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Assessment of Student Learning minutes 10/23/2000

Assessment of Student Learning Committee

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DATE: October 23, 2000

SUBJECT: Assessment of Student Learning Committee Minutes

PRESENT: Dian Lopez (Chair), Edith Borchardt, Stephen Burks, Tim O'Keefe, Engin Sungur,

Nancy Mooney, Andy Uttke

ABSENT: Eric Klinger, Lisa Perkins

Lopez called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM in the Prairie Lounge. Lopez welcomed Nancy Mooney to the Assessment of Student Learning committee. Committee members introduced themselves.

Lopez said that she had discussed with Chancellor Schuman and Assistant Dean Nancy Carpenter the Discipline Assessment needs pertaining to the 5-year review of each of the individual disciplines. Both thought that a 5-year review would be helpful to assessment and benefit the campus. There is still discussion on when to begin again with the reviews and the question of whether we should wait until we have a new Academic Dean. Mooney said that the 5-year review was mandated centrally by the Twin Cities Campus. The Assessment Committee agreed to create a reasonable plan and review it with the Division chairs. The committee agreed that they should not wait until the new Academic Dean was hired to move forward on this assessment tool.

The committee discussed the annual survey of graduates. Mooney stated that these are generic questions that break out with each Discipline. The Career Center does the survey. It was decided that a survey could consist of general questions that could be used for all disciplines, but every 5 years specific questions could be asked for each discipline in conjunction with that discipline's 5-year review and as an assessment tool.

General Education

Lopez said that the General Education Requirements are the most important piece of assessment to be completed in the next few years. This is where we are furthest behind. Lopez proposed forming a subcommittee to address this issue and to form general guidelines for the committee. Lopez said that it would be helpful to have one or two members from last year's Gen Ed committee on the new subcommittee.

Sungur reviewed the Gen Ed survey and the Learning Hypothesis approach. Sungur stated that the survey was sent out, but had a very low return rate. Sungur said that the survey should be repeated and we should ask faculty to respond again. O'Keefe said that the Gen Ed committee should have a concrete menu of what the options are, decide what are the priorities, and decide how to get the plan started. O'Keefe questioned the Learning Hypotheses, if the committee is set on using them, some are very general. The committee discussed narrowing the learning hypotheses down to only two - at most 3. The assessment tool should be developed and implemented very soon.

The committee discussed the procedures for the Gen Ed survey which is done every year. It was agreed that the professors teaching the general education courses should help make the decisions about how to test the learning hypotheses regarding that Gen Ed requirement, but the committee will provide suggestions and support.

Electronic Portfolios

Lopez said the committee should decide if Electronic portfolios and senior seminar projects should be suggested by the committee for implementation. Lopez reported on her experiences working with the First Year Seminar class on Portfolios. Lopez stated that many different documents are being included. Lopez said she will send out a questionnaire to the students concerning the ease of using the portfolios or problems they have encountered. Lopez said she will also meet with the students to see how the portfolios were arranged. Lopez stated that the portfolio was done as an experiment, but asked if it would be useful to use as an assessment tool. The committee discussed the issue of electronic portfolios. Some concerns included 1) If it is required for all freshman, all faculty would have to agree to make it part of the course. 2) Assessment of student writing - who is required to read the student's work. 3) How is the information collected and stored? It was suggested that each student could keep their own portfolio and professors of certain courses, for example a senior seminar course, could ask students to include their work in the portfolio. Then "someone," perhaps their advisor, would evaluate the five or six items that are used to provide assessment data.

Lopez asked each committee member their opinion on implementing the electronic portfolio. Mooney stated that the Electronic Portfolio is used successfully campus-wide in Duluth. Lopez said that the student

should have ownership of their portfolio, but permission could be given to certain people to look at the portfolio. Items that could be included in the portfolio are: pictures of artwork, papers, resume, personal web pages, etc. O'Keefe said he thought it would be helpful to get feedback from Duluth on the use of the electronic portfolios. Sungur said that Electronic Portfolios should be used for many reasons. He said

this tool will help us, it will create a storage area for all possible assessment tools. Sungur didn't think implementation would be too difficult. Sungur said certain items should be requested to be put in the

portfolio, such as the Senior Seminar Project.

Lopez asked the committee members if the committee should be divided up into sub-committees or work as a group for Gen Ed, Discipline Assessment, and Portfolios. The committee decided to form sub-committees. The following sub-committees were formed:

GEN EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Nancy Mooney (Chair), Engin Sungur, and Tim O'Keefe

The General Education Sub-Committee will choose two or three learning hypotheses from each requirement and talk with professors who teach those courses about how to "test" these hypotheses and then decide how to process the data gathered into useful information for assessment purposes. The surveys generated must be simple to fill out and have buy-in from faculty in the class. Also questions should be generated for an exit survey of our graduates-to-be.

PORTFOLIO SUB-COMMITTEE

Dian Lopez (Chair), Edith Borchardt, and Lisa Perkins

The Portfolio Sub-Committee will try to come up with suggested solutions to the problems of: How useful is this tool? Where is it now being used? How could we get students and faculty "on board," i.e. Seeing the value of such an assessment tool and learning how to use it? How to obtain useful assessment data from portfolios without using up too much faculty time. Should the Electronic Portfolio be required of First Year

Seminar? If so, we must have buy-in from FYS faculty.

UNIT ASSESSMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Eric Klinger (Chair), Stephen Burks, and Andy Uttke

The Unit Assessment Sub-Committee will try to make assessment easier for each discipline. Such a plan may include suggestions on how to do a Senior Seminar assessment, a questionnaire for disciplines to answer during a meeting towards the end of each year containing what went well, not so well, and what changes are planned for the following year, ways of having disciplines gather information from their graduates, and maybe a better wording for the assessment portion of Form A or put on the RC form. (or

could we just look at rationales? - added by Dian).

Lopez said the sub-committees should meet before the next regular ASL meeting on November 8 to come up with a plan on how to accomplish their tasks. Lopez will insert the charges for each committee in the

minutes of the meeting - gathered from our two meetings of discussions on these topics.

The Assessment of Student Learning will meet November 8 from 4:00-5:30PM in the Prairie Lounge.

Meeting adjourned at 5:35 PM.