

Academic Matters

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FROM THE INTERIM PROVOST:

As political winds swirl around the UW Colleges, I find calm within the mission and goals of our institution. I hope that you do as well. We must not lose sight of the important work we do on a daily basis to engage our students, our campuses, and our communities.

This issue of *Academic Matters* should serve as a reminder of the significant work we are doing throughout our institution. On the pages that follow, you will read about our efforts in assessing student learning, engaging students in the first year (ESFY), surveying student engagement across the campuses, the hybrid course project, and the use of Desire to Learn (D2L).

You will also learn about several exciting professional development opportunities. In early April, a workshop will be held on grant writing. The session will be offered via compressed video and will be available to anyone who is interested in learning more about the grant writing process. In late May, the 2005 UW Colleges Colloquium will be held at the UW-Manitowoc campus. It will feature presentations from UW Colleges' instructional, professional, and administrative staff, and is open to all members of the institution. The UW System Faculty College will be held in early June at the UW-Richland campus. Participants will attend sessions presented by nationally recognized experts on teaching and student learning.

A variety of other important activities are taking place within the Office of Academic Affairs. You will read about a UW Colleges-UW Extension collaborative grant that has been submitted to UW System which if funded will provide teacher mentor training for 40 teachers. Also included is a review of our Plan 2008, Phase II Plan.

I hope you will enjoy this issue of *Academic Matters*. On behalf of Academic Affairs, thank you for all you do each day to engage our students, our campuses, and our communities!

The World of Assessment at the UW Colleges
By Renee Gralewicz, Interim Assessment Coordinator

The UW Colleges programs for the assessment of student learning are in full swing. Currently, assessment is taking place on the department, campus, Student Services, and institutional levels. Department Assessment Coordinators (DACs) and Campus Assessment Coordinators (CACs) have received last fall's assessment data as collected by faculty and instructional academic staff. The results have been analyzed by the Office of Academic Affairs. As you might recall, Communication Skills and Quantitative Skills were the two skill areas selected to be assessed institution-wide during the 2004-2005 academic year. The data collected on these skill levels revealed several very interesting trends.

Earlier during this spring semester, Gregg Nettesheim generated data relating our fall assessment results to ACT Reading, English, and Math scores, as well as trends based on prior credits. It is interesting to note that the higher a student's ACT score, the more he or she exceeded expectation standards. While it seems that this result would be obvious, it suggests that our institution-wide assessment rubrics are most likely measuring the standards we hope our students achieve. The results also demonstrate that the large number of our students who have low ACT scores can indeed meet standards and succeed in college. These scores represent students who would probably not be in college if not for the UW Colleges. For details on these trends, please contact your DAC or CAC.

As most of you who teach know, the spring semester is dedicated to assessing sophomore level courses. In addition to assessing institution wide skills (communication and quantitative skills this spring), departments are also assessing discipline-specific knowledge. In June, a meeting is planned to reevaluate the proposed skill assessment cycle.

Campus Assessment Coordinators (CACs) are actively engaged with faculty and staff on their campuses sharing assessment data and generating assessment connections to campus programs, initiatives, and activities. CACs are not "doing" more assessment; however, they are connecting what campuses are already doing (i.e. ESFY activities, common readings, common themes, workshops on teaching and learning, and the like) to assessment activities. These campus events and initiatives along with the data generated by departments need to be placed within the context of the campus-specific missions and strategic plans. The CACs met on Friday, March 18, to discuss campus-specific assessment-related activities. They meet one or two times a semester to share what is happening related to assessment on their respective campuses. If you have comments, questions, or information you want your CAC to share with CACs across the institution, please let your CAC know.

We were fortunate to send three representatives from the UW Colleges, Holly Hassel, Roger Rigtterink, and Jeffrey Sears, to the American Association of Colleges and Universities' General Education and Assessment: Creating Shared Responsibility for Learning across the Curriculum conference held in Atlanta, Georgia, from February 17 to 19, 2005. Roger has already shared his initial impressions with the Senate Assessment Committee (SAC) and we are looking forward to learning more from these three individuals at future meetings.

