

The University of Southern Mississippi
University Assessment Committee Minutes
November 6, 2013

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) met at 12:00 p.m. on November 6, 2013 in the International Center, Room 318, with Kelly Lester, Chair of the UAC, presiding.

The following voting members were present: Ramesh Bettagere, Phil Carlan, Kenny Christensen, Elizabeth Haynes, Dawn Higdon, Ann Marie Kinnell, Jim Lambers, Kelly Lester, Doug Masterson, Peggy McArthur, Gwen Pate, Joe Peyrefitte, Avonelle Pugh, Jennifer Regan, Chuck Tardy, Yen To, Donna Valestro

The following non-voting members were present: Kathryn Lowery

The following guests were present: Julie Howdeshell

1.0 Call to Order, Adoption of the Agenda, and Review of the Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Kelly Lester, Chair of the UAC at noon. Ms. Lester presented the agenda for the meeting and the minutes from the last meeting held September 25. Both were approved by the UAC.

2.0 Committee Liaison Reports

Academic Council – Doug Masterson

The General Education Committee of Academic Council is reviewing articulation issues and is making progress. Also, Academic Council and Graduate Council have developed new Guidelines for Proposals. These are available on Info Center.

Council of Chairs – Charles Tardy

Information from the last UAC meeting was shared with the Council of Chairs, including guidelines regarding certificate programs and the modification to 4 outcomes and 1 student achievement objective for academic program assessment.

QEP - Julie Howdeshell

The QEP Topic Selection Task Force has designed a multi-phase process for selecting the new QEP. This will include a call for general topics followed by a call for proposals. The target date for identifying the new topic is the end of the Spring 2014 semester.

Staff Council – Peggy McArthur

Dr. Vinzant shared information regarding the University's finances at the last Staff Council meeting. Also, two families were selected to receive food boxes.

3.0 New Business

Phase 1 Review

UAC Members were asked to share observations and any questions related to the Phase 1 Review. A question was asked about how to address typographical errors in the reports. Kathryn Lowery responded that reviewers may mark the checkbox indicating that edits are needed as a way to communicate to the department that more attention needs to be given to editing in the next round of reports.

Ann Marie Kinnell commented that the modifications to the rubric worked very well. She also asked for clarifications regarding action plans. Since this is the first year in the two-year reporting cycle, action plans are optional. That row on the rubric may be left blank this year. There were also questions about which academic year the summer semester should be included. Kathryn Lowery

responded that it may vary depending on the program, but what is most important is that the program is providing a full picture. There was also a question about the Closing the Loop field and Ms. Lowery responded that there should be a statement for the field regardless of whether the program was new or the stage of the reporting cycle.

Kelly Lester asked about distinctions between masters and doctoral level programs. Kathryn Lowery stated that there should be clear distinctions in student learning outcomes between different levels of a program.

Ms. Lowery asked for feedback on administrative assessment and Donna Valestro responded that she thought it went very well and that the rubric was easy to use.

Certificate Rubric

Members were asked for comment on the rubric for reviewing certificate programs. The rubric reflects the guidelines for certificate programs (two student learning outcomes with one measure per student learning outcome). This is the first year for reporting certificates. If the certificate is on the list as active, a report is required. A motion was made to adopt the certificate rubric, seconded, and approved by the membership.

Second Review Assessment Assignments

For administrative units, the reports will be in your Dropbox folder. For academic programs, reviewers will have a new set of reports and the first reviewer's rubric scores and comments. Second phase reviewers are asked to review the first review and to either concur or complete a new review form. There should be one form per department. Reviewers are asked to take the comments from the rubrics and compile them, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement. This is also the place where feedback can be given regarding the plan itself.

As a reminder, please note if programs have separated findings by site and mode as applicable. Units are not required to separate data by semester. They can combine semesters, but should indicate that a full AY is provided. They should not be penalized if a full academic year of data is provided. Action plans are not required in this year's reports. If reviewers would like a refresher, the Assessment Showcase provides examples of expectations for the reports. Second phase reports are due December 4.

Academic Unit Guidelines

Kathryn Lowery provided a beginning working draft to define administrative support services, educational support services, research within educational mission, and community/public service within educational mission. Relevant notes from included from SACS are in italics. An organizational chart was also provided. Clarifications will need to be made in determining which units fall into the various categories. This includes Hattiesburg and Gulf Coast. The membership will be asked to vote on the definitions at the next UAC meeting.

6.0 Meeting Adjourned

Kathryn Lowery asked members to please e-mail her when they complete their first phase reviews so that these can be made available for the second phase of reviews. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

December 4 – International Center (IC) 318
January 22 – International Center (IC) 318
February 19 – Speaking Center (Cook 117)
March 19 – International Center (IC) 318

April 23 – Thad Cochran TBA (Assessment Showcase)