

Senate Assessment Council End of Year Report - May 11, 2009
Co-Chairs: Karen Hilberg & Richard Bartone

Charges for the Assessment Council 2008-2009

Standing Charges:

The Assessment Council shall carry out its charges within the context of the current Assessment Policy and the “Principles of Assessment”, adhered to by this institution. On this campus, assessment is distinct from evaluation. Assessment at WPUNJ shall be defined as “the measurement of course, program, and other student learning outcomes, as well as university-wide curricular initiatives, for the purpose of improvement.” To enhance our educational environment, assessments will be designed that:

1. Better articulate educational goals,
2. Provide means for collecting information on the progress towards the goals,
3. Disseminate results to faculty and staff involved, who will consider possible modifications in that which has been assessed.

Additional Charges for 2008-09:

1. Collect program-level assessment practices and reports by departments, and report to Senate on their status.
2. Develop a recommendation on the use of “assessment coordinators” by Departments/Colleges and investigate other models of assessment implementation.

Summary:

The Assessment Council met as a group as well as in small groups to address the standing charges outlined by the Faculty Senate. Additional charges were introduced to enhance the university assessment process.

In addition to meetings, the Assessment Council held a very successful Assessment Forum - “Building Strategies and Opportunities for Collaborative Assessments” on October 17, 2008. Key topic areas included: Assessing Student Learning, Connecting Introductory Survey of Communication Course with Senior Year Capstone, Student Satisfaction Surveys, Internal and External internships, and Commonalities Between Academics and Student Development.

Other points of discussion included a review of ongoing assessment by departments, job descriptions for Assessment Coordinators and preliminary work for the 2009 Assessment Forum.

The Council reviewed program assessment practices and reports from each undergraduate department. (See <http://ww2.wpunj.edu/ira/ASSESSMENT/Assessment/2008.htm> Office for Institutional Research and Assessment.) During the review of these documents, the Council focused on the following areas: (1) Learning objectives are clear and at a program not course level. (2) Assessment activities address program objectives. (3) Assessment outcomes are used for program improvement. In the next academic year the Council will review assessment documents for each graduate program on campus.

The Council also discussed the flow of information from Department Assessment Coordinators, College Assessment Coordinators and the Senate Assessment Council. The Council believes that coordinators (Departmental and College) and the Council should discuss ways to support each other as the assessment process continues. In addition, it was recommended that this second charge be addressed at the Fall 2009 Assessment Forum.