University Assessment Committee Minutes
September 30, 2011
Student Senate Chambers

Members Present: Adam McGlynn, Bonnie Green, Caroline DiPipi-Hoy, Chris Dudley, Debra Ballinger, Fernando Perez, Jaedock Lee, Jamie Thomas, Jeff Weber, Jennifer White, Joann Stryker, John Robinson, Justin Potts, Kelly Harrison, Kelly Weaber, Kelsey Paciotti, Laura Waters, Mark, Kiler, Mike Jochen, Pam Kraemer-Ertel, Patricia Kashner, Yun Kim
Guests: Sandy Shaika

- UAC members completed a worksheet entitled, *Where are You Regarding Assessment* when they arrived at the meeting. *(Compiled responses are at the end of these minutes.)*

- **Welcome and Introductions:** Joann Stryker (UAC Co-Chair) welcomed all group members and began by asking group members to introduce themselves.

- **Assessment Perspective Activity:** Committee members broke into small groups to work on the perspective/barrier activity.

- **Co-Chair Discussion:** Dr. Laura Waters indicated she was interested in being co-chair of the committee; Yun Kim nominated Laura Waters, the motion was seconded, and the UAC voted in the affirmative.

- **Perspective/Barrier Activity:** The small groups provided the following information at the conclusion of their group work:
  - The need for this committee to have one voice
  - Definition of Assessment- (group definitions)
    - A process
    - Linking performance with stated desirable outcomes
    - Finding out what students are learning; are they learning and meeting the standards expect from our students; assessing both qualitatively and quantitatively; the need to articulate what we want our students to do.
    - The process of identifying learning goals and understand student baseline performance so that we can know whether students are learning and how we need to change educational strategies to improve the process
    - Evaluation of outcomes related to academic, behavioral and affective learning.
    - The process of collecting and analyzing data and implementing change to meet an increase learning outcomes.
    - The collection of data that relates to certain behaviors that objectively demonstrate an ability to obtain and process information; to make a judgment or draw conclusions about whether learning has occurred.
Committee must accomplish in the short-term:

- Reach consensus on what should be measured
- Department assessment
- Provide examples and samples of assessment plans and assessment reports
- Departments must finish assessment plans and turn in first reports
- See the effect of large classrooms on SLO’s
- Inventory data collected
- Use our data that we already have to plan ahead
- Refine assessment plans/promote templates for academic and co-curricular programs
- Use assessment results
- Define goals of academic/non-academic areas and program goals
- Celebrate successes

Committee must accomplish in the long-term:

- Once data is critiqued, implement a system for change
- Increase measurement and standardization of university
- Come up with a general consensus with what things measure learning
- Develop a university-wide culture of assessment
- Evaluate how all programs all programs are meeting university-wide outcomes (coordinate with GE)
- Break the bias against “assessment”/create acceptance of assessment
- Educate university about assessment
- Use assessment results to promote the university
- Linking the goals of all academic/non-academic/program goals
- Develop an effective feedback loop/cycle to inform of changes

What are the barriers to accomplishing short-term and long-term objectives:

- Measurement difficulties/developing of objectives and assessment methods/format change affects
- Fear that information will be used against faculty
- Lack of trust
- Useless – why waste effort and time
- Alignment of outcomes
- Lack of communication between programs/departments
- Communication in a way that people will receive information and use it
- Trust of data and how it is used/negativity of assessment stereotype/lack of education on assessment
- Faculty/campus community buy-in
- Class size
- Time- using limited resource
- Money
- Development of a consistent approach that is objective
- Lack of clear lines of authority (sanctions???)
- Slow movement of Committee
- Communicating to admissions what pre-requisites are necessary to be successful as an ESU student
- “Behavioral drift” – K-12 teaching to the test

- **Role of Committee Members**: Joann Stryker reviewed the handout discussing the role of UAC members. UAC members are the voice of the group they are representing. UAC members are the “leaders of assessment” in the university community. The group reviewed the list of what an effective committee member does.

