

# LAC Minutes - Final

Friday, 05/09/2014, CLIMB

Share and Discuss: ~~12:45-1:15~~ Canceled

Meeting: 1:30-3:30

## Attendance:

Chris Brooks	x	Jamee Kristen	x	Davina Ramirez	
Kendra Cawley		Katie Leonard-Floyd	x	Linda Reisser	x
Sally Earll	x	Priscilla Loanzon		Julie Romey	x
Shirlee Geiger * LAC Chair Emeritus		Christine Manning	x	Lisa Rosenthal	x
Sylvia Gray * LAC Chair Emeritus		Michele Marden (Chair)	x	Julianne Sandlin	
Allison Gross		Laura Massey		Torie Scott	
Anne Haberkern	x	Scott McBeth		Doug Smith	
Wayne Hooke (Vice-Chair)		Linda Paulson	x	Susan Wilson (Recorder)	x
Gabe Hunter-Bernstein	x	Amara Perez		Stephanie Yurasits	
Marc Goodman, Guest	x				

\*Always welcome to attend

## ACTION ITEMS

- For Chair: Organize lunch poll for June 6 retreat
- For Chair to Incoming Chair: Communicate group's idea for 2014-2015 pre-meeting chats (described below under "Future of Pre-Meeting Share and Discuss")
- For Chair to incoming Chair: Start (add to?) to-do list for 2014-2015 and include:
  - creation of student questionnaire on assessment (see membership discussion below)
  - idea of using Wayne's Shared Vision diagram as a SAC activity
- For Sally as leader of Phase II Task Force: Put issue of removing the word 'measurable' and borrowing language from 4.A.1 on the next agenda of the Integration Workgroup
- For Chair to Kendra: Suggest featuring at fall's in-service the SACs with inspirational approaches to assessment, such as MSD and World Languages
- For Chair: Send strategic planning draft suggestions out to council members for review

## BUSINESS/UPDATES

### Introductions

The group opted to bypass introductions today as it was a smaller group than usual and everyone knew each other.

### Timekeeper

Chris Brooks volunteered to be the timekeeper.

### Changes/Approval of Minutes from April 11

Some external edits were made between Drafts 1 and 2 which Susan proofed prior to today's meeting (spacing, punctuation, and capitalization issues mostly). At the meeting, Michele noted a correction to page 4, last paragraph, "Summer Peer Review": Change "...score approximately 10-14 reports..." to "...score approximately 10 reports..." The minutes were approved.

### Behavior Agreement

The chair distributed the laminated Behavior Agreement cards in keeping with LAC protocols.

### Updates

#### **Future Meetings**

As mentioned last month there will be no meeting on May 30. The next and last LAC meeting for 2013-2014 is the retreat scheduled June 6 at CLIMB, 11:30 to 3:30. Christine has volunteered to research catering options that are healthy and within budget--thank you, Christine! As soon as a caterer is selected, we will likely conduct an online poll to establish folks' lunch preferences.

**Completion Investment Council (CIC) Talking Points** – Michele couldn't attend the CIC meeting held April 18. She shared the CIC's Talking Points sent out by Sylvia Gray (one of the CIC's co-conveners). See supplemental materials with the minutes for the CIC Talking Points.

- **Report on Strategic Planning** – Randy McEwen presented at the 4/18 CIC meeting. Themes are emerging. There may be opportunities for further input from various committees throughout the college in May and possibly June.

#### LAC Subcommittee Updates

**Funding:** The LAC funded Linda Paulson's attendance at a recent assessment conference in Vancouver, Washington. Also, LAC funds will pay Jamee Kristen's travel and registration expenses for an upcoming conference in New Mexico.

**Internal Review:** Wayne was ill and couldn't attend today, but Michele mentioned to the group that Wayne and some of his psychology students are performing meta-analysis on the work going on around core outcomes. For those not familiar with meta-analysis, Wikipedia says it: "...refers to methods that focus on contrasting and combining results from different studies, in the hope of identifying patterns among study results, sources of disagreement among those results, or other interesting relationships..."

**Templates/Rubrics:** The end-of-year assessment report templates became available in late April, so Chris and his small committee are working on the rubric to be used in the peer review process.

