

LAC Minutes

Friday, 2/27/2015, CLIMB 305

Meeting: 1:30-3:30

Attendance:

Chris Brooks	X	Dana Harker	X	Linda Reisser	
Kendra Cawley		Wayne Hooke (Chair)	X	Julie Romey	
Sally Earll		Gabe Hunter-Bernstein	X	Lisa Rosenthal	X
<i>Shirlee Geiger * LAC Chair Emeritus</i>		Priscilla Loanzon		Laura Sanders	X
Marc Goodman	X	Hannah Love		Julianne Sandlin	X
<i>Sylvia Gray * LAC Chair Emeritus</i>		Michele Marden (Vice-Chair)		Torie Scott	X
Allison Gross	X	Linda Paulson		Doug Smith	X
Anne Haberkern		Davina Ramirez	X	Susan Wilson (Recorder)	X
Guest: Ralf Youtz	X				

ACTION ITEMS

- Bring a friend to the next LAC meeting – April 17, 2015 – 1:30 to 3:30

BUSINESS UPDATES

Timekeeper

Lisa agreed to be timekeeper today.

Introductions

The group welcomed new member Dana Harker (Comp Lit) and guest Ralf Youtz (Mathematics). Attendance was lighter than usual due to competing meetings and events; namely, two program reviews and the statewide Learning Outcomes and Assessment (LO&A) Task Group meeting taking place at PCC Cascade.

Announcements

- LAC By-Laws will not be updated this year due to higher-priority items on the table.
- Chris B. will serve as LAC vice-chair in 2015-2016.
- Wayne and Lisa are dealing with some personal medical challenges. Wayne's emergency surgery in January preempted last month's LAC meeting, but he said it went well and he needs only a few follow-up treatments. Lisa's wellness plan involves a medical leave this spring so she can concentrate her energies on self and healing. She will step down from the LAC next term.

Minutes from Last Meeting

The minutes from the November 21, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved.

Quick Sub Committee Reports

Advisory Group – At the last LAC meeting, the group's membership tentatively included Michele, Allison, and Gabe. Since then, Chris B. and Torie have joined. The group got off to a late start but is making up for lost time. One focus is the issue of PT participation and another is the steep learning curve associated with assessment. When so many SACs rotate responsibility for assessment on an annual basis, it makes onboarding more difficult and mastery nearly impossible. Very few faculty

work on assessment two or more years in a row. Allison and Chris talked about their group's plan to survey the SACs to determine or glean:

- the extent to which adjunct faculty participate in assessment
- what parts of assessment are the most burdensome (given such choices as the norming process, administering of assessments, scoring of artifacts, analysis of results; or the paperwork associated with the Annual Plan, Multi-Year Plan, End-of-Year Report, etc.)
- feedback regarding the reporting templates
- feedback regarding the peer review process

Funding – This group will meet Monday, March 2. Wayne doesn't anticipate any surprises as the annual expenditures tend to be fairly predictable and within budget.

Multi-State Collaborative Update

Susan shared a little background about the MSC project that took her and nearly 200 individuals to a train-the-trainer event last week in Kansas City, Missouri.

The MSC was initially comprised of 9 US states (now 11) desiring to test the feasibility of large-scale assessment using AAC&U's LEAP VALUE rubrics. In a pilot project launched in the fall of 2014, thousands of student artifacts were uploaded via TaskStream from community colleges and four-year institutions in the MSC states. To qualify, the artifacts had to originate from assignments that 'fit' the elements of one of three LEAP VALUE rubrics: Quantitative Literacy, Written Communication, or Critical Thinking, and had to come from students who were at least 75% done with their degree. At PCC, the latter was defined as students who had amassed at least 67 credits prior to the start of fall term.

The purpose of the Kansas City event was two-fold: The participants would serve as scorers of the national artifacts submitted last fall, and they would return to their home institutions and replicate the training for their peers--thus multiplying exponentially the cadre of educators familiar with the targeted rubrics. Susan, Shirlee Geiger, and Nora Stevens—all trained in Kansas City—will conduct norming sessions the week of March 9 using the same three rubrics. Those trainees will then assess the very artifacts PCC submitted to the national project and additional artifacts that didn't meet the MSC criteria. Down the road, the results of the internal assessment will be compared with the results of the national effort.

