

Assessment Committee Minutes  
First Week Fall  
24 September 2003

Present: Madeline Chu, Anne Dueweke, Gary Gregg, Amelia Katanski, Eric Nordmoe, Zaide Pixley, Bob Stauffer

As convener of the committee, Eric reviewed for the new members the committee's charge, summarized the work of the committee since its inception in 1999, and explained the assessment plan grid.

We elected Eric as committee chair for the 2003-04 year.

Eric reviewed agenda items for Fall, which include:

- a) PhD Survey
- b) AC charge vis-à-vis EPC - Eric will get in touch with Tom Smith.
- c) Departmental External Reviews - Eric proposed that we set up a schedule for following up on reviewer recommendations.
- d) NCA Report Follow-up - Bob gave a synopsis of the process leading to official reaccreditation; the process should be complete sometime in October. Eric would like the committee to review the team report to see what was said about assessment.
- e) General Education Assessment: CE, Cultures, QR pilots - Anne will report most recent CE data next week; Anne's office is now equipped with a Scantron, which can be used for the CE and other surveys.
- f) AOS Goals
- g) Web site - Eric believes that assessment should have a presence on the Web.
- h) NSSE - Should we keep doing it? Should we alternate with the Senior Survey? Anne has feedback from other institutions about the NSSE survey that she'd like to discuss with the committee.

We agreed that the committee will give a status report at the 6<sup>th</sup> week faculty meeting.

**NOTE:** Although we had agreed upon a meeting time of 3:30 on Thursdays, Zaide subsequently realized that she has a meeting every Thursday at 4:00. After reviewing everyone's schedules again, it appears that 3:00 on Thursdays is the only time that will work. So . . .

Next meeting: Thursday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 3:00. Anne will bring the latest copy of the PhD survey and the last report on findings from the CE questionnaires.

**Assessment Committee Minutes**  
**October 2, 2003**

Present: Madeline Chu, Anne Dueweke, Gary Gregg, Amelia Katanski, Eric Nordmoe, Zaide Pixley, Bob Stauffer

We first reviewed the status of department external reviews originally planned for this academic year. Eric will check with three of the departments/programs--economics, biology, and health science--and report back to the committee. Gary had heard some discussion in psychology about postponing the review for a year, since two members will be reviewed for tenure this year. Inasmuch as tenure decisions largely will be made by mid-year, whereas an external review could occur later in the year, this did not seem a compelling reason for delay, but Gary will, in any event, try to learn more from his department and also report back.

Anne noted that the guidelines for external review need some revision, and she will consult with Sue Gibson and get back to the committee about this.

Discussion turned to our committee's use, if any, of the external reviews. Essentially, our role seems to be one of learning how *departments* use them; in short, we need to be informed of when and how these assessments lead to change. Eric noted that one activity this year should be that of establishing procedures for such subsequent "check-ins," perhaps three years after a review.

We next turned to a report on the Summer Discussion Group's concerns about the "cultures" requirement. According to Eric and Amelia, these revolved around larger considerations of diversity and cultural awareness and some concern that the existing cultures requirement didn't adequately connect with these matters. Some evidently felt that the requirement promotes an "appreciation" as opposed to a "power" model of understanding cultural diversity, and the notion of a second First-Year Seminar focused on cultural diversity and perhaps replacing the existing cultures requirement had been advanced. Part of the summer discussion could be summarized as wondering whether the cultures requirement works, but as the foregoing suggests, it included the prior question of "works for what?"

This resulted in our committee beginning to have something of the same discussion and a recognition that we do need to review the existing goals of the requirement, remind ourselves of the limited ways in which and degree to which we had earlier begun our assessment of the impact of cultures courses, and only then consider our next steps. These latter might include a survey of, or organized discussion among, faculty teaching cultures courses, and/or a revisiting—whether in our committee, EPC, or more broadly—of the nature and purpose of the requirement. Bob will bring the materials from our initial assessment efforts to the next committee meeting.

The remainder of our meeting was devoted to a review of the survey instrument Anne has developed for her study of the ways in which the "K Plan" may help explain the comparatively high rate of attainment of doctoral degrees by our alumni or, more exactly, the substantial increase in this rate over the last several decades. A number of small suggestions were offered, some of which Anne will incorporate into a revised version of the survey instrument.

**Assessment Committee Minutes**  
**October 9, 2003**

Present: Madeline Chu, Anne Dueweke, Gary Gregg, Eric Nordmoe, Zaide Pixley, Paul Sotherland, Bob Stauffer

We revisited the schedule of external reviews proposed for this academic year. The Department of Economics and Business has proposed that its review take place in the fall of '04, because of faculty searches underway at present. Health Sciences has committed to a review this year, and Biology is almost ready to commit. The Psychology Department, with Gary Gregg's help, is considering whether a review will be possible this year. The Psychology faculty was not sure what was involved. The committee felt that the department's exceptionally thorough self-study done a few years ago would simply need to be updated in preparation for the external review. Gary with talk with Eric Nordmoe about the review guidelines. Eric has been collecting electronic copies of external reviews and will turn them into PDF files, which currently include Theatre, History, Physics, Philosophy, Math and Chemistry.

Zaide distributed copies of the [FYE@K](#) orientation/early fall term survey, simply for the committee's information. The national FYI Survey will be conducted at the end of fall term.

Anne will conduct two focus groups of alumni this homecoming weekend, asking them what their K Plans were and whether the K Plan built skills, knowledge and interests that proved to be transferable to life after college. She will report back at the next meeting. One was to continue alumni discussion is via electronic message boards, which could be set up by Victoria Davis if deemed desirable.

