

Academic Assessment Committee

September 7, 2007

Minutes

Present: C. Eller, T. McGahee, L. Rhodes, W. Schweder, Yilian Zhang, M. Bergstrom

Dr. Windy Schweder had been asked by Dr. Trudy Henson, Chair of the Faculty Assembly to call this first meeting of the Academic Assessment committee.

The first item of business was to nominate a chair. Dr. Lynne Rhodes and Dr. Windy Schweder both agreed, with unanimous approval, to co-chair the committee for the 2007-2008 year.

A binder was distributed to each member with information about the assessment committee, its responsibilities, USCA guidelines for assessment, and supporting documentation. Maureen Bergstrom discussed the contents of the binder. Drs. Rhodes and Schweder explained different aspects of the committee, and the process of reviewing the Assessment Reports from the Program Reviews.

Dr. Rhodes informed the Committee of the latest information about the Search Committee for a Director of Institutional Effectiveness.

The next item covered was scheduling meeting times for the remainder of the semester. All agreed they would like to review the Assessment Reports from the Program Reviews before the end of the year. If at all possible, perhaps invite one or two chairs to the meeting to discuss their reports. The AAC will review five academic units this year: History, Nursing, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology.

The Fall 2007 schedule is as follows:

October 19
October 26
November 2
November 30
December 7

All meetings will take place at 11:00 A.M., in the Library Conference Room.

Dr. Schweder will notify Dr. Henson that this meeting took place and Dr. Rhodes will notify the Assembly of the upcoming meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom

Academic Assessment Committee

October 19, 2007

Minutes

Present: C. Eller, T. McGahee, L. Rhodes, W. Schweder, Yilian Zhang, M. Bergstrom

Dr. Lynne Rhodes, co-chair of the AAC, discussed the role of the Academic Assessment Committee, as noted in the USCA Faculty Manual. A student is listed as being on the committee. The other members agreed they would like to have a student serve. Dr. Schweder will check with the School of Education and Dr. Rhodes will check with the SGA.

Another question arose, if this committee needs to look at and review Graduate Programs. Maureen Bergstrom will look into this and get back to the Committee.

Dr. Rhodes went over the Academic Program Review Guidelines. In the past, USCA required academic units to submit a program review and an assessment report – two separate documents. The current program review combines the two. The AAC's duties are to review only Section III, Assessment. Each member receives the entire program review, in case there are any questions about the mission statements or other items. The Academic Council looks at all other parts of the program review.

The Committee next discussed History/Political Science assessment reports. It was agreed that one report with two separate entities (History and Political Science) would be sent to these academic units. It was apparent that the reports were very similar to the previous review of them (2005). There was also discussion by the members that the report does not make it clear what are the goals and what are the objectives. They need to be about the students, not about the faculty members.

The Committee would like to see the rubric that is noted in the report. A suggestion from the Committee was the History Department could use the Junior Portfolio database as a way to benchmark writing. This also had been suggested in 2005. The AHST300 course could be used to measure what the students know when they first come into the program.

In the Political Science report, on page 7, #10, the statements about this major being a major provider of web-based education at USCA, could be a good measurement tool. Keep track of how many students take online courses.

Another suggestion would be to note what their students plan to do upon graduation. Attend graduate school? This would be a good measurement tool.

The American Democracy Initiative and the History Club would be good ways to set up goals and objectives.

These two units also have minors – how is that being assessed?

Dr. Schweder collected the checklists and will compile the results.

The next meeting of the AAC is scheduled for Friday, October 26, at 11:00 a.m., in the Library Conference Room. The Committee will review Psychology and Nursing.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom

Academic Assessment Committee

October 26, 2007

Minutes

Present: C. Eller, T. McGahee, L. Rhodes, Yilian Zhang, M. Bergstrom

The October 19, 2007 AAC minutes were distributed, read, and approved. A student has not been identified as yet to serve on the Academic Assessment Committee.

Dr. Rhodes distributed the draft letter for Dr. Lumans. The draft is the review of the History and Political Science assessment reports. This year the review that is being sent to the unit heads is going to have a longer letter and the attached report will be shorter. The attached report will have suggestions to the departments on their assessment endeavors. The letter will also request the unit head meet with the AAC members to go over their suggestions and to hear what the unit has been doing with assessment.

