

Plan — Research — Assess!

Welcome

Welcome to the fourth Spring 2010 issue of **Plan — Research — Assess!** This newsletter is published by the Planning, Research and Assessment Office (PRA) at Penn State Berks.

The purpose of the PRA newsletter is to disseminate information on current assessment, institutional research, and planning projects at the College.

The PRA office is grateful for the student workers and intern who make the PRA newsletter possible.

FYI: Go directly to articles by clicking on article titles listed below *Inside This Issue*.

Comments on the newsletter? Email: [PRA Office](mailto:PRA@psu.edu).

We're also on Facebook & Twitter. Click on the icons to connect.



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Strategic Plan Score Card Update

Introduction

Although tremendous progress has been made with respect to the implementation of the strategic plan thus far, several Year 1 and Year 2 action steps are not complete. To that end, the Strategic Plan Advocates met in April 2010 to identify tactics to complete these action steps.

Strategic Plan Advocates

Twenty-six 2010 Strategic Plan Advocates were assigned to one or more of the Year 2 action steps. Strategic Plan Advocates are responsible for keeping track of the progress of the action steps and identifying resources so that each can be achieved. Typically one to three Advocates are assigned to each action step.

The Scorecard

The status of each action step for each of the five goals of the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan Scorecard are color coded based on the extent the action step has been implemented from fall 2008. Action steps can be assigned to one

of four status categories:

- BLUE**— Complete & Ongoing,
- GREEN**— Complete,
- YELLOW**— In Progress, and
- RED**— No progress.

To date, two separate scorecards have been created, one for the first two years of the strategic plan.

Strategic Plan Action Steps

Fortunately, these 15 incomplete action steps are **in progress**. Figure 1 depicts the percent of action steps that are in progress by year of implementation.

Proportion of Action Steps Not Complete or Not Complete & Ongoing by Year	
Year 1	13.9%
Year 2	37.0%
TOTAL	23.8%

Strategic Planning Areas

Of particular concern are the action steps in which progress is being made but the action step has not met or exceeded the metric. These Year 1 and Year 2 action steps can be categorized into seven areas:

- Assessment,
- Viable Programs,
- Student Engagement,
- Advising,
- Outreach,
- Funding, and
- Centers for Excellence.

The Advocates were asked to identify the challenges to the Year 1 and Year 2 action steps in each of these areas. They were also asked to determine additional resources that would bring the action steps to fruition. Additional or revised strategies will be identified and resources to implement these strategies will be secured to ensure that all action steps are complete.

2010 Assessment Grant Recipients

The second annual Berks Assessment Grant was announced in April 2010. The purpose of the Assessment Grant is to encourage the evaluation of student learning.

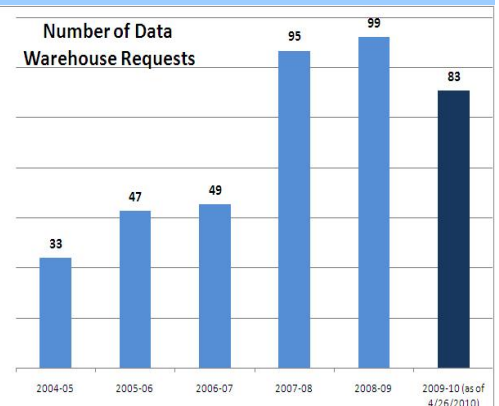
Fifteen faculty and staff applied for Assessment Grant funding this year. Because of the competitiveness of the Assessment grant, about half (8) of the projects were funded. Due to the current economy and implications to the PSU budget, only one Assessment Grant was fully funded. Congratulations to the following faculty and staff (listed in alphabetical order)

Kira Baker-Doyle
Jim Bardi
Sadan Kultural
Lolita Paff

Brenda Russell
Sandra Recihel
Ike Shibley
Janet Winter

Most projects will be developed and implemented in 2011-2012. As a stipulation of the grant, the recipients must share the deliverables (ex. methodology, instrument, statistical techniques) with other faculty and staff soon after implementation. Both the 2009 and 2010 Assessment Grant Recipients and their projects are listed on the Assessment Grant web page on the PRA web site: <http://bk.psu.edu/Information/StrategicPlanning.htm?cn711>. Inquires about the Assessment Grant should be directed to Dr. Mary Lou D'Allegro at mad23@psu.edu.

Data Warehouse Requests



General Education- Quantitative Assessment Progress

Introduction

The purpose of the General Education Curriculum at Penn State University is to ensure PSU graduates “develop intellectual curiosity, strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation.” This is accomplished by requiring students to complete a core set of courses. One set of courses addresses general quantitative skills (GQ). The objectives of the GQ program are fourfold:

- Reason quantitatively,
- Measure probabilities,
- Apply basic mathematical principles and processes to practical problems of day-to-day living, and
- Formulate informed judgments based on quantitative reasoning.

