**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 a common pre-test/post-test for assessment purposes. All instructors teaching General Psychology are asked to administer the 25 item multiple-choice examination at the beginning and conclusion of each term.

**General Psychology:**

Students from 11 sections of General Psychology completed both the pre- and post test. Data from the 2009-2010 academic year are summarized below:

 **Fall 2009**

* Number of Students Tested: 228
* Pre-Test Mean Score: 62.2% correct
* Post-Test Mean Score: 74.5% correct

 **Spring 2010**

* Number of Students Tested: 222
* Pre-Test Mean Score: 61.5% correct
* Post-Test Mean Score: 74.4% correct

**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 general psychology course. 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.

The full-time faculty will pilot a common comprehensive final exam in the Fall 2010 semester to further assist in the standardization of the curricula for the general psychology course at East Central College.

Additionally, the faculty determined that a college reading level is necessary to sufficiently comprehend the textbook and materials for course. A proposal was submitted and approved by Academic Council to add a college level reading prerequisite to the general psychology course. Appropriate reading levels are determined prior to course enrollment by Accuplacer reading scores administered to all students.

During the 2010-2011 school year, the full-time faculty plan to develop a qualitative assessment for administration in the General Psychology faculty. The assessment will further examine how students perceive course content, including the textbook and materials used, as well as the various teaching strategies employed for specific content areas within the course.