**Psychology Department Results**

Submitted by Wendy Pecka and the Psychology/Sociology Faculty

**Psychology Department Assessment Strategies:**

Because there is no nationally standardized examination available for introductory level Psychology courses, the full-time instructors in the Psychology and Sociology Departments collaborated to develop common pre-test/post-test assessments for courses offered within the program. All instructors teaching Abnormal Psychology were asked to administer the 25 item multiple-choice examination at the beginning and conclusion of the Fall 2012 term. The Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) test in critical thinking was administered in the Spring of 2013 to students enrolled in Personal and Social Adjustment. Additionally, the CLO Communication rubric was used to assess a sample of writing in the Personal and Social Adjustment course.

**Abnormal Psychology:**

Students from 1 section of Abnormal Psychology completed both the pre- and post test. Data from the Fall 2012 academic semester are summarized below:

 **Fall 2012**

* Number of Students Tested: 26
* Pre-Test Mean Score: 43.1% correct
* Post-Test Mean Score: 75.7% correct

**Personal and Social Adjustment:**

Students from Personal and Social Adjustment completed the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) test in critical thinking during the Spring 2013 semester. This test assesses the ability to clarify, analyze, evaluate and extend arguments. Data from the Spring 2013 academic semester are summarized below:

 **Spring 2013**

* Number of Students Tested: 52
* Mean Score of 62

The average student scored a 62 which placed them at an achievement level at or above the national mean on the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) test in critical thinking. Additionally, a qualitative writing assessment was administered to determine how students perceived course content, including the textbook and materials used, as well as the various teaching strategies employed for specific content areas within the course. Students scored an average of 7.2 on a 9 point rubric (CLO-Communication Rubric). Faculty analyzed assessment results and determined that writing structure was an area improved among students enrolled in the 2012-2013 academic year.

**Evaluation of Pre and Post Test Data:**

The full-time faculty in the Psychology and Sociology Departments reviewed the test results for differences in mean scores between individual sections of the course taught during the academic year. In addition to overall mean score differences, individual item analysis was conducted to determine any relationships in correct answers between pre-test and post-test responses. Through item analysis, faculty also examined patterns of similarity in responses that were incorrect across sections of the psychology courses evaluated. The results allowed faculty to discuss content areas where emphasis may be being less consistently applied across sections of the course. The full-time instructors discussed what teaching strategies may be employed to ensure both basic and advanced concepts are covered in a more standardized manner.

Faculty noted one area of weakness was the limited offerings of 2000 level psychology courses at the Rolla campus. They proposed the addition of one section of Abnormal Psychology and one section of Social Psychology to the ECC-Rolla course offerings for the 2013-2014 school year. Because Psychology is currently the 6th most popular major at East Central College, the enrollment numbers should sustain the added sections.

Personal and Social Adjustment is designated as a writing intensive course. The faculty determined that college level writing is necessary to sufficiently comprehend the textbook and assessment materials for course. During the 2012 academic year, ECC Academic Council approved the addition of a college level writing prerequisite to the Personal and Social Adjustment course. Using the CLO communication rubric, it was determined that students enrolled in Personal and Social Adjustment in Spring 2013 showed improvement in writing skills over the previous year results.