Bob distributed his summary of the history of the Cultures requirement at the college, along with EPC's comments when the requirement was revised in January 1999, and the description of the requirement found on the college's web pages. After considerable discussion, the committee decided to create a new set of open-ended questions, based on the stated goals (found on the web); to ask faculty teaching cultures courses this term to distribute the survey; to glean from the answers what significant issues were for students (as was done for the Creative Expressions courses); and then to create a forced-choice survey that could be used in winter and spring quarters. We decided that it was better to assess how well we were meeting the stated goals than to ask faculty once again to revise the goals; the information gained this year should give some idea of how well the courses are functioning. The questionnaire will ask students how many times they have taken a cultures course and whether they have been on study abroad, and thus can be sorted that way. Repeating the same questionnaire for all cultures courses will give us beer information. Gary cautioned about the difficulty in assessing such hard-to-measure qualities as enhanced cultural awareness. The committee reminded itself that we are not assessing individual courses or particular teachers, but rather the effectiveness of the requirement itself, and that therefore the cultures questionnaires should not be given on the same day as course evaluations.

**Assessment Committee Minutes**  
**16 October 2003**

Present: Anne Dueweke, Gary Gregg, Amelia Katanski, Zaide Pixley, Paul Sotherland, Bob Stauffer

We heard Anne's report on the Homecoming Focus Groups. Each group seemed to have a good mix of majors and alums from 60s, 70s, and 80s. Anne started each group by asking those present to fill in "the grid" (from the 'K' Outcomes Survey) and then asked each person to list significant events of their education here. Ensuing discussions allowed some alums to express their frustration over the College doing away with the *K-Plan*, but most conversations were relatively productive. One very useful suggestion was to add "Competency in a second language" to "the grid." Looking at completed grids revealed that different components of the *K-Plan* develop different attributes in our students. Anne seem encouraged about setting up an on-line "chat" to gather more information regarding outcomes in addition to what will be gained from the upcoming survey of Ph.D. recipients.

We then shifted our attention to our continuing discussion of the cultures requirement. Ideas expressed are as follows:

- We should integrate our efforts with those on the ACE committee (chaired by Kiran C.)
- We might think more seriously about expanding the "Jan S" before/after SA course
- What about initiating an intercultural course in the junior spring?
- We need to be more intentional about internationalizing courses.
- What is the effect of study abroad on intercultural understanding?
- What is the effect of language competency on intercultural understanding?
- It is pretty clear that the current questionnaire about cultures courses is inadequate. There is too much focus on the effects of each course instead of on the effects of the entire requirement.
- Might we include the "International/Intercultural Competencies" in a questionnaire about our cultures requirement? (Paul will distribute lists of these to members of our committee.)

Meeting adjourned a little after 5:00.

## Minutes, Assessment Committee Meeting 10.23.03

In attendance: Bob Stauffer, Gary Gregg, Zaide Pixley, Anne Dueweke, Paul Sotherland, Amelia Katanski

- Anne reported that Kiran Cunningham asked her to speak with the Experiential Education Committee about Assessment issues. The Experiential Ed Committee may develop proxy goals for some of the Five Dimension (Career Readiness and Social Responsibility).
- Kiran also noted that the ACE International Committee plans to consider Cultures Credit criteria in the context of International Education. Given this, we decided not to deal with cultures assessment at least until the ACE committee comes to some conclusions about how the requirement could/should/does fit into goals for International Education and competencies.
- All agreed that the Experiential Ed committee's decision to develop goals for some of the Dimensions was a good thing for us.—Perhaps other relevant committees will follow suit, developing goals to make the Five Dimensions assessable. Then the Assessment Committee can focus on developing instruments to carry out assessment of the Dimensions.
- Given that we removed consideration of the Cultures Requirement from our agenda, we discussed what our agenda should include.
  - One project for the committee is to look at unanalyzed but accumulated data from previously conducted surveys (e.g. Advising survey) to close feedback loop and provide results the campus community can use.
  - Another project is to develop goals/assessment tools for the AOS requirement. The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing the AOS requirement and how to develop those goals.

### Discussion of AOS:

So far, Fine Arts (not CE) and Philosophy/Religion have worked on articulating AOS goals. Chris Latiolais, who worked on the Philos/Relig statement found the process to be very difficult.

We discussed if the fact that goals were so difficult to articulate indicated a flaw or problem with the structure of the AOS requirement. (Is there a rationale for linking the distribution of classes that meet the requirement to Divisions? Is there any rationale beyond a belief in "breadth" to explain the requirement at all?)

A minimal goal for these statements would be to identify commonalities in groupings of existing courses that satisfy particular parts of the existing AOS requirement and to state those commonalities. The maximal goal would be to assert that there is something special or unique that each grouping offers, to identify what that special contribution is, and state it in writing.

One way of developing the statements is to ask department chairs to take responsibility for producing assessable departmental mission statements, and then working from departmental statements to area/divisional statements. Perhaps we could find examples of assessable mission statements to distribute to departments?

Another strategy would be for us to begin by looking at specific course goals and moving from those specific goals to general AOS goals that reflect what people are doing/teaching in their courses. Looking at what we're already doing, and then naming it, seemed like an easier process, but it might not be the more *effective* process.

We expressed the need to look beyond department and division boundaries to see if there are other patterns that make sense in terms of grouping the AOS requirements (e.g. some psychology courses might count for natural science credit, etc.)

In order to carry out this project, we need to understand why we're doing it, and to be able to convey its importance to others across campus. Some reasons it is important for us to take on this task include:

- People will feel better about service courses if they can see how they fit into the goals of the institution.
- Students will have a better sense of how their education fits together
- The accreditation team says we have to do this.
- Generally, we need to assess the effectiveness of our program better.—Effective assessment is the direction higher education will go (increased importance of NESSE, etc)

- We need to develop our *own* accountability, especially before the government steps in insisting on their accountability standards as part of “cost control” of higher ed. (Even if the government is staying out of our business, for the most part, increased budget pressures on state schools will force those institutions to articulate their goals/effectiveness clearly, and we will need to match their clarity to attract students).

