



U N I V E R S I T Y O F
SOUTH CAROLINA
A I K E N

How Well Does Your Program Review Process Work? Establishing Processes, Outcomes, and Metrics for Institutional Effectiveness

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
2006 Annual Meeting

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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

Academic Unit: _____ Date Reviewed: _____

	Missing	Approaches Guidelines	Meets Guidelines	Exceeds Guidelines
Goals				
Goals are stated clearly.				
Goals are about student learning.				
Goals are formulated with "students" as the grammatical subject.				
Comments:				
Objectives				
Objectives derive from each goal.				
Objectives are measurable in scope.				
Objectives are formulated with "students" as the grammatical subject.				
Comments:				
Measurement				
Outcomes of objectives have been measured.				
Measures for each outcome include one measure independent of student grades.				
Measurements have been made by faculty or other qualified professionals.				
Comments:				
Findings				
All findings are presented.				
Data from findings appear in tables and/or appendices.				
Findings about supplementary assessment data (e.g. satisfaction surveys, focus groups, self-assessments) are presented when appropriate.				
Comments:				
Actions Taken				
Actions prompted by the results are described.				
Comments:				

Academic Unit: _____

	Missing	Approaches Guidelines	Meets Guidelines	Exceeds Guidelines	Summary Score
Goals	0	2	14	2	3.0
Goals are stated clearly.			5	1	3.2
Goals are about student learning.			5	1	3.2
Goals are formulated with "students" as the grammatical subject.		2	4		2.7
Objectives	1	2	7	8	3.2
Objectives derive from each goal.		1	2	3	3.3
Objectives are measurable in scope.	1		2	3	3.2
Objectives are formulated with "students" as the grammatical subject.		1	3	2	3.2
Measurement	5	9	4	0	1.9
Outcomes of objectives have been measured.	3	3			1.5
Measures for each outcome include one measure independent of student grades.	2	4			1.7
Measurements have been made by faculty or other qualified professionals.		2	4		2.7
Findings	12	5	2	0	1.5
All findings are presented.	3	3	1		1.7
Data from findings appear in tables and/or appendices.	5	1			1.2
Findings about supplementary assessment data (e.g. satisfaction surveys, focus groups, self-assessments) are presented when appropriate.	4	1	1		1.5
Actions Taken	3	3	0	0	1.5
Actions prompted by the results are described.	3	3			1.5

Academic Unit:

Summary of 2005-06 Program Reviews

	Missing	Approaches Guidelines	Meets Guidelines	Exceeds Guidelines	Summary Score
Goals	2	9	74	6	2.9
Goals are stated clearly.	1	3	25	2	2.9
Goals are about student learning.	1	1	26	2	3.0
Goals are formulated with "students" as the grammatical subject.	0	5	23	2	2.9
Objectives	9	20	55	12	2.8
Objectives derive from each goal.	2	10	17	4	2.7
Objectives are measurable in scope.	2	6	21	4	2.8
Objectives are formulated with "students" as the grammatical subject.	5	4	17	4	2.7
Measurement	5	23	60	6	2.7
Outcomes of objectives have been measured.	3	12	17	0	2.5
Measures for each outcome include one measure independent of student grades.	2	8	20	2	2.7
Measurements have been made by faculty or other qualified professionals.	0	3	23	4	3.0
Findings	13	15	55	10	2.7
All findings are presented.	4	8	17	3	2.6
Data from findings appear in tables and/or appendices.	5	2	19	4	2.7
Findings about supplementary assessment data (e.g. satisfaction surveys, focus groups, self-assessments) are presented when appropriate.	4	5	19	3	2.7
Actions Taken	4	11	11	4	2.5
Actions prompted by the results are described.	4	11	11	4	2.5



**Report on Recommendations Issued
By the Academic Assessment Committee in 2004-05
November 10, 2005**

Overview

This report summarizes the extent to which recommendations issued by the USC Aiken Academic Assessment Committee in 2004-05 were addressed by Department Chairs and School Heads in their Program Reviews submitted in October of 2005. Overall, the Committee issued 14 recommendations. Of these, four were fully addressed, six were adequately addressed or in progress, three showed some progress or change but fell short of addressing the recommendation, and just one was not addressed at all. In all, 71.4% of Committee recommendations were either fully addressed or actions were in progress to address them. This level of responsiveness represents significant improvement over last year, when only 33% of recommendations were addressed in some way.

