



**November 8, 2011**

This week we're highlighting NEASC Standard Four and the work being done by that committee. We hope you'll see this as an opportunity to provide input into that work. If you have additional information you think would be useful to the work, or questions about it, contact the chair of that standard directly.

In addition, the NEASC survey for faculty and staff will be open until midnight on Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to those who have already taken it, and if you have not take it yet, please go ahead and complete it now <http://www.nvcc.commnet.edu/NEASCsurveyFall2011>.

**Standard Four: The Academic Program (Liz Frechette and Ruth Urbina-Lilback, Chairs)**

Standard Four has two chairs, Liz Frechette and Ruth Urbina-Lilback. While the Description section was completed last spring, NEASC issued revised and renumbered standards in July and much of the standard was modified. Committee members worked very hard during the first part of this semester to address the necessary changes. We thank our committee members for their work.

The committee has spent much of October on Appraisal work. Ruth Urbina-Lilback would like to recognize efforts on appraisal areas in General Education, Integrity of the Award of Credit, Academic Planning and Undergraduate Degree Programs. The members are: Sue Anderson, Osiris Rosales, Joanne Levesque, Jeannie Boniecki, Lay Kuan Toh, Patricia Beaupre, David Clough and Timothy Jacobs. Liz Frechette would like to recognize efforts on appraisal areas in the Academic Program and the Assessment of Student Learning - concerning such focus areas as fulfillment of mission, academic oversight, effectiveness of instructional practices, success in meeting quality standards, and understanding how and what students are learning - across all teaching and learning modalities. Those members are Mary Manka, Peter Benzi, David Mullaney, David Clough, Jason Seabury, Jane Wampler (ex officio), Julia Petitfrere, and Elma Solomon.

Recent appraisal items include:

- A great deal of work is being done on the General Education standards. Areas of improvement have been identified, especially related to NEASC's statement "inform the design of general education courses, and provide criteria for its evaluation, including the assessment of what students learn." We want to sincerely thank the proactive efforts by all faculty and divisions to address this appraisal item.

- Programs have been reviewed for general education credit requirements in all four groups of the general education common core.
- Certificate Programs with courses offered for credit have been reviewed to ensure that academic quality is consistent with its degree programs.
- Recent Program and Discipline reviews were selected to evaluate the program cycle review process. We would like to thank coordinators, chairs and group leaders that participated in follow up interviews. The process of institutional reviews (program reviews, discipline reviews, etc.) is being appraised to determine the adequacy of how we assess student learning.
- Credit for experiential and non-collegiate learning has also been reviewed.
- Courses taught by the same instructor on-ground and online are being reviewed to appraise whether those students in distance courses acquire levels of knowledge, understanding, and competencies equivalent to those achieved in on-ground courses, and that the same academic standards are maintained by both
- The Danbury Center has been a focus to appraise whether students there get the same instructional and academic support as those in Waterbury courses.

We would like to thank everyone for their patience and support this semester. The appraisal phase is ongoing and we are aware that evidence collection has placed an additional burden on everyone.

Sincerely,

Dean Sandra Palmer & Kim O'Donnell  
Your NEASC Co-chairs