

The “Vital Few” for 2005-2008

For the 2005-2008 assessment cycle, the A-Team identified three areas of focus to target for improvement. These three “*vital few*” areas were identified as 1) *Writing Across the Curriculum*, specifically citing of sources, 2) *Computer Competency* in terms of identifying and implementing an acceptable assessment tool, and 3) *Word Processing Across the Curriculum* in terms of a competency assessment that can be implemented to help identify students in need of a basic word processing course.

Vital Few Activities—2005-2006 Academic Year

Vital Few #1—Writing Across the Curriculum, emphasis on citing of sources

The follow-up faculty survey results, which also included part-time faculty, were outlined during the Spring 2006 in-service. One piece of helpful information was in terms of Smarthinking. The survey revealed that training was a major factor in new faculty implementing Smarthinking into classes. Offering training combined with previous success by faculty apparently made a major impact on the numbers of other faculty willing to use Smarthinking for both writing/referenced assignments and tutoring. Finding ways to make this connection with part-time/adjunct faculty is something that the Faculty Resources Facilitator is trying to focus on while promoting staff development in this sector of the faculty.

Vital Few #2—Computer Competency Assessment Tool

After a successful “test drive” of the SAM Challenge Computer Competency in the Assessment Portfolio course in Fall 2005, there were some concerns about how to administer the assessment to on-line and outreach Assessment Portfolio & Portfolio/Capstone students. With the purchase of a site license and with the willingness of Thompson to provide CDs to off-site students, the immediate concerns with this assessment may be reasonably worked out.

Vital Few #3—Word Processing Across the Curriculum

A WP Competency using SAM Challenge as a skill competency for new students to identify those students needing a computer based/wp course during their first few semesters was developed and “test driven” during the Spring 2006 Orientation. Some concerns were raised about the high number of students not meeting minimum competency. Hopefully, the Fall 2006 Orientations beginning in April will provide more concrete numbers.