

ASSESSMENT IN ACTION

The Providence College Assessment Newsletter

Spring 2015

COLLEGE PLANNING FOR NEASC VISIT

In a little more than two years, the College will be hosting *NEASC* representatives for a comprehensive reaccreditation visit. In preparation for the fall 2017 visit, the College must prepare an in-depth self-study—which includes the Student Achievement E Series Form. In addition to other data points, this form requires that we list each degree program, the learning outcomes that have been developed, and how those outcomes are measured.

For this process to be successful, it is crucial that assessment reports are submitted annually to the Office

of Academic Affairs so that we are able to complete this form with meaningful responses. If your department or program needs assistance with its annual assessment report submission, please contact [Brian Bartolini](#) or [Cathy Gagne](#) in academic affairs. ■



ASSESSING STUDENTS' ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

One of the [mission-related learning goals of the Core Curriculum](#) is that students should demonstrate the ability to speak in a clear, coherent, and well-informed manner. This spring, the Assessment Program, Core Curriculum Committee, and the Development of Western Civilization Program are gathering evidence of students' efforts toward that goal.

The study will include results of students' presentations from DWC colloquia, oral proficiency

courses, and senior "capstone-type" courses across majors. Instructors of student presentations in these courses have been asked to use a common rubric to score the presentations. All scores will be tabulated this summer (2015) and will be reported in the aggregate.

Our goals are to learn whether or not, in the aggregate, students' oral communication skills are at a level we would expect, and to see if there is a progression in speaking quality over the course of the PC undergraduate experience. As the project evolves, important developments and results will be shared with the campus community. ■

ALUMNI SURVEYS OVERVIEW

The Assessment Program manages an assortment of alumni surveys, with each survey administered online. Four alumni surveys are administered annually: the Alumni One-Year Out, the Employment/

Educational Status Six-Months Out, the Graduate & SCE One-Year Out, and the MBA Employment Status Three-Months Out.

The Alumni One-Year Out Survey provides student outcomes and satisfaction data based on students'

