

University Assessment Committee Minutes
March 4, 2011
1-2:30 PM/ A&S Deans Conference Room

Attending: Carol Gittens, Bruce Lescher, Shelby McIntyre, Monica Parikh, Josef Hellebrandt, Cynthia Mertens, Chris Bachen, Steve Lee, Rob Covich, Ruth Davis

Approval of February 4th, 2011 meeting minutes - Approved

Discussion of “Guidelines” document

Opening discussion started with the current document format, which is in PDF form; a goal for next year is to have an online submission (via TaskStream). In the meantime, Carol will add a MSWord version of the Annual Assessment Report form to the Office of Assessment web site. The remainder of the discussion focused on the main body of the document section. Last year was the first year feedback was given, and it was noted that if you have a large number of learning goals (7-8) they would be quite broad. One member also stressed that you don't want to limit the number of goals and objectives. Comments for the specific components are as follows:

OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

There are currently seven (7) statements that come after the introductory paragraph in this section of the Guidelines document. The UAC members discussed the introductory paragraph as well as the statements.

Language to add to the Intro paragraph: Statement that annual assessment of student learning and program review are linked. The results of the annual assessment processes as reported on the Annual Assessment Report (AAR) should be rolled up in to the Program Review self study (move Statement 6 into the intro). This will further clarify the difference between the AAR process and program review. Add a sentence that identifies (names) the headings on the AAR as the steps involved in assessing student learning. Add a request that programs tag all items with a creation / revision date. Add statement that the requested attachments on the AAR should be embedded into the report to create a single electronic file with the name [dept] AAR [Date]. Accept recommend edits.

Statement #1:

The terms “mission”, “goals” and “objectives” need to be clearly defined; Recommendations: Create a web version of the Guidelines document where specific words or phrases could have pop up boxes that could be rolled over for additional information.

Statement #2: Accept recommended edits.

Statements #1-3:

Remove the statement “All academic programs should have submitted this document by the end of Fall 2005.”

Statements #5 and #6:

Remove from the list; add the text of these statements to the intro.

Statement #7:

Current statement 7 becomes statement 5; Proposal to remove from the list; this information will be included in this year's response letter.

PURPOSE OF ASSESSEMENT

One member asked if this should be at the top of the document? This will be taken up at the next meeting when a clean draft with approved changes is distributed. Carol asked the question: should “outcomes” be replaced with “objectives” in the document? (Objectives is the term used by the university – exceptions are in professional schools who may use “outcome”). There was clarification noted between “objectives”, which are the goals and “outcomes”, which are the results and can be benchmarked. Decision: Use OBJECTIVES to be consistent in document.

Decision: Quote new university mission and strategic plan in this section.

CRITERIA FOR EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

Discussion included the following recommendations: Change heading title to Characteristics of Effective Assessment. There was discussion as to whether there should be an explicit statement about aligning goals and objectives with the university strategic planning initiatives (contributions to the Core Curriculum already appears in the guidelines for Program Review and alignment with strategic plan has come up in the program review revision conversations). Decision was to table this discussion until the next meeting when we will discuss Appendix A. A recommendation was made to delete the first sentence in this section that refers to the list as “criteria that will be used to gauge the success of assessment at the program level” and replace it with a sentence that explains the list as characteristics of effective, or best, practice in assessment of student learning.

APPENDIX D: GUIDELINES FOR ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

This discussion focused on whether the due date of no later than March 1st should be retained. The pros and cons of making the due date later in the spring quarter were considered (e.g., more time would be positive, more likely to be able to report on a finished project, but later in the term means more proximal to end of the academic year, hiring season, finals, grading, etc) Decision was to recommend changing the due date to MARCH 31. It was also recommended that a timeline or regularized schedule be created and added as a table demonstrating a recommended way to proceed through assessment of student learning objectives according to the phases of the academic calendar.

Items that were mentioned by discussion were tabled due to time constraints:

- Changing the name of the document from Annual Assessment REPORT to Annual Assessment UPDATE.
- Adding a section or sections named Response to Recommendations from Previous Year and / or Response to Actions from Previous Year (indicating that the program is following up on programmatic improvement decisions that have been undertaken).
- Recommendation to collapse Goals and Objectives (B and C under I. Mission, Goals and Objectives) into one subheading.
- Recommendation to add a new subheading “Changes in Program’s Curriculum & Pedagogy, Scholarship / Creative Works, and Service Goals and Objectives”
- Is the intended meaning of the word “obstacles” in the second check mark under Improvements Made clear enough?

Announcements

- For next meeting – April 1, 2011 - we will be reviewing Appendices A, B and C as well as reviewing a new draft of the main document and appendix D.
- We now have a Camino webpage where the agendas and minutes are posted: <https://angel.scu.edu/default.asp> login with your Novell username and password and the University Assessment Committee group will be listed on the left side of the page.