

**ASSESSMENT IN HUIE LIBRARY**

Dr. Bob Yehl

Huie Library has been participating in Henderson's assessment program since its commencement in the 2005-2006 school year.

The main result of assessment for Huie Library during these past five years has been validation. Validation has taken place in two ways: 1) some of the library's physical deficiencies have been documented, and 2) that Huie Library has been doing a creditable job in serving its patrons.

One benefit of the assessment process has been an annual user survey. Prior to annual assessment, user surveys had been infrequent occurrences in the library. Each year since 2005, our user survey has asked questions pertinent to the objectives of the assessment process, and which have helped us to consider the quality of service that we have been providing to our patrons.

For three years (2005-2006, 2006-2007, 2007-2008) assessment for Huie Library involved determining how several physical aspects of Huie Library ranked compared to our peer libraries.

In 2005-2006, several ratios describing aspects of Huie Library's physical space were assessed: ratio of useable space to student and faculty FTE, ratio of seating to student and faculty FTE, number of computers compared to student and faculty FTE, and number of study rooms compared to student FTE. These ratios were compared to libraries from institutions in COPLAC. In 2006-2007, these same items were measured against libraries in universities in the Masters M category from Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. In 2007-2008, the survey involved libraries in four year schools in Arkansas.

The results of each year's survey indicated that Huie Library generally ranked in the middle of our peer libraries. In 2005-2006, Huie Library ranked as follows among COPLAC schools: space 9/13, seating 12/13, computers 10/13, study rooms 13/13. In 2006-2007 among our peer institutions in Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, Huie Library ranked as follows: space 5/8, seating 5/8, computers 5/8, study rooms 8/8. In 2007-2008, among the responding four year schools in Arkansas, we ranked as follows: space 7/13, seating 6/13, computers 6/13, study rooms 7/13 (even with the addition of five new study rooms in the library that year).

The second major objective that has been measured by the assessment process is user satisfaction with library services. In the first user survey in April/May 2006, the following question was asked: *How satisfied are you with library services?* Five information categories/services provided by the library were listed: 1) Library webpage, 2) Online Catalog, 3) Reference, 4) Circulation, and 5) InterLibrary Loan. Users were able to answer: Extremely satisfied, Very satisfied, Not very, Not at all, or NA. In this survey there were 59 responses from faculty members. With 177 FTE faculty, this was a 33.3% response rate. Criteria were 75% satisfaction.

Totals for each of the five categories were as follows for Extremely/Very Satisfied: Library Webpage 55/56 = 98.2%, Online Catalog 51/55 = 92.7%, Reference 53/56 = 94.6%, Circulation 54/57 = 94.7%, Interlibrary Loan 52/53 = 98.1%. The overall percentage was 265/277 = 95.7%.

The first user survey in 2006 also measured student satisfaction with library services. The same five information categories/services provided by the library as listed in the previous paragraph were considered. Students were also able to respond as noted for faculty. There were 174 responses from Henderson undergraduates and graduate students. With 3151 FTE this was a 5.5% response rate. Criteria were 75% satisfaction. Percentages for Extremely/Very Satisfied were: Library Webpage 146/161 = 90.7%, Online Catalog 131/159 = 82.3%, Reference 137/155 = 88.4%, Circulation 141/156 = 90.4%, Interlibrary Loan 85/98 = 86.7%. The cumulative percentage for Extremely/Very Satisfied was 640/729 = 87.8%. These first survey results seemed to indicate that students were slightly more satisfied with our services than faculty were.

The statistics for this first user survey and subsequent ones have shown Huie Library's services in a favorable light. Also, another gratifying aspect of the surveys has been the positive comments made by the respondents concerning our service and our staff.

Huie Library has used the assessment process to identify, and in some instances affirm, ways in which the library building may be lacking. The assessment process over the past few years has also told us that we are doing a good job in serving our patrons. Without the regular assessment process, it is likely that neither of these situations would have been formally recognized.

**Special Points of Interest**

- All assessment plan coordinators need to e-mail Wrenette Tedder with a time and date that she can meet with your entire department to discuss the assessment team's review of your assessment plan.
- TracDat training will be held during the month of March. Information on dates and times of each session can be found on **Page 3**. Assessment plan coordinators need to be sure to sign up for one of the available sessions!

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# Assessment Brief

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**Assessment, the HLC, and Institutional Mission**

Dr. Vernon G. Miles

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Enough of you have heard me drone along on the differences between the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges and the North Central Association's Higher Learning Commission that I actually hesitate to engage my fancy in that regard again. So, I stop myself. However, there is one thing that the Commission on Colleges and the Higher Learning Commission have very much in common—a focus in accreditation on institutional mission.

