

# **PROGRAM REVIEW AND LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT** **NEWSLETTER**

## **Eleventh Edition**

*A periodic report from the Office of Academic and Institutional Effectiveness – Ellen Wentland, Associate Dean*

June 2013

*This is the eleventh 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.*

To view all editions of the newsletter, go to:

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

## **PROGRAM REVIEW**

### **Spring 2013 Completers**

The five reviews completed in spring 2013, and the program review team leaders, are:

Dental Assisting Certificate – Kerin Hamidiani  
Elementary Education – Euthemia Gilman  
General Studies – Steve Mathis  
Liberal Arts – Tricia Machado  
Radiologic Technology – Lynne Davis

*The total number reviewed to date is now 44, including 34 degree and 10 certificate programs. Of the 44, eight (6 degree and 2 certificate) completed second reviews in 2012 or 2013, following the NECC cycle which is approximately every 5-6 years. Of the 24 programs scheduled for the next three review cycles, only seven have not been reviewed in the past. Three associated programs were delayed pending the hiring of a coordinator for those programs, and another three are new programs at the college. The seventh is scheduled for this next cycle.*

### **Spring 2013 Program Review Summit**

The **eighth annual college-wide Program Review Summit** was held on **April 22, 2013**. Sample

Summit PowerPoint presentations, which highlight review findings and recommendations, can be found at <http://facstaff.necc.mass.edu/faculty-resources/program-review-outcomes-assessment/785-2/>



### **Program Review Reports**

Program reviews contain information about topics such as the curriculum, enrollments, resources available, and graduation rates. In a summary, strengths and areas for improvement/ challenges are detailed, as well as action plans to address the challenges. Following are a sample of strengths and challenges identified in this spring's reviews.

#### **Dental Assisting Certificate**

*Note: Included in the personation was a video, designed to present the program's strengths and areas for improvement. Please see:*

[http://kmc.kaltura.com/index.php/kmc/preview/partner\\_id/1301391/uiconf\\_id/13668182/entry\\_id/1\\_jf5trk96/embed/auto?](http://kmc.kaltura.com/index.php/kmc/preview/partner_id/1301391/uiconf_id/13668182/entry_id/1_jf5trk96/embed/auto?)

#### **Sample Strengths**

- Retention and graduation rates remain at 90%.
- Dental Assisting Program serves to provide well-prepared dental assistants for area dentists.

#### **Sample Challenges**

- Need for larger lab space.
- Need to develop plan to update equipment.

## Elementary Education

### Sample Strengths

- The Field Observation (75hours) gives students the real-world experience of teaching in a public school classroom.
- Student Demand – As evidenced by the data..., there is an increase in student demand for both tracts within the education program: elementary and middle/high school.

### Sample Challenges

- Creation of Technology Tools for Teachers Course.
- Full time Coordinator to do recruitment into program and licensure testing, oversee program and advise for transfer.

## General Studies

### Sample Strengths

- Has a flexible course structure that allows multiple pathways for students to graduate.
- Offers students the opportunity to explore different career options while also meeting some MassTransfer requirements.

### Sample Challenges

- Doesn't communicate clearly its purpose to the college at large and incoming students.
- By allowing so much choice to entering students, might encourage students to take more classes than they need to graduate.

## Liberal Arts

### Sample Strengths

- The Liberal Arts Program provides students with a broad array of skills and educational opportunities.
- The Liberal Arts Curriculum has:
  - Transferability to four year institutions
  - Flexibility through electives
  - Natural alignment to the six institutional learning outcomes

### Sample Challenges

- The Liberal Arts Mission forces the program to better celebrate the value of a Liberal Arts degree by providing students with CLEAR PATHWAYS to:
  - Employment
  - Bachelor degree

- Through the program review process, it has become glaringly evident that a sense of collegiality, connectedness, and belonging needs to be developed for all Liberal Arts students.

## Radiologic Technology

### Sample Strengths

- Program Faculty: a committed and caring faculty with a vast experience in their profession and in education.
- Overwhelmingly, applicants who are accepted to the program persist academically. When they do exit the program early, it is generally for non-academic reasons.

### Sample Challenges

- ... Improve Academic Support Services - Once students are in the Program and are struggling to keep up or retain information, we should have Radiography based tutors identified through Academic Support Services that can be provided to assist.
- Need for new technology of Digital Radiography in the X-ray laboratory.

