

University Assessment Council

Minutes

Friday, February 6, 2009
1:30 – 3:00 p.m.
250 Student Union (Council Room)

Present: Damron, Davis, Edwards, Gates, Hawkins, Leising, Rohrs, Swinney, Mowen, Ownbey, Payton, Paustenbaugh, Ray, Thompson, Wilber

Absent: Comer, Haseley, Lacy

Minutes from the November 7, 2008 meeting were reviewed. No corrections were requested.

The 2008 General Education assessment results were presented and discussed. The General Education Assessment Committee assessed portfolios for three learning goals: critical thinking, written communication, and diversity. Members commented that students whose work was sampled still do not adequately reflect the general population due to the difficulty in obtaining artifacts.

Consistent with previous years, Critical Thinking scores were lower than desired, with all seven sub-scores having averages at or below 3.0. Too few Diversity artifacts have been evaluated for meaningful results on this learning outcome, in part because many artifacts are difficult to assess using the Diversity rubric and students tend to avoid diversity issues in their assignments. Writing scores were significantly lower than in previous years. While it was agreed that writing scores are not attributable to the individual courses selected, artificially lower scores could have resulted from a different sample of courses than has been used in previous years. A workshop to discuss the assessment results and future directions of general education assessment has been scheduled for February 24, 2009.

Results from the 2008 CIRP Freshman Survey were presented and discussed. The response rate was much lower than previous years (30%, down from 69% in 2006) due in large part to the survey being conducted entirely online without academic incentives due to IRB limitations. The overall results for OSU were consistent with the national results. The usefulness of the CIRP Freshman Survey was questioned, particularly in consideration of its expense, as it does not assess student learning outcomes. Ray and Gates will discuss the survey's value with DSAS and other constituents and will present the results to the Assessment Council at the April meeting.

Members discussed the 2008 Advisory Board report, *Assessing Student Learning Outcomes: Best Practices for Engaging the Faculty*. The report was determined to provide a good overview of assessment in higher education, noting that future assessment requirements will be driven by accrediting agencies, not by governmental bodies. There was, however, disagreement with the role of the faculty as outlined in the report, with some members indicating that faculty need to be highly involved at every level, not just some levels. While there are areas for improvement as exemplified in the report, members commented that OSU can provide good examples for other institutions.

Gates asked the members to discuss the mission and vision of the Assessment Council since a new Director of University Assessment and Testing is being hired. Members generally agreed that the mission should emphasize faculty engagement and instructional improvement. Additionally, it was noted that faculty involvement does not appear in the list of goals until goal six, thus indicating that the order might need to be reconsidered. It was suggested that the mission and vision for University Assessment and Testing should be revised as the Assessment Council's role should be to support that mission.

The following announcements and updates were provided:

- The annual Institutional Assessment Report was submitted to OSRHE in December.
- The Survey of Alumni of Graduate Programs (SAGP) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), are both currently underway. The SAGP is expected to be completed this

month with results released in April, and the NSSE will be completed in May with the results released in the summer.

- A General Education Results Workshop will be held Tuesday, February 24th, from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. in 211 Student Union.
- The Higher Learning Commission Annual Meeting will be held April 18-21
- Spring Assessment Council Meetings will be March 6th and April 3rd. The March 6th meeting will be in conjunction with GEAC and the General Education Assessment Committee.
- SGA and GPSGA have been contacted to identify student representatives

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