



# Holy Family UNIVERSITY

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Issue 2

## OIRA Staff

Chad May: Director

Adam Christensen: Assistant  
Director

Lu Qin: Research Analyst

Cheryl Glover: Research Assistant

Shelley Robbins: Activity Director

## Quick Links

[CSS Report](#)

[Faculty Survey Report](#)

## Upcoming Events:

Assessment Brown Bags

1/11: *Journals and Wikis and  
Blogs, oh my...*

2/1: *Using Course Surveys*

3/12: *e-Portfolios*

4/4: *Making the Most of a  
Capstone*

Additional brown bags are being planned for FACs to present on a variety of topics related to program assessment. Dates and topics TBA.

# Assessment Now

## Title III Update

The first year of the Title III grant from the Department of Education has come to a close. By all measures it was a successful year. Perhaps most visible was the purchasing of, training on, and first steps in implementing the Blackboard Outcomes system. There was also a faculty development day devoted entirely to issues around assessment.

In addition to these activities, grant funds were appropriated in order to implement the Balanced Scorecard system to structure the strategic plan. A group of administrators, staff, and faculty have already been trained and the approved strategic plan is being put into this framework that will facilitate success in achieving the goals and objectives of the plan.

These activities, as well as others mentioned in this issue and previous issue of the newsletter, have already made a big difference in furthering the university to a culture of evidence. "We would like to thank everyone who has participated in Title III grant activities and appreciate the support from the University community. We have successfully met all of our year one grant objectives which positions us on-track to meet our future years' objectives." said Chad May, Director of IR and Assessment.

Looking ahead the university is already well on its way to meeting the objectives set for year two of the grant. It is the hope of the OIRA staff that this momentum can continue throughout and beyond the span of the grant to make Holy Family a leader and model for assessment both in the region and nationally.

## New Faculty Assessment Coordinators

Faculty Assessment Coordinators (FACs) have the primary responsibility of helping academic degree-granting programs establish a systematic cycle of assessing student learning outcomes. The FACs work with program faculty to determine what a graduate of their program should know, think, or be able to do and identify ways of measuring how well students achieve those outcomes. Currently 8 FACs have been identified by the school Deans and excellent progress has been made with numerous programs. Up to 4 more FACs may be added in future years.

The current FACs (with school/division affiliation) are: Tony Applegate (School of Ed), Amy Drobile (DEL), Jenai Grigg (SAS – Social Sciences), Dian He (SAS – Natural Sciences), Cathy Heilferty (School of Nursing), Joanne Ma (School of Business), Dan Mankowski (SAS – Humanities), and Megan Meyer (Gen Ed).

If you have questions about your program's assessment process or would like to know how to get more involved with the program improvement process you may contact the appropriate FAC or any member of the OIRA staff.

## FACs and OIRA Staff Attend Assessment Institute

The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Assessment Institute was held Oct 30 – Nov 1 in Indianapolis, hosted by IUPUI. Six of the FACs, 4 members of the OIRA staff,

and a representative from Student Services, as well as 2 members of the School of Ed faculty were able to attend the conference. The conference was an opportunity to be exposed to some of the best practices of higher education assessment and to hear from some of the leaders in the field.

The group that attended the conference plans to meet and discuss various practices that can be incorporated into the assessment process at Holy Family. There will also be workshops and informational sessions in the future to share this information with the broader university community.

## Portfolio and Course Evaluation Consultation

The Blackboard Outcomes and Assessment System Steering Committee recently approved using some of the remaining consultation hours left in the contract with Blackboard toward two specific needs at the university.

The first project involves using e-Portfolios for a variety of purposes. The EdD program in the School of Ed is developing a process of using portfolios for both student and program assessment. This particular project will serve as a model for a discussion with the consultant at future visit in January. (date TBD). Additionally, the consultant will set some time aside for discussing portfolios more generally for any programs or individuals interested in using portfolios in their classes or programs. If you are interested in possibly using portfolios in the future, please contact the OIRA staff so we can be sure to include you in that visit.

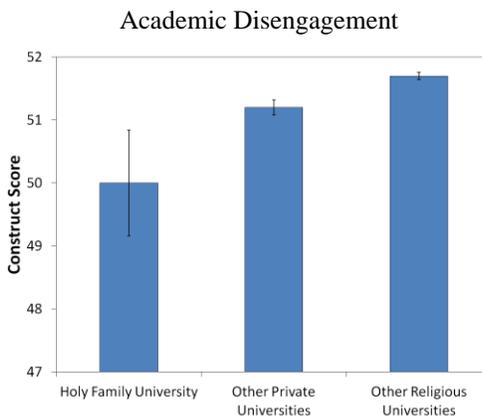
Second, the Faculty Senate has recently taken up the issue of revising the current course evaluation process. The

consultant will be assisting with making this process as informative as possible for the university as well as incorporating the data collection process into the Blackboard Outcomes System.

