Mitchell Technical College Annual Assessment Report 2024-25

INTRODUCTION

Mitchell Technical College is committed to ongoing, institution-wide processes of planning and outcomes assessment. We believe that assessment done well leads to continuous improvement and provides evidence that the college is effectively achieving its mission to provide our graduates with skills for success in technical careers. At the institutional, program, and course level, we have identified meaningful outcomes for student learning, and we are assessing and using the data to improve what we do and how we do it. We believe our process, which is guided by a faculty-supported assessment committee, will assist MTC to achieve our mission.

INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOME ASSESSMENT

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are the broad areas of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students should value, expect to know, and be able to do upon completion of their degrees and programs at Mitchell Technical College. These outcomes are developed both in the classroom and in co-curricular environments. Graduates of Mitchell Technical College will be able to:

Communicate effectively in the workplace
- Engage in Standard English practices and proper channels to produce audio, visual, and/or written work
- Employ active listening to comprehend, analyze, and respond appropriately to oral, written, and visual information and instructions
- Demonstrate professional communication using industry- or discipline-specific vocabulary appropriate for diverse audiences
- Establish credibility by using sound reasoning and quality, media-literate research to support a claim
- Construct clear, logical organization to deliver information, establish protocols, or develop procedures
- Utilize interpersonal and group communication skills, especially those that promote collaborative problem-solving, shared understanding, and teamwork

Apply reasoning and critical thinking to solve problems and seek information
- Identify vital questions, problems, or issues
- Utilize deductive reasoning to gather reputable information and evaluate data critically
- Develop options to determine the most effective solution
- Analyze and assess assumptions, biases, and multiple perspectives to develop a well-informed valid argument
- Translate problem-solving experiences beyond the classroom

Demonstrate professionalism in a diverse culture

- Collaborate responsibly in a team environment
- Demonstrate dependability & flexibility, manage time effectively, show respect for others
- Adhere to safety practices
- Display appropriate dress and present self in a professional manner that aligns with industry standards
- Engage in self-assessment strategies
- Model ethical behavior and integrity
- Approach controversy/conflict with civility to develop creative solutions

Cultivate civic engagement and social responsibility
- Engage in community service projects and civic affairs
- Understand the value of volunteerism and community impact
- Interact respectfully with individuals of diverse backgrounds, perspectives, beliefs, and values
- Evaluate the impact of one's actions on others

Direct Assessment of ILOs

Our formal ILO assessment plan, which was introduced this year, relies on student portfolios containing artifacts aligned with each of the ILOs. Students are directed by their program and general education faculty to document examples of their work related to the four ILOs by uploading artifacts into their ILO course in MyTech. In this first year, students uploaded nearly 2,000 artifacts to their ILO course in MyTech. Since many students are only in the first year of their two-year programs, by May 2026 we expect this cohort to have well over 3,000 artifacts representing their achievement of the ILOs.

INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOME	# of artifacts
ILO 1 - Communicate Effectively	650
ILO 2 - Apply Reasoning and Critical Thinking	534
ILO 3 - Demonstrate Professionalism	424
ILO 4 - Cultivate Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility	324
Grand Total	1932

A wide range of artifacts submitted in 2024-25 demonstrated student achievement in the ILOs within the context of each student's individual program, including the following:

- Research reports, informational flyers, PowerPoints, resumes, analyses of legislation, and persuasive essays
- Business plans, Excel skills tests, troubleshooting simulations, and ethical scenarios
- Photos at the job fair, OSHA certification, internship evaluations, and work orders
- Cultural competence information sheets, volunteering at community events such as the health fair or DakotaFest, attending professional conferences, and donating blood.

While instructors and the Office of Academics monitor participation, the MTC Assessment Committee is tasked with evaluating participation and artifact samples to showcase results and guide college-wide improvement efforts

in student achievement. A rubric is used to evaluate student portfolios based on how well each student's artifacts demonstrate learning and achievement in alignment with the ILOs and their academic program.

