

## Faculty Self-Evaluation Excerpts from Fall 2012

The Vice President for Academic Affairs worked with the faculty union to allow for the use of excerpts from the faculty self-evaluations as evidence for the Midterm report. The following are included for such purposes. Per the union request, and out of respect for the privacy of those individuals involved, course and discipline names, as well as individual names, are changed to generic wording and differentiated with brackets.

### Excerpt from Faculty A:

“I use various methods of assessments of student learning in my courses. I utilize informal assessments in class by asking or polling students on topics or hold questions/answer times when I hand back assignments. I give an overall feedback to the class that is general and highlights key areas people lost points and how that needed to look (this is as a class and on top of the individual input I give each student). I then answer any questions or clarify anything they may have about their corrected assignment. I also have grading rubrics for various assignments and keep creating rubrics; my goal is to have grading rubrics for all assignments in all courses. This I feel helps them be prepared for not only the criteria they will be graded on but the level needed to earn an A, B, C, etc.

The students have an assignment that evaluates their knowledge and application of each topic or a specific SLO or combination of SLO's in a course. The assignments tend to be application based and are very hands on and vary from interviews, observations, experiments, activities implemented with {subject}, assessment of various aspects of an {discipline} classroom or a teaching practice and many others.

In {Course A, Course B, Course C and Course D} there are final project that require students to put together the various topics/content covered in the course and integrate this into a comprehensive project that involves application, syntheses and analysis of course content, personal growth and personal reflection on the course content. It varies with each course and during the semester the smaller assignments they work on tend to build on or are directly related to the final project. The final projects the students do in the courses are (see project descriptions and grading rubrics in student assignment section of my portfolio):

- {Course A: Course Name}
- {Course B: Course Name}
- {Course C: Course Name}
- {Course D: Course Name}

For {Course E} the student teaching Practicum completed in our {discipline} Lab school the students spend 6 hours per week in the classroom and are responsible for application of various aspects of teaching and room maintenance, curriculum planning, and assessment; all things that measure the SLO's for this course and requires students to apply various things they have learned throughout their program. There are examples of the assignments that students due during {Course E} found in the Practicum section of my portfolio...”

“For students I hope to also move to an online {discipline} assessment tool ({Discipline} online) that the state and county are using in {discipline} programs; to do this I will need to have funds to purchase ipads (4-8) for student use as well as digital cameras and printer docs that are ipad compatible for students to print off the assessments as well as documentation in the way of photographs that go into {subject} assessment portfolios as well as their own {subject} portfolio and for other assignments.”

FROM COMMITTEE: The request noted in the last paragraph was funded in Fall 2012.

### Excerpt from Faculty B:

"After my first semester at MPC, I realized that the students and I needed an initial benchmark assessment for several reasons. One reason for a benchmark assessment is for me to get a picture of how well students are prepared and which areas of introductory {Discipline} (High school or {Discipline}) needs to be reinforced. Another reason is for me to be able to measure progress in the course. And third, and equally important, is for students to get a "reality check" for {Course Name}. The exam I chose to use as an assessment is the American {Discipline} Society California Diagnostic standardized exam. I administer this during the first week of the course in Problem Solving Session. I find it is a powerful assessment tool that allows me to connect with all students over the first two weeks who score less than 60% so we can develop a "Plan for Success". This is the second semester that I have administered the exam, so I have limited data points on how final student grades correlate with the percentile on the initial assessment. The observed trend at this point is linear- students who scored higher on the exam had a higher overall class grade than students who scored lower..."

"There are several assessment opportunities for the students and also for me after the initial diagnostic exam. One student-centered assessment is an online homework website ({Discipline}.com) that is linked to the text used in the course. Students can get instant feedback regarding problems they solve. They also have access to hints on how to do problems, extra lecture material and examples. There are useful self-quizzes, too. And, they get credit for the work that they do. For me, it is mostly useful to check in and see who is doing the work and observe the correlation between homework and quiz and exam scores- which is direct.