**EAC/LAC Phase II:** The committee gave itself a name change in order to differentiate it from the LAC Phase II Task Force. It is now the EAC/LAC Assessment Integration Workgroup. This name also reflects the broadening of the group's work. Originally, the focus was limited to assessment of outcomes. "Phase II" was a way to reference the expectation that once we had outcomes (phase I) we would connect assessment to the outcomes (phase II) – per Susanne Christopher. However, the group now realizes we need to consider the core outcomes before we go deeper into assessment processes within the College and also discuss how other institutions are incorporating assessment into their general education programs.

**Membership and LAC Phase II Task Force:** No quick updates from these subcommittees; both had lengthier items appearing in the Discussion section of the agenda.

#### The Future of Pre-Meeting "Share and Discuss"

Today's pre-meeting chat was cancelled due to insufficient RSVPs. The chair sought to collect feedback on the sessions for Wayne, who will be LAC chair in 2014-15. Do we want to continue them next year? Do we like having them ahead of regular meetings?

At least three members would prefer to use the 12:30 to 1:30 slot for subcommittee meetings, but everyone expressed support for continuing the chats in a different format. One member suggested we build sharing time into the regular agenda, saying in essence, "If it's important enough to spend LAC funds to send folks to a conference, it's worth devoting a portion of each meeting to hearing what they learned there."

## LAC DISCUSSION

### Membership

Linda Paulson officiated over this part of the meeting as membership chair. Currently, policy dictates reviewing LAC membership each spring and identifying candidates to:

- fill any existing vacancies
- fill any anticipated vacancies
- serve as alternates for the coming school year

As a potential candidate for the open part-time slot, guest Marc Goodman was asked to step out of the room during the discussion and deliberation phase.

After reviewing a list of candidates who might fill the vacant part-time faculty position, Marc was unanimously selected as the top candidate given his high degree of interest and voluntary participation in LAC meetings this year. Others on the list were deemed as alternates based on their interest, their background in assessment, and strong recommendation(s). They will be tapped in the coming year if spots become vacant. Priority will be given to those based at Rock Creek, as that campus is underrepresented on the LAC at this time.

Next, the group discussed the ongoing dilemma of what to do with candidates who hold temporary full-time positions at PCC when they are selected for a full-time LAC post, but lose their full-time status in a subsequent year. One existing committee member said she was in that predicament last year: She was full-time/temporary in 2012-13 but went back to part-time status in 2013-14 because her campus filled the permanent position with an intercampus transfer. She said she had no delusions about her tenuous position on the LAC. The chair had explained last year that moving from a full-time to a part-time slot was dependent on having an opening in that category. Luckily a part-time slot was available for her this year. As long as new candidates were similarly informed, she advised, it shouldn't be an issue. Still, it might be best to wait until the fate of any temporary/full-time candidates is known before inviting them to join.

Last, the committee reviewed a longer list of potential full-time candidates, many of whom came out of the assessment class, or have served as peer reviewers, and/or have been SAC coaches. The group did not make any decisions today, but agreed to use an online poll in the fall to vote for new members if the need arises. No candidates will be contacted unless a position becomes available.

Marc was brought back into the room and was welcomed as a new member.

Attention then turned to student membership. To date, the LAC has not sought students to serve on the committee. To start the conversation, Linda shared what she learned from Marlene Eid, membership chair for EAC. That committee has four active student members (one each from CA, RC, SE, and SY). They are ASPCC leaders at their respective campuses and they are nominated for the committee by the Student Leadership Coordinators.

Generally, the LAC is intrigued about adding students to its roster, and if there is any hesitancy, it is because the Council is relatively new and still developing. Some questions arose during the discussion: Should we wait until we know what we are doing before bringing in students? Should we bring them in now and get their feedback on outcomes? Will students be interested in learning assessment? Would they be bored in LAC meetings? Would they be more engaged in the summer peer review?

Two members have polled their students on numerous occasions and have discovered many students are unaware that degree and course outcomes exist.

While student participation on the EAC is high, Sally commented that DAC and CC have student members on the roster who rarely attend. The District Student Council gets requests for student representation on 35+ college-wide committees each year. However, students' schedules, competing meetings, transportation, and parking issues severely limit their ability to commit to and even get to all the meetings to which they are invited.

The committee liked the idea of creating a student questionnaire on assessment in the fall to solicit student feedback. In addition to surveying their own classes, LAC members could take the questionnaire to one of the monthly meetings of the District Student Council of ASPCC. LAC reps could spend a few minutes talking about the Council and what we do before administering the survey. It would be a great way to inform them and get their input at the same time.

