

Test Writing: Getting the Best Measurement You Can

Invited Guest Speaker Dr. Lynn Webb



HOSTED BY THE CVM TEACHING ACADEMY

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TEST WRITING: GETTING THE BEST MEASUREMENT YOU CAN

Invited Guest Speaker Dr. Lynn Webb

Lynn C. Webb, Ed. D. - Testing Consultant, Chicago, IL

Dr. Webb developed certification examinations for several medical specialties at the National Board of Medical Examiners, was the Director of Testing for the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, and has worked as an independent testing consultant for 13 years.



This workshop will inspire you to write excellent, clear test questions that will provide the information you seek AND prepare your students for the standardized examinations they will take for licensure or certification. Learn how to create professional-level examinations that do not give away the answers to test-wise examinees.

Thursday -April 3rd

9 am - Welcome & Why Measurement Matters

9:30 am - Planning your assessment & Assessment formats

10:30 am - Technical aspects of Multiple Choice Questions

11:30 am - Test-wise examinees

1:00 pm - Practice critiquing test questions & write a few questions

2:30 pm - Group review of questions

3:15 pm - Scoring your assessments

3:45 pm - Differences between professional assessments and your examinations

4:15 pm - Questions/discussion

Friday - January 17th

8:30 -10 am - Critiquing your own examinations



Attendance of the presentations:

Date	Presentations	Attendance
April 3	Morning Session	23*
	Afternoon Session	12
April 4	Morning Session	4

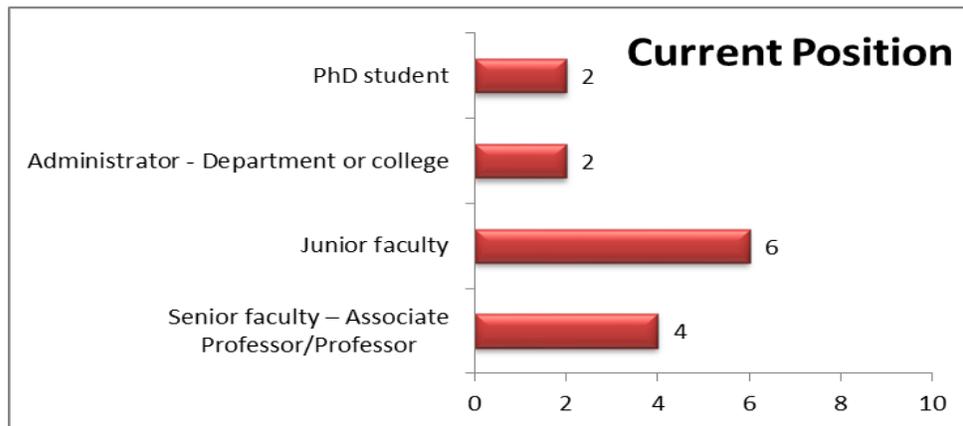
**2 Faculty members from Logan joined the workshop via video conference

Survey Results:

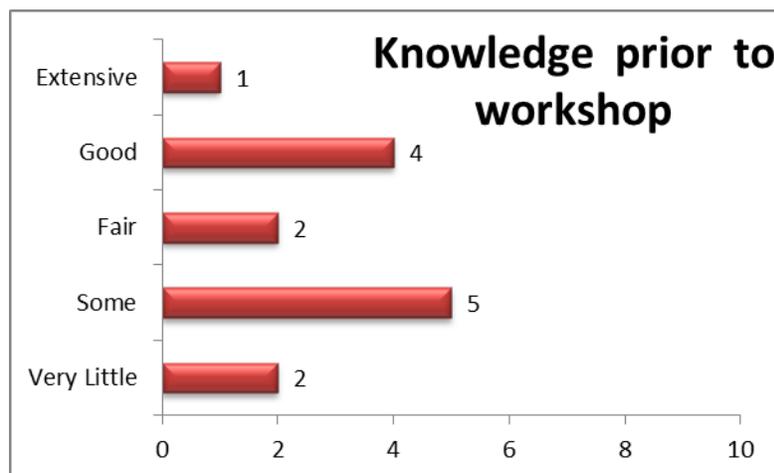
14 people took the online survey:

Department		
Animal Science	1	7.1%
CVM	1	7.1%
GAH	2	14.3%
SMB	1	7.1%
VCS	1	7.1%
VMP	1	7.1%
Declined to Answer	7	50%

