Committee on Institutional Assessment
Tuesday, November 29, 2011
BA-524 4:30 p.m.

Present: Jan Loft, Rhonda Bonnstetter, Jay Brown, Christine Olson, Lori Baker, and Nadine Schmidt.
Absent due to teaching schedule or other commitments: Tony Amato and Wije Wijesiri.
Guest: Betsy Desy

Announcements and Discussions:
Jan shared with those present the information shared by Jay Brown concerning the draft charge of the CIA, approved by the SmSUFA Executive Committee.
Next meeting: We will **NOT** meet on Tuesday, December 6th. Jan will ask Kris to send a Doodle survey to see schedules for Monday 12/12, or Wednesday 12/14.

Received prior to meeting: Jay Brown's updated Flow Chart (see below)
Received prior to meeting: Assessment Plan and Grid drafts from Betsy Desy.
Also presented was a draft chart designed by Lori Baker based on the North Dakota Model.

- ✓ Betsy Desy shared that she has been informally informed that the Executive Committee approved her appointment as the Assessment Coordinator. Betsy will now serve as the Co-Chair of the CIA.
- Lori Baker shared that the UND plan is "all about student learning", the only topic is student learning.
- However, the Bemidji model includes all aspects of the university which is inclusive, more in what we need to include in the assessments and HLC report. Does Jay's Flow Chart encompass everything? Some thought yes…extracurricular, but does that include financials and facilities? Yes, some thought. There seems to be confusion on the term "extracurricular." What does it mean? Should we add a footnote that defines extracurricular to mean all things beyond academic Programs? UND is very outcome oriented, whereas our Flow Chart is not so much.
- Lori shared her draft of "Institutional Assessment for Academic-Related Goals and Areas (see below).
- Does the Bemidji plan directly address the MnSCU goals? It does not seem so, or at least is not apparent. Bemidji seemed to aim everything at the HLC criteria.

- Do we say university goals or MnSCU goals? The LEP goals were meant to align with MnSCU goals; we could show how each set of goals are tied to each other, how they are connected. We would make sure MnSCU is reflected in a table grid and Flow Chart.
- Using MnSCU goals keeps it to four goals.
- Lori found on the SMSU website, under Administration, go to Strategic Planning. This gives a bigger picture on what we need to interact with. It seems the Strategic Plan takes into account the MnSCU goals.
- At the meeting Jay drew up a rough draft of his Flow Chart with alterations based on discussion, using terms/language used today. It makes university goals a tool for the Strategic Planning Committee. We can help create a tool.
- Rhonda said, "What the CIA produces for the HLC assessment or assessment in general will inform the Strategic Planning Committee because they can use how we've assessed or how the whole university assessed our goals to inform how well we are meeting our Strategic Plan and what needs to be done in the future to set new goals, to close the loop."
- "A Bridge Between Two Committees" will be created in a separate chart to reflect this; it would not be appropriate for inclusion in the Flow Chart.

We did not have enough time to fully discuss Betsy's 11/15/11 documents.

For the next meeting: Jay will send the new "bubble" and the edited Flow Chart; Jan will talk to the Provost about the Strategic Planning Committee being called to action.

Change in Agenda:

Betsy shared the Faculty Development Grant opportunities from MnSCU. Betsy would like to send a proposal for campus faculty projects, to gain some money for faculty development to use on program development. Bring in someone like Peggy Maki or Walvoord (nice ideas but they are no longer available, they are booked far in advance); two other names were discussed. Question: is this a good idea to attempt between now and break? Use the grant for a big speaker in late January or early February with smaller workshops that fit in? What about Susan Hatfield from Winona with her connection to HLC? What happens after the speaker, how would the project fit in the whole process of assessment and HLC? MnSCU will require something beyond just one big shot but something more long range, on-going.

There was discussion regarding January 5th: Update the faculty on where we are, what we have accomplished. To give them a big picture…we could start with a "where we are at" context and then explain how each Department will fit into the picture. We could have some charts or structures for the faculty, also time with rubrics part of the day. Maybe have each HLC Criterion Group do a brief presentation on what they are doing and what they will continue to do? We can explain who will be doing what, when, how, etc. We can share charts, Flow Charts, etc. It will make everything very transparent, how it all links to everything else.

