



CITY COLLEGES of CHICAGO

Harold Washington

Education that Works

The Assessment Times For Students Fall, 2013

Time for Change with Lessons Learned

At the end of this semester, I step down as Chair of the Assessment Committee and will no longer find myself in Room 1046 from 3 pm to 4 pm every Wednesday. I have been on the Assessment Committee for seven years and there are some things I know I will miss as I move on to new things in my working life.

I have learned a great deal about the assessment of student learning, about YOU, our glorious students, about what and how YOU learn. Perhaps, most importantly, I have learned how committed faculty can work together to make things better for students.

As you may already know from your working life, or as you will know as you begin your chosen careers, serving on committees is often demanded as part of your job. I hope the committees you get involved in are as strong and productive as HWC's Assessment Committee. We debate, we argue, we challenge each other, we learn together, and we get great stuff done.

However, an equally important characteristic that marks the life of this committee is that we have fun and really enjoy our time together. It sounds superficial to mark this as an important element of being on a workplace committee, but it isn't. Finding additional ways to connect

with fellow colleagues and students beyond the classroom has been a joy.

There are scientifically proven benefits of positivity, laughter, and shared enjoyment. These should not be underestimated in their impact on busy working lives. We are all apparently healthier, wealthier, and happier when we feel the impact of positivity.

With that I leave you and your learning in the capable hands of my friends and colleagues on the Assessment Committee. *Michael Heathfield.*

Oral Communication

Last summer, the Assessment Committee piloted an assessment of Oral Communication in order to prepare for a full-scale, college-wide assessment of Oral Communication that is taking place this fall. We are currently collecting data from 28 faculty members throughout the college who are using a shared rubric to assess students as they complete classroom presentations. Some of you may have been asked to complete a short demographic questionnaire on a Scantron. If so, your presentation will be used in the data collection process. The college is committed to ensuring that our students are not only articulate in writing but in speaking as well, and this assessment will provide us with the needed data to help inform that aspect of our teaching. *Jen Asimow.*

I Dare You to Mess with My Grammar



Departmental Assessment

Source: <http://www.xkcd.com/>

Last year, HWC's assessment plan expanded to include three departments: Humanities, Applied Sciences, and Art and Architecture. That means that in addition to ensuring that students are learning what we say they are learning in general education, we are looking at specific learning in the departments.

support and so an online resource center was developed for faculty. More data is being collected this semester in order to determine further writing needs in the Applied Sciences.

Sometimes assessment activities are going on around you, and you may not even be aware of it. In the Humanities Department last spring, students enrolled in the introductory music theory classes participated in an assessment that focused on the learning outcomes for that specific course. The data generated from that assessment informed the music faculty about how to sequence course materials and increase the opportunities for students to practice specific skills. Small and detailed assessments reveal so much meaningful information that is used to improve your learning experiences.

In the Art and Architecture Department, 2D Design (Art 144) was assessed. Art faculty determined that there are a set of core skills students need to establish in order to be successful in later studio classes. The assessment addressed those skills. Data from that assessment informed faculty to make positive additions to classroom resource support including the development of an agreed-upon shared vocabulary to be used with all students in the 2D Design classes. *Jen Asimow.*

Human Diversity- It Is What and Who We Are

Last fall, we assessed our Human Diversity outcomes through a survey of nearly 1500 HWC students. Early results are in and are very interesting. We have created a colorful full-page "First Look" poster that can be seen in hallways and escalator vestibules throughout the college so look around for it. We are in the midst of writing and finalizing the report for the assessment and are planning a variety of ways to deliver the results to you. Look for them throughout next semester. *Jen Asimow.*

The Applied Sciences Department began a process of assessing writing across disciplines. After an initial departmental needs assessment, faculty discovered that writing specific to each of the disciplines was connected through many commonalities (e.g., APA format, writing for a specific audience, report writing). In the spring, student writing was collected and assessed via a shared writing rubric. The data from that collection revealed a need for more focused and discipline-specific writing

The Assessment Committee is made up of faculty, administrators, and professional staff. We are always looking for more interested members, including students. If you have any questions about becoming a member of the committee or about anything else concerning assessment at HWC, please contact Michael Heathfield, Chair @ mheathfield@ccc.edu (office 712)