

# MINUTES – *Senate Committee on Academic Assessment*

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**March 22, 2013**

## **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, Christina Farwell, Bill Fler, Patrick Fodor, Melissa Knapp, Gary Shupe - committee members; Rhonda Basinger, Cathy Myers, Dr. David Shinn - resource members; Josh Welker, Dr. Ron Davis - Ex-Officio members

Absent: Marty Otto, David Rigsbee, Pam Foust - Resource members; Nathan Kurz – Student member

## **3. Introductions/Welcome**

3.1

## **4. Minutes Approved**

4.1 Motion: Approve the SCAA January 25, 2013 meeting minutes.

Motion: Gary Shupe

Second: Bill Fler

Approved

## **5. Special Guests**

5.1 Mike Terry – Mike led a discussion about the results of his 2007 sabbatical and some of the assessment methods he saw and participated in. Mike visited numerous two-year and four-year institutions to find out about their assessment activities, specifically in Language and Literature departments.

Assessment instruments observed:

Portfolio writing assessments

Exit Essay assessments

Exit Test

Prewriting and post writing assignments

Assess assignments that are actually assigned in the classroom

Assessment must aid student learning. If it doesn't achieve this goal, it is not worthwhile. What seemed to work very well were assessments handled within the Departments – members in a department met to determine what to assess and how to assess it. The department would do the actual assessment and include online, adjunct and dual credit faculty as well as the full-time faculty. Following the assessment, the department would determine a set of steps to implement in order to make necessary changes in the classroom. These assessments focused primarily on core courses that all students would be required to take.

Some institutions had a designated assessment day or week. Students were asked to come in on the designated day or sometime during the week and take the tests or do the writing assignments that would be used for assessment purposes.

Several institutions had a director of assessment who would oversee the assessment and collect the information, especially the action plans which outlined what would be assessed and when and how it would be assessed. Several institutions had assessment committees who would perform the same functions: oversee the assessments, collect and compile the results.

Examples:

- At Blackhawk CC, a consultant was brought in. He did a norming session in the morning, then the participants scored the essays. This seemed to be a strong assessment activity. Participants included faculty, adjunct faculty and online faculty within the discipline.
- At Red Rock, the faculty was brought in and did the scoring. There was no norming session. Mike felt that there should have been a norming session prior to scoring the essays.

Most of the English department chairs Mike spoke to indicated that assessments were designed and executed by each department within the institution, with the oversight of an assessment director or assessment committee.

Collecting assignments from classes to assess has a few issues:

- Assignment must be the same in all classes
- Different assignments make it impossible to assess using the same rubric
- Focus on a few core components, not the entire assignment

Most institutions had a general education model, but it did not seem to be used as the basis for their assessment. Department chairs and instructors teaching general education courses determined what to assess, which did support the general education model, but the model was not used directly to determine what to assess.

Mike also discussed his findings regarding writing labs. JWCC seems to have a good model for the writing lab. Some institutions utilize more faculty to staff their writing labs.

Based on his sabbatical research, Mike felt that JWCC has made great strides in our assessment process. We have tried different methods and found what worked and what didn't work. It is a learning experience.

## **6. Committee Reports**

### **6.1 Training Sub-Committee – Gary Shupe, Christina Farwell.**

Christina reported that she and Gary have looked at the feedback from the participants for the December assessment. The comments were generally similar to

those from other assessments. They included problems with scorers not knowing the software programs and comments about the training which were mostly favorable.

Gary indicated that what Mike said about the departments doing the assessments as the experts made sense. The problems encountered at the December assessment regarding scorers not knowing the programs would not exist if the scorers were all experts in the field from the department being assessed. Unfortunately, not all departments would have enough members for scoring. It would be critical in the future to reach out to the associate faculty, online instructors and dual credit instructors to get them involved in the assessment if possible.

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

Patrick reported that there are two primary issues regarding the May Assessment of GEG 6.2 – Information seeking skills. The assessment will be using classroom artifacts from ENG 102. Unfortunately the English faculty will be teaching interim classes on May 21, the designated assessment day. There was some discussion regarding having the English department schedule the assessment at a day and time that will work for the members of the department, including full time faculty, associate faculty, online faculty and dual credit faculty.

The other issue was with the rubric. There was concern about whether to simplify the rubric so people from other departments would be able to use it to score the writing assignments. If the Language, Literature and Humanities department conducts the assessment, it would enable them to use a more comprehensive rubric and obtain more usable results.

Patrick made the following motion:

Whereas part of the goal of the SCAA is to have departments engage in their own assessment of their fulfillment of the GEGs, and report those findings back to the SCAA, so that the rubrics and assessment process is best suited to the field specific content of that department, and

Whereas the Language and Literature Department has discussed its own assessment, overseen by the SCA and with assistance from the SCAA, and has been working on the rubric for the assessment, and will plan on doing the assessment after the Intersession between Spring and Summer semesters, and report those findings in standard form to the SCAA, and

Whereas the Chair of the SCAA and Dr. Shinn as Academic Dean have indicated that this would be agreeable,

Be it resolved that the SCAA:

Officially express its support for this assessment,

Give its thanks for the initiative and work of the Language and Literature department,

Give all necessary support for the assessment

Recommend to other departments that they follow this same model.

Motion to have the Language, Literature and Humanities department conduct the general education assessment for this semester using their faculty, with our support and our help, on a day and time after the Intersession that will accommodate their faculty.

Discussion: SCAA support would include preparing the packets for assessment, getting material to Josh for statistical evaluation, and remuneration for participation, just as with other assessments.

