

**University Assessment Council
Minutes**

Wednesday, September 1, 2004

419 Student Union

3:00 p.m.

Present: A. Carlozzi, J. Comer, G. Gates, B. Ivy, G. Lage, P. Lumpkin, B. Masters, S. Ownbey, E. Rabinowitz, J. Schatzer, L. Tarrant, D. Thompson, T. Weir, G. Wilber.

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

Gates and Lumpkin began the meeting by welcoming everyone.

1. Assessment Council Membership, 2004-05 – Lumpkin reviewed the membership list , indicated exofficio members and described the 3-year term for other members. She recognized three new members serving this year: Rabinowitz, Tarrant, and Comer.
2. Masters gave an update on the self-study being conducted for the Higher Learning Commission reaccreditation process and described the importance of assessment to that process. She asked Council members to note that the NCA consultant evaluator site visit is scheduled for September 26-28, 2005. She indicated that evaluators may want to visit with Assessment Council members. Masters gave an update on the various criterion committees of the self-study group, and invited council members to review the drafts of the various reports on the reaccreditation website. She will send council members e:mail updates on the progress. Masters took questions and/or concerns from the council. Masters will conduct a workshop on October 21 to update assessment coordinators and faculty on the self-study and reaccreditation process.
3. FY '05 Outcomes Assessment Budget Allocations – Lumpkin explained the process used to determine recommended budget allocations for outcomes assessment. The distribution of graduates among degree programs in the previous year was used a reference point in considering budget requests. However, all requests for eligible expenses were covered in the recommended allocations, unless a method proposed had been ineffective in previous years for that degree program, or the amount requested was extremely high for the project described or for the number of students in the program.

The Council reviewed two documents: proposed allocations for each college and proposed wording to be used in memos to inform programs of their budget allocation and to clarify expectations for reporting of assessment activities in 2004-05. Both documents were discussed and changes were suggested on the wording of the budget response memo.

Some council members stated that it would be helpful to departments if they could be informed at an earlier date of their allocation, especially since many hire students to assist with assessment activities. Council members indicated that they were in agreement with the process being used to determine allocations and that next year the Director of Assessment should inform programs of their recommended allocations as early in the summer as possible. The Council will review the recommendations at the first meeting in the Fall Semester.

The Council discussed how balances in assessment accounts from previous fiscal year should be considered in the budget allocation process. This year, departments with year-end balances in

their account were contacted and asked to provide plans for use of those funds for FY05. The Council recommended that if plans were not provided for eligible expenses, the balance should be subtracted from the allocation for FY05. Next year, that departments will be informed that budget requests should be based on zero balances – if there are funds in the account at the end of the fiscal year, those funds must be requested for the next fiscal year. The amount transferred to a program for outcomes assessment will be the approved allocation amount minus the year-end balance, unless the department informs the Assessment Office that there are expenses yet to be paid for the previous fiscal year. The Council recommended that a reminder be sent mid-year to coordinators to let them know the status of their account. There was discussion about ways to get fiscal officers to communicate better with coordinators about their accounts. The Council will invite assessment coordinators to participate in a discussion about using portfolios for assessment of student learning. And, they will note in instructions to programs for preparation of their 2004-05 Annual Assessment Report that the status of assessment projects begun during the academic year should be reported even if results are not available; results may be included in the next year's annual report.

The Council agreed with the process used to determine recommendations for outcomes assessment budget allocations; funds will be transferred to degree programs as recommended.

4. 2004 Assessment Institute, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, October 31-November 2 – One of the stated goals of the Assessment Council is to increase faculty involvement in assessment and engagement in the scholarship of assessment, and to support consultation, workshops, and professional development for faculty in the area of assessment of student learning. Funding is allocated each year to encourage participation in these activities. Council members were invited to participate in the 2004 Assessment Institute. Lumpkin asked Council members to let her know of assessment coordinators or other faculty members that might be interested in attending. Other programs like this on assessment of student learning were discussed. Lumpkin asked members to notify her about programs like this, and to let her know if anyone is interested in attending.

5. Assessment Workshops/Information Sessions – Lumpkin announced that a series of workshops have been scheduled for this year to increase awareness and involvement with assessment. Topics being planned or considered include: developing effective assessment plans (connecting assessment methods to learning outcomes, interpreting results, eligible and ineligible expenses for assessment funding), general education assessment (history and results, rubrics for science, writing, math and critical thinking), developing/evaluating critical thinking, and update on HLC (self study/role of assessment). Wilber gave an overview of a session on the topic of assessing critical thinking skills, scheduled for September 30. The Council approved submitting a request to the Provost for special permission to provide lunch at these workshops, since they will serve as professional development for assessment coordinators and faculty. Lumpkin asked that suggestions for additional speakers or topics be sent to her.

6. At the next council meeting, October 6, the following will be discussed:

- Council members will be asked to participate, as a committee with 2-3 other council members, in the review process for Outcomes Assessment this fall semester. Committees will be asked to individually review program outcomes assessment documents for 3-4 degree programs, then meet as a group in November to develop feedback for the degree program.
- General Education Assessment – a report on the assessment conducted this summer will be presented.

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

Minutes prepared by B. Brown.