

Assessment Committee
May 23, 2006
Large Faculty Conference Room

Members present:

Noni Threinen (**Chair**), Renee DeVries, Mary Berg, Jane Richardson, Alyssa Hitch, Kren McManus, Pat Casello

Absent:

Don Eggebrecht, Xianhui Yang

Guests:

Dale Healey, Mark McKenzie, Julia Bartlett

Review of last meeting minutes:

There are no recorded minutes from the previous meeting.

Topics:

Review and discussion of Assessment Matrix results as facilitated by Susan Hatfield

Scoring will be included in the University Annual Assessment Report with comparisons in values to previous years' results. These are the comments from Dr. Hatfield's meeting with the UAC.

Motion to Approve (Berg, Richardson)

Approved

Review of final report from Susan Hatfield

Dr. Hatfield approved of our use of the matrix and levels of implementation. During her visit she met separately with the Deans of each of the programs, Dr. Sawyer and Dr. Threinen, and the UAC. In general, her report was very positive, making it clear that Northwestern is doing most of what she recommends we be doing. This report will be posted on the CTLA website and will also be sent out with the CTLA Update Newsletter.

Discussion

- The sixth bullet point in Dr. Hatfield's report indicates that our assessments need not be done for every course, every faculty member, and every program aspect every year. While this is the case for course evaluations, this is not the case for program assessments.
- There is a distinction between assessment and course evaluation:
 - o Assessment is related to specific learning outcomes; it is demonstrated, measurable performance
 - o Course Evaluation is how well the instructor is delivering course content (student perception); this is about the expectation of what we want

- students to learn in class. It also serves as an indirect form of one aspect of course assessment.
- MCAOM uses an ongoing table with 14 Essential Requirements under which new items are categorized following accreditation feedback
 - o Perhaps these could also be tied back to the University learning objectives
 - Massage Therapy has specific criteria from COMPTA that is used to develop their own objectives beneath the University's eight learning outcomes
 - As far as reporting goes, is the once per year standard problematic?
 - o Mr. McKenzie and Dr. Healey think this is fine, however, Mr. McKenzie expressed a feeling that the focus on assessment is not as strong this year as it was last year. He reported that Dr. Sawyer has expressed concern about this as well.
 - o Perhaps the goal is for the culture to be so strong that we don't have to talk about it. The more we create this culture, the better off we will be in the long run.
 - Dr. Threinen asked if all those present felt that they had the information they needed to think about evaluating student learning.
 - o Are we using tools appropriately?
 - o What are we doing with the information?
 - o Student evaluations just show a trend, but clinical experiences and comprehensive exams are the best methods of measuring.
 - o Although we're developing program tools, we don't currently have faculty development for assessment aside from the optional Brown Bag seminars.
 - o Since not everyone is able to attend Brown Bags, occasional separate programs have been offered in the past.

Addition of Deans as ad hoc UAC members to develop criteria for University Learning Outcomes

We have been stuck in outcome number eight ("Competence in One's Discipline") and need to move our focus to the remaining University Learning Outcomes. This year's focus will be outcomes number seven ("Critical Thought and Knowledge Acquisition") and four ("Understanding of Individuals, Communities and Cultures").

Discussion:

- We don't currently address number four much outside of the Diversity Commission events, which have no evaluation. There are elements of diversity embedded into some of the chiropractic courses, but it may be better to address diversity separately
- Should we design an assessment for this as a group?
- Dr. Healey felt it better to develop the criteria independently.
- Mr. McKenzie suggested we start with a common framework/template and then develop individual program plans based on this template.
- Dr. Healey then suggested that we develop our drafts independently, but bring them to the forum (UAC) for input from others.
- It will be valuable to look at each learning outcome separately. We will begin with Critical Thinking.

Review and critique of Annual Assessment Reports

Dr. Threinen suggested we divide into task forces. The final decision was to email the Assessment Reports and assign each UAC member to one of the three reports. Committee members will then use the assessment plan rubric to evaluate their assigned Report and will return completed rubrics to Dr. Threinen. The results of this activity will be discussed at the next meeting.

Actions:

- ❖ Dr. Healey will send out his template for the Critical Thinking Outcome via email
- ❖ Dr. Threinen will email everyone the rubric as well as the departmental reports
- ❖ All UAC members should fill out the rubric for each departmental report and return them to Dr. Threinen no later than Wednesday, May 31st!
- ❖ Dr. Threinen will evaluate Integrative Health and Wellness and the Bachelor of Science completion program

Future Discussion Topics:

- Further definition and criteria for the rubric evaluations for Assessment reports
- further discussion with the Deans regarding University Learning Outcomes

The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, June 6th** from **12-1pm**. Location will be announced via email.

Minutes submitted by: Rachel Preisinger

Approved by: _____
Noni Threinen, D.C., Chair
University Assessment Committee