



**UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT
ASSESSMENT AND ACADEMIC
IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL
MINUTES
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2011
1:30 PM, 301 WILLARD**

Present: Brown, Damron, Hathcoat, Hawkins, Nicholas, Ownbey, Penn, Porter, Thompson, Weiser

Absent: Comer, DeVuyst, Edwards, Fry, Gelder, Haseley, McDaniel, Paustenbaugh, Swinney, Van Delinder, Wilber, Wikle

1. Welcome

2. Penn discussed a proposal for raising assessment fees for the ALEKS test that will be administered next year for an estimated 7300 students. The exam will cost the university \$25 per student, costing an estimated \$183,000 from the assessment budget. To cover this cost, the proposal would require a \$.35 to \$.40 per credit hour increase be charged to undergraduate students. It was noted that as a general policy different fees are not charged for graduate and undergraduate students, making it difficult to charge this cost only to undergraduate students. Penn stated that the purpose for including the cost as part of the fees paid by students and not as a separate charge paid directly by students at the time of the exam is to avoid having students respond negatively to another fee charged early in the summer during enrollment (and risk having students decide to enroll elsewhere) and to simplify the math placement process for current students who may not be willing to pay another fee to cover the cost of the placement exam.

As an alternative option Hawkins suggested the use of the Academic Services Fee which is a one-time fee that can be charged to specific groups of students (for example, all new incoming undergraduate freshmen or all new transfer students). This fee would appear on the September bill for students (or the equivalent bill for students being charged the fee for the spring semester).

Penn noted that the fee discussion will be examined in-depth at two future meetings he and Dr. Fry will be holding with OSRHE staff and with the Finance Office later this month. Instruction Council will have the opportunity to vote on any fee changes.

Penn asked AAIC members if the costs of course evaluations should be absorbed by University Assessment or if fees should be raised to compensate for this new cost. The costs for course evaluations were paid by Academic Affairs in the past, however, that account has run dry and funding for the course evaluations must now come out of the assessment fee. The total cost for the course evaluation process, on average, ran \$25,000 to \$30,000 a school year. AAIC members recommended that if there is to be a fee increase that it be implemented all at once, as it is not likely to be increased multiple times in a small number of years.

Penn asked if there were other funding areas for assessment for which it would be appropriate to increase the assessment fee. Penn noted the assessment fee has not been increased since it was instituted more than twenty years ago and cannot support assessment at the same level that it once did. Ownbey mentioned the College Assessment Coordinator program as one such program that had some success but was too expensive to continue long term. Penn noted the assessment program at James Madison University does something similar except they use assessment consultants who are in their own department and have split appointments between assessment and faculty roles. AAIC will need to discuss this again at the next meeting in the spring after some of the ALEKS funding details are worked out this month.

3. Penn asked AAIC members for feedback on the assessment plan and report review process for programs coming up on APR in the spring of 2013. He reminded AAIC that they can turn in their feedback on paper or by using the Google Docs form. Damron identified a change to the listed degree programs in the Animal Science graduate degree programs: Animal Breeding and Reproduction and Animal Nutrition were combined into Animal Science Ph.D. Porter stated that Plant Science Ph.D. should be listed in the Botany department in CAS.

4. Hathcoat gave an overview of upcoming NSSE survey in 2012. The response rates for previous years are as follows:

2009-22%

2005-38%

2002-21%

This year we are including incentives to increase the response rate and would like to try to get closer to the 38% response rate we had in 2005. Hathcoat and Penn highlighted a strategy recommended by NSSE which is to have faculty make announcements in class about NSSE and encourage students to complete it. An OSU NSSE flyer will be sent out to faculty to announce the survey. Council members generally felt faculty members would not be likely to take time out of class to encourage students to complete the NSSE. As alternative options, it might be possible to put information on the OSU Facebook page to encourage response. In 2012 we are also working up more personal email messages to try to encourage a response. Hathcoat noted that some schools had used marketing clubs to help get the word out. It might be possible to ask OSU's marketing club to help promote the survey to students, would offer some type of prize to the college club that had in the highest response rates from that college's students.

Penn asked AAIC to start thinking about strategies for sharing and using NSSE results. NSSE has changed the way that they share results to universities and now send out reports that are broken down by majors, which should be more helpful to departments and colleges on campus.

5. Hathcoat provided a summary on the progress of the 2012 Survey of Alumni from Undergraduate programs. Degree programs have the option of submitting a set of questions that will be asked to the alumni only from that degree program. UAT developed a set of generic questions that will be used in case the degree program does not provide a specific set of questions. Hathcoat shared the generic questions and received some feedback on the generic questions. Members of AAIC would like a list of

departments who have not submitted questions, so they can contact individual departments to send out a reminder to submit these program specific questions. Penn then asked if anyone had any objections or changes that they would like to have made to the list of questions, they are as follows:

-Question 2 and 3 are hard to decipher, students are confused as to who their TA's are and often confuse "faculty member" and "teaching assistant." It was recommended that this question be dropped or modified.

-It was not clear what question 5 meant. The word 'other' should be changed to 'employers'.

Hathcoat will send reminders about submitting the degree program specific programs.

Penn thanked AAIC for their work on assessment this semester. The next meeting will be scheduled in February of 2012.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.