ESFY Update
By Christel Taylor
Assistant Coordinator, ESFY Initiative

This academic year has seen growth in the Engaging Students in the First Year (ESFY) Initiative, both in the continued development of existing programming and in the implementation of new programming.

Because so much of our contact with students is in the classroom, our first phase of ESFY implementation was to develop an institution-wide one-credit First-Year Seminar (LEC 100) course. Nearly all of our campuses offered this course during Fall 2004, and even more will be offering it in the next academic year. On June 8, we will hold our first First-Year Seminar Instructor Retreat at the UW-Baraboo/Sauk County campus. We will work on understanding and using the course guide and sharing teaching strategies and assignment ideas with each other. Next year, we will begin working on linking the First-Year Seminar to content courses, either by creating pairings with existing courses or by developing learning communities.

On Saturday, February 19, UW-Waukesha hosted the ESFY Spring Conference. With more than 70 participants in attendance, we were able to learn about ESFY programming at both the campus and institution levels. We had a rich variety of topics, including off-campus learning opportunities, instructional techniques for first-year seminar classes as well as content courses, campus common readings, assessment, wellness, and faculty-student research.

At the institutional level, we are continuing to use the First-Year Initiative survey to assess the First-Year Seminar classes. Gregg Nettesheim and Chris Taylor also conducted a focus group of second-year students. Students reflected on their first year of college and on their first-year seminar classes. We will use what we heard to develop our questions so that we can learn from even more students this year.

On the campus level, great things are happening. Each campus has an ESFY coordinator who is responsible for promoting and coordinating the initiative. The campus coordinators met by compressed video in the fall to discuss the programming on their campuses and to consider future directions for ESFY. Campus coordinators are as follows:

- ∞ Tom Neal, Baraboo/Sauk County
- ∞ Mary Hoeft, Barron County
- ∞ Dick Gustin, Fond du Lac
- ∞ Kristin Runge, Fox Valley
- ∞ Susanne Skubal, Manitowoc
- ∞ Theo Koupelis, Marathon County
- ∞ Jennifer Stolpa, Marinette
- ∞ Julie Tharp, Marshfield/Wood County
- ∞ Linda Gentes, Richland
- ∞ Beth Jozwiak, Rock County
- ∞ Bob Margrett, Sheboygan
- ∞ Roger Peterson, Washington County

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)
By Gregg Nettlesheim

Background

This spring the UW Colleges, along with 257 other two-year colleges across the country, will once again be participating in a national assessment initiative called the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). This initiative is administered through the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin. CCSSE, designed specifically for two-year colleges, grew out of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), a survey developed for baccalaureate colleges by George Kuh and others at the University of Indiana.

The survey will be conducted in randomly selected classes beginning March 28 and running through the end of April. Each campus assessment coordinator will serve as the survey administrator for that campus, distributing the necessary materials to instructors and collecting the completed surveys. Completed survey forms will be returned to the central office in Madison to be packaged and sent to the University of Texas for data entry and processing. We expect to have national summary survey results, along with results for both the UW Colleges and for each campus by the end of summer.

What does the CCSSE measure?

Unlike other assessment tools which measure student outcomes, the CCSSE is designed to help universities better understand the range and extent of student engagement with the learning process. The survey explores engagement in a number of ways:

- ∞ time and effort expended
- ∞ the range of activities students have experienced both in and outside of class
- ∞ the services provided by the university

It also includes questions about the context of student enrollment in the University:

- ∞ What else is going on in the student's life?
- ∞ What parts do others play in the academic life of students?
- ∞ What are the barriers to engagement in the educational process?

How can we use the results of CCSSE?

The results of the CCSSE can be used in two important ways. The first is to inform our efforts to improve programs and services to students. Using benchmark comparisons with other two-year colleges, we can quickly spot areas of strength and weakness. We will also be able to identify aspects of engagement that are particularly important or challenging for students. With this information we can better understand where to direct resources and effort.

