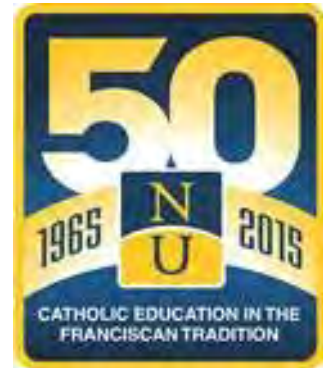


# Assessment Newsletter



## Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

### About SoTL

SoTL as an evidence-based way for continuous improvement of teaching and learning is not a passing fad in research or pedagogy. It is a legitimate form of research that is creating a “sustained culture of inquiry about teaching and learning” (Maki) and an increased awareness of the nature, role and potential of SoTL for improved learning.

Teaching can always become more effective and learning more significant and enduring. Growth in students and their learning is the life-juice of being a teacher. SoTL can stimulate those juices to flow in innovative, effective, and reflective ways.

SoTL is not only the engagement by individuals in vigorous research on teaching and making that research public in building a body of knowledge, but also an attitude and a way of thinking about teaching. SoTL emphasizes that teaching is serious intellectual activity that can be both deeply personal and highly collegial. SoTL, as understood in an expansive sense, is perhaps the best way to improve teaching for student understanding. That is a lofty claim, yet one not only possible, but when done well, probable.

Find out more at <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/ce/conferences/sotlcommons/> and <http://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/ij-sotl/>

## Lunch and Learn: Survey Says...

Neumann University will continue to offer Faculty Development sessions in the Lunch and Learn format for Academic Year 2014-15. A separate flyer and registration will be sent to faculty via email.

To plan for the upcoming year, Sr. Patricia Hutchison, OSF, EdD, Director of the NIFS and Core, along with Scott Beadenkopf, ITR—Academic Computing, James Kain, Chair of the Faculty Development Committee of Faculty Senate, and Sr. Janet Thiel, OSF, PhD, Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs met in June. Lunch and Learn sessions will include topics from: NU Core; Values Integration; Teaching, Assessment, and Learning; Faculty selected showcase topics; and, Academic Computing. Faculty were sent a separate newsletter with topics, times, and dates for the fall semester.

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### Special points of interest

- Mentor Commons—see page 3
- MSCHE 16: Neumann’s 10-year Self-Study underway!
- Complete the Assessment Cycle—begin again!



## LOAC Update

Faculty Senate Policy Committee received a proposed policy on assessment of student learning from the LOAC during fall 2013. Action on this policy is due fall 2014. The policy and its introduction are listed below.

**Introduction:** § Assessment of student learning at Neumann University occurs at the course level, program level, and institutional level. It is a process of continuous improvement based on data, analysis, research, and observation. The goal of academic assessment is to validate learning expectations as expressed in program learning outcomes, course objectives, and university-wide goals. Assessment is part of an integrative and collaborative learning process. Learning goals are integrated among university-wide, program, and course learning outcomes. Courses are mapped into a sequence that supports program outcomes. Data about learning becomes

part of academic research. Plans to improve learning and instruction are made based upon empirical evidence, understanding of the student learner, and best practices.

**Proposed Policy:** § Assessment of student learning in major programs at Neumann University is part of an annual, reportable cycle that is reviewed by the Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee of the Faculty Senate and the University's Assessment Officer. As a continuous process of improvement shared by the entire Neumann community, the topic of assessment of student learning and its cycle of continuous improvement is integrated into the topics addressed at faculty, Division, and program meetings on a regular basis. Neumann University maintains an Assessment Handbook available on the Assessment page of the University website.

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*“The only real evidence of life is growth.” \_ John Newman*

### MSCHE Standard 14:

#### Assessment of Student Learning

*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.*

## Program Assessment

Program Assessment Reports were due to the Office of the Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs by June 1. Upon receipt, the LOAC reviewed the reports at their meeting on June 2. The members of the LOAC will meet with the assessment liaisons in early fall to review the results as found in the submitted reports. Program assessment reports are found on SharePoint for internal viewing.

Some of the actions undertaken by programs as a result of assessment of student learning during AY 2013-14 are outlined below.

**Biology Program:** Introduce technical reading throughout the curriculum to better prepare students to read technical writing and to conduct experiments and report as such.

**Communication and Media Arts:** Capstone projects will include video, radio, and PR to assess a broader scope of students' course experiences.

**Criminal Justice:** Judicial Processes will become a required course (currently an elective) as a result of the scores on the Major Field Test (MFT) in this area of competency.

