

Learning Assessment Council Meeting – 6/3/2016

Present: Wayne Hooke, Chris Brooks, Elizabeth Cole, Marc Goodman, Allison Gross, Gabe Hunter-Bernstein, Jessica Johnson, Hannah Love, Linda Paulson, Laura Sanders, Torie Scott, Ralf Youtz.

Wayne suggested that, following Chris Chairsell's announcement of her retirement, we create “The Chris Chairsell Distinguished Contribution to Faculty-led Assessment at PCC” award in her honor. It would be given to a faculty member who has made significant contributions to their SAC's or the college as a whole's work in assessment. There was discussion of including a modest (perhaps \$100) cash award as part of it.

Minutes approved from last meeting.

Committee reviewed the “Why Change Gen Ed” document being sent to all faculty during finals week. Allison suggested that the heading that begins “Problems Ensuring...” be changed to “Problems With Ensuring That All PCC Graduates Meet All Six Core Outcomes.” Consensus followed that there was not enough time to suggest more substantive alterations to the document since Kendra wants to send it out ASAP.

Chris announced that the statewide Learning Outcomes and Assessment group is hosting a “Teaching Talks III” conference in Portland in October 2016. It will consist of a series of workshops and panels on the theme of assignment design and the use of rubrics associated with the three outcomes used in the Multi-State Collaborative project, namely Quantitative Literacy, Critical Thinking, and Written Communication. There will be a limited number of participants per college at the conference, so it will be tricky to select attendees at a college as large as PCC (process of selection TBD.)

Allison, Marc, and Ralf suggested that there needs to be more flexibility in assessment at PCC in general to be able to capture projects that do not follow the basic model of assessing a core outcome within a SAC. All three shared examples of projects that do meaningful work (e.g. tracking whether students who pass a given class succeed in a later one), but do not fit well with the existing model, as reflected in the report templates and peer review process.

Wayne and Chris pointed out that the requirement to assess outcomes is directly from accreditation. Wayne suggested that the other kinds of assessment projects being brought up were good and valid, but should be carried out in addition to outcome assessment. Going forward, there is a strong chance that outcome assessment might be carried out at the college level rather than the SAC level, which would potentially free up SACs to carry out other kinds of formative assessment.

There are several examples of SACs for whom the current process is cumbersome or just doesn't work well – writing, math, sociology, etc. Thus, there is a desire and perhaps a need for a more flexible process.

Wayne pointed out that the assessment process must be “baked in” to whatever changes are made in gen ed and outcomes.

Wayne asked if the committee felt that SACs should again (i.e. in 2016 – 2017) be asked to assess only a single outcome, which can be experimental / exploratory. Committee members agreed to stick with that approach for the coming year.

Significant discussion of potential core outcome slates followed. Major points:

- The document should explicitly mention the utility (or even requirement) of outcomes being tied to LEAP and the VALUE rubrics.
- Ralf pointed out that the college's general education philosophy statement is basically a set of outcomes that are different than the college's core outcomes – they should be identical.
- Some committee members thought it desirable to have fewer outcomes.
- Jessica and Linda suggested categorizing the slates:
 - A few broad outcomes with various examples of how those might be assessed.
 - A tight group (five or six) of specific outcomes that are required within gen ed.
 - The outcomes PCC already has.
 - A long list (twelve or so) of outcomes.
- After significant discussion, the committee reached a consensus that outcomes that were common to all or most of the slates be highlighted and that the outcomes that were popular among faculty during the outreach sessions at the start of the school year be highlighted in a different color.
- Ralf suggested that whatever happens, outcomes have to be made visible to students, not just part of the background of faculty work.
- Gabe noted that Oregon Promise has a required first-year experience for students that could include (overt and explicit) exposure to the outcomes.

Wayne signed off as LAC chair and Chris took over. Wayne will be vice chair next year and Chris will be chair for the next two years. Chris warned committee members that he will be recruiting for a new vice chair starting next year, to start in 2017 – 2018.

Meeting adjourned.