The second use of the CCSSE is as a source of information for reporting to groups and individuals outside of the UW Colleges, including the UW System Administration. Because the CCSSE is a national survey and is comparable to the NSSE, we have used this information in the past to show the very favorable comparison of the UW Colleges to other UW institutions and to two-year colleges across the country in areas of student engagement.

Hybrid Course Project 2005
By Pat Fellows

2005 marks the third year of the Hybrid Course Project. A hybrid course, by the UW Colleges definition, is any course in which approximately 50% of classroom seat time is replaced with out of class exercises (usually an online component).

There are 18 faculty involved in the 2005 project, representing 10 campuses. The cohort is just getting started on redesigning courses to be offered in the Fall 2005 and Spring 2006 semesters.

There are approximately 50 faculty who have developed at least one hybrid course. Several have developed a second course, and others are considering redesigning a second course to the hybrid format. Courses included in the Hybrid project represent the humanities, social sciences, sciences and mathematics. There is also a hybrid LEC 100 (First Year Seminar) course in development this year.

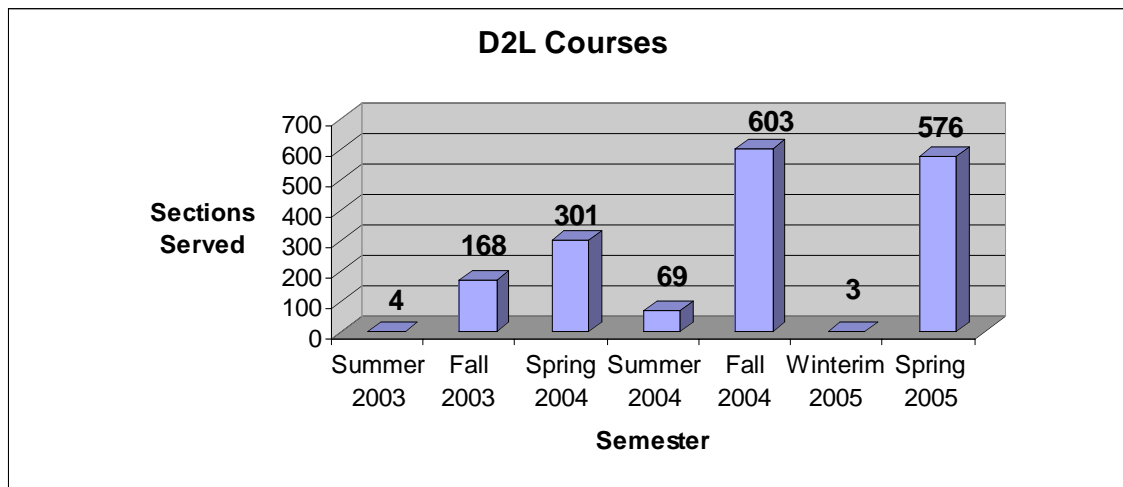
Feedback from students, for the most part, has been very positive. Assistant Campus Deans for Student Services saw a presentation on the program during their March meeting in Madison, and their feedback was also very positive about the program. They had heard positive things from students about this mode of delivery. As we near the end of the second full year of offering hybrid courses, there will be data available from both student and faculty surveys to provide a more detailed summary of satisfaction with the program.

If you are interested in getting involved in the Hybrid Course Project, the next call for proposals will come in the September or October for the 2006-2007 academic year. Work on the courses will take place between January 2006 and August 2006. Watch for the call to come from your campus dean.

Please let Pat Fellows know if you have any questions.

Desire to Learn (D2L) Usage **By Pat Fellows**

The UW Colleges is now well into its 7th semester using D2L (including summers and winterim), and is one of the leading users of D2L across the UW System. The chart below shows the number of sections utilizing D2L, not the number of sites. Many faculty are utilizing one D2L site for multiple sections of a course. They find it works pretty well and reduces the number of sites to develop and manage.



