

University Assessment Council

Meeting Minutes

October 4, 2011 2:30 p.m.

Cook Library 507

1. Attendance

Present: *Margaret Faulkner, Kerri Goodwin, Teresa Hall, Raymond Lorion, Christina Barrick, John Turner, Karen Robertson, Linda Cooper, Gail Parr, Joyce Garczynski, Patricia MacDonald, Teresa Hall, Ashlei Scott, Lonnie McNew, Laura Bageant, Diana Philip, Luz Caceda, Aileen Trainer*
Absent: *Precha Thavikulwat, Jeff Kenton*

2. Review and approval of minutes

The minutes from the last meeting held May 3, 2011 were posted on SharePoint for review.

Robertson moved to approve the minutes. Garczynski seconded. Approval passed by unanimous vote.

3. Elections of Officers for AY 2011-12

Trainer was nominated by Bageant. No other names were submitted for nominations. Bageant moved for approval. Robertson seconded. Approval passed by unanimous vote.

In the spirit of shared governance, Trainer suggested that there be a Chair-Elect to be in place this year to serve during AY 2012-13. ***Bageant nominated Robertson. No other nominees came forward. Approval passed by unanimous vote.*** The Council agreed by consensus that if the bylaws are to be amended to allow this position to be formed, Trainer will add the necessary language for review.

In a call for nominations for secretary, Parr submitted her name for consideration. No other nominees came forward. Trainer moved for approval. Lorion seconded. Approval passed by unanimous vote.

4. Review and approval of annual report

The UAC annual report for AY 2010-11 was reviewed in preparation for submission to the University Senate. The report includes approvals of General Education course assessment reports as well as undergraduate and graduate program assessment plans and reports reviewed by the assessment subcommittees. One other action item pertains to the development of a formal policy created to submit to the Council of Deans regarding academic program non-compliance with the university assessment process. ***Lorion moved to approve the annual report. Faulkner seconded. Approval passed by unanimous vote.*** The annual report for 2010-11 will be submitted to the University Senate.

5. Review of bylaws

Trainer indicates she has not been able to confirm if the revision to the University Senate by-laws submitted on behalf of UAC have been approved by the University Senate. These revisions included the addition of new representatives on the UAC representing non-academic units for Towson to engage in more active institution-wide assessment.

In addition, review of previous annual reports indicates the UAC by-laws may not be current. This delay gives the Council an opportunity to clarify any remaining issues in its bylaws. One question on the table is whether ex-officio members can vote, which will allow all members serving on the Council the right to vote. The main concern appears to be whether there will be fair representation of faculty in comparison to non-faculty members. After much discussion, the Council agreed that if the university is interested in engaging in more assessment of institutional effectiveness rather than only academic assessment, allowing all members the right to vote is justified. H2 in bylaws – ***Faulkner proposed amended language to the bylaws in Section H, 2: All members of the Council (including student representatives, elected, ex-officio, appointed members and chairs of the subcommittees) shall have the right to speak and vote. Trainer called for a vote among faculty members. This resulted in seven voting in favor and one abstaining. Measure to amend the bylaws regarding voting rights of the Council members was passed by majority vote.***

6. Subcommittee updates

A. Subcommittee for Undergraduate Program Assessment (SUPA). SUPA met last month and is currently reviewing 6 assessment plans. It is preparing for an increase in reviews come November when the 3/6-year program assessment reports are due.

B. Subcommittee for Graduate Program Assessment (SGPA). SGPA met last month and is currently reviewing 14 assessment plans. It is preparing for an increase in reviews come November when the 3/6-year program assessment reports are due.

C. Subcommittee on General Education Assessment (SGEA). SGEA met last month and is currently reviewing 22 course assessment plans for reports to be filed next summer under the old Gen Ed system. The subcommittee is preparing for an increase in reviews come December when the first round of course assessment plans are due under the new University Core system. Trainer reported that the last round of Gen Ed assessment reports are being conducted and reviewed this academic year in the categories of Advanced Composition and Creativity & Creative Development. Last academic year, assessment reports were reviewed for courses in categories of Math, Science and English Composition. Courses under the old Gen Ed System that are not seeking inclusion into the new core are still eligible for students to enroll for their general education course requirements until fall 2013.

Hall proposed a new name for SGEA, in anticipation of its work regarding courses in the new core: the Subcommittee on Core Curriculum Assessment. Robertson seconded. Approval passed by unanimous vote. This subcommittee name change will require an amendment to the bylaws under item G. Trainer will add the necessary language for review.

D. Subcommittee on Student Affairs Assessment (SSAA). Reporting on the work of the Subcommittee on Student Affairs Assessment (SSAA), Hall presented the Executive Summary of Division of Student Affairs Assessment Report AY11. SSAA continues to explore whether the assessment methodologies being used are capturing the areas that should be the most meaningful to work of the Division of Student Affairs. Council members were given the opportunity to discuss the report and ask questions. There have been some concerns that students are getting over surveyed. Trainer reported that there have been movements to evaluate the possible overuse of student emails to conduct these surveys and the timing of email surveys. Hall also shared the executive summary of results of a survey designed to evaluate the new Transfer Program focusing on

transitional issues of transfer students to Towson. A survey is also being put together about how faculty felt about the implementation of this new program.

7. Other Updates

The Council discussed feedback being received from faculty members and chairs about revisions in assessment processes due to the implementation of the University Core. Faculty are commenting that they are feeling overwhelmed by increased expectations in teaching, research and service, as well as assessment. Trainer will be doing a presentation to the Council of Chairs on October 10th. The Office of Assessment is also planning to hold Assessment Day events in the spring by college. These gatherings will be used for faculty to share examples of what they have learned from engaging in program and course assessment while sharing ideas about effective strategies and methodologies. Part of the past history at Towson has been the recognition of assessment scholars – perhaps this is something we can do again. As we have in the last couple of years, assessment “best practice” awards will be announced in this spring based upon reviews of plans and reports submitted this academic year.

Trainer reported that the most recent Student Learning Outcome Assessment Report (SLOAR) was submitted to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) June 30, 2011. It is currently accessible on the Office of Assessment SharePoint site and will be posted on the Towson website once it is presented to the Council of Chairs next week. We should hear the final results of the Middle States reaccreditation process by the end of the year. We submitted a follow-up report that was requested due this month and another one is scheduled for submission in two years.

Caceda presented an update on the course evaluation process. After working with OTS, the same passwords for Towson allowing access to protected sites can now be used in Student Voice to view course evaluation data and reports. Caceda demonstrated the revised access process. The trial period of blocking access to grades posted unless online course evaluation are completed by students ended last May. To encourage students to engage in the course evaluation process, a marketing campaign is being developed which may include prompts being sent to faculty to remind students to partake in the process and announcements posted through Black Board and PeopleSoft. Right now 70% of students are completing course evaluations.

8. Next meeting:

Bageant and McNew will present an overview of assessment conducted at Towson regarding institutional effectiveness. The next meeting will be held Tuesday, November 1, 2011 at 2:30 p.m. in Cook Library, room 507.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail Parr
Secretary, UAC