## Scheduled for 2014

Reviews scheduled for completion in spring 2014 include:

Business Transfer – Pat Morrow

Laboratory Science – Marguerite White

Liberal Arts: Biology Option – Ken Thomas

Liberal Arts: Philosophy Option – Meredith Gunning

Liberal Arts: Theater Option – Susan Sanders

Paramedic (EMT-P) Technology Degree – Ralph Wade

Paramedic (EMT-P) Technology Certificate – Ralph Wade

***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

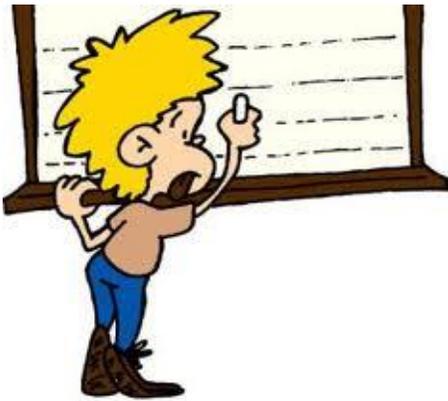
## Institutional Assessment of Core Academic Skills

NECC's has six Core Academic Skills:

### WRITTEN COMMUNICATION



### ORAL COMMUNICATION



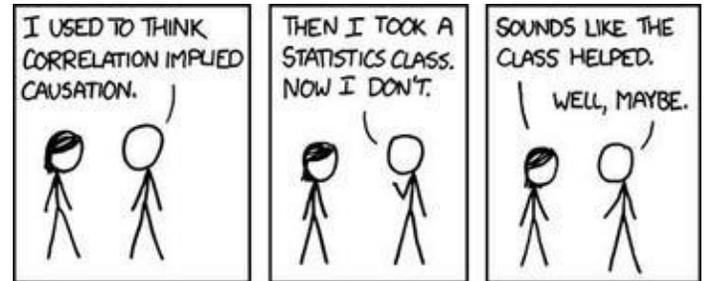
### GLOBAL AWARENESS



### INFORMATION LITERACY



### QUANTITATIVE REASONING



### SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



Institutional assessment focuses on these six core skills, with one or two being selected for assessment each year.

Members of the HOAP (Help for Outcomes Assessment Plans) Committee assist in the planning for this effort. Members in AY 2012-13 were:

**Judy Ciampi** – Coordinator, Paralegal Studies Program

**Nancy Garcia** – Assistant Dean, Health Division

**Kerin Hamidiani** – Coordinator, Dental Assisting Program

**Rick Lizotte** – Professor, Department of Academic Preparation

**Gail Stuart** – Coordinator of Library Reference Services

**Suzanne VanWert** – Professor, English Department

Results of the past three institutional assessment projects - focused on **Written Communication, Global Awareness/ Quantitative Reasoning and Information Literacy** – can be found at: <http://facstaff.necc.mass.edu/faculty-resources/program-review-outcomes-assessment/institutional/>.

## Spring 2013 assessment of Quantitative Reasoning

On May 31, using the AAC&U Quantitative Literacy VALUE rubric, three faculty rated the 31 **Quantitative Reasoning** student products collected from NECC faculty this spring. The raters were:

**Lori Heymans**, Professor of Mathematics  
**Patricia Machado**, Associate Professor of Economics  
**Habib Maagoul**, Associate Professor of Mathematics

After the scoring, raters were asked to provide feedback about the session. Comments offered include:

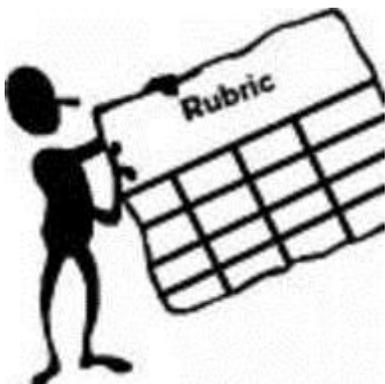
*Scoring sessions are an excellent form of staff development. The scorers (if they have the right mindset) have the opportunity to learn so much from the rubrics, from the variety of assignments offered from different disciplines, and from the discussion/feedback from their colleagues. Once the scoring session is over, it is a chance to look back on your practice as an educator and re-assess what works well and what could be improved in your classroom instruction and assignments. This provides an excellent opportunity to partner with professional development activities in the future at NECC.*

*The rubric is the key for good project/rating; we should provide some training / workshop for faculty interested.*

*(Recommend) Faculty workshops on using the rubrics - normalizing sessions.*

Raters also recommended that, in the future, answer keys or perhaps even model student responses should accompany the instructors' assignments and student products.

A complete report will be available in late summer.



## VALUE Rubrics and NECC's Core Academic Skills

The AAC&U VALUE rubrics are used as written at NECC for the institutional level assessment of Written Communication, Quantitative Literacy (Reasoning), and Information Literacy, and likely also Oral Communication. Because the AAC&U had not developed rubrics to directly assess Global Awareness, Science, and Technology, rubrics were developed by NECC faculty, using parts of a number of the existing VALUE rubrics.

The rubrics in place to assess NECC's Core Skills are the basis for the learning outcomes included on the Core Academic Skills Intensive Course applications. In this way, a relationship is established between learning outcomes for courses and the tools (rubrics) that will be used in institutional assessment work to evaluate students' products.

