

Assessment Committee Meeting
September 30, 2011
1:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Drinko 402 (Huntington) and GC 134 (S. Charleston)

Members Present:

Caroline Perkins, Loukia Dixon, Janet Dozier, Sherri Stepp, Celene Seymour, Louis Watts, Janet Dooley, Mary Beth Reynolds, Maribea Barnes, Andrew Gooding, David Pittenger

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Sherri Smith, Chris Green, Larry Sheret, Doug Nichols, Jenny Lauhon

Members Absent:

Wayne Elmore, Ray Harrell, Nicki LoCascio, Bill Pierson, Rex McClure

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Frances Hensley, Eryn Roles

Agenda Items

1. The meeting began with an introduction of committee members. There is not presently a representative for the College of Liberal Arts, but one will be appointed by David Pittenger.
2. Approval of the minutes for the May 11, 2011 meeting: Minutes were approved as corrected – Chris Green should be listed as a “guest” at the May meeting.
3. Presentation and discussion of the Assessment Committee Report and progress on goals that were suggested in 2008:

Goal 1 – Improve student performance in Critical Thinking and Active and Collaborative Learning

Steps Taken:

- Core Curriculum approved in spring 2009 and, beginning the summer of 2010 students began taking First Year Seminar and two Critical Thinking designated courses.
- Faculty development sessions offered to future FYS instructors emphasizing active, experiential learning.
- CT Workshops offered to future CT instructors.
- CT courses approved by the General Education Council.
- Continue to increase number of service learning courses offered.

Progress to Date:

- Critical Thinking
 - CLA results show we are moving in the right direction. Our institutional “value-added” continues to be at or near the expected level, but our “value-added z-score increased slightly between 2009—2010 (0.79) and 2010 – 2011 (0.93). Keeping in mind that z-scores between -1.0 and +1.0 are within

the expected range, we are currently close to “above expected.” In fact, at the 95% level of confidence, Marshall’s “value-added” range for both years was between “expected and above-expected” levels. Mary Beth will report on the representativeness of our samples at the next meeting.

- 2011 NSSE results showed a significant improvement in freshman performance after the first year of implementation of the core curriculum.
- The report contains links to these analyses and Mary Beth suggested sending this information to the committee members’ constituents.
- Active and Collaborative Learning
 - 2011 NSSE results show significant improvement among freshmen in this area, bringing us closer to the level of our peers.

Future Plans:

- Monitor the progress in critical thinking among students
 - Continue to recruit representative samples of freshmen and seniors to take the CLA and monitor the university’s performance in terms of “value-added.”
 - Possibly implement a CLA type task for freshmen. This could provide a baseline of performance upon entry and further assessed in conjunction with FYS.
 - Monitor NSSE performance.
 - Participate in the Higher Learning Commission’s Pathways Cohort 3 Project.
- Monitor the progress in active and collaborative learning among students
 - Continue with service learning pedagogy.
 - Assess learning outcomes in capstone experiences.
 - Monitor NSSE feedback.
 - Monitor feedback from Assessment Day and other assessment activities.

Goal 2 - Increase the number and quality of enriching educational experiences offered to freshmen.

Steps Taken:

- Worked to increase learning communities.
- Worked to increase co-curricular participation.
- Worked to increase the number of study abroad students.
- Internationalization Committee continues to work to bring international experiences to campus.

Progress to Date:

- 2011 NSSE results showed no improvement among freshmen in the Enriching Educational Experiences benchmark. However, the 2011 NSSE results did show improvement in the study abroad rates among seniors, with a steady increase in percentage of seniors who reported having studied abroad between the years 2007 and 2011.

Future Plans:

- Increase freshman participation in Learning Communities.

- Increase freshman participation in co-curricular activities.
- At the senior level, our students report completing foreign language coursework at a rate higher than seniors at our peer institutions. We will need to monitor this result in the future, as some colleges have dropped a foreign language requirement since implementation of the new core curriculum.
- NSSE Writing Consortium results showed that our students outperformed or performed at the same level as those at other Writing Consortium institutions in all areas in 2011. The one area where our freshmen had performed below peers in 2009 and 2010 (argue a position using evidence and reasoning) improved to a level commensurate with peers in 2011.

Goal 3 – Develop a plan to improve advising

Steps Taken:

- The Retention Committee recommended the Week of Welcome, a centralized Advising Center and university-wide mandatory advising, Academic and Career professional plans, and to connect students with Career Services.
- We partnered with HEPC to pilot MAP-Works.
- Advising has become the focus of Academic Affairs.

