University Assessment Advisory Team  
October 27, 2010  

Attendees: Gigi Escoe (Chair), Dong-Gil Ko, Mimi Martin, Ginny Westheider, Flavia Bastos, Mary Jo Petersman, Kim Jacobs-Beck, Cheryl Cates, Rich Robles, Pam Person, Eric Rademacher, Maria Palmieri, Julie Burdick, Debbie Zorn, Nancy Oliver  

Absent: Cathy Strathern, Annie Bauer, Jim Vondrell, Shauna Buring, Michael Burnham, Claudia Skutar, Tina Whalen, Cheryl Albrecht, Pamela Baker, Imelda Castaneda-Emenaker  

Welcome and Background (Gigi Escoe)  
This is the first meeting of the University Assessment Advisory Team. Gigi presented the key events which led to the forming of this group: a recommendation from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) visit in 2009 to form a university-wide assessment committee and the 2012 semester conversion with the opportunity it provides to improve General Education and program assessment throughout the university.  

There is a national movement that asks the question “Are colleges and universities providing an education that is commensurate with tuition dollars?” There are approximately 350 institutions that have joined the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) to provide similar information for prospective students, parents, and other stakeholders. Assessment which shows evidence of student learning is part of the VSA. The self-evaluation of assessment and the transparency through the VSA can be helpful for institutions to evaluate results, revisit them, and seek ways to improve learning. UC is currently using the ETS Proficiency Profile, a standardized test for a sample of freshman students. Along with this, the university is looking for other authentic and valid measures of student learning, such as eportfolios. Faculty Senate has expressed some interest in eportfolios, which if successfully implemented, could be a national benchmark.  

General Education competency assessment (summative) takes place in the capstone course each year. In general, there is faculty acceptance and buy-in. There have been excellent examples of “close the assessment loop” successes. More formative assessment is needed however and the GenEd core in semester format should provide the framework for this to take place.  

The HLC accreditation visit in 2009 successfully ended with a ten year reaccreditation. This was quite an accomplishment for the assessment area when most (approximately 40-60%) institutions require an interim report. With that said, there is room for improvement. The university does not show enough evidence of program assessment in unaccredited programs. The “feedback loop” of continuous program improvement is lacking in many major programs. Also, programs lack formative assessment which when implemented, can give programs an opportunity to improve their curriculum during the student’s enrollment.  

The success that regional campuses have had in program assessment can hopefully be transferred to main campus programs. This committee can help in this process.  

University Assessment Advisory Team (UAAT) Charge  
The charge for the Assessment Team follows and will be refined as team members define the learning assessment needs within various academic contexts.
Work to develop a comprehensive assessment vision for the university. Special emphasis will be placed on assessment in support of:

- Assessing the new programs and program modification resulting from the conversion from quarters to semesters with an emphasis on assessing Student Learning Outcomes
- Assessing for continuous program improvement including the ongoing assessment of UC’s General Education Program and the documentation of student achievement that of the baccalaureate competencies
- Refining and using data from UC’s Participation in the Voluntary System of Assessment (VSA). The Committee will provide assistance in experimental design, implementation, and dissemination of results
- Improving faculty awareness of and skill with regard to college, program, course, and student-level assessment
- Developing and maintaining a faculty assessment web-site
- Supporting re-accreditation efforts
- Investigating portfolio assessment

Other Assessment Examples

- Mimi Martin (College of Nursing) gave some examples of the college’s process of benchmarking assessment measures to focus on areas that need improvement. These focus areas have been studied extensively and are documented in detailed reports.
- Cheryl Cates (Professional Practice) presented an overview of the Professional Assessment Learning (PAL) survey instrument, where co-op employers evaluate students’ work habits along with General Education competencies. There are approximately 500K data points gathered each year.
- Rich Robles is a member of a multi-institutional eportfolio group. This group is reviewing eportfolios for use as an assessment tool. The Honors program is currently using iWebfolio and much progress has been made to integrate the eportfolio into the student’s curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Pam Person described the Learning Community survey which has questions similar to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The LC survey has had a high response rate. The questions are designed to coordinate with FYE goals and GenEd competencies.
- Julie Burdick showed an example of the I-LEAP (Integrated Learning Experiential Assessment Program) survey instrument for last summer’s study abroad students. I-LEAP will be an “expansion” of the PAL system and will include several experiential learning types, such as undergraduate research, clinicals, and service learning. The surveys to date have been conducted with Survey Monkey, but will transition this year as a modification to the PAL system. I-LEAP has great potential as a national best practice. Team members are encouraged to seek ways in their own colleges where I-LEAP could be used.
• The graduate programs have a program review in place but would like input from this assessment team. There may be “pieces” of undergraduate assessment that could be useful to graduate programs.

• Gigi and Julie showed the eCurriculum program (P-1) and its component of assessment. The next section of the P-1, called the P-2, will have an assessment of learning outcomes section. The question for this group is what and how much faculty development is needed on this?

• Maria Palmieri presented the NSSE reports on the Institutional Research website. The NSSE has greater focus now as it will be a metric on the President’s academic strategic plan.

Subcommittees
Gigi recommended that 2 subcommittees be formed at this time and members signed up as follows. Please let Gigi or Julie know of your interest to co-chair one of these groups. The subcommittees should plan to meet to establish goals and a general timeline and framework for their work. The CET&L will be a resource for the subcommittees.

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Meeting Adjournment
The UAAT will meet on a quarterly basis. Next meeting to be scheduled. Team members are encouraged to “pass on the good news about assessment” to their colleges/units.

Minutes: Julie Burdick