

Assessment Committee Meeting
May 11, 2011
11:30 AM – 2:00 PM
MSC John Spotts Room

Members Present:

Caroline Perkins, Bill Pierson, Loukia Dixon, Janet Dozier, Sherri Stepp, Wayne Elmore, Dan Holbrook, Celene Seymour, Louis Watts, Nicki LoCascio, Elaine Baker, Janet Dooley, Mary Beth Reynolds

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Frances Hensley, Doug Nichols, Eryn Roles, Jenny Lauhon

Members Absent:

Rex McClure, Patrick Murphy, David Pittenger

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Sherri Smith, Sam Securro

Guests:

Gayle Ormiston, Corley Dennison, Chris Green

Agenda Items

1. Lunch: the meeting began with lunch and introduction of members and guests.
2. Approval of the minutes for the January 31, 2011 meeting: Minutes were approved as submitted.
3. Recorder: Mary Beth asked Jenny Lauhon to be the recorder for this meeting.
4. End of year wrap up discussion:

Program Assessment

- Mary Beth asked for feedback on the Program Assessment rubric. She said she noticed (and received feedback from committee members) that some programs had developed detailed assessment rubrics for one assessment, thus allowing them to identify relative strengths and weaknesses. However, because they did not report complementary measures, could not be evaluated past level 1 on assessment measures. Other programs reported complementary assessment measures (level 2), but had not developed analytic rubrics, or were not using their measures in such a way as to allow them to identify relative strengths and weaknesses. She felt that programs that were developing more in-depth assessments, even if of only one, should perhaps be scoring at a higher level than those that had not.
- Mary Beth also said that she felt that she was probably assessing learning outcomes at a higher level than they should be assessed. This led to a discussion about appropriate program learning outcomes. Mary Beth said that she felt that, upon graduation, all learning outcomes should reflect higher orders of learning/thinking. This generated some discussion about progression in learning, from lower levels earlier in a program to

higher levels at the end of the program. Mary Beth asked, since we are stressing the introduction of higher levels of learning early in the curriculum, if it is not appropriate to assess these higher levels at least at two points in the curriculum using a rubric that accounts for different levels of mastery. So, we might assess a student's ability to "evaluate or analyze," but expect one level of performance at the sophomore level and a higher level of performance at the senior level. Several committee members shared examples of how they do this in their programs.

- We will take up the rubric again during the coming academic year.
- In the upcoming year, Mary Beth also plans to meet with individual programs to help them work on assessment plans.

Program Review

- The schedule is continually being updated, due in particular to programs continually being added.
- Mary Beth would like to move toward online submission.
- Gayle mentioned that the deans have asked about having external reviewers. Further information will be forthcoming.

Graduation Survey

- The feedback overall has been fairly positive.
- Need to look at the Lickert scale items. It may be that our results are skewed by the fact that students are being asked for their opinions rather than being asked more objective questions that allow them to relate what they actually learn during various experiences at Marshall.

Assessment Day

- Mary Beth was pleased with a good turnout for the Campus-Wide Focus Group sessions, which were new this year. Reports were sent to the students, facilitators, Academic Affairs and CTS staff, the General Education and University Assessment Committees.
- Frances recommended sending the Assessment Day Focus Group Report to deans, faculty and Faculty Senate. She also mentioned presenting results at the Fall Teaching Conference.
- Dan asked if there was a broad enough spectrum of students in the focus groups. Bill thinks it is possible to get a better spectrum of students if assessment is done as a week-long event. A particular instructor in each department could be asked to do certain activities.
- There was discussion of the possibility of using other tools, such as Blackboard or Wimba, for Assessment Day activities. Celene mentioned the possibility of online discussions.
- Survey links could be left open all year and closed on Assessment Day for tabulation of results.
- The idea of an open student forum was mentioned, with the possibility of involving Board of Governors members.

CLA

- Mary Beth reviewed revisions to scoring. Beginning with the fall 2010 CLA administration, students' responses will be scored using a 6-point scale rubric against the following traits:
 - Performance Task
 - Analytic Reasoning and Evaluation
 - Writing Effectiveness
 - Writing Mechanics
 - Problem Solving
 - Analytic Writing Task
 - Make an Argument
 - Analytic Reasoning and Evaluation
 - Writing Effectiveness
 - Writing Mechanics
 - Critique an Argument
 - Analytic Reasoning and Evaluation
 - Writing Effectiveness
 - Writing Mechanics

- Performance of freshmen from the fall of 2010 was discussed. Results showed higher scores than in past years. This past fall, incoming students were tested from September 20 to October 14. Since the purpose of the fall testing is to establish a benchmark for incoming students, the committee was asked to consider the possibility of having a sample of students complete the test during the Week of Welcome. Frances will check on this.

GEAR

- For the summer, all domains are covered except for Science and Math
- Mary Beth asked Wayne to ask Science for one more person
- Four people are needed for Math – some suggestions for other departments to ask were CITE, College of Education and statistics instructors.
- Celine tried an artifact and it took approximately 30 minutes to complete. She also said that the rubric did not work for the artifact she assessed. There was discussion that this may have been because the rubric was incorrectly tagged to “technical literacy” rather than to “information literacy.” Mary Beth explained that the main purpose of assessment of the fall and spring artifacts is to test the system. Frances emphasized that any feedback we receive from the fall artifact assessment should be shared with her and with Sherri as soon as possible so that it can be included in FYS instructor training.

MAP-Works

- Agenda item skipped.

Rethinking Assessment Model

- Grads should be able to do certain things upon graduation regardless of the program. For this reason, Mary Beth suggested a set of “university” learning outcomes to which both program and general education outcomes would map.

- Frances shared that the deans feel there should be a language for the seven domains of thinking that is common between general education and program outcomes. In other words, the core curriculum should be blended into the programs instead of being thought of as separate. Mary Beth responded that her proposal was suggesting something similar, i.e. that all outcomes, general education and program, should connect to university outcomes. However, Frances felt that it would be too confusing to state university outcomes differently than the way the core domains of thinking are currently stated. Dan felt that general education and university outcomes should be synonymous, but said that he agreed that “creative” thinking should be part of them.
- Frances asked those on the College representatives on the committee to relay information from the committee meetings to their deans.
- Mary Beth said we need to look at the outcomes for each domain of thinking to make sure that all address critical thinking.

Website Redesign

- Mary Beth presented plans for redesign of the Assessment Website to the committee. The purpose of this redesign is to ensure better transparency of assessment and communication of how assessment is used to improve outcomes, especially those related to student learning, within the university.

Feedback Loop Report

- Chris recommended a more user friendly format, as there is a lot of text to read through. He suggested presenting an executive summary, with additional material as appendices.

Syllabus Evaluation

- Mary Beth reported that she has received syllabus evaluations from only a few programs. She mentioned that, although she recalled sending out instructions regarding this process, which is new, earlier this academic year, she had not recently reminded units of the due date. Several committee members, who are department chairs, said they had not received instructions. Mary Beth said she would check to see when, and to whom, instructions were sent. She also asked if committee members thought it would be useful to have programs submit syllabus evaluation results as part of their annual assessment reports. This procedure would fold syllabus assessment into another assessment process that is well established, hopefully resulting in better compliance.
- Elaine asked if instructors were still posting syllabi to MU BERT. Mary Beth said the compliance was spotty. Elaine said it was especially important for the RBA program to have access to syllabi. Mary Beth said she would emphasize again to department chairs and deans the importance of faculty posting these documents.
- Further discussion regarding syllabus evaluation was tabled until the next meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:00.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Lauhon

Jenny Lauhon, Recording Secretary