Creating a Plan for Assessment of Student Learning (PASL) for Southwest Minnesota State University*

Draft by Betsy Desy, 11.30.11

This document is a general guide for developing the components of a *Plan for Assessment of Student Learning (PASL)*. The guidelines are intended to help you and your program/department plan, organize, track, and report your assessment work. Developing and implementing a good plan will strengthen program quality and enhance the five-year program self-study. In addition, a well-developed PASL ensures consistency with expectations of our national accrediting agency, the Higher Learning Commission: A Commission of the North Central Association.

The Plan for Assessment of Student Learning includes the following documents:

- Student Learning Goals
- Student Learning Outcomes
- Course Map
- Assessment Plan and Schedule

The steps to produce a PASL are:

1. Establish student learning ***goals (i.e., the learning intended)***
2. Generate student learning ***outcomes*** connected to the goals (i.e., how much students actually learn).
3. Produce a ***course map*** to show where outcomes are taught within the curriculum
4. Create a ***schedule*** of when outcomes will be assessed
5. ***Document*** assessment results, responses to results, and program enhancements

Each step in this process is described in more detail below. Additional resources including several example plans are available from the Committee on Institutional Assessment (CIA).

Step 1: Goals

A good assessment plan begins with developing appropriate student learning goals. Goals can be very broad, but they should identify what you expect students to learn, understand, or appreciate as a result of their studies. The following guidelines may help you develop goals.

i. Goals should reflect what you want your majors to leave knowing and being able to do. **Focus on developing four to eight goals** for your major; having more than eight goals makes assessment more difficult and unmanageable.
ii. Your program/department mission statement may be a good place to start as it may already identify important goals that can be included in your stated learning goals.
iii. Take this opportunity to review your curriculum. It was likely designed to meet a set of goals with respect to student learning. Goals (and outcomes) should be aligned with your mission statement and, ultimately, be reflected in your program's curriculum.
iv. Your program's goals (and outcomes) should be directed towards your *majors*. You may have goals/outcomes that apply to all students taking your courses but in this situation, the goals/outcomes are for your majors.
v. Your program's goals should align with the student learning outcomes of the Liberal Education Program (LEP) as much as possible. LEP-related goals may include the following: Our students will be…… effective communicators, problem-solvers, competent in the discipline, technologically proficient, and critical thinkers.
vi. National organizations in your field may already suggest goals and outcomes for undergraduate curricula. In addition, you might search the websites of departments at similar schools or contact colleagues elsewhere. Do not reinvent the wheel if you are happy with goals/outcomes others are using/recommending.

Step 2: Outcomes

Your goals must be translated into student learning outcomes (SLOs). Outcomes represent how much students actually learn, the specific abilities, knowledge, and attitudes you actually assess, therefore they must be measureable in some way. To develop outcomes for your program goals, consider what specific abilities make up being a critical thinker, for example, or reveal to others a student's critical thinking ability. The learning outcomes must be written so they specify actions, behaviors, or products that can be observed and measured. An example of a student learning outcome is: **students will be able to** prepare and deliver a high quality presentation on an area within the discipline.

The following are suggestions to guide you as you develop your student learning outcomes.

a) Focus on things you would actually like to know about and that will strengthen your program.
b) Outcomes should be both meaningful and manageable (i.e., can be assessed effectively to improve or enhance your program).

c) Outcomes should describe what your students should be able to demonstrate, represent, or produce based on their learning experiences.
d) Use active verbs such as *create, apply, construct, translate, identify, hypothesize, and describe*, when identifying what students should be able to demonstrate, represent or produce over time.
e) Outcomes need to be clearly aligned with your program goals. As a general rule-of-thumb, plan for two to three outcomes per goal. Thus, with six goals, you would have 18 outcomes. More than 18 outcomes will make assessment more difficult.
f) Think about current practices and what you already do in courses that may be used for assessment.
g) Consider carefully what you can do in terms of assessing various outcomes – think about outcomes in terms of whether you want to assess them, whether you can assess them, and how you will assess them.

