**Assessment Committee Meeting—October 12, 2017**

Present: Bruce Graham, Sarah Bernard-Stevens, Brent Phillips, Tasha Riggins, Mark Whisler, Beth Whisler, Abu Hossion, Taryn Cipra, Marc Malone

Absent: Shelly Farha, Jamieson Gross, Todd Leif (Advising appointments)

Malone called the meeting to order.

**Binders:**

The assessment committee members are each in-charge of a binder and responsible for maintaining an accurate record of minutes and agendas. The binders should be passed to new committee members current members cycle off.

**HLC Guidelines:**

The binders contain a copy of Criterion 4 of the HLC Accreditation guidelines which states, broadly, that:

*The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.*

Malone emphasized that the assessment committee is responsible for much of the work of ensuring Criterion 4 is met. Malone asked for general comments on the components and sub-components of criterion 4.

Graham spoke about component 4A6—*The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish those purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps)*.

Graham’s question was how do we track this as an institution? Malone mentioned that there is an area specific to this in the academic department review template. Finding where Mitch Stimers, Director of Institutional Research, pulls this information will be useful. Riggins noted that foundation might be a good resource. Malone also noted that, for some technical programs such as WET and Nursing, these numbers might be easier to track. In a previous program review training, Nancy Zenger-Beneda, current VPAA, said that keeping tabs on students enrolled in our programs is one of the tasks of the department.

Mark Whisler brought up components 4B4 and 4C4—*The institutions process and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.* And *The institution’s processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice*. Whisler mentioned that “good practice” is somewhat vague, and it would be good to have / find a better understanding of what HLC deems as “good practice.” Malone offered that 4B4 has a hint about what good practice means in that it mentions the substantial participation of faculty. Cipra noted that “best practices” for collecting and analyze information might also vary for delivery modes.

**Course Outcome and Gen. Ed. Outcomes:**

Malone brought up one of the assessment committees roles in helping “train” or guide individual departments in their work with academic assessment and asked the committee members to think about what types of training or assistance they think individual departments need. Grade / assignment norming? Identifying patterns in the data? The technical parts of assessment—linking outcomes to rubrics in Canvas?

Beth Whisler mentioned that continuing education for assessment is always helpful. Riggins mentioned that outside trips to things such as Kansas Core Outcomes Group is also helpful—getting people in the same room to discuss their expectations for learning. Riggins also mentioned that grade norming work has always been helpful for her as an instructor in terms of managing her own expectations. Cipra noted that there is always a bit of a problem in formal assessment because individual subjectivity plays a role.

Graham noted that, as for institution-wide assessment, from course outcomes, to program outcomes, to gen. ed. outcomes, to program reviews, people have to really see that this work makes a difference. Otherwise it will be very difficult to continue gathering buy-in to any new system. Malone agreed and noted that there are new elements being added to our assessment system—tying budgeting to program reviews, for example, that have quite a bit of promise to them. Malone then added that individual work at the course outcome level is entirely within each faculty member’s control. That work requires only the buy-in of the instructor but that the larger systems of assessment—program, general education, program review—require buy-in from a much larger group of people. Graham’s comment was well-taken by the group: at some point, faculty and staff have to see that our work in assessment is making a difference. Malone also encouraged more honest conversation about issues like this. Without honest conversation, real work can’t get done.

**Instructor Assessment Report:**

Malone asked the committee members to review copies of the Instructor Assessment Report included in their binders. At the next meeting on November 2 Malone would like to have a conversation about: What types of information can instructors report to make these reflections more valuable? What types of information can the assessment committee encourage faculty to report?

Malone will send out a copy of an annotated Instructor Assessment Report that Jamie Durler prepared for the adjunct in-services at the start of the Fall 2017 semester.

**General Education Assessment Process in Future**

Malone briefly mentioned a framework for gen. ed. assessment in the future that involves more support for faculty throughout the process—from design of assignments to assessment of subsequent artifacts. In this framework, the assessment committee would work with faculty to tailor some existing assignments to enable effective assessment of gen. ed. outcomes. For example, rather than thinking about “critical thinking” broadly, the committee would work with faculty to identify assignments that ask students to pose questions, develop a hypothesis, research to answer those questions, etc. This would result in existing assignments that are enhanced in some way to facilitate general education assessment.

 On the assessment side, rather than our current system of giving paper-based artifacts, sending them to committees, and giving a deadline two months out, this new system would have a two-day paid summit where committees would come together, do some “norming” activities, then spend time reading artifacts together.

 The group expressed general support for an idea like this. Malone will send out a link to a webinar by Dr. Paredes from Old Dominion University with some time-stamps noted so people can get a sense of where this idea came from.

***LINK***

Weave Education’s “Tackling General Education Assessment” webinar with Dr. Tisha M. Paredes, VP for Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment at Old Dominion University:

<http://info.weaveeducation.com/gen-ed-assessment-webinar-recording?utm_campaign=Accreditation%20Guide&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=57279262&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_5GvW1QKGuNN2UgIYWJDZ1IzXd9wFPhwCUl2WEsJfQxbcRpd47ozUQ552iaYPP48uMT7wBYUK9uD-Z78Rf8Z0Czv06fQ&_hsmi=57279794>

Good Time-Stamps:

9:00—Old Dominion’s general education outcomes (they have 15)

16:30—Old Dominion’s general education assessment cycle

19:39—Old Domion’s general education assessment process—five steps

31:46—“The Assessment Summit”—two days of faculty work to read artifacts (please note that Cloud could not afford the same rate that Old Dominion pays)