We recognized, once more, that in order to deal with the AOS requirement, we need to think about curricular issues.—Another argument for thinking of ourselves (and being recognized as) a “Curriculum and Assessment Committee”—We must deal with the structure of the curriculum to assess it.

We discussed the possibility of rethinking the AOS requirement entirely, and talked about Gary’s suggestion of “Globalization Studies” as the overarching theme of general education at the College, using ACE competencies to guide the requirement. Other models included a general ed requirement organized around the notion of “location”—location in place, time, etc.

A first step should be to talk with Greg Mahler about asking Department Chairs to write departmental mission statements. This will help with assessment of departments as well as AOS.

Gary noted that sophomore year appears to be very unstructured at the College. Perhaps we need to deal with what appears to be the abandonment of sophomores (no clearly articulated goals for the sophomore year). Zaide agreed that sophomores seem to appear frequently on the early alert rolls, perhaps because of a lack of shape in their studies/ unclear expectations.

At this point, we decided that there is NO issue that falls outside the purview of the Assessment Committee, and therefore we can and should consider any issue that comes our way! ;-)

We received copies of the Study Abroad Experiences results (from the Class of 2000 survey?) from Gary, and the meeting came to an end.

**Assessment Committee  
Minutes of the 10/30/03 Meeting**

**Attending:** Gary, Bob, Zaide, Anne, Paul, Amelia, Eric, Madeline

1. Update on external reviews.

Eric gave an update on the status of external reviews scheduled for this year. He will be meeting with Diane Kiino next week to discuss the Health Sciences review and will follow up with the Provost to determine how many reviews can be funded this year and to learn of any other concerns regarding reviews of which the committee should be aware. Paul confirmed that Biology will carry out their self-study in the spring followed by an external review visit during Fall 2004. Gary asked Eric to follow up with Bob Batsell regarding the Psychology review scheduled for this year.

2. FEC Meeting Follow-up

Eric reported on his participation in the FEC meeting of 10/28/03 at which the respective charges, agendas, and division of responsibilities between EPC and Assessment were discussed. The understanding emerging from the FEC meeting was that EPC would handle permanent and one-time course proposals and other short-term curricular action items such as consideration of the future of the Education department. Meanwhile, the AC will focus on longer-term curricular review and assessment issues.

FEC requested that each committee draft its charge following the format of the old College by-laws from 1980 (copy distributed in the meeting). In the discussion of this assignment, we discussed the possibility of having a student representative on the committee. Anne suggested adding a liaison from Student Commission that could periodically attend AC meetings as appropriate. Gary observed that if the committee is to have an ongoing role in discussing the entire curriculum, then ongoing student representation is essential. While no clear consensus emerged on this issue, there was agreement that more student participation in the activities of the committee are needed. In the short term, Eric will ask the Student Commission about having a committee liaison.

Reporting back to FEC on the AC charge will also require recommendation of administrators to be permanent members of the committee. The committee will request that two administrative positions be permanently established as part of the committee: Director of Institutional Research (Anne) and Director of Advising/Director of the First Year Experience (Zaide). Both of these positions are actively involved in ongoing assessment of the curriculum and the general education requirements. Zaide also noted that she is the only person who reports to both the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Student Affairs.

Next step: Following the format of the old by-laws, Eric will prepare a draft the AC charge and submit it to the committee for consideration within about two weeks.

### 3. Other Issues

We ended with a brief discussion of other issues. Moving forward on consideration of assessment results, Anne will share results from the past NSSE (student engagement) survey with the committee next week. The committee will also return its attention to strategies for developing Area of Study goals to allow assessment of AOS requirements. Departmental participation in establishing mission statements will be important. At the same time, the AC will need to be careful to prevent its being perceived as a make-work committee.

Meeting adjourned at 4pm for the Honors Day Lecture.

**Assessment Committee  
Minutes of the 11/6/03 Meeting**

**Attending:** Anne Dueweke, Gary Gregg, Amelia Katanski, Eric Nordmoe, Zaide Pixley, Paul Sotherland, Bob Stauffer

This meeting was given over to a report on and discussion about the NSSE survey. Anne began with several points:

- Many very highly selective institutions do not participate, including those comprising the COFHE group. This means that the comparison group does not include many colleges with which we might want to compare our results. In the available comparison group of four-year colleges, we rank high in academic rigor but somewhat poor in campus climate or student life. Yet, given the limited nature of this comparison group, what are we to make of this.
- Comments regarding the NSSE on the HEDS Listserve range from highly critical to fairly supportive. Criticisms ranged from worries about the confidentiality of the NSSE data to perceptions that other surveys (CIRP, including the CIRP Senior Survey; HEDS; in-house instruments; etc.) cover much the same ground as the NSSE. Regarding the second point, some institutions alternate surveys.
- Our latest response rate on the NSSE was 54 percent. This past year's results show a slight improvement over the previous year in the campus climate area.

Subsequent discussion focused first on the campus climate findings, including the comparatively lower estimation by students at K of administrative offices. One interesting theory advanced was that the K Plan necessarily requires that students have more frequent contact with such offices.

We turned then to what the AC should do with the NSSE data. One question was whether we could request comparisons with a specific group of colleges of our own choosing, e.g. the various GLCA and ACM colleges that use the NSSE. Anne will look into this possibility and its costs. Another possible use would be to use the full data set from K that NSSE provided on disk to do internal comparisons, e.g. by class year, major, etc.. Especially given the relatively low response rate, it was unclear whether breaking out the data into small groups, such as would occur if we compared majors, would have much meaning. (This problem might be partially alleviated were we to combine data over two or more years.) Another concern related to examining the data by majors was whether this would be another instance where the AC seemed to be evaluating as opposed to assessing. Eric noted that we might simply provide the data to departments "for their information" only.