Even though the number of sections dropped slightly from fall to spring this year, I am confident that our numbers will continue to grow as more faculty find one tool or another in D2L to be useful in their face-to-face courses. As we move into our third year using D2L, there will be some changes. We will be upgrading to version 7.4 in May, before summer session begins. While we haven't had a peak at 7.4, we are told the changes will make D2L, the Gradebook and quizzing run even better than they have this semester. This is great news!!

The A, B, C's of Grant Writing ***By Eric Smith***

Join your colleagues on April 8 from 3-5 p.m. for an institution-wide compressed video conference on grant writing. This workshop will be available at all 13 campus sites. Most, if not all, UWC faculty and staff will at some time be directly involved in designing a grant-funded initiative. There are some tried and true techniques in grant writing that will greatly increase the quality of proposals and likelihood of funding. Grant writing is very experiential; however participation in this type of workshop can help get you up-to-speed quickly.

The workshop will feature an overview of several key grant writing topics.

- ∞ Searching for Grants: Discover the on-line tools used in searching for government and foundation grants.
- ∞ Effective Writing Techniques: Learn the techniques that will help your proposals stand out.
- ∞ Budget Development: Learn the language of budgets and time-saving techniques for creating a budget.
- ∞ Working with the UWC Grants Office: Learn about the process for submitting grants and accessing resources of the grants office.

If you are interested in attending this workshop (free to UWC faculty and staff), please email Eric Smith at esmith@uwc.edu as soon as possible. Workshop materials will be sent to all registered participants via email attachment a few days prior to the workshop.

2005 UW Colleges Colloquium
By Wava Haney

The response from faculty and staff to the call for proposals for the 2005 UW Colleges Colloquium *Joining Voices: Connections and Collaborations* was terrific! Many faculty will present on interdisciplinary collaborations with colleagues from their campus, department or at other UW institutions, and with students, individuals and organizations in the community. Others will provide examples of new teaching initiatives, including first year seminars and related activities.

Academic staff and administrators will share a range of exciting programming that they have developed and are implementing. These range from creating a positive journey for students from “admitted to alum”, to service learning opportunities for students, to what happens to UWC students once they get “the best start” with us, to CE programs for mentoring teachers in our communities, teachers who may well be our alums.

UW-Marquette Professor of English and Philosophy, Jane Oitzinger, will give the keynote address featuring stories and data from the years of faculty, staff and students “joining voices” to create and assess interdisciplinary learning communities at that campus.

Look for a complete Colloquium program in your Inbox soon after your return from spring break!

Just in case you forgot to circle Tuesday, May 24, 2005 for participation in the 2005 UW Colleges Colloquium, we urge you to do so now. It is a great opportunity to meet new faces and renew acquaintances across campus and department lines. UW-Manitowoc, located on the shores of Lake Michigan, will host this year’s Colloquium.

Each campus is invited to send the campus Dean and up to 12 faculty and staff. The Colloquium Planning Committee encourages delegations that include faculty and professional and instructional academic staff. Any campus that has more faculty and staff interested in attending the Colloquium than slots available should let the Planning Committee know and efforts will be made to accommodate everyone who is interested in attending. The details on campus delegations will be available with the preliminary program in early April.

Faculty College
By Annette Kuhlmann
Professional Development Coordinator

Each May since 1977, faculty and staff from the UW System gather for four days of lectures at the *Faculty College*. The participants truly may feel reminded of their college days. Organized by the UW System Office of Professional & Instructional Development (OPID), the programs are presented by nationally renowned scholars and focus on a variety of topics related to theoretical and practical aspects of teaching and learning. This year’s presentations include:

Bill Cerbin and Bryan Kopp

“Improving Teaching and Student Learning Through Lesson Study.”

Elizabeth Barkley:

“Engaging Students in Active Learning Through Collaboration: Integrating Theory, Research, and Practice.”

Craig Nelson:

“Achievement, Equity and Retention: Three Pedagogical Changes that Can Make a Real Difference in ANY College Classroom.”

Dee Fink

“Want Your Students to Learn More? Some New Ideas for Designing Significant Learning in Your Courses.”

