Tiger Swan, QORE Team Present Toolkit

The QORE team (Quinsigamond Outcomes Research for Excellence), which includes librarian Tiger Swan, has had a busy semester sharing its Oral Presentation Assignment Toolkit with colleagues from peer institutions across the Commonwealth. The public higher education assessment community has recognized the QORE team for its creative and innovative approach to assessment of general education outcomes. After presenting the Oral Presentation Assignment Toolkit at AMCOA (Advancing a Massachusetts Culture of Assessment) in February, the team was invited to do an encore presentation at Holistic Approaches to Advancing Student Learning, which took place at Fitchburg State University on March 8. In April, the team will do a third presentation at the Mass Department of Higher Education 8th Annual Assessment Conference in Marlboro. In addition to Swan, the QORE team members are Amy Beaudry, Professor of English and Academic Technology Facilitator; Gaelan Benway, Professor of Sociology/Academic Assessment Facilitator and Maureen Giacobbe, Coordinator of Instructional Technology & Assessment.

The QORE team has made the Oral Presentation and other toolkits freely available to all through a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike license. QCC faculty and staff may find the toolkits in the Educator Idea Vault section of Blackboard and direct questions to QORE@qcc.mass.edu or any member of the team.

In 2016, as the QORE team started to envision the project, librarian Tiger Swan performed a literature review and found virtually no research on using oral presentation to assess general education learning outcomes. Thus the project represented not only an opportunity to strengthen QCC general education outcomes assessment but also a chance to contribute to the scholarly conversation about assessment.

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Photo by Ken Dwyer
Morse awarded grant

Librarian Cary Morse has been honored as the inaugural community college recipient of the MALTA award: the MCCLPHEI Academic Librarian Travel Award. (MCCLPHEI stands for Massachusetts Commonwealth Consortium of Libraries in Public Higher Education Institutions) This is a generous travel grant awarded to one Massachusetts Community College librarian to support attending a national conference. Cary will participate in the American Library Association (ALA) annual conference in Washington, D.C., in June and present a summary of the conference proceedings at a MCCLPHEI professional development workshop in 2019-20. Cary’s participation in the ALA conference is also supported by QCC Staff Development funds.

The ALA Conference offers librarians an unmatched professional development opportunity. At the conference, Cary will attend workshops, discussions and poster sessions about key issues such as information literacy instruction for first-generation college students and usability of library websites. Conference keynote speakers will include Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden and Nigerian-American author Tomi Adeyemi.

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Helpful hints from your QCC librarians

- Fill out a Library Instruction session request today! Library instruction helps to empower students to become better learners in your classroom, at the college, and in the community. Librarians help students develop effective research strategies for locating and evaluating sources appropriate to their needs. Session discussions may incorporate topics that look at scholarly vs. popular sources, reasons for citing, the information cycle, or others. Each instruction session is designed based upon your intended course and/or project outcomes.

- Want to embed library content (e.g. streaming video or a journal article) in your Blackboard page? Librarian Denise Cross has you covered with her helpful instructions.

- Did you know that as a QCC faculty member you have borrowing privileges at a number of area libraries? Find out more about how to borrow items from the libraries of Worcester Polytechnic, Holy Cross, Worcester State and more!

- Anyone who lives and/or works in Massachusetts has access to a Boston Public Library ecard. Sign up for yours to get access to JSTOR and many other databases.

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In the first phase of the project the QORE team assembled a cross-disciplinary committee that created an oral presentation assignment framework and grading rubric explicitly tied to several QCC general education learning goals. In the second phase, the team piloted the project with the help of faculty members and students who generously donated sample assignments and student work, respectively. The results of the pilot project showed that the oral presentations helped students become active and autonomous learners. A participating faculty member summarized the results: “[Students] are teaching, really: Sharing insights that are based on research and personal experience... whose use is to educate their audience. This requires considerable meaning-making and authentication, as well as audience awareness.”

The Oral Presentation Toolkit is one of four toolkits available to faculty and staff in the Educator Idea Vault section of Blackboard. (Image by Maureen Giacobbe)

—Cary Morse
EDUCATED


Homeschooled by survivalist parents in the Idaho mountains, Tara Westover grew up stockpiling rations for Doomsday and gathering herbs for the family’s medical needs – seeing a doctor or nurse was *verboden*. Encouraged by an older brother who had been out in “the world,” Tara overcame physical and psychological abuse to educate herself and gain admission to Brigham Young University, where she thrived. Later she studied at Harvard and at Cambridge University, earning a PhD in History. She currently lives in London and is estranged from some members of her family.

PUSHOUT


Already being compared to Michelle Alexander’s blockbuster *The New Jim Crow*, Morris’s expose drills into the harmful experiences impacting black girls in schools. Morris chronicles the experiences across the U.S. of young black women whose complex lives are poorly addressed by school bureaucrats and the U.S. justice system. *Kirkus Reviews* calls *Pushout* “compelling” and “thought provoking” in its exposure of a world of dashed dreams. Author Morris encourages the growing movement to reform the structures that too often eject students – female and male – into precarious futures.

SAY NOTHING


Northern Ireland’s “Troubles” are in the news again, as the prospect of an unfriendly border with the South as part of Brexit raises old fears. New Yorker staffer Patrick Radden Keefe examines a notorious 1972 murder in the North and its decades of repercussions. The victim was Jean McConville, a 38-year old mother of 10, abducted from her home by masked gunmen whom neighbors readily identified as Irish Republican Army (IRA) operatives. Keefe’s story focuses on Dolours Price, one of McConville’s killers who was a valuable asset to the Irish Republican Army. Keefe zooms out from the personal to the political: the decades of guerilla war that still cast a pall over Northern Ireland and the Republic, and that Brexit might inflame anew.

(Cont.)

And Cary is particularly excited to participate in two ALA reference research workshops offered by a team of librarians from the University of Southern California. The team conducted focus group research to better understand their students’ habits, attitudes and needs in relation to research help.

The Los Angeles team also studied chat reference with an emphasis on balancing student expectations with the mandates of the information literacy framework adopted by ACRL (Association of College and Research Libraries) in 2015.

Cary expects to return from ALA with new skills and knowledge, an expanded professional network and a rejuvenated commitment to serving the information literacy needs of QCC students, faculty and staff. She is eager to share her learning about new trends and innovations with colleagues both at QCC and at other sites across the Commonwealth.

—Michael Stevenson

-Michael Stevenson