

Minutes

University Assessment Council

March 11th, 2016, 9am, Tirey Hall 133F

Members Present: Arvin, Baker, Ball, Ballard, Bernard, Bunnett, Chao, Hampton, Hare, Herrington-Perry, Myers, Peterson, Pitner, Sare, Tuttle

Guest: Lynn Maurer, Dean of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies

Members Absent: Anderson, Powers, Protz

- I. Welcome to John Sare, new SA representative.**
John is the new Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs and has been designated as that division's assessment coordinator.
- II. Approval of the February 12th Minutes**
Hampton moved and Pitner seconded the motion to approve the February 12th Minutes as published. The motion was approved with two abstentions.
- III. Discussion of Professional Development Activities for AY2016-17**
Members reviewed the draft calendar of professional development activities created by the Assessment Leadership Team. (Calendar topics were based on the results of the campus-wide survey of professional development needs.) The Coordinator will seek additional advice from Beth Whitaker, the Director of the Faculty Center for Teaching Excellence. Members also suggested that she look into the possibility of presenting sessions as part of Faculty Orientation.
- IV. Draft of the Provost's Award for Excellence in Student Learning Assessment**
Members reviewed the draft document developed by the Assessment Leadership Team. Suggestions included inviting those earning the highest scores on the Student Learning Assessment Report Rubric to participate and requiring them to provide additional information in order to be considered for the awards, such as a brief report on how their assessment plans/results have contributed to student success, what the secrets of their success are, or how they would use the award to further their assessment work. Members indicated that the award should be spent on learning assessment and program improvement, and they suggested that the "winners" be required to provide an assessment-related professional development activity. Last, they recommended that programs who win the award be eligible to compete again after three (not five) years.

Members agreed that it would be best to have the Provost present the awards at a dean's council meeting in the fall because few competing events occur then. It might also be a good idea to congratulate the winners at the spring faculty recognition event.

Sare indicated interest in developing a similar award process for Student Affairs. He will discuss this with Dr. Banks.

The Coordinator will present a revised draft of the proposal to the Council at its April meeting.

V. Updates from Members of the Council

Arvin and Bunnett attended the AAC&U conference, "General Education and Assessment: From My Work to Our Work," in February. Arvin provided a summary of member institutions' assessment achievements. For example, 85% have established over-arching learning outcomes (writing, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, communication, etc.), though students appear to have no better knowledge of these goals now than they did in 2008. Almost all member institutions offer applied learning experiences. Most faculty are using digital learning tools. (Two-thirds use eportfolios.) Few describe their general education programs as having coherence. Bunnett noted the general theme of the conference was that to be successful, assessment has to be the responsibility of the institution, not the individual (Our work, not my work). Assessment must be transparent, it requires constant communication, and it must be assessed, too. Faculty development is an integral part of learning improvement and requires an institutional mandate. He also noted that as student demographics change, we can't blame students for not being ready for college. Instead, the question we should be asking is, are we ready for them?

VI. Other Business

Reminder: Q&A sessions about the new assessment reporting process will be held March 30 (3 pm), and April 14th (9:30am). Hare encouraged members to attend and get others to do so.

VII. Adjournment 9:45

Our final meeting of the semester will be at 9am on Friday, April 15th, in Parsons Hall 210.