A summary chart of findings appears below. More detailed reports for each major appear on subsequent pages of this report.

Summary Chart of How Recommendations Were Addressed

Major	Fully Addressed	Adequately Addressed/ In Progress	Limited Progress	Not Yet Addressed	Total
Dept/School 1	2	1	--	--	3
Dept/School 2	1	1	--	--	2
Dept/School 3	1	2	--	--	3
Dept/School 4	--	2	1	--	3
Dept/School 5	--	--	2	1	3
Total	4	6	3	1	14

Conclusions

1. The level at which Committee recommendations were addressed more than doubled from 33% to 71.4%, suggesting that alterations to the assessment review process have had a positive effect.
2. In cases where recommendations were not met at expected levels, the suggestions from the Committee were at times unclear. Recommendations from the Committee may need to be more clearly delineated (i.e. numbered in a section specifically titled, "Recommendations"), while maintaining the friendly and collegial tone of the final letters sent to Departments and Schools.
3. The timeline of reviews still may need to be revisited by the Committee and strengths and weaknesses of the process may need to be reviewed. While all units made good-faith efforts to address Committee recommendations in some way, some units were more successful than others in reacting, given the time available for changes to be made. It is possible that Committee reviews may need to be conducted earlier in the academic year.

[Department Name]

Overall: Report indicates significant effort is being devoted to assessment in the Department, but the presentation would benefit from significant repackaging around learning outcomes (rather than operational objectives) identified by program faculty. A few meetings between the Chair and IE Director should be sufficient to resolve these issues. It should be noted that Committee recommendations to the Department could have been stated much more clearly in the final letter to the Department.

	Fully Addressed	Adequately Addressed/ In Progress	Limited Progress	Not Yet Addressed
Recommendation				
Goals & Objectives for Student Learning - Replace general education language from pre-2003 mission with outcomes specific to the discipline of [Department]			X	
<i>Outcomes in last year's report that drew heavily on the pre-2003 general education outcomes have been removed but not replaced. In a few select areas, the assessment report discusses student learning outcomes (e.g. students develop competence in subject matter; develop communicative skills; gather and critically evaluate historical data and sources; explore and evaluate values, p. 8-9) but the bulk of the report focuses on process-oriented goals for faculty (e.g. emphasize excellence in teaching and collaborative learning experiences, stressing the connections between the liberal arts and professionally based courses, p. 4)</i>				
Measurement – [Provide assessment results from application of rubric.]			X	
<i>Use of the rubric is discussed on p. 3, but neither the learning outcomes that were measured, nor the results are presented. The report states, "So far we have gathered the information for two semesters, not enough to discern recognizable trends." Despite the small sample, a chart summarizing results by learning outcome for these two semesters should have been included in the report.</i>				
Future Plans – Review and revise rubric following the revision of goals and objectives for student learning.				X
<i>Because of the manner in which program-level learning outcomes are approached in the report, this recommendation would have been difficult to address.</i>				
Total			2	1



Presentation Overview

- Where we started
- Changes made to program review process
- Experiences using the evaluation rubric
- Evaluation results

The Starting Point

- Wide variation in assessment practices
 - Some Departments thought they were doing assessment but weren't
 - Some Departments were resistant

- Cumbersome assessment review process involving many forms

- Faculty Assessment Committee existed, but was not improving assessment practices



The Fix

- New Director of Institutional Effectiveness hired in 2003
- Change in administrative reporting structure
- Change in name of office
- Office staffing and funding