### Phase II Task Force Discussion on Reframing Course Outcomes

In the past week, Sally's Phase II Task Force met with the Integration Workgroup and with the Curriculum Committee to share the draft of a document explaining the proposal to reframe course outcome statements. After meeting with all of the subcommittees and collecting their feedback, Phase II will take the document to the EAC in late May. Using the same PowerPoint presentation shared with the CC, Sally quickly reviewed...

- the history and rationale for the change
- current outcome guidelines
- recommended changes to the guidelines
- a list of the things outcome statements should contain
- a narrative describing aspirational goals

Sally brought up the "Guidelines for Writing Outcomes" that appear on the Curriculum Office web pages. She noted the "out there" mantra is pervasive in the current guidelines and it is time to revise them. The idea that assessment should be tied to outcomes needs to be overtly stated in the new version.

Jamee shared a two-page handout, created by the Phase II Task Force and vetted by the EAC/LAC Integration Workgroup, which was shared at Wednesday's Curriculum Committee meeting. The replicated handout appears in italics below:

#### ***Recommendation for reframing course outcomes***

*Over a decade ago the college brought in Ruth Stiehl and adopted the current format for course outcomes language. To move faculty away from a long list of competencies, she encouraged writing of outcomes with an 'out there' perspective - describe what we intend the students to be able to do "out there" (in their roles as worker, family member, community citizen, global citizen or lifelong learner) as opposed to an activity "in here" or in the classroom. This framework was embraced by some SACs and resisted by others.*

*Many SACs felt that the 'out there' focus was artificial and a barrier to aligning course outcomes and assessment. So, in moving toward the alignment of course outcomes and assessment we want to remove 'out-there' language as a requirement and make it optional. Additionally, we want to acknowledge the importance of aspirational goals for some SACs.*

*A collaborative group (representing the EAC, Curriculum Committee, Degrees and Certificates, Academic Policies and Standards, the LAC, and the Curriculum Office) requests your feedback on the following:*

1. Remove 'out there' language as a requirement for course outcomes. Note: If the 'out there' framing works for a SAC, there is no need to make changes to outcomes. If it does not feel authentic, then SACs can revise the course outcomes for better alignment to content.
2. Clarify the difference between course outcomes and aspirational goals and have a place in the CCOG for optional aspirational goals.

For illustrative purposes, key ideas are listed below.

#### **Criteria for Outcome Statements (Proposed)**

Outcomes should reflect the essential course content. Typically, a course will have one to six outcomes; a one-credit course would likely have few outcomes, whereas a multi-credit course would likely have more.

The stem for the list of outcomes is: "Upon successful completion of the course students should be able to..." This didn't change.

Course outcome statements should:

- Describe what students should be able to do upon successful completion of the course to demonstrate their knowledge of and/or their capabilities relating to course content.
- Represent themes, key concepts, or comprehensive skill sets.
- Be supported by all other sections of the CCOG.
- Be measurable and assessable.
- Be aligned with degree, certificate, and/or PCC core outcomes where appropriate.
- When possible, use language that is accessible to a broad audience including students, faculty, external agencies, and the public.

#### **Aspirational goals**

Apart from outcome statements, some SACs may have goals for a course which are not measurable or for which students may not be held accountable (e.g., "enjoy a life enriched by calculus" or "take pride in one's work"). These aspirational goals may be essential to a SAC's conception and/or motivation for the course and its hope for the students; however, they are not outcome statements as outlined above. There will be a new optional field for SAC-determined aspirational goals in the CCOG. Faculty may also include their own individual aspirational goals in their syllabi.

[Current course outcome guidelines](#) from the Curriculum Office webpage (this will be a hyperlink on the web page)

What follows is a summary of the concerns, comments, and suggestions expressed by LAC members.

#### **Regarding the Criteria for Outcomes Statements:**

The "Be measurable..." statement implies a value is sought. An (LDC) member asked how that fits the vast amount of qualitative information found in many disciplines and suggested some wordsmithing was needed here. In response, another member recalled hearing the CC chair say faculty who come before the Curriculum Committee should be able to articulate how their outcomes are to be measured—that the SAC defines the 'measurability' piece, not the CC. It comes down to semantics and the original member suggested we should simply take out the word 'measurable.'

