

## PROGRAM REVIEW AND LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT NEWSLETTER

A periodic report from the Office of Academic Program Review and Assessment – Ellen Wentland, Assistant Dean

May 2011

### SEVENTH EDITION

This is the seventh edition of what is planned as a periodic newsletter. As noted in the first April 2008 edition:

*The major goal is to share with the entire campus community the significant work – significant in terms of the commitment of time and effort as well as in the results - that is being done by NECC faculty and administrators on program review and outcomes assessment activities.*

*Individuals from outside NECC have also been engaged, including representatives of area four-year colleges and employers. It is hoped that through sharing, the work that has been done will be supported, and the work that will be done will be encouraged and better informed.*

To view all editions of the newsletter, go to:

<http://facstaff.necc.mass.edu/faculty-resources/program-review-outcomes-assessment/newsletters/>

### PROGRAM REVIEW

#### Spring 2011 Completers

Following are the eight reviews completed in spring 2011, along with the program review team leaders:

Business Management: Healthcare Practice

Management Option –

Kathy Hudson

Engineering Science –

Paul Chanley

General Studies: Multi-Media Option –

Patricia Kidney

Liberal Arts: Political Science Option –

Steve Slaner

Liberal Arts: Psychology Option –

Carolyn Cohen

Liberal Arts: Writing Option –

Steve Mathis

Medical Assistant Certificate –

Kathy Hudson

Web Page Design and Development Certificate –

Ethel Schuster

*With these reviews, the total number completed to date is 36, including 29 degree and 7 certificate programs.*

#### Participation on Program Review Teams

**Forty-two faculty members, administrators, and representatives of external constituencies participated on this year's program review teams.**

**Internal participants** included fifteen faculty members who teach in the program, eleven faculty members from the same division as the program under review but who do not teach in the program, six faculty members from other divisions, and four administrators.

**The seven representatives of external organizations** who participated include:

- Anne Marie Tinkham, Practice Director, Women's' Health Center, Haverhill, MA
- Frank DeCaro, Director of Operations, Cambridge Health Alliance
- Pamela Langevian, Practice Manager, Highland Primary Care, Newburyport, MA
- Monica O'Brien, Assistant Professor of Literature and Humanities and Chair, Department of Writing and Literature, Chester College,
- Regina Flynn, Assistant Professor, English Department, Salem State University, Salem, MA.
- John Cook, Faculty Coordinator, Granite State College, NH.
- Harry Wessel, Professor of Political Science and Department chair, Merrimack College, North Andover, MA.

## Spring 2010 Program Review Summit

Team leaders presented the results of their reviews at the **sixth annual college-wide Program Review Summit, on April 7, 2011**. Sample PowerPoint presentations shown at the summit, which highlight review findings and recommendations, can be found at <http://facstaff.necc.mass.edu/faculty-resources/program-review-outcomes-assessment/785/#presentations>



**General comments offered by program review presenters** – the team leaders who prepared the reviews - include the following:

*[Program Review is an] excellent formal vehicle for systematically evaluating a program.*

*Given the current state of the art with regards to the Web and technology, I look forward to our Web Page Design and Development Certificate becoming a vibrant, successful and over-enrolled program in the coming years.*

*My impressions are that the process was very thorough, that the presenters knew their stuff, and that the summit was valuable insofar as people outside the area of the various programs became better acquainted with them. It's always helpful to associate a name with a face, and then to put name and face together, in a way that relates to the overall goals of the college. While no program review can identify every problem, it can lay out the rationale for having the program in the first place, and for others to see how the program actually functions.*

*I think the general consensus was that though it was a lot of work, in the end it was worth it.*

**And from one of the attendees...**

*This sort of event is significant to feature in a professional day format, because these presentations inform us about aspects at NECC that are crucial to know so that we can collaborate, teach with more success, effectiveness.*

## Strengths Identified in the 36 Programs Reviewed to Date: 2005 – 2011

Program reviews include summary sections where program strengths, areas in need of improvement/challenges, and action plans related to those areas are detailed. (The summary sections for all reviews are posted at <http://facstaff.necc.mass.edu/faculty-resources/program-review-outcomes-assessment/785/#status>.)

