PARC Debuts Assessment Newsletter

In an effort to better support the WNC community in its assessment and program review efforts, WNC’s Program Assessment and Review Committee (PARC) is launching a new bimonthly publication with this issue of *Program Assessment & Review News*. Readers will learn about: upcoming workshops and conferences; program assessment and review activities and best practices; and college-wide surveys and how they are used to improve institutional effectiveness.

You are encouraged to contact the members of PARC with your newsletter ideas and feedback.

January Assessment Workshop

PARC will conduct a hands-on assessment workshop in Cedar 331 (the main computer lab on the Carson campus) from 9:30 until noon Tuesday, January 13. The greater part of the workshop will focus on the use of technology in performing outcomes-based assessment. After the presentations, participants will have the opportunity to put new skills to use during guided practice.

This workshop is intended for teaching faculty with or without prior experience using the assessment technologies that will be discussed. Once instructors understand how to use these powerful tools and how their use can benefit the students, instructors may want to turn their face-to-face classes into Web-enhanced classes. Presenters will show participants how to do that, too. The workshop will address the following topics:

- **How** to use the assessment tools within Blackboard and Turnitin for Web-based or Web-enhanced classes. Blackboard CE6 is the course management system used for online instruction at WNC, and Turnitin is a Web-based tool for managing writing assignments. Turnitin offers originality-checking, peer-review and rubric-based grading capabilities.

- **How** to use the online Roster to request Web-enhancement of a class.

- **How** to set up basic content and tools (Discussion, Mail and Learning Modules) for a Web-enhanced class.

- **How** to help students meet the challenges of logging into their Web-enhanced or Web-based classes and find their way around.

- **How** to use student course evaluations, especially optional Q. 15, to gather assessment data.

Dates to Remember:

- **Month of January**
  - Completed Action Plans from 2007-2008 Program Reviews due to PARC chair

- **January 13**
  - PARC Assessment Workshop

- **Month of February**
  - Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory implementation

- **February 6**
  - 2009 NNAC at UNR

- **May 15**
  - 2008-2009 Program Review Reports due

- **May 15**
  - 2008-2009 Assessment Reports/2009-2010 Assessment Plans due
2009 NNAC AT UNR

UNR’s 7th Annual Northern Nevada Assessment Conference is tentatively scheduled for Friday, Feb. 6, 2009.

The opening plenary, roundtable discussions and presentations will interest faculty and staff working in both administrative and academic departments. The conference is still in the planning stages but will likely address the following topics:

- Recruitment, Retention and Completion: Supporting Student Success in Challenging Times (opening plenary).
- Using Assessment Results: Organization, Analysis, Evaluation, Program Implications.
- Improving Writing Across the Curriculum.
- Supporting Student Group Work.
- Student Services: Supporting Student Success.

At last year’s conference, presenters and participants represented GBC, NSC, TMCC, UNLV, UNR and WNC.

There is no cost for individuals to attend, but WNC will contribute $500 toward conference costs.

Lunch will be provided for those who register by Feb. 3.

Online Registration Form

PROGRAM REVIEW PROGRESS REPORT

Last fall, members of PARC gave feedback to the three academic (AA Musical Theatre, AS Chemistry and AS Mathematics) and four administrative (Admissions & Records, Bookstore, Lifted Café and Human Resources) Program Review Teams that completed reviews in 2008.

Members of PARC took the opportunity to express appreciation of the considerable hard work and thoughtfulness that went into the program reviews, and PARC members heard valuable feedback from the Program Review Teams about how the process could be improved.

The 2008-2009 Program Review Teams are using slightly revised self-study report templates and streamlined guidelines that were designed to clarify and sometimes simplify the process. Likewise, all academic and administrative programs are using updated assessment plan and report templates that should better guide teams through the annual assessment process.

Starting with the 2007-2008 program reviews, academic program review summaries that must be submitted every year to the Board of Regents will also be publicly accessible from the Institutional Research Web pages.

As we begin the spring semester, this is where the 2008-2009 teams should be in the program review process:

Academic:
- Curriculum review is either completed or scheduled.
- Teams are analyzing Summary Data Sheets and Course Scheduling/Enrollment History reports received from Institutional Research.

Administrative:
- Exit interviews and site visits should be scheduled.

2008-2009

ACADEMIC
- AA-CRJ
- AASDTA
- AASDTM
- AASECE
- AASLEA
- CP-EC
- CP-LEA

GENERAL EDUCATION

ADMINISTRATIVE
- Child Development Center
- Controller
- Development & External Affairs
- Facilities
- Financial Assistance
- Institutional Research
- Public Safety
Faculty and staff review and assess programs at WNC in order to ensure that these programs are contributing to student growth, development, and overall institutional effectiveness.

While the performance of ongoing assessment and program review is required in order to meet the eligibility requirements of our accrediting authority (the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities), the student-oriented faculty and staff at WNC recognize that the benefits go far beyond maintaining accreditation. The practice and culture of program assessment focuses educators on program goals and affords them a holistic view of those programs—a view educators must have in order to offer the best possible learning experiences to students, including the acquisition of skills, the retention of knowledge, and the development of values necessary to succeed in their personal, professional and civic lives.

The assessment coordinator in Institutional Research works with members of the Program Assessment and Review Committee (PARC) to facilitate annual assessment projects and five-year program reviews conducted by faculty and staff of all college programs, including degree- or certificate-granting academic programs and administrative programs.

In February, the Office of Institutional Research will implement the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory in order to collect data to support the strategic planning process. Around 85 classes from the Carson, Douglas, Fallon and Web campuses will be randomly selected to create a representative sample of approximate 1,500 students. After WNC’s first implementation of this survey in 2007, a work group comprised of some members of the Strategic Planning for Institutional Effectiveness (SPFIE) committee analyzed survey results in terms of the college’s strategic planning goals. The group also analyzed results by campus in order to identify additional challenges not apparent when viewing results for the college as a whole.

Results from 2007 and 2009 will be compared in order to measure the effectiveness of actions taken in response to the 2007 results. The 2007 results can be found on the Institutional Research Web pages under “Surveys.”