

Academic Assessment Committee Meeting
January 28, 2016
12:00 – 1:00
MacArthur Hall 620

Present: Rashid Aidun, Renee Campbell, Patrick Casselman, Jondavid DeLong, Ken Erickson, Marela Fiacco, Kirk Jones, Tatsuhito Koya, Michael Newtown, William Rivers, Rachel Santose, Douglas Scheidt, Jennifer Sovde, Sarah Todd, Jennifer Waite

The meeting was convened at 12:00 noon.

Review of Assessment Process for Fall 2015:

Sarah: Sarah believes that while we are on a good path, there is still a tremendous need for more assessment and Taskstream training on campus. We have a foundation to build on and by doing this continually, we will get better at it. However, there needs to be a point person who could start sitting down with a faculty member and work with that person throughout the year. In addition, there is a strong need for multiple trainings each semester to assist faculty in developing good measures, improving their rubrics, and other assessment and pedagogical issues. It is not feasible for Sarah to continue trying to do this aside from her regular job duties and similarly, would not make sense for a faculty member to take it on and have the ability to do an adequate job with it either.

Doug: As we have started this process and need to make a commitment to it, Doug has written a proposal to present to the President; the goal is to hire a full-time person to have in place for fall 2016.

Sarah: Trying to do every SLO in every course every semester leads to mediocre assessment and results. In cases where the measures are good, it won't be bad; however if the measures are bad they will just end up being copied from semester to semester. This leads to a large quantity of assessment but much of it is of bad quality.

Jennifer S: As a new faculty member, writing SLOs was the most frustrating for her because people who were here before her were inconsistent with theirs. Would there be benefit gained by SLO department workshops? SUNY Potsdam has Taskstream in their School of Education; would it be practical to tap into that resource for assistance? That could be a good idea to pursue in the future.

Jennifer W: Let's build these ideas into a plan. What we currently have is not sustainable. Our biggest problems are lack of time, lack of communication, and lack of resources. Jennifer announced that she will be stepping down as Academic Assessment Committee chair at the end of this semester.

Issues that need immediate attention by the committee:

Sarah: In regards to a standard institutional guideline: what do we do with the cohort of non-responsive students? Should they be included or not?

Marela: Including non-respondent percentages should be included to help show trends. That data can be very helpful for faculty.

J.D.: Non respondents should not be considered as a failure. There could be many different reasons why students do not complete assignments. It would be ideal if there was a way to aggregate the reasons why assignments are not completed (ex., school cancelation, etc.).

Sarah: Sarah feels we need a campus assessment policy, as there is no document anywhere that says what the purposes and uses are for assessment. We need to deal with that immediately. Sarah will draft a document and send it to the committee for review and feedback. This document needs to include information to reassure faculty that this is assessment and not an evaluative process.

Sarah: Mapping. Should programs be mapping to subject areas outside of their discipline? Sarah does not feel that they should be linked.

Mike: Mike stated concern that by not linking service courses to programs could be problematic. He feels that those connections need to be made, particularly for upper level coursework.

J.D.: We aren't there yet with upper level course mapping. We don't know if the measures will give us good data yet. We need to know that we are using good rubrics and getting good findings and measures first.

Doug: Where is something taught and where is it assessed? Where are the skills being applied and where are they being appropriately applied? Do we need a map of assessment down to the foundation? There may or may not be a need to map down. Someone is always a "customer" and someone is always a "supplier." We are all here for one purpose, the improvement of continuous assessment at the college.

Sarah: The Taskstream mapping won't be providing any more feedback than it already is. Faculty should not be doing unnecessary work. We are going to hold off on upper level mapping at this time.

J.D.: Suggested having a global meeting with issues that cut across schools and flesh out those issues.

Academic Assessment Cycle Discussion:

Sarah: We need to get on a regular cycle so everyone is aware of when assessment needs to be done and some final decisions need to be made. What should we be measuring and how often? Sarah provided a draft of a proposal which was reviewed. She said that if we go by the cycle in this proposal, our mapping has to be really good and overall, we will not need to assess every SLO every semester. The ISLO's and GERO's to be assessed on a three year cycle with five assessed each year. In cases where courses that are not taught every year, those courses would have to use previous data or wait. We have two competing assessment models now; one program based and one course based. We have already forced the faculty to do the course based cycle and we can't go back now. We need to find a way to come to a resolution on how we are going to make these work.

Ken: Some programs won't fit this cycle well unless every program has the four ISLO's as their program ISLO's.

Mike: Concern about accredited programs and this cycle.

Sarah: The whole college will use this cycle and the accredited programs will add what they need to for accreditation.

Institutional Student Learning Objectives:

Jennifer W.: Are these the institutional student learning outcomes we want? We know they don't map to professional competence and critical thinking. A determination needs to be made if we want to stick with them.

Time ran out; therefore, the last two topics will be added to the next Academic Assessment Meeting agenda for further discussion.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Recorder: Renee Campbell