

## **University Assessment Committee Meeting Minutes for April 20, 2015**

**Attendees:** Brian Bogert, Mike Garr, Karim Letwinsky, MaryBeth Mullen, Phil Ruthkosky, Patricia Sweeney, Adam Welch, and Janet Starner (invited guest)

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

**Minutes from the March 16, 2015 meeting were approved.**

### **Committee Updates: Membership/Representation, new Faculty Co-Chair for 2015-16**

- For the School of Pharmacy, Adam Welch will be rotating off the committee after three years of representation, and will be replaced by Harvey Jacobs. Adam will also be leaving the University for a position at East Tennessee State. The committee thanked him for his leadership and service and wished him well.
- For the College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences, Mike Garr will be rotating off the committee after several years of service/representation, and will be replaced by John Hepp.
- Justin Matus was elected as UAC faculty co-chair for the 2015-16 academic year, following the results of an online 'election' survey of UAC members.

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

- Graduate ISLOs were adopted by the full faculty earlier in April. Brian indicated that in subsequent iterations of program review, graduate programs will align their program outcomes to these new graduate-level ISLOs to link them to the mission of the University.

### **Discussion on Program Review Involvement Surveys Feedback**

- Summaries of results from the surveys of faculty and staff were distributed to UAC members in advance of the meeting to aid discussion. UAC discussion of the results at the meeting resulted in a suggestion (made by Phil) to integrate an item into each program review form (whether for faculty or staff) requiring an explanation of tactics used to engage faculty/staff in the program review process.
- Adam noted that question 3 was the key question that should be tracked if the survey were to continue following each round of program review. Question 3 reads, "I was provided sufficient opportunity to contribute to the program review process for my (academic program/unit or division)."
  - Adam also suggested that this item be changed to a likert scale to more easily measure progress (rather than simply 'yes/no' as it currently exists).
  - It was also suggested that the population be better defined for surveying in the future (was just sent via the staff or faculty distribution lists (DLs)). This would enable tracking the response rate, since ideally it would be consistent or increase over time as people become more engaged in the process.
  - Another suggestion was to disaggregate results of faculty between full-time and adjunct faculty respondents (only 69% of respondents to the faculty survey self-identified as full-time faculty). For staff, full-time vs. part-time did not appear to be as much of an issue, with 87% of respondents indicating they are employed full-time.
    - Although part-time employees are certainly welcome to participate in assessment and planning processes, the expectation of involvement is different than that of full-time employees (who are expected to participate at a higher rate).

## Program Review Planning

- Recommendations for changes to the academic program review form were discussed.

Recommendations included:

- Add a new item at the end of the form, asking for a description of the tactics used to engage faculty in the process.
- Incorporate drop-down menu functionality in the Excel spreadsheet to make the form's interpretation, completion and review easier.

Questions posed for further consideration included:

- How to best address retention and time-to-degree for graduate programs through program review
- Determine whether the feedback received on 'placement' proved useful. Is it worth continuing to include it on the program review form?

- Recommendations for changes to the administrative program review form were also discussed.

Recommendations included:

- Add a new item at the end of the form, asking for a description of the tactics used to engage staff in the process.
- Better focus questions, or re-organize form to ensure easier and more consistent interpretation by the completer and reviewer.
- Allow sufficient flexibility within the form so that units with co-curricular learning outcomes can easily reference those – and their assessment - on the form, in a meaningful way.
- Consider moving the form to Excel or some different format that makes review of submitted forms easier – with a layout more conducive to easy understanding and communication of how the unit is achieving program objectives. This format would also allow the University to summarize results more easily that provide an update related to achievement of strategic priorities (since programs could align each program objective to a strategic plan theme, indicate how it is measured, indicate how they are doing in achieving the objective, if additional resources are needed/should be budgeted, etc.).

Additional suggestions posted for further consideration included:

- Checking in with the Vice Presidents for help in determining if some of the form's prompts may need to be customized based on the type of unit evaluated, so it can be more easily interpreted by the completer.
  - Checking in with administrative unit heads/directors to ensure buy-in for adjustments made to the form – ensuring that the adjustments generally make sense to them/their unit/their planning process.
  - Consider “deconstructing” the larger divisions (made up of several smaller units) for program review reporting. This idea should be vetted with the Vice Presidents before being implemented. The idea behind this suggestion is that it may make sense to ensure that each smaller unit has their own objectives that they are referencing and associated measures to determine their level of success which can be directly linked to the unit's operations, resource need, etc.
- It was noted that the Provost will have additional information to contribute to the discussion of possible changes to the academic form and/or process based on her program review meetings with the department chairpersons and deans.

**The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:05pm.**

**A next meeting date is yet to be determined. UAC leadership will consult with the Provost to determine appropriate timing for a next meeting.**