During breaks between presentations or over an evening meal, participants gather to meet new people and share some interesting conversations. Attendees in the past have enjoyed their time at the Faculty College calling it “energizing,” “well organized and fun,” or “engaging and useful.” This year’s Faculty College will be held at the UW-Richland campus.

UW Colleges Submit Grant for Teacher Mentor Training
By Diane Pillard

The UW Colleges has partnered with UW Extension and UW-Parkside to submit an \$80,000 grant proposal to UW System. If approved, this collaborative initiative will provide teacher mentor training for 40 teachers in the Fond du Lac, Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Fox Valley and West Bend communities and 40 who are regionally based in the Kenosha/Racine communities.

Two-day workshops focusing on *Foundations in Mentoring* will be presented at two locations: UW-Fond du Lac and UW-Parkside. Teachers participating at UW-Fond du Lac will evaluate a workshop presented through the Wisconsin New Teacher Project using curriculum that was originally implemented several years ago in Santa Cruz, California. Teachers participating at UW-Parkside will evaluate a workshop presented by UW-Parkside using curriculum that was designed a little over a year ago.

Continuing Education outreach program managers from each of the participating campuses will collaborate on recruitment, workshop coordination and assessment. Following the training workshops, instructional design staff will design learning modules that can be accessed via the internet and used by PK-16 schools across Wisconsin to supplement face-to-face teacher mentor training programs.

A team of representatives from the Wisconsin New Teacher Project, UW Colleges, UW Extension and UW-Parkside will observe both workshops, review the curricula and determine which segments are best used to develop the online learning modules. An external evaluator will conduct an impact analysis of each workshop.

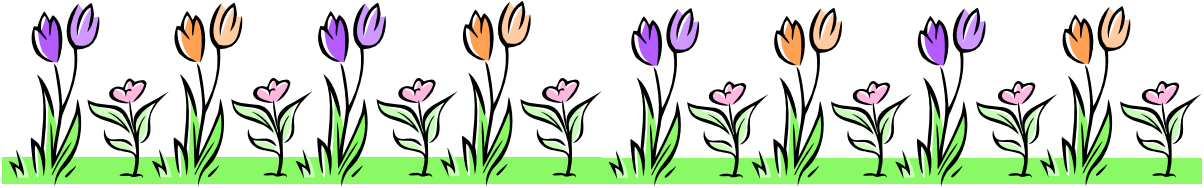
Our goals are three-fold: 1) To introduce teacher mentor training to at least 80 Wisconsin teachers, 2) To evaluate curricula from two workshop providers, 3) To design at least one learning module that will be reviewed by the participating educators. Feedback from participating educators will be critical in planning the 2006-2007 project - the design and implementation of hybrid or online teacher mentor training materials.

***Plan 2008: Educational Quality Through Racial and Ethnic Diversity
Phase II Plan
By Nora McGuire***

The University of Wisconsin Colleges submitted its Plan 2008: Educational Quality Through Racial and Ethnic Diversity Phase II Plan in December of last year. The Phase II Plan includes both institutional and campus initiatives for the second five years of this ten- year strategic diversity plan.

Institutional plans were reviewed by UW System prior to submission to the Board of Regents. In the official feedback letter to Interim Chancellor Margaret Cleek, UW System Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Cora Merritt wrote “I write to you because of the favorable review of the plan from UW Colleges. The summary identifies the plan as one whose structure and approach applies to the UW System, with one overarching plan which identifies a set of initiatives followed by plans for each of the Colleges that are tailored to their individual situations, each outlining a manageable set of initiatives. Each of these plans addresses the target population, person(s) responsible, expected outcomes, and assessment indicators for each initiative. The summary compliments the UW Colleges plan for demonstrating a truly institutional commitment, with processes in place to ensure implementation and assessment.” The UW Colleges Phase II Plan was one of four institutional plans that received a favorable review.

Efforts are now underway to implement both the institutional and campus initiatives contained in the Plan. A copy of the Plan may be found in public folders in the folder titled “Initiatives-Colleges-wide.”



*“A little madness in the spring
is comforting even for the king.”*

Author: Emily Dickinson