Assessment of the student ILO portfolios was piloted in May 2025 by members of the Assessment Committee using the ILO Assessment Committee Review Rubric (see appendix). Twenty-seven sample portfolios were evaluated and scored using the rubric. The artifacts were used by the assessment committee to score each ILO from 1 to 4 (2 = *Satisfactory—Consistently delivers requirements of the ILO project*) based on descriptions provided in the rubric.

Apply Reasoning and Critical Thinking to Solve Problems and Seek Information	Communicate Effectively in the Workplace	Cultivate Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility	Demonstrate Professionalism in a Diverse Culture
1.69	1.97	1.18	1.57

Committee members then provided feedback on the ease and effectiveness of the process, including using the rubric to evaluate student work. Based on this feedback, we will rearrange the order of the categories on the rubric, create ILO courses by program, and add instructions for faculty and students to improve the experience for all. The changes should also help committee members have a more complete understanding of each artifact's significance and purpose. The process seemed to work well overall, and next year's assessment (May 2026 after the cohort has had two years to provide artifacts) will provide us with both quantitative and qualitative data to guide future efforts to improve learning in the four learning outcomes.

Indirect Assessment of ILOs

Indirect assessment of ILO achievement is also conducted every three years in alumni and employer satisfaction surveys. Graduates from 2021, 2022, and 2023 were invited to complete the Mitchell Technical College Alumni Satisfaction Survey in the spring of 2024. The survey had a 19% survey response with 274 returned out of 1,451 alumni. Employer surveys were sent to those individuals and companies who hired MTC recent graduates. 117 surveys were returned, representing companies hiring students in 26 different programs.

Overall, alumni are very satisfied with their educational experience at MTC. The percentage of graduates who would definitely still choose to attend MTC has seen a significant increase over time (from 40.9% in 2015 to 65.3% in 2024).

If you were starting your education over, would you still choose to attend MTC?				
	2024	**2021**	**2018**	**2015**
Definitely Yes	65.3%	50.7%	43.4%	40.9%
Probably Yes	26.6%	38.7%	40.3%	41.9%
Probably Not	6.3%	7.4%	10.7%	12.3%
Definitely Not	1.9%	3.2%	5.6%	4.9%

Feedback from alumni showed they value the contributions the college made in their knowledge, skills, and personal development that align with MTC's institutional learning outcomes.

Knowledge and Skills	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatis-fied	Very Dissatis-fied	N/A
Acquiring a broad general education	51.1%	43.4%	2.6%	0.4%	2.6%
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	55.8%	39.8%	2.2%	1.5%	0.7%
Writing clearly and effectively	40.2%	49.6%	1.1%	0.4%	8.8%
Speaking clearly and effectively	42.0%	47.5%	1.8%	0.7%	8.0%
Thinking clearly and effectively	47.1%	47.8%	0.7%	0.4%	4.0%
Using computers and information technology	43.1%	49.3%	2.6%	0.4%	4.7%
Working effectively with others	53.3%	43.8%	0.7%	0.7%	1.5%
Learning effectively on your own	53.3%	43.8%	1.5%	0.4%	1.1%
Understanding people of varying backgrounds	43.4%	48.2%	1.1%	1.1%	6.2%
Using math to solve problems	42.7%	47.8%	1.5%	0.4%	7.7%
Social responsibility	42.3%	50.0%	1.1%	0.4%	6.2%
Work ethics (appearance, attitude, dependability, etc.)	57.5%	38.5%	0.7%	0.7%	2.6%

Employers also affirmed that MTC graduates are demonstrating high levels of achievement in skills and attitudes related to the college's ILOs. The 2024 results indicated 98% of employers were satisfied with MTC graduates' technical preparation for successful employment with their company. (In 2021, this was 96%, and in 2018, it was 89%.)