**In the 36 reviews completed to date, 239 strengths were listed, representing nine major themes which accounted for 86% of the comments.** These themes, including the number of mentions and examples, are:

### External Relationships (35)

- Collaborative relationships...with community agencies
- Internships/ Cooperative Education
- Articulation agreements with local high schools
- Key partnerships with community organizations and public school systems
- Clinical sites
- Effectively timed and varied field placements and practicum experiences
- Working relationships with area four-year college representatives
- Interaction with area employers
- Community service

### Faculty (34)

- Dedicated, committed, and caring faculty
- Dynamic faculty
- Hard-working, highly qualified faculty
- Highly professional faculty
- Program Faculty: A committed and caring faculty with a vast experience in their professions and in education
- Excellent quality of instruction
- Faculty credentials
- Faculty...make every attempt to stay current in their field

### Curriculum/ Instruction (30)

- Breadth and depth of courses
- Solid curriculum that provides a well planned sequence of courses
- Curriculum strongly supports student learning outcomes

### Curriculum/ Instruction (continued)

- Well developed curriculum
- Comprehensive content of courses
- Diverse course offerings
- Continuous updating of courses

### Program Resources (24)

- NECC library and related learning resources
- Electronic lab equipment and classroom environment
- Clinic/ laboratory space
- Adequate instructional technology
- State-of-the-art simulation laboratory
- Well designed classrooms and computer labs

### Student Success (20)

- Student retention
- Graduation and transfer rates
- Solid employment rate
- Students experience success
- Student performance

### Support for Student Success (20)

- Effective, intensive academic advising
- Encourages student success through faculty mentoring of clubs and advising of students...
- Tutoring
- Procedures in place to ensure adequate communication with students on program policies and expectations
- Academic support for students

### Support for NECC's Mission, Core Values and Strategic Plan (17)

- Facilitates the accomplishment of all of NECC's Core Values
- Program mission supports college mission
- Supports the Institutional Strategic Plan
- Engages students as active learners

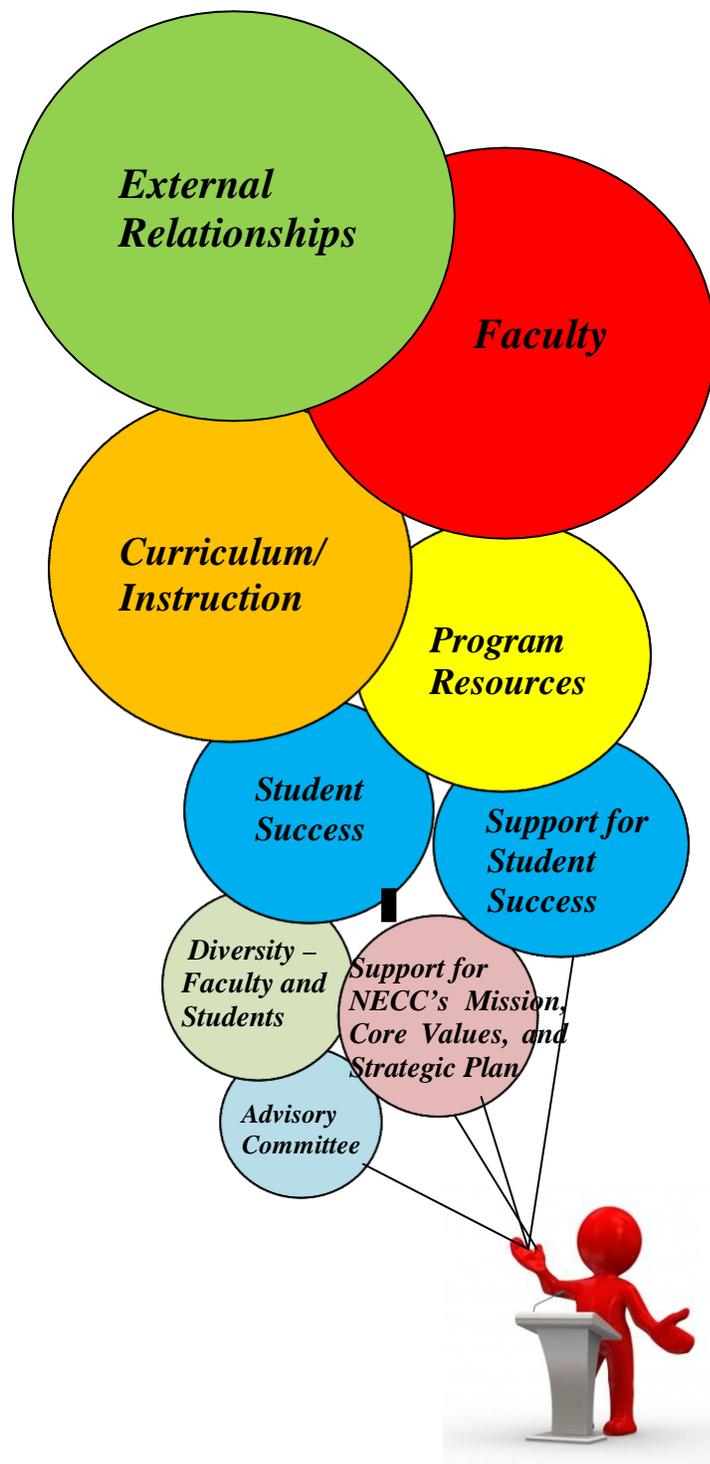
### Diversity – Faculty and Students (16)

