

## Chapter XVII: YEAR-END UPDATE

A significant and temporary change in the structure of the Assessment Committee was implemented during the 2007 calendar year. Due to administrative restructuring of the University generating a realignment of disciplines and subsequent questions concerning equitable representation on the two subcommittees coupled with the expiration of several faculty terms on the Analysis and Reporting Group (ARG), it was decided by the Chair and the Provost to postpone new appointments and invite the remaining ARG members to join the Design and Implementation Group (DIG). Thus, the two committees have functioned as one during the 2007-2008 academic year. Their joint activities are summarized below.

Two Scholarship of Assessment Grants were awarded for the report year. Recipients were: Dr. Jeffrey Vittengl, Associate Professor of Psychology and co-researchers Dr. Paula Cochran, Professor of Communication Disorders and Dr. Janet Gooch, Department Chair and Associate Professor of Communication Disorders.

The Student Interview Project continued with junior student interviewees under the direction of Dr. Jeffrey Vittengl.

Higher Education Research Institution assessment (HERI) was administered to faculty with a few local questions added based mainly on faculty attitudes about their satisfaction with teaching and research.

Planning was initiated for campus-wide forums of open discussion of critical thinking skills centering on how these skills are presented and where in the curriculum the opportunities for introduction of these skills are. Task force members include: Dr. Martin Eisenberg, Dr. Karen Smith, Dr. Scott Thatcher and Dr. Candy Young. This initiative is in response to concerns about critical thinking as evaluated by the portfolio project as well as results from the CLA, MAAP and CAAP.

The Assessment Committee endorsed the University's early adoption of the College Portrait and the Voluntary System of Accountability. Interested University members can view sample report forms and obtain further information at the following website:

[http://www.voluntarysystem.org/index.cfm?page=about\\_cp](http://www.voluntarysystem.org/index.cfm?page=about_cp)

The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) was administered to a sampling of first year students, while 250 of their cohort completed the CIRP assessment. In addition to these students, 261 seniors took the CLA as their senior test since no nationally normed vehicle was available. Truman was ranked in the 2<sup>nd</sup> decile in 2006-07, whereas we were in the 1<sup>st</sup> decile for the 2005-06 reporting year. A conference call was completed in June of 2007 with the CLA staff to address concerns the Committee had concerning the interpretation of results.

The NSSE was again administered to a sampling of first year and senior students.

The Committee evaluated results of the MAAP and the CAAP and discussed their usefulness in evaluating Liberal Arts Skills at Truman.

The Committee approved a joint research project with James Madison University and three other institutions evaluating the efficacy of the JMU Scientific Reasoning/Quantitative Reasoning vehicle for assessing the outcomes in these modes. Initial tests were administered to half of the juniors in the 2007-2008 academic year with the other half taking the CAAP scientific and quantitative subtests for comparison.

The Portfolio Project had near 100% participation from graduating seniors with results presented at several forums on campus and included in this year's almanac report.

The formation of an information warehouse for assessment results continues to be a concern of the Committee so as to facilitate research projects on assessment issues on campus.