

UT MARTIN ASSESSMENT NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2017

Assessment Day Is This Week!!

“The willingness to experiment with change may be the most essential ingredient to success at anything.”—Pat Head Summitt

UT Martin’s annual Scholarfest is this week, celebrating our students and their accomplishments in research, scholarly, and creative activities.

As part of Scholarfest, UT Martin is hosting Assessment Day on Thursday, April 27, from 12:30 to 2:30 in the Boling University Center Ballroom. On display will be poster presentations from administrative and academic units across campus that highlight accomplishments in assessment. Visitors will also be the judges, with \$5000 in prizes at stake. The Chancellor’s Office is providing \$2500 for first place, \$1500 for second place, and \$1000 for third place to the units with the winning posters, chosen by popular vote.

Also joining our assessment posters will be a special exhibit of posters from the implementation of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) initiative supported by the Title III Strengthening Institutions Program grant. UT Martin has implemented Faculty Teaching and Learning Communities focusing on small groups of faculty who have taught at UT Martin for five years or less and led by experienced mentors who are recognized for their teaching and scholarship expertise. Two cohorts of faculty have been participating in the SoTL initiative, and a third cohort is currently being formed. The first two cohorts have studied various aspects of teaching and learning from a research perspective. Seven

posters from this initiative will be on display during Assessment Day showcasing what they have learned through this process. Dr. Bonnie Daniel (bdaniel@utm.edu) is coordinating the SoTL initiative if you are interested in joining a cohort or would like more information.

Collectively, the various Scholarfest events are supported by a long list of contributors: the Honors Program, the Division of Academic Affairs, the UT Martin Title III Strengthening Institutions Program grant, the Chancellor’s Office, the Office of Accreditation and Assessment, and our students, faculty, and staff from various units across campus.

Just as Coach Summitt was willing to experiment with change as she strived to find a recipe for success, this year our students, faculty, and staff have experimented with in-depth investigations, creative approaches, and new experiences in their efforts to achieve success. Please come and help us celebrate their accomplishments!

SACSCOC Summer Institute

The 2017 SACSCOC Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation will be held in July in 2017. The Chancellor’s Office is supporting two faculty/staff members, Dr. Melanie Bruce and Ms. Heidi Busch, in attending this institute in order to learn more about accreditation and assessment.

Melanie Bruce is an assistant professor in the Department of Management, Marketing, and Information Systems. In her application to represent UT Martin at the institute, Melanie wrote: “Since starting at UTM I have begun a new research stream into

teaching and learning. I believe this conference will provide me with an arsenal of knowledge into best practices in assessment and designing quality student learning that I can integrate into my department and college as well as informing my developing research stream.”

Heidi Busch is an assistant professor and the electronic resources librarian in the Paul Meek Library. In her application, Heidi wrote: “As a member of the Assessment Team from the Paul Meek Library, I hope to gain a better understanding of the role the library plays in ensuring success for all our students. I also believe this institute will provide me with the opportunity to learn from other stakeholders across the accreditation spectrum; including those in administration, faculty, and staff.”

Melanie and Heidi will be sharing their experiences with us in later Assessment Newsletters. We will be soliciting applications for faculty and staff to attend the December SACSCOC Annual Meeting in late summer/early fall, so keep that opportunity in mind as you begin to make plans for the Fall semester.

MILE Program update

This month, the MILE Program administered the SAILS Information Literacy Test to students enrolled in English 112 and in discipline-specific courses that had been identified for use in the MILE Program due to their culminating experiences that rely on information literacy. The SAILS Test is the MILE Program’s external assessment of the program, and this administration is serving as a post-test for the program (for more information on the SAILS Test, see <https://www.projectsails.org/>).

As an incentive for participating in the SAILS Test, students who completed the test were entered into a drawing for one of eight \$25 gift cards. The winners of the gift cards

were: Alyson Brown, Molly Green, Trever Hall, Shay Reid, Sarah Barnhart, Tanner Weissling, Rebecca Wisdom, and Bailee Esch.

A total of 101 students completed the SAILS Test. Complete results will be available this summer.

High Impact Practices

We have received assessment guidebooks from almost every unit on campus; a few of you are still working on those, and we’re looking forward to seeing your results! Currently, we’re reading your guidebooks and are planning to provide some feedback for you.

One of the things we’ve noted is the prevalence of work experiences our non-academic units provide to our students. Many of these units noted the professionalism, work ethic, initiative, and customer service characteristics that our students develop through working with these units. In addition, some of these units provide career-based opportunities for these students:

- **Finance and Administration** involves their student worker with developing and analyzing reports.
- **IT Services** involves students in summer lab rotations, classroom installations, and inventory. In many cases, students are in charge of planning and completing these projects.
- **Public Safety** employs students in a variety of ways, including as dispatchers, securing academic buildings at the end of the academic day, and night supervisors for residence facilities. Many of the students they employ are pursuing career paths related to public safety.

We’ll have more information on high impact practices in future Assessment Newsletters.