As we anticipate our upcoming Higher Learning Commission visit, which will take place on February 20-22, 2012, we should especially note Criteria One itself. There are five basic criteria in the Higher Learning Commission's *Handbook of Accreditation*; the very first one focuses on institutional mission:

- Criterion One: **Mission and Integrity**—The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.
- Core Component - 1a: The organization's mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization's commitments.
- Core Component - 1b: In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.
- Core Component - 1c: Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.
- Core Component - 1d: The organization's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.
- Core Component - 1e: The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

You might wish to note that this particular standard, with its five core components, not only revolves around institutional integrity surrounding mission, but also includes our organizational structure (particularly the Board and the administration) and our processes (such as internal governance). As you can easily discern, mission is central to each of the five Core Components. Everything eventually leads back to our mission.

The central questions of Criterion One are, in fact, basic assessment questions: What is our mission? What documentation exists to demonstrate what our mission is? How do our "mission documents" (a phrase used no less than eight times in two subparts) define the institution, and what do they say about our "function in a multicultural society"? How do we demonstrate that our faculty, staff, administrators, students, and Board members "understand and support" the mission? How do our "planning and budgeting priorities flow from and support the mission"? What processes do we use evaluate our "structures and processes regularly"? How do we use that knowledge to enhance those structures and processes to better fulfill our mission? In what ways can we ensure that our structures and processes continue to nurture personal, professional, and institutional integrity? These are the sorts of questions the Criterion One committee will be investigating as it writes its report.

One presenter at my recent Peer Review Corps training adventure noted that when a Higher Learning Commission visiting team is on campus, the team members need to make sure that everything is "evidence-based and mission driven." What he meant is that everything we do with assessment and put in our self study document should be "relevant" (evidence-based), "verifiable," "representative," "cumulative," and "actionable" (meaning we **do** something with that knowledge).

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**Assessment, the HLC, and Institutional Mission**  
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As we think about our mission in relation to our self-study, our institutional self-examination process, let's not quibble over whether we are "The School with a Heart" or "Arkansas's Public Liberal Arts University" or both. While each has its merits, and these topics deserve our most thorough examination, the Higher Learning Commission will not ask us to assess either of them. Rather, we should focus our efforts on the more mission-like statements that each one of us can take from the University Mission Statement. What is it we attempt to "nurture" in each student? How do we do that? How well do we do that? These are the central questions the Higher Learning Commission will expect us to supply coherent answers to through our assessment processes. And the HLC will expect us to have done something positive with those answers as well.

I encourage each of you to discover within yourselves—if you have not done so already—those parts of our diverse mission that you will begin to own before the HLC visit and to share those with colleagues. I also encourage you to do all that the Assessment Team and the Criterion One Self-Study Committee ask of you over the coming months, not because the Higher Learning Commission expects it, but because it is the best thing for our students, your programs, and the University. Rest assured that the Self-Study Steering Committee, the Assessment Team, the Assessment Office, Institutional Effectiveness, the Provost's Office, the entire Cabinet, and President Welch stand ready to assist you in any and all efforts to fulfill our Criterion One goals. In that we stand united.

**From the Chair**  
Dr. Phillip Schroeder

During the past few years the awareness that institutional assessment is a positive and necessary tool has dramatically increased across the HSU campus. The changes were initiated from many sources, internal and external, individual and collective. The current and projected economy and the ongoing expansion of global awareness additionally increase our responsibility to make certain that all areas of the Henderson community are fulfilling the school's mission, always focusing on the students.

A cultural change across campus may be facilitated by a few activities and a question:

- Think about how assessment may be integrated into your current work responsibilities
- Discuss assessment with colleagues
- Visit the HSU Assessment webpage and browse through some of the documents
- Read the Assessment Quick Reference Guide several times
- Read through the assessment plans for your area from another institution
- Honestly ask: Will assessment and evaluation help our students?

HSU Assessment Homepage: <http://www.hsu.edu/content.aspx?id=7999>

From the desk of...

**Wrenette Tedder**

The Henderson State University community has created and sustained a culture of assessment over the past six years. We have a lot to be proud of at Henderson! Over the past semester the Assessment Team has spent many countless hours evaluating each assessment plan using a rubric. The Office of Assessment would like to meet with each department to discuss the suggestions brought forth from the team. The goal for the Assessment Team is to have strong, sound plans with several years of data for the Higher Learning Commission visit in early 2012. In order for us to accomplish our goal we need your support by scheduling a time for you and your department to meet with me during this semester. Each department is required to also submit data collected during this year. Academic departments must have their data into TracDat by the end of May and the non-academic departments must have their data in by the end of June.

