

Assessment Newsletter

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Special points of interest:

- NU establishes Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee of Faculty Senate.
- NU uses and adapts AAC&U VALUE rubrics.
- Quality does matter at NU: QM certification.
- MSCHE Standard 14 reviewed.

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Neumann Establishes Learning Outcomes Assessment Faculty Senate Committee

At the beginning of the 2012-13 academic year, the Faculty Senate of Neumann University approved Learning Outcomes Assessment as a standing committee (LOAC). The first committee members included the members of the LOA Task Force as well as additional members to continue the work of assessment of learning. Co-chairs of the LOAC include Tammy Feil and Ryan Savitz. Other committee members include Tiffeny Atkins, Jil Donnelly, Karen May, Ed Milliner, Marisa Rauscher, and Albert Tay. Sr. Janet Thiel serves as ex-officio.

The LOAC established its mission as follows: The

Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (LOAC) of the Faculty Senate strives to ensure that all Neumann University academic programs utilize high quality student learning outcomes assessment processes. This is done through the provision of assessment resources and education to all faculty, as well as through individual consultation with each academic program. The LOAC will support and encourage organized, systematized, and sustained improvement in academic programs using assessment data.

The LOAC welcomes your input and feedback as they live out their stated

mission to support student learning at Neumann.



Neumann Adapts and Adopts AAC&U VALUE Rubrics

Looking for a rubric for written assignments, oral presentations, or research assignments? Look no further than Neumann's own website under the [Teaching and Learning Support](#) for Faculty and Staff.

New this year is an expanded rubric for information literacy. The oral presentation rubric has been revised to include the principles of Erik Palmer's *Well Spoken*. Rubrics for written assignments, research assignments, and

literature papers are also updated. As the university focuses on the communication learning outcome of its new NU Core Experience, the use of these rubrics across the curriculum will enable all students to achieve the outcome of effective communication.

Neumann Student Profile: Class of 2016



What can one say about the Class of 2016? The students comprise the largest freshmen class ever: 573 to be exact! More students than ever are attracted to the honors program: 29 at last count! They are better prepared in Math: the Pre-calculus classes have enrolled 60 students this fall. The four highest enrollment for intended majors is Nursing (85), Biology or Bio/CLS (61), Criminal Justice (51), and

Psychology (43). In addition, almost 120 of the class of 2016 are undecided about their major.

At the same time, 63% of the incoming class require one or more developmental courses. In the freshman class, 40.6% of the students are enrolled in ENG 100 College Reading. MATH 092 Developmental Algebra enrolls 36% of the freshmen class, and ENG 094 captures 28.3 % of the

class.

While there are many more demographic categories to describe this class, engagement in the learning process requires both motivation and active learning. Active learning will entice even the most hesitant learner to engage with the course content. For those students without a defined major, it may be one of the required courses that sparks a student's interest

ETS Testing: Growth over Time

During fall 2012, Neumann University will administer the ETS Proficiency Profile test to senior year students enrolled in senior seminar courses and to the freshmen class at the end of the fall semester. The class of 2016 will be the fourth class to be assessed with this measure of general college learning. Intermediate testing with the ETS

test is administered during the spring semester to those students enrolled in the 102 level of foreign language core requirement. Data thus far shows that Neumann students are making gains in proficiency levels of critical thinking, math, reading, and writing. Faculty are asked to become familiar with the proficiency levels address by this

test and to consider skill development within their curricular goals. While showing gains, Neumann students fall below their peers from other universities who take the same test.

For additional information on the competencies of the ETS Proficiency profile go to the [ETS website](#).

“Data thus far shows that Neumann students are making gains in proficiency levels of critical thinking, math, reading, and writing.”

-ETS Proficiency Profile Results

Faculty Development on NU Learn

BlackBoard Learn as our new Learning Management System (LMS) requires all of us to re-tool and re-learn. To assist with the process of becoming more familiar with this new system while saving face with use of the system for your students, the Faculty Development course is now migrated to BlackBoard

Learn. Here, you will not only find helpful resources for teaching and learning, but you will have a safe place to explore the new LMS.

Feel free to browse the course content and enter into discussion with your colleagues. If you have any suggestions for the site just email [Sr. Janet](#),

your instructor!