## College Senior Survey Results

The College Senior Survey (CSS) administered by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) was deployed in 2009-2010. The full report investigates differences both externally with comparison groups provided by CIRP as well as internal comparisons by school and some longitudinal comparisons with students that took both the Freshman CIRP survey and the CSS. The full report is linked in the Quick Links section.

One of the many interesting findings from this report was that Holy Family students showed a lower rating of Academic Disengagement compared to other institutions as shown in the figure below. This construct is a measure of activities that are not consistent with college success compared to other institutions as shown in the figure below.

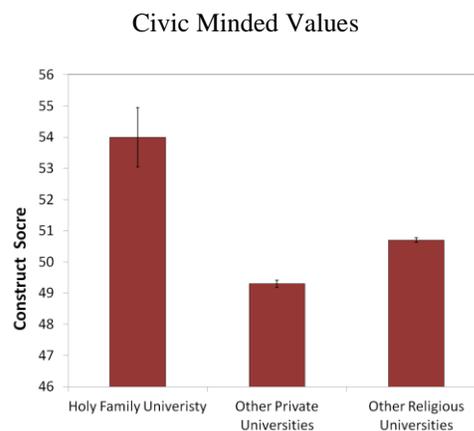


Other results from the report suggest areas that can be improved upon. Further analyses of this data are planned and results and suggestions will be shared through future research briefs.

## HERI Faculty Survey Results

The Faculty Survey sponsored by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA was administered in 2010-2011. The Research Brief Report can be found in the Quick Links section.

An encouraging finding from this data was that full-time undergraduate faculty at Holy Family rated themselves higher in “Civic Minded Values”, compared to the same type of faculty at other 4 year private or religious universities as shown in the figure below. This suggests that faculty are embracing civic engagement as a central part of the university mission.



## Lu Qin Joins OIRA

Lu Qin joined the staff in September becoming the last member of the OIRA core team. Originally from, Sichuan Province, China, Lu recently received her MS in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from California State University San Bernardino. As the research analyst, Lu’s primary responsibility will be expanding and maintaining Holy Family’s data sources. This includes both internal institutional and external sources of institutional data. Ultimately, she will be creating an architecture that will enable quick and efficient processing of requests from faculty, administration, consortia institutions, accrediting agencies, and

the media. Lu is currently in the process of assisting in the compilation of survey reports and executive summaries of previously administered faculty and student surveys to make the data available to the University community. Lu is also getting acclimated to Holy Family and we wish a very warm welcome to her and her husband to the Philadelphia area.

## Chad May Presents at Regional CAP Meeting

Chad May was one of four featured presenters at the Commission for Accelerated Programs (CAP) Fall Regional Meeting at Stevenson University in Maryland.

CAP, which serves adult and non-traditional

students, is a member organization benefiting academic units like the Division of Extended Learning here at Holy Family. Chad's topic: "Strengthening Assessment of Student Learning and Institutional Effectiveness: A Case Study", gave faculty and staff in attendance from two dozen member institutions an overview of the assessment process being developed at Holy Family. The group was particularly interested in how Holy Family has been able to develop a culture of assessment, and in the choice of Blackboard as the tool for data collection. The presentation was well received and Chad has offered to be of assistance should CAP members want to adopt any of the practices discussed including how to seek grant funding for assessment initiatives.



## NEAIR Presentation

Chad May is a co-author with Erin Ebersole from Immaculata University on an upcoming presentation at



the annual meeting of the North East Association for Institutional Research (NEAIR). The presentation entitled, "Creating a Culture of Assessment: From Logistics to Politics" will discuss how Immaculata has used student surveys to help non-academic units use the assessment process to improve their services and offerings. The presentation will also address what it took for Holy Family to successfully apply for the Title III grant. Both pieces will concentrate on how to deal with the logistical, political, technical, and overarching infrastructure problems that often exist when developing systematic, sustainable, and meaningful assessment processes.

## Quality Matters Conference

Shelley Robbins, Mike Markowitz, John Woznicki, Leanne Owen, and Megan



Meyer attended the Quality Matters Conference in Baltimore from Nov 7 -Nov 10. Quality Matters publishes a comprehensive rubric for the evaluation of online and blended courses. Workshops included detailed instructions in using the rubric to build online and blended courses. Symposia throughout the conference focused on best practices in implementing online learning at all educational levels, including higher education.

