

Minutes

Joint Meeting of the Academic Affairs Assessment Committee and Assessment Mentors

27 February 2009

Members Present: Sandra Brigance, Julie Coon, Susan Hastings-Bishop, Maureen Heaphy, Pat Klarecki, David Marion, Kristen Motz, William Potter, Todd Stanislav, Cheryl Thomas, Robert von der Osten (Chair of the AAAC)

Members Absent: Michael Cron, Matthew McNulty, Barbara Ross, Mark Thomson, Helen Woodman, Roberta Teahen

Those present discussed the HLC Academy for Assessment survey results

- A review of the demographics indicated that the predominant responders were experienced faculty but many were new to Ferris. There is not currently a statistical breakdown of the results by years at Ferris.
- Faculty are surprisingly positive about student learning outcomes and most indicate that they make the outcomes available to students, though they are not as confident that students would affirm the information. Fewer faculty specifically link their assessment measures to the identified outcomes.
- A surprisingly high number of faculty have attended assessment programs outside of Ferris ((36.4%) and Ferris programs on assessment (58.9%). However, a surprising number do not see such programs as readily available (44.6). This might be biased by the word “readily” which might be construed as being immediately available at the faculty member’s convenience.
- Based on number 12, and the recognition that there are still faculty who still do not know if there is a knowledgeable person to contact (30.2%), it would be useful to increase the information campaign about the availability of mentors and others with assessment expertise.
- Faculty use an array of assessment strategies. There is some concern that respondents did not distinguish grading from student learning assessment, as demonstrated by the high count on attendance as an assessment tool.
- It was noted that respondents looked toward Academic Affairs for leadership and financial support. They saw less of a role for Deans and Department heads/chairs. This may be a reflection of their sense of initial competence as well as the nature of the relationship to this leadership, (which may in some instances seem too close.
- It is very clear that many faculty do not feel that they are recognized for their assessment effort and would prefer to be so recognized. This suggests that the effort to increase assessment recognition in institutional processes should be supported.
- There seems to be a willingness to learn more about how to effectively assess student learning. Still, mentors report that they have not been extensively contacted for assistance. Two suggestions were made. 1. Mentors should be more proactive in making contacts and offering assistance. 2. It may be useful for Mentors to increase the available written material for use in their Colleges.
- There was a strong argument made that the survey should be administered annually or bi-annually. We might administer a shorter version of the survey.

It was announced that the Assessment Newsletter will be forthcoming. In the future, it was agreed that more members of the AAAC and Mentors would be involved in writing articles for the newsletter.

The Channel for MyFsu was discussed with several possible items to be included in the channel.

- Link to the assessment web page.
- Link to the assessment web page with links to other sites.
- Highlighted best practice.
- Assessment Suggestion.
- Link to online version of the newsletter.

The members present indicated that it is important to not let the focus on assessment be drowned out by budgetary concerns. There are several important suggestions.

- Continued support is essential for faculty development in assessment, including for new faculty.
- There needs to be real growth in the recognition of assessment, including through vehicles like tenure review and promotion.
- Need to go through a process of review and the refinement of assessment methods. The May 11 retreat was discussed as such an opportunity.
- It suggested that we might consider assessment certification similar to online certification.

Maureen Heaphy offered a synopsis of her experience of the Texas A&M Conference which she felt was excellent. She offered a handout that provided a range of useful questions, a model of a program alignment matrix (curriculum map) and Portland State University's Critical Thinking Rubric.

The committee reviewed the TracDat implementation timeline with the AAAC Assessment Plan with the assistance of a phase in comparison document prepared by Ron Mckean. In general the two plans were commensurate on program implementation. Based on the evaluation of unit progress the dates for entering course outcomes and assessment plans were moved forward to December 09. The modified plan was made available to all members of AAAC, all mentors, and the Associate VPAA for review.

Minutes prepared by Robert von der Osten 3/2/09