



Holy Family UNIVERSITY

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Assessment Now

Blackboard Outcomes News

There are some exciting developments lately regarding the use of Blackboard on campus. The first is the piloting of e-portfolios in programs in the School of Nursing and the School of Education. The portfolios are being used in graduate programs to catalog work done throughout the program and to provide students with opportunities to reflect on their work and learning. These programs already had paper portfolios in use. Switching to the Blackboard e-portfolio will save reams of paper, will make the collection and sharing of information easier, and will allow the portfolios to be used easily for program assessment within the Blackboard Outcomes system.

The second major project within the Blackboard system that is underway is establishing a new protocol for administering course evaluations. A faculty subcommittee has recently developed a new instrument to be used in the evaluation process. In addition to the new questionnaire in the future the administration will happen through the Blackboard system. OIRA and IT staff are currently being trained on how this process will work. Some of the benefits of deploying the evaluations through the Blackboard system include the ability to aggregate data across course sections and years more easily, better reporting tools available to both faculty and administrators, and a better user experience for the students filling out the evaluation.

In addition to these efforts, faculty assessment coordinators continue to work with academic programs to get assessment plans and data into the system. Several programs are now

using that data to inform curriculum changes and other program enhancements. Reporting templates and tools within the system have been set-up to help programs complete the process of planning, collecting, acting, and reporting on assessment data.

OIRA Lunch & Learn Sessions

The OIRA began offering lunch discussions last month and will continue monthly this academic year on how to prepare your program/department for student learning outcomes through the effective use of Blackboard Learn 9.1. Here are the remaining topics and dates. Watch for e-mails announcing the locations. Lunch will be provided.

No.	Date	Topic
2	10/11/12	Building BB Content: Notes, Files, and Mashups
3	11/8/12	Tests and Assignments in BB
4	12/13/12	Safe Assign and Grammarly
5	1/10/13	Grading with Rubrics
6	2/14/13	e-Portfolios in Blackboard
7	3/14/13	Aligning Student Work to Outcomes
8	4/11/13	Reporting on Course Outcomes

University Outcomes Assessment & Improvement Committee (UOAIc)

The most recent Middle States Commission on Higher Education self-study report recommended that Holy Family streamline its committee structure and centralize assessment efforts. A large piece of this centralization was to establish the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA). This office serves a vital function as outlined in the statement of OIRA's Mission and Objectives.

There is, however, a need for the University to establish a governance body to set institutional policies and procedures, interpret results, make recommendations for improvements, and ensure that assessment results are communicated to appropriate stakeholders. The charge and composition of this University Outcomes Assessment & Improvement Committee (UOAIc) was approved by Senior Administration after adequate time was given for feedback from Faculty members via the Faculty Senate and shared with staff to ensure all are aware of these changes and how the University will move its assessment processes forward in concert with the Title III grant activities.

This new structure combines and/or replaces some or all assessment committees. The UOAIc, in conjunction with the work of implementing the Balanced Scorecard, would replace the need for the Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness Committee (AIEC). In addition, the UOAIc and OIRA replace the need for the Academic Assessment Committee (AAC) as OIRA and Faculty Assessment Coordinators fill the role of ensuring quality assessment plans at the program level, OIRA and the general

education committee centralizes institutional assessment, and UOAIc provides a forum for presenting and discussing data/analyses/information generated from institutional assessments. The UOAIc not only streamlines assessment committees but it sets an infrastructure for assessment related policies and procedures to be governed by one body instead of a loosely affiliated group of many committees. This will reduce the number of committee meetings, which will result in potential cost savings for the University from the reduction in time consuming meetings that faculty, staff, and administrators need to attend as well as the preparation time and the overlap in information discussed from one meeting to the next are reduced.

This new structure attempts to give individual units and academic programs autonomy to assess student learning and their effectiveness and provide a structured way of communicating their assessment plans' and annual reports of the data collected and acted on annually through a common assessment reporting template. The goal is to have information pass back and forth to the UOAIc from units and back to units. This is not meant to be solely hierarchical but reciprocal and should provide more of a voice and forum to discuss individual units strengths and challenges as it tries to meet its student learning or unit goals and objectives.