Knowledge and Skills	2024 Satisfied/Very Satisfied	2021 Satisfied/Very Satisfied
Applying job-related technical skills	98.2%	97.3%
Writing clearly and effectively	97.3%	93.6%
Speaking clearly and effectively	98.2%	92.7%
Working effectively with others	99.1%	98.2%
Adjusting to new job demands	98.2%	91.8%
Being dependable and on-time	96.5%	94.6%
Leading others	92.7%	94.5%
Working with people from diverse backgrounds	100.0%	99.1%
Working well independently	93.8%	90.9%
Customer service	95.6%	95.3%
Critical thinking skills	92.1%	93.6%
Using computers and information technology	100.0%	97.3%
Acting responsibly and ethically	96.4%	95.5%

Next Steps

The Office of Academics will continue its efforts to build the institution's capacity to drive improvements for student achievement of Mitchell Tech's ILOs.

1. We will rearrange the order of the categories on the rubric
2. Create ILO courses by program and customize ILO "assignments" to the selected artifacts
3. Add instructions in the ILO course in MyTech for faculty and students to improve the experience for all

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOME ASSESSMENT

At Mitchell Technical College, program-level assessment evaluates how well students achieve the established Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) by the time they complete their certificate, diploma, or degree. Each academic program defines its own PLOs, and assessment methods are determined by program directors, with input from faculty and industry partners to ensure relevance and rigor.

Faculty members conduct these assessments annually, using student learning data to analyze outcomes and determine the effectiveness of any changes made in response to previous assessments. The results of this analysis are used to create and document improvement plans for the upcoming academic year (e.g., 2025–26).

Although assessment activities may occur throughout the academic year, faculty convene during dedicated sessions each May to finalize their assessment reports. This timing ensures that improvement plans are ready to be implemented in the following year. For five programs whose student cohorts graduate in August, assessment reports are completed in the fall to align with their academic calendars.

After submission, the Office of Academics reviews each program's assessment report to evaluate the depth and quality of the analysis and the strength of the proposed improvement strategies. These reviews help identify areas where additional support or training may be beneficial, including tailored, one-on-one assistance for departments.

Summary of Reviews

- Total programs reviewed: 33
- 21 programs (64%) submitted reports that demonstrated thoughtful use of student learning data, intentional planning, and clear reflection on results. Several were highlighted as excellent examples or potential models for others
- 10 programs (30%) showed meaningful effort but would benefit from more robust, clearly articulated improvement plans, better data use, or more precise definitions of learning success
- 2 programs (6%) were in transition due to faculty turnover or curriculum redesign

Common Themes

Strong Assessment Practices

- Clear, purposeful planning and analysis
- Use of data to inform improvements
- Consistency and depth in assessment practices

- Recognition of strong performance with thoughtful justification for maintaining current strategies
- Reports that could serve as models for others

Needs Improvement
- Lack of robust or intentional plans for continuous improvement
- Incomplete assessment of all Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
- Unclear or missing assessment tools and metrics (e.g., rubrics, quantifiable data)
- New faculty requiring training
- Combined reports needing clarification of distinct outcomes

It should be noted that several programs maintained strong assessment efforts despite challenging conditions such as high student-faculty ratios, new faculty, or curriculum changes. Several departments should be recognized for their deep engagement with assessment and ongoing use of data to drive improvement. Their reports could be used as models in future training on assessment.

Next Steps

The Office of Academics will continue its efforts to build faculty's capacity to consistently use data effectively to drive improvements for their programs.

1. Faculty Development: Provide targeted training for new and returning faculty, especially in programs undergoing transitions or adopting new curricula. Develop onboarding materials for new faculty, especially for programs undergoing leadership transitions.
2. Reporting Guidance: Refine templates or rubrics to encourage:
   a. Clear articulation of "no changes" (with justification).
   b. Avoid generic statements; instead, describe specific actions tied to student performance trends.
   c. Use of rubrics or quantifiable measures, whenever possible
   d. Stronger links between analysis and action planning.
3. Support for Incomplete or Transitioning Programs: Follow up with programs still pending or in transition to ensure plans are completed and documented for 2025–26.
4. Highlight Exemplary Work: Consider recognizing departments that consistently produce high-quality assessment.