

Most Notable Contribution to an Assessment Project by a Faculty Assessment Leader

As we approach that time of year when individuals are honored and recognized for their contributions to the College, we will hear many stories of how our faculty, time and time again, go above and beyond the normal call of duty. These will include stories of leadership – in the classroom, in service, and in the profession. This award is meant to honor an individual faculty member's leadership in academic assessment that is distinctive and worthy of emulation.

The efforts of this year's honoree in leading this program's evaluation project could best be described as "dynamically self-motivated." Throughout the three-semester program evaluation, this faculty assessment leader effectively used all resources available to complete the inquiry, ensuring that the final outcome would be of such quality that both the department and division dean could use the report to make important strategic decisions about the future of the program.

Although the honoree's department already has a strong track record of supporting assessment, being able to effectively include colleagues in on the program evaluation process from start-to-finish is generally a hard-sell for a faculty assessment leader (particularly when balancing a teaching load and other departmental responsibilities). Recognizing the importance and potential benefits of continued involvement of department colleagues, this faculty assessment leader made frequent, strategic requests of colleagues that ensured their continued interest and involvement in the process. Characterizing these colleagues as "equal partners" in the project, this faculty assessment leader was careful to refrain from asking them to do the "busy work" of the project, but instead, involved them in the broader, visionary aspects of the project's goals.

An impactful assessment project – one that anyone would consider to be "successful" – starts with a purpose that frames the inquiry, includes a wide variety of qualitative and quantitative information, and ends with an analysis that leads to a plan for action that is linked to the initially stated purpose. Under this faculty assessment leader's guidance, this project fulfilled all of the important requirements constituting a successful program evaluation. We have yet to complete the "perfect" assessment project at MCC, or write the "perfect" assessment report. But by all objective measures, this faculty member led project, and wrote the accompanying report, in a truly exemplary fashion.

Please join me in honoring this year's recipient of the Award for the Most Notable Contribution to an Assessment Project by a Faculty Assessment Leader, ***Cristin Finch***.