting as the Communication rubric.

# Spring 2024 In-Service: Reviewing 5 Rubrics

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- Wanting to continue to have our assessment be an all-faculty endeavor, the Assessment Leadership Team took the rubrics back to the faculty at the Spring 2024 In-Service.
- The faculty groups who drafted the rubrics approved of our minor revisions and re-formatting.
- Here are the five ISLO rubrics the faculty created



Creative Thinking  
Rubric



Critical Thinking  
Rubric



Professionalism  
Rubric



Science Rubric



Quantitative  
Literacy Rubric

- On each rubric, we allowed the groups to decide which criteria, if any, we could allow for a N/A option to maximize faculty rubric use and minimize opting out of assessments.
- As you can see on the rubrics, we have started to think about targets (e.g., how many students we would like to see score a 2 or higher or a 3 or higher). However, in keeping with our desire to have faculty drive the process, these are merely the ALT's ideas, and thus have not been vetted by faculty, and are thus not yet official.

# Spring 2024 In-Service: NJC Assessment Plan

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- Based on the NJC Assessment Cycle, both Professionalism and Diversity are to be assessed in 2024.
- We again grouped the faculty into their program groups and provided them with the ISLOs and PSLOs they drafted at the Fall 2023 In-Service.
- We asked them to figure out which of their PSLOs mapped to the Professionalism and Diversity ISLOs.
- We then asked them to look over the CCNS outcomes for their courses and figure out which CCNS outcomes mapped to the PSLO(s) mapped to the Professionalism and Diversity ISLOs.
- This resulted in our second assessment plan (that still has a few pieces left to come in):



2024 Assessment  
Plan (in progress)

# Looking Ahead: Where We Go From Here

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- Since the programs have mapped their PSLOs to the ISLOs, we would like to have the faculty begin to work on PSLO rubrics.
  - They can use the ISLO rubrics as a guide, remove what does not apply to their PSLOs, and add what does.
- We would like to solidify our targets for each ISLO rubric.
- Our curriculum map continues to grow with each assessment plan that we create, so we are going to continue drafting assessment plans at each in-service.
- We are considering purchasing assessment software and are happy to hear your thoughts on any you have used.
  - This will help us formalize our program report template.
  - This will help with our institutional assessment as well.

# Conclusion

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- As noted in the title, NJC built, revised, reviewed, and approved five rubrics between August 2023 and January 2024.
- We have also come a long way in being more intentional in our assessment and drafting detailed assessment plans.
- We have provided clear deliverables for our HLC monitoring report, and we hope to meet Criterion 4B with no concerns in our 2028 Assurance Review.
- How awesome are NJC faculty?!? *They created five rubrics in five months!*

# Thank you! Questions?

