University- Wide Assessment Committee
Year End Report
2011-2012
The University-Wide Assessment Committee (UWAC) met 8 times throughout the 2011-2012 academic year in continuing its charge in promoting a meaningful planning and assessment system that fosters continuous improvement throughout the University. One hundred university units from student learning (45 units), student development (18 units) and administrative entities (37 units) submitted plans for 2010-2011 and reported on their individual outcomes. Through various peer reviews, initiated by the UWAC oversight committees, progress continues to be made in unit planning and assessment as 23 units (23%) were deemed to Need Improvement (NI) in writing and reporting on their plans compared to 39% for the 2009-2010 report cycle.

Discussion and data review by UWAC centered on The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools - Commission on Colleges’ (SACSCOC) regional re-accreditation process culminating with an on-site review in March 2012. From the Focused Report of the off-site SACS review committee and Coastal Carolina University responses concerning outcomes assessment on educational programs, administrative support services and education support services, UWAC recognized the importance placed on continual improvement in assessment and continues to recommend enhancement in assessment training at the unit level.

With an 8.1% decline in 1-year freshmen retention from Fall 2006 through Fall 2010, UWAC reviewed 11 key areas of enrollment data that was sent to the University’s retention consultant. The UWAC Student Development Oversight Committee conducted focused groups with students to learn about the quality of student services, the UWAC Student Learning Oversight Committee sought to “create a big picture” view of actual learning occurring and the UWAC Administrative Units Oversight Committee set its sights on analyzing efficiencies in administrative processes for students.

UWAC oversaw the administration of 2 Senior Exit Surveys (Fall 2011 and Spring 2012) and reviewed a comparative analysis of all Graduating Senior Exit Surveys completed to date. With 110 positive general comments from 130 total comments (82%), the sentiments from these students suggest a very positive experience at CCU. The lowest rated elements within these students’ academic majors were with opportunities to develop appropriate computer skills (60%) and computer skills preparing them for today’s technology (70%).

Recommendations

The following specific recommendations flowing from the UWAC and the 3 oversight committees include:

Recommendations from the University-Wide Assessment Committee

- Require the Graduating Senior Exit Survey for all graduates to capture the insights of all.
Incorporate proactive approaches to alleviate parking despair among the University community including, a public relations campaign to communicate with students/faculty/staff about parking lots/spaces at the beginning of each semester. Use technology to inform students/faculty/staff on real-time parking availability and emphasize shuttles schedules to outlying lots. Provide a Public Safety presence at peak traffic times directing constituents to available lots.

Designate a building, outside of the library, for study rooms after hours so that students will have quiet places to study. The new addition of the Library will be great but it still will not add enough seats to cover the student population. The Library will have a 1 to 15 seat ratio. Our peers have a 1 to 8 ratio.

Enhance outcomes assessment training among individual units.

Encourage decision making at the University based on sound data and not anecdotal information.

Recommendations from the Student Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee

- **UWAC – SL Provides a Preliminary Assessment “Approval”**: Maintain our own CCU internal “review committee” which acts like an external accrediting body (such as CHE, SACS, AACSB, NCATE, etc.). This committee reviews and returns all assessment plans and final assessment reports, with suggested revisions or the request for a second review. Successful first review means a successful posting. Unsuccessful first review requires a re-submission. All results are reported to the Provost.

- **Recognize and Support Success**: Develop and fund a process to widely recognize successful assessment plans producing effective change within an academic unit.

- **Move the Focus to Student Learning**: Implement assessment plans to improve student learning in the classroom. Few assessment plans address changes in instruction and how the material is taught in the classroom.

- **Identify and Incorporate Supporting Initiatives**: Identify and support existing or emerging initiatives (such as Experienced@Coastal, learning communities, CeTEAL training opportunities, etc.) that show promise of improving specific student skills.

- **Better Integrate Student Learning**: Develop an integrated, cross disciplinary approach where crucial student skills such as research, presentation, and analytical reasoning and problem solving are identified and included in as many courses and for as many semesters of study at CCU as appropriate. The Core Curriculum may be a good place to begin.
Recommendations from the Student Development Oversight Committee

- Require an extra-curricular graduation component, across all academic disciplines, to foster involvement of students in the University.
- Implement a Special Interest Housing plan with partnerships between University Housing and academic or student affairs units for fall 2012.
- Incorporate a consistent customer service philosophy for the entire campus and implement a ‘secret shopper’ program to assess customer service.
- Provide additional shuttles during peak hours during the semester.
- Place Vending machines that accept CINO cash in all academic buildings.

Recommendations from the Administrative Units Oversight Committee

- Improve communication and access to survey materials and findings through the Institutional Research, Assessment and Analysis website.
- Develop a protocol for a centralized repository (Institutional Research, Assessment and Analysis) for all survey materials gathered across campus to share data.
- Increase focus on “service” to students and applicable related publics.
- Include workshops for committee members and other related staff to receive training and/or feedback on improving assessment planning and reporting.
- Create a Transportation Planning Unit as a centralized area charged with managing a comprehensive view of all transportation needs and issues.
**UWAC Focus for 2012 – 2013**

- UWAC will bring action items to the Provost and the University Administration in a more timely manner throughout the year.

- UWAC will identify and review systems not currently assessed.

- UWAC- Student Learning will continue analysis of the state of student learning.

- UWAC- Student Development will assess student leadership and study the impact of "engagement" on the development of "productive, responsible, healthy citizens."

- UWAC- Administrative Units will emphasize efficiency, accuracy and timeliness of unit services and their impacts on other areas within the University.