

University Assessment Steering Committee
Summary Note #34
Meeting Date: November 21, 2005

Present: Steve Malcolm (chair), Patrick Benton (AVS), Sue Brodasky (Institutional Effectiveness), Maira Bundza (Libraries), Kathy Cummings (EDUC), Eileen Evans (Institutional Effectiveness), Bruce Ferrin (HCOB), Lin Foulk (Fine Arts), Jim Leja (H&HS), Hossen Mousavinezhad (AAUP), Deb Newson (EUP), Peter Parker (CEAS), Zoann Snyder (A&S).

Absent: Judah Ari-Gur (CEAS), Josephine Barry-Davis (International Programs), Clement Burns (Grad Studies Council), Kelly Daniels (GSAC), Marianne DiPierro (Grad College), Meg Dupuis (A&S), Linda Ickes (DOSA), Rand Johnson (A&S), Suzie Nagel (DOSA), Dave Reinhold (Undergrad Studies Council), Tyler Watson (Sindecuse).

The meeting was called to order by chair, S. Malcolm at 2 p.m.

1. There was a motion by B. Ferrin to approve the summary notes from meeting #33, seconded by P. Parker. Motion approved.
2. IUPUI Assessment Symposium Report:
 - a) E. Evans noted the keynote session by Doug Eder from Southern Illinois University. He presented by using keynote addresses from the past 12 years and pulling quotations from them. The three quotations she took special notice of were: 1) assessment is not a vision worth working toward, but student learning is; 2) the question to ask is what helps students learn and then to focus on that; 3) the enemy of the good is the perfect, start some place with one thing and go forward. She went on to report that the conference for next year will be moved to downtown Indianapolis and not on IUPUI campus in order to accommodate the ever-growing registration. E. Evans noted that she attended a workshop by Ephraim Schecter, the guru of assessment, who manages the meta assessment website, and who is retired from North Carolina State University. He presented on assessment of administrative and support areas. He stated that there isn't a one size fits all method, what works is what's appropriate for that support unit. Administrators need to avoid the mind set of "if we do it, it will work" (as in academic affairs "if we teach it, they will learn"). He went on to say that data does not have to be quantitative, and can be a combination of quantitative and qualitative. E. Evans asked him if he would consider serving on the advisory board for CEPA. While he agreed to consider service on the board, he asked for documentation of the duties and a CEPA concept paper.
 - b) S. Malcolm reported that he attended the portfolio workshop led by Sharon Hamilton. He stated that he was impressed with the uses of portfolios at other institutions especially New York Community College. There was extensive affirmation that WMU has selected the most effective portfolio software with its choice of iWebfolio. He went on to state that he was struck by changes in assessment since he last attended the symposium three years ago. There are significant changes in the language being used for assessment. He noted lots of talk in all areas about portfolios and their uses. S. Malcolm provided a hand out with curriculum mapping made up of a matrix of courses with outcomes plotted across the top of the grid.
 - c) J. Leja stated that Doug Eder is originally from Michigan and has visited WMU when in the area. E. Evans asked the committee if they would recommend her extending such an invitation, and the committee agreed.
 - d) E. Evans asked K. Cummings to give a brief overview of CEPA to the committee. K. Cummings reported that CEPA stands for Center for Electronic Portfolios and Assessment. It is a virtual center to support the development of portfolios. It will be seeking outside funding, and is partnered with NuVentive and SCT SunGard. E. Evans stated that K. Cummings has been named the founding director. She went on to say that

- this now establishes an institutional home for resources for assessment activities at WMU.
- e) S. Malcolm asked for the status of the center for teaching and learning. E. Evans reported that the support staff, Linda Walker, has been re-assigned to the ATIS department. She acknowledged that WMU has not filled the niche of teaching/learning as well as other institutions she has observed. She will give an update at the January meeting.
 - f) B. Ferrin asked for clarification on a statement by S. Malcolm during his report on the IUPUI Symposium regarding a broader use of collecting data in assessment. Specifically use of embedded questions within exams. He asked for further clarification of the targeted assessment S. Malcolm referenced. S. Malcolm stated that this topic would be an appropriate discussion item for a future meeting. Discussion was held. The topic was tabled.
3. Higher Learning Commission Focused Visit Update: S. Malcolm congratulated E. Evans for facilitating a successful visit. E. Evans reported that the teams draft report is due to North Central by December 6. It will be processed and WMU will be given an opportunity to review and make corrections of fact. The final report can be expected in late February or mid March. Discussion was held.
 4. Deans' Meetings Planning: S. Malcolm provided a handout with four questions he was proposing which reiterate the questions posed in the reporting process. K. Cummings questioned that if the committee has access to the deans' written responses would it be wise to ask the same questions again. P. Parker added that he felt the deans', if asked the same questions, would reiterate their written answers provided in the reports and nothing further. E. Evans suggested an attempt to get at the heart of these issues by posing the questions differently. She asked to have a sub-committee established to formulate the questions and present them at the January meeting. K. Cummings volunteered to lead the sub-committee with members B. Ferrin, Z. Snyder, and J. Leja.
 5. RACTs:
 - a) S. Malcolm reported for the Arts and Science RACT. An oversight was uncovered whereas the RACT report for June 2004 was not formally approved at that UASC meeting. It is estimated that it was due to the transition of S. Malcolm leaving the committee and D. Reinhold assuming the RACT chair responsibilities. A motion was made by H. Mousavinezhad to confirm the approval of the plans for foreign languages, geosciences, philosophy, sociology, statistics, chemistry, and psychology retroactively, seconded by P. Benton. Discussion held. Motion approved.
 - b) S. Malcolm asked the RACTs to strengthen their role of consultation and be more proactive. He will be sending an e-mail to notify the RACT chairs of this initiative. Discussion was held regarding the level of involvement by the RACTs on the assessment committees. E. Evans suggested framing the Eder invitation to help foster the consultation efforts of the RACTs. L. Foulk asked about RACT assignments, being a new committee member. S. Brodasky was asked to redistribute the assignment list to all committee members.
 6. Other:
 - a) Z. Snyder commented on the recent meeting of the Arts and Sciences assessment committee chairs, stating that she did not find it a constructive process since the departments are so different. S. Malcolm stated that such meetings had been valuable when the departments were writing their plans, and he intends to structure future meetings each with a specific focus. E. Evans noted that this discussion item would be best served as an individual meeting since it pertains only to Arts and Sciences. S. Brodasky was instructed to set a meeting for E. Evans, S. Malcolm and Z. Snyder for further discussion.

- b) E. Evans reported that WMU will participate in both the NSSE and FSSE surveys this coming Spring semester. She will provide further details at the January meeting.
 - c) An article "What Does College Teach?" from *The Atlantic* November 2005 issue was provided as a hand out at the request of the Provost. It will also be provided to the General Education Review Task Force.
 - d) P. Benton asked about the previously proposed assessment round table discussions. A suggestion had been made to have the UASC host discussions on how the annual report went and how the reporting process could be improved. E. Evans asked P. Benton to spearhead the planning process for this initiative and provide some suggestions at the next meeting.
7. Spring Semester Meeting Schedule: Please turn in your schedule to S. Brodasky as soon as possible via the spread sheet provided.

The meeting was adjourned by chair, S. Malcolm, at 3:20 p.m.