

The Week Formerly Known as In Service



The new symbol for "the week" (borrowed from Prince only sideways)

In the last five years, there have been great efforts to help make in-service more "palatable" for everyone. How does the College **balance** the need to share valuable information (both good and bad) prior to the beginning of the semester WITH the need to have staff time to prepare for the beginning of classes? The week of in-service is the only time that Administration, work groups, and special focus/project groups have to share information and promote initiatives with a "captive" audience. Nonetheless, all employee groups from custodians to Student Development Center to faculty are feverishly trying to prepare for the most important thing the College does:

STUDENT LEARNING.

This is truly a balancing act as demonstrated by the in-service employee feedback survey results. In the spirit of shared decision-making, this very dilemma was taken to both the Para-Professional Organization and to the College Senate.

The Para organization (thanks **Lori Paulson**) was able to better define their desires and needs. They have devised a plan to have each fall PRE-in-service with two separate days and times AND a spring focused workshop later in the semester around spring break. The Senate appointed a sub-committee to work on the creation the coming fall in-service week. The result is a newly designed week that is approximately 50% administrative meetings/sessions and 50% office hours. The group struggled with a new name, but ultimately knew that everyone would just

call it "in-service" anyway. Jerry Thomas likened it to "the artist formerly known as Prince." After the laughter died down, the new name was born: **"The Week Formerly Known as In-Service."**

This effort will continue to evolve. Both the Paras and the Senate have decided that they will continue this method of in-service planning in the future. CJ Budd will facilitate this process moving forward and will continue to populate the calendars as overwhelmingly requested by the College employees.

Thanks should go to the "Week Formerly Known as In-Service" planning committee:

Dee Forest, Jerry Thomas, Rick Kempa, Ellen Ventura, Kim Drane, CJ Budd, and Sandy Caldwell

A-Team: New Members & Summer Workshop

Assessment of Student Learning is a difficult concept to master, much less to actually evaluate. Western has been on the forefront of this activity, particularly at the program- and curriculum-levels. The Assessment of Student Learning Team (AKA-the A-Team) is a group of dedicated faculty and staff who work to lead the curriculum-level assessment effort through the measure, analysis, and evaluation of the Five Goals for Student Success:

- ◆ Communicate Competently
- ◆ Retrieve Information
- ◆ See Issues From Multiple Perspectives
- ◆ Solve Problems
- ◆ Develop Life Skills

This is not a simple task. As much as many would like to see student learning results synthesized down to one easy to read chart, this requires multiple measures of assessment including internal, external, direct, and indirect. The team works diligently to evaluate each year's data both immediately and longitudinally as well as the evaluation of the alignment of the measure to the GSS and the desired outcomes.

The team will meet for its annual Summer Workshop on June 27-28. During this workshop, the team will review last year's data and summary, this year's new data, the status of the CCSSE data, the past and current AQIP Action Projects, and any related activities and initiatives on campus. Once all the information and data is gathered, the team will analyze and evaluate the combined infor-

mation in order to develop "next steps" and to make recommendations for student learning.

The new A-Team members for the 2011-2014 cycle are:

Voting Members	Representation
Chris Propst	Humanities
Carla Hester-Croff	Business/OIS/CIS
Sandy Mitchell	Math/Science
Stephen Miraglia	SS/FA
Tracey Hind	T&I
Nancy Johnson	Distance Education
Jenny Daniel (2 term veteran)	Nursing
Liane Lamb (2 term veteran)	Developmental Studies
Al Calmes (2 term veteran)	Outreach
Bret Zerger (2 term veteran)	Student Success Services
Cindy Hafner	Administrative Services
Anna McClure (WILL NEED TO CHANGE!)	Para-professionals

Non-Voting Standing Members include: Sandy Caldwell, Permanent Chair; Dianna Renz, Learning Assessment Associate; Kay Cooley, Assistant; Laurie Watkins, AVP SSS; CJ Budd, AVP Administration.

Ex-Officio includes Dr. Karla Leach, President; Dr. Jackie Freeze, VP SSS; TBA, VP SL, and Marty Kelsey, VP for Administration. Assessment team meetings and workshops are always open to anyone interested in the activities and directions, so please join if you are interested!

Western Wyoming Community College

Western in Motion

May 2011

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Message	1
Scheduling AP	1
Program Review	2
Prof/Faculty Senate	3
Systems Portfolio	3
In Service	4
A-Team Members	4

AQIP Action Projects

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



Graduation May 20, 2011

President's Message

Dear Western,

Curiously, doors provide both entrances and exits. In public buildings the National Fire Protection Agency required that external doors must swing in the direction of egress (towards the exit) under four specific circumstances. (Factoid: The root of many of these regulations stem from a Boston fire in 1942.)