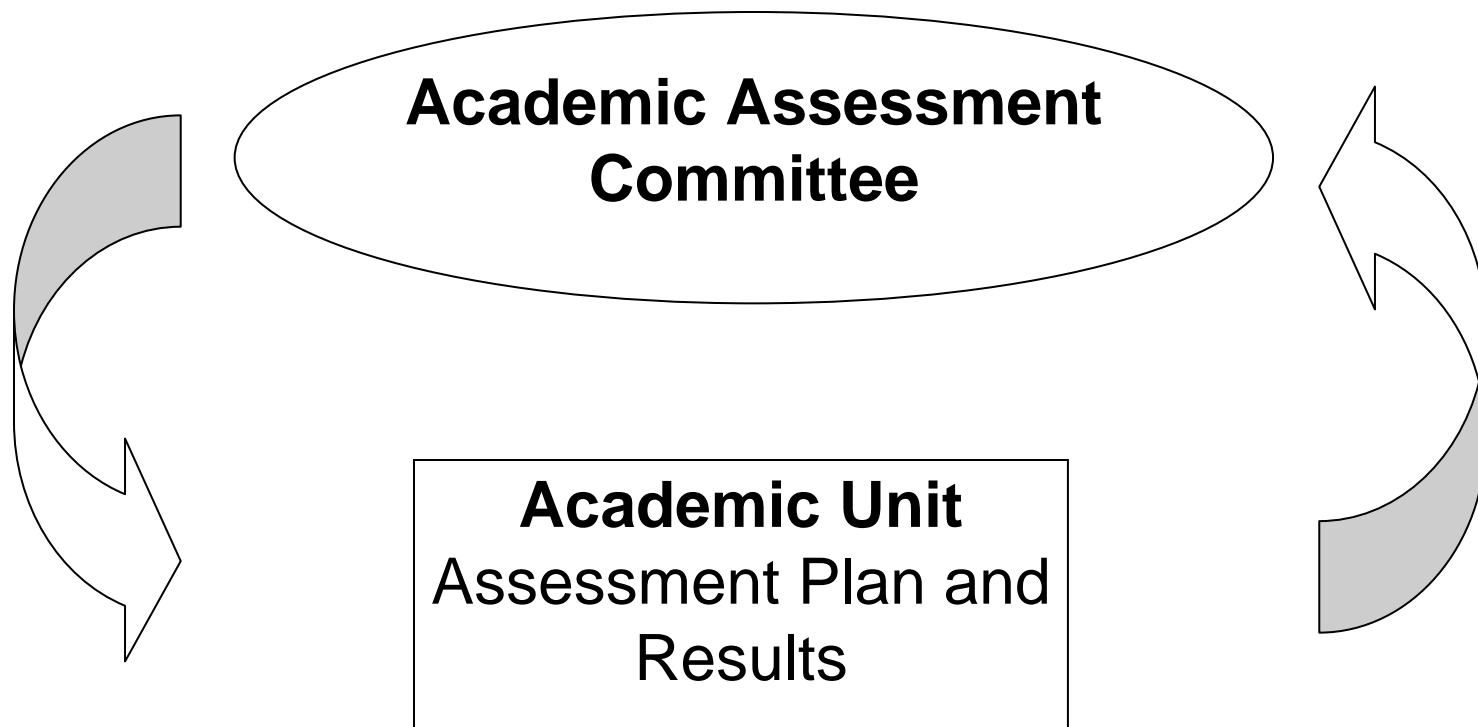
The Fix (continued)

- Report on assessment incorporated into annual program reviews
- Engagement in assessment (but not results) factored into annual performance review of Deans and Department Chairs



Assessment Process Prior to 2003

Assessment practices reviewed by Academic Assessment Committee every three years.





Assessment Process Prior to 2003

Assessment reporting involved cumbersome forms A, B, and C.