IN THIS ISSUE

College Planning for
NEASC Visit

Page 1

Assessing Student' Oral
Communication Skills

Page 1

Alumni Surveys Overview

Page 1 - 2

Ithaca S&R Faculty
Survey: What We're
Doing About It

Page 2 - 3

News Briefs

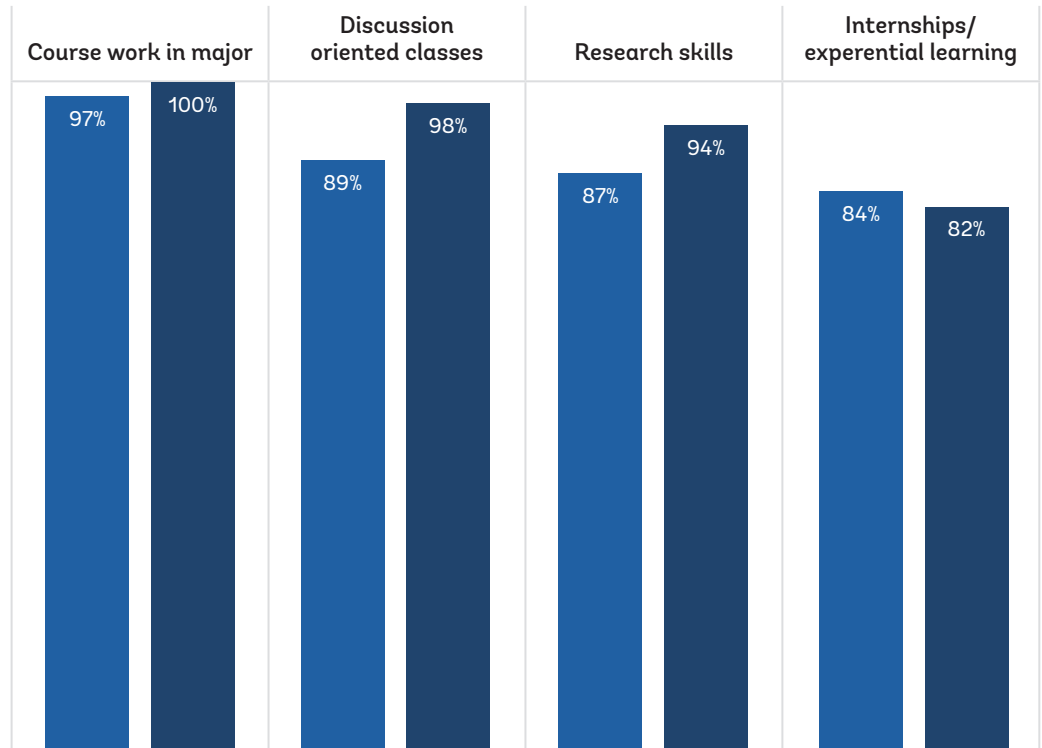
Page 3 - 4

Providence College experiences. The Employment/Educational Status Six-Months Out, the Graduate & SCE One-Year Out, and the MBA Employment Status Three-Months Out Surveys provide student employment and educational status data. In addition to these annual assessments, the College also administers Five and Ten-Year Out surveys to alumni. These surveys collect information from undergraduate alumni on overall satisfaction with their PC experience, career and graduate/professional school outcomes, civic engagement, and interest in alumni connections.

For more information on all of these instruments, including the timing of when they are administered, please visit: <http://www.providence.edu/academic-affairs/assessment/Pages/assessment-instruments.aspx>. ■

Activities most frequently cited as having prepared alumni for current activities to “some” or an “extensive” degree.

Academic Activities – Preparedness (Top 4)



Amount
 ■ Preparedness
 ■ Involvement

According to the Class of 2013 One-Year Out Alumni Survey results, the amount of involvement in most of these academic activities while at PC was greater than the extent to which the activity prepared respondents for their current activities.

ITHAKA S&R FACULTY SURVEY: WHAT WE’RE DOING ABOUT IT

ITHAKA S+R

Of the many aspects of the library-to-faculty relationship covered in the 2013 Ithaca S&R Faculty Survey, two specific items can serve as examples of the action that has been taken by library staff to-date: *support and development of student research skills and faculty format preferences for research knowledge resources in books/monographs*.

Support and development of student research skills

Faculty, principally, consider supporting and developing

student research skills as a faculty responsibility (55% very strongly agree) versus the library’s responsibility (22% very strongly agree). However, faculty also think librarians contribute significantly to the development of students’ research skills (56% very strongly agree) and help students find and make use of scholarly resources (59% very strongly agree).

Capitalizing on this opportunity for faculty-to-library collaboration related to student research skills, the library has subsequently focused more strongly on greater quantity and variety of formal, just-in-time library instruction/research education sessions for faculty classes

and greater quality and effectiveness of just-in-case research guides.

A. Research sessions for faculty and students

The library has increased quantities from FY14 (58 faculty, 109 library research sessions with ca. 2,100 students) to FY15, July-December 2014 only (45 faculty, 110 library research sessions with ca. 1,744 students).

B. Research guides/LibGuides

The library reviewed and redesigned all 107 of our LibGuides to maximize impact and effectiveness based on faculty and student feedback and download data (<http://providence.libguides.com/browse.php>). These include guides to specific subject areas and disciplines, eBooks, copyright, career services, ReWorks, bibliographic citations, etc.

Faculty format preferences for scholarly research knowledge resources in books/monographs

Faculty see the library's role as purchaser for scholarly research knowledge resources as most important (86% strongly agree); disagree that eBooks will gain primacy in five years (62% strongly disagree); do not often like to read eBooks (only 30% indicated yes); and seldom prefer reading a monograph cover-to-cover electroni-

cally (only 3% strongly agree). In other words, faculty members still express a relatively strong-to-very strong preference for print books/monographs over the electronic format.

