2014-2015 University Writing Project Guidelines

Introduction:
The University Writing Project (UWP) (formerly known as the Junior-Level Writing Project) was established in the mid-1990s to specifically measure the writing ability of NIU undergraduate students. The UWP has evolved into a course-embedded assessment of students’ written assignments. The Office of Assessment Services (OAS) invites faculty from across the campus to participate in the project each year by submitting completed course assignments to the OAS for review by faculty from the Department of English using a standardized assessment rubric.

Benefits of the UWP to Faculty and Students:
The benefits of the UWP are numerous:

1. Faculty members have ongoing input into the writing assessments. The course instructors who participate in the UWP will select the writing sample to be scored.

2. Faculty members are not asked to assign additional written coursework or give up class time to participate in the UWP. Writing samples are obtained from work already required in the selected courses.

3. Faculty members, departments, and colleges will receive valuable feedback on the writing abilities of their students. Samples will be scored by trained scorers selected from the Department of English and results will be tabulated by department and college in aggregate format by the OAS. These data may be used for ongoing course and program assessment and will contribute to the assessment of general education at NIU.

Faculty Participation:

1. Faculty members will send the course name, section #’s and semester to the OAS (ex. ENGL 104, section 0001, Spring 2015).

2. Faculty will inform their students that course assignments will be submitted to the OAS for institutional, college, and program assessment. Faculty will ask students to indicate their native language on the assignment.

3. Faculty members will send the writing assignment instructions to the OAS to be shared with the English faculty evaluating the writing assignments. Student assignments MUST be a minimum of three pages of text.

4. Faculty members will send the student writing samples to the OAS no later than May 11, 2015 (electronically or by hard copy). Faculty participating in the fall semester can submit all class roster, assignment instructions, and student assignments in December.

5. Faculty will inform their students that the results of their individual assessments will remain confidential. Aggregated results will be made publicly available.

For more information, please contact the Office of Assessment Services at (815) 753-8659 or by email at assess@niu.edu