

General Education Assessment Committee
SUMMARY NOTE: Meeting #16 – Friday, March 18, 2005
<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/GEA>

Present: Roberta Allen (Business Information Systems); Raja Aravamathan (Paper Engineering, Chemical Engineering and Imaging/COGE); Susan Brodasky (Institutional Effectiveness); Margaret Dupuis (English); Eileen Evans (Institutional Effectiveness); James Gilchrist (Arts & Sciences); Bassam Harik (Economics); David Henry (GSAC); Elaine Jayne (University Libraries); Lisa Paulius, (Physics); Fred Sitkins (Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering); Matthew Steel (Music); Heidi Vogley (Speech Pathology and Audiology)

Absent: Gina Garza-Kling (Mathematics); Shavonne Petts (WMU Student Association); Carol Weideman (HPER)

The meeting was called to order by Chair, R. Allen at 1:35 PM

1. Welcome and introductions of the new GSAC representative, David Henry, and a committee guest, Maira Bundza from University Libraries.
2. There was a motion to approve the committee summary notes from meeting #15 with one edit for the department affiliation of R. Aravamathan to read "Paper Engineering, Chemical Engineering and Imaging." Motion seconded and approved.
3. J. Gilchrist reported that in his meeting with department faculty to review protocol of the Area Assessment Evaluation Report that the question has been raised of whether review was still planned as a two-year cycle. E. Evans responded that it will not go into a third year of review. She further stated that at the end of this year there should then be a conversation about what to do next.
 - a) J. Gilchrist gave an update on the First Year Experience program, noting that the announcement of a director is expected very soon. Several seats have been saved in courses for the FYE clusters established. He stated that he expects 600 freshmen to be participating. Discussion was held. R. Allen expressed that it would make sense to include a writing course as part of the cluster. J. Gilchrist reported that he anticipates IWebFolio training to also be included once it can be tied to a specific course.
 - b) He noted that registration started in Banner as of March 14 and has been running smoothly.
4. R. Allen led the discussion of the CBase test results. L. Paulius questioned an apparent error on the summary report produced by C. Weideman in regards to the senior numbers in English and math. L. Paulius provided a supplementary spread sheet. R. Allen reported that she is not confident with the results or the instrument and does not feel that the committee should recommend going forward. M. Dupuis noted that having reviewed both the CBase test and the California test that she is not confident of the writing portion within CBase. She asked that before a decision is made that the committee review the California test results. S. Brodasky reported that there are two courses that have yet to administer the California test to seniors, which will do so by the end of this month. R. Allen stated that she does not feel standardized testing is the best way to assess general education. She recommended the committee leave behind the notion of standardized testing as she feels it tests things that are not linked with what is going on in classroom nor could ever be addressed within the course work. She prefers the area assessment reports that are completed by faculty. M. Dupuis offered that there is a difference in standardized testing of student outcomes vs. faculty interpretation of student outcomes. M. Steel asked which level of assessment would satisfy the Higher Learning Commission. E. Evans stated that the HLC is interested that there be an institutionalized ongoing assessment program, that the faculty who are doing assessment are also the ones reviewing the data and making changes to the course work as a result. We need to show a faculty-driven-assessment-for-improvement model. E. Jayne asked if there was something that would be lost if standardized testing did not continue. R. Aravamathan noted that accreditation agencies will want to see external assessment processes. They will ask if the testing corroborates what is being done in the classroom or does it hinder assessment across the board. L. Paulius suggested the possibility of conducting

other testing with different instruments to see if a pattern emerges with a deficiency in a specific area vs. a continual fluctuation indicating a fault in the testing. Discussion was held. S. Brodasky was asked to have C. Weideman make the corrections to her summary report.

