



Western in Motion...

December 2008

Western:
Committed to
*Continuous Quality
Improvement!*

Academic Quality Improvement Program

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Dear Western family,

As you pick up this copy of *Western in Motion*, some of you may be asking "Why do I receive these? This is all about teaching students and that's not what I do at Western." Did you know that everything we do at Western is about student success? Not one single activity stands apart from student success. From the heat in the buildings to snow removal to the servers in Mitchell's Cafeteria -- we are all involved in the positive experience that each student has as they attend Western. And, we are all deeply involved in reaching out to new students as they consider Western for their college years.

Our strategic planning process and AQIP address all areas of the college. Our accreditation as an institution of higher learning tells the outside world that the teaching, learning, and student support at Western meets the high standards of the North Central Association. Because we meet these standards, the certificates and degrees earned at Western have value and are accepted as legitimate by employers, other colleges and universities, and the federal government. Not only do these standards review the quality of our faculty and curriculum, they also identify the adequacy of our facilities, space, technology, student support, and student engagement. Every person, every



Look for the Winter Ball
January 30th

job, and every role is vital to providing a good experience for our students and our community.

So, as you move forward, remember that AQIP and the strategic planning process belong to you and that you are integral to their success, the success of Western, and most importantly, the success of each and every student.

Karla

For more information...

Instructional Support
Room 1310
Sandy Caldwell x1720
Dianna Renz x1871
Kay Cooley x1810

Alumni & Retention
Room 3012
Laurie Watkins x1899
Tammy Walker x1827

Vital Few for Student Learning—Writing

After having completed a 3-year A-Team cycle using the AQIP model Action Plan approach to select 2-3 targeted areas of improvement, we are currently in the next round of a 3-year cycle of the Action Project called the "Vital Few for Student Learning." In the last issue, we identified key areas of focus and discussed the broad con-

cerns. Here are some highlights:

#1 Writing Across the Curriculum

Plan: This was an area targeted in the last go-around and was kept due to its "ripple" effect into multiple content areas. Emphasize Writing Across the Curriculum. Encourage faculty to assign various

types of writing in all sectors of the curriculum. Encourage faculty to use Smarthinking and Turnitin. Track faculty use via surveys and student use. Include adjunct faculty in the conversation. Look for improvement in student writing.

Activities & Measures: Beginning in Fall 2005, we have emphasized writing in a variety of ways including in-service, workshops, *Cont. page 2*

Fall 2008 /Early Spring 2009 Retention Activities

- **Midterm Grades:** Registration & Records printed and mailed grade reports to all students with D or F grades and to their advisors; 1,243 students with no deficiencies were emailed a congratulatory letter from Dr. Karla Leach, Ken Fitschen and Dr. Jackie Freeze.
- **Advising:** Becky telephoned 64 students with multiple midterm deficiencies regarding the last day to drop classes.
- **Alumni & Retention:** Laurie emailed WWCC full-time and part-time faculty to remind them to talk to students and advisees about the last day to drop full-semester classes. She also emailed thanks to full-time and adjunct faculty for submitting midterm grades (only 5 full-time faculty failed to submit midterm grades by the deadline).
- **Fall Advising Newsletter:** Becky's latest edition was sent to on-campus advisors and outreach staff.
- **Part-Time Student Newsletter:** Part-time student newsletters were emailed to 1,461 students. The newsletter included information about WWCC's goals for student success, important dates, how to check the progress of their degree or certificate, and helpful hints for online classes.
- **Pre-requisite checks for proper class placement:** Becky and Tammy began prerequisite checks for students who registered for spring government, math, statistics and English classes above pre-requisite or COMPASS levels.

Summer 2009 Registration Program Dates



Thursday, April 30
Academic Scholarship
Recipients
6:00 PM



Tuesday, May 19
6:00 PM
Wednesday, May 27
1:00 PM & 6:00 PM



Thursday, June 4
1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Monday, June 22
1:00 PM & 6:00 PM



Thursday, July 9
6:00 PM
Monday, July 20
1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Tuesday, July 28
1:00 PM



Wednesday, August 12
1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Friday, August 21
International Students
1:00 PM
Monday, August 24
1:00 PM

B-Team Members

Jami Anderson	Kay Leum
Becky Asplund	Christine Lustik
Sandy Caldwell	Stacie Lynch-Newberg
Steve Davis	Kay Marschalk
Kim Drane-Nash	Patty Pedersen
Ken Fitschen	Sarah Stanley
Jackie Freeze	Tammy Walker (Recorder)
Rick Kempa	Laurie Watkins (Chair)

Contact any B-Team member if you have questions or suggestions regarding WWCC's retention efforts.



Vital Few for Student Learning—Writing Across the Curriculum

Writing cont. from page 1

and newsletters. The faculty surveys, CCSSE, CCFSSSE, student surveys, and student use have indicated that writing is happening across the curriculum to a much greater extent than in 2005. Below are some faculty survey highlights:



Have a Great Winter break !!
Stay Warm...