On other fronts:

Zaide urged that in the AC report at the January faculty meeting, some attention be given to the Advising Survey results.

Anne noted that the Experiential Education committee and the new Internationalization group will give attention to developing “proxy” goals for the “hard-to-measure” Dimensions—or at least those relevant to these groups.

Eric suggested that our next meeting should focus on developing our charge, as requested by FEC, and articulating the remaining fall agenda.

**Assessment Committee Minutes**  
**13 November 2003**

Present: Anne Dueweke, Gary Gregg, Amelia Katanski, Paul Sotherland, Bob Stauffer

We discussed and revised a draft of the Assessment Committee Charge provided by Eric. Eric will incorporate our suggested changes into the Charge and then distribute the revision for further comment.

Eric will generate and distribute a pdf file of the North Central report, which we will discuss in the near future.

Eric proposed the following agenda items (in no particular order) for the upcoming year:

- Advising survey report (Zaide)
- Read and respond to NCA report
- Read and respond to departmental self-studies and external review reports (History - Bob and Paul, Physics - Eric and Gary, Theatre - Anne and Amelia)
- Respond to annual self-study updates from departments - Senior Connections Essay
- Request departments to submit self-study updates, focusing on comprehensive exams
- Examine department-specific NSSE reports
- Read and discuss Abbott's paper (20 November)
- Analyze results from alumni survey and prepare report (Anne and Paul)

Meeting adjourned at 4:25.

**Assessment Committee Minutes**  
**13 November 2003**

Present: Chu, Dueweke, Gregg, Katanski, Nordmoe, Pixley, Sotherland, Stauffer

Welcome to winter quarter.

Zaide presented the results of the advising survey and we all vetted it in preparation for Zaide's presentation at the faculty meeting. It's clear that the faculty value and enjoy advising students, but it's also clear that at times we find it frustrating and appreciated/valued less than we think it should be.

Anne gave an update on the "*K Plan Outcomes*" survey of alums who earned a PhD. So far we have received in excess of 50% of the distributed surveys. Data from the majority of these have been entered, and analyses of these data will commence shortly. As shown in the schedule at the bottom of this page, Anne and Paul will give a presentation to our committee on 12 February to get feedback as they prepare for their AAC&U presentation on 5 March.

Eric presented a table of potential agenda items and we placed many of them in the schedule that follows.

Meeting adjourned some time shortly after 5:00 pm.

**Schedule for Winter 2004**

Week	Date	Item(s)
2	15-Jan	Discuss External Reviews
3	22-Jan	CE Survey; Distr Sr Conn
4	29-Jan	Discuss Senior Conn Tasks
5	5-Feb	QR Assessment Instr-Eric
6	12-Feb	K-Plan Outcomes-Anne/Paul
7	19-Feb	CIRP & FYI - Anne/Zaide
8	26-Feb	
9	4-Mar	
10	11-Mar	

Assessment Committee Minutes  
11/20/03

In attendance: Eric Nordmoe, Bob Stauffer, Zaide Pixley, Anne Dueweke, Paul Sotherland, Gary Gregg, Madeline Chu, Amelia Katanski

1. We discussed the report Eric would give for the committee at the 10<sup>th</sup> week faculty meeting. The update stressed the following committee activities: a) the PhD survey (cover letter and graph handed out; copies of survey available on request); b) the ongoing work of the committee—done with accreditation, but assessment lives on. We will continue to focus on developing a culture of assessment on campus and learning things that can help improve our programs.
2. We briefly discussed the need to close the assessment feedback loop re: the North Central report.
3. Eric reported back on the Pew Conference he attended in Minneapolis, and Amelia reported back on the GLCA Academic Council meeting she attended in Ann Arbor.
4. The committee discussed Abbott's article, asking if there is any way to assess the "habits of mind" that Abbott sees as the useful outcome of college education. Particularly, we wondered if there was any way to assess K's role in/responsibility for the habits of mind we see in our graduates. Perhaps comparative data with peer schools could help with this?
  - a. One conclusion: If we know that education is better than no education, and a good education is better than a bad education, what we need to do is define what *we* think is a good education, then make sure, through assessment, that we give it to our students.
  - b. One of Abbott's points is that education helps to put things into more, bigger, broader contexts. One of the ways we address this idea is through the Portfolio.
  - c. We briefly discussed the differences between the Psychology Department's comprehensive exam and the English Department's comprehensive essay.— Psychology Comps=standardized exam that allows for comparison with a national data set. The new English comps ask students to explain their "critical framework"—the means by which they put the specifics of their education into a bigger, broader context. Both assess different aspects of what the College does.
5. We discussed the value of asking departments to come up with departmental goals instead of mission statements. We (and departments) might be able to distill mission statements from the goals, and this process would allow departments to sort out goals of the major from overall goals of the department (which would include the department's contribution to the area of study requirement). Perhaps departmental goals would provide enough information for assessment of AOS.
6. Winter quarter meeting time will be Thursdays at 4PM.

Assessment Committee Minutes  
15 January 2004

Present: Anne Dueweke, Amelia Katanski, Eric Nordmoe, Zaide Pixley, Paul Sotherland, Bob Stauffer, Madeline Chu

We heard reports on the Self-Study and External Review of the Departments of History and Physics and discussed on them.

Part I.

Bob and Paul reported on the History Department Self Study and External Review, followed by discussion among committee members.

