# Assessment Committee Meeting – Minutes

October 16, 2015 | 11:00 - 12:30 pm |Library 329

Attendees: Jim Hatton, Kristin Nagy Catz, Craig Stillwell, Lee Ayers, Jamie Vener, Hart Wilson, Jody Waters, Vicki Suter, Rene Ordonez, John Taylor, Jeff Gayton, Heather Buchanan

1. For discussion: Our committee’s evolving role in overseeing, publicizing and reporting academic assessments.

We now have some programs which are doing assessments that have university-wide implications. Currently we gather academic program reviews which contain at minimum program specific assessment results and our committee does some university-wide assessments but what about the intersection – the current USem study of capstone papers and the library’ s work with the Ed department for example? No matter how the information comes to the committee, how do we deal with it?

**Given the above information we ask that programs, who are doing assessments that have possible university-wide implications and who want to bring their findings to the campus community at large, present their study to the assessment committee first for our review.**

1. Just a note and a question: The new TracDat interface seems to be self-organizing. This was one of our goals. Will the new structure be sufficient for our purposes? **It is possible that programs may want or need to place documents in TD that are not direct documentation for learning outcomes. Two such categories are syllabi and meeting minutes. Kristin’s office will place such folders in each program’s documentation section. Also programs need to be informed that whenever possible student names should be omitted from TD documents.**
2. We begin our senior writing assessment process for last year’s senior writing samples.
   * Kristin will report on the progress of gathering the papers. **Kristin presented a table showing who has turned in their papers. There are several programs with no or very low submissions. She is contacting them individually.**
   * Kristin will discuss how to incorporate a FUSE assessment and the senior writing assessment. **For consistency reasons we will add the assessment of FUSE papers to our senior writing process. This means our norming exercise will include sample FUSE papers. Jim and Kristin will work up a timeline with the goal of having the norming done, the papers chosen and the teams formed by winter break.**
   * Jim will present a draft of the rubric that now includes Quantitative Literacy. **The committee affirmed the idea of using senior writing samples for a pilot run of a Quantitative Literacy, now Quantitative Reasoning (QR), assessment. The intent is to surface how much QR is being done on campus, how much could be done, and how well what is being done is being done. (How do you like that sentence?) Hart will apply her extremely high logic and organization skills to making the draft rubric conform to her and thus our committee’s high standards.**
3. We will discuss initial steps toward developing as Oral Communication University-wide assessment.
   * We will discuss a survey of chairs that will allow us to get some idea of how many seniors are doing a senior presentations and where they give it. **Jim in consultation with Kristin will develop questions for the chairs and Hart will build a qualtrix survey.**
   * Jim will bring copies of an oral communication rubric. **We determined that the oral communication rubric needs some simplification. Hart will apply her skills.**
4. Our charge: Does it include graduate assessments? We don’t want to take this on. Here is our charge from the senate bylaws:

The Assessment Committee (AC) will oversee the institution, maintenance and development of student learning outcomes for the curriculum at Southern Oregon University.

The AC will be composed of seven voting members, one representing each of the following:  the School of Arts and Letters, the School of Business, the School of Education, the School of Sciences, the School of Social Sciences, Health and Physical Education, the University Seminar program, and the Library.  The chair of the committee will be elected from the voting membership of the committee.

The Associate Provost for Curriculum and Personnel, the Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Services and Director of Admissions, the Director of the Center for Teaching, Learning and Assessment (CTLA), the Director of University Studies, one member of the ACCESS center advising staff, a representative from Information Technology (IT), and one student will serve as ex-officio, non-voting members of this committee.  The Provost will designate one of the administrative ex-officio members as the administrative contact for this committee.

Jim notes that the Senate Assessment Committee page has just two old agendas from 2012. Also, since we will be adjusting for our new division structure, we might rewrite our charge? **This committee has not ever considered graduate student learning outcomes and we don’t want to begin now. Graduate programs are disparate some with external accreditation and different writing standards for instance which would be hard to unite in some university wide standards. While we were looking at the charge we thought we might as well rewrite it to include more members since we need to be training new members at a constant rate and have taken on an increasing work load. Also we have gained a better sense of our mission (charge) as we have evolved. Noting the only minutes on the Assessment committee senate page, Jim will do some research and address Kevin Sahr and Larry Shrewsbury about a consistent web presentation of committee documents.**

1. Kristin will explain what the MultiState Collaborative (MSC) is and what we can do about it. **In a nutshell the MSC is a multistate effort to use embedded assessments from participating universities in the writing, critical thinking and QR areas for establishing external benchmarks. There are paid opportunities for faculty to participating in the assessment of artifacts from other universities. We need to announce this to the faculty.**

On-going (so we don’t forget)

* Portfolios
* University Studies
* CLA
* Communicating with our students – Language from the catalog:

**Components in the Major**

Each academic major leading to a bachelor’s degree includes two upper division requirements for students completing that major.

**Writing and Research Component**

Demonstrate writing and research skills within the academic field of study chosen as a major. This upper division requirement is in addition to the University Studies writing requirement. It is met through coursework in the major that is designed to encourage the use of professional literature.

Students who have achieved the writing and research goals will be able to:

1. systematically identify, locate, and select information and professional literature in both print and electronic formats within the knowledge base of the specific discipline;
2. critically evaluate such materials;
3. use the materials in a way that demonstrates understanding and synthesis of the subject matter; and
4. develop cohesive research papers that use data and professional literature as evidence to support an argument or thesis following the style and conventions within the discipline of the major.

**Capstone Experience**

Complete a capstone experience designed to focus on and provide understanding of the major field of study. Each program specifies the manner in which its majors must meet these requirements. There is variation among fields of study. Please refer to the program listing of major requirements for details regarding the implementation of these requirements.

**Assessment**

SOU is committed to improving the quality of instruction by assessing student outcomes. The University determines the progress of the learning process by relating outcomes to clearly defined learning objectives. During their collegiate careers, students actively participate in the outcomes assessment process. Student participation contributes to curriculum design and the evolution of the learning community.

**Jim was concerned that we are not meeting the promises in the last paragraph above. He was reminded that 1) Heather is a fully participating member of the committee and 2) We have been encouraging through the academic program review process programs to be communicating program outcomes to their students.**