Fall 2013

Assessment Matters #18, November 2013

Assessment in Action Committee

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Welcome! Please forward this to anyone that may have an interest in assessment of and for student learning. For suggestions or comments, contact Karen Stokes Chapo at: karen.stokeschapo@wmich.edu

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A Note from the Associate Provost for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies:
As an institution, Western Michigan University uses two national instruments to help assess student learning. One instrument is an indirect measure based on surveying students (National Survey of Student Engagement - NSSE) and faculty (Faculty Survey of Student Engagement - FSSE). The second instrument is a direct measure of student learning (Collegiate Learning Assessment - CLA exam) which measures our institution's value added to student learning in critical thinking and written communication.

This past academic year (2012 - 2013), Western Michigan University participated in the NSSE/FSSE assessment. We received the results of those surveys in September and the Office of Assessment and Undergraduate Studies has written an executive summary of the results. The data suggest some areas we can work on to improve student learning on our campus. Once the results have been presented to the president, they will be shared with the campus community. Please be on the lookout for announcements on where the results will be presented.

WMU is participating in the CLA exam this academic year. During two weeks in October, selected freshmen were given the exam. The freshmen results will be available in February and establish the baseline for WMU. Graduating seniors will be given the exam during the spring semester, and their results will be compared to the entering freshmen to determine the value added to their education by WMU. The final results of the CLA exam will be available in the summer of 2014 and will be distributed in the fall of 2014.

Dave Reinhold
Associate Provost for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies
SAVE THE DATE: WMU Assessment in Action Day Conference 2014
Mark your calendar for the WMU Assessment in Action Day Conference 2014 which will take place on Friday, March 21, 2014 in the Fetzer Center. Look for more details to come soon!

2013 WMU Assessment Survey – Now in Progress
On Wednesday, November 6, all faculty, graduate teaching assistants and staff were sent an email containing an invitation to participate in the 2013 WMU Assessment Survey. If you haven’t done so yet, please take a few minutes to fill out the survey. Your feedback can provide the University Assessment Steering Committee and the Office of Assessment and Undergraduate Studies with valuable information on how to improve our services and the future direction that we should take. All survey answers will be kept strictly confidential. And if you opt to share your name and email address at the end of survey, (which will be kept separate from your responses), you will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win an Apple iPad mini! The survey will be open until November 27. Click here to access the survey: https://survey.wmich.edu/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=m40K4m6
Thank you in advance for your assistance in helping us to improve.

University Assessment Steering Committee - Assessment Excellence Awards
It is time to start thinking about nominations for the University Assessment Steering Committee Assessment Excellence Awards. Every year we recognize one individual and one unit on campus for exemplary work in the field of assessment of student learning. Applications for the individual award and nominations for the unit award are due to be turned in by January 31, 2014. Awards will be announced on WMU Assessment in Action Day, March 21, 2014. If you are interested in submitting an application or nomination, please go to the following website for further information: http://www.wmich.edu/assessment/grants.html

Upcoming Assessment Conferences
The North Central Association Higher Learning Commission’s (HLC) 2014 Annual Conference will be held in Chicago, IL from April 11 – 15, 2014 at the Hyatt Regency Chicago. The Conference offers a broad range of sessions and services that include pre-conference workshops, approximately 100 general program sessions, an Exhibit Hall, and an Accreditation Share Fair. Each year, more than 4,000 administrators and faculty from more than 850 higher education institutions located throughout the 19-state HLC region attend the Annual Conference. For more information go to: 2014 Annual Conference Program
And for information about other assessment-related conferences, click here.
Faculty Learning Communities and SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning)
If you're assessing your student's learning, you're also probably engaged in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). The Office of Faculty Development (OFD) currently supports several Faculty Learning Communities (FLC), cross-disciplinary groups of 10 to 12 participants that study pedagogical topics of shared interest in an in-depth, ongoing, scholarly, and systematic manner. This fall, we'll be continuing our FLC whose focus is on deepening understanding of the scholarship of teaching and learning process. Participants collaboratively work on SoTL research projects, and prepare proposals for SoTL presentations, conferences, and publications. If this work sounds interesting to you, please get in touch with the OFD. You can find more information and FLCs and our contact info. on our website: www.wmich.edu/facdev

Call for Publications: WMU ScholarWorks
If you have published an article or book or have presented on the topic of assessment of or for student learning, we would like to know about it! We would like to create a repository where we can share with our university community and others off campus the great work being done by our faculty, staff and students in this area. If you are interested in having your article or presentation posted on the WMU ScholarWorks Assessment page, please contact Karen Stokes Chapo at: karen.stokeschapo@wmich.edu

Don't fall for phishing!
Phishing is an online scam involving email messages that appear to be from a trusted source. WMU will never send you an email requesting your password. If you suspect a phishing scam report it to abuse@wmich.edu. Visit www.wmich.edu/it/newsphishing for more information.

Assessment Web Site
For information about assessment at WMU: Events, funding, handbook, resources, rubrics and support, go to www.wmich.edu/assessment

ScholarWorks Assessment Page: http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/assessment/

Assessment Tip
In order to sustain assessment practices over time, it’s usually best to create assessments that are simple to implement, embedded in required courses, and focused on a limited number of outcomes. These might include responses to a subset of questions from final exams, rubrics applied to key assignments, and evaluations of capstone experiences or projects.