



Holy Family
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OIRA Staff

Chad May: Director

Adam Christensen: Assistant
Director

Lu Qin: Research Analyst

Cheryl Glover: Research Assistant

Shelley Robbins: Activity Director

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Reminder: The OIRA is here to assist with any surveys that might be related to institutional effectiveness. Our office has recently helped deploy surveys for the library, School of Nursing, and School of Education. Deployment through our office will help save time by not collecting redundant information and prevent the over surveying of students.

Assessment Now

Cliff Adelman, Ph.D. Speaks at Faculty Development Day

On March 21st, Dr. Cliff Adelman from the Higher Education Policy Institute, on retainer with a Lumina Foundation project addressed those that attended Faculty Development Day. The theme of the day was “Academic Rigor,” and Dr. Adelman discussed the process of creating the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP).

The DQP is a framework or profile that colleges and universities can use as a guide for the kinds of skills that students graduating from their programs should have at the associate, bachelor’s, and master’s levels. The talk focused on how other countries have created similar standards that help institutions of higher education ensure a level of rigor in order to make transferring between institutions easier for both students and colleges and universities. Much of the talk discussed the European Union’s efforts in what is now referred to as the Bologna process, in which the EU has created a set of discipline specific qualifications frameworks.

The talk by Dr. Adelman was followed up by break-out sessions in which faculty met by division to discuss how classes within their programs mapped on to the objectives listed in the DQP. The exercise will help identify how well the university is achieving the standards of rigor outlined by the DQP. Essentially, the DQP is a set of student learning outcome statements created using Bloom’s taxonomy with a developmental intentionality in which students are envisioned to build on

skills from the associates to bachelor and masters degree levels. This is a national project to help institutions communicate to external stakeholders in a convincing way what exactly a student learns or is expected to learn as a result of completion of various degrees. The DQP could be very useful in helping programs frame learning outcome statements, as well as framing institutional learning outcomes and providing a framework to build institutional assessments off of. Doing so could provide clear and convincing evidence of student achievement through learner-centered portfolios, artifacts, or other authentic assessments.

New Round of Mini-Grants Available

Last year, the Title III grant funded 8 mini-grants to support efforts to enhance, engage, promote, and improve program and course level assessment of student learning or institutional effectiveness. The OIRA is once again putting out a call for applications for these funds. The call has been emailed to the faculty and staff e-mail lists and can be found under “Quick Links”.

Any faculty or staff members with ideas for new ways to encourage assessment at the university are strongly encouraged to submit a proposal. See the call for proposals as well as the previous issue of the newsletter for ideas. Also feel free to call or stop by the OIRA to discuss potential projects.

Proposals are due by June 15 and decisions will be made by the end of the summer so that funds can be available for the new academic year.

OIRA Website Launched

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment now has its own website ([OIRA](#)). The site currently contains some basic information on assessment, a FAQ, training materials, links to reports, and links to external resources.

The site is going to be going through rapid changes as more information is added. This will include video tutorials on using the Blackboard Outcomes system as well as a full assessment manual.

Feedback regarding the content and design of the website is welcomed by the OIRA staff. We hope this will be the first stop for anyone with an assessment related question.

Course Evaluation Revisions Underway

As mentioned in the previous issue, the Faculty Senate has charged a subcommittee to look at changing the current process and form for student course evaluations. This subcommittee along with the deans and other staff has made great progress in revamping the now dated course evaluation process and instrument.

This group has been working with Dr. Karen Yoshino, consultant from Blackboard, to rework the current form. The new form has been drafted and is being sent to the full Faculty Senate for review.

The new form is tied to the teaching standards contained in the faculty handbook and focuses on evaluating the course, the instructor, as well as asking the student about their own contributions to the course.

Administration of the new form, if approved, will take place in the Blackboard system. Through this new process, OIRA will be able to easily provide aggregated data to faculty in order to assist them in gathering the relevant data for their annual reviews, contract renewals, and promotions. OIRA will also be able to provide faculty, deans, and senior administration with a wealth of information that was not possible with the old system.

e-Portfolio Consultation

In addition to the revisions to the course evaluation process, the university is also collaborating with Blackboard on establishing e-portfolios for interested programs.

Initial meetings with Karen Yoshino have explored what is currently being done at the university in way of portfolios. There are several programs currently using paper-based portfolios very effectively.