Step 3: Course Map

Create a course map that identifies the degree to which particular courses emphasize outcomes for your major. For example, where in the curriculum will students encounter relevant experiences, and develop and/or apply the skill or knowledge? Completing this step may help you plan how and where to assess particular outcomes. Not every course will meet every goal or outcome. The point is that your curriculum as a whole must address each goal/outcome. Also, as most outcomes will be developed across the curriculum, this road map may help articulate where and how changes will be made based on assessment results.

Step 4: Assessment Plan

Remember that who, when, and how you assess should follow from what you want to know. In other words, make sure your assessment will provide the information you want. Things to keep in mind:

a) Who & What
   a. Remember that you want to assess as many majors as possible but you do not have to assess every student in every class every year.
   b. You do not need to assess every goal every year, hence the assessment plan. Record keeping and organization are critical in terms of a plan.

b) Types of assessment

a. Direct assessments are preferred over indirect assessments. Direct assessments examine student "products" as reflecting learning whereas indirect assessments ask students about their learning. Indirect assessments can be very useful but you should assess every outcome with a direct measure.
b. Assessment needs to be focused. Course grades and, typically, exam grades are too broad to assess a good objective. However, particular assignments or exam questions may be just what you need. Using course assignments is referred to as course embedded assessment.
c. It is helpful to identify instruments and methods for assessing student achievement for each learning objective. Some possibilities include: exam questions, essays, journals, case studies, simulations, internships, written assignments, portfolios, presentations, capstone or other projects, surveys (students, alumni, or employers), interviews, focus groups.
d. Standardized assessments such as nationally normed tests (e.g., ETS exams) or department level assessments (e.g., faculty teaching different sections of the same course including the same question on a final exam) can be helpful but are certainly not necessary. Course content may differ across sections or the same outcome will be assessed in different courses so your assessment procedures may vary but all of the procedures require that students demonstrate the same skill (e.g., apply a theory to understand a particular type of social problem). An important, easy way to standardize is to develop an agreed upon rubric for faculty to use in evaluating a paper or presentation (note: the rubric is only for the purposes of assessing learning outcomes and does not need to change or impact faculty grading systems/policies).
e. Formative assessment (e.g., assessments mid-semester or midway through a curriculum) provides valuable information. You want to balance formative assessment with summative assessment – at the end of the process, will students leave knowing and being able to demonstrate what you want.

c) Planning

a. Think about what you already do (e.g., types of assignments, in-class activities) and consider ways to use those activities or parts of them rather than trying to construct a whole new apparatus for assessment.
b. Be mindful of workload for faculty. Do not put all the assessments in places where only a few faculty will be responsible for the work.
c. Generate an assessment plan that includes as much of the following information as possible
    - *Time table for assessment*. You should be assessing the outcomes associated with several goals each year. Think about a complete assessment cycle (all goals assessed) every 3-5 years depending on the number of goals. Keep in mind that we must show the HLC that we are using assessment results, thus doing more than several goals each year would likely be overwhelming for program faculty.
    - Other things that can be included in the Plan are:
        - Where will the assessment of a particular outcome be done (e.g., what course or courses)?
        - What student work will be evaluated (e.g., final paper) to assess each outcome?
        - How will the assessment be conducted (e.g., rubric to be used)?

- Criterion for Success. How will you know if students perform at a satisfactory level? In other words, how will you determine if students have learned it or not. For example, if 70% of students can do some task, is that sufficient?

Step 5: Documenting Assessment

Implement your plan by collecting the data and reflecting on or evaluating the assessment results. What do they tell you about your success with respect to what is being assessed? If the results are satisfactory, good, or great, celebrate that and consider ways to reinforce that success. If the results fail to reach your stated goal, articulate how you will respond in terms of changes you will make to help reach your goal (e.g., changes to courses, assignments, or curriculum). It is critical that you "close the loop" by explicitly stating plans in response to assessment results! Additionally, you may find that the assessment process yields ideas for changing aspects of your assessment plan or strategies.