1. Both the department's Self-study report and external reviewers' report indicate a "generation gap" between the department's faculty members. The reviewers praised the senior members' significant accomplishments in guiding and nurturing the junior members.
2. The Reviewers commented that members of the department were forward looking.
3. The department was dissatisfied with the college's lack of emphasis on the history curriculum. The department statistics indicate that only 35% of students take a history course before graduation. The department was also dissatisfied with the lack of emphasis on American history, which only constitutes 1/5 of the department's staff and course offerings, much lower than the average 1/3 to 1/2 focus in comparable institutions.

\*\*Questions were raised on whether the American history issue was one of staffing or curriculum. The conclusion was "both," as the two issues were closely related.

\*\*We considered the staffing shortfall an important message to convey to the administration, but understood that a half-time American History position has been added to the department.

\*\*We questioned the reliability of the 35% estimate.

\*\*Paul provided follow-up information on the enrollment matter. A Registrar's Office's computer search in response to Paul's inquiry illustrates that 54% of the 2003 Spring graduates took a history course.

4. The reviewers suggested that the department should limit the length of SIP papers to 30 pages so that they can be turned into publishable papers.
5. The reviewers suggested that the department consider moving from the Social Studies Division to the Humanities Division—to boost enrollment, among other reasons.

\*\*Bob's exploratory inquiry to colleagues in the Religion and Philosophy departments did not meet with great enthusiasm.

6. The reviewers also suggested that the department raise the enrollment cap on lower-level courses—to increase enrollment.

\*\* We found the reviewers' suggestions useful. Bob reported that the History department colleagues were unwilling to raise enrollment cap of their lower level courses. However, they are open for ideas of installing student requirement. We considered the possibility of (1) re-opening conversations on the general education requirement issue and (2) suggesting to the provost the possibility of installing such requirement.

\*\* We thought that it might be a healthy conversation with the students to ask them how they fulfill their general education requirement and how this requirement related to their majors. A requirement survey was suggested. The idea was supported that the gathered information should help lessen the curricular complexity and thus help with advising. At the same time, questions were raised on who would administer the survey and tally the result, how the gathered data would be used, and the potential implications of this. Zaide and Anne both indicated that this could be done in coordination with student's sophomore or senior audit.

## Part II.

Gary and Eric reported on the Physics Department Self-Study and External Review, followed by discussion among committee members.

1. The department and the reviewers both highlighted the staffing shortage as a serious problem. With the reduction of FET, the department has been forced to teach only majors courses since mid 1990s.

\*\*We were satisfied to see the administrative move of adding one faculty (1 FET) position to the department. This is in line with the need of the department.

\*\*We look forward to seeing the possibility for the Physics Department to offer non-majors courses and First-Year Seminar.

\*\*We were concerned about the perception that department review and administrative attention were somehow related. (Here, the concern was of a general nature, not limited to the physics or history department case we discussed.)

2. The department's self-study and the reviewers' report criticize the college's lack of commitment in putting the Physics curriculum on a higher priority. The members of the physics department found the administration's policy apparently excluding physics from being an integral part of the liberal arts curriculum unacceptable.

\*\*Some raised the question on the validity of such complaint; the faculty workload seemed to be lighter (than others such as psychology) considering the number of courses they had to teach and the number of students enrolled in the upper level courses. Others commented that the department's faculty members also led labs (some of the courses have labs) and advised 3-2 engineer majors.

3. Finance is another concern of the department. They indicated the need to add laboratory supervisors and to pay the non-work-study students better.

\*\*We thought that these problems would be solved by curricular cooperation with other departments (Math department, for example), and by the added one FET, of which the search is underway.

4. The reviewers remarked on the department's strong research program and its ability to deliver the program.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.

**Assessment Committee Minutes**  
**1/24/04**

Present: Dueueke, Gregg, Katanski, Nordmoe, Sotherland, Stauffer

Paul reported that data from the registrar show that 53 percent of our graduates have taken a history course. This is more than we had thought, although is the glass half full or half empty? Before pursuing this further, we will wait until we have senior audit data.

We earlier had noted that the physics external review seemed to have led to an additional line. Eric noted that what had happened was an extension of Jan Tobochnik's half-time release as journal editor for three more years.

Amelia and Anne reported on the theater department's external review. Overall, the reviewer was impressed with the department, with special praise for its strong alumni network and good assessment efforts. (As part of the latter, the department had developed a new comprehensive exam rubric following our committee's response to the department's earlier self-study.) The department's program was considered very ambitious and rigorous, requiring students to begin during the first year and to take an extended, complex comprehensive examination. Students seemed appreciative of the rigor, but the program does take its toll on faculty. This toll stems partly from the department teaching some courses not normally offered in such programs, e.g. African American Theater. Also, however, since the externally-funded guest artist program seems not to be an endowment, much time is expended annually to raising these funds. A separate matter with regard to this external support is that some of the funds are now used to support a part-time costumer, and the reviewer wondered whether the college should pick up this funding. The reviewer also noted the limited attendance at some productions and wondered if the performance choices should sometimes have greater audience appeal. Finally, the reviewer noted that the Goldsmiths College program in the U.K. was good for theater majors, but is problematic in that student aid doesn't transfer. Were this to be changed, more majors might participate and be able to meet some of their requirements in this way.

We discussed what our follow-up should be after we discuss these external reviews. Essentially, we decided that each AC "team" would contact the respective departments, informing them of our discussion, sending praise when due, and asking to be informed of any changes stemming from the external review. Copies of these communications would be sent to the provost (and to EPC if potential educational policy matters are raised). Each "team" should circulate their draft response to the AC by week six, and Eric will mention at the faculty meeting that we have been reading and discussing the external reviewers' reports.

Subsequently, we turned to last winter's Creative Expression Assessment Survey, and Anne walked us through the results. At this point, I (Stauffer) had to leave the meeting, but I'm told there was a minor brawl over whether natural or social scientists make the better poets!! Somehow, this segued into a discussion of options to self-reporting for assessing creative expression. Since we had already noted Ed Menta's active involvement in assessing the theater program, Anne agreed to share the results of the creative expression assessment with him and solicit his reactions and suggestions.

