

Assessment Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 4, 2004

2:30 - 3:45 p.m.

Bogle Conference Room

Members Attending:

Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

Sharon Calhoon (chair)

Kathy Ross

School of Arts and Sciences

Angela Becker (Psychology Assessment Coordinator)

Mary Hansen (Mathematics Assessment Coordinator)

Nadene Keene (Director of Writing)

Donna McLean (Communication Arts Assessment Coordinator)

Sue Ridlen (Humanities Assessment Coordinator)

Allen Safianow (History/Political Science Assessment Coordinator)

Robin Symonds (NIMS Assessment Coordinator)

School of Business

Dmitriy Chulkov

Division of Education

Ellen Sigler

Library

Gail MacKay

School of Nursing

Susan Hendricks

School of Public and Environmental Affairs

Kelly Brown

Student Activities

Aimee Sadler

Guest:

Raul Mosley, Humanities Representative to Faculty Senate Assessment Committee

Minutes:

- I. Member introductions.
- II. Charge was discussed. Members will:
 - A. Act as a liaison between CTLA director and their unit
 - B. Become familiar with campus assessment policy (see attached)
 - C. Become familiar with Higher Learning Commission accreditation standards (see attached)
 - D. Become familiar with assessment processes and terminology (CTLA will conduct

workshops or brown bag sessions)

III. Issues raised by Council members:

- A. *Interface between Faculty Senate Assessment Committee (FSAC) and Assessment Council.* Several Assessment Council members are also on FSAC and one additional FSAC member attended this meeting as a guest. They questioned whether and how Council duties would overlap with FSAC duties, and whether there is a need for both groups. Council members act as liaisons between CTLA and their units, carrying information back and forth. CTLA will receive assessment reports, write a yearly report of campus assessment efforts (including assessment results), and will support units with training and consultation as they carry out their assessment tasks. As an administrative unit, CTLA works with faculty to carry out assessment, but CTLA does not interfere with faculty governance. FSAC will meet to discuss how faculty governance will work within the new structure for managing assessment and make recommendations to Faculty Senate.
- B. *Core Competencies.* (These are the student learning outcomes listed in the Bulletin as being expected of all IU Kokomo graduates.) Council members reported that Educational Policies Committee is not currently reviewing existing general education competencies. If they are so charged, Educational Policies members appear to be willing to review these competencies in light of the President's initiative to develop IU-wide General Education Principles. Council members recognized that all changes in General Education student outcomes should occur at the same time to minimize rewrites of assessment plans. The Council discussed whether to wait for the Principles to be handed down or to start working on them now. If Educational Policies Committee begins work on the Core Competencies now, they would more familiar with the issues when the all-IU Principles are sent to the campus. Council agreed that revisiting these competencies was an important issue for Faculty Senate to take up.
- C. *General Education Assessment:* Issues raised by Council members included how general education is defined (e.g., what constitutes a general education course), who decides what general education courses should be assessed, how Council members will be involved in gen ed assessment, whether there should be a Council member whose function is to represent General Education issues. Council agreed that rewriting the Core Competencies is an important first step in developing a Gen Ed assessment plan.
- D. *Results of Assessment:* Council members stated the concern that results of assessment efforts in the past were not widely shared, and asked that the CTLA undertake to report regularly (every year) assessment results, which could be shared with faculty, staff, students, and community members.
- E. *Accreditation:* A council member reported that some faculty are unclear about the purpose of accreditation. He suggested that information about the role of the Higher Learning Commission be disseminated to faculty. Other Council members stated that it was not an issue in their departments. A memo about this is attached to these minutes. Please share with your departments as you see fit.

IV. Announcements

- A. Susan Hatfield will be on campus November 11 and 12 to meet with departments about their assessment plans. The schedule of appointments was distributed and is attached.

Higher Learning Commission and the Role of Accreditation

Attachment to Assessment Council Minutes
of October 4, 2004 Meeting

(For dissemination by Assessment Council members to their constituents as they see fit)

The organization that accredits Indiana University Kokomo the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The part of the NCA that deals with accreditation issues in higher education is called the Higher Learning Commission. Thus, their official title is The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association. It is one of six regional accrediting organizations recognized by the U.S. Department of Education to be "a reliable authority as to the quality of education." According to the Department of Education (http://www.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg2.html), accreditation serves the following functions

- Verifying that an institution or program meets established standards;
- Assisting prospective students in identifying acceptable institutions;
- Assisting institutions in determining the acceptability of transfer credits;
- Helping to identify institutions and programs for the investment of public and private funds;
- Protecting an institution against harmful internal and external pressure;
- Creating goals for self-improvement of weaker programs and stimulating a general raising of standards among educational institutions;
- Involving the faculty and staff comprehensively in institutional evaluation and planning;
- Establishing criteria for professional certification and licensure and for upgrading courses offering such preparation; and
- Providing one of several considerations used as a basis for determining eligibility for Federal assistance.

In practical terms, regional accreditation is *required* for students of a college or university to be eligible for federal financial aid under Title IV. So, even though it is not a legal requirement, and the regional accrediting agencies are not part of the Federal Government, they serve as gatekeepers for the release of federal funds to higher education institutions.

For more information, see the following website:

Higher Learning Commission: <http://www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org/>

U.S. Department of Education: <http://www.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/index.html>

Council on Higher Education Accreditation: <http://www.chea.org/>