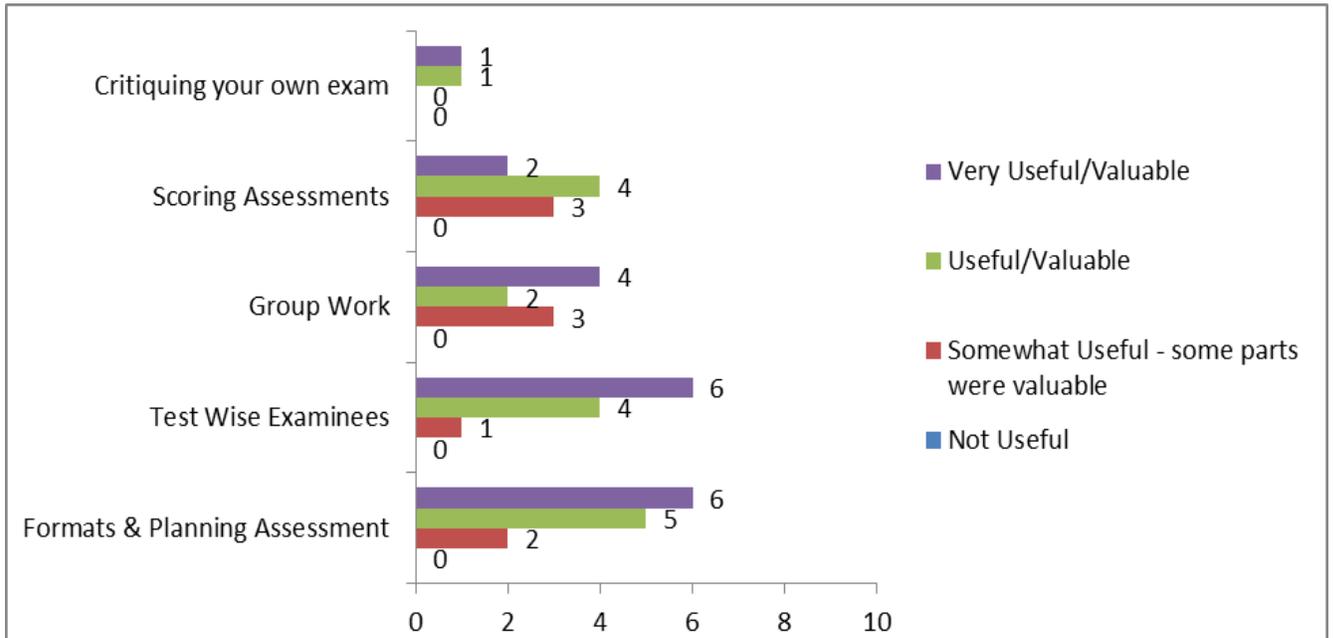
Survey participants:



Which of the following best describes your knowledge/experience with Test Writing details prior to attending the workshops:



Rating of the sessions attended:

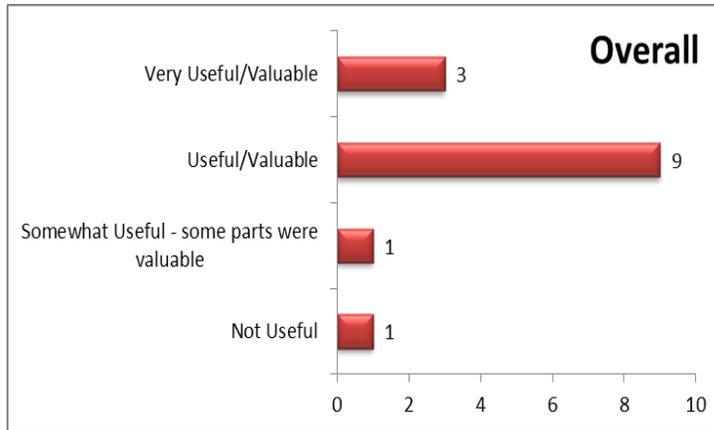


Comments:

- I had not attended a session with the focus before. I appreciated Lynn Webb's approach, helping develop different aspects of test writing. The partner work was especially useful to me personally, working with a knowledgeable colleague who I usually do not collaborate with. The objective feedback was critical but most helpful. I took home test questions that had been evaluated by peers.
- I'm sorry I was unable to attend the Friday AM session. I think I was late for the Thursday afternoon and couldn't stay for the whole thing.
- Seemed disconnected from student learning objectives. A bit too basic.
- The AM material was mostly known stuff for me, but I've been around a while. I think it was very useful for junior faculty who were able to attend. The critiquing session was beneficial for all, and a great model to follow in the future! Projecting the question and inviting conversation was very productive.
- Unfortunately, I couldn't attend the whole session. I would have liked to. I appreciated learning what questions were good, and how to turn a negative question into a positive one.
- I enjoyed having the chance to speak with Lynn one-on-one. Since I missed some of the Thursday sessions due to advising and teaching commitments, that really gave me the opportunity to catch up on some things that I didn't have the chance to observe. I think

Lynn gives too much credit to students, though - at least the ones I see are far from being "test-wise."

