

Will Another National Ranking Be on the Horizon?

WWCC administers surveys to students in selected courses every other year using "The Community College Student Report" survey instrument produced by the **Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)**. The survey will be conducted in March 2011 in WWCC classes. Faculty, please excuse the inconvenience. Some very important data is collected through this process!

CCSSE's survey instrument provides information on **student engagement, a key indicator of learning and the quality of community colleges**. The survey asks questions that assess institutional practices and student behaviors that are correlated with student learning and student retention. The CCSSE survey asks students about their college experiences — how they spend their time; what they feel they have gained from their classes; how they assess their relationships



and interactions with faculty, counselors, and peers; what kinds of work they are chal-

lenged to do; how the college supports their learning; and so on.

WWCC employee Patty Pedersen chaired the NACADA Region 10 Conference Feb 28-Mar 2. Congratulations Patty!

NACADA is the National Academic Advising Association

Summer Registration Programs - Help Wanted!

Beginning in May, WWCC offers small, personalized Registration Programs for new students and their families. This summer, 14 Registration Programs will be offered to help orient students to WWCC and plan fall schedules. Families attend a separate workshop with opportunities to ask financial aid and student adjustment questions. Sessions are about 3 hours with a meal provided for staff between the afternoon and evening programs. Stipends are provided for programs between June 7 and August 8 (\$100 per program for faculty and \$100 for professional staff who help at evening programs). Please let Coordinator of Academic Advising Rebecca Asplund know which dates work for your schedule. WWCC is committed to quality academic advising and its importance to student satisfaction and success, and your help is appreciated!

Registration Program Dates

May 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

May
Tues.....May 103pm

June 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

June
Tues.....June 71pm*
Tues.....June 76pm*
Wed.....June 151pm*
Wed.....June 156pm*
Thurs.....June 231pm*
Thurs.....June 236pm*

July 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

July
Tues.....July 12.....1pm*
Tues.....July 12.....6pm*
Wed.....July 27.....1pm*
Wed.....July 27.....6pm*

August 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

August
Mon.....August 81pm
Mon.....August 86pm
Mon.....August 221pm
Tues.....August 23
Kick-Off Day
Wed.....August 24
Classes Begin

*Free childcare is available at the WWCC Children's Center for the June and July 1pm Registration Programs. Advance reservation required. Call (307) 382-1827 or (800) 226-1181 ext. 1827 for more information.

*A Parent Session will be conducted in Spanish at this session.

Thanks to all the faculty and staff who participated in the Spring Advisor Training:

- Christine Radakovich
- Doug Bunn
- Heather Pristash
- Jenny Penland
- Jessica Clark
- Kelsie Keller
- Kristy McManus
- Lora Meredith
- Melinda Hickman
- Nathan Balsler
- Nicole Castillon
- Nicole Grove
- Patty Nieters
- Rocky Barney
- Stephen Schutten

**Learning Ideas:
Gallery Walk and Value Line**
<http://www.wvcc.wy.edu/facres>

**Western Wyoming
Community
College**

**Western in
Motion**

March 2011

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AQIP Action Projects

- Internal Communications
- Student Engagement
- Student Learning
- Course Scheduling

**Assessment Day
Tuesday, April 12**



President's Message

Dear Western,
#5 Guiding Principle . . . Adapting to Change Defines Our Future
In 2002, the employees of Western Wyoming Community College developed our amazing set of Guiding Principles. To say it succinctly, the Guiding Principles are SPOT ON . . . and today, we are challenged to respond to #5. As I look upon #5, it occurs to me that the most important word in the principle is 'adapting' rather than 'change.' How do we respond to change? The Greek philosopher Epictetus is credited with the quote "It's not what happens to you, but how you react to it that matters."

Despite our sincere desire to support Ken Fitschen in his pursuit of his new retirement adventure, his decision represents a huge change for this institution. As we seek to find the next person to attempt to fill Ken's shoes, we know that an absolute replacement is impossible. When I joined Western, I did not replace Dr. Tex Boggs, I simply followed behind in his footsteps. Our challenge is to find the best person possible to fit into this vital role in our College.
As we bring in candidates to interview for the Vice President for Student Learning position, we need your help. Please plan to attend the forums and provide feedback to the PSB (Professional Standards

Board). Your input is valuable and important.
Now, let's get back to #5. Benjamin Franklin said, "The only things certain in life are **death and taxes.**" By adding #5 to the Guiding Principles, you recognized the certainty of change as well. How will we respond? First, by hiring the best person to fill the job and second, by supporting that individual as they go through the tremendous learning curve to learn at least 62% of what Ken has learned in his years in this position.
Celebrating #5, and numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 as well,