*Assessment Minutes*  
*5 February 2004*

Present: Chu, Dueweke, Gregg, Katanski, Nordmoe, Pixley, Stauffer  
Absent: Sotherland

1. **Senior Connections Exercises (2003)** - Zaide handed out a summary of assignments that departments used for the Portfolio senior connections requirement and described feedback she received from departments about how well the exercise worked. It's clear that the senior exercise is working well for both students and faculty in at least some departments; others were less enthusiastic. Eric will say a collective "thank you" to departments for implementing and reporting back about the senior exercise at the 10<sup>th</sup> week faculty meeting. Zaide will reply to departments when she reminds them of this year's senior exercise requirement. We discussed the idea of including a list of best practices gleaned from departmental feedback about the senior exercise.
2. **2004 Departmental Self-Study Update** - The senior exercise discussion lead into a discussion about what the AC should request from departments for this year's self-study update. Zaide suggested a brief report on the intercultural/international aspects of the department; Bob suggested a few paragraphs on how departments contribute to the AOS requirement. No decision was reached. We agreed, at Eric's suggestion, to re-read over the next two weeks the departmental self-studies with attention to how they contribute to general education. This reading will help inform a discussion at the 2/19 meeting about AOS requirements. We'll also discuss findings from biology, math, and psychology senior audits.
3. **QR** - Eric gave a brief preliminary report on the QR conference he attended. The main take-home message is that we're not behind in assessing QR. Eric will give a more in-depth report at the 2/26 meeting.

*Next week (2/12):* Zaide and Madeline will give brief reports on the AAC&U Annual Meeting in DC. Paul and Anne will present findings from the PhD Alumni Survey.

*2/19 meeting:* AOS and senior audits. The Dewing faculty lounge will not be available. Anne will check the availability of Dewing 114.

*2/26 meeting:* QR and CIRP/FYI.

Minutes--Assessment Committee Meeting, March 11, 2004

In attendance: Nordmoe, Pixley, Stauffer, Gregg, Sotherland, Chu, Dueweke, Katanski

1. Paul and Anne reported on their presentation on K-College outcomes at AAC&U. The presentation was well-received, and many in the audience seemed familiar with K and impressed by the K-Plan, especially study abroad.

Anne and Paul noted that the Earlham College session on how they revised their General Ed requirement was particularly interesting. The new requirement is not at all Division-based. Anne and Paul suggested visiting Earlham's website for the details of the new Gen Ed system.

2. Zaide reported on CIRP and FYI data. The primary question to consider, given the voluminous amounts of data these surveys provide, is who would be interested in this data? How can we target areas of interest in all of this data and get the appropriate information out to various constituencies?
  - Zaide provided a copy of the CIRP survey itself and handouts on the CIRP that
    - a. listed headings from the 2001-2003 reports (indicating the way the CIRP people focused the data) and the headings from the self-study CIRP analysis, indicating that the way we have made use of the data does not directly correspond to the CIRP reports' organization of the data
    - b. provided comparative data on national responses and K responses (K from 2001-03) on boredom and tardiness; split between time on studies and grades; sense of health and wellness; and interracial interaction
    - c. gave results from the 2003 K-specific questions about student perceptions about their room for improvement in skills and competencies that K seeks to nurture
  - For the FYI survey, Zaide distributed charts that
    - a. provided results from the K-specific question report for 2003 and 2004
    - b. Listed K's highest and lowest mean questions
    - c. Summarized the analysis of factors in an all institution comparison.
  - In the FYI analysis of factors (all institution comparison), K's FYE ranked very high in the factors we actually care about and try to teach in the seminars (in the top 7 on 7 factors). Zaide noted, in particular, that we rank #2 out of 51 in "engaging pedagogy," the factor most closely associated with a successful first year seminar.
  - Zaide noted that we could potentially also sort FYI data by seminar section and by cohort groups (athletes, Land Sea, and everyone else), the latter of which might be useful in thinking about retention.
  - The committee agreed that the FY Seminar faculty would be an important audience for both CIRP and FYI data.
  - The committee felt that our high scores on FYI should be visible and available on the college website and on the admissions site.

3. Bob requested feedback on the self-study update memo he drafted. Discussion of possible changes included adding a list of each department's courses (from the Registrar's website) and asking departments to note which have high non-major populations; linking our request more closely to the self-study; and other changes that were noted by Eric and Gary, who will share these changes with Bob. The memo will be distributed to department chairs early in spring quarter.
4. Discussion of QR was tabled until a future meeting.
5. The committee will meet next week to hear back from those who are participating in the "summit meeting" about the registration crisis.

## Assessment Committee Minutes of the 3/18/04 Meeting

**Attending:** Anne Dueweke, Gary Gregg, Eric Nordmoe, Zaide Pixley, Paul Sotherland, Bob Stauffer,

The meeting was devoted to a discussion of strategies for addressing the problems raised by the most recent registration for spring quarter. We discussed both short-term and long-term approaches to the problems and discussed the role of the assessment committee in addressing the problems. Specific problems and concerns raised include:

- The question of “who’s minding the curriculum” still needs to be addressed. Historically, EPC had once played this role on campus but is now primarily focused on the operational details of course approvals. Asking FEC to re-cast Assessment as the Curriculum and Assessment committee and expanding its charge to include oversight of the curriculum would allow the committee to fill this gap. Bob specifically introduced the following proposed addition to the committee charge:
  - “Assess the degree to which students can meet the requirements and goals of the general education program in a coherent and meaningful way.”

The committee agreed that it makes sense for Assessment to play this additional role.