Yearly assessment data collected by a program should be included in each Department's Annual Report.

- *Format derived, with permission, from Maurice Levesque, Associate Dean, Elon University, Oct. 2011, 'Creating

SAMPLE ************SAMPLE************SAMPLE*******

Biology Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes:

Goal 1. To achieve scientific competency in diverse biological topics

- **Student Learning Outcome 1.1**
  - Demonstrate understanding of scientific content.

Goal 2. To understand and apply the scientific method.

- **Student Learning Outcome 2.1**
  - Apply the scientific method in laboratory or field situations, including competency in: observation skills, hypothesis formulation, experimental design, use of proper controls.

Goal 3. To develop critical thinking skills and problem-solving techniques.

- **Student Learning Outcome 3.1**
  - Demonstrate competence in data analysis, including the preparation and interpretation of graphs and tables.

Goal 4. To find, evaluate, and communicate biological information.

- **Student Learning Outcome 4.1**
  - Communicate experimental findings or data interpretations both orally and in writing including:
    - Demonstrating proper use of binomial nomenclature
    - Use of appropriate scientific format with appropriate citations
- **Student Learning Outcome 4.2**
  - Effectively use information-gathering techniques in scientific inquiry.

Goal 5. To improve students' understanding and appreciation of current biological issues and their relevance to society and the environment.

- **Student Learning Outcome 5.1**
  - Evaluate societal issues from a natural science perspective.
- **Student Learning Outcome 5.2**
  - Critically evaluate biological issues.

Goal 6. To appreciate the central role of evolution in the unity and diversity of life.

- **Student Learning Outcome 6.1.**
  - ❖ Demonstrate knowledge of how mutation and selective pressures drive the process of evolution.

Alignment of Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes with Liberal Education Program Learning Outcomes

Sample…….sample…….sample

Biology Program Goals	**Student Learning Outcomes--SLOs**	**Liberal Education Program (LEP) Learning Outcomes**	**Program Core Courses that address SLOs**
Goal 1: To achieve scientific competency in diverse biological topics	1.1 Demonstrate understanding of scientific content	LEP 1: knowledge in a discipline	
Goal 2. To understand and apply the scientific method	2.1 Apply the scientific method in laboratory or field situations, including competency in: observation skills,	LEP 1: knowledge in a discipline	BIO 200

	hypothesis formulation, experimental design, use of proper controls.	LEP 3: identify, formulate, and solve problems	
Goal 3. To develop critical thinking skills and problem-solving techniques.	3.1 Demonstrate competence in data analysis, including the preparation & interpretation of graphs and tables.	LEP 4: critical thinkers	BIO 200,
Goal 4. To find, evaluate, and communicate biological information.	4.1 communicate experimental findings or data interpretations both orally and in writing	LEP 2: communicate effectively	BIO 286
	4.2 Effectively use information - gathering techniques in scientific inquiry	LEP 1: knowledge in a field LEP 2: communicate effectively	

Goal 5. To improve students' understanding and appreciation of current biological issues and their relevance to society and the environment.	5.1 Evaluate societal issues from a natural science perspective. 5.2 Critically evaluate biological issues.	LEP 5: understand social and physical aspects of world	
Goal 6. To appreciate the central role of evolution in the unity and diversity of life.	6.1. Demonstrate knowledge of how mutation and selective pressures drive the process of evolution	LEP 1: knowledge in a discipline	

Table 1 . Plan for Assessment of Student Learning: **Course map** for the B.A. in BIOLOGY…….sample……..sample…….sample

Goals & Student								300-level	Requirements in related fields (math,

Learning Outcomes (SLOs)	Bio 200	Bio 287	Bio 301	Bio 302	Bio 311	Bio 321	Bio 487	electives	physics, chemistry)
Goal 1: To achieve scientific competency in diverse biological topics SLO 1.1	I		R					A	
Goal 2: To understand and apply the scientific method SLO 2.1	I						A		
Goal 3: To develop critical thinking skills and problem-solving techniques SLO 3.1	I								
Goal 4: To find, evaluate, and communicate biological information SLO 4.1 SLO 4.2									