The weekly quiz is a more in depth assessment of student understanding regarding {discipline} concepts. The quiz is a short 3-4 question format that tests concepts and may involve short calculations. It has either fill in the blank or multiple-choice or a combination of both. It shows me whether students are studying and understanding the concepts we have covered in lecture. The current quizzes are short and brief glimpses in to how students perform in a testing environment. It was apparent to me last year that students needed more examination practice and so I have made longer, more detailed quizzes this semester, to benefit students in their preparation for the mid-term and final exams. Another, more rapid feedback assessment that I started (from {personnel} suggestion) is "review/participation" questions at the beginning of each lecture. These questions allow students to earn "participation points" (a total of 30 points earned in the semester coming from lecture, PS session and lab) by answering them when called on randomly from a stack of 3x5 cards with their names on them and it allows me to see which basic points need more review before building on a particular topic. This has not added to the overall time needed for lecture- somehow it's working out!

The most in depth assessment that I have of student knowledge and understanding are three 3-chapter exams during the semester and a cumulative final exam. The midterm exams are comprised of multiple choice, fill in the blank, nomenclature, {discipline} reactions, and calculations. Initially a number of the students were shocked about the length of the exams! The students who are most prepared finish in 50 minutes or less with 80-100% scores, but I do give the students 80 minutes for the exams. One change I made from my first semester was to decrease the number of problems on exams to shorten them, retaining the same level difficulty. Another change I made was to use the American {Discipline} Society Final exam in to order to be able to rank how my students are doing across the nation (and how I'm doing teaching). I found a direct correlation between student proficiency in the class before the Final and the grade on the Final exam. The highest ranking students (>93% in my class) scored in the 99th percentile on the {Discipline} exam! The exams are a direct indicator of how much time students are spending on learning the material. Initially, I found that many students did not

know that {Course Name} requires a minimum of 6 hours and most likely 10 hours per week outside of lecture, PS session, and lab, of studying and homework. This semester I alerted students immediately (I added a description of the class and "survival tips" as an entire page in my syllabus) of the time that needs to be dedicated to {discipline} in order to excel in this course (I'm in competition with {Course Name} and {Course Name}!)

The laboratory portion of the class is a great place to teach students how the principles learned in lecture apply in the real world and how discoveries are made in {discipline}. For the first semester at MPC, I would hand out the lab procedure and background on Mondays each week, along with pre-lab questions that students needed to turn in at the beginning of lab. The pre-lab questions are designed to prepare students for lab and were not a perfect assessment since students often copied from each other. After the first semester I made a lab manual and had it printed and sold in the bookstore. I also instated pre-lab quizzes that come from the pre-lab questions for a more accurate assessment and a larger incentive for students to study and understand the lab ahead of time. After each lab is completed, students turn in a lab report sheet, but the current set-up is not a true indicator of whether students understand how to apply the concepts learned in lecture. They can fumble through the lab and the report sheet with help from me and from other students and get a decent to perfect grade on their report sheet. My plans for next several semesters are to develop the lab portion of the course to include a lab notebook requirement, an open lab notebook practical final exam, and one full written lab report and two new labs. Specifically, for the new labs, I would like to include labs that use probes which interface with a computer to display and record data. The reason I would like to include these types of labs is that many of the {discipline} techniques used in industry and in commercial applications use a machine with a particular probe or sensing device that interfaces with a computer for data collection and further data analysis...."

#### **Excerpt from Faculty C:**

"Lectures are typically guided with Power Point presentations and occasional pauses for student questions and input. Lately, I've also given students worksheets with exercises to be completed during the Power Point presentations to keep them engaged and focused. Lectures are supported with short videos, articles, pictures and models when possible. Additional in-class worksheets are used to check progress and ensure comprehension with less pressure than a graded test. Points are given for class work completion to encourage attendance. Sometimes, students work in pairs or groups to complete worksheets or to complete more complex projects (e.g.: one group assignment was to design a {discipline} office – students then voted on the best design, logo and mission statement to be used in our mock office for this semester). Role playing is used in lab classes ({subject} scenarios, mock phone calls, emergency situations, etc.). {Discipline} labs consist of demonstrations and hands-on practice using skills sheets. Students sign each other off for completion of a number of practice skills, encouraging team work as well as accountability. We often break into small groups to work on different skills at the same time, which makes good use of time and classroom space. Some homework is assigned in most classes, often consisting on some type of research related to the current topic to encourage conceptual thinking. Students can earn bonus points through special related projects or extracurricular activities.

