

**University Assessment Committee
Meeting Minutes for July 16, 2015
Room: Cohen 103**

Attendees: Ed Bednarz, Brian Bogert (co-chair), Harvey Jacobs, Karim Letwinsky, Justin Matus (co-chair), MaryBeth Mullen, Anne Skleder (Sr. VP/Provost), Elizabeth Sullivan, Terri Wignot

The meeting was called to order @ 10:35 am.

Minutes from the April 20, 2015 meeting were approved.

The 2014-15 end of Year UAC Summary Report was approved, pending minor revisions.

Welcome of New Members

- The following new committee members were welcomed/acknowledged:
 - Harvey Jacobs – Faculty representative, School of Pharmacy
 - John Hepp – Faculty representative, College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
- It was also noted that this was Justin Matus' first meeting as Faculty co-chair of the UAC.

Provost's Recommendations for Academic Program Review

General/Context

- Sr. Vice President/Provost Anne Skleder shared her suggestions for adjustments to program review process and content from the many meetings she had with Deans and Academic Program Chairpersons during the spring semester.
- She noted that an important part of her conversations was that the program review process and assessment of student learning involved is about improvement, not "filling in the chart". Discussions differed by whether the program held an external accreditation. Conversations with representatives of programs without disciplinary accreditation focused more on process.
- The Provost was happy to note that there was not a lot of philosophical/foundational issues that needed to be discussed during the meetings regarding the purpose or value of program review/assessment of student learning.
- The term, "grade" was often used differently – sometimes interchangeably with rubric scores. There may need to be clarification going forward to ensure understanding all-around.
- Anne noted that the staggered program review schedule that we have committed to going forward will create additional opportunity for better conversations.
- One thing that surprised her was that people often did not ask for resources, even sometimes when the student learning outcomes assessment suggested that resources were needed. An important part of the conversations was explaining that this process gives license to ask for resources based on assessment results. An example might be the need for professional tutoring (discussed in UAC meeting), beyond the faculty's availability through office hours.
- Anne underscored the importance/value of external reviewers in prompting our thinking about what else could be done, how we could do things more effectively, etc.

Process

- The form is too large when printed (prints to 11x17" paper) – need to make it smaller/easier to print.
- Make the form as technologically-based and easy to use as possible
- Provide more time for the process

Content

- We need to come up with a better way to address Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) assessment.
- References to benchmarks may need to be clarified to ensure appropriate reference and understanding.

- Retention – Had been included to put our heads together to figure out what we can do to help students stay/succeed at Wilkes.
- Alumni – Had been included to ensure it was part of the conversation – and to learn which areas had information on their alumni. It was noted in the UAC discussion that the University needs to ensure we are surveying alumni and sharing the information.

Additional Assessment Discussion related to Academic Programs

- The idea of an Assessment Day was popular (from Provost’s conversations with program reps.)
- There are a lot of authentic assessments used across the university
- We could do more to showcase good assessment practice (event, poster session, fair, etc.)
- A question was brought up by a UAC member as to who would fund all of these ideas? (Bringing in external evaluators, assessment day, assessment events on campus, etc.). The Provost indicated that her budget would be an appropriate source, when needed/funds available. There was additional discussion regarding whether it would be possible to budget for assessment needs through a separate account through the Finance Office, to help with tracking spending/budgetary support needs.
- May want to coordinate the academic SLOs/ISLOs with those of the learning center. This could help to inform budget requests.
- Justin Matus mentioned that the Sidhu School of Business is considering instituting a “fellowship in assessment” in which a faculty member within the school would receive 3 hours of release/year to engage more in assessment. The faculty member could then report back to his/her colleagues about how he or she had used that time to integrate assessment into his/her practice.
- There was some discussion regarding securing of a university contract for the use of clickers in the classroom (for instant polling, etc.) to supplement learning. Karim Letwinsky shared information about apps that are available for free related to the use of clickers.

Discussion/Recommendations for Administrative Unit Program Review

- There was a suggestion to change the word “customers” in the administrative program review form to something like “those served”.
- MaryBeth Mullen noted that the NACADA Institute provides best practices in her field (Advising), and may be a good resource.
- Brian Bogert reminded the group of the suggestions made at the April UAC meeting (possibly bring form into Excel like the form used for Academic Programs, re-organize and clarify items to ensure more consistent interpretation, etc.).

Next Steps – Program Review for 2015-16

- Brian will share the Program Review schedule with the Academic Deans for their review and possibly adjustments to their programs’ review schedules going forward.
- Karim Letwinsky, Terri Wignot, and Elizabeth Sullivan indicated that they would help Brian with reviewing and updating the program review forms based on feedback shared at the April and July meetings. Justin Matus suggested that it may be beneficial to include at least one non-UAC member on the group, and provided a suggestion.
 - This group will provide a draft which will be shared with the Sr. VP/Provost and the UAC for their review prior to use.

Informational Items/Upcoming Conferences & Workshops

- Brian provided an update on upcoming conferences and workshops related to assessment.
- A group from Wilkes will be attending an upcoming one-day assessment workshop in Hershey, sponsored by AICUP (Association of Independent Colleges & Universities of Pennsylvania). The group includes members of the UAC, Deans, and hopefully at least one representative from the GEC.
- Drexel University will be holding its 2nd annual assessment conference. Ed and Brian, both in attendance at the meeting, had attended the 1st annual conference and encouraged others to attend this year.
- Another one-day workshop, Becoming an Assessment Facilitator, is sponsored by Middle States, and will be held in mid-September in Jersey City, NJ. Terri and Justin expressed interest in attending.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:30pm.

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