The goal now is to work with a technical consultant from Blackboard that can help create templates and establish processes for these programs to move to an electronic format.

Housing these in the Blackboard system will make using the data contained in the portfolios for program assessment a more streamlined process.

Any programs that are interested in starting an e-portfolio or have a portfolio in place that could benefit from moving electronically are encouraged to contact the OIRA so we can work with Blackboard to meet your needs.

Upcoming Conferences

Title III Activity Director, Dr. Shelley Robbins, will speak at the upcoming conference of the Pennsylvania Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (PACES) on April 27, 2012. Dr. Robbins was asked to join a panel entitled “Developing and Using Grading Rubrics”. She will share guidelines and grading rubrics she has developed for the grading of Comprehensive Exams in the Counseling Psychology Program. These rubrics have been associated with program outcomes for Counseling. The use of the rubrics allows Counseling to more easily utilize comprehensive exam performance as a program assessment tool.

Drs. Shelley Robbins and Jenai Grigg will be presenting at the upcoming Blackboard World Conference being held in New Orleans, July 10-12. Drs. Robbins and Grigg will be presenting a poster on the work that has been done in implementing assessment plans in the social and behavioral sciences.

OIRA has been asked to present at the meeting for the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP) in August, to be held in Hershey, PA. AICUP is interested in Holy Family’s experience with a federal grant to support assessment and how efforts are being made to create a culture of assessment.

Business School Fact Book Released

The OIRA is in the process of putting together school-specific fact books similar to the annual university fact book. The Business School Fact Book is now complete and can be found on the

OIRA website (linked under “Quick Links” above). Fact books for the remaining schools are being drafted now and will be released shortly.

The goal of these fact books is to provide schools with current and historical data to aid in decision making processes. The OIRA welcomes feedback on these products and suggestions on any data that could be useful that is not currently included.

Book Review: Classroom Assessment Techniques by Angelo and Cross

By *Shelley Robbins, PhD*

Before reading Angelo and Cross (1993), I thought I was a pretty good teacher. I was creative and tried many avenues to work with students in the learning process. This book not only demonstrated more classroom assessment techniques than I had ever considered, it also helped me to see the bigger picture of classroom assessment.

Angelo and Cross present strategies for intentional teaching. That is, they guide faculty through a process to understand how assessments in the classroom fit the course material and the learner. The book begins with a self-assessment that helps faculty identify the intended purpose of the course they are teaching and what goals the faculty have for that course. A course may be intended to teach facts, or skills, or theoretical principles. The course may exist to create higher order critical thinking or application of previous learning. A Teaching Goals Inventory assists faculty in identifying these purposes. Once the purposes for the course and the learning have been defined, faculty

have a better sense of how to assess that learning.

The meat of this book consists of 50 strategies for assessing what students have learned. The 50 Classroom Assessment Techniques (or CATs) are categorized by teaching goals. These techniques themselves are worth the price of admission. I guarantee that even the most seasoned faculty member will find a new assessment technique in this book.

Finally, the authors propose that evaluation of the efficacy of these techniques in class constitutes scholarship. After trying new techniques, faculty can ascertain whether student learning has improved. This represents research into the Scholarship of Teaching. This one volume can assist faculty in being both a more effective teacher and a more prolific scholar.

Copies of Angelo and Cross (as well as other titles) are available for loan from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (Holy Family Hall, Room 106). Please see Cheryl Glover to borrow resources.

Student Services Assessments in Progress

So far the transition of assessment of student learning to the Blackboard Outcomes system has primarily occurred within the academic programs. However, academic programs are not the only services on campus that contribute to student learning. Recently, the OIRA has begun assisting the directors of the units in Student Services on the assessment of student learning objectives for co/extra-curricular programs at the University.

Assessing Student Learning in these programs is of importance because there is a wealth of learning opportunities and experiences offered in the co-curriculum that support the academic goals and objectives. Not all AES units will be expected to assess student learning objectives in this way. However, assessment of institutional effectiveness will be on-going and integrated into the planning process (short-term, long-term, and strategic).

AICUP FYS Results

Holy Family recently participated in the First Year Survey (FYS) put out by the Association for Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania. Results from this survey will soon be reported on.

The data promises to provide insight into what we are doing well in comparison to similar schools. For example the graph above illustrates how helpful first year students found the academic advising to be at Holy Family.

