

# LEARNING CURVE UPDATE

A s s e s s m e n t T a s k F o r c e

February, 2005

Volume 9

## Going Up

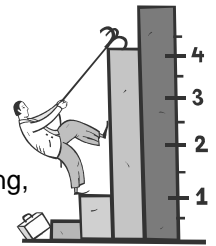


We're on our way up! One year ago we began to prepare for the NCA focused visit on Assessment. According to NCA evaluators we were functioning at Level I of assessment. By the fall of 2006, we need to be functioning at Level III. With each passing month we get closer to achieving our goal. By working together, we have and will continue to rise to the challenge! This *Learning Curve* brings news of important events taking place this spring. Thank you all for your cooperation and positive attitudes. ~ Lin and Corinne ~

**Together we assess and achieve measurable outcomes—a win for us all.**

## Measure Up

The results of the first pilot tests are in and the FACS teams are climbing toward official measure of student learning. Here is a quick summary of each team's progress.



### Writing Team

The team worked together to develop and implement an assessment plan for students' writing, beginning with a "pilot run" in the fall of 2004. The writing pilot collected sample papers from students with 45+ credit hours utilizing the Instructor Assignment Survey. Classes across the curriculum were represented in the sample. The team's findings determined that Northeast students demonstrated "acceptable" (3 on a 5-point scale) writing practices. A formal assessment will be conducted in the spring using a larger more representative sample.

### Speaking Team

The team evaluated videotaped student speeches in December. The purpose of the session was to test the recently revised rubric as a scoring instrument for measuring the speaking objectives. They determined that the instrument was an effective tool. The team plans to collect a larger sample utilizing the *Instructor Assignment Survey*. A formal assessment measurement will be conducted this semester.

### Problem Solving Team

The problem solving team has been working on a rubric and plans to pilot test this spring. They will be using classroom assignments provided by instructors. The team will be distributing a questionnaire to instructors regarding problem-solving assignments from classroom situations or lab activities. When you receive the questionnaire, please respond in a timely manner.

### Math Team

The math team conducted a classroom pilot test of the first math objective with a limited sampling. They determined that their rubric would work for the rest of the goals. They felt comfortable with the process. Considering that most students enroll in math prior to the sophomore year, the math team is searching for alternative methods that can be administered to students with 45+ hours.

### Social Skills Team

The committee will examine how to assess the FACS social skills objectives during the spring semester 2005. Additional meetings will be scheduled to continue the work of assessing the social skills area. A pilot of the first objective is planned for this year.

## Up to Speed



Our consultants, Dr. Jane Hunter and Carroll Bennett, will visit our campus in March. **Are you prepared to discuss your program's data collection and matrix columns 4 (Actual Results) & 5 (Analysis & Recommendations)? General Education FACS Teams also need to be ready to discuss these columns.** Please use this month to gather necessary information. Remember, assessment is about measuring results and making necessary changes to improve student learning. The consultants will be able to advise us toward sound assessment reporting needed for 2005. Please look at the time schedule below and make sure that at least one program faculty and/or FACS team member meet with the consultants at the designated times.

### From the Top

On March 16 and 17, Dr. Jane Hunter and Carroll Bennett will be on campus again to meet with each program and the general education assessment teams to review our progress with the assessment of the student learning process. In order to schedule a time for each program area faculty to meet with the consultants, some faculty may need to make special arrangements with a class. This is an opportunity to gain additional input on our assessment plan, so I hope you will make arrangements to take advantage of this opportunity. ~ Dr. Giddings ~

Consultants' Visit					
		March 16-- Wednesday		March 17--Thursday	
				C. Bennett	Dr. Hunter
8:00				Diesel & Utility Line	Broadcasting
8:30	Dr. Giddings, Deans, Assessment & General Education Taskforces				
9:00				Building Construction	Social Skills FACS Team
		C. Bennett	Dr. Hunter		
10:00	Auto Body & HVAC	Business Management & Accounting		Agriculture Programs	Speech FACS Team
11:00	Drafting Electronics	Computer Programming & PC Support		Electromechanical & Electrician	Writing FACS Team
12:00	Taskforces & Consultants Lunch		Consultants & Deans Lunch		
1:00	Allied Health, PTA & EMT	Audio Recording		Return of programs for additional help	Problem Solving FACS Team
2:00	Auto Technology	Early Childhood	Taskforce Wrap-up with Consultants		
3:00	Veterinary Technology, Horticulture & Welding	Paralegal & Administrative Assistant			
4:00	Nursing: ADN & LPN	Math FACS Team	<b>Note:</b> Dr. Hunter's Program Schedule in non-shaded area Carroll Bennett's Schedule in shaded area		



**Reminder:** If you have not completed the instructor assignment survey, please do so ASAP. The consultants have endorsed this survey as a very useful tool. We need to have widespread cooperation in order to maximize its usefulness.

### What's Up: A Student's Perspective

I don't know if I speak for a majority of the student body, but....Assessment? What's that? I've never heard of it. What's it got to do with me? And more importantly, what's in it for me? I believe this is the attitude of a great number of the students at NECC. I joined the Assessment Task Force as a student member just a few months ago with this same attitude. As an education major and a non-traditional student it is easy for me to understand the importance of assessment now. I have seen a lot of progress in the FACS teams' endeavors to improve the mechanics of assessment, but it still remains that students don't know and more than likely don't care. The challenge is in how to help students become aware of assessment. Make it the "buzzword" if you will on campus. In my opinion, there needs to be a media campaign that uses brief but meaningful messages to help students understand what assessment means, and the consequences without it. We need to get the word out and get it buzzing around campus that NECC cares about its students' education and is striving to be better every year.

~Melinda Schneider~