



# ASSESSMENT UPDATE

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## CASL Members & Areas of Representation

**Caridad Brito**, College of Sciences

**Rigoberto Chinchilla**, Lumpkin College of Business & Applied Sciences

**Ryan Hawkins**, student

**Mary Herrington-Perry**, Academic Affairs

**Peggy Holmes-Layman**, College of Education & Professional Studies

**Debra Hopgood**, Academic Assessment & Testing

**Stacey Knight-Davis**, Booth Library

**Daiva Markelis**, Writing Across the Curriculum Committee

**Kathleen O'Rourke**, Council on Graduate Studies

**Christie Roszkowski**, Council on Academic Affairs

**Karla Sanders**, Center for Academic Support & Achievement

**Rebecca Throneburg**, chair, Provost's Appointee

**James Tidwell**, College of Arts & Humanities

## PROVOST'S ASSESSMENT AWARDS ANNOUNCED

Annually, Provost Blair Lord selects three programs to receive awards in achievement in assessment. College deans may nominate up to three programs from their college for consideration. For the Fall 2006 nominations, CASL members Christie Roszkowski and Rebecca Throneburg provided the Provost with comments concerning the strengths and weaknesses of each program.

This year's assessment award recipients are:

**1st place:** M.A. in Gerontology

**2nd place:** B.S. in Biological Sciences

**3rd place:** M.S. in Technology

Awards were given out on February 6, 2007 at the Deans' Council meeting.

Dr. Lord noted that the graduate program in technology "has been actively modifying and improving its assessment activities."

Reviewers called the undergraduate program in Biological Sciences "a robust program—not only are results analyzed, discussed, and acted upon, but the assessment plan itself is evaluated and changed as appropriate."

This is the second year that the Gerontology program won an assessment award. Reviewers noted that "assessment practices seem to have been cultivated throughout the program with the appropriate focus of striving to improve student learning. The program's quality is evident."

## 1997 GRADUATES REPORT ON COLLEGE IMPACT

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) mandates that all public 4-year institutions conduct a survey of their alumni on a rotating schedule of 1-year, 5-years, and 9-years past graduation. In 2006, the class of 1997 was surveyed; the response rate was 38%.

In addition to the questions that IBHE requests we ask, Eastern includes two open-ended questions: *What has the most positive impact on you during your time at Eastern?* And, *What had the most negative impact on you during your time at Eastern?*

Answers to these questions have been categorized and sorted into reports that are now available on the assessment web site at [www.eiu.edu/~assess](http://www.eiu.edu/~assess).

This was the second time that a survey was sent to this cohort with the open-ended questions. The first iteration was sent in 2002, five years after their graduation. The response rate for this survey was 41%.

An examination of former students' positive impact responses shows that in both survey years alumni relationships

## AWARDS CONT.

Pictured from left to right: Mayhar Izadi and Rigoberto Chinchilla, School of Technology; Andrew Methven and Thomas Nelson, Biological Sciences; Mary Anne Hanner, College of Sciences; Jeanne Snyder, School of Family and Consumer Sciences; Martha Brown, Lumpkin College of Business and Applied Sciences; James Painter, School of Family and Consumer Sciences; and Blair Lord, Academic Affairs.

## 1997 GRADUATES CONT.

to faculty members and advisors ranked highest: 5 years out—37%; 9 years out—43%. This was followed by their appreciation for their education in general or major program: 5 year out—25%; 9 years out—40%. Social life and personal relationships came third: 5 years out—18%; 9 years out—26%.

Former students were less consistent with their comments concerning negative impact. For the survey 5 years past graduation, social life issues and

personal relationships ranked highest at 31% whereas for the graduates 9 years out, issues with academic programs received the most comments at 25%.

Issues with campus facilities or offices ranked second for negative comments for both cohorts: 21% for 5 years out and 24% for 9 years out.

Direct comments are available on the web site. Here is a small sample from the 2006 survey: “I had a wonderful experience at EIU. I loved

the campus and the friendliness of my peers and fellow townspeople. My professors were not only knowledgeable but caring and compassionate. I had many opportunities to get involved with groups and clubs that supported my major. I would recommend EIU to anyone pursuing a degree in education.”

These comments—both the negative and the positive—can help Eastern understand its strengths and challenges.

## ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

**Dr. Jeanne Snyder**, Family and Consumer Sciences, presented at the IUPUI Assessment Institute in Indianapolis in October. Her presentation was titled “How to Conduct Assessment in an Interdisciplinary Program.”

**Dr. John Stimac**, Geology/Geography, attended the American Council on Education workshop in Austin, Texas on Chairing the Academic Department. Funding

for his attendance was provided by the Council of Chairs.

**Dr. Christine Helsel**, Communication Studies, has published an article on assessment in the *International Journal of Listening*. The title of the article is “Assessing Communication Proficiency in Higher Education: Speaking Labs Offer Possibilities” and was co-authored by Dr. Mary Hogg, a former CMN faculty member.

If you have participated in an assessment activity such as attending an assessment conference, publishing on assessment topics, or acting as a consultant/site team visitor, please send this information to Karla Sanders at [kjsanders@eiu.edu](mailto:kjsanders@eiu.edu) for inclusion in the next newsletter.