The AAC members next discussed the School of Nursing assessment report. All agreed that Nursing is doing a lot of good things and showing what they are doing in their assessment report.

The members were unsure if the Psychology department's assessment report was current. It appeared that not all the data was reported. Dr. Rhodes will ask Dr. Callen about this.

Dr. Schweder was not at today's meeting because she was attending a conference. However, she had completed the checklists and gave copies to Dr. Rhodes.

The next meeting of the AAC is scheduled for Friday, November 2, at 11:00 a.m., in the Library Conference Room. The Committee will review Sociology.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom

Academic Assessment Committee

November 2, 2007

Minutes

Present: C. Eller, T. McGahee, L. Rhodes, Yilian Zhang, M. Bergstrom

The October 26, 2007 AAC minutes were distributed, read, and approved. Dr. Rhodes plans to talk to Dr. Callen today about the Psychology Assessment Report.

The AAC members discussed the Assessment Report from the Department of Sociology. There appears to be some confusion about the goals, objectives, and mission statement. Are their goals listed as objectives? Are their objectives in the mission statement?

It was agreed that the letters from the Academic Assessment Committee meeting should stress to the academic units being reviewed, the fact the members on this committee are different from the members who reviewed the report three years ago. Because of the rotation of committee members, the academic units would help the review if they put items into context. Some questions that may have been answered previously, but are unfamiliar to this group:

- How do the Sociology portfolios work? Who reviews these portfolios?
- What is the rubric used?
- How does the Sociology Department come up with the success rate?
- Are the objectives really their goals?

Other items discussed:

- The objectives seem to be evaluated the same way.
- Number 5 objective – Exercise a sociological imagination:
 - (-An awareness of the interconnection between larger social forces and the individual
 - An understanding of the impact of history on biography.)
- Can this one objective be broken into two?
- Please rank order the data, best to least.
- It was interesting to note that the student perception is different from faculty perception. Is this contradiction in data?
- It might be more consistent to make the ratings 2.4-2.5.
- Can the data be correlated?
- Please clarify the measurements being used.

Dr. Rhodes will work on the letters to be sent to the Academic Units. It was agreed if at all possible, the AAC members would like to meet with the units before Christmas. Dr. Thayer will reserve the room in the Nursing Building, giving us more space for invited guests.

The next two AAC meetings scheduled are November 30 and December 7, 11:00 a.m., School of Nursing conference room.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom

Academic Assessment Committee

November 30, 2007

CANCELLED

The November 30, 2007 Meeting was cancelled.

(Dr. Lumans unable to meet with Committee to discuss his Assessment reports.)

Academic Assessment Committee

December 7, 2007

Minutes

Present: C. Eller, T. McGahee, L. Rhodes, Yilian Zhang, M. Bergstrom

Guests: Dr. Julia Ball, Dr. Lloyd Dawe

Dr. Rhodes introduced Dr. Lloyd Dawe who will be starting as Director of the Institutional Effectiveness office in January 2008.

Next Dr. Rhodes introduced Dr. Ball. Lynne thanked the School of Nursing's assessment efforts. The AAC members commends the School of Nursing for the wonderful job they are doing with assessment.

Dr. Ball noted that her unit is always trying to make the curriculum better. They are always updating something. The accrediting bodies they report to, make changes necessary.

The AAC members had suggested that the assessment reports should make it clear where the outcomes were derived from, Goal 1 and or Goal 2. A revised copy of the assessment report was sent to the Committee members.

When asked if there was anything the AAC could do to make assessment or reporting easier, it was noted that the rubric would be a very good tool to distribute to all the departments. It makes it much easier to see what it is the committee is looking at/for, and it makes it easier for the units to make those additions, changes, etc. to their reports.

The Committee thanked Dr. Ball for all her hard work and she in turn thanked the Assessment Committee.

Dr. Rhodes explained to the Committee that the other Academic Unit heads will be unable to meet with the Committee before the end of the year. The upcoming meetings of the Academic Assessment Committee will be February 1 and 8. It is hoped that the remaining Academic Unit heads, Dr. Callen, Dr. Lumans, and Dr. Kuck will be able to attend one of these meetings to go over their assessment reports and the Committee's response.