Some topics of interest include: Key documents that underpin our new core, all assessment workshop materials and presentations, best practices in inclusive learning and teaching, and training to use the IDEA course evaluation instrument. Enjoy!

Program Assessment at Neumann

Last spring, many of Neumann's academic programs developed and initialized program assessment aligned with program learning outcomes. So, what is next?

First, if this process caused your discipline to substantively change program learning outcomes, your plan needs to change accordingly. Next, review the timeline of the plan. Not all learning outcomes need to be as-

sessed each year. Decide on a three year cycle of assessment of the stated learning outcomes. Submit revised plans to the office of the AVPAA by October 1. These plans will then be directed to the LOAC.

Execute this year's cycle of assessment as outlined. The LOAC will ask for a progress report by the end of the fall semester. If additional support is needed the LOAC will

be your advocates. Annually, at the end of the academic year, each academic program will submit a report of assessment results, the use of results, and resultant program changes again to the office of the AVPAA so that these can be directed to the LOAC.

Moving forward, academic program assessment will be a key component of program evaluation at Neumann.



Communication is Key

With the initiation of the Neumann University Core Experience (NUCE) comes the start of the NUCE assessment plan. The focus of the AY 12-13 plan is the learning outcome of Communication. Communication assessment at the upper level has been identified by each Major. In addition, samples of student work will be selected from the

ENG 102, HNR 112, and LSENG 190 courses as lower level assessment.

The writing workgroup has developed an effective assessment tool and process that will help direct this area of assessment. Using artifacts from the same student in ENG 101 and ENG 102, Gail Corso and colleagues have tested Neumann's adaptation of the AAC&U

VALUE rubrics on Written Communication and Inquiry and Analysis with samples of student work. Students at the end of ENG 102 scored See [Dr. Corso](#) for "the rest of the story"!

Quality Does Matter!

Congratulations to Neumann's Quality Matters trained peer reviewers: [Alison Green](#), [William Hamilton](#), [Wendy Ostendorf](#), [Andrea Pent](#), and [Theresa Pietsch](#). Soon to join their ranks is John Mizzoni. Theresa Pietsch is now training to be a Master Reviewer. Each of the above mentioned fac-

ulty will be conducting an internal review on a course taught by the reviewers as well as the following CAPS courses: LSENG 190 and LSINT 490. This is the first step of the process to have an online or hybrid course eligible for QM certification.

Courses are evaluated

according to the newly revised [QM rubric](#). This rubric looks at all features of online or hybrid courses that are considered as best practice.

Want to be involved in this initiative at Neumann? Contact any of the above mentioned faculty members or [Sr. Janet Thiel](#).

"Beyond first year composition, faculty may need direction on how and when to introduce a range of writing intensive assignments."

-NU Writing Report 2010-2012

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Catholic Education in the
Franciscan Tradition

Neumann University, founded and sponsored by the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, is a Catholic co-educational institution of higher education in the Franciscan tradition. As such, the University promotes the following core values consistent with its identity and mission: Reverence, Integrity, Service, Excellence, and Stewardship (summarized campus wide using the acronym RISES).

Neumann University focuses on learning in the liberal-arts as a basis for professional and career preparation, readiness for graduate school, and preparation for socially responsible living. The University's physical campus is located in Aston, PA.

www.neumann.edu

MSCHE Characteristics of Excellence: Standard 14

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals. (MSCHE, Standard 14)

Assessment of student learning is the third step in a four step process. First, clearly articulated key learning outcomes expressed in observable terms are written for courses, programs, and other undergraduate learning experiences. Second, design of courses or experiences that

provide intentional opportunities for students to achieve the above learning outcomes is expected. Third, the university is to assess student achievement of its learning outcomes. Finally, teaching and learning should be improved based upon the results of assessment.

Direct evidence gathered by Neumann University to demonstrate student learning include the ETS Proficiency Profile test administration at the beginning, midpoint, and during the student's senior year to determine student progress in general college education, the assessment of student work

products in senior seminar classes or other appropriate upper class courses, and the results of the administration of the ETS Major Field Test in some discipline areas.

Indirect evidence of student achievement of Neumann's learning outcomes is found in the results of the NSSE survey, the Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory survey, and the Graduate Mission Survey, and program specific surveys.

All of the above data is analyzed for learning's sake!

