

# MINUTES – *Senate Committee on Academic Assessment*

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**September 28, 2012**

## **1. Call to Order**

1.1 Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Barb Stoll in room C284.

## **2. Attendance**

Present: Barb Stoll - Chair; Sharon DeWitt, Patrick Fodor, Melissa Knapp, Bill Fleeer, Gary Shupe - committee members; Rhonda Basinger, Marty Otto, Cathy Myers, - Resource members; Dr. Ron Davis, Josh Welker - Ex-Officio members; Nathan Kurz – Student member.

Absent: David Rigsbee, Carolyn Warren, Dr. David Shinn, Pam Foust - Resource members;

## **3. Introductions/Welcome**

3.1 Christina Farwell was welcomed as an official member of the Committee. She was voted on at the September Faculty Senate meeting. Christina will be working with Gary Shupe on the Training Sub-Committee.

## **4. Minutes Approved**

4.1 Motion: Approve the SCAA August 31, 2012 minutes.

Motion: Patrick Fodor

Second: Sharon DeWitt

Approved

## **5. Special Guests**

5.1 Val Vlahakis asked to meet with the Committee to discuss the Spring 2013 assessment of GEG 6.2 – Information Seeking Skills.

Patrick and Melissa looked at the Gen Ed Matrix to determine which classes claim GEG 6.2, and whether they fulfilled the requirements regarding potential number of artifacts. Patrick contacted Val regarding ENG 102 and CMN 101, which would meet those requirements.

Val led a discussion about this assessment. The following points were discussed:

- CMN 101 was assessed in December 2011. It seems too soon to assess it again.
- Val expressed concern that so few classes claimed GEG 6.2. There are many more classes that require the writing of research papers. She suggested that
  - More departments be asked to claim this goal for their classes
  - Look at how the goal is being interpreted. Maybe we are interpreting it too narrowly
  - ENG 102 would be a better choice for this assessment
  - Chris Wiewel will be on sabbatical this Spring, looking at academic dishonesty and what comes out of her research will be implemented and

may strengthen the process, so maybe we should postpone this assessment until after Chris has completed her research.

- Barb stated that the opinion of some members of the Committee is that where there is a single Department providing the artifacts, that Department should take control of the assessment and simply share the results with the Committee
- The criteria for selecting classes from which to request artifacts was discussed:
  - Common pool of information
  - Large sample size
  - Artifact that is standardized across all delivery methods so it can be assessed using a single rubric
  - Multiple delivery methods
- Patrick shared his calculations based on likely enrollment, Both ENG 102 and CMN 101 met the criteria. All other classes claiming the goal fell short of meeting the criteria.
- The interpretation of the goal was discussed. Generally, we interpret it as determining whether students can do research. Dr. Davis shared his interpretation of the goal. He expressed the following thoughts:
  - While AA and AS degree-seeking students are required to take ENG 102, AAS degree-seeking students may not be required to take the course; we need to find a way to assess their ability to find information
  - Using information is one part of the learning outcome
  - Finding information is the other part of the learning outcome
  - Seeking and Using information is something that should be included in every course;
    - Students should know about sources and how to find them
    - Students should demonstrate that they can use the sources to provide information
  - We need to ensure that we are not locking ourselves into assessing a small portion of the student population seeking AA and AS degrees.
- Val suggested that ENG 191 would be the track used by AAS students; we could combine ENG 102 and ENG 191 into this assessment.
- Concerns were expressed about the interpretation of all the GEG goals and the fairness and validity of the matrix. Suggestions included:
  - Precisely define what is meant by each general education goal
  - Go back to the Departments and ask them to assess all of their classes with regard to the interpretation of the goals.
  - Update the matrix to reflect the new information
- The bigger problem is the vagueness of the goals. There needs to be a college-wide initiative to look at the goals and determine if any changes, deletions, and/or additions should be recommended to the Board for implementation. This initiative may be started after our HLC Accreditation visit in March.
  - Workshops may be needed for Department Chairs to help them understand the assessment process and how the learning outcomes will be interpreted
- Val shared that there is a perception among students (don't know how broad this perception is) that students only have to pay attention to writing skills and research skills if they are in an English class.