Goal 5: To improve students' understanding and appreciation of current biological issues and their relevance to society and the environment SLO 5.1 SLO 5.2									
Goal 6: To appreciate the central role of evolution in the unity and diversity of life. SLO 6.1									

Competency: I=Introduced (exposure to general concepts)
R=Reinforced (moderate emphasis and iteration of concepts)
A= Advanced (command or mastery)

**Format derived from the following sources:

- Maki, P.L. 2002. *Developing an Assessment Plan to Learn about Student Learning*. Journal of Academic Librarianship 28(1):8-13.
- "Creating a Plan for Student Learning Assessment) by Maurice Levesque, Associate Dean, Elon University, Oct. 2011

Plan for Assessment of Student Learning (PASL): Program Assessment Plan and Timetable, 2011-2016

Sample A**

Program Goals	**2011-2012**	**2012-2013**	**2013-2014**	**2014-2015**	**2015-2016**
Goal 1 SLO 1.1	Core course A				
Goal 2 SLO 2.1		Core course B	capstone		
Goal 3 SLO 3.1		Core course C			
Goal 4 SLO 4.1 SLO 4.2			Capstone (SLO 4.1)		
Goal 5 SLO 5.1 SLO 5.2	300-elective courses				
Goal 6			capstone		

SLO 6.1					

**Format derived from the following sources:

- Maki, P.L. 2002. *Developing an Assessment Plan to Learn about Student Learning*. Journal of Academic Librarianship 28(1):8-13.
- "Creating a Plan for Student Learning Assessment) by Maurice Levesque, Associate Dean, Elon University, Oct. 2011

Plan for Assessment of Student Learning (PASL): Program Assessment Plan and Timetable, 2011-2016

Sample B**

Educational Experiences: Courses in the major	**SLOs addressed by course**	**Assessment Methods**	**Timeline**	**Responsibilities**
Bio. 200	2.1, 3.1, 3.2	Regular course exams, graded homework assignments, pre- and post-tests,	2012-2013	Assign bio faculty member

Bio 301	1.1, 4.1,		2013-2014	Assign bio faculty member
Bio 302	5.1 ,6.1		2014-2015	Assign bio faculty member

**Format derived from the following sources:

- Maki, P.L. 2002. *Developing an Assessment Plan to Learn about Student Learning*. Journal of Academic Librarianship 28(1):8-13.
- "Creating a Plan for Student Learning Assessment) by Maurice Levesque, Associate Dean, Elon University, Oct. 2011

Plan for Assessment of Student Learning (PASL): Program Assessment Plan and Timetable, 2011-2016

Sample C**

Goals and Student Learning Outcomes	**SLOs addressed by course**	**Assessment Methods**	**Timeline**	**Responsibilities**
Goal 1 SLO 1.1	Bio 301, 302	Regular course exams, graded homework assignments, pre- and post-tests,	2012-2013	Assign bio faculty member

Goal 2 SLO 2.1 SLO 2.2	Bio 200		2013-2014	Assign bio faculty member
Goal 3 SLO 3.1 SLO 3.2	Bio. 200, 301, 302, 287		2014-2015	Assign bio faculty member

**Format derived from the following sources:

- Maki, P.L. 2002. *Developing an Assessment Plan to Learn about Student Learning*. Journal of Academic Librarianship 28(1):8-13.
- "Creating a Plan for Student Learning Assessment) by Maurice Levesque, Associate Dean, Elon University, Oct. 2011

Department Annual Report: Report on Assessment Progress

1. Program/Department _____

2. Department Chair _____

3. Report covers the academic year August, 20_____ to May, 20_____

4. Based on last year's Department Annual report, reflect on the implementation of any changes-for-improvement your program/department recommended.

5. Each program should complete the following information which will be incorporated into the Department Annual Report.

   For each Student Learning Goal assessed during this time period, complete the following information.

