

University Assessment Steering Committee
Summary Note # 52
Meeting Date: February 18, 2008

Attending: Patrick Benton, chair (Aviation), Sue Brodasky (Institutional Effectiveness), Maira Bundza (International Programs), Kathy Cummings (EDUC), Laura Darrah (DOSAs), Marianne DiPierro (Grad College), Edward Eckel (Libraries), Eileen Evans (Institutional Effectiveness), Bruce Ferrin (HCOB), Lin Foulk (Fine Arts), Kevin Knutson (Arts & Sciences), Peter Parker (CEAS), Dave Reinhold (A&S, Undergrad Studies Council), Carie Robertson (Sindecuse), Zoann Snyder (A&S), Karen Stokes (ex-officio, TracDat),

Absent: Ari-Gur, Buwalda, Desroches, Ickes, LeBlanc, Newson, Tarbox, Unrau

Benton called the meeting to order and called for approval of summary note #51. It was approved with a correction to the spelling of "Eckel" (Ferrin/Darrah).

Benton will chair the subcommittee to review applications for assessment grants. The subcommittee will include Cummings, Darrah, and DiPierro. Applications for the grants are due by April 15th.

Snyder provided an update on the voluntary system of accountability (VSA). A task group has been convened to recommend one of the three tests of student learning outcomes that have been approved for VSA. After examining the three tests, the task group has focused on a test that addresses writing as well as critical thinking. Reinhold noted that two of the approved tests seemed to focus almost exclusively on multiple-choice items related to grammar. UASC members expressed concerns about the possible results of the test and the way in which those results might be used. Ferrin suggested that the test results should be seen as an opportunity to make improvements. Evans will check the specific requirements of the VSA project to determine which aspects of the assessment will be made public. She also noted that the VSA project is an attempt to respond to concerns about accountability in higher education. Snyder will share the UASC comments with the task group.

Eckel distributed information on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) workshop. Suggestions for the schedule were discussed and will be considered by the subcommittee coordinating the workshop. The workshop is scheduled for Friday, May 30 in the College of Health and Human Services.

Knutson provided information about the online survey concerning assessment at WMU. Over 500 people responded to the survey. The subcommittee will report on the results of the survey at the next UASC meeting.

Benton asked for volunteers to develop a strategy for reviewing departmental assessment plans. The original assessment plan for the university called for a five year cycle of reviewing department plans. Benton, Cummings, Eckel, and Foulk will meet to discuss possible approaches.

Evans reported that the April issue of the provost's newsletter, *The Prism*, will focus on the assessment of student learning. Deans, chairs, and directors are being encouraged to submit items on accomplishments in the area of assessment.

Evans has begun the process of getting the associate deans together to discuss assessment. She will convene a meeting of the associate deans within the next month.

Evans reported that Dianna Sachs will participate in an immersion program through the Association of College and Research Libraries. The assessment of information literacy will be the focus of the program. Bundza, who has participated in the program in the past, indicated that the program is valuable and should result in additional emphasis on information literacy on campus.

Evans distributed a copy of an email she sent to the deans concerning the annual assessment reports. This year, the deans will be asked to address some new questions and to provide examples of best practices within the units in their colleges.

Bundza reminded the group that proposals for the fall assessment conference at IUPUI are due March 21.

The meeting adjourned at 3:29 (Parker/Knutson)