CASL Members

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Assessment website:  
www.eiu.edu/~assess

Assessment Workshop Planned

CASL’s Annual Assessment Workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, February 22, 2005. The workshop, “Developing and Assessing Thinking Skills in the Classroom,” will be led by Dr. Susan K. Wolcott, a leading international assessment consultant who works with faculty to support critical thinking development, competency assessment, and curriculum innovation.

The workshop on Feb. 22 will be held from 8:00-11:00 a.m. in the Charleston-Mattoon Room of the MLK, Jr. Union and will focus on thinking skills such as critical thinking, ethical reasoning, professional judgment, and lifelong learning.

Dr. Wolcott will discuss the mental processes that underlie skill development and will offer information on how to design coursework that fosters improved (Continued on page 2)

Results from Gen Ed Measures

This year marked the first time that data on all four General Education goals were collected from Eastern’s students. In AY04 data on students’ speaking abilities at the freshman level were collected in SPC 1310G (now CMN 1310G) from 1,422 students.

Of those students, 263 (18%) gave speeches that were deemed highly competent by their faculty members (for the speaking matrix, see www.eiu.edu/~assess). An additional 790 (56%) student presentations were judged to be competent, 337 (22%) were minimally competent, and only 22 (2%) were assessed as not competent.

Data collection on students’ speaking abilities has continued in AY05 with data being collected from freshmen in CMN 1310G and in senior seminars.

As of May 2004, 13,751 submissions had been collected for the Electronic Writing Portfolio (EWP) with 1,423 students having completed this requirement. In AY04 2,512 (40%) documents were deemed highly competent by writing-intensive and writing-centered course instructors; 2988 (Continued on page 2)
Workshop Cont.

Assessment Update

student thinking.

This fast-paced, interactive workshop will help participants explore innovative and practical ways to enhance their students' thinking skills. How cognitive development affects student performance will be discussed.

A number of programs at Eastern are still struggling with finding efficient methods for assessing ineffable skills such as critical thinking, ethics, and employing judgment in decision-making. CASL chose to make these topics the focus of the annual forum to aid departments in refining the measurement of these objectives. At this workshop participants will learn a practical method for assessing students' thinking skills using classroom assignments.

Since the individual college meetings with our external expert were so well received last year, CASL decided to continue this practice. Dr. Wolcott will meet with college groups in the 1895 Room of the MLK, Jr. Union on the following schedule:

11:00 Graduate Coordinators & CGS
2:00 Education & Professional Studies
3:00 Arts & Humanities
4:00 Business & Applied Sciences

Eastern is fortunate to have an expert of Dr. Wolcott's caliber come to share her expertise with us. Her publications include Developing Critical Thinking Skills: The Key to Professional Competencies. She has recently completed a new cost accounting textbook, which focuses specifically on the development of professional competencies. She has given over 60 presentations on critical thinking development and assessment and has consulted with over 30 educational institutions. She was previously a member of the accounting faculty at the University of Denver. Dr. Wolcott holds Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in Accounting and Information Systems from Northwestern University and a B.B.A. in Accounting from the University of Portland.

Because of space concerns, we ask that you reserve your space for the 8:00-11:00 a.m. workshop by calling 581-6056 or emailing us at cskks@eiu.edu.

Results Cont.

Two presentations were made by Eastern faculty and staff members at the 2004 Assessment Institute held in November at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. Dr. Janet Cosbey and Dr. Mary Hogg presented "The Art of Assessing Speaking Across the Curriculum: One School's Journey." Dr. Karla Sanders and Dr. Debbie Hopgood presented "Addressing the Challenges of Assessing the General Education Curriculum." Also in attendance at the Institute were Dr. Mary Herrington-Perry and Dr. Melanie Burns.

Dr. Sanders and Dr. Herrington-Perry presented at the American Association of Higher Education’s Assessment Conference held in Denver in June. Their presentation was titled "Going Public: Translating Campus Assessment Results for Multiple Constituencies."

If you have assessment activities to report, email Karla Sanders at cskjs@eiu.edu.

The composite mean was 26.39 (out of 40) and in Spring 2004 it was 25.76. Means for individual majors are given to the departments each semester.

As data is collected for each of the General Education goals, it will be shared through this newsletter, direct mailings, and through the assessment website.