

Meeting Minutes for the
University Assessment Committee Meeting
Wednesday, January 26th, 2011, 10:00-11:00 a.m.
Conference Room, Second floor, Olin Physical Sciences Building

In attendance: Monica Baloga (Chair), Guy Bruce, Ken Crooks, Brian Ehrlich, Veronica Giguere, Pierre Larochelle, Ted Richardson, Tim Rosser, Matt Ruane, Andy Stanfield, Manolis Tomadakis, Richard Turner, Alex Vamosi, Leslie Savoie (guest)

Absent: Hamid Rassoul

I. December 14th, 2010 meeting minutes approval – approved by all voting members in attendance

II. Change in committee name

The Chair explained that the current committee name of University Assessment Committee is misleading because it implies this committee handles all aspects of institutional assessment instead of just academic programs. There has already been confusion internally with this, and there is concern that confusion may arise with external reviewers. It was recommended that the committee change its name to reflect its purpose. Two new names were nominated: University Academic Assessment Committee (UAAC) or Academic Program Assessment Committee (APAC). Dr. Richardson asked which of this would be more in line with our mission and more easily recognized by external reviewers. It was stated that the latter would be better, thus 11 committee members unanimously voted to adopt “Academic Program Assessment Committee”, with one abstention.

III. Review mission, vision, goals

The Chair stated that since she forgot to bring copies of these statements, the committee would not review at this time. She did remind the committee that annual review of these statements was important, especially as stated goals were met and as the assessment process evolved. It was recommended that this review occur in May, since this is when they were initially drafted.

IV. Timeline

The Chair brought up the need for this committee to establish an annual timeline for the academic program assessment process. She provided committee members with several examples of timelines from other institutions, most of which included a summer commitment for reviewing data and writing action plans. This prompted a discussion about summer compensation for 9-month faculty (not guaranteed under our current financial situation) versus organizing the timeline so that data review and action planning occurred within the academic calendar year. College of Engineering currently reviews their ABET data collected in the fall in January of the same academic year, and data collected in the spring in August of the next academic year. In general, the committee members believed this could be a workable solution to summer time commitment.

Questions surfaced on whether all PLOs needed to be assessed on an annual basis or whether they could be partitioned over a number of years (two- or three-year cycle). Dr. Vamosi

indicated that the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business's on-campus and online programs were piloting their assessment this semester but for only a number of their PLOs. The remaining amount would be assessed the following year with the intent of generating a two-year cycle for assessing all PLOs for their degree programs. Dr. Larochelle stated that the College of Engineering used a three-year cycle that worked for ABET. This led to vote by the commitment to adopt a three-year cycle with a strong recommendation to assess more frequently. Although 11 approved and 1 abstained, the topic was further continued when Dr. Ruane questioned whether this cycle would provide the data and continuous improvement process information needed for the next SACS reaffirmation in 2015 (with the report due in 2014). Also there were questions about what "continuous" meant for SACS purposes. There were concerns raised that for a three-year cycle, changes that may be made due to evidence collected for a particular learning outcomes would not be measured for success for another two years. The Chair asked for a motion to table the original vote until she could find out more conclusive information about what constitutes "continuous improvement". The motion was granted, seconded, and voted on unanimously.

V. WEAVEonline Discussion

Now that the majority of PLOs for academic programs has been uploaded to WEAVEonline and has been marked as "Final" by Assessment Coordinators, it is time to move to the next step. CJ Colley, Assessment Specialist, recently sent an email out to committee members requesting that the Assessment Coordinators begin the process of entering their Measure Statements and Achievement Targets. With instructions provided in the email message, CJ indicated that it would be good practice for the ACs, but that if there was any resistance, he would be happy to enter them. The committee members were instructed to inform their respective ACs to have these entered by Friday, March 4, 2011 (right before Spring Break). **[Action Item]**

The Chair had specific questions regarding the PLOs on WEAVEonline:

In the Extended Studies Division (ESD):

Chair: Do you intend to use the same PLO statements for all concentrations in a degree program?

Dr. Richardson: Since the programs differ by only a few courses, they would all use the same PLO statements.

In the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business:

Chair: Are there PLO statements for the MBA in Accounting and the MBA in Finance?

Dr. Vamosi: These are newly approved programs (approved Spring 2010) which were not brought up to the committee for "exemption" status. In addition to these two, there is an MBA in Internet Marketing, a B.S. in Sports Management, and a B.S. in Logistics Management that are new.

The Chair asked the committee for approval to put all five programs on "exempt" status for the spring 2011 semester. All voting members approved, but CoB was encouraged not to wait to begin developing their PLOs for these programs.

This prompted discussion about requiring new programs to have a developed assessment plan with learning outcomes, curriculum mapping, and measure statements in place before going through the approval process (i.e. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or Graduate Council). The Chair acknowledged the need for this, but maintained that the immediate concern of the committee is to help finalize the assessment process for the existing programs in anticipation of the SACS Fifth-Year Interim Report.

VI. DRC Reports

With little time to spare, the Chair told the committee that the DRC reports had been submitted to the Executive Vice President for review. The Chair also asked the members to specify individuals in their DRCs who should be recognized for their hard work in the developmental phase of our assessment process. **[Action Item]** Only College of Engineering and the Department of Humanities and Communication provided names, while others only listed department/degree programs.

VII. Action Items:

- 1. Assessment Coordinators should begin entering Measures and Achievement Targets into WEAVEonline. CJ Colley will email instructions.**
- 2. Identify individuals to be recognized for their hard work on the developmental phase of our assessment process.**

VIII. Next meeting: Wednesday, February 23, 2011 from 10-11 a.m. in the OPS Conference Room

Respectfully submitted,

Monica H. Baloga