**EdD Education:** EDU 799 course changed to assist students in development of a dissertation proposal. This will allow the students an additional semester to meet dissertation requirements.

**MS Pastoral Counselling:** PCC 740 course will be changed to a pre-clinical course as a result of assessment data.



*Inside or outside the classroom, learning happens at NU!*

## NU and IDEA Course Evaluation System

At the May meeting of the Faculty Senate, IDEA was affirmed as the course evaluation system for Neumann University. In addition, the All Divisions Council (ADC) agreed to use the form suggested by IDEA to evaluate reports generated by the identification of Essential and Important Objectives and student evaluation of their learning experiences in courses. The form aggregates data over several courses and guides the instructor into the development of an action plan based on researched strategies aligned with their indicated objectives. Faculty will be asked to report their action plan to the office of the AVPAA through a Survey Monkey form, and to share their plan with their division dean.

For Spring 2014, the following table gives the results of the IDEA evaluation system in place within the divisions.

Number of Classes Included: Diagnostic Form 352      Short Form 8      Total 360

Response Rate: Classes below 65% Response Rate 89      Average Response Rate 77%

Percent of Classes at or Above the IDEA Database Average	Raw Score	Adjusted Score
Progress on Relevant Objectives	77%	64%
Excellent Teacher	68%	57%
Excellent Course	69%	50%
Overall Rating	75%	57%

### Mentor Commons

Magna 20 Minute Mentors answer your questions about teaching. Our highly respected presenters give you the "here's how" advice that you can start using right away. Each session lasts for just 20 minutes — long enough to deliver actionable insights, but short enough to fit anyone's schedule. Watch a sample of the 20 Minute Mentor program [How Do I Create a Climate for Learning in My Classroom? »](#)

### Neumann subscribes to Mentor Commons.

To access these trainings, visit

[www.mentorcommons.com](http://www.mentorcommons.com) and create an account. Use activation code: **NEUM7PA2**

Report your professional development using Mentor Commons. Use the following link: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ODZnA0jWv-4AB-T0giLtEMMDT4QIVIKKs871EYYS6ykc/viewform?usp=send\\_form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ODZnA0jWv-4AB-T0giLtEMMDT4QIVIKKs871EYYS6ykc/viewform?usp=send_form)

## MSCHE Report

On June 27, 2014 Neumann University received word from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) that its progress report submitted on April 1, 2014 was accepted. Neumann's next evaluation visit is scheduled for 2015-16, which will be the decennial review.

Co-chairs of the Steering Committee for the 2016 Decennial Self-Study Report are Drs. Marisa Rauscher and Robert Post. The Steering Committee members have been meeting periodically during the 2013-14 academic year to develop guiding questions and to gather documents which give evidence of compliance with the MSCHE 14 Standards of Excellence. The workgroups formed by the Steering committee consist of all members of the Neumann community: administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

## NU Core Assessment

During the academic year of 2013-14, the NU Core Experience assessed its outcomes of Conscience and Contemplation. This assessment was completed over the summer 2014. Results will be shared in the fall at Lunch and Learn sessions.

Direct measures used to assess competency in Conscience included campus reports of security violations, student incidents requiring judicial review, and academic reports of plagiarism. Indirect measures included questions from NU Mission surveys, NSSE, NSSE Catholic Cohort, and Noel-Levitz mission questions, relevant questions from the NU Student Coop Employer Evaluation, evaluation of student exercise of responsibility in nursing clinical placements and student teaching, student responses to interventions following referrals and student incidents.

In addition, a convenience sample of surveys

completed by students who engaged in teamwork over several weeks in three academic courses and in the Institute for Student Leadership, and student and community responses to student growth in ISL were used to assess Conscience.

Direct measures used to assess competency in Contemplation included written work products from first year students enrolled in Theology 104 and Honors 105, junior or senior level students enrolled in upper division theology courses and a biology course, CAPS division students enrolled in LSREL 200, and a review of the evaluations of the Capstone Reflections from 28 graduating seniors in the Institute for Student Leadership.

Indirect measures of competency in Contemplation involved an analysis of NSSE data, NU alumni survey questions, and NU Mission survey questions, using the most recent data.

## Writing Program Assessment

The Writing Program conducted several analyses to assess performance by students in their fall 2013 ENG 101 reflective writing for the portfolio. These results were compared to those from fall 2012 assessment of portfolio reflections for English 101. In addition, they compared student performance in the compressed ENG 094/ENG 101 course to those students enrolled in ENG 101 as a stand alone course.

