Assessment Matters #8, Dec 2009

Assessment in Action Committee

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ASSESSMENT MATTERS @ WMU

A newsletter of the University Assessment Steering Committee (UASC) to disseminate information on tools, education & training, and best practices for assessment at WMU.

December 2009-Issue #8

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Welcome! Please forward this to anyone that may have an interest in assessment. For suggestions or comments, please contact: Karen Stokes at karen.stokes@wmich.edu

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A Word from the Associate Provost for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies

Assessment of general education is currently a focus at WMU. We have completed our first year of using the Collegiate Learning Assessment exam to measure the added value of the Western experience to our students in the areas of critical thinking, analytical thought, and writing ability. In our initial testing year, we ranked in the 64th percentile among all schools participating in the exam. We are now embarking on another pilot study aimed at using TracDat for assessment of general education. On November 3, Dave Choban from Nuventive was on campus to show us the capabilities of TracDat for this purpose. In the spring of 2010, we will be asking instructors of baccalaureate-level writing courses within departments to volunteer to test the system. Instructors will be asked to use a rubric provided to them to assess at least one writing assignment during the semester. Instructors will submit results using TracDat. We will use the semester to see how the pilot works with the idea to expand the system to other areas of general education in the near future. Any instructors of the baccalaureate-level writing courses for the spring semester in 2010 who are interested in participating in this pilot can contact Karen Stokes at: karen.stokes@wmich.edu

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UASC Individual and Unit Assessment Excellence Awards

To recognize and showcase the outstanding efforts of our faculty and departments in the area of assessment at WMU, the UASC is offering the Individual Assessment Excellence Award and the University Assessment Excellence Award. Applications for both of these awards are due by January 15, 2010. Winners for both the individual and unit awards will be announced on March 12, 2010 during the WMU Assessment Day luncheon. There is a cash prize for the individual award and University-wide recognition for both awards. If you are interested in applying for either award, please send in your application electronically by the above due date. To learn more about the awards and where to send your application go to: http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/grants.html

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**Assessment Day at WMU**

WMU will hold its first annual Assessment Day on Friday, March 12, 2010! Assessment Day, sponsored by the Associate Provost for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies, will be comprised of a keynote speaker Jillian Kinzie, (Associate Director, Center for Postsecondary Research & NSSE Institute, Indiana University), multiple hands on sessions on various assessment topics, and a luncheon to award this academic year’s Assessment Excellence Individual and Unit Awards. The event is scheduled to run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and anyone can attend some or all of the sessions and events scheduled for the day. If you think you would like to attend, please send an email to Karen Stokes at: karen.stokes@wmich.edu. RSVP is required only for the lunch, but we would like to be able to accommodate everyone who attends comfortably. To learn more about Jillian Kinzie, please go to the following web site: http://nsse.iub.edu/html/staff.cfm?uid=jikinzie

Look for more details to come!!

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**Assessment Site Reorganization**

Assessment information is still found under Institutional Effectiveness on the WMU website, but it can now also be accessed under http://www.wmich.edu/assessment/ and "Assessment" is in the A-Z directory of the WMU website. Take a moment to look at the new site, especially the new assessment calendar for upcoming events and conferences. We would love to hear your feedback. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send them to Karen Stokes at: karen.stokes@wmich.edu

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**Higher Learning Commission Annual Conference**

[Conference on Quality in Higher Education], the 115th Annual Meeting of the Higher Learning Commission will be held in Chicago April 9-13, 2010. It is not too late to register so don’t miss this great opportunity!

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**Atlantic Assessment Conference**

The Atlantic Assessment Conference grew out of the North Carolina State Undergraduate Assessment Symposium and is organized in collaboration with Meredith College and the Virginia Assessment Group. It will still be held in Cary, NC - April 11-12, 2010. The conference theme is "Collaboration in a Changing World." Early registration receives a $30 discount on registration fees and will be available Jan 4 to Feb 19, 2010.

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**WMU Fall 2009 Portfolio Contest**
All WMU students can participate in the WMU Fall 2009 Portfolio Contest. Portfolios created using iWebfolio can be submitted for a chance to win one of five $100 prizes. Portfolios need to be submitted by December 14, 2009 at midnight to be eligible for the contest. For further information about the contest, please go to the following website: http://www.wmich.edu/cepa/contest/
If you have any questions concerning the contest, please contact Karen Stokes at: karen.stokes@wmich.edu

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Assessment Tip

Thoughtfully worded statements of “intended student outcomes” are essential for developing meaningful assessments. We need to be able to express what we want our students to “know and be able to do” by the time they complete our programs. These statements provide clarity for faculty, students, and external reviewers.

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University Assessment Web Site: www.wmich.edu/assessment