

Academic Assessment Committee
December 13, 2011, 3:00pm
Provost's Conference Room, 239 Tigert Hall

Present: Timothy Brophy, Joanne Foss, Anne Kendall Casella, Margaret Fields, Mark Law, Bernard Mair, Barbara Pace, David Pharies, Theresa Vernetson

Guests: Fedro Zazueta, Jennifer Smith, Rebecca Williams, James Demery, Brian Ray

Dr. Brophy introduced Ashley Caspary as the Program Assistant for the Offices of Institutional Planning & Research and Institutional Assessment. She will be taking minutes for committee meetings. Fedro Zazueta, Jennifer Smith, and Rebecca Williams from Academic Technology as well as Brian Ray from the School of Business were introduced to the committee.

Approval of the November 8, 2011 meeting minutes

David Pharies moved to accept, Mark Law seconded the motion, and the motion was passed.

SACS Conference Update

The conference held in Orlando on December 3-6 presented changes in policy and standard wording that will go into effect on January first. Because of these changes, the process that Dr. Brophy has promised the committee will be postponed until these policy and wording changes have been integrated.

ALC revision proposals

The Business School is trying to meet the needs of its specific accrediting agency as well as state and SACS accreditation. Instead of focusing on the 16 credit hours required for each major, the school has chosen to focus on student learning outcomes for the 60 hours of business that are required while providing one student learning outcome for each major. This shows commonalities in the business field as well as the uniqueness of each major. A chart shows which courses will assess each SLO. The Business School does not use a high stakes test for assessment. Anne raised the question of "how is the level of expectation for performance set if there is not a high stakes test and the ETS is not a pass or fail exam?" Instead data is aggregated from writing rubrics, public speaking rubrics, test questions that meet specific objectives, etc. These items are reviewed to assess whether courses can be improved. A seven page Assurance of Learning report provides methods of assessment. Another issue is that the accrediting agency assesses a sample of student work whereas the Board of Governors assesses the success of all students.

A recommendation from the committee for Brian Ray is to provide a brief summary of the seven page Assurance of Learning report that can be posted with the learning outcomes rather than linking to the report. This will help explain and expand upon assessment in the ALC. An example given was "Writing is assessed by a rubric for X course" rather than "Students should be able to X before graduating." This summary was requested for review for the January meeting. The committee also suggested removing the wording such as "Choose from over 70 areas of specialization..." It may be a requirement for the degree, but it is not assessed or a form of assessment.

HHP – Athletic Training

SLOs are listed as bullets on this ALC, and Dr. Mair has noted that a global request has been made for numbered lists to be used instead of bullets. The basic consensus is that the ALC is accepted conditionally on the approval of the new course. A concern was raised that there was not a defined assessment for the major. However, it was determined after interpreting the wording that a portfolio is the means of assessment. Dr. Brophy noted that he will work on clarifying and creating a consistent way to interpret ALC's.

CALS – Communication and Leadership

Communication and leadership is a specialization within a major. The question of whether an ALC is needed for a specialization or track within a major was raised. Can the specialization be folded up into the ALC for the major? Should specializations use the Business School method that was mentioned earlier in the meeting where the degree outcomes are listed overall and one outcome for each major is listed. In this case, outcomes for the major would be listed and one outcome for each specialization would be listed in one ALC. This ALC revision is pending.

Academic Technology

Fedro Zazueta offered the committee the services of Academic Technology to develop systems for capturing and storing data for academic assessment. He pointed out that a system that is multifunctional and useful for faculty, students, and assessment needs would benefit more parties than several systems that do different things. Dr. Brophy asked the committee to think of requirements and suggestions for a system that could help facilitate assessment.

Updates for General Education Assessment Sub-Committee

No specific updates at present.

Update for Internationalization Assessment Sub-Committee

James explained that they have to build their own form of assessment as no other previous methods fit their needs. They have created a process and need an external advising committee. An appropriate reliability and validation process is necessary. They plan on starting with the class of 2013 with a pre-assessment and reassessing during the students' senior year.