

**PROVOST'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE *for* LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT  
(PACLOA)**

**College Assessment Representatives Sub-Committee Meeting  
Spring 2019**

**February 1, 2019 | 1:30 – 3:00 PM | Bizzell Library, Lower Level 2, Room LL2111**

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**MINUTES**

Present: Felix Wao, Jihee Hwang, Teresa Debacker, Eric Heinze, Todd Hubbard, Petra Klein, Leehu Loon, Jensen Moore, Beth Stetson, Victoria Sturtevant, and Jennifer Kisamore (via phone)

**I. Welcome and Introductions by Felix Wao**

The meeting was called to order by Felix Wao. He introduced and welcomed the following two new members to the sub-committee:

1. Eric Heinze, from David L. Boren College of International and Area Studies. Eric replaces Mark Raymond.
2. Jensen Moore from the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication. Jensen replaces Ralph Beliveau.

**II. Review and approval of minutes of the February 16, 2018 meeting**

A motion was made by Beth Stetson and seconded by Eric Heinze to approve the minutes from the February 16, 2018 meeting. The motion unanimously passed.

**III. State of program assessment at OU**

**a. A multi-year review of program assessment**

Felix informed members that the Office of Academic Assessment has begun using the Microsoft Power BI platform to showcase status of progress of program assessment at OU. He invited Jihee to present a dashboard reflecting progress that has been made in the past four years. This included the following (among other information):

- Increase in reporting of assessment plans (i.e., student learning outcomes and assessment methods) and assessment results (i.e., student performance and action plans for continuous improvement).

- Distribution of types of assessment methods used by various degree programs as well as the most common terms used for articulating student learning outcome statements.
- Increase (from 2014-2015 AY to 2017-2018 AY) in the number of assessment reports that had “met” or “exceeded expectations” in all the four steps of the assessment process.

Felix pointed out that this is just the beginning of using MS Power BI software and that, in future, the Office of Academic Assessment intends to visualize various aspects of the assessment process by Colleges, Departments and Degree Levels and provide Assessment Liaisons as well as College Assessment Representatives access to various reports. He also assured members of the committee that the information shared in MS Power BI are exclusively for internal use.

**b. Observations resulting from reviews of 2017-2018 AY reports**

Felix shared details regarding the program assessment reports review process that takes place after the deadline of submission of assessment reports. He then went ahead and presented the following key challenges observed as a result of the review of the 2017-2018 AY assessment reports:

**Key challenges at the institutional level**

- non-submission of assessment reports,<sup>i</sup>
- late submission of assessment reports,
- incomplete assessment reports,
- focus on compliance instead of enhancement of student learning,
- documentation of assessment for inactive programs and those in the process of being terminated.

**Common challenges regarding specific steps of the assessment process**

**Articulating Student Learning Outcomes:**

- using “process” verbs instead of “active” verbs,
- using statements that are not-student specific, overly broad, and appropriate at the department level,
- documenting “bundled” student learning outcomes,

- complete lack of information on student learning outcomes.

#### **Identifying appropriate direct assessment methods:**

- using electives to address program student learning outcomes,
- lack of brief descriptions of how students were assessed,
- using end-of-course grades as evidence of program assessment,
- using indirect assessment methods such as surveys as the primary and/or sole assessment method,
- exclusive reliance on culminating experiences – especially documenting outcome of thesis and dissertation defense as the only method for ALL learning outcomes in graduate assessment reports,<sup>ii</sup>
- using licensure exams (not required for graduation) as the sole assessment method for ALL student learning outcomes.<sup>iii</sup>
- complete lack of information on assessment methods.

#### **Describing student performance on aggregate:**

- lack of brief descriptions in some SLOs of how students performed on aggregate,
- using actual student names,
- providing raw data or data in table/graph form,
- complete lack of information on description of how students performed.

#### **Describing student performance on aggregate:**

- stating that “no improvements are necessary.”
- providing personal views of how results should be used for improvement (not involving other faculty),
- stating consistently (every year) that “faculty are in the process of reviewing the data.”
- providing statements that have nothing to do with student performance,
- complete lack of information on how faculty intends to or have used assessment results for continuous improvement (e.g., for curriculum modification, course sequencing, request for resources, etc.).

### **Changes to documentation of the results of review of assessment reports**

Felix reported that because the TracDat system currently enables the student learning outcomes and assessment methods information to be rolled over from one academic year to the next, the color-coded outcome of the assessment review process will, from now henceforth, focus exclusively on the “assessment results” and the “use of assessment results” sections. He added that the Office of Academic Assessment will continue to assist programs by offering workshops on various topics at the department, program or individual faculty level.