- Diversity of enrolled students, in terms of both gender and ethnicity
- Minority and female representation among the faculty
- Encourages respect for diversity...

### Advisory Committee (11)

- Increasingly active Advisory committee
- A solid Advisory committee that is committed to the program's success
- Very engaged Advisory Committee with a willingness to help students

## STRENGTHS – NECC ACADEMIC PROGRAMS



## Scheduled for 2011

Early in the 2011 spring term, eleven programs began their reviews with orientation sessions. These programs and their program review team leaders are:

Accounting – Kristen Quinn

Alcohol-Drug Abuse Counseling Certificate – Jane Gagliardi

Early Childhood Education – Gail Feigenbaum

General Studies: Dance Option – Michelle Deane

General Studies: Music Option – Ken Langer

General Studies: Visual Arts – Rachel Hellman

Nursing (ADN) – Patricia Demers

Practical Nursing Certificate – Patricia Demers

Phlebotomy Certificate – Brenda Salines

Polysomnography Certificate – John Murray

Radiological Technology – Nancy Garcia

Respiratory Care – Jennifer Jackson Stevens

***IMPORTANT - You can help (and learn)! If you are able to help your colleagues in the above programs by participating on their review teams, please let them or me know!***

## OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

### Institutional Level Core Academic Skills and Assessment

In addition to assessment at the program level, approximately two years ago, five new core academic skills were introduced to the college for assessment at the institutional level. These five are:

- **Communication:** Students will be able to produce clear and well-organized writing using standard American English that thoroughly addresses the assignment and is appropriately geared toward the intended audience.
- **Global Awareness:** Students will be able to compare and contrast a single situation or institution from the perspective of three cultures of the world, at least two of which are outside the United States.
- **Information Literacy:** Students will be able to demonstrate use of multiple search systems to identify sources appropriate to their research and to critically evaluate and cite those sources.

- **Quantitative Reasoning:** Students will be able to apply mathematical concepts and skills to solve real-world problems and/or display and interpret quantitative information in percentages, graphs, and tables.
- **Science and Technology:** Students will be able to describe the steps required and to evaluate an experiment with respect to the correct application of the scientific method.

**Institutional-level assessment began in AY 2009-10 with a focus on Communication.** Writing samples collected from students who met a credits-earned-at-NECC criterion were evaluated in the summer of 2010 by teams of raters using a developed rubric. Results were distributed college-wide in the fall of 2010, and included in the Sixth Edition of this newsletter (see <http://facstaff.necc.mass.edu/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/PROAnewsletter12-7-10.pdf>).

In the fall of 2010, the co-chairs for the Institutional Assessment effort, Suzanne VanWert and Ellen Wentland - with the assistance of members of a faculty subcommittee - developed **an assignment that could be used to assess Global Awareness and Quantitative Reasoning.** This method was used in part to address the issue of variation in assignment demands found during the analyses of last year's assessment results.

Once again, students who had accumulated between 45-50 credit hours at NECC were identified, as well as the classes in which they were enrolled. Instructors in those classes were then asked to administer the assignment to all students in the classes, with the plan that students completing the assignment who did not meet the credits criterion could serve as a comparison group.

Assignments collected will be evaluated during the summer, using a rubric specifically developed to reflect the core skills' descriptions. Results will be shared in the fall.

## THE PROGRAM REVIEW – OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT WEBSITE

For detailed information on the processes and much of the work completed to date, see: <http://facstaff.necc.mass.edu/faculty-resources/program-review-outcomes-assessment/>.