Overall, students' performance in writing in fall 2013 sections of English 101 shows improvement in statistically-significant ways for each feature of writing on portfolio reflections when results are compared to those from fall 2012. In addition, the program of compressed courses yielded positive results. The two models of Accelerated Delivery of first-year writing worked really well and helped the underdeveloped students to catch up with regular students.

## MSCHE 2016: Decennial Report

Accreditation is viewed as a continuing status which, once conferred, is not removed except for cause, and then only with due process. To guide candidate and member institutions as they strive for excellence, and to ensure that they continue to meet the criteria for eligibility and membership in the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the Commission conducts periodic evaluation of all institutions.

The Commission maintains a 10-year cycle of review alternating between self-study and on-site evaluation and a Periodic Review Report. Ideally, institutional self-study should be an integral and ongoing activity on every campus, only incidentally related to calendars and accreditation, but constantly keyed to the natural relationship among self-study, assessment, and educational planning.

Neumann is now preparing its self-study for 2016. See side bar for additional details.

## NU Institutional Goals

Always and everywhere, Neumann University strives to:

- *Demonstrate a firm commitment to the Catholic Franciscan tradition.*
- *Nurture a campus community which lives the values of Reverence, Integrity, Service, Excellence and Stewardship.*
- *Challenge its students to achieve personal, academic, and professional excellence.*

Approved by the NU BOT June, 2014.



*“ The best teachers help students learn in ways that make a sustained, substantial, and positive influence on how students think, act, and feel.”*

*–Bain, K. 2004. What the Best College Teachers Do.*

## NU Graduate Programs Learning Outcomes

During the 2013-24 academic year, Neumann’s Graduate Council, under the direction of Dr. Len DiPaul, developed Graduate Program Learning Outcomes for Neumann University. After reviewing several models, the members decided to use the 5 Learning Outcomes (5 C’s) of the Neumann Core Experience, but to reframe these to fit Neumann’s Graduate Programs.

Active engagement in the Graduate Programs offered by Neumann University provides Neumann University graduate students the opportunity to achieve the following learning outcomes.

**Comprehension: Think critically, creatively, and analytically**

Demonstrate knowledge of materials required for competence in field of study; Analyze and solve complex problems; demonstrate quantitative reasoning and scientific literacy; and demonstrate expertise in field of study through competent application

**Contemplation: Engage in meaningful reflection**

Apply the principles and values of the Catholic Franciscan tradition to personal, professional, and societal questions and issues; engage in self-

reflection and reflective practice relevant to the field of study; embrace life-long learning as a consequence of meaningful self-reflection.

**Conscience: To act ethically and responsibly**

Manifest social and ethical responsibility, stewardship, and servant leadership.

**Compassion: As stewards of God’s universe respect all creation**

Model the highest degree of ethical, professional and academic behavior; demonstrate leadership through interactions that promote justice and foster right relations; consider how choices and actions impact the global community and extend oneself to outreach and service; integrate the knowledge of the discipline with the principles and tenets of the Catholic Franciscan intellectual tradition [CFIT].

**Communication: Communicate Effectively**

Demonstrate proficiency in gathering data/ research material/evidence; demonstrate proficiency in presenting findings in a logical, methodical, systematic argument.

## NEUMANN’S LEARNING OUTCOMES ( 5 C’S )

*COMPREHENSION*

*CONTEMPLATION*

*CONSCIENCE*

*COMPASSION*

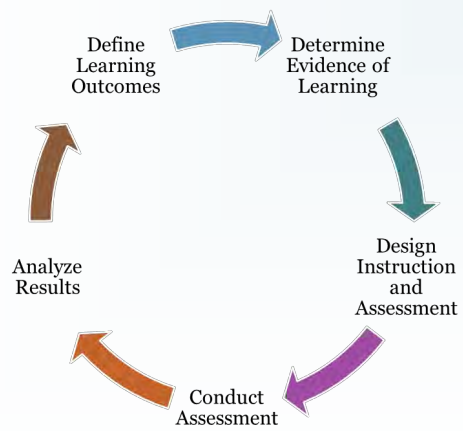
*COMMUNICATION*



## Neumann University

Founded and sponsored by the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Neumann is a private, Catholic, co-educational University in the Franciscan tradition, which emphasizes respect for individuals, concern for the environment, and social responsibility. The University offers undergraduate degrees in a broad variety of subjects, three doctoral programs, six master's degree programs, and an accelerated bachelor's degree program for adults.

## Closing the Assessment Loop: Begin Again!



## Neumann University

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