

**University Assessment Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 7, 2014**  
**2:00-2:50p.m., Peace Garden Room, Memorial Union**

Present: Margaret (Peggy) Andersen, Jeffrey Boyer, Ann Clapper, Brenda Hall, Larry Peterson, Scott Pryor, Amy Rupiper Taggart, Elizabeth Skoy, and Bill Slanger

Recorder: Kelly Hoyt.

Unable to Attend: Kevin Brooks, Julie Garden-Robinson, Chris McEwen, Andrew Montgomery, Jeremy Penn, Bruce Rafert, Brandy Randall, and Chad Ulven.

1. The minutes from 03/10/14 meeting emailed on 03/11/14 were approved.

Housekeeping:

- Brandy asked Larry to mention to the committee that she is planning a workshop to help graduate students learn more about assessment. She thinks it will be approximately 2-3 hours long. If anyone on the committee is interested in helping her with this, let Larry know. The date and time have not been set yet.

2. Updates

- The committee reviewed the updated Mini Progress Report Chart.
  - Larry isn't expecting any reports to start coming in until after April 15<sup>th</sup> for the May 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.
  - These reports should be in the new format with departments submitting a reflective report on their learning outcomes and a curriculum map.
- Update on two departments that are late with their reports
  - Larry received an extensive assessment plan from one of the departments with a request for feedback on it. They plan on submitting an actual report in September.
  - The other department has been trying to meet with Larry to discuss assessment, but schedule conflicts have not allowed this to happen yet.
- Update from Clapper, Hall, Garden-Robinson, Penn, and Peterson on reviewing the current University Assessment plan and drafting revisions for the UAC
  - The group is making progress on the introduction, goals and plans.
  - They are creating a more focused, actual plan and will have a separate handbook. It will be fall before this goes out to the rest of the UAC.
- Bill asked about the annual report from the UAC to Faculty Senate.
  - Larry said it will be due for the May 12 meeting. He will send out a draft in middle to late April.

3. Members discussed the revised reviewer template for reflective reports

- This form is just for Academic Affairs. The one for Student Affairs would be slightly different.
- Question 1.B may change slightly due to CULE changing the outcomes. If the Faculty Senate approves the revised outcomes, the changes would be effective for reports coming in September.
- Larry asked if a norming session would be helpful for members doing reviews since they will be in the new format and this type of review is new to the committee as well.

- Multiple members thought this would be very helpful.
  - Larry asked if the form seemed like it would work to review the reports.
    - Most felt it seemed appropriate, but wanted to test it with actual reports.
    - We agreed to try it and learn if it needs to be revised.
4. Members discussed the revised Guidelines for 2014-15 Student Learning and Development Reports
- Larry explained that this document is very similar to what we asked departments to do on their reports prior to the current reflective report for 2013-14.
  - Larry highlighted some of the changes he suggested:
    - Larry said he noticed that some departments had trouble showing how the majors are similar or have the same objectives with each other in one report. He said he indicated on this document that departments with multiple distinct majors may choose to submit a separate report for each major in the department.
    - Larry also reminded the committee that at a previous meeting it was decided to have the same people review reports from the same departments they reviewed previously and to provide previous reports and reviews to reviewers.
      - Because reviewers will have copies of the previous reports, departments will not have to submit assessment plans and learning outcomes again unless they have made revisions to them.
  - Amy asked if this committee reviews the assessment plans from departments.
    - Pat Murphy did that in the early 1990s in the era of “the chart.”
    - Sometimes individual reviewers make suggestions about a department’s plan and sometimes departments requested feedback, but it has not been done systematically since then.
  - Larry encouraged committee members to think about the possibility of having either a pedagogical luncheon or a workshop to assist departments in reviewing and revising their assessment plans.
    - Jeff thought that a workshop would be better as it would allow more time for discussion, questions, and feedback.
    - Members suggested that the departments could bring their plan in and committee members could provide feedback and suggest changes or revisions.
    - Larry said that we should have a “safe environment” for people to feel comfortable bringing their plans for discussion. He suggested maybe holding workshops for each college.
  - Elizabeth asked if there was a place that we could put examples of good assessment plans so others could view and see what constitutes a well written plan.
    - Ann said that we could list an explanation of what a plan should include and indicators and then show an example of a good plan.
    - Amy did a Google search and it returned a number of resources on how to create a good assessment plan.
    - Members suggested having an NDSU “best practices” link on the Assessment homepage.
      - Larry asked the committee to think about what would be the leading categories to have on this site.
      - He also asked committee members to recall reports that they’ve viewed in the past that they thought would be beneficial to use as an example or to at least take parts of the report to use as examples.

- Elizabeth asked if the assessment reports were listed somewhere that people could access.
  - This has been a discussion that has come up numerous times. At the present time we not put reports on any webpages for people to access. It was a concern that departments might feel shamed if theirs was not a good report.
- The committee thought it might be a good idea to share the reports that are “top notch,” letting those departments “toot their horn” a little bit.
- A financial incentive for “best report of the year” was also mentioned as a way to reward a department that submits a better than average report. Maybe the new provost would be in support of something like this.
- Another item that Larry brought attention to on the draft Guidelines document was that he separated out one program learning outcome for each major or program and also separated that for the undergraduate and graduate levels. Even if the college submits only one report for all majors, like the College of Business, they would have the opportunity to report on the student learning for each major within the college.
  - Jeff was concerned with majors with large numbers of outcomes would take too long to complete their assessment cycles.
  - Amy suggested revising this to approximately 1/3 of the department’s learning outcomes.
- Bill suggested that the 4<sup>th</sup> bullet under Report Guidelines should end with “. . . expect students to know and be able to do” because that phrase is commonly used both on campus and nationally.
- Scott asked what we should do about departments that submit reports that are clearly not what we have asked them to do this time.
  - Larry said that’s a great question. We will need to determine how we will address this. Will we return it to them and ask them respond to the appropriate guidelines or just review what they submit using an old rubric/guidelines?
  - We aren’t asking them to stop doing what they have done in the past. They should still be assessing student learning, but now we want them to step back and reflect on their goals and their processes.
  - Larry suggested the committee think about this so we can discuss it at the next meeting.

**Next meeting is Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm in Peace Garden**