

LAC Minutes – v 1.1

Friday, 2/22/2019 – CLIMB

Attendance:

Voting Members		Voting Members, cont.		Non-Voting Members	
Chris Brooks, Vice-Chair	x	Jessica Martin	x	Kendra Cawley	
Magda D'Angelis-Morris	x	Linda Paulson	x	Sally Earll	x
Marc Goodman	x	Davina Ramirez		Susan Wilson, recorder	x
Allison Gross		Sara Robertson			
Wayne Hooke	x	Julianne Sandlin	x		
G.D. Iyer		Torie Scott	x		
Troy Jesse	x	Thomas Songer		Today's Guests	
Jamee Kristen		Nora Stevens, Chair	x	None	
Hannah Love	x	Delpha Thomas	x		
Heather Lubay		Jacki Williams	x		
Juan Maldonado					

ACTION ITEMS

- Group: Notify Eriks Puris (DAC) or Josephine Pino (EAC) if interested in joining either committee
- Nora: Share with Kendra the Council's motion re Annual Program Review
- Nora: Send the Council's input re NWCCU Draft Standards to Kendra
- Nora: Send Critical Thinking rubric to the LAC group
- Nora: Share feedback re PCC's Outcomes language with Kendra, after the Council has a chance to look at the new Critical Thinking rubric

BUSINESS

Attendance

Fifteen members were in attendance, including Magda D'Angelis-Morris who participated by phone.

DAC and EAC Recruitment

Nora announced that the Degrees and Certificates Committee (DAC) and the Educational Advisory Council (EAC) are looking for new members. Eriks Puris, who chairs the DAC, said his committee would benefit from having folks with assessment expertise. The EAC, chaired by Josephine Pino, is looking for new faculty members (PT and FT). Interested parties should contact the committee chairs.

DISCUSSION

Proposed Annual Program Review

The administration is moving toward an annual system of program review, where SACs would fill out a shorter and simpler template each fall using custom data supplied by Institutional Effectiveness. The change would aid in more timely and responsive budgeting among other benefits. The downside is that the managers haven't decided if they're going to eliminate the five-year comprehensive review, according to Chris, who is on the subcommittee (as are Julianne and Susan) that worked on the LDC template.

Nora said learning assessment will continue to be an integral part of program review, with SACs being expected to demonstrate how they are improving instruction as part of closing the loop on assessment. To that end, each SAC's annual template will include a customized question addressing the assessment project it reported on in its end-of-year (EOY) report the previous spring, and that's where the LAC comes in. When we create the Summer Peer Review critique form, we will need to include a place for the reviewers to craft a question to the SAC whose report they are critiquing. Each question must elicit more information about some aspect of the SAC's assessment process, results, and/or next steps. A notation will be added to the effect, "This question will be included on your SAC's 20XX-XX program review template." It is not known when the annual reports will commence, but we believe the crafting of the tailored questions will start this year.

Chris and Nora fielded these queries:

- Wouldn't annual reviews multiply the number of administrative responses and increase Management's workload? No. It is Chris's understanding that not all reports would require a response.
- Wouldn't annual reviews create more work for SACs? Not necessarily. The report could come together rather quickly, especially if a SAC's pertinent data (e.g., enrollment, completion rates, etc.) are pre-populated or provided, and if the SAC can cut-and-paste relevant assessment information directly into the template from their EOY.
- Will the annual review get me out of writing a 30-page report? Yes. The new template is around 3 to 5 pages.
- Will the SACs still do presentations? SACs likely would have the option to do so or have the ability to meet with the deans' group if they wish. Linda advocated for keeping the option for a live presentation, saying that planning such an event is a great opportunity to collaborate with colleagues.
- If the EOYs are nuanced and misinterpreted by the peers, writing a coherent question for each SAC could be harder than it sounds. Yes, this will entail more work for the peer reviewers, but the critiques will be vetted by a smaller team of expert reviewers (in 2018, this was handled by Nora, Chris, Sally, and Susan).

Chris moved *"to approve to Kendra Cawley the idea of peer reviewers creating targeted questions for SACs based on end-of-year assessment reports, with the recommendation that SACs are no longer required to do a big program review every five years."* Marc seconded the motion, and the group approved it by a vote.

To ensure that the tailored questions are consistent in breadth and difficulty, Linda would like to see coaching provided to the peers. Susan suggested including a segment on writing sample questions at the annual Peer Review training.

NWCCU Assessment Standards

The group read and discussed a draft of the proposed NWCCU eligibility requirements and seven new or revised standards (in blue below) related to the assessment of student learning. For preview purposes, Nora had provided the same document ahead of the meeting. The LAC was to bear in mind that the draft standards are intended for both two- and four-year colleges.

Eligibility Requirements

4. ACADEMIC QUALITY

The institution identifies and publishes the expected learning outcomes for each of its degree and certificate programs. The institution engages in regular and ongoing assessment to validate student learning and, consistent with its mission, the institution establishes and assesses institutional student learning outcomes (or core competencies) such as effective communication, scientific and qualitative reasoning, critical analysis and logical thinking, problem solving, and information literacy for all programs.

The language is confusing. The paragraph makes reference to degree and certificate outcomes, but also talks about assessing institutional student learning outcomes. Clarification is needed.

