

The University of Southern Mississippi
University Assessment Committee Minutes
March 27, 2013

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) met at 12:00 p.m. on March 27, 2013 in the Liberal Arts Building, Room 209, with Kelly Lester, Chair of the UAC, presiding.

The following voting members were present: Phil Carlan, Kenny Christensen, Stacy Reischman Fletcher, Anne Marie Kinnell, Joohee Lee, Kelly Lester, Kristi Motter, Bonnie Nicholson, Lisa Nored, Jennifer Regan, Kyna Shelley, Chuck Tardy, Donna Valestro, and Ellen Weinauer

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 at noon. Ms. Lester presented the agenda for the meeting and the minutes from the last meeting held January 23rd (previously sent via e-mail). Both were approved by the UAC.

2.0 *Committee Liaison Reports*

Academic Council – Stacy Reischman Fletcher

All degree plans will be presented to Academic Council at the April 8th meeting for approval. The degree plans reflect the general education model of having all general education course options listed with the degree program noting recommended courses and courses that also meet a degree program requirement.

QEP – Julie Howdeshell

The topic selection process for the University's second QEP will be launched Fall 2013. It is important that the topic emerge from institutional data. UAC members are encouraged to consider themes that have emerged from program assessment reports as this process begins.

3.0 *Old Business*

In lieu of the regular February meeting, UAC members were asked to review and provide feedback on the following:

- possibilities for stand-alone minor assessment measures
- the rubric and review process
- proposed edits to address Federal Requirement 4.1 (required by SACS)

Kathryn Lowery compiled the feedback submitted via Dropbox and shared it with the committee.

The committee members discussed the fact that the problem with assessing stand-alone minors is the collection of the data. Some programs require that a student declare the minor at the beginning as a means of tracking students. Portfolios or short exams were also noted as possible assessment measures.

The committee members also discussed ways to make the rubric more qualitative, especially in regards to the annual report field. It was suggested that, in addition to instructions being followed, that the rubric reflect the importance of the annual report being comprehensive, substantive, and thoughtful, so that there is a greater focus on quality. The annual report field

could mirror that of the analysis field on the rubric. Members do want to keep the rubric limited to two pages even with the proposed edits.

In determining whether a unit should be commended, it was suggested that further definition be provided as to what it means to demonstrate “the spirit of SACS Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.”

The membership voted to make edits based on the discussion provided at today’s meeting.

The committee also reviewed changes to the Plan and Report Guidelines in light of Federal Requirement 4.1. Suggested new wording for the guidelines based on UAC discussion at the last two meetings was presented again for review. Members discussed grouping enrollment and retention data as one area of reporting rather than two, and also discussed ways to obtain the needed data without the requirement being burdensome, including giving units options based upon their particular discipline. A motion was made to adopt the new wording.

4.0 *New Business*

Kelly Lester asked committee members for suggestions regarding the upcoming Assessment Showcase, scheduled for April 24. Lunch will be provided and there will be door prizes. Degree programs that were rated as “commended” will be recognized at the showcase. (A list of programs was shared with the committee.) Kelly Lester asked members to send nominations for the Assessment Star award. The Assessment Star is awarded to a university faculty or staff member who has shown outstanding service in the area of assessment. Past recipients include Jeff Evans (CoST), Nancy Howell (CoST), and Beth Richmond (CoEP). The Assessment Star will also serve as the featured speaker at this year’s Assessment Showcase.

As this was the last meeting of the academic year, the UAC needed to elect a chair for 2013-14. A list of members not rotating off the committee was provided. Ellen Weinauer nominated Kelly Lester for a second term and she accepted the nomination. A motion was made to close nominations and was approved by the membership. Ms. Lester was elected chair for 2013-14.

6.0 *Meeting Adjourned*

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be the Assessment Showcase scheduled for April 24, 2013 in the Thad Cochran Center.