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Assessment of Student Learning Minutes  
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2-6-1997

### Assessment of Student Learning minutes 02/06/1997

Assessment of Student Learning Committee

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**DATE:** February 6, 1997

**SUBJECT:** Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of the Task Force on Assessment of Students' Learning

**PRESENT:** Bert Ahern, Eric Bass, Jim Cotter, Edith Borchardt, Tom Johnson, Carol Marxen, Nancy Mooney, Engin Sungur

**ABSENT:** Eric Bauer, Nat Hart

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Materials handed out before the meeting:

- 1) Guidelines for Unit Assessment Plans
- 2) Updated chart condensing the information from the assessment surveys
- 3) Handout detailing the current learning objectives for the General Education requirements
- 4) Assessment of Students' Learning: Survey 1 for the following units

- Speech Communication
- French
- Political Science
- Elementary Education

### **Minutes**

The minutes for meeting #5 were approved with the following changes: the meeting took place on January 23, not January 21. Eric Bass made a motion that the minutes be approved with the suggested change, Tom Johnson seconded and an unanimous vote passed the motion.

### **Budgetary Needs**

When the task force talked to the Campus Assembly in November of 1996, they committed to looking into the budgetary implications the assessment process would produce. Engin Sungur compiled a list of some of the possible assessment expenses, which are as follows:

#### I. Organizational Stage

- A. Institutional Researcher
- B. Coordinator for the assessment process
- C. Secretarial
- D. Duplications

#### II. Implementing Stage

- A. Assessment workshops for faculty and administration
- B. Consultant
- C. Support for course/faculty development
- D. Storage space for keeping assessment data
- E. Costs for assessment tools

The above is a preliminary sketch of some possible expenses; these costs are both direct and indirect. Since many of the units are already doing assessments, 90% of these expenses are already being paid for under different budgets. Nancy Mooney stated that she is already over allocated in the Institutional Researcher position and

would definitely need more help if units were going to use her as a resource when finding assessment data. One question brought up pertained to whether units that are already doing assessments should get extra money. Another question was whether or not units that haven't been doing assessments should get extra money to start doing them.

There were several concerns regarding some of the suggested expenses included in the assessment process. One major concern was the creation of a coordinator for the assessment process. The idea of creating more administration and having an intricately funded process for assessment raised objections, especially if this would take power away from the units. There was support for keeping the process as decentralized and as close to a grass-roots organization as possible. Another major concern was the idea of having an official budget for the assessment process. With a central pool of money for all assessment needs, some people felt units would start competing over the money. Although there needs to be a fund where units could get a little extra money to help implement new things, the task force did not want units competing for the extra dollars. A third cost to keep in mind will be the costs of the General Education assessments that will be happening in the future. Jim Cotter made the suggestion that the task force needs to look beyond the monetary needs and look at where the money is going to come from.

Possible solutions for getting the extra money needed for the assessment process was discussed. One possibility would be to apply for grants. Problems with this include: most grants are only for start-up purposes; grants take time and aren't always worth the time involved; by applying for grants concerning assessment, you would be taking time away from applying towards other grants. Another possibility would be to ask the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities for help covering some of the assessment costs. At this time, this idea does not seem feasible. Everyone agreed that the assessments costs must be kept as low as possible, but no concrete ideas on how to do this have appeared.

Engin Sungur asked all the task force members to fill out a worksheet on the General Education requirements for each of the units. These will be worked on collectively at the next TFASL meeting.

To be discussed at the next TFASL meeting:

1) the General Education Assessment Plan

submitted by Julie Brotzler