Weekly written tests are given in all classes- using multiple choice, matching, diagrams and essay questions. Especially at the beginning of a course, I tend to use more essay questions to learn about students and their thought processes. I create new tests for each course because learning styles and pace of the class vary. I add more critical thinking questions and scenarios if I'm not sure that students grasp a concept. When I'm more certain about clarity of a subject, I tend to use more multiple choice and matching. In {Course} ({Course Name}), students are also evaluated through practicals. After weeks of practice, a skill is demonstrated by the student without help from the instructor or other students and graded using a check-off list. I believe my methods allow for accurate student assessment for the most part. However, I am

sometimes surprised by students who seem to struggle or be disinterested with traditional testing methods but really shine when an assignment requires creativity, leadership or verbal communication. I'd like to work in more projects that test and showcase those skills. I've recently given students the chance to earn bonus points for bringing in subject related brochures or articles and sharing them with the class in a 1-2 minute presentation. This seems to be successful so far and allows for individual accomplishments beyond other testing methods....”

“Aside from the formal processes, program review and program reflection are ongoing in my department. Though adjunct availability is limited for meetings, I ask for and use their input when possible. Other division instructors have also been great resources for teaching techniques and subject matter. Since I am the only full-time instructor in the {Discipline} program, I take every opportunity to listen to seasoned colleagues in other departments and many of the ideas are applicable in my courses.

This semester, as mentioned previously, I have begun meeting with each student in the program which has also given opportunity to consider student perspectives on learning.

The insight gained from my summer project has already been included in program reflections and used in the classroom....

I continuously review and update my lectures and teaching methods to increase effectiveness and to fit the most relevant material into the given time frames. The recent remodel of the {division} building has provided a variety of new equipment and technology for the {Discipline} program and I've been busy integrating them into my instruction. I've been using a free electronic {discipline} program that is accessed via the internet and hosted by a vendor. I created user profiles for all students and a {subject} base to mimic a real {discipline}. Students have been using the newly provided classroom laptops to work with the program. We also obtained a set of functioning telephones that can call each other to practice telephone technique in the classroom and a new set of {discipline equipment} will be used in the spring semester to {practice skill} in an updated fashion, again mimicking real-world scenarios. {Skill} is a new component that will be added to the {discipline} class-the student will type and update a {person's information} as the {specialist studies} the {subject}. This is a newly emerging duty for {discipline personnel} as I observed in the field this summer....”

#### **Excerpt from Faculty D:**

“In {Discipline} and in my {discipline} classes I use exams that combine objective, multiple-choice questions designed to test content knowledge, with short answer questions designed to test critical thinking and analysis skills. In addition, I have added a section on art identification where I show slides of key works of art and students are asked to identify the work and comment on why it is important culturally or artistically. This year, at the suggestion of our art instructor, I have started to allow students to make a hand written cheat sheet for the exam. There is so much content to learn in {Discipline} in such a short time that this seems like a reasonable way to get the students to study effectively. The percentage of A's has not changed, but I think there are more students who are at least achieving basic content mastery now (earning C's instead of flunking). Students still need to demonstrate higher thinking analysis skills on the short answer essays to earn an A.”

“I continue to make changes in my {discipline} classes as I strive to make it better. I have switched textbooks to one that is more analytical about breaking down the skills of critical analysis. I have also switched from four mid-sized papers to three essays. The amount of writing is the same but I found that having three essays allows the students more time to rewrite and improve the final product. I constantly change topics and try to come up with topics that are current. For example, this fall students wrote a comparison of the Obama tax plan and the Romney tax plan. Last spring during the debate over the deficit and the debt limit, I had students write research papers on the federal budget.

Another change that I made last year in {Course} was that I spent one day the first week of class going over common grammar issues such as comma splices. While this seems remedial and shouldn't be necessary, it is. And I have found that the students do far better on their essays as a result of taking time early on to review basic grammar....”

