

Ferris State University
Academic Affairs Assessment Committee
Meeting Minutes for 2/23/07

Members Present: Mike Cooper; Bill Potter; Todd Stanislav; Cheryl Thomas; Ron McKean; Robert von der Osten, Chair.

Members Absent: Douglas Haneline, Julie Coon

The chair thanks all members of the committee for their work on the assessment fair and for their extensive and successful efforts to enhance the quality of assessment in their areas of responsibility.

University Assessment Committee

It was reported that with the approval of the President a University Assessment Committee is being formed as an informal group to establish conversion of assessment efforts in the different Division. The committee will be initially co-chaired by Robert von der Osten, Chair of the Assessment Committee, and Robbie Teahen, Dean of UCEL. The committee will have several initial projects including but not limited to the following:

- Determine the procedures to record the diverse assessment data.
- Establish a process to decide on the most effective allocation of resources, including Institutional Research.
- Develop a model for sharing best practices and strategies across divisions.
- Reviewing whether some form of university plan or statement is helpful.

In response to the queries by committee members, any such university wide effort would not usurp the work of other units and would not establish directives that would contradict the progress being made by specific colleges. The committee suggested another project for the committee as well.

- Map what is being done and when.

Ferris Grand Rapids

The chair reported that Ferris Grand Rapids is increasingly being integrated into the assessment process.

- Ferris –GR now follows the standard curriculum practice
- Ferris-GR is scheduling programs into the program review cycle
- The Chair is working with Ferris-GR on developing program and course outcomes as well as developing assessment strategies
- This is being done in a manner that respects Ferris-GR need to remain agile

Assessment Fair

Members indicated that the assessment fair and the process of that fair were fruitful. Michael Cooper reported that the College of Business used a workshop format over two days to significantly increase the number of programs with effective learning outcomes. The College of Education and Technology benefited from an effective guest speaker.

- The members of the committee charged the chair to collect brief statements of the fair from each of the Colleges that participated.

- The descriptions of the fairs along with a statement of institutional progress in assessment should be forwarded by the Chair to the Deans with copies to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the President.

Moving Course Assessment Forward

Discussion indicated that in establishing course outcomes and in establishing assessment plans we need to be sensitive to the different trajectories of our many constituents.

- Some programs effectively establish course outcomes as being relevant to program outcomes. However, not all programs or areas are able to proceed in this fashion. Many had programs that evolved before the change to an outcome driven model.
- We need to stress exemplary programs and courses which have successful assessment models.
- We should recognize that course assessment will develop in stages, and our concern should not be in achieving immediate compliance but in sustaining a process that results in success.
- Members of the committee should work with their respective units to move their area forward.
- The chair will develop for Arts and Sciences a list of practical strategies for course assessment with examples tied to specific areas. He will share the document with members of this committee.
- During Faculty Week before classes start workshops should be offered on very specific assessment strategies such as when and how to gain data for surveys, how to use rubrics to evaluate actual practices, how and when to use portfolios.

Next steps for this committee as suggested by the members present.

- Clearly we will need to wait for some of the conclusions of the University Assessment Committee which will be meeting on March 7, 2007.
- Several actions including integrating assessment into planning and budgeting will be contingent on developments at the university level.
- If there is no timeline for the HLC site visit by Fall 2007, the committee may need to consider whether it has a role in assisting in creating such a timeline.
- Consistent with the Chair's discussion with Robbie Teahen, a workshop or seminar should be held for the Department Heads/Chairs on assessment expectations and strategies as well as on strategies to lead their respective units to more effective assessment practices.

Minutes prepared by Robert von der Osten on 24 February 2007.