University-Wide Assessment Committee
Student Learning
March 21, 2014
2:00 p.m., Kearns Hall 205

Members Present: John Beard (Chair), Karen Aguirre, Janet Buckenmeyer, Kristal Curry, Margaret Fain, Jeannie French, Dodi Hodges, Michael Latta, Jim Luken, Megan McIlreavy, Carol Osborne, Scott Pleasant, Nelljean Rice

Members Absent: Ellen Arnold, Vivian Ford, Amy Fyn, Chris Mee, Lee Shinaberger

I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

John Beard, Chair, convened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. in Kearns Hall 205 and welcomed all present. The minutes from the meeting on February 14, 2014 were included as part of the packet distributed to all attendees. The Chair asked if any modifications to the minutes were recommended. A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was offered by Kristal Curry, seconded by Jim Luken, and approved by the committee.

II. Discussion Topic: A New Five-Year Assessment Plan

A. Most Likely Goals for the Next Five Years – Each assessment committee is being asked to provide input for the five-year assessment plan currently being written by Chairman Beard. Included with the meeting materials was the UWAC Student Learning Five-Year Plan document discussed at the last committee meeting. Chairman Beard made reference to the Clemson ePortfolio information and indicated this program had been successful and might be considered as a starting point for the discussion. Carol Osborne spoke on behalf of her group and shared that an ePortfolio initiative should not be mandated from administration. A better way to approach this topic would be to meet with department chairs and ascertain if ePortfolios would benefit their students and how. It was agreed that ePortfolios would be a helpful way to assess the core, with students including samples of their best work in their portfolio. The ePortfolio tool to be selected would have to be easy to use. Jim Luken stated that several years ago Dean Roberts attempted to introduce an ePortfolio requirement, however, the initiative never quite got off the ground. It was agreed that making an ePortfolio a graduation requirement would be a challenge.

B. Actions & Changes That Should be Done – A recommendation was made that prior to beginning the discussion of ePortfolios at the department and faculty level, a group could travel to Clemson to see a working system in place. It was agreed that some level of assessment of the portfolios would need to occur. In addition, student support of the application would need to be considered.

The Collected Suggestions for the Future of Assessment document was discussed. This document is a compilation of recommendations and opinions on assessment from internal (CCU) and external sources. How to move from a culture of compliance to a culture of evidence-based decision making is an important topic for future discussion. Chairman Beard requested committee members' feedback (by the end of April) on any suggestions from this list.

C. Sequencing of Goals – No discussion
III. Discussion Topic: More Focus on Student Learning

A. COHFA Confab Example – The CONFAB took place in late February and is included as an example of a college engaging in sharing assessment activities and results in an open forum. Kristal Curry spoke on behalf of her group and began the discussion by questioning whether those conducting assessment are focusing more on student learning goals or on what to include in assessment reports. The focus seems to have moved towards "what to include in TEAL Online" and away from actual student learning.

A discussion took place regarding the common language of assessment (goals, objectives, etc.) and how these terms relate to student learning outcomes. Also, it was agreed that departments can change their student learning outcomes if they do not fit with what the major is trying to accomplish.

B. How to Bring Student Learning to the Front – No discussion

C. Follow Up Discussions – It was agreed that the idea of focusing on student learning is a long term discussion.

IV. Discussion Topic: Request for Early 2014 Reports

A. A Reasonable Submission Date – As a result of the SACSCOC accreditation taking place in March 2015 (report due in December 2014), Chris Mee has requested that the 2013-14 assessment reports be submitted in TEAL Online earlier than the previous November 1st deadline. September 1st has been identified as a possible deadline for assessment reports. It was suggested that those writing reports be encouraged to submit pieces of reports as they are completed. It was suggested that Assessment Coordinators be called upon over the summer to help those who are in need of assistance with their assessment reports.

B. How to Communicate with Participants - No discussion

C. Internal/External Reviews - No discussion

V. General Updates

B. Summer Activities That Help - No discussion
C. Tentative Recommendations for Next Year - No discussion

V. Adjourn – Next Meetings: April 25 @ 2:00

Several committee members were scheduled to be at another meeting. The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.