The UOAIc will serve four major purposes at the University: 1) setting policies and procedures governing the assessment of student learning and institutional effectiveness; 2) collaboratively interpreting results from institutional assessments and the aggregate of individual unit or program annual assessment plans/reports; 3) making recommendations based on the cumulative understanding resulting from these assessment processes; and

4) communicating assessment results and activities to other committees and groups at the University. The UOAIc will specifically be linked to the Strategic Planning Stewardship Team (SPST) as results and recommendations stemming from assessment need to be sent to the SPST.

The first meeting of this new committee will be October 23, 2012. Here is the membership it stands for the 2012 – 13 academic year.

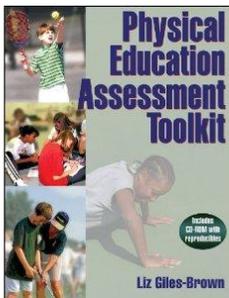
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Honour Moore, Assoc VP
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Dan Mankowski, Arts & Sciences
Katherine Quinn, Education
Ann Marie Vickery, Registrar
Robert Reese, VP Enrollment
Denise Diorio, IT
TBD Finance rep
TBD Development/marketing rep
TBD Student Life rep
Jonathan Salamak, SGA rep
Sara Szymendera, SGA alternate rep

Mini-Grant Update

The second call for faculty/staff mini-grants around topics of assessment has been another success. Formal decisions are still being made on some of the grants; however, awards are being made for a variety of activities. This year the activities being conducted include conferences to be hosted on the Holy Family campus to bring together experts from the region on assessment of specific subjects, training evaluators to score student work for program assessment, conducting workshops to determine the appeal of blended programs in the Radiologic Sciences, and supporting faculty to attend a regional conference related to assessment.

Look for further updates in the next *Assessment Now* newsletter for more specifics on these projects once all final decisions are made. Also, think of projects that you may want to apply for in the coming year as we plan to make a third call for proposals in the spring.

Book Review: Physical Education Assessment Toolkit



Liz Giles-Brown

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Human Kinetics
(February 22, 2006)

Review by Sheila Murphy

The title is Physical Education Assessment Toolkit. The author is Elizabeth Giles-Brown. The publisher is Human Kinetics- 2006. I do not see any other books she has written. She was named Elementary Physical Education Teacher of the Year in 1995. She, the author is has been an elementary physical education teacher in Maine for 17 years.

The main goal of the book, Physical Education Toolkit, is to provide teachers with meaningful yet practical ways to assess learning in the classroom. Good assessment is part of good teaching, and assessment can be fun and motivating for students and teachers when used in a positive manner.

In addition to providing teachers with sample assessments, the book also

contains three sample units based on the backward design model of unit development that is used in many disciplines. All of the units, lessons, and teaching suggestions reflect effective teaching practices as well as current brain-compatible learning principles. The units can be used as guides while planning quality assessments.

The goal of a quality physical education program is to help children become self-confident movers, gaining the skills, knowledge, and understanding that will motivate them to lead healthy and active lifestyles. Part of achieving that goal is teaching and assessing skill development, but another key is to support skill development by delving beneath the surface to teach and to assess for understanding. If students truly understand the underlying concepts and principles of motor skill development, health and skill related fitness, and positive social interactions, ultimately they will develop better skills and be able to make applications in related situations. To foster the motivation necessary to maintain a health and active lifestyle, teachers can use effective assessment to help students become consciously aware of what they can do, what they know, and what they understand.

The book explains the development of assessments in the following areas:

1. Daily self-assessments in the motor, cognitive, and affective domains.
2. Assessments for setting goals and reflecting on performance.
3. Motor skill assessment.
4. Creative games assessment.
5. Fitness assessment.
6. Strategy assessment.

I would recommend this book to teachers in all disciplines. The assessment templates and sample units provide educators with everything they need in order to

simultaneously assess and teach students. The templates may be used in meeting a variety of learning styles, providing opportunities for assessing students through rubrics, journal-writing assignments, self-assessments, and skill tracking assessments across the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

This book is available in the OIRA Library of resource materials and can be borrowed by calling Cheryl Glover in the OIRA office at 267-341-3614.