This would replace the Gen Ed assessment planned for May 21<sup>st</sup>. The CTE assessment will still be held on May 21<sup>st</sup>.

Motion: Patrick Fodor  
Second: Melissa Knapp  
Approved

Patrick led a discussion about the problems with the Gen Ed matrix. Some of the learning outcomes have few classes claiming to teach to that outcome. There has been a request from the Language, Literature and Humanities department that the matrix be reviewed and re-evaluated. Before this is done, the Assessment Committee may want to head an initiative to define what each goal and outcome means. It would be helpful to have definitions in terms of the wording of the goals, i.e. what does information-seeking mean. Patrick questioned whether the SCAA has the authority to make changes to the goals. It was determined that the SCAA can make recommendations which would go through the Faculty Senate and then through the college and, if changes are recommended, to the Board for approval. In the process of working through the goals while conducting our assessments, we have already begun the process of defining the goals.

Josh stated that we have been moving in this direction with the standardized rubrics initiative. The rubrics help define the goals. But we must be careful not to let the rubric completely define the goal.

Barb suggested putting together a sub-committee to work on defining the goals and outcomes. It was recommended that we deferring this discussion until our next meeting.

The next goals on the schedule are GEG 7.1 – explain the importance of adapting to change, and 8.1 – demonstrate the awareness of the humanities. The Gen Ed Sub-committee will be looking through the matrix to determine what classes claiming these goals meet the criteria for assessment. Once this is determined, they will notify the faculty and work with them to provide classroom artifacts for the December 2013 assessment.

Patrick posed a question which was brought up in their department meeting about the significance of sample size. Why do we need a certain number of artifacts to make the assessment measurable and how absolute is this number? Josh responded that since

we are looking to make some comparisons and apply it to the population of students, a larger sample size is better. We know that there will be some goals that will not generate the larger sample size, but the results are still significant and useful. As we progress through the goals in the future, we may need to include more of these low-enrollment classes. Dr. Shinn stated that there are other methods of assessment than classroom artifacts and rubrics. The CAAP test, for example, has been used to assess critical thinking and writing skills. We need to determine what would be the best way to assess those classes. Rhonda suggested that artifacts could be collected from more than one semester in order to obtain a larger sample size.

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

Bill reported that he and Sharon have gone through all the CTE program folders and have come up with 13 programs that are behind in completing their assessments. Some of these programs may be discontinued or may be new enough that they have not developed assessment plans yet. Seven have a report for 2011 but none for 2012, they may be planning on the May Assessment Day to complete their 2012 assessments; three have 2010 as their most recent report; one has 2009 as the most recent report; two are new programs. This information will be sent to Dr. Davis and the two Deans.

### 6.4 CAAP Testing Sub-Committee

Barb reported that everything is on target for the test. The letters have gone out to students and the publicity is in progress. Feedback from students seems to indicate that students are more likely than not to come in and take the test. Dr. Shinn will meet with the faculty who have classes during the testing time to ensure that they are encouraging their students to go ahead and miss class to take the test. Reminder emails will be sent to students the end of next week.

Josh indicated that the tests are already in and ready to go.

Barb asked if any members might be available during the test time and could help with the test. Please let Barb know if you are available.

### 6.5 Rubrics Sub-committee – The Rubrics sub-committee has not met yet with Val and the Language, Literature and Humanities department.

Once the classes have been identified for the Fall 2013 assessment of GEG 7.1 and GEG 8.1, the sub-committee will begin working with those instructors on rubrics for the Fall assessment.

## 7. Other Action Items

7.1

## 8. Other Reports

### 8.1 Results of the December 11, 2012 Assessment of GEG 6.1 - Josh Welker

Josh reported that there were 131 artifacts assessed, which included on each of word processing, spreadsheet and presentation documents. Each was scored using a

separate rubric. Word processing mean scores for all components were above 2, which is acceptable, although there was concern about the “Enter/Edit” component. Spreadsheet mean scores were all above 2, although there were a large number of artifacts that scored in the “developing” range. PowerPoint mean scores were very high; no concern there. Inter-rater reliability was good for most components, but again the inter-rater reliability for the “Enter/Edit” component was low. There may need to be more training or clarification on this component. For demographics, the only thing statistically significant was the “semester at JWCC”. Students who were 5<sup>th</sup> semester students had the highest scores.

Barb reported that the Computer Science/Office Careers department met earlier this week and discussed the results. Plans will be implemented to address the areas of concern. Rubrics will be revised to reduce the ambiguity. The assignment will be revised to provide more specific instructions. Several areas of concern will be reinforced with the students. This information is documented on the implementation form and can be accessed in Appendix A of the online Assessment manual.

Dr. Davis suggested that we include more detail regarding how these changes will be implemented such as detailing steps to be used to reinforce areas of concern with students.

8.2 HLC Accreditation Visit – meet with Assessment Committee on Monday, March 25, at 1:45 p.m. in room D023. Barb reminded members that the HLC Accreditation team wants to meet with the Assessment Committee on Monday at 1:45 p.m. We would like to have as many members as possible attend this meeting.

## **9. Other Items**

9.1 The 1<sup>st</sup> Regional Invitational Assessment Fair, Wednesday, May 8, 2013 at Illinois Central College East Peoria Campus – Save the Date

9.2

## **10. Closed session**

## **11. Announcements**

11.1 Next meeting notification

The next Senate Committee on Academic Assessment meeting will be held on Friday, April 26, 2013 from 9:00 – 10:15 a.m. in room C284.

## **12. Adjournment**

The Senate Committee on Academic Assessment meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

*Submitted by Barb Stoll 4/22/13.*