- Generated reams of paper with redundant information
- Significant faculty resistance to completion of forms
- Difficult to determine improvement or change



The Changes We Made

- Developed guidelines to include assessment reports in annual program review
- Developed new review cycle, with more frequent feedback and follow-up
- Developed evaluation instrument to determine quality of assessment practices of academic units

Revised Program Review Guidelines (1)

- Include assessment reporting in **annual** program review reports

II. Department Mission, Goals, and Objectives

Include goals and objectives for student learning outcomes for majors and 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 ...”

Revised Program Review Guidelines (2)

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:

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Revised Program Review Guidelines (3)

III. Assessment (continued)

Each goal must have at least one measure of learning outcomes independent of student grades.

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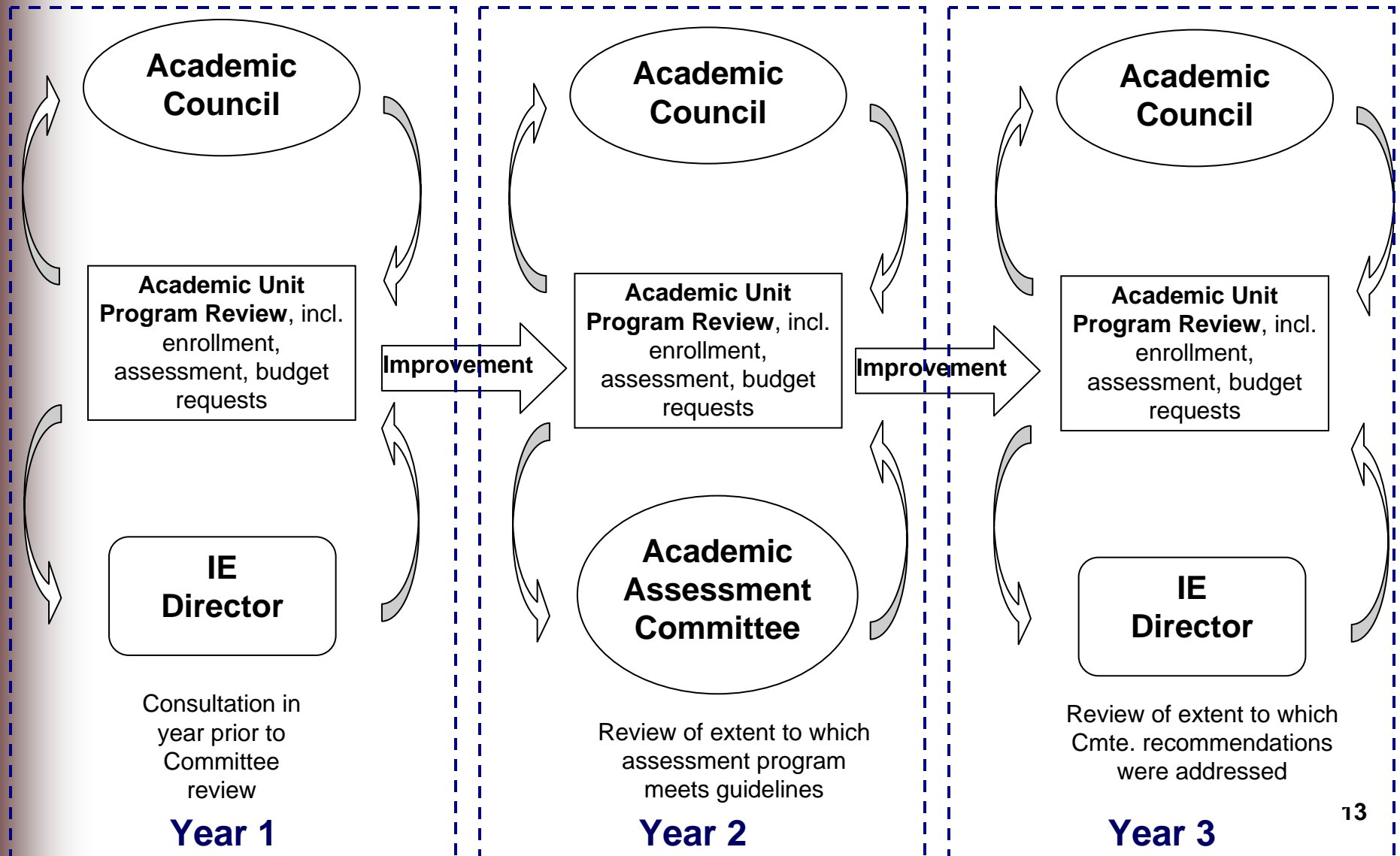


