

## University Assessment Council

### Minutes

Wednesday, November 10, 2004

250 Student Union

3:00 p.m.

**Present:** A. Carlozzi, J. Comer, G. Gates, G. Lage, P. Lumpkin, S. Ownbey, E. Rabinowitz, L. Tarrant, D. Thompson, G. Wilber.

**Guest:** Kriengkrai Boonlert U Thai (doctoral graduate assistant for assessment in the College of Business Administration), and Jeff Hattey

**2004 General Education Assessment Report** –Jeff Hattey, Chair of the General Education Assessment Committee, presented a report on the Committees' work in Summer 2004. The Committee continued assessment of institutional portfolios of students' written communication skills and science problem-solving skills, and developed and pilot tested a rubric to assess critical thinking skills. Hattey reported that the portfolio of written communication skills is the most fully developed, with 562 samples collected and assessed over a four-year period. In this portfolio, the writing scores of freshmen were found to be significantly lower than scores of seniors. Consideration of these results leads to the question, "what should be considered an 'acceptable' score?" Of course, higher is better, and an expected outcome is that seniors would have higher scores on assessment of writing skills, but should a benchmark score be established?

Hattey reported that 141 artifacts were assessed for the science problem-solving portfolio, but that the total sample size in the portfolio (209) is still not large enough for detailed analysis. Several issues were considered by the committee regarding the science problem-solving assessment. Although about 300 artifacts were collected from science courses for the portfolios, only about half of those could be used for the assessment process as is has developed. Hattey indicated that data provided to the committee by the office of Institutional Research and Information Management indicates many students who are non-science majors take one of three courses to meet the science requirement for general education. In this report, the general education science courses most frequently taken by non-science majors were Biology 1114, Geology 1014, or Geography 1114. Therefore, the committee believes that artifact collection for assessment of science problem-solving skills for general education should focus on these and other frequently taken courses. A similar situation was reported last year regarding assessment of math problem-solving skills; many students who are in majors that are not related to math take one of three courses to meet the general education math requirement. The committee hopes to discuss these and other related concerns with faculty who teach these courses in a series of sessions about general education assessment in the Spring semester.

Hattey also reported that he and Greg Wilber developed a critical thinking rubric, using a model created by Washington State University (with their permission). This rubric was used as a test run to assess a small sample of artifacts. From this process, the rubric was modified to allow for assessment of critical thinking within varying contexts. The modified rubric is included in the committee's written report.

Greg Wilber will chair the General Education Assessment Committee in 2005. The committee will provide a series of information sessions for faculty on General Education Assessment (process and results) during the Spring semester, and will provide opportunities to continue the discussion on assessment of critical thinking.

**Council Review of Program Outcomes Assessment** – Materials have been distributed to sub-committees for review. Lumpkin invited Council members to also provide feedback on program budget requests and on the rubric they use to evaluate plans and reports, when the sub-committees meet to discuss their reviews. Recommendations will be collected at the sub-committee meetings, and the assessment office will compile and send the information to programs being reviewed.

**Response to 1995 NCA Accreditation Concern About Assessment** – Lumpkin reminded the Council of specific concerns about assessment expressed by NCA accreditation reviewers during their last visit to OSU in 1995. A document has been prepared to provide examples of assessment activity that has occurred since 1995 that address these concerns; a copy was provided to Council members. This document will be posted on the accreditation website. Lumpkin recently received material indicating that in 1995 there was also a concern regarding assessment of graduate programs; this was not specifically addressed in the document just described. Council members agreed to participate in a session with assessment coordinators of graduate programs to discuss current activity and ideas for improvement.

**Templates for Assessment Plans and Reports** – These templates were developed based on discussion at the last Council meeting indicating a need to demonstrate or explain more clearly how assessment plans and reports should connect all components of assessment. Since time for discussion was limited, Lumpkin will email the templates to Council members and ask them to review and provide feedback. A session will be scheduled with Assessment coordinators to discuss these templates when they are distributed.

**Assessment Professional Development Workshops** – Lumpkin gave an update on the various professional development sessions that were held since the last meeting.

- Jon Comer presented “Effective Departmental Outcomes Assessment” on October 14. Approximately 40 in attendance.
- Brenda Masters presented “Regional Accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission” on October 21. Approximately 23 participated in that discussion.

**Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey** – The Bureau of Social Research has just completed collecting data for this survey. Attempts were made to contact, by telephone, all currently enrolled graduate students who are not special students or vet med students, resulting in a 65 percent response rate. A report of results will be completed in early spring.

**Survey of Alumni of Graduate Programs** – This survey will be conducted in Spring 2005, including alumni who graduated one year ago and five years ago. Invitations have been sent to academic units requesting unit-specific questions; these should be submitted by December 10.

**National Survey of Student Engagement** – Plans are being made to participate in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in Spring 2005.

**Spring 2005 Assessment Council Meetings** – Brenda Brown will contact Council members regarding their availability for spring Council meetings. A time matrix will be e:miled out asking for members to indicate times that they are not available.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by B. Brown.