Maureen will contact Dr. Lumans to see if his schedule would allow him to meet with the committee on Friday, February 1 at 11:00 a.m. If not, an alternative date will be arranged. Once we learn of Dr. Lumans' schedule, we will contact Drs. Callen and Kuck. We will attempt to reserve H&SS 201 for the February meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom

Academic Assessment Committee

February 1, 2008

Minutes

Present: C. Eller, T. McGahee, L. Rhodes, W. Schweder, Yilian Zhang, L. Dawe, M. Bergstrom
Guests: Dr. Ed Callen

Dr. Callen discussed the Psychology Department's assessment report. The report that the committee reviewed, had not been updated. Dr. Callen distributed a revised report. Dr. Callen explained new faculty have joined the Psychology Department, who felt the goals and objectives weren't right, and proceeded to change the plan. The new plan is explained in the new report.

There was some discussion about the Major Field Test. The Psychology Department would like to increase motivation among their students to take the test and do well. However they're not sure how to do this. Other units on campus tie it to a course. But the Psych Dept. does not have a capstone course.

Dr. Dawe noted that the strength of the Psych assessment report was that they had multiple assessment measures.

General Education goals and objectives need to be finalized with the Gen Ed committee and they need to begin assessing gen ed.

Dr. Rhodes asked if there was anything this committee could do to help the Psychology Department with their assessment. Because they don't use writing as an assessment tool, Dr. Rhodes offered to help them with assessing their students' writing portfolios. That could be a tool for measurement in their report.

Next week's meeting, February 8, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. will have Dr. Kuck (Sociology) and Dr. Lumans (History/Political Science) discussing their assessment reports.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom

Academic Assessment Committee

February 8, 2008

Minutes

Present: C. Eller, T. McGahee, L. Rhodes, W. Schweder, Yilian Zhang, L. Dawe, M. Bergstrom
Guests: Dr. Doug Kuck, Dr. Val Lumans

Dr. Rhodes welcomed Dr. Doug Kuck to the meeting and asked him to discuss with the Committee members what the Department of Sociology has been doing with Assessment. Dr. Kuck explained his department uses the senior exit survey, portfolios and an oral component in the Research Methods course. The department is not assessing gen ed.

The department actually does not use the oral component. Dr. Kuck asked the Committee if it was alright to do away with this component and all agreed if it is not accomplishing what they hoped, they should eliminate it. Although the professors in the department believe it is important for their students to have oral skills, writing is more important. Dr. Rhodes offered to help them with using the Writing Portfolio to tease out information for their report.

Dr. Val Lumans was next welcomed to the meeting. Dr. Lumans was asked by Dr. Rhodes to share with the committee where his departments are with assessment.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom

Academic Assessment Committee

April 18, 2008

Minutes

Present: C. Eller, T. L. Rhodes, W. Schweder, Yilian Zhang
Dr. Suzanne Ozment, L. Dawe, M. Bergstrom,

Dr. Ozment attended today's meeting to discuss VSA – Voluntary System of Accountability. USC Aiken is now a member of VSA. As described on its website, VSA is designed to improve public understanding of how public colleges and universities operate.

One goal of VSA is to report student learning outcomes. There are three tests being recommended by VSA:

- Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) – two modules: critical thinking and writing essay.
- Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) – complete test including performance tasks, analytic writing tasks.
- Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) – two sub scores of the test: critical thinking and written communication.

Dr. Ozment is requesting the Academic Assessment Committee become familiar with VSA, and especially its initiative of general education testing. Members who served on the AAC will be asked to meet once or twice to look at these tests. They will, along with the current AAC members, make a recommendation to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness about what test our university should participate in.

Dr. Dawe is completing the College Portrait and it should be ready within the next few weeks.

Dr. Rhodes will send notes to previous AAC members asking them if they are interested in being on the subcommittee.

The next Academic Assessment Committee will be on Friday, May 9 at 11:00 a.m. The new members of the Committee who will be taking over Drs. Rhodes and Schweder's positions will be invited to attend that meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Bergstrom