New Assessment Review Process

- Review by Academic Council every year
- Full review by Academic Assessment Committee every three years
- IE Director charged to:
 - Meet with Dept. Chair or Dean in year prior to Committee review to communicate expectations and provide consultation
 - Review report in year following Committee review to determine the extent to which Committee recommendations have been addressed



Current Assessment Process





Discussion of Rubric

- Evaluation criteria taken directly from program review guidelines
- Program review guidelines printed on obverse side of rubric to reinforce connection



When Faculty Use the Rubric:

- The scaffolding provided by the rubric is helpful to all concerned: the departments / schools who generate the reports, the committee members who read and interpret the results, and the institutional assessment officer who draws upon the reports to create the connections between individual programs and the larger picture of institutional effectiveness.
- The academic assessment committee always has representation from the two colleges and the schools, and that those of us who serve on the committee are often creating connections between the home departments / schools and the rest of the campus community. Faculty tend to “speak for” and translate the jargon / disciplinary language of our home departments for our colleagues when we discuss the reports.
- The rubric helps the faculty member on the assessment committee to anticipate, to read reports as part of a recursive process.



The Reading Experience

- We read each program review with the rubric beside us.
- We make notes to ourselves on the rubric and the review itself.
- We use pencil so we can erase something if needed.
- Using the rubric when reading the review allows us to be actively engaged.
- The rubric helps us to anticipate what we will see (or need to see) in the review.



Example Rubric Results for One Program

	Missing	Approaches Guidelines	Meets Guidelines	Exceeds Guidelines	Summary Score
Goals	0	2	14	2	3.0
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Findings about supplementary assessment data are presented.	4	1	1		1.5
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Actions prompted by the results are described.	3	3			1.5



2006-07 Rubric Results for All Programs

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2006-07 Rubric Results for All Programs

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Committee Review Ratings

- Ratings have improved each year that an evaluation rubric has been used (*Target = 3.0*).

	2002- 2003	2003- 2004	2004- 2005	2005- 2006	2006- 2007
Number of Majors Reviewed	--	6	5	8	5
<i>1=Missing, 2=Approaches Guidelines, 3=Meets Guidelines, 4=Exceeds Guidelines</i>					
Goals	--	--	2.4	2.8	2.9
Objectives	--	--	1.8	2.3	2.8
Measurement	--	--	2.0	2.3	2.7
Findings	--	--	1.7	2.5	2.7
Use of Results	--	--	1.7	2.0	2.5



2004-05 Recommendations Follow-Up

- Annual Summary Report Distributed by IE Office

Major	Fully Addressed	Adequately Addressed/ In Progress	Limited Progress	Not Yet Addressed	Total
Dept/School 1	2	1	--	--	3
Dept/School 2	1	1	--	--	2
Dept/School 3	1	2	--	--	3
Dept/School 4	--	2	1	--	3
Dept/School 5	--	--	2	1	3
Total	4	6	3	1	14



Summary of Recommendations Follow-Up

Significant improvement was observed in the extent to which Committee recommendations were addressed in the second year of the new process.

Recommendation Status	Initial Submission	
	2003-04	2004-05
Fully Addressed	3	4
Adequately Addressed / In Progress	3	6
Limited Progress	4	3
Not Yet Addressed	8	1
Total	20	14
Mean	1.9	2.9

Conclusions

- “Assessing our assessment” has produced results
- The rubric-based review process models good assessment practices for Schools and Departments
- Faculty Committee members carry back “big picture” and new ideas to Departments