

**University Assessment Committee (UAC)
End of Academic Year Report, 2016-17**

High-Level Bulleted Summary of 2016-17 Major UAC Accomplishments

- Through ongoing discussion and review, continued (and continuing) to make changes to the program review forms and process
- Committee membership engaged in norming sessions to support review of assessment processes (program review)
- Developed and approved new policy to determine when appropriate for new academic programs and administrative units to undergo first full program review
- Proposal to Curriculum Committee for all new major (degree or certification) programs submitting a curriculum proposal to complete an “assessment addendum” form which identifies program-level outcomes and an overview of a program-level assessment plan.

2016-17 Committee Members:

Faculty

- Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences – John Hepp (Fall), replaced by Christine Mellon (Spring)
- Business & Leadership – Justin Matus –2016-17 was 3rd consecutive year on UAC
- Education – Karim Letwinsky – 2016-17 was 3rd consecutive year on UAC
- Nursing – Patricia Sweeney (Co-Chair) – 2016-17 was 3rd consecutive year on UAC
- Pharmacy – Jon Ference – 2016-17 was 1st year on UAC (replaced Harvey Jacobs)
- Science & Engineering – Yong Zhu – 2016-17 was 1st year on UAC
- General Education Committee (GEC) Representative – Kalen Churcher – 2016-17 was 2nd 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) – *vacant*
- Student (Undergraduate) – Lyndsey Shay, Christine Walsh

Meeting dates:

- September 13, 2016
- October 18, 2016
- November 8, 2016
- December 8, 2016
- January 26, 2017
- February 21, 2017
- March 21, 2017
- April 18, 2017
- April 25, 2017
- May 5, 2017*

**End of year report drafted prior to May 5, 2017 meeting (planned).*

Detailed overview of accomplishments included on the following pages

Full Overview of 2016-17 UAC Accomplishments:

- The primary focus of the UAC in the 2016-17 academic year was supporting the **program review process**. This support included the following activities:
 - **Program Review Adjustments to forms**
 - Made several adjustments to forms detailed in May 11, 2016 (last year), October 18, and November, 8, 2016 meeting minutes to strengthen a common understanding for individuals completing the program review forms and for UAC members in consistently following assessment process review guidelines.
 - **Includes the following adjustments to program review forms:**
 - Calling explicit attention on forms and in instructions that evaluations are to reflect assessments from the last fully-completed Academic (fall-spring-summer) or Fiscal (if Administrative Unit) year.
 - Minor adjustments to clarify (in academic full review form) sample size used for assessments referenced, when artifacts were collected vs. reviewed (since “collected” must reflect last academic year); incorporation of specific request for supporting rubrics, and a narrative section in form A1/A2 (SLO Assessment) that collects additional context to aid interpretation/evaluation of assessment process by UAC reviewers.
 - Integrated the Spring 2015 Faculty-approved General Education Student Learning Outcomes for alignment in Tab F – General Education Learning Assessment)
 - Scaled back on reporting of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) assessment to just cover which courses are “WAC” courses, and the tool used (e.g. writing assignment with rubric) for assessment(s).
 - **Includes the following adjustments to UAC assessment process review guidelines:**
 - Allow reviewers greater flexibility to indicate “Mixed/Uncertain” since feedback cannot always realistically be a clear “Yes” or “No”.
 - Split “Is there a balance of direct and indirect evidence used to assess student learning?” into 2 separate questions (- Is there direct evidence used...?.....Is there indirect evidence used...?).
 - Reframe of a couple items to use more actionable language.
 - Allow a space to address any resources needed related to proposed solutions to address retention or graduation rate issues (or time-to-degree issues) reported.
 - Add the same review guideline to the full reviews as exists in the annual update – regarding involvement of others in department/unit in the assessment processes described.
 - **Planned adjustments proposed for program review forms in 2017-18:**
 - **ALL (Academic & Administrative – at least in Full Reviews)** – Prompt to ask whether the review process has been helpful/useful (e.g. To find out what has been learned through the process.)

Full Review (Academic)

- Separate full review and annual update forms to prevent confusion for those completing the forms (Annual Update currently couched in same form as Full Review).
- Tabs A1/A2 (Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Process) – Be more explicit in request for referenced rubrics– perhaps through instructions for sending, etc. (Currently few if any shared)
- Tab “B” for Full Review: Retention – Adjust prompt to more specifically ask what can be done to address any listed problems by those reporting on it, rather than focusing on larger/university-level issues over which they have little to no control.
- Also tab “B” (Retention) – Clarify prompt to ensure all are focusing on the appropriately-framed retention (and graduation rate) snapshot that is most appropriate. It is unclear currently whether individuals will focus on “within major” retention (or graduation rate) or

“within University” retention...an adjustment to the prompt will help to ensure all are answering the question based on the same retention focus.