Overall Rating of the workshop:



Overall Comments:

- I heard some things I knew, but learned much about strategies/best practices for test-writing.
- The limiting factor was the time needed - very few people can spend 1.5 days on a workshop. Condensing it somehow might be good.

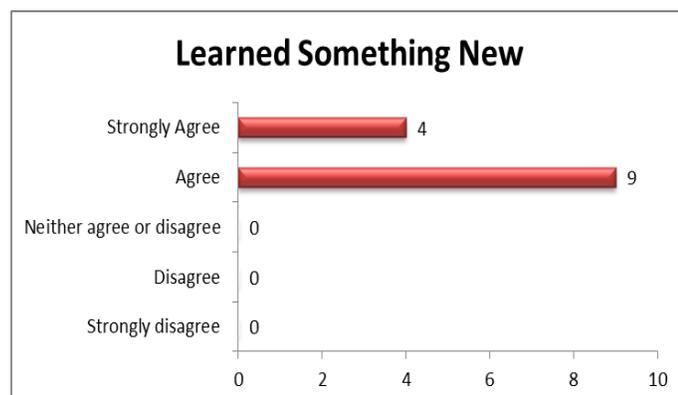


- I would have liked to attend the Thursday morning session
- Not a complete waste of time but not very useful.
- We have a hard time grading multiple answer multiple choice questions. Now I just try to remember to avoid those. I was not around long enough to discuss grading which now often dictates how I write a question. Maybe next time!
- I thought it was definitely useful; I guess I was surprised more people didn't attend.

Workshop:

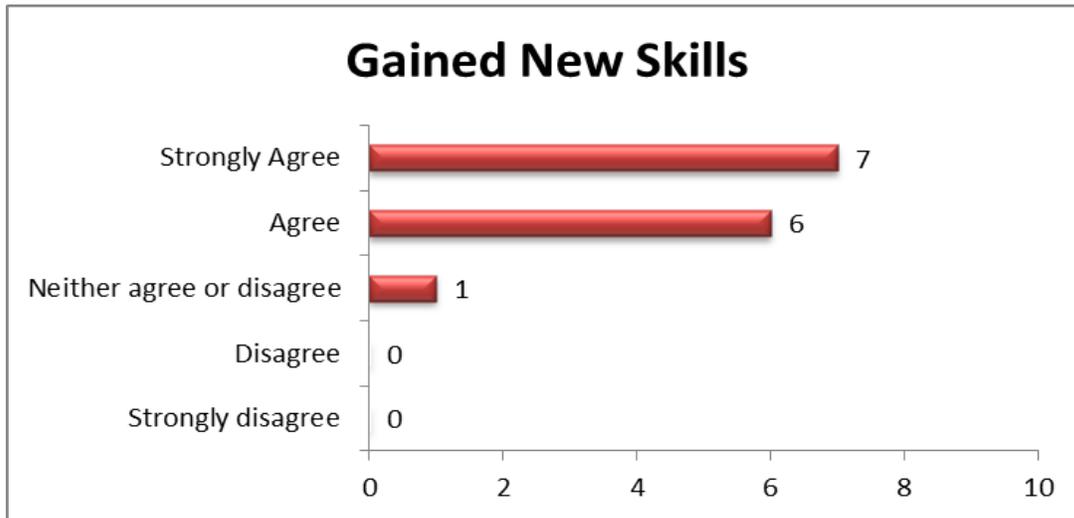
I learned something new

- 100% of the people that took the survey agree to strongly agree that this seminar that they learned something new.



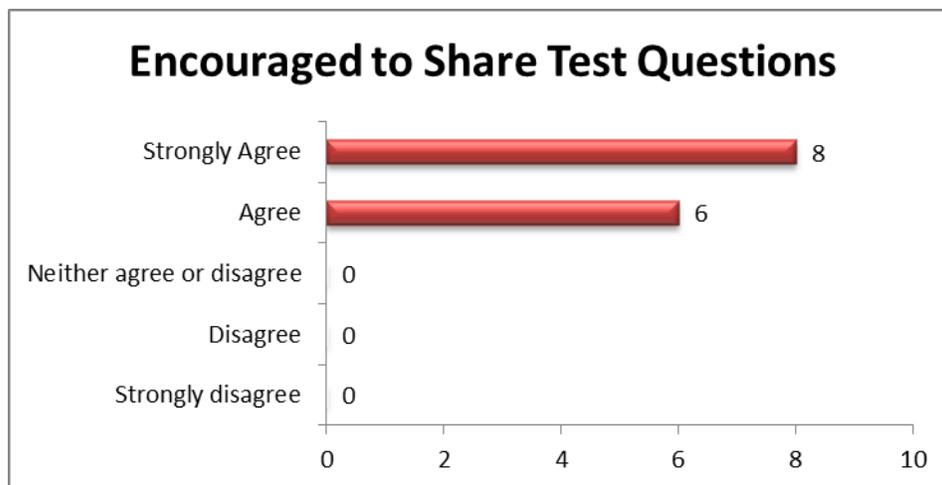
I gained new skills & knowledge that I plan to use in future exams that I write:

- 92.86% of the people that took the survey agree to strongly agree that during the workshop they gained a new skill and knowledge that they plan to use when writing their future exams.



