

**Institutional Assessment Committee
Minutes for Monday, May 1 (3:30-4:30)
CAS Dean's Conference Room (B101a)**

Members in Attendance: Brent Brossmann, Todd Bruce, Rodney Hessinger, Brittiani McNeil, Mike Nichols, Cathy Rosemary, Michelle Walker

- I. **Welcome, Agenda, and Introductions**
- II. **Approvals for 2016 Reports Feedback**
- III. **Recommendations for Faculty and Staff Development for 2017-2018**

The committee discussed the feedback generated by individual members. There are many programs doing a great job with assessment, and some departments that have some work to do on this front. Problems tended to cluster in three areas: poorly written learning goals, poor alignment of goals to assessment measures, and poor use of data. Rather than formal faculty development sessions next year, the Director will provide an orientation session to coordinators and then members of the committee will work one-on-one or in small groups to help departments and programs with their specific problem areas. Interdisciplinary programs will be also offered assistance with curriculum mapping.

- IV. Changes to Processes and Procedures
 - A. Changes to assessment processes for majors?

Based on the conversation, the Annual Assessment Report form will be modified to require departments to list their learning goals and identify which one(s) is/are being assessed. Additional sections will be added asking the program to summarize the feedback received from the Committee and briefly explain the program's response.

- B. Changes to committee procedures?

Based on the conversation, the Director will craft a feedback form for committee members' use with a more quantitative/checklist-style approach to enable easy summary. Next year (in connection with the Core report) the committee will discuss targets for sample size in program assessment.

- C. Handling assessment of minors within departments?

It was suggested that minor assessment/program review might be better handled via an institutional effectiveness perspective (looking at grades, time of declaration, other Banner data).

Appendix A. The committee reviewed the following document in addition to feedback for individual programs:

**Institutional Assessment Committee
Annual Assessment Report Feedback**

1. Are there institutional expectations, processes, and procedures that we should consider changing? What evidence from these reports leads you to that conclusion?

- Recommend updating the class standing calculation/breakdown from current model. Freshman 0-30 (0-24), Sophomore 30-60 (25-54), Junior 60-90 (55-84), Senior 90+ (85+) Based on the Academic Advising findings about declaration and the number of students not earning sufficient credits enough to declare a major, perhaps increasing the class standing thresholds would be a better gauge/incentive for students to remain on track to complete their declaration and degree requirements.
- Along with the above change, recommend a standardization of the publishing of catalog/bulletin course offerings to include terms that courses are normally offered so that students are not caught off-guard when they realize certain courses may only be offered in a fall or spring term. This would also help with students being able to build a 4-year plan and stay on track with declaration and degree requirements.
- Recommend that students keep the catalog requirements (core and major) that they enter the university under. This would provide clearer course planning for departments and also 4-year degree planning for students.
- I don't see anything glaring, but the business programs certainly have more efficient processes and reporting than the CAS programs that I reviewed; maybe providing a workshop showing different ways the programs are collecting and reporting data would be helpful to others in modifying their program assessment programs.
- There has been an increased emphasis on using similar scales and I think that has helped this round of reports. I am still concerned about differences in the process, especially when different scales are used in the same report as was true in one of the individual reports.
- To be honest, I don't think the expectations are too high. The reports are pretty concise, the ability to focus on a single measurement helps.
- There is probably a need to work with some groups still on learning how to write a learning goal (that was a weakness in the Military Science report) and how to make sure that we have valid and reliable measures for those goals. While I am not denying the validity or reliability of any of these measures, there are questions as to why quiz results (Finance) or officer placement (Military Science) constitute effective assessments of learning goals beyond content knowledge and/or job placement.
- Some departments assess all learning goals every year and some just a selected number every year (at least it seems that way to me). Would there be any value in trying to standardize this process. Would departments be able to do more if they focus just on a select number of learning goals each year? I don't have a strong opinion on this, but just something that crossed my mind.
- It's difficult to make determinations of student learning from an interdisciplinary major that a) had 2 students graduate; b) has faculty from across various programs; c) not a centrally-located or formally structured major; d) students may take courses or complete a thesis based on interest; e) is often a second major, i.e. a student sees the opportunity based on the credits they have taken, courses they have taken, declare later on in college career, etc.; and f) advising is done outside of the major. I have no personal knowledge of how the program works, this is just what I gleaned from reading the assessment report.
- Does it make more sense to consolidate the library reports into one?

- A general observation is that many reports do not address all questions in the template. A more streamlined format may address this gap and allow the institution assessment committee to both quantitatively and qualitatively analyze the assessment reviews efficiently to (a) determine effectiveness of the review process, (b) define steps for further improvement at university, division, and department levels, (c) summarize the institutional assessment findings, and (d) use data in a more timely formative evaluation.

A way to streamline the review process may be to come up with a rating scale on how well the departments are meeting the expectations of the assessment reporting process, using the questions in the template as the items, with comments that focus on strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement. Subsequently, providing and explaining the review rubric to the departments may be helpful to them as they prepare their reports.

2. What needs for faculty/staff development did you see in these report?

- Additional (mandatory?) training/instruction for advisors on Pre-Major advising and university academic policies.
- There still may be some need to provide development in writing outcomes that are specific and measurable. Many of the programs use critical analysis but it would be helpful – to them – to have that specifically placed in the context of their program goals.
- The BSOB reports were more direct and specific than those of the CAS programs. Is there something inherent in their programs that allows this to be a more efficient process or could we somehow model what they do in many of the CAS programs? Perhaps a workshop where different program's processes are presented to allow other programs to re-design their programs?
- Additional help in developing measureable learning goals and additional help in establishing validity and reliability for those measures.
- Some departments are a bit farther behind in the maturity of their assessment plans. And some have undergone big curricular changes (I'm thinking CO here)—so more targeted training perhaps (and not just you, Todd, holding individual departmental workshops), but also finding some funds to send select departmental assessment representatives to off-campus training (I'm assuming such a thing exists). Just a thought.
- Some development that assessment doesn't need to be the capstone, though I can understand that might be difficult for an interdisciplinary program. Additional work w/ faculty across campus. Additional support for the major in order to build it from graduating 2 student, who may have declared EAS as a second major (not clear from report).
- How to present data. The data charts made no sense to me. There was no context for what was being evaluated or what the scores meant.
- Alignment between goals, assessments, interpretations, and action steps
- Rubric development
- Development and articulation of SMART goals

Do you have any other comments for the Institutional Assessment Committee?

Entrepreneurship: A question about the sampling of student work: they note that they assessed 4 of 15 presentations in ER 201 and 4 of 7 presentations and written papers in ER 480. Is that enough for sufficient results?