

SENIOR PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

All Nichols College Day Division students develop a portfolio which is begun in the sophomore year and expanded and refined until a final version is passed in as part of the Senior Professional Development Seminar in the fall semester of the Senior year.

For the fourth consecutive year, in the fall of 2006, the senior portfolios were used to assess General Education in the following areas: written communication; technology; teamwork and leadership; and analytical and critical thinking. These areas are based on the College's Educational Objectives. Teams of professors use rubrics developed for the purpose of standardizing our assessment of student achievement in each of these areas. Each skill is rated as "Not Observed (0), "Below Expectations (1)," "Needs Improvement (2)," "Satisfactory (3)," "Good (4)," or "Outstanding (5)."

FINDINGS

FALL 2006 PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT SCORES

Area Assessed	%NO	%1	%2	%3	%4	%5
Integration of research and data into written work.	21%	12%	23%	23%	18%	3%
Coherence of written work	0%	1%	14%	38%	39%	7%
Creativity of written work	1%	1%	31%	33%	31%	3%
Mechanics in written work	0%	7%	29%	21%	39%	4%
Technology skills	0%	4%	19%	36%	33%	9%
Teamwork	2%	12%	16%	31%	27%	13%
Leadership	13%	14%	13%	28%	18%	15%
Analytical/Quantitative skills	19%	0%	13%	36%	18%	13%
Analytical/Critical thinking	17%	2%	13%	32%	24%	13%

FALL 2005 PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT SCORES

Area Assessed	%NO	%1	%2	%3	%4	%5
Integration of research and data into written work.	1.67	5	20.8	45	26.7	11.7
Coherence of written work	0	4.17	14.2	43.3	26.7	11.7
Creativity of written work	1.67	0	10.8	54.2	23.3	10

Mechanics in written work	0.83	9.17	37.5	34.2	12.5	5.83
Technology skills	1.67	23.3	30	28.3	14.2	2.5
Teamwork	0.63	10	25	28.8	24.4	11.3
Leadership	7.5	16.3	28.8	13.8	18.1	15.6
Analytical/Quantitative skills	18	4.5	18.9	25.2	25.2	8.11
Analytical/Critical thinking	9.01	2.7	13.5	26.1	35.1	13.5

Over the last year, these scores show notable improvement. In Teamwork and Leadership there is a clear movement from 2: “Needs Improvement” to 3: “Satisfactory.” A similar change is also evident in all aspects of the writing evaluation, as a notable percentage of “2s” became “3s.” However, the number of “5s” showed a decline.

In order to address areas where the Nichols Faculty would like to see a continuation of this improvement, the College has begun the development of cross-disciplinary Writing and Analysis rubrics, to guide non-writing faculty in evaluating student papers. The College also has supported initiatives spearheaded in the Academic Resource Center to present workshops for faculty on teaching writing and in developing a Teaching Writing Guidebook for faculty. A particular area of concern is to give students more consistent exposure to research and integrating data into their writing.