

# University Assessment Council

## Minutes

Friday, February 3, 2006

1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

250 Student Union

Present: P. Bowers, J. Comer, T. Drab (attending in S. Ownbey absence), G. Gates, C. Hawkins, D. Jordan, G. Lage, L. Martin, J. Paustenbaugh, J. Schatzer, D. Thompson, and G. Wilber

Guests: Karen Neurohr and Jennifer Stevens

Introductions were made of our guests.

Minutes from November's meeting were distributed. If corrections are needed, please let Bowers know.

Assessment Annual Report – a copy was distributed of the Assessment Report that was submitted to the Regents in the fall. A full report of the General Education work during the summer is included as one of the appendices. Bowers pointed out within the report “what’s new in assessment” – what new things are going on or were changed last year.

### Assessment activities –

- Freshman Survey – The CIRP Freshman Survey will be conducted in Fall 2006, pending IRB and DSAS approval. IRB is concerned with this survey because it ask for students name and ID number -- the student may fill it out even if they are told not to.
- A handout, provided by Hawkins, of analysis of ELPA effectiveness in predicting success in courses was reviewed. The numbers that were reported were questioned, so they will be checked, and will be reviewed at a future Council meeting.
- This summer, General Education Assessment Committee will be reviewing writing and critical thinking artifacts, and begin development of assessment of diversity learning goals. The Council was asked for help in getting artifacts.
- Bowers invited the Council to the session on Development and Assessment of Diversity Learning Outcomes, March 6, 11:45 a.m.-2:00 p.m., 211 Student Union.
- A presentation by Gary Brown, Director of Critical Thinking Project at Washington State University has tentatively been scheduled for March 21.
- March 3 a joint meeting with General Education Advisory Council, General Education Assessment Committee, and Assessment Council to review general education assessment. Detailed information will be sent out soon.
- Annual assessment reports and FY07 budget requests are due on June 9. Information will be sent to assessment coordinators soon.

- The week of February 13, two meetings have been scheduled with programs going through Academic Program Review in Spring 2007, to give them feedback from Council's review of program outcomes assessment.
- The survey of Alumni of Undergraduate Programs is underway. Graduates from 2004 and 2000 are being contacted.
- Bowers has met with Instructional Council and shared a copy of the annual report to let them know what's going on in assessment, and talked to them briefly about NSSE. She received a little feedback from them which will be discussed later during this meeting.
- Bowers has also met with the Council of Deans and provided them with an overview and program learning outcomes assessment. That way they know what we are asking of assessment coordinators.
- Feedback, written and verbal, will be given to programs that were reviewed by the Council in the Fall 2005, on Monday, February 13.
- The second workshop on "Assessment of Learning Outcomes in Graduate Programs" is scheduled for February 14, 10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 211 Student Union. Presenters will be David Thompson, Shiretta Ownbey, Deb Jordan, and Pam Bowers. These same presenters will also be presenting "Engaging Faculty in Assessment of Learning Outcomes in Graduate Programs" at the Higher Learning Commission Annual Meeting, on April 2, in Chicago.
- Bowers has a meeting on February 8 with Directors of Student Academic Services regarding CIRP and ELPA.
- Office of University Assessment and Testing will be moving, this summer, to the former Parker Tele-training Institute Building at 1524 W. Admiral.

The remainder of the meeting was spent on discussing the NSSE report which has been sent out. Framework for discussion: what do results mean; interpreting results; and what change, if any, is needed to improve and that would increase student learning, retention, etc. Approximately \$10,000 is spent to NSSE for the data collection process, plus the expense of Assessment office staff time. Useful information is provided by this survey, and colleges are using the information to guide their assessment. The best chance for us to make a difference, to make some things happen, would be to link this process with other projects. For example: program learning outcomes assessment, diversity effort, first year experience, Student Affairs, and academic program review.

Assessment Council is mostly connected to the NSSE project, so the Council should take some leadership and engage others in discussion on what should happen based on the results/what do the results mean. Two questions for the Council: 1) results of the survey, what caught their attention, what needs to be done; and 2) what mechanism or structure, if any, should we as an institution use to incorporate the NSSE results into a continuous process for improvement (in a more formal way than we have in the past)? More and more institutions are participating in this survey and hold it in high regard. Gates provided a summary of content of survey that contributes to each benchmark score. The Council should focus on freshman, first year experience, and if our seniors are lower than our peers we should be concerned with how much we are challenging them. The NSSE survey is compiled from random samples of students classified as freshmen. NSSE suggest that groups can look at the survey and determine what constitutes reasonable levels of engagement given local circumstances like the institutional mission, student characteristics; and not focus so much on how you compare to someone else. General Education made changes in criterion goals. So look

at the enriching education experiences. Various Council members explained how they use this survey and it helps show them where improvements are needed in their area or college.

Discussion was held on how to get/keep students who stay longer and transfer students involved. It would help to separate out the transfer student information. Also students are not able to study abroad because of financial difficulties. Changes would be more effective if done at the college level instead of through the Council.

The NSSE diversity information was reviewed. Is there a way of telling the difference between commuters from residential students? Thinking about the first year experience that's in the works (living learning community), it would be great to be able to know which residential area students live in when we start thinking about how to assess the impact of living learning community. We will need to check with NSSE to see how to include that information. Maybe instead of comparing OSU to the current peer institutions that, for example, compares to studying abroad, would it be better to look at institutions that have similar compositions, or have students that tend to be older, or tend to transfer students in?

One of the priorities, that was pointed out for us, we need to have a serious discussion at OSU about diversity. After discussion, it was suggested to present diversity areas/questions to the new vice president, Dr. Cornell Thomas, and see if he wants to do a session, and Assessment Council could assist with the session if needed. To make this happen, ones from this group willing to take on this leadership role were: Lage and Paustenbaugh.

Instructional Council has requested more notice to colleges before the NSSE survey is done, so more participation can be encouraged. The President is interested in maybe doing the NSSE survey every year; and consider doing the faculty survey of student engagement as well. To get the participation rate up, have faculty talk to students about NSSE survey questions, so they would be better understood, and faculty could alert students and encourage them to participate.

Council members are to designate three top issues that questions could be pulled from the NSSE survey and acted on. Bowers will e:mail the Council with the specific request.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Brenda Brown.