

## University Assessment Committee Meeting Minutes for February 16, 2015

**Attendees:** Brian Bogert, Mike Garr, Karim Letwinsky, Justin Matus, MaryBeth Mullen, Amjad Nazzal, Thomas Rowe (new undergraduate student rep), Phil Ruthkosky, Anne Skleder, Elizabeth Sullivan, Patricia Sweeney, Adam Welch, Helen Davis (invited guest) and Janet Starner (invited guest)

**The meeting was called to order @ 11:05 am.**

**Minutes from the January 19, 2015 meeting were approved pending a minor clarification.**

Tom Rowe was welcomed as the new undergraduate student representative, appointed by Student Government.

### **Update on UAC Composition**

- Adam provided an overview to the committee of wording suggested for the UAC composition at the most recent full faculty meeting. The revised language (to be reflected in the Faculty Handbook) is below:

*Composition: One elected faculty member from each college or school and one appointed by the General Education Committee; two staff representatives appointed by the Vice President of Student Affairs; the Director of Information, Analysis and Planning; a representative of the Farley Library appointed by the Dean of the Library; up to two additional assessment experts (from among Wilkes faculty, staff or administration) appointed by the Provost; and two student representatives, one undergraduate student appointed by student government and one graduate student selected by the committee.*

### **Update on Graduate-level Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs)**

- Justin had volunteered in a Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) discussion of the graduate ISLOs to coordinate a draft to bring to the faculty and committees (UAC & GSC). He provided draft ISLOs to the GSC for their feedback. He indicated that the ISLOs were on the agenda for the FAC meeting the following Tuesday. He will see if he can also get time in the March full faculty meeting agenda to briefly introduce and discuss them. Justin hopes to get time on the agenda for the April full faculty meeting to revisit the topic and close the loop.
  - There was some discussion as to whether the proposed graduate ISLOs should be shared with Curriculum Committee (CC). The General Education Committee (GEC) is planning to share the revised general education learning outcomes with the CC. Since the graduate ISLOs will not have a direct effect on curriculum (as the general education learning outcomes may) it was felt that the additional step was not necessary for this process.

### **Review of Progress on 2010 Self Study Assessment Recommendations**

- Brian projected the assessment-related Self-Study recommendations that the committee had periodically discussed and reviewed progress on over the past year or so. The following recommendations were discussed (organized with discussion and suggestions offered summarized below each one):
  - At a minimum, the revisions to the Faculty Handbook must include a section regarding student learning outcomes assessment that reflect currently accepted practices and include: (a) Guidelines for aligning course, program, and institutional learning outcomes, (b) Guidelines for resources that support excellence in teaching, and (c) Guidelines to ensure that communication to all constituencies about how course, program and institutional learning goals support learning is clear.
    - Helen offered a couple suggestions to address this. Either:

- “Assessment” could be added to the first sentence on page 103 (section 6.9 – Procedures for Curriculum Development) of the Faculty Handbook. The language currently states: “All should recognize the centrality of full time faculty to the development, implementation and quality of the curriculum.”; OR
- ...that there be an addition to the list of requirements for curriculum proposals to include something about the means used to assess the curriculum.

*\*UPDATE:* Since the February UAC meeting, a handbook proposal was submitted by faculty representatives on the Periodic Review Report (PRR) Committee. The most notable change proposed is the addition of the following sentence to section 6.3 (Instructional Regulations), on page 96 regarding the content of course syllabi/outlines: “It must include course outcomes that are assessed and align with program outcomes”. It was the feeling of the faculty on the PRR Committee that the Faculty Handbook itself may not be the best resource for providing the proposed guidelines. However, it could be used as a vehicle to communicate to faculty via this language that the alignment of course to program outcomes should be provided to students in course syllabi to be transparent about how the course contributes to the overall goals of the program, and of most immediate need – to provide a response to this recommendation.

*\*IDEA:* If it is not necessary that these guidelines are included in the Faculty Handbook itself, there may be an opportunity for the UAC to be involved in drafting these guidelines, which could, if approved, be referenced in the Faculty Handbook as an available resource.

- The University Assessment Committee, along with appropriate administrative and academic leadership, needs to refine the current Program Review Process to:
  - (a) Foster inclusion and promote active participation of all individuals in the unit creating the review;
    - Janet proposed that we initiate a survey sent to faculty and staff to solicit their feedback regarding their participation in program review. Additional discussion suggested that the survey should be more than a “check the box” sort of thing, so it could be used for ongoing feedback and planning.
    - **Brian will draft a survey and share with the committee for feedback prior to distribution to faculty and staff.**
  - (b) articulate and monitor adherence to a program review timeline that provides timely and useful feedback; tracks the progress of units under review through prescribed channels; and assures that improvements in support of strategic planning can take place in a timely manner; and
    - The multi-year program review timeline proposed for academic programs should help to address this. A similar program review timeline must be developed for the administrative units.
    - The meetings that the Provost and VPs have with the programs/units should provide useful feedback. Also the 1-page “assessment process” summaries generated by UAC members should facilitate discussions regarding assessment.
  - (c) Create a mechanism to recognize and reward excellence in support of strategic initiatives.
    - Not directly addressed in committee discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:00pm.