The workshop has encouraged me to share my test questions with colleagues before giving it to students:

- 100% of the people that took the survey agree to strongly agree that the workshop encouraged them to share my test questions with colleagues before giving it to students.



What were the one or two **BEST/MOST VALUABLE** aspects of this workshop?

- 1) getting over my fear of sharing tests with colleagues **BEFORE** administering the exam ; 2) strategies for avoiding test-wise students"
- "How to write various test questions (formats)- How to think about what I want to test before writing the questions-"
- Getting an outsider's perspective on exam writing. Getting specific tips such as to never use negatives, never use "All of the above", etc.
- Bringing to the forefront that we can do better
- The different testing modalities. Multiple choice questions issues.
- The test wise exercise.
- The discussions that involved sharing of questions and the emphasis on the value of that.
- Learning what good test question types are and what to avoid.
- I thought it was really interesting to hear that certain types of questions should never be used. I also got some information on how to better write questions that still ask for the information I'm seeking. I think I incorporate some of Lynn's practices already, but in the future I'll probably try to do a bit more with that.
- "Learning how not to structure questions that test wise students can figure out the answer without really knowing the subject matter.
- Learning how to critique both my exam and other members' exams"
- I found the group work to be the most helpful. The Thursday morning sessions seem to only apply partially to WSU-CVM and more to true standardized testing.



What one or two suggestions do you have that might have **IMPROVED** this workshop?

- "1) The partnered work didn't seem to be scaled for our group. we worked and got a few examples up, but I don't think everyone got the same treatment. An opportunity for all to get feedback would be preferred. 2) More doing and less listening. We could have covered some content before. Employ best teaching practices to help us learn."
- The workshop was a bit lengthy, the material covered could have fit into 1-2 fewer hours
- Consider helping us tie to our student learning objectives, using Blooms Taxonomy or another learning taxonomy. Practice writing questions of different formats for different levels of taxonomy.

- Perhaps breaking it up over 2 days as 2 shorter sessions. One full day left a lot of people out. A venue within the CVM might also have improved attendance, although the room we had was very nice.
- Since I didn't attend a large portion of this, I don't know that I can suggest this. I would like to discuss text question type, and then grading. That may have been covered, but I don't know.
- "I might have missed something, but I think more insight regarding/examples of what are considered "good" test questions would have been helpful to me personally. I realize the fields represented in the room are pretty varied, but...maybe some GRE-type questions would have been appropriate since those are things that should look familiar to everyone in the room. I think improved attendance would have been nice as a courtesy to the speaker."
- More in depth on how to design multiple choice questions
- I think the workshop could be greatly improved if Lynn had more information about our objectives and goals in testing and could tailor her time with us to focus on those objectives and goals.



Any final comments about the workshop (or anything else)?

- It was a most beneficial use of my time. I am glad I went. I was surprised so few were there.
- I enjoyed Dr. Webb and the participant interaction throughout the workshop.
- It would be nice to get this information to the folks who are really in need of this training. The people who came are already interested and engaged in writing better exams. The ones who don't give a hoot are the ones who need it...
- This was a valuable experience for me.
- Rachel rocks! Lynn Webb was awesome!

After attending these workshops do you have any additional/new suggestions for future workshops, brown bags, or other activities related to TEST WRITING

- I would like to see a group meeting where everyone brings a test they already wrote (no new work) and were willing to share with the group/a partner. This work, having colleagues review test questions, would help give us structure to practice what Lynn encouraged us to model. It will work well if there were "beverages" available...

- I did not attend on Friday, but instead of coming up with questions on Thursday, it may have been sped up by having people bring their old tests.
- We have such large class sizes. It's very difficult to grade essay questions- I would like more training in writing multiple choice questions and how to assess students' thought processes in an objective way.
- "It would be good to repeat a workshop like this again for faculty who could not attend - especially junior faculty.
- It would be very useful to follow up with short discussions where participants shared and critiqued exam questions, as we did together in the afternoon session.
- Well done!"
- This can be done pretty regularly since it is such a broadly applicable topic and people generally get little training in this area. Might be worth considering asking someone to run the same 2-3 hr session twice (morning & afternoon).
- A handout with 10-20 great suggestions for people to try.
- How to use the WSU online system for giving exams
- Since the group discussions were the most helpful, I think it would be great to have a scheduled session every few months or so where faculty can meet to discuss test questions with their peers and get advice.

