University Assessment Committee Meeting - November 7, 2012

Attendance:

Barbara Kopp Miller  Marlene Porter  Barbara Schneider
Penny Poplin Gosetti  Marilyynne Wood  Laurie Mauro
Peggy Fritz  Ken Davis  Anthony Edgington
Chris Roseman  Rebecca Schneider  Linda Smith
Llew Gibbons  Brian Ashburner  Alana Malik
Suzanne Spacek  Erin Harper  Heather Johnson Huntley
Scott Molitor

Introduction of new members (Welcome, Ken Davis, from the College of Adult and Lifelong Learning!)

Vice Provost Report – Penny Poplin Gosetti

- The renovation of the Office of Assessment is currently underway. The new office will include three separate office spaces and a reception area. The renovation should be completed very soon.
- The additional assessment position has been approved by HR. The position’s PSA title is the “Learning Outcomes Assessment Specialist.” The job description (#13777) is currently advertised on the UT Employment Opportunity Site. We will start to review applications on November 26th.
- Reminder: President Jacobs has placed assessment on the agenda for the next Senior Leadership meeting on November 29, 2012. Further information will be provided.

The UAC has established a goal to develop and adopt a common language of assessment. For clarification purposes, the senior administration has requested a glossary of assessment definitions. We must provide short and concise definitions that are easy to understand. After a lively group discussion, we have agreed upon tentative definitions of the assessment of student learning and student learning outcomes. The proposed definitions are listed below. Each liaison was asked to “test” the two proposed definitions at their college, identify any miscommunication, and report their findings to Erin Harper (erin.harper@rockets.utoledo.edu) by Wednesday, November 21st.

- Assessment of student learning can be defined as the systematic and ongoing collection of data on and measurement of student learning in order to inform continuous improvement decisions.
- Outcomes are concise and measurable statements that specify what students will know, be able to do, or be able to demonstrate when they have completed/participated in a program/course/project or received a service.

Presentation by JHCEHSHS - Rebecca Schneider and Chris Roseman. (Due to time limitations, Llew Gibbons will now present at the next UAC meeting on December 5, 2012.)

“Establishing a Culture of Assessment” by Wendy Weiner. Members were asked to anonymously complete a short survey to rate how well we are implementing the 15 elements
of the culture of assessment at the institutional level. The results will help identify areas in which we must improve. The results will also help us prioritize our efforts.

Announcements/Reminders:

- December presentations by Llew Gibbons and Scott Molitor (Distance Learning was scheduled for December, but this college will now present at another time)
- Please provide feedback to Erin Harper (erin.harper@rockets.utoledo.edu) by Wednesday, November 21st on the definitions of assessment of student learning and student learning outcomes.
- Next meeting date: 12/5/2012, 1:30-3:00p.m., in GH 3050
University Assessment Committee Charge

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) leads the continued development of learning assessment policies at UT. Through College, academic support units, student affairs, and core curriculum liaisons, the UAC monitors assessment activity at the program level, and reviews and provides feedback on the annual reports. The UAC collaborates with the appropriate internal and external resources to provide leadership for the professional development of faculty, administration and staff on assessment processes and resources. The UAC website serves as a source for archiving assessment activity and resources available for those involved with assessment at the university. Specifically, the UAC will:

- Lead the development of learning assessment policies at UT.
- Provide leadership in the review, evaluation and continuous improvement of the University’s assessment plan.
- Provide a clearinghouse for the dissemination of information on student learning and assessment.
- Identify external professional development opportunities to help faculty understand the complexities of assessment and to help articulate learning outcomes.
- Provide leadership for training faculty in the use of assessment tools such as portfolios, surveys, formative and summative instruments, capstone experiences, applied experiences, course embedded assessment and use of multiple measures in student outcomes assessment.
- Communicate with University senior leadership and the campus about assessment policies and activities, assessment report summaries and recommendations, and recognition of substantial individual and group contributions to progress in the assessment of student achievement.

AGENDA

1. Introduction of new members
2. Vice Provost Report – Penny Poplin Gosetti
3. Definitions of assessment and student learning outcomes
4. Presentations
   - JHEHS – Rebecca Schneider & Chris Roseman
   - College of Law – Llew Gibbons
5. Report Committee update - Scott Molitor
6. Update from the UAC Chair – Barbara Kopp Miller
7. Rate the 15 elements of the culture of assessment
Define: Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning. It involves:

- making our expectations explicit and public
- setting appropriate criteria and high standards for learning quality
- systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards
- using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance

When it is embedded effectively within larger institutional systems, assessment can help us:

- focus our collective attention
- examine our assumptions
- create a shared academic culture dedicated to assuring and improving the quality of higher education

Assessment of student learning can be defined as the systematic collection of information about student learning, using the time, knowledge, expertise and resources available, in order to inform decisions about how to improve learning.

