Committee on Institutional Assessment
Friday, January 27, 2012
BA-524 9:00 a.m.

Present: Jan Loft, Betsy Desy, Rhonda Bonnstetter, Christine Olson, Jay Brown and Wije Wijesiri.
Absent: Lori Baker and Nadine Schmidt (due to previously scheduled commitments).

Did everyone take some time to look at the new CIA webpage? It is much easier to find…under Administration, and also under A-Z; the membership list is current, the new Charge is posted. Brainstorming…we've posted the University of North Dakota plan and some rubrics from AAC&U, some samples. Also posted, a site with a list of rubrics, put together by a former (or on leave) Dean from Winona State, although you may have to access the site via Google because it might tell you "page not available." Don't get discouraged; just put the address into Google and it will take you there. It is a good page on connections to rubrics.
What else should we post? Maybe the results of the four surveys? Betsy thinks the CLA and NSSE results are posted. There was discussion on assessment tools/tests used at SMSU in the past, the pro and cons of each test or style.

Discussions and Reflections on Thursday, January 26, 2012, the various sessions with Linda Suskie.

- LEC Outcomes should be mapped to LEC requirements. There should be a measurement independent of who is teaching the course, for consistency year after year. We need the same measureable outcomes, same things measured on the same scale i.e. professors that teach a particular course all agree to have one common assignment with one common assessment within their course content. Something already in a course, something all professors agree to do, rather than create an "add on." Standard tools that have to be used throughout.
- Perhaps in the future when Programs submit the paperwork for courses into the LEC, each curriculum proposal should very clearly state the goals and outcomes and how the course meets the requirements along with the one common method for assessing the course. Have faculty agree, for the future, what the one common thing will be so that when they submit the paperwork for that category they will all include that component in the proposal. For example, have the faculty agree what the Diversity commonality will be, so that all faculty that submit a form to teach a course under the Diversity category will include that in the proposal. It was suggested that Lori introduce this idea at LEC. If you want to teach a course in a category you would know you have to include certain things in the proposal, so there will be consistency across that category.
- Flaw: talk about buy-in…you have a group of faculty that have "bought in" on a rubric for Diversity (for example) and they bring it to Assembly. For those that do not know the background some might not vote for it based on lack of information while others will vote nonetheless. It was pointed out that there would need to be a trust framework, a trust that those who did the work on it did so with good intent and due diligence.
- Betsy shared the three handouts from Thursday, January 26th. Page two…find a measurable tool that you would use for a specific category, a corresponding assessment that was common for all who teach a course in that LEC category.

- We never had a post First Year Seminar get-together to talk about what worked and what did not work. Actually, Corey did try to organize something like that but it was poorly attended. What is it we value and how do we measure it?
- We need to do a better job inspiring those who teach FYS to want to share and talk. A rubric needs to be developed by those who know what they are doing.
- Create a list of all faculty that teach courses under a Category, put out a call to that whole group for five or six to sit on the sub-group that creates the rubric for that Category. Personal, eye-to-eye contact to get people involved, give homework, and promise a set number of meetings. It would be recorded when the group met, what was accomplished, what changes were made, etc. This seems to be what the HLC will want to see. If this should happen, of course, it would go through the proper process via SmSUFA and Curriculum Committee. Get your core group of five that create a rubric, Curriculum approves, then post the rubric on the CIA page and everyone who teaches a course in that Category must use that rubric. That way there will always be data to be submitted and reviewed with the raw data eventually interpreted. The questions of who does that, and when it gets done, are the bottleneck. Time, cost? Faculty will have to trust one another on some of the evaluations and final data interpretation. Make this as painless as possible…you get more "buy in" that way. We would dedicate "X" numbers of hours to tackle the data.
- Linda Suskie had suggested we assess large sections of courses, rather than assess the low enrolled courses.

What do we want to do the remainder of the semester?

- ✓ Betsy spoke to the third page of the handout. What is a good learning outcome? Expect them to know and how do you know they know what you expected them to know.
- ✓ Those on the list were collected on January 5th…some vague language was used. What is competence? What is "demonstrate?"
- ✓ We looked at Suskie's suggested timelines for assessment.
- ✓ What can we do now to offer help and guidance? Conduct a workshop? Betsy is starting to be invited to Department meetings for starter help. Provide samples? Look at what the Programs have done so far and then talk about their language, to improve the goals and outcomes to truly articulate what they want the student to know and how they will now the student knows it? We have only eight Departments, most of Education is done, but the PE folks and the other Departments need to continue their work. Betsy and Rhonda take the lead on this because of their experience with assessment? They should reiterate the timelines and urgency, offer information on concrete examples, and Departments with several different Programs could identify which Program might be ahead in the process and have them carry more of the load of helping their colleagues by sharing good samples, rubrics, help walk them through the process. Emphasize this is "your" discipline and your professional responsibility.
- ✓ Share "prompts" that others have discovered, sources for good assessment methods.
- ✓ When it comes to rubrics we will not spend our energy fighting over three or four columns; Linda Suskie said it was not necessary to have every rubric match but consistency amongst the category is more important.
- ✓ Even if the rubric has not been used yet for a measurement due to the timeline for measurements, the HLC will want to know the rubric has been designed.

- ✓ The HLC will want the five year cycle of rubrics to be evaluated for good aspects and the parts that should be improved or edited. We can show “markers” for when we evaluate our tools within the cycle.
- ✓ The CIA purpose…Linda Suskie said that student learning is 80% of the Mission so that is what we should focus on.
- ✓ Five year self studies need credibility; they need to be read with something pulled out as evidence in concert with LEC, depth and quality, substance, etc. Maybe the CIA would design a rubric for collecting information from a five-year self study? Have something that says that within a five-year self study you need “this, this and this.” We need to know the external reviewer is more than a buddy of the Program members, an expert on the discipline, but they also should know something about assessment. Maybe a rubric for the external reviewer to use?
- ✓ Suggestion: maybe every Program could post on their website the assessment tools, rubrics, developed thus far in their area? We actually have made more progress than is evident because we do not post our progress.

Topic for the next meeting: Department/Program websites and what should be there.

Meeting adjourned about 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Loft