

2016-2017 Faculty Senate Assessment Committee Annual Report

Members:

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Activities:

The main activities of the Assessment Committee (AC) in 2016-2017 were:

- Encouraging departments to report assessment activities to the Committee or the Director of Assessment
- Reviewing possible rubrics for evaluating assessment reports received by the Committee
- Selecting and disseminating a rubric and clearer reporting instructions to departments
- Reviewing reports submitted via Qualtrics relative to the selected rubrics
- Discussed the transition of assessment reporting from Qualtrics to Taskstream

Results:

General Education Cycle for 15-16 involved reporting assessment data for courses aligned to Speech, Physical and Life Sciences, Quantitative Literacy, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. Assessment results were submitted for at least one course in all required areas; in addition, results were submitted for Information Literacy (formally required in 2016-2017).

Out of the 60 total courses listed in all Gen Ed areas, 22 different courses were reported (37%) in 30 separate reports (some courses were reported separately for different terms).

The rubric for evaluating assessment reports lists 8 areas in need of comment for sound assessment: Identified Learning Outcomes, Previous Assessment, Description of the Course and Setting, Assessment Media, Description of the Student Sample, Quantitative Findings, Interpretation of Findings, and Action Plan. Each report was assessed as *Needing Improvement*, *Meeting Expectations*, or *Exceeding Expectations* per the rubric descriptors of each area. Committee members agreed that the rubric functioned well when applied to our reports.

All 30 reports clearly identified the Gen Ed learning outcomes being reported on; thus, they all were rated as meeting expectations. 24 of the 30 (80%) met or exceeded expectations on their descriptions of the media (tools) used for assessment, how the assessment findings should be interpreted, and what action plan(s) they felt were appropriate to their findings. 20 of the 30 (67%) met or exceeded expectations on their description of their quantitative findings. 16 of the 30 (53%) met or exceeded expectations on their description of the student sample completing the assessment media. No reports met or exceeded expectations in their description of any previous assessment of that course, or their description of the course and setting itself where assessment was completed.

It was our conclusion, then, that Gen Ed assessment is actively occurring across campus, and that in most ways the reports were descriptive enough to document these efforts usefully for future reflection on curriculum. However, we wished to impress upon the faculty that in order for such documentation to be complete and useful within departments and across campus, some commentary on past assessment practice (even if there has not been previous assessment) of outcomes, and some brief description of the content of the course being assessed, how many students completed the assessment, and whether those students represented the typical students who take that course, would be helpful for ongoing assessment efforts. Such information helps to “close the loop” of assessment in promoting appropriate generalization and application of results.

For program review, 9 programs reported with the online tool and 3 other programs submitted through email using their own format. We applied the same rubric to evaluating these reports, as we used for Gen Ed.

All 9 reports met or exceeded expectations on their description of their quantitative findings, how the assessment findings should be interpreted, and what action plan(s) they felt were appropriate to their findings. 8 (89%) clearly identified the program learning outcomes being reported on, and 7 (78%) met or exceeded expectations on their description of the student sample completing the assessment media. 5 (56%) met or exceeded expectations on their descriptions of the media (tools) used for assessment, and 4 (44%) met or exceeded expectations in describing past assessments and the course/setting of assessment administration.

Similar to with Gen Ed assessment, then, we concluded that program assessment is occurring in many departments, but that reporting could be clarified. We recommend that all areas review the evaluation rubric for guidance on how reports can be made sufficiently descriptive for curriculum improvement and institutional documentation. We do not seek exhaustive detail, but departments can self-evaluate their submitted report relative to the rubric in order to determine where additional detail would be helpful in future years.

Overall, out of the 21 programs, we received either GenEd or Program review data from 11 (52%).

Recommendation from the Assessment Committee:

It remains an expectation that all programs report on some aspect of student learning on an annual basis. Assessment does not have to be highly complex, but it does need to be performed and used for reflection on how the program can continue to enhance student learning. If programs have any questions about how to best approach assessment of student learning, the Assistant VCAA is prepared to assist. When programs receive their individual feedback reports, the members of the Assessment Committee also welcome your questions.

Respectfully submitted,

The Assessment Committee