

**The University of Southern Mississippi**  
**University Assessment Committee Minutes**  
**December 7, 2011**

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) met at 12:00 p.m. on December 7, 2011 in the Bobby Chain Technology Building (TEC), 102 with Desmond Fletcher, Chair of the UAC, presiding.

The following voting members were present: Allysa Beck, Kenny Christensen, Desmond Fletcher, Stacy Reischman Fletcher, Pam Gibbs, Jeannie Gillespie, Lilian Hill, Ann Marie Kinnell, Kelly Lester, Kathleen Masters, Chris Meyers, Kristi Motter, Wanda Naylor, Gwen Pate, Joe Peyrefitte, Avonelle Pugh, Beth Richmond, Chuck Tardy, and Fei Xue (by proxy)

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

The following guests were present: Julie Howdeshell

1.0 *Call to Order*

The meeting was called to order by Desmond Fletcher, Chair of the UAC.

2.0 *Adoption of the Agenda*

Mr. Fletcher presented the agenda and it was approved by the UAC membership.

3.0 *Review of the Minutes*

Mr. Fletcher presented the minutes from the last meeting held November 2, 2011 and they were approved.

4.0 *Committee Liaison Reports*

Academic Council – No report.

Graduate Council – No report.

Faculty Senate – No report.

Council of Chairs – No report.

GEC – The modifications and new template will go into effect in 2013-14.

QEP – A draft of the QEP Impact Report is near completion and will be presented to the QEP Advisory Board at its next meeting.

Staff Council – No report.

5.0 *Academic Assessment*

The UAC Chair, Desmond Fletcher, led a discussion on improvements to rubrics and the review process.

There was consensus by the committee that using Dropbox made the process much easier. Ms. Lowery noted that the new Dropbox system made administration of the review process more efficient as well. Given the use of Dropbox, the rubric will be formatted to make entering scores and notes as user-friendly as possible.

Dr. Jeannie Gillespie asked about the follow-up process for programs rated as inadequate or not meeting expectations. Dr. Kathy Masters suggested that there be mandatory guidance for the programs. The committee discussed workshops and one-on-one consultations as possible follow-up measures. The workshop could include examples of what to do and what not to do based on UAC guidelines and expectations.

Dr. Ann Marie Kinnell noted that it would be helpful to have more clarity on how to rate the overall assessment report. The committee discussed the importance of “use of data” in marking the overall score.

The committee also discussed whether second reviewers are supposed to be capturing the comments of the first reviewer and the consistency between reviewers.

The review of reviews will go back to the department before the holiday break.

## 6.0 *Updates from the SACS Annual Conference*

Kathryn Lowery, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, shared the following updates from the December 2011 SACS Conference:

Dr. Crystal Baird and Dr. Mark Smith gave a presentation on “Preparing for the Fifth Year Review” and noted the five most cited standards for fifth-year reports from 2014 & 2015 institutions:

1. CS 3.3.1.1 Institutional Effectiveness: Educational Programs, to include Student Learning Outcomes (57.2% )
2. CR 2.8 Number of Full-time Faculty (48.7%)
3. CS 3.4.11 Qualified Academic Coordinators (35.5%)
4. FR 4.5 Student Complaints (23%)
5. CS 3.11.3 Physical Facilities (17.1%)

Regarding CS 3.3.1.1 Institutional Effectiveness: Educational Programs, common issues include:

1. Lack of defined student learning outcomes and/or methods for assessing the outcomes
2. Limited/Immature data
3. Not documenting use of data to make improvements
4. Non-representative sampling
5. Not addressing distance education and off-campus site programs

Other Issues:

1. Assessing Certificate Programs
2. FR 4.7 Title IV Program Responsibilities and CS 3.10.3 Financial Audits (23% of 2015 Track B had referrals; Noted in Dr. Rudy Jackson’s presentation from SACS Institute)
  - a. Audit results are not yet available
  - b. The institution has responded to audit issues with a plan but has not yet received the USDOE letter accepting the plan
  - c. Tips:

- i. Work with auditors well in advance to ensure that audit is available by report due date
- ii. Present evidence of financial aid audits as required by *state* regulations, not just federal, in CS 3.10.3

#### 7.0 *Academic Certificate Program Assessment Guidelines*

Kathryn Lowery presented draft guidelines for academic certificate program assessment based on current practices at Southern Miss. Currently, when new certificate programs are proposed, they are asked to submit an assessment plan with a minimum of three student learning outcomes and at least one direct measure; however, no formal guidelines have been established by the UAC for certificate program assessment. A certificate is a credential and credential-level programs must be assessed. SACS does not dictate a minimum number of student learning outcomes. After discussion, the committee approved the guidelines as amended below:

##### ***Academic Certificate Program Assessment Guidelines***

*All certificate programs must identify a minimum of two student learning outcomes. Each student learning outcome must be assessed with at least one direct measure.*

*Certificate programs must assess annually in WEAVE, following program-level calendars.*

*Certificate program assessment follows all other program-level assessment expectations.*

The committee also noted and discussed the federal requirement for tracking placement of students in certificate programs if financial aid is provided. Certificate programs are tracked with a separate enrollment code.

#### 7.0 *Meeting Adjourned*

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2012 from noon – 1:00 in TEC 102.