

## University Assessment Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 2, 2013; 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM  
Shawkey Room

### Minutes

**Members Present:** Wayne Elmore, Loukia Dixon, Betsy Dulin (for Bill Pierson), Karen McComas, Maribea Barnes, Paula Lucas, Nicki LoCascio, Marty Laubach, Louis Watts, Chuck Bailey, Larry Sheret, Andrew Gooding, Celene Seymour, Sherri Smith, Corley Dennison, Sherri Stepp, Mary Beth Reynolds

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Chris Swindell, Doug Nichols

**Members Absent:** Adam Fridley, Rex McClure, David Pittenger, Caroline Perkins

**Ex-Officio Members Absent:** None

### Agenda Items

1. The meeting began with an introduction of members.
2. The minutes of the January 18, 2013 meeting were approved as submitted.
3. **Review of Open Pathways Demonstration Project: Activities, Results, and Next Steps**
  - Mary Beth Reynolds shared that the Assessment Report for academic year 2012 – 2013 (which was sent to committee members) will be posted on the assessment website [www.marshall.edu/assessment](http://www.marshall.edu/assessment), under “Assessment Committee Documents.” She referred committee members to this document for an outline of steps Marshall has completed as part of its Open Pathways Demonstration Project. Mary Beth emphasized that Marshall’s regional accrediting organization, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association, requires that each institution complete a quality initiative as a requirement for continued accreditation and that the HLC invited Marshall to join a cohort of about twenty other institutions to test the Lumina Foundation’s *Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP)* as our quality initiative. The HLC institutions testing the *DQP* met in Chicago this past February and provided initial feedback regarding the *DQP* to the Lumina Foundation. Mary Beth emphasized that the HLC did not ask institutions to adopt the *DQP*, but rather to test it. Marshall’s activities and results in this regard have included:
    - Summer 2012: A faculty committee analyzed work done during spring 2012 and produced a preliminary report of findings that was submitted to the HLC. <http://muwww-new.marshall.edu/hlcopenpathways/files/2012/08/2012HLCOpenPathwaysReport.pdf>
    - Fall 2012: Programs completed rubrics and collected data for two outcomes.
    - October 2012: Marshall presented its work at the Assessment Institute in Indianapolis. <http://muwww->

- [new.marshall.edu/hlcopenpathways/files/2011/11/2012-10-30-Assessment-Institute-Presentation.pdf](http://new.marshall.edu/hlcopenpathways/files/2011/11/2012-10-30-Assessment-Institute-Presentation.pdf)
- January 2013: Dr. John Immerwahr, Senior Researcher and Public Engagement Specialist at *Public Agenda*, conducted Faculty Focus Groups regarding the *DQP* on Marshall's campus.
- January 2013: Marshall University's Baccalaureate Degree Profile was passed by Faculty Senate. [www.marshall.edu/assessment/LearningOutcomes.aspx](http://www.marshall.edu/assessment/LearningOutcomes.aspx)
- February/March 2013: Marshall presented its Open Pathways Project results and future plans to other members of HLC's Cohort 3. <http://muwww-new.marshall.edu/hlcopenpathways/files/2011/11/2013-02-28-HLC-Presentation.pdf>
- April 2013: Programs completed the Open Pathways Project Survey. Results can be accessed at <http://muwww-new.marshall.edu/hlcopenpathways/files/2013/05/Open-Pathways-Assessment-Day-Survey-Results.pdf>
- April 2013: Marshall presented its work in developing its baccalaureate degree profile and rubrics at AAC&U's Network for Academic Renewal Conference: Student Success and the Quality Agenda, Miami, FL. [http://prezi.com/xfisqimko9n7/coordinating-university-learning-outcomes-with-assessment-rubrics/?auth\\_key=c59cd445d83574af49dc9848467b875b2b977037&kw=view-xfisqimko9n7&rc=ref-721238](http://prezi.com/xfisqimko9n7/coordinating-university-learning-outcomes-with-assessment-rubrics/?auth_key=c59cd445d83574af49dc9848467b875b2b977037&kw=view-xfisqimko9n7&rc=ref-721238)
- April 2013: Marshall participated in a panel, "The DQP: Sharing Findings, Latest Thinking, and Candid Criticisms" at the HLC's Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.
- Mid-May 2013: Marshall's degree programs will use a new reporting template to submit results of spring semester assessments. Following analysis of results, programs will report planned actions. This reporting will result in completed assessment updates for academic year 2012 – 2013.
- June 2013: The final report on Marshall's Quality Initiative (testing the *DQP*) will be submitted to the HLC.
- **Programmatic assessment results** for academic year 2012 – 2013 will be reported at the fall 2013 assessment committee meeting.
- **Next Steps for the Open Pathways Project:**
  - For 2013 – 2014, programs will continue to conduct embedded assessments according to their plans and upload data using the online reporting system as they are gathered. New data uploaded each year will not overwrite data from previous years. Additionally, programs will have the option of comparing results from one academic year with those of previous academic years, allowing the opportunity to follow student cohorts over time.
  - There was discussion about the logistics of analyzing data and the best time for assessment reports to be due. Once assessment results are entered into the online reporting system, it will be necessary for faculty in each program to meet to discuss the results and determine plans of action. Mary Beth proposed that an assessment day when students are not in class be set aside for this purpose. Suggested dates included a day in May after spring semester grades are submitted, a day in August before fall semester classes begin, or the spring semester study day in May. There was discussion that a designated day might not work for all programs. Following discussion, consensus emerged that it

