### Academic Assessment Committee Minutes Index Fall 2006

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<th>Meeting:</th>
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<td>October 11th</td>
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<td>October 25th</td>
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<td>November 15th</td>
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<td>November 29th</td>
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Dr. Pirkle opened the meeting stating he had been asked by Dr. Trudy Henson, Chair of the Faculty Assembly, to call this first meeting of the Academic Assessment Committee. He said the first item of business was to nominate a chair. Dr. Lynne Rhodes was unanimously elected chair of the 2006-07 Academic Assessment Committee.

A binder was distributed to each member with information about the assessment committee, its responsibilities, USCA guidelines for assessment, and supporting documentation. Dr. Hosch provided a brief overview of materials in the binder.

The next item covered was scheduling meeting times for the remainder of the semester. The Fall 2006 schedule is as follows:

- September 20
- October 25
- November 15
- November 29

All meetings will take place at 4:00 p.m., H&SS 201.

The process of reviewing the Assessment Reports from the Program Reviews was discussed. The Committee will review five academic units this year: Biology, Business, English, Mathematical Sciences, and Visual and Performing Arts. The goal is that these reports will be reviewed by the end of 2006 and review letters sent to the units with the committee’s recommendations as well as an invitation to a meeting with the Committee. These meetings are hoped to be held at the beginning of 2007.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom
Academic Assessment Committee  
October 11, 2006  
Minutes

Present: C. Eller, Y. Zhang, L. Rhodes, B. Pirkle, W. Schweder, B. Hosch (ex officio), M. Bergstrom (guest)

Dr. Rhodes turned the meeting over to Dr. Hosch.

Dr. Hosch provided a brief overview of materials in the assessment binder, distributed at the first AAC meeting in August 2006.

Dr. Hosch provided an overview of materials in this binder, which includes:
- University policy on assessment (Faculty Manual Section 1.2)
- USC Aiken’s Strategic Plan on Assessment
- A Resource Manual for Accreditation (SACS)
- The Principles of Accreditation (SACS)
- Academic Program Review Guidelines and a rubric used by the Committee in evaluating the assessment programs of academic units.

The 2006-07 AAC members will be reviewing the following academic units over the next few months:

- Biology/Geology
- Business Administration
- English
- Mathematical Science
- Visual and Performing Arts

The rubric in the binder may be copied and used for each academic unit reviewed.

Dr. Hosch then discussed the Proposed USCA General Education Outcomes Goals. A committee has been established by the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs to come up with new initiatives for General Education at USCA.

The next item on the agenda was Dr. Hosch’s presentation on assessment of general education, which included an overview of results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). This presentation can be found on the IE site at:

Dr. Rhodes requested that the Committee members review and discuss at the next Assessment Committee Meeting (October 25) the English and Math academic unit assessment reports. These reports are included in the Program Review documents distributed at the meeting. The rubric is attached to these minutes.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 25, 2006, H&SS 201, at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom
Academic Program Review Guidelines
(due early October)

I. Data

Table 1 Faculty Load List of Faculty with Reassigned Time and Overloads (including internships and independent studies), with Explanations

- Table 2 Annual Degrees Awarded
- Table 3 Average Number of Students with Major or BIS Concentration
- Table 4 Enrollment Count and Average Class Size by Discipline

II. Department Mission, Goals, and Objectives

This section should also include Goals and Objectives for Student Learning Outcomes for 1) majors and 2) general education, where appropriate (these should be identifiably linked if not identical to institutional goals and objectives for general education). Goals are clear general statements about student learning, e.g. “Students will understand and apply basic research methods in [discipline].” Objectives should represent derived subsets of each goal and be measurable in scope. All statements should be phrased in the format “Students will …” or “Students will be able to …”

III. Assessment

This section should present an analysis of the results of the department’s efforts to assess its goals for student learning. Material in this section should be organized by the goals and objectives for learning outcomes listed in Section II in the following order:

- List the goal/objective for student learning
- Describe how the outcomes of this objective were assessed
- Present the findings; use appendices for data when necessary
- Describe actions taken that were prompted by the results

Each goal must have at least one measure of learning outcomes independent of student grades. Multiple assessments for each goal are preferable, and the primary measurements of student performance should be assessed by faculty or other qualified professionals. Additional supplementary indirect assessment data may include tabulated results of satisfaction surveys, focus groups, students’ self-assessments, and interviews, but such material, absent direct assessments of student competencies is not sufficient to constitute an adequate assessment program.

IV. Year in Review

- Accomplishments and Strengths
- Work in Progress
- Obstacles to Achieving Unit Goals
- Long-range Plans

V. Needs—Provide Justification and Projected Costs

- Personnel
- Equipment/Furniture (non technology)
- Facilities
- Technology
- Other

Address Strategic Planning Goals and Objectives throughout, as appropriate
Characteristics of Unit Assessment Report

This checklist is based directly on the guidelines for preparing Academic Program Reviews

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<th>Academic Unit:</th>
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<th>Meets Guidelines</th>
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<td><strong>Goals</strong></td>
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<td>Goals are stated clearly.</td>
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<td>Goals are about student learning.</td>
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<td>Goals are formulated with “students” as the grammatical subject.</td>
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<td><strong>Comments:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Objectives</strong></td>
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<td>Objectives derive from each goal.</td>
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<td>Objectives are measurable in scope.</td>
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<td><strong>Measurement</strong></td>
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<td>Outcomes of objectives have been measured.</td>
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<td>Measures for each outcome include one measure independent of student grades.</td>
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<td>Measurements have been made by faculty or other qualified professionals.</td>
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<td><strong>Comments:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Findings</strong></td>
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<td>All findings are presented.</td>
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<td>Data from findings appear in tables and/or appendices.</td>
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<td>Findings about supplementary assessment data (e.g. satisfaction surveys, focus groups, self-assessments) are presented when appropriate.</td>
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<td><strong>Comments:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Actions Taken</strong></td>
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<td>Actions prompted by the results are described.</td>
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<td><strong>Comments:</strong></td>
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</table>
Present: C. Eller, Y. Zhang, L. Rhodes, B. Pirkle, W. Schweder
B. Hosch (ex officio), M. Bergstrom (guest)

The Committee members reviewed the Departments of English and the Mathematical Science Assessment Reports.