Further, the adoption of VALUE rubric criteria will facilitate NECC's participation in the DHE's **system-level learning outcomes assessment**, in which the VALUE rubrics will be used to evaluate collected student work. (See Vision Project discussion below.) One goal of the DHE project is to have in place a common assessment tool to apply across all Massachusetts colleges to enable aggregation. The VALUE rubrics have promise as such a tool.

## CORE ACADEMIC SKILLS

### Where We Stand

NECC's **goal for the fall of 2014 is to have in each degree program at least one course intensive in each of the six Core Academic Skills. As of March 2013, 111 courses have been approved as intensive** in one or more of these skills, with some programs now meeting the goal.

### Activities in AY 12-13

In AY 2012-13, with the assistance of resources provided by a **DHE Performance Incentive Fund (PIF) grant, five faculty workshops were held, with the overall goal of increasing the number of core skills intensive courses.**

The workshops were designed to assist faculty in **developing intensive courses or infusing classes with core skills** through creating skills-related

teaching modules and assignments, and becoming more familiar with the rubrics criteria. “Coaches” facilitated the workshops, and also met with faculty outside of the workshops to provide guidance and assistance. The Core Skills Coaches are:

Global Awareness – Kristi Arford

Information Literacy – Gail Stuart and Ann Grandmason

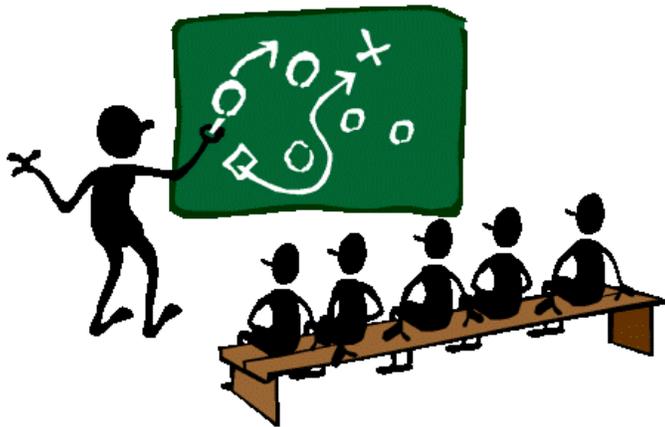
Quantitative Reasoning – Lori Heymans

Oral Communication – Linda Desjardins

Science – Ken Thomas

Technology – Paul Chanley

Written Communication – Elle Yarborough



Final May and mid-June workshops are specifically focused on **assisting faculty in developing intensive courses and completing related applications**. In order for processing to be complete in time for fall 2014 course offerings, **applications for intensive course status must be received by September 2013**. Applications can be found at:

<http://facstaff.necc.mass.edu/faculty-resources/program-review-outcomes-assessment/core-academic-skills/intensivecourse-applications/>

For general information on the Core Skill Intensive Course Initiative and the PIF activities, see:

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

## MASS DHE VISION PROJECT

One focus of the **Massachusetts Department of Higher Education’s Vision Project** is **system-wide and campus-level assessment of student learning**.

### Spring 2013 Pilot Study

In the summer of 2012, the DHE formed the **Mass Team and Task Force**, charged with developing and testing a process for state-wide outcomes assessment.

A **pilot study** conducted in the spring at 7 colleges focused on collecting student products to evaluate using AAC&U’s **Critical Thinking, Quantitative Literacy, or Written Communication VALUE** rubrics. Fifty-nine products collected at NECC were forwarded to the state for combining with products from the other campuses. A team of faculty from across the state, including NECC’s **Patricia Machado** and **Melissa Juchniewicz**, then rated the products.

A summary report, prepared by the Mass Team, included recommendations for moving forward. The report is now under review by the DHE.

## AMCOA

The **AMCOA (Advancing a Massachusetts Culture of Assessment)** team consists of assessment leaders from Massachusetts public undergraduate campuses. In AY 2012-13, two conferences were held, both with NECC’s representation.

### OCTOBER 2012 - QUANTITATIVE REASONING: LOOKING BEYOND THE NUMBERS

Session: *Incorporating Quantitative Reasoning in Your Course: Examples from Across Disciplines*

**Presenters:**

**Maria Carles**, Associate Professor of Natural Sciences

**Euthemia Gilman**, Coordinator and Adjunct Faculty, Elementary and Middle High School Education Programs

**Patricia Machado**, Associate Professor of Economics, Program Coordinator for Liberal Arts

**Rory Putnam**, Assistant Professor, Clinical and EMT Basic Program Coordinator, EMS/Paramedic Program Clinical Coordinator

### FEBRUARY 2013 – ASSESSING CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING USING THE VALUE RUBRICS: DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE

Conference Co-Chairs:

**Judy Turcotte**, Director of Planning and Assessment, Holyoke Community College

**Ellen Wentland**, Associate Dean-Academic and Institutional Effectiveness, Northern Essex Community College

Attendees from NECC at the all-day scoring sessions included **Paul Saint-Amand**, **Steve Slaner**, and **Suzanne VanWert**