

Senate Assessment Council Year-End Report for 2010-2011

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Meeting Dates: October 12, 25, November 17 & December 8. No meetings scheduled for spring 2011 due to Middle States site visit and on-going work with UCC Assessment. Additional work completed by email.

Assessment Council Charges 2010-2011

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,
 - All Colleges within the university have assessment plans that articulate educational goals and continue to work on program review to maximize student learning.
2. Provide means for collecting information on the progress towards the goals,
 - Most Colleges that require accreditation or certification have standardized assessment processes that include direct and indirect measures as well as “closing the loop” to ensure educational goals are met.
 - The Division of Student Development continues to utilize “Student Voice” to assist with managing assessment plans, projects, and addressing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
3. Disseminate results to faculty and staff involved, who will consider possible modifications in that which has been assessed.
 - College Assessment Coordinators write an annual report that is filed with the Dean of each respective College. Council members voiced some concern

about how the results are shared with other faculty and staff. This information is critical to “closing the loop” and facilitating programs changes.

- With the completion of the Middle States Self-Study Report and the March 2011 visit, many Council members were very busy within their areas gathering assessment information for reporting on Standard 7: Institutional Assessment & Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning. The final Middle States report stated that the university has an effective assessment process, and recommends that assessment continue to align itself with the University Mission, Student Success Plan as well as divisional-level goals.
- **“Standard 7: Institutional Assessment** *The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.* **Recommendations:** The visiting team recommends the development and implementation of a systematic, sustainable and ongoing process for institutional assessment 1) that includes all units of the university; 2) that is based on the university mission; 3) that will be embedded in the new strategic plan as it is developed; 4) that will assess the strategic planning process; 5) that provides clear and realistic guidelines and a timetable for ongoing assessment of university level goals using multiple qualitative and/or quantitative measures; 5) that ensures all divisions of the university engage in effective assessment of university and division-level goals; 6) that commits sufficient resources to adequately support a comprehensive cross-campus assessment process; and 7) that utilizes standardized assessment reporting formats to facilitate the communication, dissemination, and systematic use of assessment results and data, and the systematic use of assessment results and data. The visiting team recommends that WPU 1) imbed directly into the new strategic plan, as it is developed, a comprehensive, systematic and sustainable assessment process with clear and measureable institution-level goals, objectives, methods and outcomes to ensure that effective assessment is in place at the start-up of the Plan; and 2) provide for systematic documentation of assessment processes and use of assessment results throughout the institution to demonstrate accomplishment of strategic goals and institutional effectiveness. The visiting team recommends that 100% of WPU academic departments and programs be brought into full compliance with the assessment requirements as outlined in the WPU Student Success Plan and University Assessment Plan, including but not limited to documented and measureable student learning outcomes for each course and academic department or program, as well as appointment of an Assessment Coordinator or Committee to coordinate assessment activities within those departments
- **“Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning** *Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation or other appropriate points, the institution’s students have knowledge, skills and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.* **Recommendations:** The team recommends that WPU ensure that each Division within the university develop and implement a comprehensive assessment plan to coordinate and maximize the effectiveness of program and unit level assessment, and that these plans connect at the university level to document, demonstrate and support campus-wide assessment of student learning and use of assessment results to improve student learning and the student experience. “

Additional Charges for 2010-2011:

1. Work with the UCC Council to develop and refine an assessment plan and protocols for a new UCC Program.
 - Karen Hilberg & Jacob Felson served as representatives to the UCC Council
 - Meetings were held with the Assessment Coordinator from each of the respective Colleges to review current assessment practices and gather input for UCC Assessment.

2. Assemble campus-wide assessment data, documents and initiatives for quick, easy and comprehensive use by campus members.
 - This charge was a discussion at many Assessment Council meetings in the fall.
 - Most assessment plans, projects and surveys are posted to the Institutional Research and Assessment web site
<http://www.wpunj.edu/ira/assessment/index.dot>
 - Information on assessment within the division of student development can be found on the division web site
<http://www.wpunj.edu/enrolled/assessment/index.dot>
 - Council members submitted a review of ongoing assessment practices in their College and any evidence of “closing the loop” and best practices.
 - Examples: 1. College of Business is phasing out Course Portfolios and replacing them with course-embedded assessment. Informal feedback from employers of student internships has assisted the College in strengthening course offerings and adding a new course. 2. College of Science and Health reported on the addition of an assessment contact for each department to assist with development and implementation of program assessment goals, objectives and projects. Some departments report an improvement in their programs from assessment. Some are collecting assessment data but need to work on “closing the loop.” 3. College of Education has 6-8 critical assessments in all programs and they are working on follow-up studies of graduates. 4. College of Humanities and Social Sciences are utilizing a variety of strategies including portfolios, entrance and exit exams and standardized field tests to assess student learning.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Hilberg
Co-chair, Assessment Council

April 26, 2011 – Report to Senate

May 17, 2011 – hard copy submitted