



Toolkit

The Nuts and Bolts Newsletter from

ASSESSMENT

SERVICES

In this issue:

Sharpen Your Pencil: The One Minute Paper

Did You Know? The College Student Survey

Contributions Solicited!

FAQ: How Do Alumni Surveys Work?

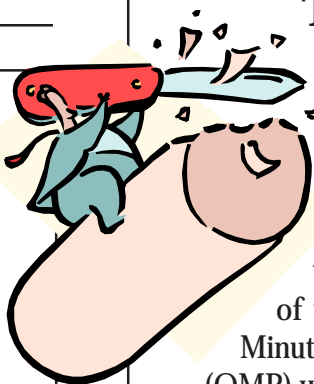
Profiles in Assessment: Michelle Emmett of Student Affairs

Beyond Confusion: An Assessment Glossary

Student Housing and Dining Services Conducts Two-Area Assessment

SHARPEN YOUR PENCIL:

The One Minute Paper



At a recent national assessment conference, the concept of the “One Minute Paper” (OMP) was discussed

by Louis Rosso from Winthrop University. The “One Minute Paper” is exactly what the title says – a one minute paper, which can be administered at the end of any class meeting or at the conclusion of an important presentation or key concept. Students are asked to take one minute to write a *non-graded* response to key questions, which may include:

“Name two important concepts examined in today’s class interaction”

“In your opinion, what was the most important information presented in today’s class session?”

“What concept was the most difficult for you to understand?”

“What could I do (as teacher) to present the material more effectively?”

This assessment activity provides immediate feedback to the course instructor regarding student understanding of key concepts. Because the assignment is to be completed in one minute, excess verbiage is not present – the student must get straight to the point. The instructor obtains direct, succinct information from each student, and upon an aggregate review, knows how well a concept has been assimilated by the class. The aggregate information obtained in the OMP may be used as evidence regarding students’ abilities to meet articulated student learning

objectives, a part of any quality assessment plan. In addition, the OMP furnishes feedback on what the students have *not* understood, so that the teacher can revisit or clarify material as needed. Additionally, if the question regarding teacher presentation of material is used, the teacher receives timely information on their own presentation skills as well as students’ active learning styles.

The OMP – One Minute Paper: put it to the “test” in your courses!



DID YOU KNOW?**The College Student Survey**

The College Student Survey (CSS) is a survey instrument that has been used at NIU for many years. It is designed and published through the auspices of the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) and currently administered on a biannual basis by a partnership of the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) and the Office of Assessment Services (OAS). The CSS is administered to NIU junior level students, as well as to other junior level students across the nation. The purpose of the CSS is to obtain self-reported data on a variety of college related experiences ranging from academics to facilities to extra-curricular activities. Students have in the past had the option to complete the survey either

online or on an “op-scan” answer sheet. On conclusion of the CSS administration, HERI tabulates the collected results and returns the data to NIU.

A major reason that the CSS is utilized at NIU is that it contains “core” items that are administered in other surveys used at NIU. Beginning prior to enrollment at NIU, these core questions are included in several instruments: the CIRP (Collegiate Institutional Research Program); the campus based Non-Matriculating Student Survey (sent to students who were admitted to NIU but never registered for classes); the Non-Returning Student Survey (students completing one year at NIU and in good academic standing, but who do not

re-enroll for their sophomore year with NIU); the CSS, and the university Alumni Surveys, which are administered annually to both baccalaureate and graduate degree recipients.

Not only is the information obtained valuable as an individual group of data, but the data received from the “core” items provide comparative data of a longitudinal nature – a sort of “snap shot” or photo album of students’ opinions from pre-enrollment to post graduation. The CSS is a vital link in NIU’s [University Assessment Plan](#), which is posted on the Assessment Services website.

For more information on CSS data/results, visit the [Office of Institutional Research](#).

Contributions Solicited!

Contribute to *Toolkit's* newest feature, “Sharpen your Pencil: Assessment Tips from the Inside” or any of our other regular features. We’re looking to share the wisdom that we each develop at home, making the work of assessment more productive. If you’d like material to be considered for inclusion in a future edition of *Toolkit*, submit a Word document of no more than 300 words as an email attachment to barnard@niu.edu

FAQ: How Do Alumni Surveys Work?

On an annual basis, the Office of Assessment Services administers alumni surveys, collects and analyzes the results, and disseminates the data that report alumni reflections on their time at NIU. This year's survey was sent to baccalaureate and graduate degree

recipients from calendar year 2003. It began in March of 2004 and will conclude in September. Graduates are given the opportunity to provide feedback online, by completing a paper survey, or by answering the survey in the context of a telephone call. Programs

have the option of including a separate departmental/program survey. Completed departmental surveys are returned directly to the originating program.

Watch for key results from the current survey in future issues of *Toolkit*.