The end of the academic year marks so many changes for Western. Of course every year, we have students graduating and moving on to their next adventure and students visiting Western to start their next great adventure. Doors close and doors open. Dear friends will leave the College as the year ends and new colleagues will join us in the next

chapter of our lives.

In the last day, I've heard stories of Dave Kathka, Bobbie Freeman, Mike Hensley, Jim Aumiller, Jon Collins, and Karen Love. Over the years, you've shared stories of many others whose presence in these halls have touched lives and continue to shape those around them and shape the College itself. The legacy left by each of these people is notable and present. You see, one of Western's defining characteristics is the length of time people stay and the deep imprint they make upon the institution. And more specifically, the positive imprint they leave is their gift to each of us that follow.

The question is often asked, "Can we ever replace this person?"

How will we ever get by?" And, the answer is that everyone is replaceable. But, all cannot be replaced because the imprint of each is as unique as their fingerprint.

We will miss our colleagues who exit this year. Ingress and egress, entrance and exit. Let me express my sincere thanks to each of you who leave behind traces of your time, talent, creativity, and passion. You have changed lives. Have fun and don't forget to visit. Au revoir until we meet again. Don't forget . . . those doors swing in as well as out.

Karla Leach

Scheduling Action Project by Bud Chew

During the Spring semester, members of the Scheduling Action Project Team met with each Division and Academic Program within the college. At these meetings, data that is to be used for developing a master schedule was presented and discussed. The Scheduling AP Team also has developed a timeline that will be used once Western is on the master scheduling system.

During Fall "not-in-service," each Division and Program will begin to use this data to outline a draft master schedule. The hope is that this will generate as many scheduling questions as answers. Then during the Fall semester, Divisions can begin collaborative discussions regarding scheduling conflicts and opportunities, and hopefully start working those issues.

This is something we've never done before -- exciting, isn't it?

Special thanks go to Kay Leum and Stacey Lynch-Newberg for extracting the Program data and putting it all into a coherent presentation. It took approximately 10 hours of number-crunching work prior to each meeting!

A New Way to View Program Review

According to dictionary.com, a “review” is:

- ◆ a critical article or report, as in a periodical, on a book, play, recital, or the like; critique; evaluation.
- ◆ the process of going over a subject again in study or recitation in order to fix it in the memory or summarize the facts.
- ◆ a general survey of something, especially in words; a report or account of something.
- ◆ an inspection or examination by viewing, especially a formal inspection of any military or naval force, parade, or the like.

Here at Western, a review of your program is all of these things. First, it is a critique or evaluation—one that is based in *self-reflection* of the current status of your program. Second, it is a process of studying and summarizing the facts of the program’s past five years. Third, it is a report that is prepared by the program, for the program. Fourth, this review is a careful inspection of the program itself—its strengths, limitations, and opportunities for improvement.

Now that Western follows the Academic Quality Improvement Program, and our accrediting body, the Higher Learning Commission, has declared the self-study process obsolete, our method of program review has also changed. Programs are now encouraged to make time for annual evaluations of the results of their program-level assessment, and progress on the program’s Action Plans. This means programs have regular opportunities for critical self-evaluation.

This academic year has seen other major changes in the way Western conducts program reviews.

First, the entire process has been moved online to the Accountability Management System in the Taskstream program, a platform we have labeled *Western Progress*. In this way, program review committees can collaborate in an online workspace. Individuals from varied locations have shared access to the review and can give their input synchronously. Some programs have seen this feature cut down on the need for face-to-face meetings. This new technology means that programs can now incorporate photo slideshows, videos, and other media into their reviews.

Through the Accountability Management System, programs can receive timely input on their work. The Learning Assessment Associate can give periodic feedback, and when the program has completed their review, they can submit the report to the appropriate vice president for comments online. The review is easily published into a formal electronic portfolio, which can be posted on the Western website for viewing by internal and external audiences.

The **second** major change involves the timeframe in which we conduct program review. Given the periodic nature of the program portfolio, it can seem like an “extra” task on top of our daily efforts at Western. Procrastination, however, results in lack of meaningful evaluation as the assessment results, FTE data, evaluation of facilities, equipment, and staff are outdated by the completion of the report. To address this issue, the Executive Council recently implemented a contract between the Program Review Chair and his or her Vice President. Program Review Chairs receive a monetary stipend for completion within the given timeframe.

A **third** change in the program review is the result of a program-driven demand for additional assessment data. As Western has made the move toward Continuous Quality Improvement efforts, we have increasingly provided more timely and relevant data sets for the purpose of program review. These include program-level FTE data and UW transfer data; survey design, dissemination, and analysis are also available upon request. In this year, instructional programs like Business have challenged us to provide additional data sets, including high school GPA, ACT scores, and COMPASS scores of that program’s graduates.