Progress to Date:

- The Graduation Survey Results show improvement in students' satisfaction with advising but there is still room for improvement.
- There has been progress on the Retention Committee's advising goals. Week of Welcome was initiated in fall 2010, along with the opening of the Student Resource Center. Each degree program developed four-year academic plans and Career Services is connecting to students through JobTrax.
- Three Advising Task Forces have been established in fall 2011 to provide recommendations to the Provost.

Future Plans:

- These will be determined after October 15.

Goal 4 - Develop a workable plan for meaningful assessment of general education

Steps Taken:

- E-Portfolio (General Education Assessment Repository [GEAR]) developed.
- Rubrics developed for Core Domains of Thinking.
- Artifacts tagged and uploaded to GEAR from FYS courses.
- Artifacts assigned to reviewers.
- Results analyzed and shared with assessors.

Progress to Date:

- Most artifacts were from domains most closely aligned to FYS outcomes.
- Domains that are most in need of further analysis are Information/Technical Literacy, Multicultural/International Thinking, and Metacognitive Reflection.

- Most students scored at levels 1 and 2, and the highest scores were in Communication, Ethical/Social/Historical Thinking, and Aesthetic/Artistic Thinking.

Future Plans

- A small group is working to align the current domains of thinking to the domains of the Lumina Foundation's Degree Profile.
- This group is developing more detailed sample rubrics using as guides:
 - Rubrics developed during summer 2010.
 - AAC & U Value Rubrics.
 - Language from the Lumina Foundation's Degree Profile.
- Next steps:
 - Small groups of faculty (3 per group) will be recruited to refine the rubrics for each domain.

Goal 5 - Refine surveys and put all online

Steps Taken:

- The graduating senior and graduate surveys were combined into a single graduation survey.
- There is a need for efficiency and we are making progress.

Goal 6 – Move toward electronic report submission

- Goal is for the Academic Affairs Web Developer to develop a system to allow for electronic submission.

Goal 7 – Work with academic units to better track graduates

- New graduation surveys request specific information regarding future plans.
- Results can be tracked by college and program.
- We need to do a better job of sharing this information with programs, including adding a question where students give permission for employment and further educational plans to be shared with academic colleges and programs.

4. General Education Assessment Repository (GEAR) Update and next steps

Please refer to "Goal 4" above.

5. Syllabus Evaluation Results from 2010-2011

Mary Beth gave a short report on the results of syllabus evaluation. Reports were submitted from all colleges except COLA, COS, CITE, and GSEPD. She noted that most university mandated items were reported as included on syllabi submitted. However, fewer than 50% of syllabi included program learning outcomes or links between course learning outcomes and assessment measures. The provost has appointed a task force that is currently working on a syllabus template that will model this mapping. Mary Beth also mentioned that David Pittenger

has requested that syllabus evaluation be returned to a central committee rather than being carried out on the college/department levels. Some members felt that it was meaningful for colleagues to share and discuss their syllabi. This will notably become important as we move toward more intentional mapping between course and program outcomes. No decision was made on changing the current syllabus assessment procedure; however, Mary Beth did appoint a syllabus audit subcommittee.

6. Update on fall 2011 CLA testing

CLA testing is finished for the fall semester. One hundred one freshmen completed testing and Mary Beth reported that the sample was representative based on college enrollment. She will share further details at the next meeting.

7. HLC Project

The process that Marshall has previously used for Higher Learning Commission accreditation, "Program to Evaluate and Advance Quality (PEAQ)," is being phased out and replaced by the Pathways Model. In addition to documenting outcomes (assurance), each institution that participates in the Pathways Accreditation Model is required to design and carry out an improvement project. Because of our previous successful self-study reports, Marshall was one of twenty-one institutions selected to participate in the HLC's Pathways Project Cohort III. This cohort will test the Lumina Foundations' Degree Profile (our improvement project) and give feedback to the Commission. Information about this project is being shared with the campus community via Campus Conversations. More information will follow.

8. Subcommittee Charges

Mary Beth discussed who is assigned to the subcommittees. She will be in touch with these subcommittees in the next few weeks.

She asked the Assessment Day Subcommittee to give some thought to the 2012 Assessment Day schedule. She said that she would like to continue campus-wide student focus groups, focused on a specific topic each year and asked members to give some thought to an appropriate question. Chris recommended that someone from each department send out requests to students to participate in the focus groups. He felt that these invitations might result in a better response rate than if they receive the invitation from someone they don't know. Doug recommended an open forum panel discussion that would be available to all students, involving such panelists as the President, the Provost, etc.

9. Discussion about Syllabus Audit

Please refer to agenda item 5.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be a lunch meeting. It was agreed noon would be the best time for most. The date is to be determined.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Lauhon

Jenny Lauhon, Recording Secretary