might be best to designate an assessment day for this purpose, but to give programs for which this day is not convenient the latitude to establish their own schedules. No firm reporting due date was set, but suggestions included the first of October or a date immediately after the start of the fall semester, e.g. the last week in August.

- There was discussion about flexibility in the assessment data reporting template to accommodate the needs of programs with specialized accreditation. Mary Beth agreed that such flexibility is important, provided alterations in these programs' reporting systems address all of the requirements needed to maintain the university's HLC accreditation. Doug Nichols assured committee members that he could work with those using other databases to store data.
- The new data collection system that will be launched in fall 2013 was discussed. Doug said it would be ready for Paula Lucas to test using data for the elementary and secondary education undergraduate programs shortly. Mary Beth explained that instructors of courses that include embedded program-level assessments will submit results for each student who is majoring in those programs. The system will collate the information across all students to report the number of students scoring at each performance level for each trait of the outcome assessed. Final reporting will not separate results by course sections (or by courses). Results will be collated at the program level.
- Mary Beth thanked committee members for their work on evaluating assessment reports and said she would have feedback to all programs by the end of the summer.

#### 4. Assessment Day

- **Senior Assessment/Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA):** Mary Beth reported that the Colleges of Education, Fine Arts, and Health Professions had good showings on Assessment Day. Although it had been our intention to invite all seniors planning to graduate in May, summer, or December 2013 to participate in the Assessment Day Senior Assessment, only the Colleges of Science and Fine Arts and the School of Journalism and Mass Communications provided lists of their summer and December graduates. Therefore, for the other colleges, only May graduates were invited to participate. Forty-one percent (398 out of 972 invited) of the seniors invited completed the senior assessments on Assessment Day. An additional 53 students participated in make-up assessments after Assessment Day, boosting the final participation rate to 46%. A group of faculty will assess Week of Welcome (WOW) and Assessment Day tests, as well as First Year Seminar (FYS) artifacts, this summer. The freshman (WOW) CLA sample was representative of the freshman population and the senior CLA sample was representative of the senior population except for GPA and college membership. Mary Beth noted, however, that the GPA of the sample was 3.3 as compared to the population GPA of 3.2. Although statistically significant, the effect size (or practical significance) was small. Mary Beth asked committee members to encourage their faculty to visit the assessment website [www.marshall.edu/assessment](http://www.marshall.edu/assessment). Betsy Dulin suggested that, in addition to committee representatives sharing this information with their faculties, it would be a good idea for Mary Beth to send the assessment report to all faculty. She felt this would give the information some added importance. Mary Beth said she would do this.

