

The “Vital Few” for 2008-2011

Updated 2009

COMPUTER USE

With the progress made in this area, the data indicates that this is moving smoothly through the curriculum. Continue to promote as a part of the student learning culture. Sunset as a Vital Few.

WRITING

During the last three-year assessment period 2005-2008, the Assessment Team Committee highlighted this as a Vital Few. Although the Assessment Team was excited to see that research writing truly is conducted *across* the curriculum, with some writing elements being quite strong—such as solid purpose statements, logical organization, unified and coherent paragraph structuring, and having evidence to support claims—the students are still not performing at the level we would like to see. We have made great strides with students having the experience of writing, but we want to continue this focus to ensure that this type of activity becomes a part of “what we do” as a student learning culture. The A-Team wants WWCC to strengthen Writing Across the Curriculum. This will be a continuing focus area.

Challenge Statement: WWCC must choose to facilitate our students' abilities to become competent writers.

Action project Writing Component: Facilitate students' abilities to become competent writers.

- a. Using Smarthinking &/or Turnitin, surveys, and student assessment results to get feedback over 3 years.
- b. Emphasize Writing Across the Curriculum during in-service including adjunct faculty;
- c. During in-service, promote Smarthinking and conduct survey to identify how many faculty are assigning papers and how many are using Smarthinking.
- d. Provide faculty with scoring rubrics or guides. Include information on FR website.
- e. Promote the concept through newsletters. *Highlight examples that faculty actually use in class.*
- f. Conduct workshops with external specialists promoting this activity. May also include department based seminars.

READING

The A-Team wants to stop the downward trend in Reading. Across the GSS, the data indicates that READING is a significant impact in students' abilities to Communicate Competently, Retrieve Information, and Solve Problems. This is continuing from the previous year when Reading was elevated to a Vital Few. However, the A-Team wasn't sure if the approach to improving Reading Across the Curriculum was the most effect way to approach the issue. During the Summer 2009 Workshop, the A-Team moved through an in-house AQIP Strategy Forum process to identify the root causes of the reading issue and discern how to approach improvement based on those root causes, drivers and the data results.

Challenge Statement: WWCC must choose to facilitate our students' abilities to become active, engaged readers.

Root Causes:

1. Faculty are content experts, not teaching experts.
2. Western is comfortable with the status quo and resistant to change.
3. WWCC has low expectations of students.
4. The institutional environment and values do not hold students to a quality standard.

Drivers:

1. Obtain and share data regarding active, engaged reading.
2. Implement and support campus-wide policies and procedures that address active, engaged reading.
3. Implement professional development strategies and best practices.

Action project Reading Component: Facilitate students' abilities to become active, engaged readers.

Obtain and share data (one year):

1. Survey faculty, staff, and students (regarding expectations and behaviors) at inservice and after midterm (both fall and spring).
2. Share data at fall & spring in-service, in newsletters, at kick-off day.
3. Conduct student interviews and forums in 4th week, both fall and spring.

Campus-wide policies and procedures (one year):

1. Create ad hoc group with representation from each division (not all chairs) and administration.
2. Ad hoc group meets after mid-term (fall and spring) to evaluate data and present suggested procedures at next in-service.
3. Ad hoc group refines and modifies suggestions and makes proposal for implementation in fall 2010.

Professional development and best practices (one year):

1. Review best practices document at in-service and create jazzy tri-fold for faculty to hand out to students in class.
2. Faculty host Active Reading (for classes taken by entering students) implementation forum at fall 09 in-service designed to change one lesson from lecture based to one based on active, engaged reading in the first 3 weeks of class.
3. Host follow-up forum at spring in-service--activities to be determined with survey data.
4. Host outside expert at spring in-service, or purchase video to view by division.