- Is the statement intended to be suggestive or prescriptive?
- Must all programs share identical outcomes?
- How does CTE fit in? Is it sufficient for them to focus on degree and certificate outcomes? Perhaps breaking the statement into two parts—one for LDC standards and one for CTE—would be best
- What about Less-than-One-Year Certificates? What should they be assessing?
- Who decides what the Outcomes will be?
- Who creates the rubrics?

Institutional Effectiveness

1.B.1 The institution demonstrates a continuous process of assessing institutional effectiveness, including assessment of student learning and other support services to facilitate student learning and achievement. The institution uses that ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to inform and refine its key processes, assign resources and improve student learning.

- No questions or comments

Academic Quality

1.C1 The institution offers programs with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission, culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes, and lead to collegiate-level degrees, certificates, or credentials with designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

- The word “culminate” is problematic; we’re not quite there
- When they say “learning outcomes” do they mean program, core, or both?

1.C.2 Awarding credit, certificates, programs and degrees is based on student learning and learning outcomes that possess an appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing and synthesis of learning

- No questions or comments

1.C.3 The institution identifies and publishes expected course, program and degree learning outcomes for all degrees, certificates and credentials. Expected learning outcomes for all courses are provided to enrolled students

- It mentions course, program, and degree outcomes. What is the difference between program and degree outcomes?
- What is the intent?
- A glossary of terms would be useful

1.C.5 The institution engages in an effective system of assessment to evaluate the quality of learning in its programs. The institution recognizes the central role of faculty in establishing quality and improving instructional program

- No questions or comments

1.C.6 Consistent with its mission, the institution establishes and assesses student learning outcomes (or core competencies) such as effective communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and logical thinking, problem solving, and information literacy for all programs

Nora had written: This sounds very similar to the above Eligibility requirement but the language is somewhat different. Is this referring to institutional-level learning outcomes or only program-level? This raises the question if our core outcomes need have descriptors broad enough to accommodate all programs. Critical Thinking, especially.

- No additional questions or comments

1.C.7 The institution uses the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices that lead to enhancement of student learning

- When it says “uses,” what does that mean? As is, the language can be interpreted broadly. Wayne believes the intent is for the institution to use the results to inform funding for student success.

PCC Core Outcomes

Another document distributed ahead of the meeting was the Draft Revision of PCC Core Outcomes. It included the existing six core outcomes, with new wording for Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, and descriptions for the other outcomes adopted by the DSACs. A few of the outcomes inspired targeted comments (see below), but otherwise the group had only general observations. As members of various DSACs, Delpha, Hannah, Julianne, and Marc were able to provide some insights about the outcomes.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- The “Problem Solving” piece needs to come off, because it’s not part of the Social Science DSAC’s outcome or rubric
- Critical Thinking, even if appended with “*in Social Science*” is a misnomer. Where other disciplines might see Critical Thinking and say “we teach that,” the outcome isn’t general at all. Chris thinks Social Analysis is a more fitting title.

Nora will send the Critical Thinking rubric to the group next week. She asked the members to look it over and make recommendations as they see fit.

Communication

- Some members expressed concern about the logistics of assessing Communication. Susan mentioned that Academic Affairs is kicking around the idea of using artifacts already submitted for the DSAC pilot, and having them assessed against a written communication rubric. The details haven't been worked out yet.

All Outcomes

- Wayne asked if CTE will be able to satisfy these. Marc was adamant that CTE would not be able to satisfy the new outcomes if forced to use the DSAC rubrics, especially for students pursuing certificates. The outcomes should be for degree-seeking students only; hence the notion of meeting them through Gen Ed.

Getting the Word Out about Gen Ed

Not that long ago, it came to the attention of LAC members that some deans and others across the district were not aware of the changes coming to General Education. One of Nora's goals for this meeting was to discuss ways of getting the word out, but a more recent development made that unnecessary. Chris explained that he and Jamee have been asked to give an update on Gen Ed and Guided Pathways to the Instructional Leadership Team on March 8. The ILT includes PCC's Deans of Instruction, district academic deans, division deans, faculty department chairs, and SAC chairs.

Impact of Budget Cuts on the LAC

The recent 3% cut across the board meant that the LAC chair/vice-chair's remuneration was halved and travel went away. What remained:

- 1-class release for chair; hourly stipend for vice-chair in lieu of class release
- stipends for part-time members who attend meetings
- summer peer review
- assessment coaching

When Marc asked about the fate of the annual college-wide scoring project, Nora clarified that it will continue, but that it doesn't come out of the LAC budget.

The paring of funds, which takes effect July 1, means it will be tougher to recruit future chairs, especially if LAC responsibilities increase with the implementation of assessment within Gen Ed. More than ever, the College and the Council itself relies on the four-year leadership cycle, which features overlapping roles for the incoming and outgoing chairs.

For the benefit of newer members, here is an example of the staggered LAC leadership:

2017-18 – Chris Brooks, 2nd year chair; Nora Stevens, incoming vice-chair
2018-19 – Nora Stevens, 1st year chair; Chris Brooks, outgoing vice-chair
2019-20 – Nora Stevens, 2nd year chair; TBA, incoming vice-chair
2020-21 – TBA, 1st year as chair; Nora Stevens, outgoing vice-chair

Nora noted that PCC's system of assessment is more faculty-based than that at other colleges, yet we're unusual in that we don't have a full-time assessment coordinator. The fact that it is a faculty-led process, Linda noted, is something to be grateful for. At least we get to decide what we assess and how we assess it.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Nora at 2:26. The Council meets again on March 22.