

**University Assessment Council  
Minutes**

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

419 Student Union

3:00 p.m.

**Present:** J. Comer, D. Eaton, G. Gates, P. Lumpkin, B. Masters, S. Ownbey, E. Rabinowitz, J. Schatzer, D. Thompson, T. Weir, G. Wilber.

**Guest:** Kriengkrai Boonlert U Thai (doctoral graduate assistant for assessment in the College of Business Administration)

A copy of the minutes from the September 1, 2004, Assessment Council meeting was included in the handouts. The minutes had been sent out through e:mail after the meeting in September, and no revisions were requested.

**1. Assessment Professional Development Workshops update:**

- Outcomes Assessment Using Portfolios, September 28 – A group of about 20 assessment coordinators and faculty met to discuss using portfolios for outcomes assessment. The discussion focused on the type of information that should be reported if portfolios are used for outcomes assessment. Funding for development of portfolios is a big concern; it was suggested that students' career development fees might be requested for development of portfolios, since they are often used to demonstrate students' work to prospective employers. A concern was raised at this meeting that a lot of time and effort goes into assessment activities and preparation of the reports, and the perception was that nothing happened as a result of that. Lumpkin and Gates expressed that they believed this would begin to change as information required for Academic Program Review now includes documentation of outcomes assessment. Dr. Strathe has indicated this will be considered in resource allocations.
- Developing and Assessing Critical Thinking, September 30 – This session was presented by Greg Wilber and Jeff Hattey, with 57 faculty members in attendance. Wilbur gave a summary of the session. They discussed the rationale for assessing critical thinking, alternative methods they considered, and the rubric developed this summer for a very small scale pilot study. A full scale institutional portfolio for assessment of critical thinking will be developed next summer. Several faculty members attending the session volunteered to provide artifacts from their courses.
- Lumpkin reminded Council members of the upcoming sessions: October 14 – Effective Departmental Outcomes Assessment, Jon Comer presenting; October 21 – Regional Accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, Brenda Masters presenting; and General Education Assessment: Process and Results, 2000-2004 – date to be arranged, possibly in the spring.

**2. 2004 Assessment Institute – Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, October 31-November 2:** Brochures were handed out at the September meeting and invitations were sent to assessment coordinators inviting individuals to participate in this workshop. Lumpkin reported that

three people will be participating – one from Business and two from Engineering. These individuals are pleased to have this opportunity and are appreciative of the Council supporting it.

**3. Update on 2004 General Education Assessment Report:** The General Education Assessment Committee will report results of general education assessment conducted this year at the Council meeting on November 10.

**4. 2004 Survey of Alumni of Undergraduate Programs report:** This report was conducted in the spring semester, and the report was completed during the summer. A copy was given to each Council member.

**5. Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey:** This survey is underway. The Bureau of Social Research is attempting to reach, by phone, all currently enrolled graduate students except special students and vet med students. E:mails and notices were sent to academic departments asking them to let their students know that they would be contacted. So far, over a two day span, 150 telephone interviews have been completed.

**6. Spring 2005, Survey of Alumni of Graduate Programs:** This survey will be done in Spring 2005. The survey includes a group of common questions for all OSU alumni; the Assessment Office will contact departments to see if they would like to add specific questions for their program alumni or to update questions that have been used in the past.

**7. Spring 2005, National Survey of Student Engagement:** OSU participates in this annual, national survey every three years, and will participate in spring 2005.

**8. OSRHE meeting to discuss changes in annual report structure:** Lumpkin reported that she will attend an OSRHE meeting on Monday, October 11, to discuss possible changes in the annual institutional assessment report required by the regents.

**9. Council Reviews of Program Outcome Assessment:** Lumpkin reviewed the Assessment Council policy statement; this policy provides the basis for the review process. Masters requested that references in the policy to the North Central Association be changed to the Higher Learning Commission. Revisions should also indicate that the documentation for Academic Program Review now requires assessment information also.

