Assessment & Academic Improvement Council
Meeting Minutes
Friday, October 7, 2016 • 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. • 460 Student Union

Present: C. Campbell, K. Clinkenbeard, J. Comer, L. Cota, C. Edwards, P. Fry, S. Gordon, K. Hickman, C. Ippoliti, C. Johnson, J. Knecht, J. Nalon, S. Ownbey, J. Swinney.

Absent: B. Davis, J. Gelder, S. Haseley, C. Hawkins, D. Hobson, B. Masters, K. Neurohr, R. Seitsinger, T. Wikle.

Guests: A. Witham.

1) Call to Order and Approval of September 9, 2016 Minutes

Dr. Ownbey called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. Dr. Johnson moved to approve the September 9, 2106 minutes as is. Dr. Swinney seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2) Assessment Updates

a) Update on Fall 2016 Global Perspective Inventory (GPI): Lisa Cota informed the council that she was waiting for the data set to be completed before forwarding it to the University of Iowa to begin data collection. Banner implementation caused delays in gathering necessary information. OSU's Institutional Research and Information Management (IRIM) is working on gathering this information, then everything will be sent to the University of Iowa, which runs the survey. They will contact our students, collect the data, and put together reports.

b) Update on Fall 2016 General Education Artifact Collection: Ms. Cota then briefed the council about her activities regarding Fall 2016 Gen Ed artifact collection. Emails inquiring about course assignments that fit the Gen Ed assessment requirements have been sent to every Gen Ed-designated course instructor as well as to instructors of ENGL 1113 and 1213. There have been more negative responses than positive responses to the email. Remember that a two-page (consecutive pages) paper is the minimum required for an artifact to be considered valid (three would be ideal). Although GEAC guidelines require five pages of writing, the writing assignments do not have to be five consecutive pages, and many instructors break that requirement down into five, one-page papers (or paragraphs). This is a loophole that needs to be addressed at the next joint AAIC/GEAC meeting in March. Ms. Cota is essentially auditing the 555 course/instructor combinations via these emails in order to determine where Gen Ed Artifacts can be collected. She is happy to share these responses with GEAC to facilitate their course requirement revision process. Discussion among the council members followed. Since Gen Ed designators are given for a term of 5-years, it doesn't seem unreasonable for department heads, associate deans, or GEAC to approach instructors of courses which have not produced artifacts for the first three years of Gen Ed designation and request that they begin producing said artifacts, or the designation will be revoked. Dr. Comer requested an update in a month regarding responses of artifact availability as more instructors respond to Ms. Cota's emails. It was further suggested this topic be brought up in Instruction Council to make people aware that their Gen Ed courses are not producing the artifacts they agreed to produce when they apply for a General Education designation.

c) Update on Annual Assessment Reports: Ms. Cota then gave a breakdown of Annual Assessment Reports that were due on September 15th. Approximately 75% have been submitted. Due to the State of Oklahoma's new regulations, we are not under a time crunch at this point. New programs at OSU file an assessment plan and have a year to produce an assessment report. OSU as a university now has to

file an assessment plan with the State of Oklahoma, so we have a bit of time before the assessment report is due to the regents. It is Ms. Cota's hope to have the full University report done by our November meeting. James Knecht brought up that we now have to assess graduate certificates, so it's a good idea for individual colleges/departments to have plans developed in the near future so they can submit reports in 2018. Graduate certificates that UAT has on file will be compared with the list that the Board of Regents has on file for OSU. Templates of plans (for certificates that are both embedded and standalone) are available on the UAT Assessment site. Creating/updating plans this Fall for graduate certificates would allow data to be gathered during 2017 Spring and Summer semesters. UAT will send out a list of known certificates to Assessment Coordinators requesting certificate plan submission no later than December 2016. There was some discussion regarding the difference between embedded and standalone certificates, as well as assessment requirements for embedded certificates. The number of program participants required for valid assessment of certificates was also discussed. Lisa Cota can help with any questions regarding the different types of graduate certificates and the assessment requirements.

