

Committee on Institutional Assessment (CIA) Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 19, 2016
8:15 a.m. BA

Present: Pam Gladis, Michael Kurowski, Linda Nelson, Nadine Schmidt, Lori Baker, Cindy Aamlid, Chris J. Anderson, Matt Zabka, and Nancyruth Liebold (via AdobeConnect)

1. Secure minute taker – Nadine volunteered to take the minutes
2. Review of 10/5/16 Meeting Minutes (email attachment) – Passed as submitted
3. Review/Update Mini Grant Application (email attachment) – The committee discussed clarifying the language describing the various levels. For example, there are 3 levels for the grant application compared to 4 boxes on the CIA webpage’s assessment “circle” – should the levels align with the boxes? There was also discussion about using the phrase “continuous improvement” instead of “closing the loop”. There were some changes to the wording of the application (active verbs, continuous improvement, etc.). There was discussion of deadlines and whether there should be an extra round or a later March deadline for programs that want to do projects in August. It was noted that programs could do their project and apply for funding retroactively. Other factors to consider regarding deadline dates are the issue of the fiscal year and the fact that non-academic programs operate year-round. There was discussion of how funds might be used in the program review process. The committee also discussed what constitutes a “program” – for example, how Education defines programs vs. how other departments and entities might define it. There is an existing definition in the glossary. The committee discussed clarification of wording for the various checklist items regarding what activities could be tackled at each level. The checklist might possibly give people ideas of what they can do at each level. The revision of the application will be an on-going agenda item, and members should review the application for homework. (Cindy and Chris J. also arranged to meet to work on some suggested changes that they can bring to the next meeting.)
4. Review HEIghten Materials re: assessing civic engagement, diversity, and critical thinking (email attachment) – Nancyruth provided background on this project, which is via ETS. Civic Engagement and Critical Thinking have already been through the pilot testing process. There is cost savings in being part of a pilot project (for example, for the upcoming Intercultural Competency instrument). ETS has emphasized that these tests should not drive curriculum, but constitute just one measure of student competency. In pilot testing, faculty buy-in was sometimes an issue; some faculty felt they and their teaching were being evaluated. The instruments have been used as pre- and post-tests (first-years and seniors). Nancyruth gave an example involving the University of North Carolina system. Universities that have used these instruments have said the results helped them “tell their story.” The instruments really are focused on student skills, not on teaching, and thus are not an assessment of faculty or their teaching. Instruments are multiple choice, though Nancyruth

was not sure about how the Written Communication assessment is structured. There are separate tests for different outcome areas. Each test takes 45 minutes to complete, and the tests are computer-based. Linda mentioned that she and Sara Fier are approved to do proctored ETS tests. Randomized sampling would be possible (sampling would be beneficial for cost reasons, but can hurt reliability). Committee members felt it is worth asking about an affordable deal to be part of pilot testing for Intercultural Competency, especially since the Diversity outcome is an area where we have struggled to collect data. There was discussion about various ways assessment is done across campus (pre-/post-, decentralized, places where a partial system is in place such as Assessment Academy and Minnesota Collaborative Project, etc.).

5. Status reports and the Assessment Academy Timeline Update – Status reports will be going to individual departments through the department chairs at the end of this week or next week, with some feedback about where growth could be, what’s going well, etc.
6. Assessment Roundtable on November 10, 12:00 -1:15, in Upper CC – Try to encourage faculty in your areas to come. The topic will be a follow-up on status reports mentioned in the previous item that are part of the Assessment Academy Project, and as such will be geared towards academic programs.

The next meeting is Nov. 2, which is Pam’s birthday!

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadine Purvis Schmidt