Linda R. read the NWCCU definition of 4.A.1: "...meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the objectives of its core themes." This statement applies to core themes not course outcomes, which are found in 4.A.3, but if we like the wording can we use it anyway? It was decided to take the issue of removing 'measurable' and the idea of borrowing language from 4.A.1 to the Integration Workgroup.

The Task Force intends to provide strong and weak CCOG examples to accompany these guidelines when they are posted online. Real CCOGs would be used for the 'good' examples, and contrived ones would be used for the 'poor' ones. It has been said before, but bears repeating, that SACs may

continue to use the ‘out there’ approach if it works for them. The bullets under the Criteria section are mainly there to distinguish outcome statements from aspirational goals.

Linda P. offered personal testimony on the value of having clearly stated outcomes. The MSD SAC agreed on the essential knowledge and skills students must take away from their courses and they boiled those down to outcome statements. All faculty, but especially new ones, can immediately discern what absolutely must be covered content-wise in each course. This approach served to simplify the assessments as well. With the explicit outcomes and a well-crafted rubric, the SAC’s recent norming session lasted only five minutes. The SAC co-chairs (Linda P. and Rebecca Robinson) received excellent feedback about their rubric. This prompted Christine to suggest using Linda’s inspiring example at an in-service workshop in the fall. The committee liked this idea and someone mentioned World Languages as another SAC to feature. The LAC chair will suggest this to Kendra.

### **Regarding the Aspirational Goals section**

It was the intent of the Phase II Task Force to communicate to SACs that it’s permissible but not mandatory to include aspirational goals in a CCOG. The CCOGs will have a discrete and optional field for such statements, but it hasn’t been decided how best to emphasize the ‘optional’ piece. Some of the members are afraid no amount of wording, highlighting, or underlining will overcome the tendency of some faculty to see an empty box and feel they must put something in it. Another important message to communicate in the instructions: If a SAC opts to have a set of aspirational goals on the CCOG, everyone in the SAC needs to own them. If the goals are not mutual, they are left off the CCOG and individual instructors can ascribe to them if they so choose. A CC member commented that often SACs do not fill out areas of the CCOG that one would expect they would value (e.g., “Content”). The worry about empty box (above) may not bother some SACs.

The members who are familiar with Curriculum Committee protocols liked the idea of having a dedicated field on the CCOG for aspirational goals. When they have come through CC in the past, the faculty have been told to “squirrel them away in the addendum area,” which made them less formal, less tangible.

Sally encouraged the group to share the draft of recommendations with other faculty. The Phase II Task Force is eager for feedback.

### Wayne’s Diagram for Shared Vision

The chair reminded the group of the “homework” assigned at the last meeting. They were to share Wayne’s diagram with their colleagues and bring comments and observations to the committee. She said she shared it with a few colleagues. One realization was that the document was not a good “stand alone” diagram. The colleagues didn’t quite know what to make of it, but once intent was shared, it made sense to them. There was one conversation about it, but she didn’t have the diagram available. In this conversation, the chair couldn’t remember one of the ovals – and now wonders if that oval could be described in a better way. . Instead of trying to do this homework again for next meeting, someone suggested tabling this for now and bringing it back next year as a featured activity.

### Strategic Planning Statements

At the March 2014 meeting, LAC members brainstormed their personal, departmental/divisional, SAC, and institutional priorities. Michele and Sally consolidated all the responses into a four-page handout that was distributed today. She said the following themes surfaced:

- \*Communication

- Prioritizing Assessment (high up expectation) and Making Assessment Inspirational (culture shift) – these themes are related and thus were combined for this summary
- Resource Sharing
- Time and Money Resources
- \*Professional Development
- Accountability
- Academic Freedom
- Other

\*generated the most comments.

The next step is to communicate the LAC’s priorities to PCC’s Strategic Planning Committee (SPC). The chair offered three possible options for approaching the SPC:

1. Give a statement that shows LAC support for the Completion Investment Council’s (CIC) work regarding professional development and communication, but do not add anything specific to assessment. Rationale: The College needs these structures before we can “add in” assessment. Here are the two draft CIC priorities: “Provide professional development to empower faculty and staff with knowledge and skills to contribute to student success and completion,” and “Improve internal communication and collaboration throughout the organization.”
2. Support CIC’s work and give examples specific to assessment. Examples:
  - a. CIC: Provide professional development to empower faculty and staff with knowledge and skills to contribute to student success and completion.
    - i. Strengthen instructional support so all teachers have an opportunity to learn about new research with adult learning and develop effective practices for their program/discipline. Include in professional learning the methods of assessment that could be used for both instructional and SAC-level work to measure the effectiveness.
    - ii. Create ways to recognize and celebrate risk-taking and innovation in teaching practices. Include in professional learning the methods of assessment that could be used for both instructional and SAC-level work to measure the effectiveness of innovation and risk-taking. Create structures of communication and support to share and build upon successful teaching practices.
    - iii. Create opportunities for leaders of assessment work in SACs to have training and collaboration events.
  - b. CIC: Improve internal communication and collaboration throughout the organization.
    - i. Collaboration focused on teaching and assessment can be some of the best professional development available. It also helps faculty reach an appropriate level of consistency for the course between multiple course sections and between pre- and post-requisite courses. This supports student learning and success for course outcomes as well as degree/certificate outcomes. Create structures, incentives, and time for this type of focused collaboration within SACs, and when appropriate, between SACs (involving FT and adjunct faculty).
    - ii) Address communication concerns. Create ways to support faculty development of common understanding and common language around assessment practices for the college and for their particular programs/disciplines.

- iii) Ensure that academic leaders (department chairs, SAC chairs, dean liaisons) communicate clear expectations about the importance of assessment.
3. Create our own statements with an emphasis on student success.
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Where assessment is concerned, one member said it might be time to put “it” (that assessment is part of an instructor’s job duties) in the contract; it is negotiation time after all. Another was afraid this approach would create alarm, especially a phrase in 2 b iii that was since removed: “...as appropriately defined by job classification.” A mandate from administration to make assessment a contractual obligation might be expected if not resisted, but for a faculty-based group such as the LAC to initiate the idea could be considered conspiratorial to the group we are supposed to represent.

At the Vancouver conference, a college in Washington said they have language in their contract involving assessment. Their structure is different than ours: Faculty members are randomly selected to submit student work (which is chosen by the instructor to fit the assessment focus for the year). Faculty names are not protected. The student work is evaluated against a rubric by other faculty in related areas. The data is aggregated for their assessment report, but individual results are sent back to the randomly selected faculty. New faculty who are teaching their first 2 terms at the college are not required to participate, but all others must if randomly selected. Because instructors submitting work do not have their identities protected, the language in the contract makes it clear that this is a professional development experience for faculty and cannot be used as a part of a faculty member’s evaluation or for any disciplinary action. If a dean or department chair attempts this, faculty can file a grievance.

Referring again to language in 2 b iii, a member suggested the responsibility should be on the SAC, not the individual faculty member. Another countered with the question, “But what if the SAC chair gets no support from colleagues?” The reply: “The dean should get involved.” It was at this point the chair struck the words, “and individual faculty” from the first sentence in 2 b iii. The entire second half of the sentence was deleted when another member said it was best to take baby steps when introducing a new paradigm in business. An attendee observed that we (PCC) need to get to a place where the administration makes assessment a priority.

Randy McEwen came to the Completion Investment Council (CIC) meeting on 4/18 and shared seven draft recommendations from the Strategic Planning Committee. They still have a few to flesh out, but they hope to finish the recommendations by summer. Hopefully, if the CIC and LAC had similar messages it would make a powerful statement to the SPC.

When someone asked the chair if this conversation could be continued at the retreat, Michele said we can devote a little time to it, but the bulk of the meeting was to be dedicated to core outcomes and wrapping up the year. Michele asked if the members would review and give feedback on the suggested statements under #2. Members agreed to this. It will be sent out as a Google doc and in Word for those who prefer one format to the other. Michele believes option #2 is the best option--connect to CIC priorities, but give assessment specific examples. However, if others wish to create statements that do not connect to the CIC, that is okay, too. It should be noted that the SPC plans to submit their work by August (maybe before?). It is unclear if our suggestions will be given in time to make any meaningful impact on the SPC’s work before it goes to the president, cabinet, and board. In the CIC notes from Randy McEwen’s presentation on strategic planning, there was a mention of the SPC connecting to groups in May or June. So far, that hasn’t happened, nor has there been response to an email request to have a SPC member connect with the LAC. Michele still feels it is worth our time but she is disheartened

that the voices of the College's various councils and committees were not an intentional part of the deliberations of the SPC's work this year.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.