3) **Discussion Items**
   a) **"Orphaned" Minors and Assessment:** Judy Nalon explained that the COE has a program major with some options that exist at the master's and doctorate level only, but they have (or are resurrecting) a minor at the undergraduate level. Consequently, the student population for this minor is different than those in the department's major. Because there is such separation, there is no direct assessment of the minor, as it is not a part of any major in the College (this is the Leadership minor). Since it's a standalone minor, the question comes up if this minor needs to be assessed at all at the University level. There is no formal admissions process, and the minor just shows up when the degree is conferred. Dr. Ownbey pointed out that the State does not look at minors at all – so there is no expectation of assessment at the state level, but that doesn't mean that we aren't interested in doing something with the information, even if it's not required by the A&M or state regents. Discussion followed regarding the possible benefits of assessment such as defined learning outcomes, tracking students' development of leadership skills, and collecting data to ensure that the minor doesn't stagnate. Dr. Gordon stated that keeping track of minor assessment at the institution level may not only lead to a revolt, but keeping track of all the data would be a huge undertaking and really is outside the purview of what UAT does. Dr. Gordon and Mr. Knecht discussed this issue prior to this AAIC meeting, and they suggest that the department could use a modified version of the major assessment plan template form, and then gather and keep the data in-house in the appropriate college. It was noted that most minors are assessed as part of a major.

   b) **Explicit description of CAGE Goals/Duties/Functions:** Dr. Comer gave a progress report on the working group tasked by Dr. Fry to come up with written guidelines for CAGE. The working group has scheduled three meetings. The first meeting occurred on September 26th. The group codified representation on CAGE – one representative from each of the following colleges: CASNR, A&S, COE, CEAT, COHS, and SSB. Furthermore, staggered 3-year terms (similar to GEAC's membership) were agreed upon. The associate dean of the appropriate college will name the college's CAGE representative. Representatives serve staggered terms to conserve CAGE's institutional memory. A schedule of meetings (again, similar to GEAC's) will be created to facilitate meeting attendance. It was also recommended that at least one of CAGE's members attend GEAC meetings as an "ex-officio" representative (or "interested party" depending on GEAC's Policies and Procedures). This responsibility will rotate amongst voting CAGE members each year. The responsibilities of the CAGE chair will be discussed at the next meeting, as well

as CAGE's organizational chart and how CAGE interacts with or reports to AAIC and GEAC. The next working group meeting will take place in late October. The CAGE description found on UAT's website will serve as a guideline for further development of CAGE's vision and goals. The final results of the working group meetings will be shared with and agreed upon by AAIC.

c) **NSSE Request for Information on how OSU Used Previous Results:** A very persistent representative for NSSE recently contacted Dr. Gordon, the previous project director for the NSSE survey at OSU, asking how the University uses NSSE results. Specifically, the representative inquired if and/or how individual colleges use the NSSE results for faculty development, decision making, accreditation, program outcomes assessment and the like. Aside from being able to tell the representative that a web site has been created and several people attended various meetings with NSSE results, Dr. Gordon asked those in attendance if there was anything of note in the various academic colleges that she could pass along to the NSSE rep. Christine Ormsbee with ITLE has spoken with the NSSE representative because NSSE results are used for ITLE development – particularly for faculty development regarding engagement and indicators of high-impact practices at the institution that can be affected by classroom assignments, etc. ITLE has used and will continue to use the NSSE results. Dr. Gordon asked if any of the AAIC council members wanted to share anything of note about how the NSSE results are being used within their particular academic colleges so she could report that information to the NSSE rep. Judy Nalon stated that the College of Education uses the NSSE Executive Summary information on the HLC accreditation. Dr. Johnson stated that, this time around, the Spears School of Business wasn't particularly happy with some of the NSSE outcomes they received, so they included some NSSE questions with their capstone survey, and received very different results. These in-house results more accurately reflected areas of good performance, as well as areas of concern, and were communicated to SSB faculty. Dr. Johnson feels the data was somehow skewed due to the Tulsa campus responses. Mr. Knecht assured Dr. Johnson that the next NSSE round will separate the Tulsa campus from the Stillwater campus, resulting in two sets of data. Dr. Gordon asked if Dr. Johnson is willing to speak directly to the NSSE representative. Dr. Johnson said she would be willing to do so.

