

Take it Home: Your Assessment “Doggie Bag”

It's Nice to Know

Spring 2009

We're on the web... of course. Find all kinds of continually updated assessment results, recommendations and resources that you can use. Point your browser to: PC Home > Faculty & Staff > Committees > Academic Committees > Assessment Committees

Critical Thinking

- Critical thinking is required in academic programs, expected by employers, and very much needed in the world. When we teach our students to think, their potential is unleashed.
- Our website provides some great sample assignments that foster critical thinking. Check them out, along with our other great critical thinking resources.
- The last campus assessment of critical thinking (2003-04) showed that 53% of a comparable student population scored better than PC students. We think we can do better than that!!
- Look for preliminary results of the Test of Everyday Reasoning in May, 2009.

ESL

- There are many ESL resources for faculty and students (grammar, writing, listening and speaking weblinks). Find them: PC Home > Academic Programs > English/Humanities/ESL > ESL > Resources
- In addition, here are a couple of the one million tips for faculty who have ESL students in their classes:
 - Make personal connections
 - Communicate slowly, clearly and directly
 - Review concepts and materials
 - Avoid the problem: check to be sure student understands assignments

Information Literacy

- Information Literacy is the knowledge of research techniques: knowing where to look for information, having search skills to find the information, evaluating the quality and credibility of information, and using information in an ethical way.
- In Spring 2008, over 400 PC students took the iSkills assessment to test their information literacy skills. A score of 165 out of 300 was considered a passing score. Our PC students had an average score of 133.
- We have created assignments that you can use in your class to address information literacy skills. Find them on our website.
- We would be happy to meet with you in order to tailor an assignment to meet the specific information literacy needs of your students - just ask us!

Numeracy

- Numerical skills are essential in everyday life. Courses in almost any subject require various levels of mathematical proficiency. Whether creating a valid argument or correctly negating a statement – all these activities require solid mathematical background.
- If you need help in bringing numerical flavor to your class instruction or assignments, we are happy to help point you in a right direction.
- We collect assignment samples from a wide range of courses. After a detailed analysis, we provide participating faculty with feedback about the students' degrees of mathematical proficiency. We are gathering samples from a variety of academic and workforce courses next year. Join us.

Oral Presentation

- Speaking in public is a required skill for academic and career success in the 21st Century. As faculty, we've got to provide multiple opportunities for our students to speak.
- We aim to create a culture of oral presentations at PC. Our website offers two documents that you can use today: 1) “Oral Presentation Recommendations for Students” and 2) “Assigning an Oral Presentation: The Whys and Hows for Faculty.”
- Our rubric, The Competent Speaker, looks at eight competencies: four on the preparation of the oral presentation and four on delivery. You can use this simple tool in your class.
- We are gathering samples from a variety of academic and workforce courses this academic year. Watch for results and recommendations next year.

Workforce Development

- “Workforce readiness” is our motto. We assess how Phoenix College prepares students for the workforce and how our students exhibit professional behaviors. For details, see Outcomes #1 and #2 on our website.
- We also use (for assessment purposes) many program specific indicators such as programmatic national accreditation, employer surveys, and pass rates for national and state certification and licensing exams.
- You may find some of our outcomes and core indicators useful for your department or course even if you are not considered a Workforce Development Program.

Writing

- Today, it's fundamental to convey written content in a tight, logical and direct manner, particularly in a fast-paced technological environment. Over two-thirds of salaried workers in large U.S. companies have jobs that require writing. We encourage writing across the curriculum to improve student writing skills.
- In the Spring of 2008, we assessed 173 writing samples from 13 academic and workforce departments. Our PC students scored “Acceptable” with an average of 2.9 on a 4-point scale.
- We assess with our locally developed writing rubric. You can use it too. Attach it to your writing assignments so students know what constitutes good from poor writing. Find the rubric on our website. Leave it on your desktop for easy access!
- Here's a friendly website that you and your students can use for help with grammar and style issues. It's called Grammar Girl's Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing. Find it at <http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com>.