



ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Volume 2, Issue 1

October 2002

CASL Members

Melanie Burns
Janet Cosby, Chair
Ronnie Deedrick
Noelle Greathouse
Mary Herrington-Perry
Mary Hogg
Debra Hopgood
Andrew Methven
William Russell
Karla Sanders

Assessment website:
www.eiu.edu/~assess

Important Dates

- October 31, 3:00, Assessment Forum, Mattoon-Charleston Room of MLK Union
- November 3-5, IUPUI Assessment Workshop in Indianapolis

EWP Reminder

Many students in writing-centered or writing-intensive courses should be submitting documents to the EWP. Please announce this to your classes. Documents should be submitted to 3001 Ninth St. Hall, M-F 8:00 a.m.-noon and 1:00-4:00 p.m. Questions? Call 581-8384 or check www.eiu.edu/~assess for form and submission details.

CASL AY03 PRIORITIES

From the Chair, Janet Cosby

The Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning (CASL) has been diligently meeting this fall and working on our plans for this academic year.

We are pleased with the progress that has been made thus far in assessment on our campus. Although people still sometimes shudder at the dreaded "a" word, we have found that most academic departments have developed assessment plans that are being implemented carefully and thoughtfully, and most faculty are becoming comfortable speaking the language of assessment and understanding its importance to our university.

I initially became committed to assessment because I strongly believe in faculty ownership of the assessment process and wanted to see us cooperatively develop the most viable assessment plan that would enable us to demonstrate to ourselves and to others the

fine work that is done at Eastern.

In addition to the Fall assessment workshop on October 31 (see story below), this year our goals include:

- ◆ Collecting data from the Electronic Writing Portfolio (EWP) through the holistic rubric designed for this purpose.
- ◆ Engaging the campus in discussions of critical thinking. We will be norming data from the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal given in senior seminars and sharing our findings with the campus community. We also are hoping to present a Spring assessment forum on this topic.
- ◆ Reviewing and refining the global citizenship survey.
- ◆ Working with the Graduate School on assessing graduate education.

(Continued on page 2)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE FALL ASSESSMENT FORUM

CASL is sponsoring a Fall Assessment Forum, "Combining Research with Assessment Activities," which will be held on **Thursday, October 31, 2002 at 3:00 p.m.** in the Charleston-Mattoon Room of the MLK Union.

Several departments have agreed to give a short presentation on their experiences with assessment activities and how they have used those activities as fodder for research. CASL invites the University community to come and hear presentations from their colleagues. Refreshments will be served.

In "Advancing a Research Agenda," Janet Cosby will discuss the "evolution of assessment" and will pose questions for further research to "enhance understanding of the context, content, process, and effects of assessment."

Nancy Marlow's presentation, "Assessment 'Mistakes' = Opportunities to Improve," will cover the marketing program plan, which has been in place for several semesters. She writes, "The tools we have used and/or are currently using include the alumni survey, the senior

(Continued on page 2)

CASL PRIORITIES CONT.

- ◆ Continuing to plan to assess students' speaking abilities.
 - ◆ Continuing to advocate for more writing intensive courses, particularly at the 2000 and 3000 level.
 - ◆ Continuing to make students aware of, and involved with, assessment efforts through orientation, distribution of brochures, and advisement.
- CASL's progress with these priorities may be followed on the assessment website where minutes are routinely placed. CASL also encourages faculty to communicate with their representatives concerning assessment issues. A list of representatives is given on the first page of this newsletter and is available on the website (www.eiu.edu/~assess).

FALL FORUM CONT.

survey, the capstone course in marketing, a common exam, the marketing portfolio, and our School of Business Advisory Board. We continue to make changes to the marketing program based on what we have learned from assessment. In addition, we have learned that it is often necessary to modify our assessment program when the tools do not work appropriately."

Olivet Jagusah from Education Administration will speak on "Formative Assessment Across Course Content: From Teaching to Learning." He explains, "Moving from teaching to learning calls for formative assessment of what teachers as well as students do. In this three-year study, formative assessment was

included in courses at the beginning, during and after teaching intervals. The result shows that such an approach helped increase student learning dramatically in the course of the semester rather than waiting for the students' summative failure or success at the end of the semester."

Caridad Brito and William Addison, Psychology, will speak on "Issues in Developing a Local, Knowledge-Based Exam." They will explain that "development of a local, comprehensive exam to assess student learning can be a time-consuming and arduous process. Item selection, exam administration, performance expectations, and

psychometric properties must be considered. However, because such tests are tailored to the curriculum and student learning goals of a specific department, they can provide assessment outcomes more relevant to specific student experiences. Nationally developed tests, on the other hand, can allow departments to 'benchmark' with other institutions and programs. However, these tests present their own set of difficulties, including erroneous assumptions about the 'normative' data presented."

In addition to the presentations, the recipients of the Provost's Achievement in Assessment Award will be announced.

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

AAHE's annual Assessment Forum was held this June in Boston. Six Eastern faculty and staff members—**Mary Herrington-Perry, Julia Abell, Janet Cosby, Karla Sanders, Debra Hopgood, and Mary Hogg**—attended this forum. Dr. Sanders and Dr. Hopgood gave a presentation entitled "*You can't do that!* Meeting the Challenges of Assessing General Education Goals" to nearly 60 participants.

In July the Illinois Board of Higher Education sponsored an assessment conference, "Putting Students First: Assessment Mastery of Student Learning," at Heartland Community College. **Janet Cosby, Donna Dawson, Mary Herrington-Perry, Debra Hopgood, Robin Murray, and Karla Sanders** delivered "Eastern Illinois University's Electronic Writing Portfolio: Process, Pitfalls, and Proceeds."

If you have an assessment activity/publication to announce, please email Karla Sanders at cskjs@eiu.edu.