

University Assessment Committee
Meeting Minutes for Monday, March 10, 2014
2:00-2:50p.m., Peace Garden Room, Memorial Union

Present: Margaret (Peggy) Andersen, Jeffrey Boyer, Ann Clapper, Brenda Hall, Jeremy Penn, Larry Peterson, Scott Pryor, Amy Rupiper Taggart, Bill Slinger, and Chad Ulven.

Recorder: Kelly Hoyt.

Unable to Attend: Kevin Brooks, Julie Garden-Robinson, Chris McEwen, Andrew Montgomery, Bruce Rafert, Brandy Randall, and Elizabeth Skoy.

1. The minutes from 01/27/14 meeting distributed by email on 01/29/14 were approved.

2. Updates

- The committee reviewed the updated Mini Progress Report Chart.
 - Peterson asked if he should have the Provost speak with the 1 department that is delinquent in turning in its reports for 2011-2012 and the 1 department that hasn't turned a report in since 2008-2009 or earlier.
 - Boyer asked when the last time there was any contact from these departments.
 - Peterson emailed both departments on September 5, 2013 and on January 13, 2014. One of the departments asked him to meet, but they have been unable to find a time so far.
 - Rupiper Taggart suggested asking each department to set its own deadline as a way to motivate them.
 - Hall suggested having a conversation with them and asking what issues are holding them back. They may need some assistance. Urging them to focus on the Reflections Report might be helpful.
 - Rupiper Taggart suggested taking both approaches. The Provost could remind delinquent departments that having current assessment reports is an institutional priority and Peterson could contact them about a submission date and offer assistance.
 - Update on meetings with Deans and Heads/Chairs about new guidelines
 - Peterson met with Heads/Chairs about the new guidelines for their upcoming reflective reports (starting in May). He discussed the new guidelines with Natural Resources Sciences and Plant Sciences and has a meeting set up with Health, Nutrition, and Exercise Sciences. He was not able to meet with the Deans due to other priorities.
 - Update on GE Assessment plan
 - Peterson and Rupiper Taggart sent a memo to the instructors of capstone courses being taught this spring and their department chairs or heads. They requested samples of student work using and evaluating sources.
 - Some instructors have replied that they either do not require written reports or that they do not require students to use or critique sources. The General Education Committee will have a good sample of student work to review in the fall to complete a pilot review of university wide trends.
- Update from Clapper, Hall, Garden-Robinson, Penn, and Peterson on reviewing the current University Assessment plan and drafting revisions for the UAC.

- The group met once and has made some good progress. Peterson had to cancel last week's meeting due to other priorities.
 - They are focusing the plan on the goals for assessment, the responsibilities of the UAC, and plans for the future.
 - They will develop a separate "handbook" which focuses on the actual assessment processes and includes a glossary.
 - Peterson and Penn noted that assessment handbooks are being shared on the Assessment listserv.
3. Discuss draft of revised reviewer template for reflective reports
- Peterson created a draft template for reviewing the reflective reports that will be received starting May 1.
 - Some department Chairs/Heads have asked to see the reviewer form before submitting their reports.
 - Peterson suggested having this template completed in April so we could send out to the Chairs/Heads for their information.
 - Boyer commented that he likes to try the format out on an actual report to see if it's going to work or not before making any decisions.
 - Members agreed that Chairs and Heads need to be reminded that this is part of a dialogue with the committee and that they are not being "graded" on their reports.
 - Members decided that we would not distribute the reviewing form ahead of time, but that Peterson should reassure the Chairs and Heads that the reviews will be aligned with the guidelines.
 - Pryor suggested and Rupiper Taggart agreed that we should omit the item asking if Student Learning Outcomes begin with an action verb. This is not specifically listed in the Guidelines departments received for this report. Boyer noted that any outcomes that are observable and measureable should begin with an action verb.
 - Penn suggested using the word program, rather than department, throughout the entire document to be consistent.
 - Rupiper Taggart suggested using Learning Environment throughout the document, rather than classes.
 - It was also suggested that when reports are distributed to committee members for review, it might be beneficial for the same committee member to review the same department from year to year because he or she would be familiar with previous reports/information submitted. (This may not always be possible due to the members on the committee changing.)
 - Boyer suggested sending the previous year's report overview and cover letter so the reviewer knows what the committee's findings/concerns were previously. That way the reviewer has something to cross check and see if the department has made any efforts to incorporate the committee's suggestions.
4. New business
- Peterson stated that Program Review is considering posting the reviews departments submit on the NDSU website.
 - Peterson asked committee members to think about the possibility of posting the assessment reports from departments on the web.

- Ruper Taggart said that it would be better if they were a restricted access site. Too much public access might discourage departments from being honest about their mistakes or failures.
- Some committee members expressed concern about putting results on the web. But it was also noted that seeing the goals and methods of other departments could be valuable.
- Peterson thinks he should have a discussion with Chairs/Heads to see if they think the assessment reports should be posted on the web and if so, where should they be posted. He will also ask them if the reports should be submitted to anyone (such as the dean of the college) prior to being submitted to the committee for review.
- Because the UAC will only be asking for Reflective Reports periodically (every 5 years?), members will need to develop the guidelines for the following year's report soon.

Next meeting is Monday, April 7th at 2 pm in Peace Garden