I. Learning Goal

II. Student Learning Outcome

III. Assessment Strategy
- Description of how assessment was conducted.
  (include who was measured, where and when measurement was taken)
- Who conducted assessment? Who evaluated results?
- Criteria for success?

IV. Results (data and summary of results)

V. Use of Results
- Who participated in the discussion of results?
- What program improvements were recommended, if any?
- Reflect on this approach (e.g., tools) for assessment of this SLO
- What adaptations to the Student Learning Assessment Plan were made, if any?

6. Program's summary statement of the value of assessment and the steps that will be taken during the upcoming year to address the results of this year's assessments.
7. Tentative plans for your program's next assessment cycle. What goals and student learning outcomes do you anticipate measuring, where and by whom?

Adopted with permission from 'Creating a Plan for Student Learning Assessment' by Maurice Levesque, Associate Dean, Elon University, Oct. 201

Institutional Assessment for Academic-Related Goals and Areas

Draft Lori Baker November 29, 2011 based on North Dakota Model

Area/goals	**Assessment Methods**	***Documentation***	**Timelines**	**Responsibilities**	**Use of Results and Process for Decision-Making**
What are the different areas and goals that address academic experiences at SMSU?	*What assessment methods will we use to collect data about what our students have learned? What are our criteria for success? How will we know the objectives have been met? What level of performance meets each objective? How will we interpret and evaluate the data?*	*What is the primary assessment documentation in this area?*	*When will we collect data? How often?*	*Who will be responsible for collecting, interpreting, and reporting the results?*	*How will the results of assessment be used? Who needs to know the results? How can we convince them that the goals and objectives have been met? How can we improve our program and assessment process?*
LEC goals	Two LEP objectives assessed each year on a rotating schedule. Course assessment tools *(identify)* Standardized test results summaries from CIA (NSSE, CLA, CAT, CMG)	*Annual report from LEP for the two criteria that were assessed*	Exit surveys from IDST 100 and IDST 400 collected at the end of each term CAT data collected in spring semester (pre- and post-tests)	LEP Committee with help from the Dean's Office	Results from the assessments will be shared with the SMSU community through an annual all-university meeting. A summary of results will be sent to instructors of IDST 100 and IDST 400 A summary of results will

	(label direct and indirect methods)				be sent to the CIA committee for them to interpret and compare with findings from other institutional reports
Program goals	Each program will have identified outcomes and direct and indirect assessment measures for their assessment tools. Standardized test result summaries from CIA	*Program reviews*		Program area faculty	
Department goals	Each department will identify additional assessment methods, if different than program methods listed above	*Departments' annual reports*		Department faculty and department chair	
University goals	Standardized test results from NSSE, CLA, CAT, CMG, and others as available Institutional data (grad survey, OIRR)	*Documentation created:* *Summaries of results from standardized tests;* *Summaries of results from other institutional data as needed from OIRR or other areas*	NSSE data every ???? CLA data every ??? CAT data every ???	Committee on Institutional Assessment (CIA)	The CIA reviews data collected from the other areas listed on this table as well as from Strategic Planning to see what the overall ongoing assessments demonstrate about student learning outcomes at SMSU. The CIA in turn sends its

		Documentation reviewed: *Report from LEC;* *Summaries from assessment portions of departmental reports and program reviews;* *Summaries from co- and extra-curricular reports;* *Summary of assessment and progress from strategic planning*	CMG data every ??? Grad survey done every spring with results available the following fall Select data from Office of Institutional Research as requested Summaries of data/evidence from other areas, including Strategic Planning, annually (specify timing?)		overall findings back to these groups and communicates findings with all constituent groups, thus creating a circle of communication to close assessment loops. The CIA oversees the assessment process, recommending changes in processes as needed and updating the Institutional Assessment Plan.
Extra- and co-curricular goals	Extra/co-curricular assessment tools Standardized test result summaries from CIA			Extra- and co-curricular areas	

CIA flow chart draft 4 edited by CIA
Submitted by Jay Brown 11/16/11