#### **Excerpt from Faculty E:**

“I have recently added a practice taken from an excellent book, {Title and Author}. This book is a guide for students of {Discipline} and it advises students to take a moment at the end of every class to write down the one most important thing they learned and any questions they have or things about the day's class that they didn't understand. I now ask students to do this at the end of every class. I then transfer their comments and questions to PowerPoint slides and show the slides at the beginning of the next class. It helps students review, gives them another way to ask questions, and helps me stay on top of what students are learning (and not learning) in class, and it only takes a few minutes to do....”

“I give six quizzes and one final exam. These tests focus primarily on receptive skills, although some knowledge of grammar and culture is also assessed. In-class presentations and video recordings of students' poem and story presentations are used to assess {discipline} skills. A cumulative final exam and brief face-to-face exit interview at the end of the semester also give important information about students' competence. Summative assessments such as these provide part of the picture of student progress, but I do not rely on them exclusively for assigning a final grade. Ongoing formative assessment is conducted through observation of in-class participation, on-line discussions, projects such as the creation of concept maps, and other homework assignments. Students also earn points for study outside of class and in-class participation. Students are asked to reflect on their progress in a structured homework assignment during the 5th week (see Appendix pp. 18-19, 30-31) which is designed to remind them of the requirements of the class, assist them in planning for the rest of the semester, and motivate them to maintain or improve their performance.....”

“I participated in program review last year as an adjunct and this semester as a full-time instructor. We addressed the issue of consistency between sections, which is a perennial challenge for {discipline} teaching, where each semester must build on knowledge and skills acquired in the previous semester. We agreed that aligning our SLOs with {Discipline acronym} ({Discipline Acronym Title}) standards would be a good first step....”

“It is a widely-recognized challenge for language programs to ensure that standards are maintained so that students learn the skills required in order to truly advance through the curriculum. As my discussion of {Course} later in this document shows, the {Discipline} program is urgently in need of improvement in this regard. I intend to collaborate with my {Discipline} colleagues to explore the idea of developing a checklist-style {discipline} skills survey, based on learning objectives from the textbook we use, that can be administered to the {discipline} classes at the end of each semester. This will produce useful data that the adjuncts and I can examine in order to ensure that our student outcomes are aligned with our own expectations as well as with national standards. I expect the regular {discipline} practice labs I recommend in the next paragraph to provide additional observational data as students from all the classes work together to improve their skills....”

#### **Excerpt from Faculty F:**

“In the past, my students have perceived my classes and teaching as interesting, engaging, dynamic, enjoyable, and effective. I solicited anonymous, general feedback from my MPC courses this term, and found that they, too, see me as passionate and fair, like course topics and class time, and view my pedagogy as effective. Their suggestions for improvement echo past cohorts who have asked me to "slow down," and I'm trying so very hard to learn to do so. Additionally, I'm striving always for more clarity in class presentations, and I put most of my time into best practices for instruction,

connecting lesson planning to student learning outcomes, and polishing content delivery, including PowerPoint and multimedia....”

“I’m also using in-class questions to gage whether students are grasping key concepts. I regularly ask them, “How well do you understand this? Give me an example that shows you know how to use this knowledge...” Then, I look for students who need a bit more guidance. This year, I’m looking into Angelo and Cross’s popular book on *Classroom Assessment Techniques*, which offers many ways to check student understanding in the moment of teaching and learning. As the year unfolds, I will build more such assessments into my regular practice.

I am generally pleased with student learning and my assessment, and believe that my evaluation includes a sufficient variety of measures, and frequency of feedback, such that I gather a fairly accurate picture of student learning outcomes....”

“In the division, we have met to focus on and discuss SLO’s and social science goals, individually and collectively reflected on our programs, and received two special trainings/guidance on program review. In sum, I am responsible for all aspects of {Discipline} program reflections and review, and I am thankful for the wonderful division team and chair, faculty mentor, and department office manager that have made my transition to MPC smooth and collaborative.”

“A primary goal for next semester is to put more pre-reading and post-reading strategies in place, to increase the effectiveness of assigning week readings.”

“...we in the {discipline} division very much need to get the {Discipline} Lab up and running, with the research focus, and service learning component. This will require that we designate and, as {personnel} says, occupy a space. Also, we will need a way to provide students access to computers, either in the lab, the library, or through a student use license for the statistical software programs....”

FROM COMMITTEE: The technology request noted in the last paragraph was funded in Fall 2012.