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Assessment of Student Learning Minutes
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DATE: December 6, 2000

SUBJECT: Assessment of Student Learning Committee Minutes

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

Nancy Mooney, Kevin Ely

ABSENT: Engin Sungur, Andy Uttke

Lopez called to the meeting to order at 4:08 PM. The meeting began with the introduction of the committee members to Kevin Ely who has joined the committee as a student representative. Lopez said that each sub-committee would discuss progress made and then we would make plans for Spring semester.

GEN ED SUB-COMMITTEE

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

O'Keefe said that surveys to select the hypotheses were sent to the people who were directly involved. He said that there was a good response to the survey and good suggestions. For some of the requirements, a few of the hypothesis were clearly favored by the faculty, while for others, no clear preference emerged. O'Keefe talked with Graham concerning the hypotheses and assured her that the committee would consult with English faculty on them. O'Keefe also dropped off a copy of the old assessment plan for Graham to review. O'Keefe said that the sub-committee met last week to discuss the results of the survey. The sub-committee proposed to review the hypotheses and talk again with the faculty concerning the hypotheses. The sub-committee suggested two different types of approach.

1. Minimal approach - this is already in place. This is an exit survey (general survey) of Seniors. It includes questions concerning each of the GenEd Requirements. O'Keefe noted that the NCA has said that self-assessment is not what we should be doing, questions should be directed to what the students have learned. O'Keefe said the minimal approach should be continued, we should probably look at the current survey and improve the questions. This approach would be fairly easy to implement, and it would give us quantitative and longitudinal data.
2. In-depth Approach
 - a. The committee discussed the Progress Report III regarding College Writing, page 28-29. O'Keefe said that the disadvantage of the in-depth approach would be the time involved in drafting the plan, conducting the test, agreeing on the standards, and obtaining a large enough sample. One advantage might be that it more adequately measures student learning directly. But maybe not.
 - b. Draft detailed assessment plans for the GenEd requirements along the lines of the three GenEd plans already drafted. These can include (but are not limited to) having a sample of seniors write essays or take a test on the areas, and looking at samples of student writing (for instance, senior projects, or writing samples put in portfolios, or comparing writing samples at different stages of a student's career).

O'Keefe proposed that an e-mail be sent to the same people who received the survey, sketch out the two approaches, and ask the faculty which approach they would prefer. Mooney reported that Sungur had proposed trying to assess student learning directly by including questions on the exit survey to test what they had learned, instead of just having students

self-report on what they thought they had learned. Sungur had also proposed that two to three questions that would directly assess student learning in each of the GenEd requirements should be sent to the faculty to get their feedback. Both Mooney and O'Keefe were dubious whether such questions could actually be formulated, but Sungur had volunteered to try to do so.

O'Keefe proposed that the faculty be asked for feedback on what would work for assessment. The minimal approach (exit survey of seniors) should be used, but we should only do the in-depth approach if faculty were on board. Lopez suggested that we could try a middle approach by using the exit survey and having a short assessment survey to be sent to faculty of these courses to see to what extent they feel their course is meeting the goals of the General Education Requirement. Then we could use the in-depth approach every ten years for the Discipline Review which is mandated by the University Senate. Lopez stated that it is up to the new Dean to decide how often the Review would be done. Previously it had been every five years until it was suspended for semester transition. The committee suggested doing an in-depth approach every 10 years. Burks made a motion that the committee express their collective opinion to Chancellor Schuman that a 10-year review is more appropriate because of faculty workload. The motion was unanimously carried. Klinger thought that there should be a course reduction for the person in charge of a Discipline Review.

PORTFOLIO SUB-COMMITTEE

(Dian Lopez (Chair), Edith Borchardt, Kevin Ely)

Lopez said that her students have been using the electronic portfolios with minimal instructions. Lopez said that some problems have occurred with the electronic portfolio, some problems won't be easy to fix, but they are found only when pushing the system. Lopez has talked with Duluth about the electronic portfolio, she noted that they are open to suggestions. Lopez said that it could be done on a completely volunteer basis, it is an easy program to teach, and could be taught to 1st Year Seminar Faculty. Lopez said that the electronic portfolio may satisfy the NCA, but would not be a full assessment unless faculty, such as the student's advisor or major professors reviewed certain items found within it. Since a student can set up who can read each item in their portfolio, it is easy to give faculty access to their work for assessment purposes.

Lopez said that the sub-committee proposes that electronic portfolios should be encouraged on a volunteer basis. Additional instructions could be acquired through Technology workshops (Faculty Workshop at Peter's) or computing services, encouraging 1st year-seminar faculty to attend, or through the Library Portion of the FYS course. Lopez said that the electronic-portfolio gives student self-assessment of themselves. Lopez said that faculty could also use the electronic-portfolio as an assessment tool, but that it would be optional.

UNIT ASSESSMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

(Steve Burks (Chair), Eric Klinger, Andy Uttke)

Burks said that there was several points to cover.

1. Burks began by asking if Mooney had been given the request from the previous meeting--that the subcommittee is interested in scores for Morris seniors from the GRE and other standardized tests taken by those considering further study, and wanted to ask her to get information about this. Mooney said that Jane Kill (in Counseling) already has an excel spreadsheet with the scores. Burks then made a request for the subcommittee that Mooney report at the next ASL meeting whatever she can find out about the data Counseling has. The subcommittee is especially interested in:
 - which tests we have scores in
 - what major tests, is it available, how complete is it
 - is it full student identification,

- is it calculated by discipline
- what percentage of graduates does it cover.

Discussion mentioned the various limitations of such data--that different disciplines may have different numbers of graduates who would need to take such exams, for instance. It was pointed out that the main focus of how we want to use these data for discipline unit assessment is how the discipline is doing over time, where there turns out to be enough data to make that possible. O'Keefe thought it would be useful to get the comparison of incoming ACT scores and outgoing GRE scores. Mooney said that GRE scores do not go into Peoplesoft, this information would have to be entered by hand. Klinger said this would not be necessary, two sets of scores could be downloaded in some sort of reconcilable format and then merged in Excel or SPSS.

1. Burkes said that he had talked with Gary Donovan regarding the Former Student Survey. A copy of the survey was distributed to each committee member. Burks said that Donovan said that the survey has been administered about 9-12 months after leaving to every class that has graduated (except 4 or 5, mostly in the 80's), with a response rate typically of 50% or better. Burks stated that a bigger survey (done about every 10 years) was done in the early 70's, early 80's, and quite recently (1998-99?). This survey was sent to every known Alum, regardless when they graduated. Gary Donovan said he is happy to give our committee a copy of the data. Mooney was requested to start the process of obtaining this survey data, with the goal of compiling and analyzing the information for ASL purposes. The information will have to be obtained from the VAX, and it is not clear how much work it will be to get it

formatted and analyzed. So Mooney should bring feedback to the committee on what is involved in obtaining and analyzing the information, so we can assess the resources needed.

2. The committee reviewed the Economics and Management Research Seminar Evaluation Form. Burks said that the Disciplines that have capstone projects should be asked what measurement they use, other than a letter grade, if any.

Lopez discussed the e-mail that she will send out to all coordinators discussing the effort to streamline the process of assessment. Lopez said she would send out a draft to committee members asking for suggestions and ideas. The final e-mail will be sent out in January. Lopez said that the goal for the committee in the spring semester is to start putting the plans in motion, getting as many people involved as possible, and continue to work on streamlining the assessment process.

The next meeting has tentatively been set for Tuesday, January 23rd from 4:00 PM- 5:30 PM in the Prairie Lounge. A request for each committee member's schedule will be sent by e-mail to each member.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 PM.