Because the application of the Quality Matters rubric is central to this model of course development, assessment is built into the process. Speakers talked about the importance of faculty and

administration commitment to the assessment process at the course and program levels. Other speakers focused on the importance of having institutional policy to support assessment and quality assurance for both curriculum and faculty development.

Holy Family is a member institution of Quality Matters. Plans for the future include the development of online and blended courses guided by the Quality Matters rubric. Several faculty members have been encouraged to pursue formal training with Quality Matters in the application of the rubric to become certified online course developers.

## Faculty/Staff Mini-Grants Awarded

At the beginning of the Fall Semester, the OIRA put out a call for proposals for mini-grants that could be used to further the faculty and staff development efforts around assessment. There were 8 strong proposals that received funding. Most amounts were very modest (less than \$500) while others were awarded funding beyond the initial \$1,000 limit of the grants.

Below are summaries for each accepted proposal:

- Sister Angela Cresswell will be using her funding to purchase a series of webinars produced by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).
- Dr. Jenai Grigg will use her funds to receive more detailed reports from the ETS Major Field Test (MFT) in Sociology. The funds will also allow any other program using the MFT access to the more detailed reports.
- Drs. J. Barry Dickinson and Jan Duggar proposed to pilot the Society for Human Resource Management Assurance of Learning Assessment examination.

- Drs. Daniel Bassi and Rochelle Robbins proposed a series of in depth workshops that would develop participating faculty members' ability to effectively perform course level assessment. Improving assessment at the course level will lead to improved program level assessment.
- Dr. Lynn Orlando proposed a series of three workshops to target faculty (including adjuncts) in the graduate programs for Early Elementary Pre-K-4 and Middle School Certification 4-8. The workshops will focus on developing common assessments, criteria for evaluation, and rubrics.
- Sister Marcella Louise Wallowicz proposed the development of a colloquium to be held at Holy Family University that will bring together mathematics and science faculty from the local Philadelphia area. The focus of the colloquium will be to share their own practices surrounding capstone/culminating experiences and projects in math and science disciplines as a way to foster collegiality and to learn how other local institutions use these assessment techniques.
- Lori Schwabenbauer was awarded funding to help send three library staff members to the "Library Assessment Conference: Building Effective Sustainable, Practical Assessment" sponsored by the Association of Research Libraries.
- Drs. Jenai Grigg and Megan Meyer proposed a project that will try to determine if more stringent requirements are needed to meet the service learning goals of the institution. The project would send 12 students to the Romero Center to participate in a day-long service experience. These students will be compared to students engaging in less intensive service learning opportunities.

## OIRA and FACs Receive iPads

The OIRA is the happy recipient of iPADS to be used by office staff and FACs in developing and implementing assessment projects in their areas. The iPADS, provided by an initiative from Information Technology, are to help integrate new technology tools into teaching, learning, and assessment at Holy Family. The FACs will have the opportunity, for example, to use the iPADS as a flexible alternative to score rubrics live and collect student artifacts. "By having iPADS we hope the FACs will be able to realize inventive ways to efficiently assemble and distribute information between faculty, administration, and students," said Adam Christensen who was the lead author on the OIRA proposal. The iPads will be linked through Wi-Fi to other technologies available to the campus community.



Studies coming forth from researchers at Abilene Christian University suggest a number of benefits of iPad use for both faculty and students. (Click the following link to learn more: <http://www.acu.edu/technology/mobilelearning/research/ipad-studies.html>). The OIRA expects that many of these benefits will extend to staff and FACs that are regularly engaged in data collection efforts across campus.

## OIRA Website Launching Soon

The OIRA has a new website that will be launching early in the New Year. This site will serve as a resource for the campus community for information regarding assessment and institutional data including links to full reports.

The site will initially consist mostly of basic information. In the coming weeks and months we plan to add information that will help people understand the Outcomes system and how it is being used within programs at the university.

An additional goal of the site will be to provide examples of quality assessment taking place across campus. This will allow people to see what is going on in other departments and programs and find ideas for ways to collect data and improve their own programs.

## Contact Us

Please email, call, or stop into the office in 106 Holy Family Hall with any questions or concerns about assessment. As we move forward, we will be seeking units that are ready to transition to Blackboard Outcomes. If you have assessment projects ready to move forward contact the OIRA for assistance. Also let us know if you have assessment news that can be included in future newsletters.