addressed questions in specific disciplines, and the fourth addressed questions about specific assignments.

Katarina Edinger (English Department) handed out a summary sheet of the results, which she then discussed. Based on first and second year student responses in required general education courses, students gave a highly positive evaluation of the writing. The wording of one question provoked a response that contradicted other responses: most students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the assertion, “I enjoy writing more now than I did at the beginning of the semester.” With the audience participating, a discussion of this item led to revised wording and also to a recognition that students exposed to writing learn that it is hard work and that few students admit enjoying work.

Marcia Schlomitz (Computer Science Department) assessed the value of journal-writing in her Computer Science course, allowing students to reflect in their journals on the problems they are having with the subject matter. She assessed the student journals on their thoughtfulness, and she stressed the importance of allowing students to keep parts of their journals private and to choose which pages they show the instructor at the end of the semester. Acknowledging that she used journals as part of the learning process, Schlomitz noted that she did not use a red pencil on her students’ journals. She required a certain quantity of entries and that the entries be related to subjects discussed in class.

Gunvar Satra discussed the problems of assessing journal-writing, including the overwhelming amount of work for the instructor. She also graded the journals on quantity of pages, but added the regularity of entries throughout the semester. She set a maximum number of points that a student might earn through journal-writing. And she asked the students to grade themselves on their journals. She read their journals at the end of the semester and discovered only a few cases of total disparity between her assessment and the students’ own assessment of their writing. Perry then noted that at the beginning, the project was organized by departments within each discipline because they assumed that the writing skills varied greatly across the disciplines. However, they discovered in the course of the eight-year project that writing in different disciplines had common standards of excellence. The areas of agreement were reflected in the descriptions of effective writing given by participants at the beginning of this workshop.

**Bloom and Chew, continued from page 4**

Chew concluded by noting that there is the danger among administrators, teachers and parents to use a test to encourage limited instruction and to use a test for classroom and school management. Some administrators believe that test results are the only indicator of student performance. However, writing done in a test situation may not truly reflect a person’s ability as a writer.

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**EVALUATING WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM AND OTHER ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS**

**Speakers:** Edward White, California State University, San Bernadino
Gale Hughes-Wiener, Minnesota Community College System
Harvey Wiener, LaGuardia Community College, CUNY

**Introducer/Recorder:** Marianne Reynolds, Mercer County Community College, N.J.

Edward White provided an overview of how students’ writing is assessed, and he emphasized the notion that a writing test is inseparable from its purpose. He identified six types of tests according to function: admission, placement, equivalency, rising junior, exit barrier, and program assessment tests. He pointed out some of the differences in criteria applied to each type. For example, an admission test must have predictive validity, whereas a placement test need not be as rigorous since consequential decisions are not as drastic or final. White also emphasized that no single test score should be used as the only measure of a student’s achievement or potential.

Next, Gale Hughes-Wiener described the Writing Across the Curriculum Program of the Minnesota Community College System. As a program evaluator, she has been involved in the program’s implementation and teacher training and in the preliminary collection and analysis of data. She stressed the need to employ sound research methods in testing the assumption that increasing the quality and quantity of student writing leads to increased learning. Some of the assessment techniques she used to assess the program were Likert Scale surveys and hour-long interviews of faculty, holistic rating of student essays, matched class studies, student evaluation surveys, and workshop questionnaires. The project is scheduled to run for an additional year and a half, after which the evaluation will be completed.

Finally, Harvey Wiener described the current state of assessment. Although faculty interest in assessment is growing, the purposes and practices of assessment at most institutions are often questionable. Wiener noted the conflict between faculty and policy-makers that often accompanies assessment programs and decisions. He stressed the need for instructors to clarify the instructional purposes of assessment and plan accordingly. He emphasized the need to analyze assessment data sensibly and make appropriate program changes. He briefly described the National Project for College Assessment Program Evaluation (CAPE) as a resource for administrators and faculty members who are interested in evaluating and improving their testing programs. Wiener stressed, however, that members of institutions should engage in some self-study and analysis before consulting outside experts.