

University Assessment Steering Committee
Summary Note #32
Meeting Date September 19, 2005

Attending: Steve Malcolm (chair), Judah Ari-Gur (CEAS), Josephine Barry-Davis (Int'l Prgms), Patrick Benton (Aviation), Sue Brodasky (Institutional Effectiveness), Maira Bundza (Libraries), Kathy Cummings (EDUC), Kelly Daniels (GSAC), Marianne DiPierro (Grad College), Meg Dupuis (A&S), Eileen Evans (Institutional Effectiveness), Bruce Ferrin (HCOB), Linda Ickes (DOSA), Rand Johnson (A&S), Hossein Mousavinezhad (AAUP), Suzie Nagel (DOSA), Peter Parker (CEAS), Tyler Watson (Sindecuse).

Absent: Blanchard, Foulk, Leja , Newson, Reinhold , Snyder

Guests: Provost Linda Delene

Malcolm called the meeting to order and asked for approval of Summary Notes #31. The notes were approved (Ari-Gur/Ferrin). Committee members introduced themselves and welcomed the new members.

Delene was asked to respond to the letter from the committee concerning the use of assessment data for the graduate program review process. Delene stressed that the review will consider multiple data sources and that departments may choose which assessment data they wish to include. Extensive discussion followed. Ferrin recommended that the Provost prepare a memo clarifying the use of assessment data as part of the graduate program review process. Delene agreed to prepare a memo and reiterated that assessment data will be used constructively.

Evans described the annual assessment reports submitted by the deans in May. UASC committee members received copies of the dean and department chair responses to the three summary questions. These responses constituted a portion of the annual reports. Evans asked the committee to consider questions for the deans when they are invited to attend UASC meetings. Ferrin distributed a suggested common reporting format to ease the review process. The committee was reminded that a standard format currently exists through the use of TracDat. Committee members also discussed the continuing role of the UASC and the RACTs in supporting and maintaining assessment efforts on campus. Questions concerning the level of student awareness of assessment were also raised. Evans suggested that committee members forward suggested questions to her prior to the next UASC meeting. At that meeting, a set of common questions for the deans will be prepared.

Evans provided an update on the November 7 & 8 visit from the Higher Learning Commission/North Central Association (HLC/NCA) consultant-evaluator team. She reminded the UASC that the team will likely request a meeting with UASC and asked that committee members mark the dates of the visit in their calendars. UASC committee members will have access to the HLC/NCA report behind the portal when the report is complete. Evans also updated the committee on the work of the Assessment Fellows, the assessment of the First Year Experience, participation of WMU faculty in the October assessment conference at IUPUI, and the accreditation of the Master's in Public Administration program.

Malcolm distributed a summary of approved assessment plans and noted that there are approximately seven plans needing approval. The committee questioned whether the American Studies program needed to submit a plan. Malcolm will follow up on American Studies and on Gender/Women's Studies concerning the development of assessment plans. Ari-Gur indicated that he has consulted with the Manufacturing Engineering program (Muskegon & Battle Creek) and that their plan should be ready for the next meeting of UASC. Johnson and Reinhold will follow up with Foreign Language to determine the status of that plan. The committee indicated that the Mathematics department could prepare and submit separate assessment plans for Mathematics Education and Mathematics if the department preferred.

RACT assignments were distributed and edited to reflect changes in committee membership. A new list of RACT assignments will be sent to committee members via email.

Brodasky demonstrated the web-based Assessment Toolbox, prepared at the request of the UASC. It was noted that the toolbox is part of the institutional infrastructure for ongoing support and development of assessment. Brodasky noted that only those plans entered into TracDat will be available online.

Cummings distributed information about TracDat and a list of readings concerning university assessment. She is available to meet with department assessment committees to assist them in formatting their plans for TracDat. She noted that WMU has the opportunity to help structure the next version of TracDat and encouraged committee members to forward their suggestions for improved functionality to her.

Benton asked for clarification regarding changes to assessment plans. The committee noted that changes will be documented through the annual assessment reports and through the periodic review of plans to be completed on a five-year cycle.