



University Assessment Committee Meeting
MSC John Spotts Room / Noon – 2:00 PM
December 18, 2017

MINUTES

Members Present: Tina Allen, Kim DeTardo-Bora, Loukia Dixon, April Fugett, Andrew Gooding, Susan Imes, Marty Laubach, Paula Lucas, Karen McComas, Tim Melvin, Doug Nichols, Maddy Parker, Caroline Perkins, Mary Beth Reynolds, Larry Sheret, and Sherri Stepp

Members Absent: Maribea Barnes, Britt Frye, Nicki LoCascio, Fred Mader, Asad Salem, Amy Saunders, and Sherri Smith

1. **Introductions:** Introductions were waived, as there were no new attendees.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Larry Sheret motioned to approve the minutes of the October 5 meeting and Andrew Gooding seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.
3. **Annual Assessment Report Reminder and Rubric Update:** Mary Beth Reynolds thanked members of the committee who have already submitted their assigned program assessment report evaluations and said her goal is to have assessment letters out to all degree and certificate programs by mid-January. With that in mind, she asked committee members who have not yet submitted their evaluations to do so as early in January as possible. Mary Beth also talked about the need to update the annual assessment report rubric. She stressed that we will not use an updated rubric this year, but will implement its use in fall 2018. The reason we need to update the rubric is because we are now asking programs to summarize their planned actions for the coming academic year at the end of the previous year's report. These action plans are imported into the next year's report, with a request that programs provide us with an update of the results of their action plan's implementation. She provided a draft updated rubric for the committee's consideration.

Marty Laubach noted that, sometimes program assessment reports describe assessment measures that are nicely developed and appropriate to specific learning outcomes but, because the program in question is in the process of revising additional learning outcomes, has not identified assessment measures for those additional outcomes. In such a case, he asked whether evaluators should assign a level "0" for assessment measures when not all measures have been developed. Mary Beth's answer was to assign the rating that would be earned by those measures that have been developed, and simply to note that some measures are still in the process of development. This rating acknowledges that some revisions take time and allows the assessment committee to commend the program for progress being made.

Mary Beth talked about some changes that need to be made to the reporting form in the portal. Since we are now importing each report's planned actions into the next year's report for the purpose of allowing the program to update the committee on the results of the planned actions' implementation, we need to consider how best to do this. Our current reporting template has boxes for data analysis following each assessment point (of each learning outcome) and then a place for planned actions for each outcome. The planned actions boxes are situated at the bottom of the

page for each learning outcome. We have asked programs to then summarize their planned actions on a final page, which is imported into the next year's report. This format is somewhat problematic, however, because most programs do not copy all of their individual planned actions to this box, and some do not repeat any of them at all. In response to this dilemma, several solutions were discussed. Following this discussion, consensus was that a planned action box remain at the bottom of the page for each outcome, and that Doug Nichols write a script to concatenate the planned actions from each outcome into one summary box, which could be edited as report writers wished. Instructions for this box will read, "Please review results of each outcome and describe your plans to improve student learning during the next academic year."

There was also discussion regarding the need to give programs the opportunity to examine their assessment *process* to decide its strengths and obstacles and to determine a plan for improvement. After extended discussion, and at Karen McComas' suggestion, the committee decided to adopt this language for that box, "Please note the factors that enable and constrain your assessment process."

Doug also will work on updating mission statements for colleges.

4. **Capstone Assessment Project:** Mary Beth said that she hopes for a good cross sectional sample of capstone projects for assessment by the Summer Assessment Team in May/June 2018. She noted that she has met with deans and chairs of five colleges so far and hopes to meet with the other two early in the spring semester. We will begin assessment by using the written communication and critical thinking AAC&U Value rubrics, which are not discipline-specific and we plan to pull a sample of 250 capstone projects, which will be a significant increase in the number of *Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA+)* test takers from earlier years.
5. **Integrative Thinking and Signature Work Project Update:** Karen McComas provided an update regarding this project. She acknowledged that suggestions made by Caroline Perkins at our October meeting were helpful. She and the rest of the project's steering committee presented the project outline to the academic deans at the end of November and received thoughtful suggestions from them. The steering committee will meet again during the spring semester to address concerns expressed so far and to further develop plans for the project.
6. **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Administration – Spring 2018:** Mary Beth explained the nature of the *NSSE* survey and shared with the committee that our *NSSE* results are impressive, especially when examined longitudinally. She noted that the point where we started seeing a significant improvement in *Academic Challenge* was after implementation of our core curriculum. We need to communicate the impact that the core curriculum has had on students' perception of their learning at Marshall. She emphasized the importance of student participation in this survey.
7. **Assessment Day:** Mary Beth said we will have campus-wide surveys and other activities that will run through March. These will be followed by prize drawings on April 4.
8. **Qualtrics Update:** Tim Melvin said there are almost 340 total users in Marshall's Qualtrics' account. We also have a new template that is in compliance with Marshall's branding guidelines. Also, Tim will be working on creating two training courses, one introductory and the second for more advanced users. Susan Imes asked if the courses would be in the form of tutorials and Tim responded that they will be actual sessions. Mary Beth noted that, on the Assessment website, there is a link to Qualtrics information and that it is available to students. Tim asked Kim DeTardo-Bora for feedback regarding using the new online submission system for her students. She and Tim both noted that this is easier than the previous process and it creates a database for Marshall as well. April Fugett expressed concern that, when a student has a Qualtrics account to complete

survey research for a thesis or dissertation, the student is deleted from the Qualtrics account upon graduation. She noted that, for dissertation research, the research is the property of the student for five years post-graduation, but that after that period of time, the faculty advisor may have access to the research data for collaborative research purposes. However, if the student and/or faculty advisor does not download the data files before the student graduates from Marshall, the data may be lost. She requested that we send out a notice about this to both the student and faculty advisor before the student is deleted from the system. Tim said he would study this issue.

9. **Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE):** Tim said he is chairing a committee to create a certification program for assessment practitioners and asked committee members if they thought training for faculty at the degree program level might be beneficial. Training completers would receive a certificate from the AALHE. After some discussion, the consensus of the group was that online training would be most helpful because program faculty receive funding to attend discipline-specific conferences, but it might be difficult for them to attend funding to attend assessment related conferences.
10. **Blackboard Outcomes:** Mary Beth reminded committee members that we have now been using Blackboard (rather than GEAR) for the past year to create and align assignments to university outcomes and to have students upload work for later assessment by the Summer Assessment Team. This process will continue. She said that faculty who are new to Blackboard, as well as faculty who have been using Blackboard, but are new to the process of aligning assignments to university outcomes, should contact the Design Center professionals on either the Huntington or South Charleston campuses. The people to contact are Kristen Huff (Huntington) or Paula Kaplan (South Charleston).
11. **Policy/Procedures for Students with Disabilities:** Mary Beth said that Dr. Lori Howard, Associate Professor of Special Education in the COEPD, is working with a committee to develop a faculty handbook outlining policies and procedures to be followed when providing accommodations for students with disabilities. Mary Beth also noted that Paula Kaplan has been working on updating the university's syllabus template to make it accessible. The committee for students with disabilities recommends that individual faculty NOT place separate policy statements for students with disabilities on their syllabi, but rather that they use the link to Academic Affairs www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies/ where all university policies will be kept up-to-date. The basic syllabus template now has a bulleted list of university policies.
12. **Plans for Spring Review of Course Syllabi:** Will have our next Assessment Committee meeting in February and will discuss syllabus review assignments at that time.
13. **Loop Closing Items from 2017-2018.** Mary Beth will try to get a newsletter out in January.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Beth Reynolds