- **Workgroups**: At the end of the last academic year, the UAC committee members provided feedback on the difficulties of operating as such a large group – for example finding meeting times and combatting the sense that no one individual was critical to work of committee. For this year the proposal was to work as three semi-independent workgroups. The group was handed a sheet on work groups as a starting point for overall committee discussion. It was agreed that the workgroups would work and that functioning workgroups will be established. Each UAC each member was asked to select one work group. It was discussed that inner-group responsibilities will need to be fine-tuned and some group responsibilities will need to be added to those on the document. The relationship of the UAC goals to the selection of the optional performance funding measures was discussed. Joann Stryker concluded conversation on this topic by asking for committee members to indicate their workgroup preference via an emailed survey. The three workgroups are:
  - Institutional Assessment
  - Program Level Assessment
  - Professional Development

- Joann Stryker concluded the meeting and thanked members for attending.

- **Future Meetings**: Were discussed at the meeting. After the meeting it was determined that full UAC group meetings for the fall 2011 will be:
  - **Friday, October 28**\(^{th}\), **3:00-4:00 PM at Lower Dansbury**
  - **Friday, December 2**\(^{nd}\), **3:00-4:00 PM at Lower Dansbury**
Where are you regarding Assessment? Compiled Responses

1. Define student learning assessment in your own words:
   - Reviewing, collecting and analyzing of data and implementing changes to meet learning outcomes.
   - Checks for compliance/alignment between student outcomes and course/instructor objectives
   - The collection of data that is then compiled and used as a means of determining whether learning has occurred
   - Evaluation of whatever students are mastering the material prescribed in learning objectives and outcomes
   - Evaluating what students have learned and whether they achieved goals/objectives by using measurable tools
   - A) What student learning outcomes clearly described, B) Had the students achieved the student learning outcomes, and C) If not, what is planned/being done to assist students in meeting those objectives
   - The development of a process and tools to measure student’s acquisition of course and program content. Administering tools on a scheduled, regular basis and using the results to revise as necessary
   - The ability to track and analyze the skills students improve on or lack improvement
   - An assessment in what students are learning and how they are learning it
   - A qualitative or quantitative measure of change in ability
   - The attempt to find out if what we are doing works; if students are learning and if so, what
   - A means to enable thoughtful introspection on how well students are truly learning. A means to assess how well we are achieving our educational outcomes or objectives for our class/program. Used to drive continuous improvement on curriculum and teaching
   - Creating an understanding of a student’s ability to know content, identify learning and thinking processes and how students retain a body of content upon completion of a degree program
   - It is a qualitative and quantitative method of capturing what students are obtaining from their classes and other experiences at ESU
   - A systematic process by which we seek to ensure that students our meeting our expectations and learning what we are teaching them
   - Understanding, as an instructor, what the student has learned and how well he/she can apply what they’ve learned and what I, as an instructor, need to do for helping them learn and apply the material
   - Documenting and substantiating the degree to which students are learning

Rate questions 2 to 4 on a scale of 1-10
   No Idea What You Mean=1 to Understand Completely=10

2. Do you understand what is meant by student learning assessment at the course/activity level?
   - The average of all worksheets is 7.63 (only one answer of 5 or below)

3. Do you understand what is meant by student learning assessment at the program level?
   - The average of all worksheets is 6.63 (four answers of 5 or below)

4. Do you understand what is meant by student learning assessment at the university level?
   - The average of all worksheets is 6.11 (four answers of 5 or below)
5. Do you feel comfortable discussing student learning assessment with your colleagues?

Yes or no question

- Yes= 13
- No= 0
- Other= 5 (Pretty Well, Sometimes, Somewhat, yes and no, does not have colleagues)

6. In the area of student learning assessment, what topics would you like to learn more about?

- Improvement plan based on what we already have
- What’s going on in other departments
- What does the university administration use for reporting purposes
- Setting and measuring less concrete learning objectives
- How to best assess course-specific objectives
- Direct measures of program assessment
- What’s the best way to assess student learning
- The overall level of mathematical improvement of our students
- How successful is ESU in preparing our graduates for programs such as graduate school
- All of it!
- How to capture qualitative or subjective areas of learning (ie. How students think)
- University level assessment
- New assessment techniques/instruments
- Use of data; development of program level assessment
- Communicate to others how to utilize student learning assessment to drive program, curricular, pedagogical practices and protocol
- Innovative ways to assess large classes without losing personal feedback
- The influence on classroom environments on student learning.