- A goal of this assessment would be to raise awareness of all JWCC instructors to the importance of holding students accountable to the same standards of writing and research across the curriculum.
- Some instructors from other departments do require students to utilize the writing center to ensure that their writing meets acceptable standards, but the general perception among students seems to be the standards for writing, including citing sources, differ by department within the College and may not be as high for other departments as with the English department.
- Patrick suggested that the solution might be to:
  1. Develop an explanation of what the general education goals mean and intend and share this explanation across the College
  2. Make sure every degree program covers all general education goals somewhere in their program requirements
- Josh suggested that even though we might not ask for artifacts from every course that claims a goal, we should include them in the process, especially in the analysis of the results and the implementation of changes and improvements.
- The First Year Experience class was discussed as a possible source of artifacts for assessment of information seeking skills, but it was decided that since they are just learning about the library and not actually performing research, this might not be a good choice. It would be better to use courses that students take later in their programs.
- With changes and technology, the Library is not the only source for research. We need to adjust our interpretation to keep up with the use of technology
- Dr. Davis suggested that tackling these issues while the HLC team is visiting would be a good thing. We would be able to show them while they are here how we are handling assessment issues.
- When we did the writing assessment the first time, we developed a consensus through the Assessment Committee, Faculty Senate and faculty in general that teaching students writing skills was not just the job of the English department, but that we should stress good writing skills across the curriculum. When we did the writing mechanics CAAP test in March, students performed well. This may indicate that the writing across the curriculum initiative is in part responsible for this improvement. This is another issue that we need to have a lot of dialog about to ensure that information-seeking skills are taught and required across the curriculum. Students doing research in any class should be held to the same standards as they are taught in the English classes.
- Looking at the matrix, most of the general education classes claim one goal, GEG 4 – Use Critical Thinking. We need to go back and look at each class and determine what it contributes to the general education of our students. Every goal should be included in every program.
- Dr. Davis suggested that we might want to consider going to each program and having them identify which courses in their program fulfill each general education goal. It is not the Assessment Committee's job, but the people responsible for each program to do this. It is our Committee's job to keep the pressure on to ensure that this is done.

- The problems we encountered with courses claiming goals led to a determination that a course should not claim a general education goal if there was nothing that was normally done in the course that applied to the general education goal. Ideally there should be an artifact that can be assessed. Because of this, the number of courses claiming certain goals dropped dramatically.

Val stated that if the Committee wants to continue with the assessment of GEG 6.2 as scheduled with ENG 102 this Spring, her department will step up and do what needs to be done. Her preference is to wait until after Chris Wiewell has completed her research during her sabbatical in the Spring semester. Dr. Davis suggested that having the data from the assessment at the same time as Chris's data may give a broader picture of the task at hand and enable better analysis of where our students stand and what might be needed to improve their skills in this area.

Motion: Proceed with assessment of GEG 6.2 in May 2013, using ENG 102 as planned and to tentatively include ENG 191, if it meets the criteria stated earlier.

Motion: Patrick Fodor

Second: Gary Shupe

Approved

## 6. Committee Reports

### 6.1 Training Sub-Committee - Gary Shupe

Gary and Christina looked at the feedback from the May 2012 assessment of GEG 2.1. There were several comments about giving partial credit, such as 1.5 or 2.5. Josh stated that we are not looking for that level of detail. What we want to determine is if they have exceeded, met or not met the objective. With our sample sizes, it would make analysis more difficult.

Other points:

- The rubric may be a little vague. But much of the problem was with the students not properly addressing the assignment..
- The essay format for student answers may have made it more difficult to determine how fully the student addressed each category. It was suggested that maybe for future assessments, the students might be directed to answer each section separately. Christina pointed out that the essay format provided another opportunity for students to take information, synthesize it and put it into an organized pattern.