To assess the extent that Penn State Berks students were meeting these objectives, Dr. Janet Winter, Coordinator of the Math Program met with the PRA Office and Dr. Pradip

Bandyopadhyay, Science Division Head.

It's all in the Numbers

Dr. Janet Winter convened the math faculty in Fall 2009. The primary purpose was to map each final exam question to each of these four GQ objectives. Dr. Janet Winter then devised a spreadsheet so that each faculty teaching a targeted math class in fall 2009 could record the score of each student for each of the GQ objectives. The targeted math classes used in the fall 2009 GQ assessment were: **MATH 017 (SP2009), MATH 021, MATH 022, MATH 035, MATH 110, MATH 140, MATH 200, MATH 210, STAT 100, and STAT 200.**

Next, PRA assembled the spreadsheets into one SPSS data file. PRA also calculated the proportion of correct answers by student for each of the four GQ objectives across all sections in each math class and collectively.

In turn, this proportion will be the indicate the the extent students are meeting this objectives.

Next Steps

This summer PRA will be parsing the student participants into three cohort groups: Berks Majors, University Majors, and transfer students. Those in the first two groups are students who began their studies at the College.

The skill level or level of mastery for each of the four objectives will be identified for each class. This information could help determine the magnitude of student learning as it pertains to the GQ objectives at Berks.

Much Appreciated

A special thank you to the math faculty who helped with this assessment. The GQ assessment would not be possible without the math faculty's commitment to student learning.

Become a Fan on Facebook

PRA has truly entered the twenty-first century by creating a PRA Fan page on Facebook. Generally catering to college students and faculty as a means of enhancing social networks, PRA has discovered that a presence on Facebook can be a powerful marketing tool as well as a theistically pleasing way to announce current survey projects, distribute research project results, provide reminders of upcoming meetings, and keep a log of assessment and strategic planning activities at the College.

PRA Intern Heather Stapleton, has done much to create a welcoming and innovative Fan page for PRA. In fact, she uses the space herself as



“a means of communication between our office and the rest of the Penn State Berks community” she revealed recently.

Also available on the website are other Facebook links to other higher education entities. Currently, the PRA Facebook Fan page has several “favorite pages” that include other Penn State Fan pages, software vendors, and pages that explore contemporary issues in higher education as well as society.



However, the content that can be placed on PRA Facebook Fan page is only a fraction of Facebook's appeal. Posting messages and sending emails to fans or potential fans is

almost effortless. “This a very effective and efficient way to keep in touch with the campus community” states Dr. Mary Lou D’Allegro, Senior Director, PRA.

In sum, the PRA Facebook Fan page, showcases Berks dedication to conducting quality research and assessment to inform decision making and day to day operations. Importantly, it demonstrates PRAs flexibility to adopt to new technologies.

To become a PRA fan, log on to: facebook.com. With an existing account, a Facebook member can search on *Penn State Berks-Planning, Research & Assessment*.

Become a Fan, a PRA Facebook Fan!

Good Luck to Intern, Heather Stapleton & Alyssa Raven

Written by Heather Stapleton, PRA Intern & Alyssa Raven, Student Worker

As with every end of the spring semester, PRA waves good bye to the student workers and interns that are graduating, embarking on other internships or work experiences, or heading to his/her next endeavor.

Heather Stapleton is a senior in the Applied Psychology Program. Heather is nearing the end of her time with PRA and feels that the experience gained by interning in the office has enhanced her researching abilities greatly. “Being able to use *SPSS* and *Zoomerang* to construct several online surveys, write syntax for measures, manipulate data, and analyze information has allowed me to enhance my skills and interest in research and assessment.”

After graduating in May 2010, Heather hopefully plans to work for a local in-patient drug

and alcohol treatment center as a counselor assistant or an addictions counselor. She also plans to return to school within the year to earn her Masters in Rehabilitative Counseling or Community Psychology. Heather is appreciative for the experiences she had during her four years at Berks including the many opportunities to work closely with the Berks professors.

Alyssa Raven, PRA Student Worker, is currently a junior in the Elementary Education Program. This is her second and last semester working with PRA. She feels that working in the office opened many doors for her. “Although I once had little interest in campus research, working with various surveys and data definitely gave me a new appreciation for this type of work.” In Fall 2010, Alyssa will begin her student teaching in the

Reading School District. She is extremely excited about this opportunity. She plans to work in a forth or fifth grade classroom. Alyssa says that she is thankful for being part of the Education program here at Penn State Berks and for the supportive faculty and staff at Berks.

Quick Fact

Use PRA Resources on the *Intranet* to answer the following Penn State Berks trivia question.

How many Penn State Berks baccalaureate degree majors were enrolled in Fall 2009. What was the five-year percent change from 2004?



Email answers to Stefanie Kerns, Assistant Director, PRA: slk37@psu.edu. Those who email Stef the two correct answers will be eligible to win a Penn State Berks portfolio. *Good Luck!*