

**University Assessment Committee (UAC)
End of Academic Year Report, 2015-16**

High-Level Bulleted Summary of 2015-16 Major UAC Accomplishments

- Through ongoing discussion and review, made significant changes to the program review forms and process
- Supported changes to forms and process by hosting workshops and creating instructional videos
- Full (non-student) committee membership engaged in reviewing assessment processes and providing feedback
- Adjustments to the program review process to include post-UAC review conversations about assessment process (including UAC observations, suggestions) between deans and chairs and VPs and directors
- Posted undergraduate and graduate ISLOs to UAC website to enhance awareness and easy access

2015-16 Committee Members:

Faculty

- Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences – John Hepp – 2015-16 was 1st year on UAC
- Business & Leadership – Justin Matus (Co-Chair) – 2015-16 was 2nd year on UAC
- Education – Karim Letwinsky – 2015-16 was 2nd year on UAC
- Nursing – Patricia Sweeney – 2015-16 was 2nd year on UAC
- Pharmacy – Harvey Jacobs – 2015-16 was 1st year on UAC
- Science & Engineering – Ed Bednarz – 2015-16 was 3rd year on UAC
- General Education Committee (GEC) Representative – Kalen Churcher – 2015-16 was 1st year on UAC

Staff/Administration

- Advising/University College – MaryBeth Mullen
- Institutional Research – Brian Bogert (Co-Chair)
- Library – Elizabeth Sullivan
- Student Development – Phil Ruthkosky

Assessment Experts

- Associate Provost – Terri Wignot
- Education – Assessment and Regulatory Management – Judy Neri

Students

- Student (Graduate) – Allison Kristofko
- Student (Undergraduate) – Jeremy Yeoman

Detailed overview of accomplishments included on the following pages

Full Overview of 2015-16 UAC Accomplishments:

- The primary focus of the UAC in the 2015-16 academic year was supporting the **implementation of a revised program review process**. This support included the following activities:

- **Providing additional opportunity for adjustments to review schedules**
 - Allowing academic deans and vice presidents another **opportunity** (beyond opportunities provided in 2014-15) **to review and adjust the proposed multi-year program review schedule**, indicating which programs or units were up for which type of review (annual update or full review) in which year, for the next several years. This was a particularly important opportunity for the several new deans.
- **Program Review Process Adjustments**
 - **Every program will submit some form of program review every year.** While this plan was drafted in 2014-15, it was implemented in 2015-16. **Annual Updates (AU)** were introduced this year, providing an opportunity for programs and units to centrally report documentation of progress on improvement efforts between **Full Reviews (FR)** – which **occur every 3 years**.
 - **The window of time for completion was differentiated**, depending on the type of review a program or unit was scheduled to undergo (longer for FRs). *[In 2014, the program review window was 2 ½ months. In 2016, the program review window was 2 months for the AUs, plus 1 additional month for discussion of the AU with the appropriate dean or VP. For the FRs in 2016, the program review window was 2 ½ months, plus 1 additional month for discussion of the FR with the appropriate dean or VP].*
 - Building the month-long window into the program review period provides a designated time for deans and VPs to discuss reviews with program or unit leadership. This adjustment came about from a recommendation by the deans.
 - **Consistent reference period for review:** Determination that academic programs should focus on the last fully-completed academic year when completing the review (so when completing the 2015-16 review in 2015-16, should reflect on assessments from 2014-15). Administrative units should focus on the last fully-completed fiscal year (so when completing the 2015-16 review, should reflect on assessments from FY15).
 - The UAC **created review guidelines** for Annual Updates submitted by academic and administrative program reviews. The guidelines will be used for UAC review of assessment process, which will be shared (following review) with the appropriate academic dean or vice president.
 - The Institutional Research (IR) Office provided current program review forms, previous program review submissions (mostly from 2014), data profiles, and program or unit profiles **directly to program or unit leadership via e-mail** to ensure all identified with responsibility for program or unit oversight had all relevant materials referenced for completing the review. *[In 2014, IR had directed people completing reviews to a shared drive. Many had reported issues accessing the materials in 2014.]*
 - Academic programs and administrative units (particularly the latter) were **encouraged to update any existing program/unit profiles, or to create a new one**. Program/Unit profiles were first created at Wilkes around 2010 to provide an overview of the program or unit’s mission, vision, those served, outcomes/objectives, key assessment activities, and alignment with strategic plan themes and (for academic programs) ISLOs (different template for undergraduate and graduate programs due to different sets of ISLOs to reference).
 - The UAC held a **norming session** in April to enhance committee member consistency in using Annual Update review guidelines for reviewing assessment processes. A **second norming session** is planned for the full reviews in May.
 - All non-student UAC members were (are) **assigned responsibility for reviewing** documented assessment processes through the AU or FR forms.
 - A **“closing the loop” step** has been built into the program review process. Deans and VPs will receive UAC feedback on documented assessment process for the appropriate set of programs or units. This should occur by early summer. Deans and VPs will have through the end of the summer to meet with program or unit leadership to discuss and “close the loop” on the round of program review. Deans and VPs should document their conversations in a new, designated area on the same review form with the UAC feedback. The updated forms should be submitted to the IR office by the end of the summer. IR will ensure all finalized forms get back to the UAC for centralized archival and reference.
- **Communication Strategies Used to Support Program Review**