- Concern was expressed about the role Academic Council and division chairs would play in addressing lack of space in general education course offerings. In the past, these structures have not taken a proactive role with respect to the curriculum.
- Inconsistent application of the course numbering system may create confusion among students, faculty, and advisors.
- In the short-term, we need to insure there are enough available seats for our students to satisfy the general education requirements of the college. It is not yet clear where the ultimate responsibility for this duty lies. Paul suggested that perhaps the Assessment Committee should carry out an analysis addressing this issue in the spring quarter. After further discussion, the group reached consensus that the responsibility for the details of this analysis appears more consistent with the role of the Provost’s office.

- To prepare for future registration crises, we discussed the idea of using Alyce Brady's first year registration program to get information about the plans and course preferences of current students for the coming academic quarter/year. Bob raised concerns about this approach suggesting it would be a difficult task for students to choose, would encourage consumerism in course offerings, and would likely lead to more hiring of adjunct faculty. To get a better understanding of the capabilities of the program, Eric will discuss with Alyce the kind of information that can be extracted from the output of the program.
- While there was some discomfort with the idea of "false caps" on courses, it was generally agreed that this may be a "necessary evil" in the short term until, perhaps, introductory courses could be designated as open only to lower- or upper-level students.

The meeting adjourned about 5:30pm.

**Assessment Committee Minutes**  
**1 April 2004**

Present: Dueweke, Gregg, Katanski, Nordmoe, Pixley, Sotherland, Stauffer

We began with a discussion of the problems with registration. Our committee's contribution to solving the problems will be to focus on articulating goals for Areas of Study. But, clearly, somebody needs to keep track of the number of "seats" required for students to fulfill graduation requirements. We all agree that responsibility for this should reside in the Provost's Office. We also agreed that we should wait to "solve" the problems until the fall, after taking a longer look at the issues.

We then discussed revisions to the AOS Goals document on which Bob is lead author. Bob will incorporate our suggestions and then return the new edition for further comment.

Senior Focus Groups - the brain-child of Anne and Bob - was discussed next. We think it will be a wonderful way to obtain information on (at least) general education from graduating seniors. We suggested starting with two groups of about 10-12 students. Funds for food (pizza and pop) need to be found. Humphrey House Lounge seems like a good setting for the focus groups. Bob will take the lead.

Meeting adjourned some time after 5:00.

Assessment Committee Minutes  
April 8, 2004

In attendance: Nordmoe, Stauffer, Pixley, Sotherland, Gregg, Dueweke, Katanski

1. Follow-up to registration issues:
  - We read through the memo from G. Mahler that set out a draft proposal to deal with the issue of seniors in 100-level courses.
  - We still need data on what is happening *now*, including: the number of seats in 100-level courses and in 300-level courses; the number of seniors who will still need to fulfill their AOS requirements; the courses where exceptions to limiting senior enrollment should be made (e.g.-CE courses)
  - Zaide will report back on the meeting with the Provost to discuss the memo and will ask if anyone has done a seat count on 200 and 300-level courses (looking at the year-long schedule). If not, we will do this.
2. QR Report—Pew QR workshop:
  - Several liberal arts colleges reported on QR requirements and assessment practices.
  - Next steps: The group at the workshop will apply for Pew or NSF funding to develop a standardized assessment instrument for use at the schools represented at the workshop.
  - We discussed the possibility of allowing people to test out of the QR requirement. Would this allow us to have more seats available in courses really focused on QR (i.e. *not* Calc I, Chem I, etc.) We discussed whether or not the test should be given during orientation week or should be given on one test date at some other point in the first year. There seemed to be a developing consensus that the test should be given during orientation.
  - These ideas will be taken to the QR subcommittee for consideration.
3. We still need to close the external review feedback loop. Hopefully responses to external review can be finished up in the next few weeks.
4. Zaide suggested that we participate in The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition's call for papers for a volume called "Exploring the Evidence: Reporting Outcomes of First-Year Seminars." Zaide and Anne will work on putting together material for this report, which is due May 31.
5. Planning for the rest of the quarter:
  - Discuss CIRP date (2 weeks from this meeting)
  - Determine questions for Senior Focus Group (next meeting)
  - Return to Creative Expression assessment: Move toward end of the quarter assessment of CE courses? Give same forced-choice questionnaire again?
  - Reporting back on the continuing response to the registration issues
  - Finalizing committee charge
  - Developing a QR post-test. Would this measure attitudes in addition to skills?
  - Self-study updates will go out in the next few weeks.

Assessment Committee Minutes  
April 29, 2004

In attendance: Nordmoe, Stauffer, Pixley, Sotherland, Gregg, Dueweke, Katanski

1. First Year Initiative (FYI) Survey:
  - Zaide reported selected results of the FYI survey. She will follow up by discussing findings with student development and the ARC.
2. NS/M Area of Study Analysis
  - Paul circulated and discussed an analysis of the use of biology and chemistry courses taken by non-science majors to satisfy the area of study requirement (see attached).
  - While no definitive conclusions can be drawn, there has been a substantial drop in the number of students fulfilling the NS/M requirement by taking the introductory evolution course, BIOL 112.
3. Lifelong Learning Outcomes
  - In response to a request from the Experiential Education committee to assist them in development of a list of learning outcomes corresponding to the five dimensions of a K education, the Committee discussed outcomes for the “Lifelong Learning” dimension. Attached is a summary of that discussion prepared by Anne Dueweke and forwarded to the Experiential Education committee.

The meeting adjourned about 5:15pm.

