News from Institutional Research

Issues 7 of "News from Institutional Research" focused on results from the HERI Faculty survey completed by one hundred fifty Creighton undergraduate faculty in the 2004-2005 academic year. The data presented focused on faculty responses to five survey questions considered to be indicators of spirituality and reported mean score differences between faculty groupings. Data was also presented indicating that faculty with high scores on a Spirituality scale[1] were more likely to be high scorers on five related qualities. Specifically, the relationship between Spirituality and Positive Outlook in Work & Life was discussed.

Issue 8 continues to look at that research data and the other qualities/constructs shown in the graph in the previous issue. This issue will also report how faculty view the place of spirituality in higher education. The faculty groupings in this issue are the same as in Issue 7.

Spirituality and the Professoriate, II

As discussed in the last issue, faculty who have high scores on the Spirituality scale are also more likely to be high scorers on the five related scales than their less spiritual peers. The last issue reported that the largest difference between high and low scorers on Spirituality was on the Positive Outlook in Work & Life (41 percentage points) yet there were no significant differences between the mean scores on that scale between the different faculty groupings.

The second largest difference between high and low scorers on the Spirituality scale is on the Focus on Students' Personal Development and Civic-Minded Practice scales (33 percentage points). On both of these scales there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the different faculty groupings.

There were also large differences between those scoring high and low on the Spirituality scale on Civic-Minded Values (28 percentage points) and Diversity Advocacy (23 percentage points). Analysis found statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the different faculty groupings on these scales also.

Focus on Students' Personal Development ("reflects the degree of emphasis placed on developing students' moral character, enhancing their self-understanding, helping them develop personal values, providing for their emotional development, facilitating their search for meaning and purpose in life, and enhancing their spiritual development"). Six questions, maximum score= 24, minimum= 6.

Overall mean	15.91	Nursing	17.70	▲Science, Social Science
		Humanities	17.45	▲Science, Social Science
		Professional	16.50	▲Science
		Business	14.94	
		Social Science	14.59	▼Nursing, Humanities
		Science	13.60	▼Nursing, Humanities, Professional

Faculty in Nursing, Humanities and the Professional groupings had significantly higher mean scores ($p<.01$) on the Focus of Students' Personal Development than faculty in Science. Faculty in Nursing and Humanities groupings had significantly higher mean scores ($p<.01$) on the Focus of Students' Personal Development than faculty in Social Science.

Civic-Minded Practice ("relates to using one's scholarship to address local community needs, collaborating with the local community in research/teaching, engaging in public service without pay, incorporating community service in courses, teaching a service learning course, advising student groups in service work and engaging in community service"). Seven questions, maximum score = 23, minimum= 6.

Overall mean	10.62	Nursing	11.75	▲Science
		Social Science	11.44	▲Science
		Professional	11.18	▲Science
		Business	11.08	▲Science
		Humanities	10.59	▲Science
		Science	8.85	▼Nursing, Social Science, Professional, Business, Humanities

Faculty in all groupings had significantly higher mean scores ($p<.01$) on the Civic-Minded Practice scale than faculty in Science.

[1] See Issue 7 for an explanation of the Spirituality scale.

Civic-Minded Values ("includes several beliefs: that students should be encouraged to do community service, that colleges have a responsibility to work with surrounding communities, and that colleges should be active in solving social problems. It also reflects the priority placed on preparing students for responsible citizenship and on instilling a commitment to community service, as well as a personal commitment by the faculty member to influencing social values and to influencing the political structure"). Nine questions, maximum score = 36, minimum= 9.

Overall mean	24.01	Social Science	25.59	▲Business, Science
		Nursing	25.55	▲Business, Science
		Professional	24.61	▲Science
		Humanities	24.50	▲Science
		Business	22.25	▼Social Science, Nursing
		Science	21.62	▼Social Science, Nursing, Professional, Humanities

Faculty in Social Science and Nursing had significantly higher mean scores ($p<.01$) on Civic-Minded Values than faculty in Business and Science. Faculty in the Professional and Humanities groupings had significantly higher mean scores ($p<.01$) on Civic-Minded Values than faculty in Science.

Diversity Advocacy ("includes the belief that a racially diverse student body enhances educational experiences for all students, the priority given to enhancing students' knowledge/understanding of other races, and the personal importance that the faculty member places on helping to promote racial understanding"). Five questions, maximum score = 20, minimum= 5.

Overall mean	14.88	Humanities	16.11	▲Business, Science
		Nursing	16.00	▲Business, Science
		Social Science	15.70	▲Business, Science
		Professional	15.39	▲Science
		Business	13.19	▼Humanities, Nursing, Social Science
		Science	12.52	▼Humanities, Nursing, Social Science, Professional

Faculty in Humanities, Nursing and Social Science had significantly higher mean scores ($p<.01$) on Diversity Advocacy than faculty in Business and Science. Faculty in the Professional grouping had a significantly higher mean score ($p<.01$) on Diversity Advocacy than faculty in Science.