Upcoming Conferences



The Assessment Institute at IUPUI
October 28-30, 2012

Indianapolis Marriott Downtown

<http://planning.iupui.edu>

The Institute is designed to introduce innovations in assessment that can be used in various settings. Attendees will learn about new techniques and proven approaches in a variety of outcomes assessment areas, including general education and major fields, as well as capstone experiences, civic engagement, ePortfolios, first-year experience, faculty development, and student development. Several sessions are designed for beginners and others are for the more experienced practitioner. This year the new Faculty Assessment Coordinators (FACs) will have an opportunity to participate.



39th Annual Conference

November 3 - 6

Bethesda, MD

<http://www.neair.org/>

Members of the OIRA staff will be attending this conference. All are members of NEAIR and Chad May serves on the 2012 Planning Committee.



MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION
ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Annual Conference

December 5 - 7

Philadelphia, PA

<http://www.msche.org/>

The Conference offers practical ideas and exemplary practices by outstanding plenary speakers, concurrent sessions, and pre-conference workshops. Topics to include assessment issues, the self-study process, new federal regulations, follow-up reporting, and substantive change. With increasing demands for greater institutional accountability from government, students, parents, and others, these issues have never been more important. Members from senior administration and selected faculty will be attending this conference along with several staff from the OIRA.

Erin Bailey Joins OIRA

Erin Bailey joined the staff in July, replacing Lu Qin as the research analyst on the OIRA core team. Erin studied at Shippensburg University where she received her B.A. and M.S. degrees. Both degrees are in Psychology, with her Master's focusing on Experimental Psychology. Prior to coming to Holy Family, Erin was working for a marketing company as a project coordinator.

As research analyst, she will support the mission and goals of the OIRA

assisting in the maintenance/storage and reporting of institutional data, in the implementation of the University Systematic Cycle of Surveys, and supporting and expanding the use of the Blackboard Outcomes Assessment System. One area of primary responsibility will be working with units to support and develop internal questionnaires that might help provide valuable feedback for administrative and academic departments. She will also be the primary author of a new "Research in Brief" series that provides analyses of data on a variety of current and hot topics that will be of interest to the entire Holy Family Community.

Erin and her husband recently purchased their first home in Abington, PA, and are looking forward to this new chapter of their lives.

Library Survey Results

The Library Satisfaction Survey was developed as part of an assessment plan of the Library Services Department. The survey was sent to 2,967 students via the Blackboard Outcomes System to their Holy Family e-mail address in April 2012 and 785 (26%) surveys were returned. The survey was designed to evaluate key elements of the student experience while taking advantage (or not) of the many services/resource available through the library (and the learning resource center). Much of the efforts spent on this satisfaction survey in the OIRA are credited to our previous Research Analyst, Lu Qin, as she served an integral role in the development and evaluation of the survey.

The goal of this survey was to determine how students feel about the library and the services offered by asking questions like: how often the library is visited and at what location, reasons why and why not the library is visited, and the level of awareness, use, and satisfaction with the services available. Overall, the results were on the positive side with respondents expressing satisfaction with and awareness of the library and services. Just as a sense of satisfaction was observed, there were areas identified as needing improvement. The results of the Library Satisfaction Survey were presented to the Library Services Department. Below are some of our favorite comments from the survey.

Comments by Students

There were three areas on the survey where respondents were asked to provide any additional comments (why visit the library, why not visit the library, and what would you like to see changed/added in the library).

Most Original Comments (from what would you like to see changed/added): "A sleeping area with alarm clocks." "The bathrooms need restructuring."

Nicest Comments (from why visit the library): "The LRC Staff in Newtown is FANTASTIC." "Thank you for your excellent job!"

Most Requested Comments (from what would you like to see changed/added): More Computers. More Hours: Especially weekends and during exams (midterms & finals)

<http://www.holyfamily.edu/oir/>