As a result of these data and communications from faculty (especially DWC and the Humanities), the library has moved forward in purchase of the entire 520 print volumes of the Harvard University Press' *Loeb Classical Library* (to complement the 340 volumes of earlier editions already owned). In addition to the 860 print volumes of *Loeb*, we also have purchased—for accessibility, searchability, and currency—the electronic version of the complete *Loeb Classical Library* (http://bit.ly/PC_Loeb). With the electronic version, all subsequent print volumes and new editions are included. By having access to both format editions, we satisfy current and emerging (faculty and student) preferences.

As you can see, based on the Ithaka S&R Faculty Survey data, the library has reviewed and refined its approach to collaborating with faculty. It's our goal to continue to do so. ■

NEWS BRIEFS

New OIR Director, Institutional Effectiveness Web Site

Institutional Effectiveness has welcomed a key new member. Melanie Sullivan was named director of the Office of Institutional Research in late 2014. She is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the OIR, which include providing accurate data and analytical support for institutional reporting, policy development, and academic planning. She also conducts original studies that support efforts to improve institutional effectiveness.

In addition, the [public](#) assessment Web site has a new look and title—Institutional Effectiveness. The new name more accurately represents the functions that support strategic planning, assessment, institutional research, accreditation, and program review (CIP).

DWC Assessment Task Force Update

The DWC Assessment Task Force, comprised of members of the DWC and assessment programs, designed and created an instrument to assess “deep reading” during the 2013–14 academic year. The instrument, a student reading comprehension quiz, was administered in the fall 2014 semester to selected groups of students, roughly one-third of the DWC 101 students at the beginning of the semester and roughly one-third of the DWC 201 students toward the end of the semester. The committee will re-administer the quiz to a similar sample in the fall 2015 semester. Once the committee reviews those latest results, they will be in an even stronger position to draw conclusions about deep reading and the DWC Program's role in promoting it.

Core Curriculum Study This Spring

In the fall of 2013, the Assessment Program initiated an e-portfolio project to gather primarily qualitative data with respect to students' learning/development along the Core Curriculum's mission-related learning goals. The student participants' portfolios will be reviewed at the end of this, the sophomore, year, and again at the end of the senior year.

Student Affairs Assessment Project

This spring, Student Affairs intends to gather primarily qualitative data regarding students' learning/development with respect to its [Friar Four foundational pillars](#). The assessment project involves the recruitment of students through a representative sample of first-year students. Each student's blog will be reviewed against a rubric at different points during their PC careers. As the

project evolves, important developments and results will be shared with the campus community.

Upcoming Reports

This year, the Assessment Program will be releasing two reports focused on academics and spirituality. These reports synthesize all of our campus-wide survey data/assessment efforts on these topics. They also are updates to previously released reports. We will notify the campus community once these updated reports are available. In the meantime, the earlier versions of the reports are available internally at http://internal/assessment/assessment_reports/. ■

ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

REGIONAL DATA/INFORMATION

New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC):
<https://cihe.neasc.org>

New England Board of Higher Education:
www.nebhe.org

Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education:
www.ribghe.org

NATIONAL DATA/INFORMATION

Association of American Colleges and Universities:
www.aacu.org/resources/assessment

American Association of Higher Education Accreditation:
www.aahea.org

Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education:
<http://www.aalhe.org/resource-room/>

Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education:
<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/caeh20/current#.VRQkxpWBGJA>

College Board:
<http://professionals.collegeboard.com/educator/higher-ed>

Council for Higher Education Accreditation:
www.chea.org/

Digest of Educational Statistics (National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education):
<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/>

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education):
<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/>

Projection of Education Statistics to 2020 (National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education):
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2011026>

Quality Approaches in Higher Education:
<http://asq.org/edu/quality-information/journals/>

The Condition of Education (National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education):
<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/>

The Education Trust (Interactive Web tool for comparing graduation rates among colleges/universities):
www.collegeresults.org

PC Internal Institutional Effectiveness Website:
<http://internal.providence.edu/assessment/>



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