Results: GREAT IMPROVEMENT:

Writing Assignments		
Required some writing assignment	2005	2008
Full-time Faculty	76%	95%
Part-Time Faculty	38%	93%

As we have continued to discuss WHAT a writing assignment should be, we have moved to developing different tools to help faculty manage writing assignments in “non-writing” focused courses. We all want our students well versed with the ability to communicate competently in our

respective fields of study, but how do we as content experts manage that activity? HOW do we grade the writing assignment in the content area when many of us are not writing instructors? As faculty, our focus and energy must be spent on the class we are teaching and substance of the content. Thanks to our GREAT faculty we have scoring guides and rubrics that are 100% customizable on the Faculty Resources website. These were developed by our faculty for our faculty to be used as a tool to help this activity get moving. If you need ideas on getting started or modifying what you are already doing, these are there for you.

CHALLENGES: We have made excellent strides with our students having the opportunity to Write Across the Curriculum and with helping them develop the skills needed to write for multiple audiences. Our next step is to identify WHAT our students are still struggling with in the area of writing. Our Assessment of Student Learning has consistently identified Writing as an area to strengthen for our GSS Communicate Competently. The pattern that has emerged has been weaknesses in citation of sources and in writing a cohesive document in terms of narrative, analysis, and summary. We moved to ask these targeted writing items on the Fall 2008 faculty survey, which identified some gaps in faculty emphasis in the classroom.

Writing Assignments 2008 Survey		
	Full-time	Part-time
Require proper citation	83%	55%
Summary, analysis, narrative	76%	43%

Although not every writing assignment uses citation of sources and not every writing assignment will have extensive narrative, analysis, and summary, we can still see a theme that we’ll continue to watch in the next few years. Having the students think in a narrative manner, having them analyze the information and summarize in some meaningful way is well documented as vital for students to experience deep learning.

Action Plan Follow-up

Creating a meaningful Program Review Portfolio seems pointless if you never again look at it again. The last piece of your Review Portfolio calls for an **Action Plan**, in which you create a future-focused vision based on the information you gathered in the Portfolio process. As an AQIP institution, we don’t just file that Action Plan away for safekeeping, we want to *use* it to make our programs more effective

and efficient. Following your Review Year (in which you create a Program Review Portfolio), your program will be “in Follow-up” for three years following the Review Year. The follow-up process asks that you review your Action Plan each fall to determine the direction of your program. **Follow-up documentation** asks that you report on the action you took in the previous academic year, and create two more years of Action Plan for moving forward. This process will effectively

move your program toward its stated objectives until the next Review Year. *Business, Chemistry, Criminal Justice, Education, Electricity, Learning Center, PTCE, and Food Services* have all completed their **second** year of follow-up documentation. *Financial Aid, Green River Center Administration, and Distance Education* have submitted their **first** year of follow-up documentation.

Vital Few for Student Learning—Reading Across the Curriculum

During the Fall 2008 In-service session, we had breakout session to identify Best Practices for integrating Active reading in the classroom. We also conducted a faculty survey to identify the extent of passive and active reading activities that our students experience across the curriculum. Here are some initial results:

PASSIVE Reading Assignments	
Full-time Faculty	100%
Part-Time Faculty	99%

Our students today are a different audience than they were just a few years ago. Reversing the downward trend in our student reading ability while at Western will take all our efforts. Making the change is a big step in the classroom and it takes time to develop HOW new reading strategies will work for each class.

Below illustrates the level to which we are integrating Active reading strategies in the classroom.

ACTIVE Reading	FT Faculty
Previewing	14%
Speed Reading	9%
Outlining	17%
Annotating	16%
Directed Questions	48%
Dual-entry log	5%

Want to try a new Active Reading Strategy?

Try Concept Mapping: Students gather in groups to map the major concepts in the reading. The central idea will go in the middle of the paper with a circle around it. Connecting lines show supporting evidence, and further “bubbles” show more detailed ideas. Students should work together to create a group map, and then copy it on a separate piece of paper for individual study use. This activity can also be used by individual students to report their reading or plan for writing assignments.

Did you know... You and your students can download a *free concept mapping software* called VUE (Visual Understanding Environment). VUE is an Open Source project through Tufts University that “provides a flexible visual environment for structuring, presenting, and sharing digital information” and other ideas related to your course. Check it out at <http://vue.tufts.edu/> and then contact the IT Helpdesk at extension x1676 for download assistance.

Spring 2009 Registration Programs



On **Monday, January 12**, teams of faculty, Student Success staff and Student Ambassadors will work with new WWCC students to help them learn about campus support services and register for Spring 2009 classes. New students will be given the names of their permanent advisors and encouraged to contact their advisor as soon as classes begin.

New international students will attend a **Friday, January 9** Registration Program with international advisors Jackie Freeze, Chris Propst, Laura Chew and Laurie Watkins.

Please help us welcome our new students to campus!

New Academic Advisor Training

Are you a new faculty or professional staff member at Western? Is academic advising part of your job description or contract? Do you need to know how academic advising works at WWCC? If you answered “yes” to these questions, you need New Advisor Training! This 5-hour training program introduces new advisors to many aspects of academic advising and provides a framework on which to build.

Some of the fun topics that we cover in training include:

Academic Advising is Teaching

How to Begin the Advising Appointment

How to Read a Degree Audit

Why Faculty Make Great Advisors

“Need to Know” Policies

WWCC’s advisor training program consists of two workshops (2 hours each) followed by 1 hour individualized training on using WebAdvisor. Look for your Academic Advisor Training invitation in January! Contact Becky Asplund, Coordinator of Academic Advising, with questions at x1632.