The Council will be divided into four sub-groups groups of about four people. Each sub-group will review 3-4 programs; the programs are those scheduled for academic program review in spring 2006. Participants will not be asked to review programs from their college. The reviews will be completed in Fall 2004, providing feedback to the departments by the end of the semester or early January. Departments will have a year to consider the recommendations and make changes, if they choose, before they provide information for Academic Program Review.

A draft of the memo that will be sent to programs with feedback and recommendations resulting from the review was distributed. The memo describes the review process, especially as it relates to the HLC accreditation process. Lumpkin mentioned that if the Council wants to close the loop in their assessment of outcomes assessment activities, there should be some follow-up to see if changes are made based on feedback provided to the programs. There was discussion about whether programs should be asked to provide a response after receiving the review memo, but the council decided that subsequent reviews of assessment plans and annual reports would indicate whether or not changes were made to improve outcomes assessment based on the feedback provided.

Lumpkin also reviewed a draft of a template for assessment reports that connects all assessment elements – outcomes to methods to results to changes. She mentioned that the information she would like to see in reports are: degree and program, student learning outcome(s) for that degree,

method(s) used to assess each outcome, year each assessment conducted, number of graduates previous year/number assessed, summary of results that would be clear to someone that's not familiar with the program or the measure, and a description of changes that were made or considered based on assessment results.

Lumpkin reviewed a sample packet of materials the sub-groups will receive for the reviews. She reviewed instructions to reviewers; each group member will be asked to read through the materials and provide a rating and comments on each of the various components. Each sub-committee will then meet to discuss their individual ratings and develop feedback statements for the program. Lumpkin will collect the notes and comments and develop the document to go to each program.

Lumpkin distributed a draft rubric, developed for Council members to use for reviewing programs with the intention of providing more specific feedback. Some council members indicated they had found it very helpful in previous reviews to receive a rating of "needs improvement," "meets expectations," or "exceeds expectations." This let them know if there was something that needed immediate attention. This was not included on the proposed rubric. To address this concern, the council decided that components rated "1" or "2" on the rubric would receive written feedback indicating the need for immediate attention; "3" and above ratings would still provide information about needed improvements, but would not be conveyed as requiring immediate attention.

The group "practiced" a review using the rubric on the first sample. Each person was provided with a worksheet to indicate a rubric score and list comments for each component. After going through the process with this sample, it was decided that the rubric would be an effective process for evaluating outcomes assessment and providing useful feedback to programs. Discussion was held on how information would be reported back to the departments. In the feedback memo, the comments from the group would tell departments about each component. Although the form does not provide for ratings and or comments regarding budget requests made by the program, budget request documents will also be included in the review process. A mechanism for providing feedback regarding the program's assessment budget may be added as the groups work through their reviews. At this point, the rubric is viewed as "a work in progress," and it is expected that the council members will make suggestions for improvement as it is used during this process.

Review of one of the sample packets raised a concern about the relationship between assessment and accreditation. Much of the program's annual report was based on requirements for their accrediting agency. The Assessment Council's intention is be supportive of accreditation requirements, and to work cooperatively with those programs in which assessment is guided by accreditation. The Council discussed that most accreditation requirements are now focused on assessment of student learning, so most accredited programs should be able to document effective outcomes assessment from work conducted for accreditation. However, the accreditation report should not be substituted for the assessment report, as it is different in focus and purpose. The council suggested that a template be designed for assessment plans and reports; departments would be advised to summarize from their accreditation material to provide the information needed to describe assessment of primary expected student learning outcomes. Lumpkin will design a template and present it at the November Assessment Council meeting.

Assessment office staff will deliver Program Outcomes Assessment Review packets to Council members by approximately October 15, and will communicate with each sub-groups to arrange meetings in mid-November for group review of the materials. There are approximately 12 programs to be reviewed, so each group would review approximately four programs.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Minutes prepared by B. Brown.