Karla Leach

Scheduling Action Project by Bud Chew

The Scheduling Action Project Team wrapped up its first Action Project at the end of the Fall 2010 semester, concluding that Western needs to move toward a data-driven master scheduling system, overseen by a representative Scheduling Committee. The second of three Action Projects is underway this Spring, and has two

main goals. The first is to develop a timeline for the master scheduling process that will provide the semester-to-semester deadlines for schedule development. The second goal is to identify and disseminate the data that all academic programs will utilize in schedule development, in order to make informed decisions regarding

schedule changes. The Team will begin meeting with Divisions and Programs throughout the College community to explain its objectives for data utilization, and to begin partnering with them, in order to schedule classes in a more effective and collaborative manner.

Systems Portfolio-Status Update

As Western continues on its journey toward a culture committed to continuous quality improvement, the College is in the middle of the "next steps." As the four current Action Projects are moving forward guided by the College's Strategic Plan, the College has begun developing its first AQIP Systems Portfolio. This is much like a program review except on an institutional scale. The Systems Portfolio process is an opportunity for the College to report on its successes and challenges while determining its future direction.

Currently, the Process questions are well underway. The first open forums on Category 1 are scheduled for March 22 and 25. This will continue for each category until the end of May. The next step will be to answer the Results questions and the Improvement questions. A few categories will begin this summer with most finishing up through the Fall semester. The full draft will be complete by the end of December 2011. There will be a feedback period and, finally, Board of Trustee approval before submission in late May 2012.

As everyone is working feverishly to address and answer the questions, one fundamental concept should be kept in the forefront: **The Systems Portfolio belongs to WWCC and not HLC and AQIP.**

Systems Portfolio FAQs:

Do we have to do a Systems Portfolio?

Yes and we want to. This is our next step in the continuous quality improvement process and our continuing affirmation of accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission. WWCC chose this approach because it is self-directed and the College determines its priorities NOT HLC or AQIP.

Is this the "new" self-study?

No. It is true that the old self-study process has been eliminated and no longer suffice for accreditation purposes. However, the AQIP approach is focused on culture, processes, outcomes, and improvements. The Criteria for Accreditation is met not through just the Systems Portfolio, but rather by our continuing SELF-DIRECTION through the entire CQ/AQIP process including Action Projects, Strategy Forums, Systems Portfolio, Quality Check, and Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

When the Systems Portfolio is done, what happens next?

When the Systems Portfolio is finished, the College submits the document to HLC to be reviewed by a peer review team and the Accreditation Review Council. The College will receive substantial feedback in about 4 months on the areas in which the College is doing well and not so well. Unless there are noticeable accreditation issues or very serious strategic

issues, the College will be able to move forward in the next steps of continuous quality improvement.

Once we are done with the Systems Portfolio and receive feedback, do we get to stop until next time?

No. The whole purpose behind AQIP and the reason WWCC chose it is the focus on "continuous." The Systems Portfolio is updated at least annually. The decision of WHICH areas to work on is chosen by the College based on strategic priorities, fit, and efficiencies.

How often do we have to do a Systems Portfolio?

As stated previously, the Systems Portfolio is updated at least annually with the entire process scheduled to be revisited and completed every four years.

What happens to the Action Projects when we are working on the Systems Portfolio?

The Action Projects keep going. When projects are completed, they should be celebrated and closed with the new improvements in place. When it is time to address the next improvement area, a new action project should begin. The Action Project effort is ongoing and persistent. Examples are Computer Use Across the Curriculum, which was retired, and the current Scheduling Action Project, which is in full swing.

Are we really just doing this for HLC/AQIP for accreditation? Is this really just "busy" work?

It should not be just for HLC, nor should it be "busy" work. Part of all our collective job is to try to make sure that this is not the case. Everyone is already so busy that doing something that is busy work and seemingly without value only serves to lessen the importance of the work at hand. Continuous quality improvement must be more than a slogan—it must be about a unified voice on what and how the institution serves its stakeholders and how it intends to do so in the future. This should be about intentional self-direction and making improvements that position the College for the best strategic advantage. In a broader context, AQIP is the mechanism the College has chosen to hold itself accountable..

Watch for the open sessions and internet blogs on each of the categories. Your voice is important!
Category 1 open sessions are March 22 and 25!

