

Minutes
Academic Affairs Assessment Committee
25 September 2009

Members Present: Sandra Brigance, Michael Cron, Pat Klarecki, David Marion, Robert von der Osten (Chair)

Members Absent: Julie Coon, William Potter, Todd Stanislav, Roberta Teahen (Ex-Officio), Cheryl Thomas

The committee discussed how to refocus attention to assessment as a useful way to enhance student learning.

- In many areas, the “tail is wagging the dog” and assessment is being seen as simply a process to meet the demands of TracDat implementation. This is being compounded by the fact that in many cases clerical staff members are typing in TracDat data, undercutting any faculty ownership of the process.
- Program Review is a process with credibility because it leads to recommendations with budgetary support. Assessment needs to be more fully integrated into Program Review to insure that it become part of a long term academic practice. The Chair will address a memo to the Chair of the Program Review Council suggesting such integration.
- It is important to make certain with those at the department and program level get a better sense of the value of the uses of assessment. In many Colleges, those who are local to the College, such as mentors or assessment coordinators should play the central role in this effort.
- Some find assessment difficult. A greater effort needs to be made to direct training to faculty at the program level. Department Heads/Chairs need to be contacted to identify any training, such as the writing of rubrics, that might help faculty more effectively use assessment. FCTL and other sources of expertise on campus should be used to provide the training. Assessment mentors should be asked to identify training needs in their area.
- An effort should be made to encourage faculty who have not yet attended an assessment conference to attend one of the better conferences. The Chair will attempt to get information on the current status of the Academic Affairs budge.
- There is a growing perception that only faculty are engaged in assessment. An article should be included in the newsletter that stresses assessment done in other areas of the University. Data from assessment in other areas should be more transparent and more readily available.

The members approved the initiation of a competition to reward the top three programs that offer best practices in using assessment data to take action that enhances student learning. The award should be \$2,000.

An effort should be made to increase the effective use of assessment grants.

- Currently Math has received the assessment grant funds and will use those funds over two years to initiate a reading program, bring in guest speakers, and send select faculty for training.
- The Chair should direct information about Assessment Grants to the Department and Program level and make use of the assessment mentors to share information about grant options.

The current assessment plan was reviewed.

- Goals are currently being met. Goal 1 objectives 1 and 2; Goal 2 objective 1; Goal 4 objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, and 8; and Goal 5 objectives 1 and 2 being clearly met.
- Data is necessary on Goal 4 objectives 5, 6, and 7. The Chair will speak with the Provost concerning Goal 5 objectives 3 and 4.
- Goal 1 objective 3 is not seen as primary for many programs which need more experience with assessment before benchmarking. Other goal objectives are pending.
- The Committee recommended as a new goal for the 2009-2011 cycle: Increase faculty actual and useful engagement in assessment.
 - This is consistent with the project for the HLC Academy Team.
 - This should be accomplished by integrating assessment into program review, shifting to a record culture where faculty learn the advantages of keeping records of what may seem an unconscious process, and offering more workshops focused on the actual needs of units. An effort should be to continue to bring support to the program and faculty level.