The opening section of the English Departments Assessment Report reports on the General Education statements. Dr. Hosch noted to the committee that a decision would need to be made later in the semester about how to evaluate the Gen Ed statements. This will require perhaps an extra piece to the Review Rubric now used for the Assessment Reports.

Dr. Hosch collected all the rubrics from the members and will summarize Committee members' ratings. Based on the Committee's review today, he will provide the Committee Chair with an initial draft of the letters to be sent to the Chairs of the two Departments. As the Committee Chair, Dr. Rhodes will make revisions to these letters and then solicit additional feedback from Committee members. Once a final draft of each letter has been compiled, the Dr. Rhodes will ask the Committee to vote to approve each letter. Following this approval by the Committee, the letters will be sent to the Chairs with an invitation to attend a meeting with the Academic Assessment Committee.

Dr. Rhodes requested that the Committee members review and discuss at the next Assessment Committee Meeting (November 15) the School of Business and Visual and Performing Arts academic unit assessment reports. These reports are included in the Program Review documents distributed at the meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 15, 2006, H&SS 201, at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom
Academic Assessment Committee  
November 15, 2006  
Minutes

Present:   C. Eller, Y. Zhang, B. Pirkle, W. Schweder  
B. Hosch (ex officio), M. Bergstrom (guest)

Dr. Rhodes was unable to attend today’s meeting. Dr. Pirkle acted in her place.

The Committee members reviewed the School of Business and the Department of Visual and Performing Arts Assessment Reports.

The School of Business uses different language describing goals and objectives. Dr. Hosch wanted the members to be aware of this difference, but it shouldn’t be considered a problem. The members agreed the goals and objectives were stated clearly. However, there were a few items Dr. Hosch will write into the review letter. The Academic Assessment Committee members would suggest including:

- the rubric and surveys  
- a brief listing or summary of the actions the School of Business took based on their assessment  
- explain the term “global business” listed as objectives on page 11 and 12.

Dr. Hosch may include comments about:

- the benchmarks listed, why 75%?  
- terminology (noted above)

The Visual and Performing Arts Department’s review letter from the Assessment Committee will include:

- distinguishing between general education and the major. It was not clear if some of their goals were discussing gen ed or what they hoped to accomplish in the major.  
- goals and objectives the first one is strong. Measurements and other objectives need work.  
- what are their findings with their assessment instruments?

Dr. Hosch collected all the rubrics from the members and will summarize committee members’ ratings. Based on the Committee’s review today, he will begin working on the review letters that will be sent to the units. These letters will first be shown to Dr. Rhodes and then the committee members.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 29, 2006, H&SS 201, at 4:00 p.m. The committee will review the Biology department’s report at that meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom
Academic Assessment Committee  
November 29, 2006  
Minutes

Present: L. Rhodes, Y. Zhang, B. Pirkle, W. Schweder  
B. Hosch (ex officio), M. Bergstrom (guest)

Dr. Rhodes opened the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

The Committee members reviewed the Department of Biology’s Assessment Report. Overall, the members were pleased with the Biology/Geology’s report.

Goals
Dr. Hosch reported that there is a discrepancy in the number of goals listed in the report. Page 4 listed four goals, but there are actually six goals, according to the Department Chair. The two extra goals are listed in the appendix in the survey results. Aside from the missing goals, Committee members agreed that those stated were reasonable.

Objectives
Objectives were not listed following each goal in the initial presentation of the Department’s outcomes for students – the presentation of general education outcomes appeared stronger than those in the major in this regard. Some Committee members indicated that specific objectives could be found in various places in the appendix presenting assessment data but they had to work to find them and some objectives appeared to be missing.

Measurement
For areas in which measurements were provided, these evaluations were quite good. The report clearly provided evidence that selected outcomes in general education and in the major had been measured by faculty or other qualified professionals – in the case of Major Field Test results, these measures are even compared to a national benchmark. Several measurements were either missing or indicated to be under development.

Findings
Overall findings were well presented, although in some areas, the results presented were confusing. Committee members were unable to see how the results collected in Table 3 of the Appendix (p. 5) translated into Figure 2 on the same page and its interpretation that student skills appeared strongest in the area of outlining future implications.

Actions Taken
Actions taken were presented – the Department has formed a departmental assessment committee and made some curricular modifications based on assessment results. Plans appear to be in the works to establish a better baseline with Major Field Test results, and the Senior Project has evolved nicely. A simple bulleted list of these items in the body of the report would usefully highlight these important activities to readers. Additionally, the Committee observed that the presentations of student research noted in the “Achievements” section of the report would be valuable to link to departmental outcomes and presented as an annual number indicating mastery of research-related outcomes. Additionally, if the Department has data about alumni job or grad school placements, these would be useful to report.

Dr. Hosch collected all the rubrics from the members and will summarize committee members’ ratings. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Maureen Bergstrom