New Professional Development Opportunities

MOUNTAIN STATES EMPLOYER COUNCIL:

The college recently became a member of Mountain States Employers Council. The membership with MSEC provides services relating to employment law, human resources, training and development, and salary and benefit survey resources. If you are interested in attending training for professional, managerial or leadership development, please visit the MSEC website at www.msec.org and review the seminar catalog under the training tab. There are a number of training seminars scheduled to be held in Casper this year; contact Human Resources for a complete list. We also intend to provide onsite training for supervisors and managers in the coming year.

Take the "Chronicle of Great Colleges to Work for" Survey 3/22-4/16

In 2010 Western was recognized as one of the great colleges to work for by the Chronicle of Higher Education. Western was recognized in two categories: compensation and benefits; and facilities, workspace and security. We will be participating again this year and will be expanding the survey pool to include paraprofessional employees. Please keep an eye out for the survey to be coming to your email boxes soon.

Innovative Teaching Forums—Senate "Brown Bags"

The faculty and professional Senate initiated "Innovative Teaching/Learning Forums" this semester. It is a concept that had been discussed in the Senate for several months before launching. The Senate felt strongly that this was to be a voluntary endeavor by both the faculty presenting and the attendees. Divisions called out to their members for volunteers to be presenters and the idea took hold. The Senate division representatives are taking responsibility to advertise the forums when done by a member of their division, decreasing the workload on any one Senator. Nish Ferrero worked with Kyle Rosetti to have our first sessions printed into a poster!

There have been four presentations by two divisions. Jerry Thomas started us off on January 27 with "Advantages of using Excel to apportion seats in the House of Representatives". Jerry describes the current process as one that is prescribed by law not constitution and not politically neutral. He provided the audience with his description of how Excel has transformed this labor-intensive project into a trivial problem.

In February David Metz provided faculty and students with easy to use tips on how to display math symbols and equations in a Word or Excel document using Word's Equation Editor. He followed up

two weeks later with an advanced version of the same. Dave's easy to use tips will be helpful to anyone who displays math symbols in Word programs.

On February 23, Rick Kempa performed a selection of his poems that described comics, conflicts, triumphs and tragedies in the classrooms, hallways, and offices to an excited audience of faculty, retired faculty, and students. As always, Rick was very entertaining and insightful. On March 7th and 8th, Ellen Ventura discussed active learning strategies that can be used easily in any classroom. According to an attendee: "**Ellen gave us two cooperative learning ideas—the Value Line and the Gallery Walk—that are designed to get students out of their chairs and moving around, learning with their feet as well as their minds. It was fun to**

practice them and I can't wait to try them out in class," and another: "Ellen did such a great job! These strategies are useful to anyone."

There are plans to continue these forums two-four times per month until graduation.

These forums are meeting the expectations of the Senate by being short (20-30 minutes) and informal. We are happy with the response from faculty, professionals, and staff who desire to present and to all who make a few minutes to attend. It is our hope to get the video tapings of these forums available to view by way of the intranet soon. If you have something - anything you would like to share with your peers - please let your Senate representative know!



Spring 2011 Survey Results—Writing and Reading Results

With several years of a downward trend in Writing and Reading skills among our students, the College has focused improvement in the classroom. The latest survey results show a persistent effort on the part of WWCC faculty members to impact change in this trend. Although it may take several years for graduating students to show the results of these efforts, keep up the good work. Curriculum-based writing assignments and content-specific active reading assignments are both tied to improvements in students' abilities to think critically about the course material.

WRITING

Faculty members increasingly report assigned writing within their curriculum.
76% incorporate informal writing assignments
90% incorporate formal writing assignments

83% incorporate research-based writing with source citation

"I love writing assignments. They allow me to show that I know what I learned without taking a quiz that may leave out much of what was covered." --anonymous student, spring

Faculty members incorporate scoring guides or rubrics to assist students with writing assignments.

88% use a scoring guide or rubric to evaluate student writing

83% have collaborated with others in their content areas to design scoring guides or rubrics

86% give the rubric to students ahead of time so that the student understands the expectations of the writing assignment

Students increasingly report assigned writing experiences in courses other

than English. (85% up from 77% two years ago).

READING

Faculty members increasingly encourage their students to use active reading techniques:

- 54% incorporate outlining
- 46% incorporate online discussion boards
- 39% incorporate previewing
- 37% incorporate a reader response log, journal, or notebook

"In all my classes my instructors have encouraged me to look over the material and then to start reading, it has helped me in all of my studies." --anonymous student,

For the past four semesters, approximately 72% of students who used the active reading strategies say they are helpful in their studies.