

UNIVERSITY SENATE ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Name: Learning Outcomes Assessment 2016-17

Number of Meetings Held this Year: 3

Committee Chair: Alison N. Novak

Committee Members: (list here)

Alison N. Novak	Bethany Gummo	Andrew Johnson
Sangita Phadtare	Ravi Ramachandran	Seran Schug
Kevin Daus	Tiffany Gonzalez	

Purpose of/Charge to Committee:

Engages in the ongoing review of the University's assessment principles and observes the application of the principles in practice; reviews and recommends assessment plans from academic programs, general education, and student development; assists in the establishment of a process for the systematic review of assessment information collected each year.

Eligibility: (Committee Chair is not calculated in the committee total) 6 Faculty (one from each College), 1 Curriculum Committee Rep, 1 Institutional Research Rep (non-voting), 1 AFT rep, 1 Professional Staff, 1 Academic Policies/Procedures Rep, 2 SGA Reps

Summary of Activities this Year:

This committee met three times this year to review and discuss current assessment procedures and beta-test a secondary analysis of assessment reports. Members brainstormed ways to clarify assessment goals and messages across the university, analyzed reports from three disciplines, and revised and developed a new purpose reflective of committee needs (located in recommendations report). Members met with Jeff Bonfield to discuss challenges identified within departmental and program annual reports. During this meeting, a new committee mission and purpose was proposed and drafted.

In the spring semester, the committee undertook a beta test of a secondary analysis of three departmental reports to identify challenges and opportunities for future analyses. The goal was to investigate the potential of this committee investigating and reviewing reports from across the university for additional feedback. The

committee reviewed annual reports from Art, Chemical Engineering, and Computer Science. The following observations were reported from the group:

- Direct observation methods (including the use of rubrics to evaluate student success within each learning outcome) yielded stronger results than reports of student surveys and in-direct professor feedback.
- Reports that yield all 3's (or above expectations) should revise observation methods to strengthen the analysis and provide detailed instructions of concepts or outcomes to focus upon.
- Remediation plans for outcomes listed at "1" (or below expectation) should be provided by departments.
- Outcomes that are assessed based on online and in-person classes provide an additional challenge for observations.
- Departments providing rubrics within TracDat would help reviewers understand the assessment method.

The beta-test and results (described above) confirm that the committee is interested and able to perform a secondary analysis of annual reports. While the committee is concerned that they would not have the time or resources to review all reports generated during a year, by identifying a few that Bonfield would like additional feedback from, could help the committee and individual departments.

-use additional pages if required

-do not include suggestions & recommendations with this report - use separate form for recording purposes

UNIVERSITY SENATE ANNUAL COMMITTEE
SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

2016-17

SUGGESTIONS:

Overall, the committee makes the following suggestions for the next academic year:

- Propose changes to clarify existing purpose statement. The current statement is very unclear and lacks direction. We suggest the following:
 - The committee assists through observing and identifying current departmental and university trends in the assessment process; reviewing departmental and program reports; providing feedback on annual reports; assisting in the implementation and modification of existing and upcoming assessment techniques (such as direct observations, online systems- TracDat, and secondary analysis of annual reports); and collaborating with assessment directors, chairs, and reviewers to produce quality and helpful reports.
- Continued work with Jeff Bonfield would help the committee address University needs
- Implementation of a *secondary analysis of departmental assessment reports* next year will also help formalize the responsibilities of the committee. This procedure identified and used this year during the beta-test of the secondary analysis is as follows:

- a. Departmental reports are identified and assigned for committee reviews
 - b. Individual members read the report privately, and answer the following questions:
 - i. What similarities exist between the learning outcomes and assessment tools across all three reports?
 - ii. What trends/patterns emerge as strengths between departments (i.e. Are writing or research assessed as “meeting expectations?”)
 - iii. What challenges did you face when reading the reports (i.e. language, concepts, or layout difficulties)
 - iv. What challenges did you face when analyzing the reports (i.e. are the outcomes difficult to compare across departments?)
 - v. What method or process did you use to analyze the reports (i.e. did you use a statistical or qualitative method?)
 - vi. What recommendations can you make regarding the assessment process and a secondary-level of analysis?
 - c. Individual members make recommendations for report improvements.
 - d. Committee meets to combine observations and recommendations
 - e. Committee reports findings to Bonfield
- Improved consistency within committee membership from year-to-year would help sustain the momentum of the committee and implement changes. This year, Alison Novak, Bethany Gummo, and Sangita Phadtare have requested to stay on the committee for the following year.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The committee sees a need to develop a culture of assessment on campus. While assessment is conducted at the department level, there are few opportunities for departmental assessment chairs to interact with each other over the course of each year. By providing workshops or college-wide meetings, increased interactions and conversations between chairs may produce a community of practice and improved dedication to the assessment process.
- Improved communication between the committee and departmental chairs may improve with the secondary assessment process detailed above. The LOA committee can directly provide feedback on departmental reports, thus providing an opportunity for chairs and the committee to interact, brainstorm partnership uses, and trouble-shoot problems.