Assessment of student learning: the “process by which we ascertain through data collection if students have learned the skills, content, and habits of mind that will make them successful; if students are not learning, we decide on changes in the curriculum or teaching strategy to improve learning.”

Assessment is the ongoing process of:

- Establishing clear, measurable expected outcomes of student learning
- Ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to achieve those outcomes
- Systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well student learning matches our outcomes/expectations
- Using the resulting information to understand and improve student learning

Assessment is a systematic process for gathering information about student learning; it answers the question, “How do we know what students are learning, and how well they are learning it?”

As a process, it has five steps:

1. specify learning objectives;
2. select teaching and learning strategies;
3. gather data on student learning;
4. evaluate the data; and
5. make decisions and implement them.
<table>
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<th>Learning Objective</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
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<th>Institutional Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>General Education Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Non-instructional student learning outcomes</th>
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<td>An outcome statement that captures specifically what knowledge, skills, and attitudes learners should be able to exhibit following instruction. SMART Specific Measureable/Observable Attainable for target audience within scheduled time and specific conditions Relevant and results-oriented Targeted to the Learning and the desired level of learning. Another definition: Objectives are INTENDED results or consequences of instruction, curricula, programs or activities.</td>
<td>Concise measurable statement that specifies what students will know, be able to do, or be able to demonstrate when they have completed/participated in a program/course/project or received a service. Characteristics • Practical • Measurable • Meaningful • Specific • Consistent • Sensible</td>
<td>Directly describe what a student is expected to learn as a result of participating in academic activities or experiences at the college. SLO focus on knowledge gained, skills and abilities acquired or demonstrated, and attitudes or values changed. Priorities • Directly involving all faculty who teach the course being assessed in the assessment process itself • Make the process as unobtrusive as possible • Minimize potential sources of biased data Page 3 – Guiding values of outcomes assessment What makes a good learning outcome? • Learner centered • Key to the course’s mission • Meaningful for faculty and students • Representative of a range of thinking skills • Measurable</td>
<td>Measurable cognitive, psychomotor, or affective skills or knowledge acquired which embody the overarching goals of a course, program or student service unit. Page 5 – Good definition of assessment from AAHE Bulletin, November, 1995, p. 7</td>
<td>ILOs are the knowledge, skills, and abilities a student is expected to leave an institution with as a result of a student’s total experience.</td>
<td>GE SLOs are the knowledge, skills and abilities a student is expected to be able to demonstrate following a program of courses designed to provide the student with a common core of knowledge consistent with a liberally educated or literate citizen.</td>
<td>Ask yourself the following questions: • Who is the typical student or client to utilize your services? • What are the attributes, skills, and values that are supported and nurtured by the students experience when in contact with your services? • What does this student know as a result of using your services? • What can this student do as a result of using your services? • What does this student care about as a result of using your services? What are the services provided by your unit that contribute to the development of the ideal student?</td>
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http://ccoe.umdnj.edu/for.ms/EffectiveUseofLearningObjectives.pdf  
http://www.uwlax.edu/learningoutcomes/edreading/LearningOutcomes.pdf  
Culture of Assessment

Definition of the culture of assessment: “the predominating attitudes and behaviors that characterize the functioning of an institution [and] support the assessment of student learning outcomes.”

15 Elements of the Culture of Assessment:

1. Clear general educational goals ___
2. Common use of assessment-related terms ___
3. Faculty ownership of assessment programs ___
4. Ongoing professional development ___
5. Administrative encouragement of assessment ___
6. Practical assessment plans ___
7. Systematic assessment ___
8. The setting of student learning outcomes for all courses and programs ___
9. Comprehensive program review ___
10. Assessment of co-curricular activities ___
11. Assessment of overall institutional effectiveness ___
12. Informational forums about assessment ___
13. Inclusion of assessment in plans and budgets ___
14. Celebration of success ___
15. Responsiveness to proposals for new endeavors related to assessment ___

Rating Scale:

1 = element clearly exists throughout the institution and provides strong support for the assessment of student learning
3 = element exists in pockets of the institution, providing support for assessment in student learning outcomes within those pockets
5 = element does not exist within the institution, or element exists but does not provide support in a meaningful manner

Author: Wendy Weiner
Title: “Establishing a Culture of Assessment”
Academe Online, 2009