

Senate Assessment Council Report

The Assessment Council has met its charges over the 2015-2016 academic year within the context of the University's Assessment Policy and the Principles of Assessment. Our focus has been assessment, not evaluation, where assessment is defined as the measurement of course, program, and other student learning outcomes, and university-wide curricular initiatives, for the purpose of improvement.

Senate Assessment Council Report - Academic Year 2015-2016 Charges

1. Integrate Assessment Coordinators from each College into Council Meetings

We invited the Assessment Coordinators from each of the colleges to attend our meeting on December 15, 2015. The topics we discussed included: 1) Overview of what's going on in assessment in the various colleges, 2) how to move assessment along, 3) tools and knowledge do we need for performing assessment, and 4) strategy to move forward. See section I of Standing Charges for more on this.

Senate Assessment Council Report - Standing Charges

Our actions over the past year to meet our three standing charges are discussed below.

I. Better articulate educational goals

In an effort to help faculty better articulate educational goals, we compiled the feedback from each College Assessment Coordinator:

College of Business (represented by Martin Gritsch): The six programs in the College of Business all go through an accreditation process. Assessment includes the common core, 2000, 3000, and 4000 level courses. There is an assessment committee. Use rubrics, which includes all three categories, expectations, benchmarks and writing intensive. The College relies heavily on the data from the alumni survey and other offices.

- Identified: potential for guidance on alternative assessment collections; the College of Business currently collects assessments by hand.

College of Humanities and Social Sciences (represented by Scott McDonough): The diversity of programs presents many issues for the coordination of assessment. Last year, the College worked on curriculum course mapping to outcomes and syllabus analyses for 13 of 17 programs. Some definitions were created and five year assessment plans are due by February.

- Identified: the need for a standard assessment form, which Campus Labs might offer an opportunity to standardize.
- Identified: the need for guidance pertaining to different techniques that can be used in assessment, such as portfolios, surveys, and exams.

College of Education (represented by Joelle Tutela): The College abides by the NCATE accreditation. It includes 20 Competencies, and unit assessments in each discipline. The College implemented the Chalk & Wire Learning Assessment. The College has 28 programs, and 18 of them are in the process of accreditation and programmatic evaluation. They defined four areas of impact. The College hired a company to evaluate alumni, which includes a “Program Completer” based on 20 competencies. The College also sends surveys to school principals.

- Identified: the need for guidance regarding how to collect data about their graduates.

College of Science and Health (represented by Kendall Martin): Some of the College's programs undergo accreditation (public health, nursing, computer science, chemistry, and kinesiology). The natural sciences programs do not undergo an accreditation process, and their approaches to assessment are frequently shifting.

- Identified: the need for guidance and the development of an education process for faculty in the appropriate ways to approach assessment.

College of Arts and Communication (represented Jennifer Owlett): Addressed the general assessment approach for the College of the Arts and Communication.

- Identified: the need for support and guidance for faculty in developing rubrics.

II. Provide means for collecting information on the progress towards the goals.

- To promote UCC Assessment, we have worked with Maggie Williams and Nancy Weiner in planning a UCC assessment in accordance with the Assessment Plan for UCC (available <http://www.wpunj.edu/dotAsset/333426.pdf>)
 - The next phase of UCC Assessment will focus on assessing Technology Intensive courses, and is scheduled to take place in the 2016-2017 academic year.
 - We note that Senate Assessment Council has been assured by UCC Assessment that this will not be an evaluation of faculty, but a direct assessment of students in UCC technology courses.
 - Future phases of UCC Assessment will involve application of the same model (i.e., using VALUE rubrics) to the other areas of UCC.
- Feedback on the development of UCC Assessment has been accomplished through meeting with Maggie Williams and Nancy Weiner, provided by the UCC Council in collaboration with Maggie Williams.

III. Disseminate results to faculty and staff involved, who will consider possible modifications of that which has been assessed.

- A Needs Assessment Survey (see Appendix) was sent to College Deans, Department Chairs, and College and Department Assessment Coordinators in the Spring of 2016 to measure interest in training focusing on different levels and methods of assessment. The results will be disseminated to the University community.

Recommendations for Charges to Assessment Council for 2016-2017

The Senate has ratified a new charge for the Assessment Council that will take effect in the 2016-2017 year. The charge is as follows:

- Regarding Program Review: Academic Standards Council will review documentation and make recommendations *in consultation with the Assessment Council* to clarify the process.

The Assessment Council feels that it needs to have a greater impact on Assessment as practiced in the Academic Departments (including the Library and Information departments). While there are several ways this impact could be achieved, we recommend the following be considered:

- College Assessment Coordinators should be more integrated in the Assessment Council, which would promote seamless incorporation of Assessment across campus, and provide a way to influence the Assessment process.
- The Assessment Council should develop assessment training and information sessions based on the results of the Needs Assessment Survey deployed in the Spring of 2016. Such training and information sessions should be offered at the College level and Academic Departments.
- The University should reprioritize Planning as a major purpose of Assessment. On the administrative side, ideally no program changes should be approved without relevant Assessment data.

Appendix

Assessment Survey

Default Question Block

Survey of Resources Needed for Assessment

In an attempt to capture the training needs of Assessment at William Paterson University, the Senate Assessment Council is reaching out to assessment stakeholders like yourself to learn about the current condition of assessment resources needed on campus. We hope you will give us 10 minutes of your time and let us know how we can help meet these needs. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

CONFIDENTIALITY: All information obtained in this study will remain strictly confidential and will be used for research purposes and assessment improvement only. Participants will not be identified by name in any report of the completed study.

If you may have any questions, please feel free to contact the Senate Assessment Council Chair, Ray Schwartz, (SchwartzR2@wpunj.edu).

Rank- order questions:

By dragging and dropping the following areas or issues, please rank order their importance to your assessment work (most important at the top and the least important at the bottom).

Basic Issues:

- More information in assessment statistical design (in order to conduct the assessment what statistical design should be used)

- Tools and systems that can be used for assessment (embedded questions, surveys, examples of student work, etc.)

- Course mapping and unit mapping

- Integrating UCC assessment into departmental assessment plans

- The role of assessment in program review

- Designing assessment goals and objectives for academic programs

- Building a culture of assessment in my department (or college for responding deans)

Specific Issues:

- More information on sampling (in order to conduct the assessment what sampling method should be used; what is a representative sample, e.g., all sections of a course/a section of a course, all papers and assignments/some papers etc.)

- How assessment information is captured at William Paterson University (CampusLabs as used for assessment/ Chalk & Wire)

- Software packages for survey design (REMARK, BASELINE)

Open-ended questions:

1) Why did you choose the priority of services above?

2) What else do you need to assist you with assessment?

3) Please describe whether and how you are achieving the needs of UCC (please distinguish between non-major or major needs, if possible).

Thank you so much for your assistance!