

University Assessment Council

Minutes

Friday, October 3, 2008
1:30 – 3:00 p.m.
250 Student Union (Oklahoma Room)

Present: Bowers, Comer, Davis, Gates, Haseley, Hawkins, Leising, Ownbey, Payton, Paustenbaugh, Rohrs, Thompson.
Absent: Damron, Edwards, Lacy, Swinney

Minutes from the September 5, 2008 meeting were reviewed. No corrections were requested.

Provost Marlene Strathe attended the meeting to discuss general education assessment and recommendations for improvement. She commented on several activities that are expected to contribute to improvement of students' achievement of general education learning goals. These efforts include programs offered for faculty through the Institute for Teaching and Learning Excellence (ITLE), faculty development workshops offered by the UAT office in collaboration with ITLE, and bringing national speakers to campus. Strathe discussed plans to modify the A&D form used for faculty evaluation to include items such as participation in professional development related to improvement of instruction and engagement in assessment activity at the program or institution level. Members indicated interest in the possibility of inviting the Advisory Board to come to campus to study an issue such as general education assessment and provide recommendations for improvement. Strathe asked the Council to continue to develop recommendations for improvement of students' achievement of general education learning goals. She discussed her intention to provide funding, as available, for programs that demonstrate need through assessment of student learning. She described an example of providing funds for purchase of GIS equipment for a program that demonstrated the need for the equipment to help students achieve desired learning outcomes. Leising suggested that the Council consider making assessment funds available to programs to provide incentives for improvement efforts or for costs of implementing improvements, as well as for conducting assessment. Strathe asked about the status of assessment of graduate programs, and Payton said that some programs have improved their assessment efforts but there is wide variability regarding faculty engagement in the process and effectiveness of assessment methods being reported.

Gates discussed the upcoming General Education Advisory Council (GEAC) review of non-designated courses (Freshman Composition, American History, and American Government) that are required by regents' policy. Colleges have the opportunity to provide input into these reviews through their GEAC representative. This will provide an opportunity to consider the alignment of learning outcomes for these courses with institutional learning goals. Learning outcomes for these courses are not specified by regents' policy, but could be determined at the institution level. It was suggested that the group consider the history of inclusion of technical writing courses in program curricula; some programs have dropped this requirement and others still include it.

Assignments were made for review of program outcomes assessment materials for programs that will participate in Academic Program Review in 2010. Each college assessment coordinator will review and provide feedback for all programs in his/her college; these materials were distributed today. Feedback should be provided in a format suitable for direct transmission to department heads and assessment coordinators by December 1. Memos will be sent from Gail Gates to each program in January, and will include the feedback provided.

Other Assessment Council members are asked to review two programs each and provide feedback for improvement. These reviews should be completed by the next meeting date – November 7. Reviewer ratings and comments will be given to the appropriate college coordinator and to Gail Gates for inclusion in the feedback memo to department heads and assessment coordinators.

To provide guidance for individual's review of these documents, the group reviewed the MS in Management Information Systems program documents and discussed several positive comments that could be provided to the program, as well as a few points for clarification.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.