PROFILES IN ASSESSMENT

Michelle Emmett of Student Affairs

Michelle (Micki) Emmett, Associate Vice-Provost of Student Affairs at Northern Illinois University has been actively involved in assessment at NIU for a number of years. In addition to serving on the University Assessment Panel (UAP), she is a strong supporter of assessment in Student Affairs. She created the Student Affairs Assessment Committee, made up of staff across all of Student Affairs' departmental lines. The function of this internal committee is to review all Student Affairs'

assessment plans. The Committee helps individual departments design and operationalize effective assessment plans prior to review by the UAP. Micki's philosophy includes the vision of successful assessment plans in all Student Affairs areas and departments. For additional information on the assessment process in Student Affairs at NIU, see the interview with Micki, below. The reader is also invited to visit the [Student Affairs website](#).

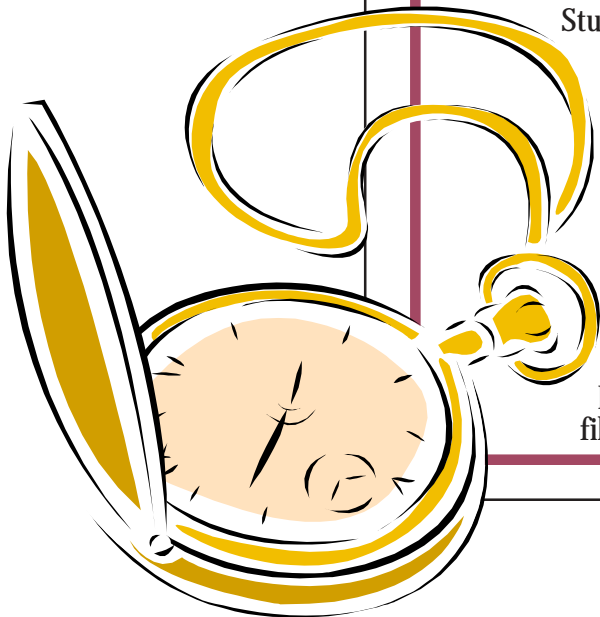
Better quality



Faster transmission



Click either picture, above, to hear Micki Emmett's assessment philosophy. Windows Media Player is necessary to view these files. Download [Windows Media Player](#) for free.



BEYOND CONFUSION An Assessment Glossary

This feature is the seventh in a series designed to clarify common assessment terminology.

Embedded Assessment—A means of gathering information about student learning that is built into and a natural part of the teaching-learning process. Often used for assessment purposes in classroom assignments that are evaluated to assign students a grade. Can assess individual student performance or aggregate the information to provide information about the course or program; can be formative or summative, quantitative or qualitative. Example: as part of a course, expecting each senior to complete a research paper that is graded for content and style, but is also assessed for advanced ability to locate and evaluate Web-based information (as part of a college-wide outcome to demonstrate information literacy).

Local Assessment—Means and methods that are developed by an institution's faculty based on their teaching

approaches, students, and learning goals. Is an antonym for "external assessment." Example: one college's use of nursing students' writing about the "universal precautions" at multiple points in their undergraduate program as an assessment of the development of writing competence.

External Assessment—Use of criteria (rubric) or an instrument developed by an individual or organization external to the one being assessed. Usually summative, quantitative, and often high-stakes (see below). Example: GRE exams.

"High stakes" Use of Assessment—The decision to use the results of assessment to set a hurdle that needs to be cleared for completing a

program of study, receiving certification, or moving to the next level. Most often the assessment so used is externally developed, based on set standards, carried out in a secure testing situation, and administered at a single point in time. Examples: at the secondary school level, statewide exams required for graduation; in postgraduate education, the bar exam.

— Dr. Andrea Leskes, Vice President for Education and Quality Initiatives of the Association of American Colleges and Universities
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Student Housing and Dining Services Conducts Two-Area Assessment

In fall of 2003, Student Housing and Dining Services (SHDS) requested University Assessment Panel funding for an assessment mechanism that would allow for easy design and collection of survey data to support ongoing SHDS assessment efforts.

Infopoll Survey Hosting Service was the selected solution.

Infopoll is designed for those who want to conduct a survey without purchasing and administrating software. The survey company provided everything needed to develop the questionnaire and deliver real-time results, and the cost was very affordable at \$375 per designed survey. The results were easy to understand and interpret.

The surveys were conducted over a 30-day

period. The two SHDS operations selected for evaluation were Residential Dining and Residential Technology Services (ResTech).

Two hundred eighty-five students responded to the Residential Dining survey. Key results included:

- Ninety-five percent of respondents have visited the Residential Dining website with over half (53.3%) of respondents visiting daily.
- Most respondents (60.3%) view the website as the best method for informing residents of the menu.

Three hundred fifty-six students participated in the Residential Technology Services survey. Highlights of these responses included:

- Forty-two percent of respondents are aware of ResTech and their services.
- Ninety-two percent of respondents use a ResTech computer lab with most (70%) using the labs at least once a week.
- Fifty-eight percent of respondents have contacted ResTech Help Desk for assistance.
- Seventy percent of respondents who reside in a residence hall use the Internet service in their room.

Student Housing and Dining Services thanks the University Assessment Panel for providing the funding for this important assessment project!

–Guest Columnist
Michael Stang, NIU
Manager of Residential
Administration

The [Office of Assessment Services](#) assists NIU academic programs, learning centers and student services units in developing their assessment plans. Its mission statement focuses on excellence and continuous quality improvement.

Toolkit is brought to you by the Office of Assessment Services:

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