5. S. Brodasky distributed the California test results for freshman testing conducted Fall 2004. The committee requested that S. Brodasky obtain an interpretive guide for the California test results.
6. E. Evans reported that:
 - a) WMU is participating (by providing a study team member) in a national study of graduation rate outcomes. The national report of the findings of the 12 institutions involved will be out in July.
 - b) The HLC Focused Visit Steering Committee is engaged in drafting the report. They meet on Monday mornings and the summary notes are posted online for anyone to review. (<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/accreditation>)
 - c) The call for proposals for 2005-2006 University Assessment Grants is online and was sent to the Academic Forum as well as announced at Faculty Senate in early February. This year's Assessment Fellows gave their public presentations yesterday, which provided overviews of their projects, lessons learned, and advice to new applicants. The power point presentations for each will be posted on the University Assessment webpage.
 - d) Area Assessment reports for Area 5 and 6 were to be turned in at the end of the fall semester. In January S. Brodasky conducted an audit of the completed reports, resulting in follow up with three deans by mid February. Ten departments were identified in Area 5 and one in Area 6 for the College of Arts and Sciences. Two have since turned in their documents, and another had indicated that it will conduct the assessment this semester. Business 175 and Finance and Commercial Law 150 and 350 were identified. Dean Edwards indicated that those reports are forthcoming. The College of Engineering and Applied Sciences indicated that their one department will complete the report this semester. Once all of the outstanding reports are finished a summary report will be written for Area 5 and 6. Cheryl Lyon-Jennes is writing the summary for Areas 3 and 4. The summary report for Areas 7 and 8 will need to be done this summer.
 - e) Dr. Victor Borden will be on campus on March 23 to make a public presentation about assessing diversity at 1:30 in the Fetzer Center. This committee along with the University Assessment Steering Committee and the Assessment Fellows have been asked to participate in an informal conversation regarding assessment with Dr. Borden at a session at 9:30 a.m. in room 204, Bernhard Center.
 - f) E. Evans asked that as program accreditation teams are scheduled for campus visits that the departments also set briefing meetings with the provost and herself at least 7-10 days prior to the team visit.
 - g) Nine sabbaticals were approved for provost's sabbatical care replacement funding. Those nine faculty members have been asked to conduct a developmental workshop early May as assistance for fellow faculty preparing their sabbatical proposals. Also, those same nine will give a public presentation on their results one year from now.
7. Other Business:
 - a) R. Aravamuthan asked about the cost of assessment (i.e. how much is being spent across campus for assessment). He feels that many faculty don't document their expenses. E. Evans noted that the deans will be submitting their first annual assessment reports to the provost on May 15. Templates for the reporting process are online. (<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa>) She noted that the dean's report will take into account the expenses being attributed.
 - b) R. Allen noted that the agenda called for the date of the committee's next meeting. She indicated however that the committee was not intended to continue and her recommendation was to dissolve at this time, charging COGE with any ongoing assessment of General Education. Several committee members questioned whether the committee had completed its mission. They felt that there were questions yet unanswered, that the committee would be stopping short and at least one more meeting was in order. E. Evans indicated that the committee will need to remain in tact until the California testing has been completed, an analysis is written for those results, as well as the Area Assessment summaries. Then the committee will need to review all of the results for both tests and the Area Assessments, to finally make its recommendations. L. Paulius made a

motion to implement a better tracking system on future standardized testing for the student sample being tested; whereas it could be determined that senior students have taken the general education courses at WMU vs. transferring those courses in. Motion seconded, final call was not taken, motion tabled. Further discussion was held regarding the continuing work for the committee.

- c) R. Allen called for a new committee chair, as she did not wish to continue. Discussion was held. L. Paulius agreed to serve as chair.
- d) L. Paulius suggested that the committee reconvene when all of the Area Assessment reports, and California test results are compiled. B. Harik noted that there should be a sub-committee to review the results data in order to make a final presentation to the full committee so that the committee may then formulate a recommendation or set of guidelines to the Office on Institutional Effectiveness. L. Paulius, M. Dupuis and E. Jayne were established as the sub-committee. The General Education Assessment committee will meet during the second week in October 2005.
- e) S. Brodasky was instructed to provide the results with interpretive guides for the following reports to the entire committee during the fall 2005 semester: 1) CBase test, 2) California Critical Thinking Skills test, and 3) Area Assessment reports for Area 1 through 8.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 PM by chair L. Paulius