

**The University of Southern Mississippi
University Assessment Committee Minutes
November 7, 2012**

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) met at 12:00 p.m. on November 7, 2012 in the Liberal Arts Building (LAB), Room 209, with Kelly Lester, Chair of the UAC, presiding.

The following voting members were present: Bret Becton, Phil Carlan, Kenny Christensen, Diane Fisher, Stacy Reischman Fletcher, Anne Marie Kinnell, Joohee Lee, Kelly Lester, Kristi Motter, Wanda Naylor, Laurie Neelis, Bonnie Nicholson, Gwen Pate, Jennifer Regan, Sharon Rouse, Chuck Tardy, Donna Valestro, Ellen Weinauer, Ursula Whitehead

The following non-voting members were present: Kathryn Lowery, William Powell

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. Ms. Lester presented the agenda for the meeting (previously sent via e-mail) and the minutes from the last meeting held September 26, 2012. Both were approved by the UAC.

2.0 *Committee Liaison Reports - No reports.*

3.0 *Old Business*

First phase reports are due today. Members were asked to provide general feedback and the following questions/issues were raised:

- a. Dr. Weinauer asked how members could best address programs of different levels within the same department that had similar measures, outcomes, and reports. Kathryn Lowery noted that departments should distinguish between various levels of programs. This is also stipulated in the guidelines. Reviewers should address this in the comments section of the rubric as applicable.
- b. The Annual Report section of the rubric does not currently address quality, but rather compliance in completion based on the instructions. A program can earn a "4" in this category but not receive a "commended" review if the annual report (or other areas) does not reach the level of "commended" in the judgment of the reviewer. The UAC may want to revise the rubric to include distinctions in regards to quality.
- c. Dr. Charles Tardy asked about programs that had action plans that were not linked to current objectives. Kathryn Lowery noted that action plans should be directly related to outcomes/measures. All other program and department improvement initiatives should be included in the continuous improvements section of the report. Also, as noted on the rubric, even if a program has met all targets, an appropriate number of action plans are needed to show continuous improvement. Programs cannot "close the loop" if there are not any action plans. If a program is new and the "closing the loop" field is not applicable yet, the program should note that in the report.

4.0 *New Business*

a. *2nd Review Assessment Assignments*

Kathryn Lowery provided an overview of the process for second reviews. UAC members will receive a Dropbox invitation that will include rubrics and reports reviewed in the first phase. There will also be a Review of Reviews form. UAC members are to read the reports and

first reviews and then determine whether they agree or disagree with the overall assessment. If the second reviewer agrees, she/he should include a narrative on the Review of Review form that includes feedback, encouragement, and suggestions regarding the plan and report. If the second reviewer disagrees, she/he should complete a new rubric in addition to the Review of Review form. If the first review resulted in a “does not support” and the second reviewer discerns that the report should be rated as “adequate,” the reviewer is asked to contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (ie@usm.edu) for further review. Second phase reviews are due December 5, 2012.

b. *Administrative Unit Guidelines*

In response to members’ feedback on administrative assessment, and in particular on the issue of direct and indirect measures, Kathryn Lowery recommended adding two sentences to the administrative unit assessment guidelines under B.2 Achievement Indicators (noted in bold for emphasis in the minutes):

“Ideally, each responsibility has at least one Achievement Indicator that is a direct measure. A direct measure evaluates actual performance. Indirect measures can also be used but are usually paired with a direct measure. An indirect measure evaluates perceived performance (customer satisfaction surveys, focus group, etc.). **In some cases, an indirect measure is the only applicable measure available. Overall, there will be a mix of direct and indirect indicators.**”

The rubric for this section was also modified to reflect this change and after member feedback was modified to read: “At least one indicator for each responsibility is a direct measure of essential function accomplishment or an indirect measure of essential function accomplishment if that is the only applicable measure available.” (See column 4, B.2.)

A motion was made to approve the changes in the guidelines and rubric as noted above and was approved by the membership.

c. *Amend by-laws to address re-establishment of College of Nursing*

Ms. Lester addressed the issue of modifying the UAC By-Laws to reflect the re-establishment of the College of Nursing and to address the proportion of representatives per college given the number of programs within a college. Kathryn Lowery noted that the number of programs varies each year and that the colleges represented by council representatives also changes. In addition, minors and certificates will be added to the review process which will increase the number of reports to review.

UAC members suggested including a stipulation that every 3 years (or an appropriate number), the number of representatives will be reviewed and reallocated based on the number of programs. It was also recommended that the College of Nursing have two representatives even though they only have seven programs at present. Ms. Lester suggested that she and Ms. Lowery prepare a draft to address the needed changes and present it to the UAC for review and the UAC membership concurred.

9.0 *Meeting Adjourned*

Administrative assessment representatives were asked to stay to discuss administrative assessment reports and to determine a workable meeting date for a separate meeting. Ms. Lester noted that the next meeting will be in the **International Center, Room 318 on Dec. 5, 2012 at noon**. Second reviews are also due on this date. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.