

LEARNING CURVE

Northeast
community college
Norfolk, Nebraska

Assessment Newsletter

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Yes, Virginia, There is Assessment

Dear Editor,
Some of my friends say
there is no assessment.
"If you see it in the
Learning Curve, it's so."
Please tell me the truth, is
there assessment?

Virginia

We take pleasure in answering thus prominently the communication at left, expressing at the same time our great gratification with the contributions to the 2004/2005 institutional assessment report. The report reveals that assessment is truly happening at Northeast Community College. This compilation of documents shows great commitment on the part of many faculty and staff to improve student learning. *The Learning Curve* is proud to share some of the highlights in this issue. The complete report is now available in the library. Additional sharing will take place at the January in-service so that all may believe.

~Corinne & Lin~

"Together we assess and achieve measurable outcomes- a win for us all!"

Assessment Elves Came Through

Assessment work doesn't magically get done; but the people involved in assessment last year, worked as magically as elves. Below are highlights from general education and program assessment as chronicled in 2004/2005 institutional assessment report:



General Education Assessment

Graduating Student Survey Assessment

Two hundred sixty (260) graduation candidates participated in the survey during the spring 2005 graduation rehearsal.

- Ninety percent of the candidates rated their experience at NECC as good or excellent. Over 99 percent rated their experience as average or above.
- Eighty-six percent of them indicated if they were to start over they would still attend NECC.
- Ninety percent indicated they would recommend NECC to a friend or relative.
- Overall, the majority of students attributed improvement in their skills to the instruction and experiences while attending NECC.

It is noted that all the means for the 2005 survey are higher than the corresponding means for similar items on the 2004 survey. The overall improvement from year to year would indicate that Northeast has made substantial progress in implementing its assessment program.

Writing Assessment

The team evaluated 30 writing samples from students with 45+ credit hours. Overall, the writing team assessed the core writing samples as "acceptable," or 3.31 on the 5-point scale. Averages for each of the measurements were as follows:

Content/clear thesis --- 3.56

Organization --- 3.38

Punctuation, spelling, mechanics --- 3.32

Statements supported/relevant details --- 3.2

Paragraphing/sentence structure --- 3.17

Diction/Cliché-free --- 3.2

While in the lower end of "acceptable" in most cases, the data shows that we are meeting the minimum requirements necessary for students from NECC to be successful lifetime writers.





Speaking Assessment

The team evaluated 30 speeches from students with 45+ credit hours. Students were evaluated in the three areas: *purpose*, *physical presence* and *vocal variety*. Students were expected to score a 3 or above on a 5-point scale for each objective.

Overall, students met the expectations for the *purpose* and *vocal variety* objectives. Under the *physical presence* objective, the mean score was a 2.94, just short of the expectation. Considering that general education requirements for speaking have recently been revised, the team expects scores to be positively impacted in the future. The team is looking forward to improved sample selection in 2006.

Math Pilot Assessment

The team developed rubrics to measure the two general education math objectives. Artifacts were collected from sophomore students in Chemistry classes. Rubrics were used to evaluate the artifacts. Further revisions were made to the instrument, and a second evaluation was conducted. The math team is now ready to proceed with formal measurement during the 2005/2006 academic year.

Problem Solving Pilot Assessment

The team developed a rubric to use as a scoring instrument for measuring problem solving skills. A pilot sample was taken from selected classes, and the artifacts were scored using the newly created rubrics. The team plans to conduct another pilot in the fall semester of 2005 with formal measurement to follow in the spring of 2006.

Social Skills Pilot Assessment

The team developed and pilot tested strategies for measurement of each of the social skills objectives. Artifacts were evaluated using rubrics developed by the team. Results indicated that the team is ready to move ahead with formal measurement strategies during the 2005/2006 academic year.

Program Assessment

The 2004/2005 institutional report includes assessment reports from all programs. It is the most complete assessment ever compiled from NECC technical programs. Overall, the reader of the program section would be able to note:

- Where national exams or boards are part of the program assessment, our students' scores and pass rates are very impressive. This speaks well not only of the competency level of our students but also of the instruction they receive within our programs.
- Recommendations based on analysis of data indicate concerted efforts to use results for the betterment of programs and student learning.
- A variety of methods are used to assess students' knowledge and skills including but not limited to written exams and practical applications.



Elves Hired for Another Year

An elf's work is never done, but help is available. The consultants will be back on campus on January 30 and February 1. **If you would like to request a time with Dr. Hunter and Mr. Bennett, please contact Corinne.** Consultants are looking to meeting with support staff this time. The preliminary schedule is attached.

Future Measures

Wednesday, March 22 at 10 a.m. the Collegiate Assessment Academic Proficiency Test (CAAP) will be administered to approximately 200 students. If you teach at this time, your class is likely to be included in the sample. Plan your syllabi accordingly; watch for more specific details in the memo from Mary Honke this month.

Santa's Helpers

We would like to extend a special thank you to Janet Heberer for preparing the institutional report for printing and to Barb Sucha for building the print job. Thanks also to Pam Dahlheim for her assistance. Your gracious contributions to this report are very much appreciated!

Happy New Year!

Attached is a list of important dates for the upcoming year to assist in preparation for the assessment focused visit next November. Have a wonderful break!