- Tab “C” (Placement) – Consider whether worthwhile to keep this section, since most do not collect this information, or feel it is their job to do so.
- Tab “D” (Process Involvement) – Clarify prompt to ensure language is clear - that intention of question is to find out about involvement in SLO assessment processes documented in review (rather than more broadly (current) – “activities described in this review”). **[This item is relevant for all types of review – Academic/Administrative, Full/Annual]**

Full Review (Administrative Units)

- Consider removing “Staff Accomplishments” section, since appears to be significant overlap with the scope of HR’s Performance Management process.
- (See “process involvement” note above)

○ **Program Review Process Adjustments**

- The schedule for program review was extended until later into the spring semester (about a month later, to respond to faculty feedback about the conflicts of the original schedule with course registration-related advising load). The UAC review period and opportunities to meet/discuss UAC feedback with the Dean or Vice President was also delineated (and the latter extended) to clarify communication and understanding of the roles and responsibilities involved in the full process.
- The PowerPoint presentations used to provide an overview of the process were separated by type of program/unit (administrative or academic) and the type of review (full or annual), yielding 4 different process overview documents. These were made available (as were the previous process overview slides) on the website at <http://www.wilkes.edu/programreview> .
- The instructional videos were reviewed and any adjustments to dates or content were footnoted below the videos. The committee determined that due to low viewership last year, and few substantial changes to the forms, new videos did not need to be recorded this year. These videos were also available via the link referenced above.
- The committee followed a recommendation made by one of the members to poll Chairs, Deans, Vice Presidents, and Directors to see what sort of support they were hoping for through the workshop the UAC had originally planned to provide (as had been done last year). Feedback was mixed, and there was no “best time” for most in mid-late January (based on survey responses) to hold the workshop. However, a popular response was to just be directed to the videos for guidance, so the committee opted for that this year rather than holding another workshop.
- The committee held norming sessions to support consistency in interpretation of the process review guidelines on April 18th (Annual Updates), 25th (Academic Full Review), and the last norming session is planned for May 5th (Admin Unit Full Review). As had occurred last year, committee members will be randomly assigned about 4 or so reviews (although never of their own area) and asked to complete them and send to Brian by the deadline of June 30th. It is anticipated that most members, especially those who are faculty, will submit their reviews by the end of May.

○ **New Program “On-Boarding” for Program Review (Policy)**

- The committee had several conversations resulting in an approved policy for determining the appropriate timing for relatively “new” academic programs or administrative units to undergo their first full review. Annual Updates will only need to occur following the full review, since they will serve as a reference point for the update.

The Policy Statement is included on the following page for reference:

Policy Statement

This policy ensures that each new academic program or administrative unit at Wilkes University is setting measurable goals for student learning, and that those goals are assessed in a regular, systematic, and useful manner.

Academic Programs

The Wilkes University Assessment Committee (UAC) will guide each new academic program to set measurable goals for student learning (Student Learning Outcomes) for each approved degree and certificate program. The UAC will also encourage these programs to assess those goals, and to use the assessment findings to improve teaching, learning and the curriculum. The expected student learning outcomes (SLOs) will be accessible to current and prospective students.

New programs will submit an initial assessment plan with their SLOs for review by the University Assessment Committee in conjunction their Curriculum Committee Proposal. The University Assessment Committee may provide feedback on the proposed assessment plan. Once the initial assessment plan and SLOs are agreed upon, programs will be required to demonstrate regular, systematic review and revision of their SLOs and associated assessment plans before entering the University Academic Program Review Cycle according to the following:

New undergraduate programs: After a sufficient number of graduates, as agreed upon by the program and the University Assessment Committee, *or four years after curriculum approval.*

New graduate programs: After a sufficient number of graduates, as agreed upon by the program and the University Assessment Committee, *or two years after curriculum approval.*

Departmental faculty will revise, delete or add to a program's SLOs as appropriate to ensure that they remain dynamic, relevant, and measurable.

Administrative Units

The Wilkes University Assessment Committee (UAC) will guide each new administrative unit to set measurable goals (objectives) to assess unit performance. The UAC will also encourage these units to assess those goals, and to use the assessment findings to improve the operation and performance of their units.

New units will submit an initial assessment plan with their objectives for review by the University Assessment Committee. The University Assessment Committee may provide feedback on the proposed assessment plan. Once the initial assessment plan and objectives are agreed upon, units will be required to demonstrate regular, systematic review and revision of their objectives and associated assessment plans before entering the University Academic Program Review Cycle *after two full years of operation.*

Administrative directors will revise, delete or add a unit's objectives as appropriate to ensure they remain dynamic, relevant, and measurable.

○ **Assessment Addendum to Curriculum Proposal**

- Committee leadership attended the Curriculum Committee to discuss the UAC's proposal that new academic programs (new majors associated with degree or certificate programs) complete an assessment plan as part of the curriculum proposal process. The Curriculum Committee saw no issues to making this change to their process, provided the following changes/adjustments are made:
 - Suggestion that the UAC provide additional guidance to those completing the Assessment Addendum. The guidance proposed was a link to web content on best practices for developing a program assessment plan. It was suggested to be available on the web, so Curriculum would not need to change their form whenever guidance-related content is updated.
 - Also, an additional prompt was suggested to be a part of the Assessment Addendum form – to address Accreditation Requirements/related comments, with the understanding that a program may be required to frame their planning according to program accreditation needs.

The current status of the Assessment Addendum form (pre-revision) is included on the following page for reference:

Assessment Addendum

- 1. Please list program-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) that all program majors should be able to demonstrate upon graduation from the program. SLOs should be worded such that student performance can be measured directly. Please consult with University Assessment Committee (UAC) leadership for guidance, if needed, in developing these program-level SLOs.***

- 2. Please briefly describe current plans for how student performance on each program-level SLO will be assessed. Be sure to answer “when? (frequency)” and “how? (assessment method)” for each SLO.**