

The Assessment Times

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From the Chair

Carrie Nepstad

Greetings!

It has been a busy semester for the Assessment Committee.

Last month the committee finalized a Progress Report on the Assessment of General Education Objectives at HWC. The report was submitted to John Taylor of North Central Association's Higher Learning Commission and it documents assessment activities at HWC since 1998 emphasizing the more recent assessment work done from 2003 to the current date.

As part of the process for completing this report, the committee revisited our conceptual framework for the assessment process at HWC by fine-tuning a graphic representation of the framework (see figure 1 on reverse).

The committee also drafted and approved an institutional Assessment Plan. All departments will receive a bound copy of the Progress Report.

If you have ever had questions about what we do in assessment, the report will give you a solid description of our assessment activities at HWC, data that has been generated, and various projects, which have used some of the information gained from assessment activities on campus. I encourage you to peruse it at your leisure!

I would like to thank the faculty on the Assessment Committee for their dedication and hard work in getting these pieces done on time! I would also, on behalf of the committee, like to extend our deepest gratitude to Dr. Cecilia López, Vice President of Academic Affairs for spending her Thanksgiving holiday proof-reading and polishing the above-mentioned 150-plus paged Progress Report. We truly appreciate your support.

In addition to working on these documents, the committee has spent the semester, with the consultation of Amanda Loos and David Richardson from the Humanities Department, designing an assessment tool focusing on the HWC General Education Objective pertaining to Humanities and the Arts. As of the printing of this newsletter, we are administering a pilot of the tool with both faculty and students. We are also conducting focus groups with the participants to get information about the process of taking this assessment.

It is an interesting tool as it includes a survey component and a short answer component in which students will choose to write about either a visual, poetic or a musical work of art. We plan to administer this assessment to a representative sample of the HWC population during the 6th week of spring 2007. As we have done in the past, we will ask faculty to volunteer a section or two of their courses for our Assessment Week activities – stay tuned.

Committee Members

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Humanities and Arts Assessment

The HWC General Education Objectives are listed on page 128 of the catalog.

General Education Objective #6 – To understand and appreciate the arts, literature, history, and Philosophical systems of major world cultures

Humanities and the Arts are defined at HWC as “the study of the evolution and development of ideas, beliefs, and philosophies in the context of various forms of cultural expression to broaden the human experience.”

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Students will demonstrate:

1. Analysis skills by identifying historical periods, major movements, and theories related to the evolution of a particular discipline.
2. Evaluation skills by establishing criteria to assess the major characteristics, and to draw inferences from a work (e.g., a painting, novel, play)
3. Interpretation skills by responding through the “self” to the synthesis and integration of analyzed and evaluated information.
4. Application skills by using techniques relative to the discipline to construct a physical manifestation as a vehicle for communication.
5. Communication skills by articulating ideas, emotions, or interpretations through dialogue, reading, writing, and visual imagery (e.g., an essay, an oral presentation, a painting).

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

