

Program Review and Assessment Committee
April 17, 2014, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., CE 305
Meeting Notes

Attendance: P. Altenburger (Chair), R. Aaron, E. Ardemagni, S. Baker, T. Banta, R. Bennett, K. Black, T. Davis, P. Ebright, C. Gentle-Genitty, K. Gilliam, S. Graunke, M. Hansen, S. Jimenez, K. Johnson, S. Kahn, K. MacDorman, A. Mitchell, H. Mzumara, B. Neal-Beliveau, K. Norris, M. Price, S. Rice, M. Rust, S. Scott, M. Urtel, W. Wang, S. Weeden, W. Worley, S. Zahl

1. March meeting minutes: approved unanimously as circulated

2. Announcement

- T. Banta announced approval of IUPUI's proposal to take part in a new project on competency-based education funded by the Lumina Foundation. The Council on Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) will provide "Jump Start" participants with workshops to inform faculty and help launch new campus initiatives. Banta circulated a sign-up sheet for those interested in receiving an information listserv about the project (those not in attendance should notify her directly of interest).

3. Principles of Undergraduate Learning Assessment

- T. Banta distributed an information flyer about the Principles of Undergraduate Learning as most recently approved in May 2007. P. Altenburger reminded members of the March 2014 committee discussion that indicated need for a clear, formal statement of the purpose of the PULs along with supporting rationale. He asked members to review the existing purpose statement and consider whether it is adequate and what modifications, if any, may be needed.
- Following individual reflection, the full committee exchanged insights and concerns. There was some agreement that the current purpose statement seems vague. Thus, it may not be surprising that the majority of faculty have only poor or partial understanding of the PULs. Securing full faculty participation in assessing student mastery of the PULs depends in part on understanding their purpose, though there was some consensus to keep the purpose description clear and concise.
- Altenburger then asked members to form small groups for further discussion of questions about how we can use PUL assessment findings to improve learning and whether those uses can be realized sufficiently with the current process of measurement and information dissemination.
- Subsequent reports back to the full committee continued to focus on the need for clarity across the board. Questions remain about expectations for the assessment process, with some faculty still unaware of both the expectations and the resulting information. Faculty participation is consequently very uneven across units, though no one particularly wants to be "the assessment police" or create a climate of coercion. Most members appeared to agree that comparisons are impossible with the current cumulative reporting structure, meaning that meaningful actions to improve are almost

impossible. Another problem with the current data reporting is the lack of commonality among the methods of assessment (multiple-choice exams? papers? performances?) as well as the variable standards applied. Some suggested that adopting “signature assignments” might be one way to improve consistency of approach.

4. PRAC Reports Review Subcommittee Report

- S. Kahn reported on the work of the PRAC Reports Review Subcommittee this year. Noting that all members should now have received copies of their reviewers’ comments on 2012-13 reports, she added that this year the committee did not try to reconcile differences between reviewers and would welcome feedback about whether that approach was helpful or confusing.
- She called out reports from Engineering and Technology, Center for Service and Learning, Dentistry, Nursing, and Herron as exemplary.
- In general, subcommittee members feel that reports continue to improve each year. All units now have learning outcomes and are making some efforts to assess them, and most reports have become easier for a lay reader to understand. Use of appendices and attachment of rubrics often contribute to clear organization.
- Kahn added that the Subcommittee notes continuing issues with reporting of actual assessment results and of improvements based on those results. Sometimes improvements are described without indication of what prompted them, and some units still rely too heavily on indirect methods.
- She noted that subcommittee members generally value the peer review as a means of their own professional development. The Subcommittee would welcome having more reviewers to share the load next year.

5. Workshops on Learning Outcomes

- On behalf of S. Hundley and the ad hoc subcommittee on professional development, Altenburger distributed two handouts:
 - a list of proposed workshops dealing with developing, implementing, and assessing learning outcomes at program and course levels, and
 - a questionnaire soliciting feedback about the topics, others that may be needed, resources available, and workshop delivery.
- Because of time constraints, discussion of the proposals was postponed until the May meeting. Copies of the handouts are attached for pre-meeting consideration for those who missed the April meeting.

6. Adjournment at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by S. Scott and respectfully submitted by S. Hundley, 2014 Vice Chair