Faculty View of Spirituality in Higher Education
Given the high priority students place on spirituality, it is important to understand how faculty view the place of spirituality in higher education, both for themselves and for their students. The vast majority of the Creighton undergradaute faculty (82%) disagree that "the spiritual dimension of faculty members' lives has no place in the academy" . While the percentage of faculty disagreeing with the statement ranged from ninety-one percent to sixty-two percent, there were no statistically significant differences ($p<.01$) between the means of various faculty groupings.

Seventy percent of the undergraduate faculty agree that "colleges should be concerned with facilitating students' spiritual development". Again, even though the percentage of faculty agreeing with this statement raged from eighty-three percent to forty-four percent, there were no statistically significant differences ($p<.01$) between the means of various faculty groupings.

	Business	Humanities	Nursing	Professional	Science	Social Science
Disagree—Spiritual dimension of faculty has no place in the academy	81%	85%	91%	94%	62%	81%
Agree—Colleges should facilitate students' spiritual development	44%	79%	83%	78%	55%	73%

EssentialVery Important Goals for Undergraduate Education
The Faculty Survey asked respondents to indicate the personal importance of sixteen "educational goals for undergraduate students" on a four point scale (not important, somewhat important, very important, essential).

Three of the sixteen "goals" were not supported as "essential/very important" by more than fifty percent of the faculty and will not be discussed further: Facilitate search for meaning/purpose in life (44%), Enhance spiritual development (43%), and Provide for students' emotional development (39%).

The remaining thirteen "goals" follow in descending order of importance to the total faculty (i.e. the percentage of total faculty marking them "essential" and "very important". *An asterisk after the goal indicates there are statistically significant differences ($p>.01$) between the means of the various faculty groupings on that particular goal.*

Goals for Undergraduate Education	All	Business	Humanities	Nursing	Professional	Science	Social Science
Develop ability to think critically	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%
Help master knowledge in a discipline	96%	100%	95%	96%	100%	100%	86%
Promote ability to write effectively*	87%	87%	92%	78%	83%	80%	100%
Develop moral character*	75%	69%	78%	91%	94%	57%	68%
Prepare students for employment after college*	71%	88%	45%	91%	94%	63%	73%
Prepare students for grad/advanced education	67%	56%	63%	87%	61%	63%	73%
Help students develop personal values*	67%	56%	80%	78%	89%	33%	64%
Instill a basic appreciation of the liberal arts*	65%	38%	100%	57%	39%	47%	77%
Prepare students for responsible citizenship	63%	50%	65%	83%	61%	47%	73%
Enhance students' knowledge of and appreciation for other racial/ethnic groups*	61%	44%	78%	91%	56%	20%	73%
Develop creative capacities	60%	44%	70%	78%	56%	60%	36%
Enhance students' self-understanding*	59%	44%	75%	70%	72%	33%	55%
Instill in students a commitment to service*	53%	44%	55%	87%	50%	27%	59%

* indicates a statistically significant difference (p>.01) between the means of various faculty groupings and is explained immediately below.

Statistically Significant Differences Among Faculty Groupings (p<.01)

Promote ability to write effectively:
    The means of Social Science (3.59) and Humanities (3.53) were significantly high than Nursing (3.04).

Develop moral character:
    The mean of Nursing (3.52) was significantly higher than Social Science (2.77) and Science (2.67).
    The mean of Professional (3.33) was significantly higher than Science (2.67).

Prepare students for employment after graduation:
    The mean of Nursing (3.43) was significantly higher than Science (2.80) and Humanities (2.48).
    The mean of Professional (3.33) was significnatly higher than Humanities (2.48).
    The mean of Business (3.25) was significantly higher than Humanities (2.48).

Help students develop personal values:
    The mean of Nursing (3.04) was significantly higher than Social Science (2.77) and Science (2.44).
    The mean of Professional (3.0) was significantly higher than Science (2.44).

Instill a basic appreciation of the liberal arts:
    The mean of Humanities (3.43) was significantly higher than every other faculty grouping..
    The mean of Social Science (2.95) was significantly higher than Professional (2.39), Science (2.33) and Business (2.31).

Enhance students' knowledge of and appreciation for other racial/ethnic groups:
    The mean of Nursing (3.26) was significantly higher than Business (2.50), and Science (1.97).
    The mean of Humanities (3.10) was significantly higher than Science (1.97).
    The mean of Social Science (3.00) was significantly higher than Science (1.97).
    The mean of Professional (2.83) was significantly higher than Science (1.97).

Enhance students' self-understanding:
    The mean of Humanities (3.10) was significantly higher than Business (2.44) and Science (2.33).
    The mean of Professional (3.06) was significantly higher than Science (2.33).

Instill in students a commitment to community service.
    The mean of Nursing (3.00) was significantly higher than Science (2.17).

The data above show that there is considerable variety as to the importance of various goals of undergraduate education by faculty grouping. While there are no meaningful differences about the importance of developing critical thinking skills, the importance of effective writing skills varies by faculty area. Likewise, while there are no meaningful differences about the importance of preparing students for "responsible citizenship", not all faculty agree that instilling a commitment to community service is an important means to accomplishing that goal. It follows, therefore, that the importance of developing moral character, helping student develop values, enhancing knowledge and appreciation for other racial/ethnic groups, and enhancing students' self-understanding will not be as important to some faculty as it is to others.

This is the last "News from Institutional Research" for this academic year. See you in the fall!