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Assessment of Student Learning Minutes
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Date: March 8, 2011 (9:00-9:50 @ Moccasin Flower Room)

Present: Cheryl Contant (Dean, guest), Stacey Parker Aronson (chair), Cyrus Bina, Vicki Graham, Holly Gruntner (student representative), Carrie Jepma, Kristin Lamberty, Michael O'Reilly

Absent: Nancy Helsper, Jennifer Rothchild

Update on Student Learning Outcomes definitions:

The Dean wanted to update our committee on our previous request to the Curriculum Committee regarding the Student Learning Outcomes definitions. For the SLOs, the Curriculum Committee borrowed heavily from the AACU's VALUE document (15 learning outcomes with rubrics, scoring, etc.). Surprisingly only 5 of UMM's SLOs are not defined here in this AACU document. According to the minutes of the Curriculum Committee's November 29, 2010 meeting, they are not interested in further defining the terms, which were intentionally vague. Details of the Curriculum Committee meeting can be viewed here: http://www.morris.umn.edu/committees/Curriculum/minutes10-11/10_Curr_11_29_10.html

Carrie and Kristin suggested that we could provide the AACU document on our website to help people in the assessment process. Apparently, the AACU's VALUE document is used at over 200 institutions. A report will come out in the spring to evaluate the measures, and a calibration session will take place soon. The Dean participated in the calibration of the Value rubrics. The 15 essential learning outcomes are specified in the LEAP document. At the AACU conference, the Dean became aware of tri-fold sheets detailing the essential learning outcomes. She may send these to us and would like to distribute them to freshman.

According to the Dean, many institutions (community colleges, research 1 institutions, 4-year colleges) adopted the LEAP document without changes.

The AACU VALUE document (intended to be read from right to left) includes benchmarks, milestones and capstones.

Michael commented that this suggested an assessment of individual students and the amassing of an incredible collection of data. He wondered whether or not faculty would collaborate.

Carrie noted that Education and English already do some of this by looking at the course level (benchmarks) and majors (milestones) and beyond / graduate school (capstones).

Cyrus agreed with Michael and proposed that there be incentives.

The Dean reminded the committee that in 2015—4 short years from now—the Higher Learning Commission would ask what we were doing. Ideally, she would like us to get to the point where the process is well established. She would to recruit a core group of faculty (4 or 5) to meet to hold reliability sessions to evaluate statistically relevant samples and to report back their findings to the institutions. She suggested that UMM might want to consider E-portfolios.

Vicki asked if students would have to save all of their papers, in the event that UMM adopted E-portfolios. She also wondered what would happen in those majors for which there are no senior capstones.

Holly (Hi, Holly!) agreed that students would save all of their papers if they were told that it was necessary (and that it was required for graduation).

The Dean commented that assessment was often used in a summative way. She reminded us that assessment could also be used in a formative way, because assessments help us change and improve what we do, and we've been doing these anyway (through gut reactions, student requests, evidence, etc.).

Michael suggested that there might be two sets of measures as we try to determine if students are achieving the SLOs: (1) Student Learning Outcomes (2) course improvements. He suggested that we look at the AACU VALUE rubrics to see if we can fill in any more boxes.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

***Campus Assembly Meeting (03-08-11)**

Kristin alerted Campus Assembly members to our templates and our offers to assist with the assessment reports.