d) **Process for Handling Data Requests to use OSU Assessment Data for Research:** Lisa Cota informed the council that she was recently contacted by a peer from the University of Texas, Arlington, asking what policies OSU has in place for outside researchers to request and use OSU's assessment data. Ms. Cota's response was that there is no current policy in place for either outside or in-house research. UAT, as the gatekeeper of this data, needs set guidelines for whenever someone (either internally or externally) requests to use OSU's assessment data for research. Ms. Cota sees a growing potential for using assessment data in research and would like the council to consider giving UAT specific guidelines on how to handle data requests in lieu of asking AAIC for permission or denial each time a request for data is made. Discussion regarding IRB guidelines followed. It is true that the IRB has policies that guide these inquiries to an extent, but if, for example, an OSU faculty member with IRB clearance asks for Gen Ed data from five years ago, the question becomes whether that de-identified data is considered archival data and how should UAT proceed with such a request. Dr. Gordon stated that the IRB does not consider the data to be human subjects research because it has been de-identified. Dr. Johnson stated that she feels that, if the data could somehow be embarrassing for a college or the University, we might want to think twice before releasing it. Dr. Ownbey stated that she didn't think the University is compelled to give out assessment data short of some societal issue involving the police or other law enforcement agency. Dr. Swinney added that she is involved with a multi-state research group, and they submit a declaration form through which they list the data they would to access, for what

purposes, and stating their research goals. Ms. Cota will contact Dr. Swinney to get a copy of the form. Dr. Gordon stated that, when she was Director of UAT, external researchers were denied OSU data. However, her opinion is that if we don't make the data available to [internal] researchers, we are just giving faculty more reason to hate the assessment process. Many members agreed that if there is a good cause for requesting the data, there is no reason it should be denied. A request form/process is necessary, as the data should not be accessible to just anyone, from anywhere, at any time. Dr. Comer restated that UAT was asking for guidance on who actually approves these requests. Mr. Knecht stated, and Dr. Ownbey agreed, that UAT should not be the entity to decide these matters. Dr. Comer proposed that the form that Dr. Swinney suggested could be brought to AAIC, and the council would be responsible for approving or denying requests. Dr. Gordon brought up the possibility of a two- or three-member subcommittee that could be formed to approve the any request via email without the requesting researcher having to wait until the next AAIC meeting. Discussion followed. Dr. Ownbey suggested that UAT forward research requests they deems acceptable to the AAIC Chair for approval. If the Chair has questions, he or she could approach another AAIC member for their opinion and report back to UAT with their decision. Dr. Johnson stated her concern that only de-identified data should be released, and suggested that OSU itself be de-identified. Dr. Gordon recommended that written IRB approval be obtained regarding requested data, and Ms. Cota agreed that IRB approval along with a version of the declaration form Dr. Swinney mentioned would suffice and could be forwarded to the AAIC Chair for consideration. Although no vote on the issue was called, the overall response from the attending council members to that scenario was positive. Ms. Cota said she would modify Dr. Swinney's declaration form and present it to the council at a later date.

e) **Upcoming Free Webinar on "Meta-assessment: Evaluating the Quality of Academic Program Assessment":** James Knecht informed the council that a group out of James Madison University was hosting a webinar to present their review process for program assessment plans and reports before they come up for academic program review for feedback purposes. The group has come up with a rubric to assess the reports. Mr. Knecht suggested that the council members might want to attend in preparation for AAIC's future plans to review assessment plans and reports for programs that have an upcoming APR.

4) **General Reminders**
   a) The NSSE Major Field Report is posted on the SharePoint site: https://stw.sp.okstate.edu/provost/uat (requires OKEY login).
   b) The 2016-17 APR Contact List created by Dr. Masters was distributed. This is a list of academic program reviews coming up this spring. The 2018 list is forthcoming. Ms. Cota reminded the council that all of the APR documents can be found on the accreditation web site.

5) **College Updates**
   Lisa Cota has engaged Linda Suskie, an expert in the field of assessment, to give a workshop in the College of Agriculture on February 6, 2017. Please try to set aside the date to have lunch or dinner with her at the Rancher's Club. More details will be provided closer to the actual presentation date.

6) **Adjourn –** Dr. Ownbey adjourned the meeting at 2:42 p.m.