More Insights from Meta-Analysis

Further analysis of the 2013-2014 assessment reports has yielded information about the probable levels of bias in the data. Wayne created funnel plots to compare the assessments that used recommended sampling strategies, recommended sample sizes, and adequate inter-rater reliability with those that did not and found the latter to have over-estimated outcome attainment. Wayne will share his findings at the Association for Institutional Research conference in Denver this May.

LAC Membership

In Linda P.'s absence, Wayne provided an update on membership. He was pleased to announce the addition of Dana, introduced earlier, and of Hannah Love (Philosophy). Due to belated communication about today's meeting, Hannah was unable to attend, but she plans to be here in April. Despite its two new members, the LAC currently has only 16 active faculty members and 9 individuals who fall into the support/liaison category. The by-laws stipulate that the LAC should have 18 to 25 voting members representing CTE, LDC, and all four campuses. With recruitment in mind, Wayne declared April 17, 2015 to be "Bring-a-Friend-to-LAC Day."

Software Review Task Force Report

The main goal of this task force is “to make recommendations on the selection and adoption of assessment software, to aid...in better tracking and management of student mastery of course, SAC, and institutional learning outcomes.” This statement opened a two-page document that featured 8 bulleted committee objectives and 28 software specifications desired for assessment and institutional effectiveness. Marc and Wayne represent the LAC on this PCC committee, which also includes representatives from Distance Learning and from Institutional Effectiveness. Before coming to the LAC today, Marc had shared the same list of objectives and software specs with those attending the LO&A meeting at Cascade. There, Marc heard what other institutions are using for assessment software and how much they are paying for it—anywhere from \$9K to \$70K per year.

It is essential the software selected for PCC satisfy institutional *and* departmental assessment needs. If there is a way to take what we are already doing and ‘roll it up’ for reporting, that would be ideal. As an example, Marc mentioned that D2L shells have the capacity for built-in competencies and course outcomes, so having software that interfaces with D2L (which is one of the specs) would allow aggregation of course-level outcomes to DAC or core outcomes and simplify measurement and reporting of student achievement. [Note: The full document detailing the task force’s objectives and the software specifications will be posted at the LAC web page with these minutes.]

LAC DISCUSSION

Core Outcome Review Update

From NWCCU’s website, Standard 4.A.3:

“The institution documents, through an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement, that students who complete its educational courses, programs, and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, achieve identified course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Faculty with teaching responsibilities are responsible for evaluating student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.”

In a brief review of what led the LAC and the EAC to current discussions about Core Outcomes, Wayne explained the connection between accreditation and the need for transparency and accountability when it comes to assessing course, degree, and core outcomes.

2014-2015 represents PCC’s sixth year of conducting institutional assessment, but the current Core Outcomes were conceived in the late 1990s. Many feel it is time to take another look at the Core Outcomes to see if they are still a good fit for PCC. And, while we are looking at the Core Outcomes, maybe it is time to evaluate our General Education model to see if and where changes might be needed. Some institutions are aligning their Gen Ed with their Core Outcomes in a programmatic approach that ensures all graduates leave their institutions with minimum levels of competence or literacy in whatever areas the colleges deem most valuable.

In the annual assessment projects, many SACs assess 200-level courses and capstones, thus measuring student achievement as they near graduation. Gen Ed is an area where we can assess for outcome achievement well before students graduate, so blending Core Outcomes and Gen Ed is thought to be one way to effectively assess students in their first term, their last term, or any point in between. Plus, if PCC decides to roll its Core Outcomes into its Gen Ed, it will free up the CTE programs to concentrate on proprietary material. Elements such as Community and Environmental Responsibility or Cultural Awareness wouldn’t have to be covered unless they naturally occur in the course content.

Some questions have arisen: How do we review current Core Outcomes for suitability? How do we involve the larger faculty community in the conversation?

One recommendation is to tackle the 'problematic outcomes' first. After deciding which Core Outcomes to keep, add, or remove, we need to shore up what remains. Another idea is to have a set of measurable Core Outcomes for the institution and a separate list of Core Values that serve more as aspirational goals.

This topic has surfaced as the major theme for discussion this year among the EAC/LAC Integration Workgroup. Wayne should have more to report at the next meeting.

Next Meeting / Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 17.

This meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.