### **IV. Report of the 2018 Assessment forum**

- a. **Observations:** Felix brought members’ attention to the one-page handout that reflected information regarding the 2018 OU Assessment Forum as well as evaluation of the event. Results of evaluation of the event. Jihee presented details of the forum as well as suggestions from attendees regarding future forums.
- b. **Future plans:** Felix announced that the next forum scheduled for Fall 2020, will feature, among other things, (1) more time for sessions, (2) separate rooms for roundtable sessions, and (3) improved plans regarding food (breakfast and lunch).

### **V. College level updates regarding program assessment**

**Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication:** Jensen Moore reported that they are working on updating incorrect assessment practices and are changing their assessment plan.

**Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education:** Teresa DeBacker reported that the Teacher Education programs are currently undergoing accreditation review and the Academic Program Review process but should all be done by summer 2019.

**College of Arts and Sciences:** Victoria Sturtevant reported that they just finished processing the paperwork to terminate a dormant program.

**David L. Boren College of International Studies:** Eric Heinz reported that they are developing survey instruments which will be more accurate in determining assessment. He

added that they had just finished their Academic Program Review site visits and said that it was nice to incorporate assessment data in the process after a substantial revision to and streamlining of their program assessment approach.

**Price College of Business:** Beth Stetson reported that this is their self-study year to prepare for AACSB re-accreditation.

**College of Professional & Continuing Studies:** Todd Hubbard reported that the Department of Aviation is in the process of preparing a self-study for the forthcoming AABI re-accreditation.

**College of Atmospheric & Geographic Sciences:** Petra Klein reported that the assessment process for the graduate programs in Meteorology have been revised. They will be moving forward to implement the plan.

**Christopher C. Gibbs College of Architecture:** Leehu Loon reported that they are in the process of refining the assessment process for their doctoral program.

Felix thanked everyone for their updates and stated that while the University has come a long way in enhancing documentation of assessment process, there is always room for continuous improvement. He encouraged members to contact the Office of Academic Assessment whenever they have any questions and/or need for our assistance.

## **VI. Follow up/next steps**

Felix asked if meeting once per year is enough. Members unanimously agreed that one meeting per year is adequate.

Felix mentioned that future meetings may have guests invited to share various aspects of program assessment.

Victoria Sturtevant asked about a mention in the past meeting minutes regarding the possibility of adopting a biennial cycle for program assessment reporting. Felix said that due to the changes at the

University, he was unable to have a meeting to discuss this with the Provost. He added that adopting a biennial cycle may be quite beneficial in a number of ways given the current progress in cultivation of a culture of assessment at OU. He promised that he would keep everyone posted.

## VII. The meeting adjourned 2:45pm.

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<sup>i</sup> Late or non-submission of assessment reports (i.e., info on “results” and “use of results”) is, according to Assessment Liaisons, attributed, in part, to lack of information/data from faculty in various departments/schools.

<sup>ii</sup> The main challenge is that exclusive use of information from theses or dissertation defense for ALL SLOs may not provide adequate or concrete information and opportunities for **continuous enhancement of student learning and curriculum modifications** (which are the main reasons for doing assessment). Part of this is because candidates defending their theses or dissertations are almost always expected to pass. This leads to most graduate reports indicating (in the “*Use of assessment results*” sections) that “no changes are necessary as students are doing very well”. Since, from assessment stance, there is always room for improvement, use of information from formative assessments to augment outcomes of summative assessments (theses and dissertation defense) is recommended.

While the use of information from theses and dissertation defense is acceptable, we’d like to emphasize documentation of information from **formative assessments** linked with SLOs and centered on activities that occur prior to the defense as they provide excellent opportunities for faculty to provide feedback to students. Consequently, that is very good information on **how aggregate results of assessment are used for continuous enhancement of student learning/progress**. Examples may include using a simple, generic criteria to document the following:

- Overall performance of students in key research projects in required courses.
- Annual academic advisement reports (or similar reports) from faculty detailing progress of students regarding their research or aspect of their research.
- Overall student progress as they begin preparing thesis or dissertation prospectus.

<sup>iii</sup> Licensure Examinations are crucial for graduates of professional programs (e.g., Teacher Education, Social Work, Accounting). Although inclusion of information regarding licensure examinations in program assessment reports is important and acceptable, in cases where the licensure examinations are not required for graduation (**which means students take the exams voluntarily before or after graduation**), we recommend that:

1. Licensure examinations are not documented as the **only or sole method for addressing any program learning outcome**. This is because program assessment should reflect assessment activities embedded in each program’s curriculum which is designed and required of ALL students in the major.
2. Information on licensure examination are used to supplement other key direct assessments that have been implemented based on the program’s curriculum (**required of all students in a major**).

Programs may document assessment processes in the required curriculum that are designed to equip students with knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to prepare them for, among other things, passing the licensure examinations. Examples may include:

- Embedded assessments in core courses based on key assignments/projects/exams.
- Performance in projects in capstone courses.
- Practicums/internship reports.