The Assessment Team will be working to accomplish several goals this semester. One of our most important goals is to improve our communication with all campus constituents. Please email me with any ideas you might have regarding this issue. Another goal is to increase the number of members on the Assessment Team. We have added two new members from Ellis College of Arts and Sciences. It was recommended that another Student Government Association member be added this semester since the current representative graduates this semester.

Please let me know how my office and the Team can assist you in the area of assessment. We have come a long way and we need to continue improving. Remember to email me with the date and time for your department's assessment meeting. I look forward to continuing my work with each of you.

**Assessment, the Chore We Love to Hate**

Katherine Strause  
Art Department Chair  
Assistant Professor of Painting

What is it about assessment that sends us into a tailspin? We have so many tedious chores attached to our jobs that we manage with ease so why is this particular one so difficult to complete? The fact that we are required to look at our own departments and justify the work that we just completed feels like overkill. What we want to do is setup a system of data collection that can give you information about your program that will guide you to things that are working well and those that are not.

Stay calm, make it easy and don't procrastinate.

The most difficult part is setting up a plan that will be easy, effortless and will work for your program. The key is using our own assessment guru Wrenette Tedder. Ask her to help you set up your assessment program and have her help guide you through the process.

The Art Department has set up a system of assessment that seems to work and is incorporated fairly effortlessly into our program. Most areas have ready information like Praxis scores that can be used but along with that, we take each class, freshman, sophomore, juniors and seniors and have a separate annual evaluation for each.

Our freshman evaluation each February consists of a meet and greet with all freshman Art Majors as a group. The purpose is to help freshmen understand what the department standards and grading criteria are, what will be expected from them in the program, and to give them guidance about what they might do to improve towards that end. The sessions are not designed to be punitive or critical, but to be genuine discussions with the group as a whole. This helps the faculty get to know the freshmen and to become more available to them. The students bring in two examples of their work and we discuss, their current experience in art and what their intention is in earning a degree from our department. We have a very simple rubric where we assess their performance and this information is then turned into numbers and entered into the TracDat system.

During the fall semester our sophomore students are required to submit to a more rigorous evaluation. They are asked to bring in 15 works along with their sketchbooks. During this review the entire faculty meet with each student individually. The Second departmental review is designed to help faculty and students determine who is facing future problems as an art major. This is a sincere effort to help students evaluate their intentions as art majors before they invest even more in the major. It is a chance for the students to hear the stated goals of the department and to recognize what the standards are that will be expected from them in the next two years. It is also intended to help guide majors into the area of emphasis most consistent with their skill and interest levels. Again we use a simple rubric to evaluate the students and then enter this information into the TracDat system.

The third departmental review for juniors is conducted in the spring and is designed to help our soon to be graduating seniors, prepare for their Senior Exhibition. This is by far the most rigorous of the reviews and gives the faculty an opportunity to help the student make decisions about final directions and future works to be completed in time for their Senior Exhibition. Again, we as a faculty meet with each student individually. The student is required to bring in 15 works along with an artist statement. We use basically the same rubric as we have in the second review and the information is gathered and entered.

The final review is the student's Senior Exhibition. This is a public expression of the high level of accomplishment required of our students about to enter the professional world. A strong personal commitment to excellence is expected. This is the student's final evaluation. Faculty complete a more in depth evaluation and this is also entered into the TracDat system.

The reviews are intended to serve two purposes. The most important is to help the student make some kind of steady progress through his/her academic career here at HSU. The second is to provide evidence to the administration and that we are indeed accomplishing our responsibility as teachers. The reviews allow the students to know we are paying attention and give them some measure of how well they are progressing.

Look at assessment as an annual check up with your students. We have gained a lot of insight into trends in our department and how to reinforce what it is we want for our graduating seniors.

Good luck with the process.

**FACULTY** TracDat Training Schedule

March 16	9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
March 17	9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
March 26	9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

**NONACADEMIC** TracDat Training Schedule

March 19	9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
March 24	9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
March 25	9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

The last 45 minutes of each session will be spent entering the data collected for 2009-2010.

Sign up to attend one of these sessions by going to the following webpage:

<http://hsusurvey.hsu.edu/apsp10.htm>