Barb reported that during discussions with the Rubrics Subcommittee and Greg, it was suggested that maybe a contributing factor to the low score for one of the four components, *Influence on Economic System*, might have been the low inter-rater reliability. This was documented on the assessment implementation form as well as a recommendation that in future assessments of this goal, more training may be needed for this component. Greg provided the supplemental material that he supplied in the training session and it will be include with the rubric in the Assessment Manual for future reference.

## 6.2 Gen Ed Sub-Committee - Patrick Fodor, Melissa Knapp

Patrick summarized that we will go ahead with plans to assess GEG 6.2 in the Spring 2013 semester. He also stated that we are recommending moving GEG 2.2 to December 2015. This change is being recommended for a variety of reasons.

## 6.3 CTE Sub-Committee - Sharon DeWitt, Bill Fleer

Bill reported that he and Sharon have reviewed the programs since the last meeting and found the following assessment results regarding the May assessment:

- 18 programs have reports through 2012
- 6 programs have reports through 2011
- 1 program has reported through 2010
- 2 programs reported no students so no assessment was done

There are 21 programs that typically report on their assessments in December. A review of these programs showed the following:

- 2 programs have reports through 2012
- 8 programs have reports through 2011
- 4 programs have reports through 2010
- 3 programs have partial reports; they are medical programs that depend on Blessing Hospital to some extent; this is indicated in the report
- 4 programs have no reports

Bill indicated that we need to be more proactive with regard to keeping the program folders up to date, removing discontinued programs and adding new programs.

## 6.4 CAAP Testing Sub-Committee

Barb reported that the CAAP test sub-committee met last week and are making the following recommendations regarding the next CAAP test:

- Administer the Reading CAAP test
  - Comparison with COMPAS scores will be possible
  - Some concern that students may have a reading comprehension problem
  - Results will be useful to the Dev Ed area as well as for general education purposes
- Have only one test time, Tuesday from 9:30 to 10:45
- Move the date of the test to Tuesday, April 2, 2013
  - Looking at the academic calendar for next Spring, the second Tuesday after Midterm Break would fall on March 26<sup>th</sup>, which is in the middle of our Accreditation visit

Motion: Patrick Fodor

Second: Bill Fleer

Approved

One additional informational item: we are looking into doing a bigger prize as an incentive to encourage students to take the test. We are considering an electronic device such as an iPad or iPad knockoff. Nathan feels this would help bring the students in, but cautioned that there may be a down side to this as students may take

the test solely for a chance win the prize. However, generally students are honest about the degree of effort they put into the test when asked to respond to this question at the end of the test.

6.5 Rubrics Sub-committee – As previously reported, the Rubrics sub-committee met with Greg Lee. The results were discussed, along with the feedback from the scorers. The assessment implementation form has been updated to reflect the discussion and changes that are being considered for implementation. Barb will share with Greg our thoughts about the appropriateness of the essay format for this type of assessment.

The Rubrics sub-committee will meet with the Computer Science department to finalize the rubric to be used for the December assessment of GEG 6.1. Following this meeting, we will begin meeting with the English faculty to fine tune the rubric to be used for the May 2013 assessment of GEG 6.2.

## **7. Other Action Items**

7.1 GEG Assessment Timeline revised – as Patrick mentioned in his report, we are proposing moving the assessment of GEG 2.2 – Politics from December 2012 to December 2015. This move is due to the fact that we are spread pretty thin right now and don't have enough time to adequately prepare for this one. An additional change needs to be made to the Timeline to reflect the decision to move the March 2013 CAAP test to April. Barb will make this change before the document is released.

Motion: Patrick Fodor

Second: Nathan Kurz

Approved

## **8. Other Reports**

8.1

## **9. Other Items**

9.1 Vice Chair Position remains unfilled – we are still short one member of the committee; if anyone has an idea for a member, please ask them yourself, or refer them to me and I will ask.

## **10. Closed session**

## **11. Announcements**

11.1 Next meeting notification

The next Senate Committee on Academic Assessment meeting will be held on Friday, October 26, 2012 from 9:00 – 10:15 a.m. in room C284.

## **12. Adjournment**

The Senate Committee on Academic Assessment meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

*Submitted by Barb Stoll 10/04/12*