**CATS Tallow Sculpture Skills Assessment**

**By Jon Hill**

***Abstract***

I used the CATS Comprehensive Assessment Tracking System to measure student’s ability to create a sculpture with my instruction and providing the environment and materials to do so. Tallow sculptures are used to decorate our campus Regions Restaurant for lunch service and food events. In the Fall 2012 was my first measurement of the process and then again Spring 2013 was the second measurement.

***Results***

The results were exciting because I could improve student success by incorporating student learning outcomes and creating a rubric to measure their understanding. Students improved in the Spring 2013 over the fall 2012 in all areas. The area with the largest increase in Spring 2013 compared to Fall 2012 was time management followed by focus on task. A scale of 4=exceptional to 1=below expected or using a point scale of 4=20 points, 3= 18 points and 1 = 14 points.

***Intervention Strategies***

This is a list of differences in the tallow sculpturing assignment which I changed from Fall 2012 for Spring 2013.

Intervention Strategies between Fall 2012 and Spring 2013

* The instructor showed students a sculpture that he created to provide an example for students. By doing an actual tallow example for the class I feel I generated more interest and raised expectations for the student’s projects.
* Students worked in a team environment. Students paired up to work as a team on their sculpture. The students picked their classmate partner for the assignment.
* The students were given three weeks to complete the tallow sculptures. Student’s took the sculptures home and traded with their partners each class period. This three week timeframe seemed to keep all students on task and they all remained driven to complete their sculpturing projects.
* The tallow sculpture directions were changed in the Spring 2013 to have the students create Southwestern themed sculptures as opposed to the open theme of choice. The open theme choice was more difficult for students to determine what to sculpt, therefore more time was used in what to design rather than working on the tallow project. This seemed to impact student’s focus on project scores that improved in the Spring 2013.
* Class time was allocated for students to work on the tallow sculptures for 20 minutes each class period. The class time allowed the instructor time to coach and assist student’s hands on, and to answer any questions the tallow sculpture teams may have.
* The biggest change from Fall 2012 to Spring 2013 was increasing the amount of class time for students work on sculptures. This allowed students to focus on the project in class and ask questions. Student’s time management scores increased in the Spring 2013 because of this change.