- **Assessment Day Survey Report:** Mary Beth reported that she has sent survey reports to offices that administered them. She will post survey results to the Assessment website by the end of the summer.
  - **Assessment Day Student Focus Groups Results:** Focus Groups for Assessment Day this year repeated the topic last discussed during Assessment Day 2011, “What makes a good classroom learning experience?” Eighteen students participated in the groups this year. Results showed that the themes were very similar to those from 2011. Participants reported that active learning was important, that they want to receive formative assessment, and that professors are important, noting that professors should be prepared to teach and passionate about what they’re teaching. Students majoring in practical fields wanted professors who had relevant experience in their professional fields. Some students said they felt that professors should have attendance policies. A new theme that emerged this year was “connections.” One student said that when major concepts are heard in more than one class within his major, that tells him those concepts are important. Some students recommended a more uniform structure for First Year Seminar. Marty Laubach noted the self-selected nature of the participants, especially given the reference to metacognitive reflection. Sherri Smith pointed out that any student who has completed FYS should be familiar with metacognitive reflection, as it is one of the outcomes of FYS.
  - **Open Pathways (DQP) Survey Results:** Mary Beth referred committee members to the survey results she sent them. She noted that, although she had organized the results into major themes on the Assessment Report, the entire Survey report included all comments, edited only to remove departmental identification.
5. **Graduation Survey Response Rates for Academic Year 2012 – 2013:**
- Preliminary response rates are 38% for the university, with breakdowns by college on the Assessment report. These will be updated in the fall, with comprehensive results given at that time.
6. **Program Review Recommendations**
- At its April meeting, the Board of Governors recommended that all programs reviewed this year continue at their current level of activity.
7. **Syllabus Audit Report**
- Mary Beth thanked committee for reviewing syllabi. Of the 380 syllabi audited, 285 (75%) were posted. Of those, 167 (59%) included a full or partial explanation of the relationships among course outcomes and how each would be practiced and assessed in the course. Mary Beth noted that full implementation of the new master syllabus policy was not expected until fall 2013 and said she would reach out to colleges this fall where faculty were not including this information. Nicki LoCascio said she has heard from some faculty that including this information on syllabi has helped them evaluate their courses. Sherri Smith said that some faculty have reported that students have noticed the information and now look for it in syllabi for all of their courses.
8. **General Education Assessment**
- **General Education Assessment Repository (GEAR) Update:** Mary Beth reported that FYS faculty are helping students upload artifacts to GEAR. Assessment rubrics also have

been uploaded to GEAR. Students are tagging only to one outcome and within that outcome can choose one or more traits.

- **Summer Assessment Plans:** As noted earlier in the meeting, a group of faculty will evaluate WOW and Assessment Day assessments and FYS artifacts this summer. A report will be forthcoming this fall.

**9. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Update**

- NSSE response rate for academic year 2012 – 2013 is 21% thus far. Results will be reported this fall. Larry Sheret asked about previous years' results and Mary Beth noted that freshman responses in the benchmark areas of *Active and Collaborative Learning* and *Level of Academic Challenge* have increased significantly since the inception of the core curriculum.

**10. West Virginia Assessment Council Update**

- Mary Beth reported that, beginning in academic year 2013 – 2014 the Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC) will no longer financially support the *CLA*. The West Virginia Higher Education Assessment Council has spent the past year working on an alternative strategy to assess general education in the state's two- and four-year institutions. To date, Council members representing all of the state's institutions have agreed on four core areas of learning (communication, citizenship, quantitative literacy, and critical thinking/problem solving/analytic inquiry). The Council has broken each area of learning into measurable outcomes at the 30-hour certificate, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, and advanced levels. The Council is currently seeking feedback to inform a plan to test these outcomes.

**11. Report on "Building a Culture of Evidence in Student Affairs" Workshop**

- Vanessa Keadle, Mary Clark, Tammy Johnson, Shaunte Polk and Mary Beth Reynolds attended an HEPC sponsored workshop, "Building a Culture of Evidence in Student Affairs" in April. Our goal is to include Student Services in assessment of student learning in a more intentional way. We will keep the Assessment Committee updated on our progress.

**12. Additional Business**

- Mary Beth pointed out where results of various assessments can be found. For example, *NSSE* and graduation survey results are posted at the "current survey reports" tab of the assessment website. *CLA* results are posted at the general education assessment tab.

**13. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,

*Mary Beth Reynolds*

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