Use of Biology and Chemistry courses for non-science majors during 2002-2004

Course	2002	2003	2004
BIOL 105 - Bio of Dis	13	38	15
BIOL 107 - Hum Gen	4	5	13
BIOL 108 - Ecol Afr	43	39	13
BIOL 110 - W Austr	7	15	9
BIOL 112 - Evol&Gen	49	25	19
BIOL 115 - Env Sci	39	28	54
BIOL 124 - Phys Eco	18	9	2
BIOL 182 - Botany	4	1	0
CHEM 101 - Chem Soc	27	30	44
CHEM 105 - Phys Erth	74	31	42
CHEM 107 - Inf Dis	30	46	7
CHEM 110 - Chem I	36	34	28
CHEM 120 - Chem II	1	5	5

Patterns in the data over the three-year period:

- There is a fall-off in the number of students using Evolution & Genetics to fulfill the NS/M requirement. This could mean that fewer students are leaving the sciences after taking that course now than in the past.
- Is there a similar drop, for similar reasons, in Intro to Chem I?
- Loss of Ecology of Africa is apparent in the decline in the use of that course.
- Fluctuations in use of Physical Earth probably reflect Tom Smith's sabbatical absence.
- Use of Chemistry in Society is on the rise.
- Use of Environmental Science is on the rise.
- Few students use PhysEco to fulfill the NS/M requirement.
- Others?

## Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning is the passion for exploring new ideas through sustained engagement with the liberal arts and sciences and for the rich reflection on ever-changing experiences that such engagement affords. One end of formal education, in short, should be an eager curiosity and the skills and knowledge that will give direction to that curiosity. Lifelong learners:

### Knowledge

- Possess a foundational knowledge in the liberal arts that will serve as a basis for ongoing intellectual and aesthetic inquiry
- Possess a solid grounding in a discipline with enough knowledge to continue learning in the discipline either formally or informally
- Possess sufficient familiarity with the creative arts to make informed aesthetic judgments
- Possess a human knowledge of the self in the context of history, society, and the natural world

### Skills

- Are conversant on important issues of the day
- Are able to explore diverse realms of knowledge independently
- Are intrinsic learners
- Are able to build, support, and defend an intellectual position
- Are able to discriminate among moral and ethical values

### Attitudes

- Are passionate about a discipline and inspired to remain engaged in new developments in the discipline over time
- Are curious about the world around them
- Are excited and energized by new ideas and knowledge
- Display a continuing disposition to make sense of world events
- Are open to the unbidden
- Are willing to engage with new ideas and new areas of learning

Assessment Committee Minutes  
05/13/2004

In attendance: Eric Nordmoe, Bob Stauffer, Gary Gregg, Paul Sotherland, Anne Dueweke, Amelia Katanski, Zaide Pixley, Madeline Chu

### **1. Spring Registration Update**

Report from Zaide had been sent out to Committee members before the meeting.

### **2. Senior Focus Group Update**

Bob reported that two Senior Focus Group sessions took place during the 6th week. Amelia, Anne and Bob facilitated the first session, and Anne and Bob facilitated the second. The sessions reflect that students are generally pleased with the education they have received at the college. Some were concerned about two issues: 1) the clarity on the culture's requirement, and 2) the strength of the non-major's courses on natural science.

Committee members discussed whether the study-abroad experiences should be considered for culture's credit. Members agreed that this was a topic worth further pursuit.

### **3. Teagle Foundation request and value-added assessment**

Anne reported that Teagle Foundation grant funds for liberal arts colleges on the type of things we do. Anne is helping Greg to respond to their questions: 1) Whether our college does value-added assessments (on students' increased learning potential between the time when they entered the college and their graduation), and 2) Are we interested in attending a planning conference in that regard.

The Committee indicated reservation on doing that particular type of assessment. Instead, the committee is interested in having a GLCA meeting to discuss the assessment issues, particularly on the meaningful and doable assessments in liberal arts colleges.

Amelia will look into the GLCA contacts, and Anne and Eric will take this matter to Greg.

### **4. AOS Goals Updates**

Eric reported that he has received responses on AOS goals from the Physics Department and the Foreign Language Division. The Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Mathematics, English, Psychology are preparing in sending in their responses. Eric will send out reminder to department chairs.

- \* Teagle Foundation request and value-added assessment (Anne)
- \* AOS Goals updates (Eric)

## Assessment Minutes, May 20, 2004

In attendance: Pixley, Stauffer, Nordmoe, Gregg, Dueweke, Katanski

### 1. CIRP Data

- Zaide handed out selected CIRP data in bar graph form. This data will be presented to new faculty in their fall workshop, and possibly to the full faculty during the pre-orientation workshop in the fall or during an early fall faculty meeting.
- Results of institution-specific questions: Before deciding how to use this data, we will compare with senior data on similar questions.
- We agreed that data on answers to “social attitudes” questions (e.g. asking for opinions on issues like gay marriage, gun control, etc.) would be interesting to the faculty at large and should be disseminated.

2. External Reviews: It is uncertain if (unlikely that ?) there will be a budget for external reviews next year. Nevertheless, Psychology, Health Sciences and Biology are ready to proceed with external reviews. The Economics Dept. is probably not ready to proceed, given that one of their tenure-track lines remains unfilled.

3. Potential GLCA Conference on assessment: Amelia will check with GLCA to see if they're still accepting new program ideas for this coming academic year and to verify that GLCA would fund the conference if it sponsors it. The ideal time for the conference would be sometime during the winter. Potentially Andrew Abbott would be a good person to bring in as a speaker at the conference, to discuss his thoughts about the ineffable outcomes of a college education in the context of assessment.

4. Senior Focus Groups: The committee discussed Bob's report on the focus groups.

- This report should be shared with the faculty at the first fall faculty meeting, ideally along with the CIRP results in order to emphasize both the qualitative and quantitative assessment the committee has been completing.
- We discussed running more focus groups in the fall to respond to the external demand to assess AOS, as the focus groups might be our best way to assess AOS. Possibly the results might eventually be quantified as well.