- A **communication piece from UAC leadership** was provided, via the Provost, **to the President's Cabinet** in early January to communicate the importance of participating in ongoing assessment efforts and the upcoming program review process.
 - The **UAC coordinated 2 workshops** (1 for academic programs, 1 for administrative units) in the HSC Ballroom in mid-January **to provide an overview of the revised processes and forms**. Several UAC members participated in either the planning, the presentations, or both. This was the first time in recent years that a workshop was provided to support administrative unit program review. It was the second year in a row that workshop was provided to support academic program review. Twenty to thirty (20-30) individuals attended each workshop.
 - For the first time ever, the **UAC developed instructional videos to support the completion of the program review forms**. This also provided a consistent overview of the changes to the forms and their completion for individuals who could not attend the appropriate workshop. The videos were available by the end of January. Elizabeth Sullivan and Kalen Churcher took the lead in creating the administrative unit and academic program instructional videos, respectively.
 - Questions about the form or process were directed (through the forms and all related communications) to Brian Bogert (Director of IR and UAC Co-Chair).
- **Adjustments to the Academic Program Review form**
 - **Creation of an Annual Update (AU) form**
 - The purpose of the AU is to document ongoing assessment/improvement efforts, and to encourage assessment-related discussions within each program or unit.
 - **Most Notable Changes to the Full Review (FR) form**
 - **Formatting** - The 2014 form was adjusted to print (in 2015-16) on smaller paper than the 2014 form (was 11x17" format) based on feedback received from those completing reviews in 2014.
 - The **multi-year program review schedule was integrated into the form**, to ensure everyone had easy access to the review expectations for the reporting period.
 - **Graduate programs** were provided their first opportunity via the program review form to **align** their program-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) **with the graduate-level institutional student learning outcomes** (ISLOs) developed and approved in spring 2015.
 - Undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences were asked to provide course-level assessment results for any courses within the discipline that fulfill **general education** requirements. These programs were provided the opportunity through the form to align their course-level gen ed. outcomes with the appropriate gen ed. skill or distribution area set of outcomes. This assessment information will be shared with the General Education Committee (GEC) for supporting general education assessment efforts/planning.
 - Undergraduate programs were asked to provide course-level assessment results for courses that contribute to **Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)** for students in the major program. [In the 2014 review, programs were asked to identify 1 of their programmatic SLOs that addressed WAC. Review of results from the 2014 program review indicated a need to collect the assessment information in a different way).
 - A section was added to the FRs (and the AUs) for programs to indicate **how program faculty was engaged in the program review and/or assessment process**. This was also added to the administrative forms – as the inclusion is intended to heighten awareness of the need to be inclusive in these processes. This stems from a 2010 Self Study recommendation.
 - **Terminology and clarifications** and **reference codes** were included as separate tabs within the program review template, to ensure easy reference to clarifying information for those completing the forms.
 - **Examples** were provided by the committee for each component of the full review dealing with the assessment of learning outcomes.
 - **Adjustments to the Administrative Unit Review form**
 - **Creation of an Annual Update (AU) form** (*same purpose as described for academic programs, above*)
 - **Most Notable Changes to the Full Review (FR) form**

- The program review form **template was transitioned from Word to Excel**. The transition was due to the need (identified by reviewers of the 2014 reviews) to make it more manageable for UAC members to use the developed guidelines to provide feedback to administrative unit leadership on assessment process, and to be able to reference and use the information collected across units to inform the focus of UAC assessment support.
 - A '**Key Terminology**' tab was added to ensure easy reference to clarifying information for those completing the forms.
 - The administrative review was **restructured to contain the following reporting components/tabs**:
 - 1 – Unit Objectives
 - 2 – Unit Assessment Process
 - 3 – Unit Performance
 - 4 – Staff Accomplishments
 - 5 – Unit's Role in Achievement of Strategic Plan Goals/Themes
 - 6 – Staff Involvement
 - The revised form allowed for units to identify **co-curricular** and **extra-curricular learning outcomes** referenced by the unit in their assessments, if/where relevant.
 - The forms allowed **alignment of each units' objectives with the themes (or goals) of the current strategic plan**. This is the first time this has occurred as part of program review for administrative units. Units using **co-curricular outcomes** were provided an opportunity to **align those outcomes with both the strategic plan themes/goals and the undergraduate institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs)**.
 - Further clarification was added to "carryover" sections (from 2014) focused on staff accomplishments and role in achievement of strategic plan goals to increase clarity in understanding the relevance and current status of reported activities.
- In addition to the significant energy devoted across the year to supporting the implementation of the program review process, the UAC also had several discussions focused on such topics as (1) how the committee can improve their ability to capitalize on the different strengths that different individuals bring to the group, and (2) how the committee can go beyond current practices to enhance the group's facilitation of assessment processes. These are, and likely should be, ongoing discussions.
 - Towards the end of the year, the UAC made the recommendation that the undergraduate and graduate **ISLOs** be made **available online through the website**, to ensure an easy reference outside of the bulletins. Both sets of ISLOs are now easily accessible through the UAC website (direct link: <http://www.wilkes.edu/islo>). This ease of availability should help the UAC's efforts to increase awareness of, and facilitate alignment of program SLOs with the appropriate set of ISLOs.