In addition, instructional programs like English continue to develop their own program-level assessment projects that give detailed information about how well students are performing in that particular academic area. These content-specific assessment projects, developed by program leaders, are **essential** to determine how well students achieve within the determined curriculum.

So, what is “WESTERN PROGRESS”? According to dictionary.com, “progress” is defined as:

- ◆ a movement toward a goal or to a further or higher stage.
- ◆ growth or development; continuous improvement.
- ◆ the development of an individual or society in a direction considered more beneficial than and superior to the previous level.

The program review process allows the College, program-by-program, to move toward our goal of *continuous quality improvement* in a beneficial direction. As one individual commented two years ago during our Strategic Planning efforts, it allows our institution to be “proactive rather than reactive.” And **that** is real progress.

Professional/Faculty Senate Report—May ‘11

Western’s Senate is made up of the faculty and professionals. We have been working very hard this year to move forward changes to some policies and procedures that are outdated. This work will continue into next year as we begin to look at personnel policies.

This year’s Senate took a proactive role in looking at horizontal advancement. The faculty and professionals were surveyed and recommendations will be made to our policy and procedures committee. We have requested to have this policy split into three: Initial placement, Horizontal advancement, and Rank advancement. We appreciate the work done by Carla Budd to provide a check list for persons applying for horizontal advancement.

Our faculty and professionals are very happy with our 4% increase in salary and sufficient slots for horizontal advancement for the number of applicants. We are pleased the administration has been able to offer this increase, and grateful to our board for supporting. We understand this is in large part due to careful budgeting and fiscal responsibility over many years by the administration. Our biggest success this year has been the initiation of faculty lead ‘Innovative

Teaching/Learning Forums’. These have been offered several times each month by different members of the faculty and staff as professional development opportunities. They are kept low key and short (30-45 minutes). We will plan to continue these next year and hope to find consistent times each month to offer.

Some of us are excited about the interactivity of our Sharepoint server and the vehicle for communication it can become for our staff. We currently post all of our Senate minutes on this server, thus making them very available to all.

We have been called on by different administrators to assist with forums to increase communication in our facility. We have been given an opportunity to voice our opinion on other areas, such as the upcoming changes in advising, Children at Work, and in-service week. These are very positive steps forward for our institution.

Lou Flaim, Instructor of Industrial Technology will be taking over as the Senate Chair next fall. Joining him as Vice Chair will be Tammy Register. Jennifer Allen will continue as Secretary.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Luzmoor, MS, RN, Senate Chair 2010-2011
Instructor of Nursing

“The Faculty/Professional Senate would encourage all employees to take part in Healthier Wyoming by registering and completing the requirements to decrease your health care premiums. It is easy, it can be fun, and it will save you more than \$480/year. We find it disappointing that less than 40% or our employees are taking advantage of this program. Health care is a very large expense for our institution and state. Taking personal responsibility to work on decreasing our personal costs is important. Healthier Wyoming can help! <http://www.healthierwy.org/>.”

Systems Portfolio—The P’s are Done!

R’s and I’s left to GO!

The College has been moving forward in its quality journey through the use of **Strategic Planning** and a commitment to **Continuous Quality Improvement** using the AQIP process (Academic Quality Improvement Process). A prime example is the current Scheduling Action Project. After many years of grappling with scheduling, the College collectively said it was time to address it in the Strategic Plan. We held ourselves accountable and took on the project using the AQIP process to “hold our feet to the fire.” We are at that point with the Systems Portfolio development process.

Once again, this institution has proven that if we focus on our mission and Guiding Principles, the rest WILL follow. Western is halfway through the development of

our first Systems Portfolio. This document is being *created by us for us*. Although we do have to submit to the Higher Learning Commission and AQIP for PEER REVIEW, the lens through which it is reviewed is mission and Guiding Principles focused.

With the **outstanding category co-chairs** facilitating the process and **committed employees contributing** to the content, the development of the Systems Portfolio is moving along very well. The PROCESS (P’s) questions are almost complete with the first review draft going to the Board at the regular June meeting. The last two parts, the RESULTS (R’s) and IMPROVEMENTS (I’s), will kickoff concurrently this summer and fall. Target completion

of the full draft is end-of-semester in December 2011.

With so “**many mitts in the pot**” (**Bruce Anderson, May 2011**), the Systems Portfolio should be more than a stagnant document created for some external entity. Continuous Quality Improvement using the Strategic Plan, Action Projects, Initiatives, and the Systems Portfolio should work TOGETHER to promote intentional self-direction and to target improvements that position the College for the best strategic advantage.

