

**University Assessment Council
Minutes of the September 7, 2010 Meeting**

Present: Ellen Byrne, Laurie Carter, Anne Chandler, Jan Chlebowski, Delores Dungee-Anderson, Herschell Emery, Vennie Filippas, Sally Hunnicutt, Kathy Kreutzer, Christina Lindholm, James Mays, Susan McKelvey, Carolyn Norman, Sherry Sandkam, Veronica Shuford, Seth Sykes, Lex Tartaglia, Gaurav Gupta, Kathy Ingram, Scott Oates, Laura Moriarty.

Welcome & Introductions

- Scott Oates, Director of Assessment, welcomed everyone. All those present introduced themselves.
- Scott expressed appreciation to Kathy Ingram for her work in 2009-2010 as Interim Director of Assessment.
- SACS Fifth-Year Interim Report: Kathy Ingram provided a brief update. The report was submitted in March 2010 and VCU recently received feedback from SACS. There are two standards for which VCU must provide additional clarification/data (i.e., about the adequacy of the number of full-time faculty and about distance education programs), along with one standard requiring a minor change in how VCU's response was formatted. VCU's report about those issues is due in April 2011. SACS praised VCU's excellent response in the Fifth-Year Report about student learning outcomes assessment. Kathy thanked Assessment Council members for the work they did with their units and expressed the hope that we can build on this momentum. She also thanked the other members of the 2009-2010 Assessment Team, Linda Birtley and Gaurav Gupta, for all their hard work.

Director Comments & Brief Discussion: Useful, Meaningful, and Sustainable Assessment

- Scott provided an overview of his values as Director of Assessment about useful, meaningful, and sustainable learning outcomes assessment.
- Several members commented about WEAVE and observed that programs in their units could benefit from receiving feedback about assessment of learning outcomes. Scott encouraged a focus on assessment, rather than on WEAVE. He would like to reduce the burden on programs about WEAVE in the future, perhaps by asking programs to prepare their assessment report and then having a work study student or graduate student enter the information into WEAVE.

Council Priorities for 2010-2011 (subject to revision)

- Establish University Assessment Council Mission and Protocols
 - Scott discussed establishing a mission statement and protocols for the Assessment Council, and offered a draft mission statement. A brief discussion followed.
 - ➔ Action: During the October meeting of the Assessment Council, work to tease out the mission statement.
 - ➔ Action: Consider including a definition of student learning on the Office of Assessment webpage.

- SCHEV/5 Year Assessment Plan
 - ❑ Scott reported that each undergraduate program including University College and General Education will help develop and then participate in assessing the *six SCHEV undergraduate competencies* over the next five years.
 - ❑ VCU must develop and launch a plan by December 1, 2010.
- SACS/QEP
 - ❑ Scott reported that each school and the College will create their own plan to increase/enhance ***student engagement*** in undergraduate and graduate programs. (Joe Marolla, Vice Provost for Instruction, presented this initiative to the Deans in August.) Scott stated that objectives/outcomes for these Quality Enhancement Plans must be measurable. He noted that although the Assessment Council is not responsible for developing the school/college QEPs, the Council may be called upon to assist with issues related to assessment of student learning outcomes.
 - ❑ Several members asked for clarification about the purpose and specifics of this initiative and some expressed concern about the tentative due date of December 2010 for developing the QEPs. Laura Moriarty explained that VCU's original QEP for SACS emphasized student engagement in students' first year. She expects that when the 10-year SACS report is due in 2013/2014, VCU will need a QEP II to increase/enhance student engagement in the rest of undergraduate experience and at the graduate level. The school/college QEPs will address how each unit is increasing/enhancing student engagement. Laura reported that the Deans have a Blackboard site containing all the necessary information about the school/college QEP initiative.
 - ❑ There was some discussion about the meaning of "student engagement."
 - ➔ Action: Per Scott's suggestion, during the October meeting of the Assessment Council, we will discuss curriculum mapping as one tool to address the QEP initiative and the SCHEV 5-year assessment plan.
 - ➔ Action: If time permits in a future Assessment Council meeting, consider having a discussion about educational philosophy.

Good & Welfare

- (News, information, opinions and comments to share; questions, concerns, suggestions to consider.)
- Laura Moriarty provided additional details and answered questions about the feedback from SACS regarding the Fifth-Year Interim Report.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, October 5, 9-10:30, Sanger Hall, 1-038