

LAC Minutes – Final

Friday, 03/17/2017, Cascade Campus CH 301, 1:00 to 3:00

Attendance:

Voting Members		Voting Members, cont.		Non-Voting Members	
Chris Brooks, Chair	X	Laura Sanders		Kendra Cawley	
Elizabeth Cole		Julianne Sandlin		Sally Earll	
Marc Goodman		Jenny Sasser	X	Anne Haberkern	
Allison Gross		Torie Scott	X	Susan Wilson, Recorder	X
Dana Harker		Thomas Songer	X		
Wayne Hooke, Vice-Chair		Nora Stevens	X	Today's Guest	
Jessica Johnson		Ann Su	X	Matt Levy	X
Hannah Love	X	Catherine Thomas			
Linda Paulson	X	Ralf Youtz	X		
Davina Ramirez					

Note: Minutes are sent to all of the individuals listed above, plus the VP of Academic Affairs, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, and all past LAC chairs.

ACTION ITEMS

Chris: Send Susan the By-Laws draft from the last meeting

- Susan: Update the By-Laws table of contents and appendix and finalize the document
- Chris: Share with Kendra the recommendations for future Gen Ed sessions
- Chris: Try to get completion / success data from Institutional Effectiveness

BUSINESS UPDATES

Assessment in the News

Chris kicked off the meeting with some comments about an article published March 8 by the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME), titled, *Ten Years After the Spellings Commission: From Accountability to Internal Improvement*. Written by Ou Lydia Liu, the timely article looks at innovative ways to maximize student assessment, given the mounting pressure put on accreditation agencies to see that the institutions they sanction show evidence of student learning and increasing returns on [educational] investment.

Nora gave a brief report on a session she attended, as part of the NWCCU Mid-Cycle Workshops in Seattle on March 9, which related to what Chris just shared.

Video Idea

Chris thinks it might be time to produce a short video about assessment at PCC. As part of a SAC and department that has produced its share of videos, Torie had some insights to share. Even the shortest videos, she said, require an amazing amount of effort, and they tend to go out of date quickly if the content isn't sufficiently generic. She did come across an effective video recently on how to do assessment at the institutional level; it had just a few slides, was tailored to faculty, and didn't take much time to view.

Subcommittees

Outreach: Thomas suggested inviting SAC chairs and/or their designees to LAC meetings. It could eliminate some of the mystery about the LAC and what it does. Members voiced enthusiasm for the idea, and a few shared additional thoughts on the matter:

- Restructure the way we hold meetings, keeping the first part a closed business session and making the discussion segment open to the public

- Make sure the invitations are clear as to what we do, so guests aren't under the impression that we are doing coaching vs. council stuff
- Allow guests to do a 5-minute share about what their SAC is doing related to assessment
- Send the invitation through Google Calendar, so interested guests can have the day, time, and venue information at their fingertips should they opt to accept
- Encourage the SAC chairs to send a proxy if they can't attend personally

If we move forward with the idea, Tom plans to visit the Sylvania-based chairs personally to introduce himself and to extend the invitations. SAC chairs might respond more positively if they can put a 'face' to the mysterious entity that is the LAC.

By-laws: Minor changes to the by-laws draft were made at the last meeting, and Chris received confirmation on one of the items in the document—that the Vice-President of Academic Affairs is the official overseer of the LAC, its chair, and its vice-chair. Susan will update the table of contents page and add the appendix items. When that's done, Chris will send it to the members this spring and ask for a formal vote. Ralf thanked the by-laws subcommittee for their work.

Templates: Nothing to report.

LAC DISCUSSION

Science, Mathematics, and Computer Studies General Education Session

On March 3, Academic Affairs hosted the third of three "Gen Ed Sessions," as they have come to be known. Nora and Ralf, who were among the attendees, described the order of the session, which included an overview by Kendra; four (12-min) stations that explored LEAP VALUE rubrics, rubric mash-ups, the Gen Ed concept map, and the cost of doing business; small group sessions in which faculty created decision grids that featured the outcomes and usability criteria that worked best for them as a group and for them individually (determined by sticker votes); and a 15-minute wrap-up session.

One member felt progress was being made at this year's session, because the faculty had a chance to look at the outcomes in more depth. He was comparing it to last year's inservice sessions about Majors at PCC and Gen Ed, which felt more prescriptive than participative.

Chris then shared Kendra Cawley's spreadsheets showing the results of the March 3rd session, as well as the ones for the Arts & Letters and Social Science held February 17. Collectively and individually the faculty votes are significant, for they provide the first meaningful and tangible results since PCC set out to identify its 'ideal' core outcomes.

Chris said the ELAIT task force (the integrated EAC and LAC subgroup) plans to debrief on March 24. He asked if the council had any comments to relay to the task force if they should decide to hold more sessions in the future. Their suggestions:

- Allow more than 3 hours (folks with little prior knowledge would find it hard to get up to speed in 3 hours or less)
- Couch it in terms that faculty should put aside their prior notions about Gen Ed and be open to the adaptable Summative Assessment Model
- Design the follow-up sessions to be more structured and goal-driven
- Don't spend as much time on the background information

- Focus energies on the middle section of Eriks' concept map and 'scrunch it up'—concentrate on the Gen Ed Philosophy Statement
- Encourage faculty in attendance to share session 'takeaways' with their constituents when they return to the office

Chris was asked what he thought progress would look like in 'next steps.' He responded that there really is no road map for this—we are exploring new territory. Deciding which outcomes (new or existing) would be more assessable would be a big step forward. To that end, he commented that the Gen Ed and the Outcomes efforts are 'incremental' at best. He has concluded, in his time with the LAC, that small gains are the norm and should be celebrated, as opposed to expecting wholesale decisions or changes to occur at the end of each year.

Having a timeline would be nice, but, as Nora explained, when we tried to replicate Montgomery College's lock-step project a couple of years ago, our first attempt at outreach netted too few faculty and so we tripped up on our very first milestone.

Nora, who is the LAC chair-in-waiting (she will replace Chris in 2018-19), has spent a lot of time thinking about ways to move the Gen Ed project forward. One idea is to chunk the 400+ courses on the existing Gen Ed lists, and poll each SAC as to whether they want their courses to remain on the lists. If so, have them reapply, and review all on a case-by-case basis.

Another member noted the challenge of creating a culture of acceptance and agreement when there is no built-in accountability structure. We want to be collegial so we invite folks to attend and to share, but we cannot mandate any sort of product because ours is only a helping role.

Career Pathways

In the wake of Rob Johnstone's stimulating conversations this week, Chris devoted some time for sharing what we learned. Faculty who had attended one of Rob's sessions shared their impressions and takeaways. Low completion rates across the country seemed to be driving interest in guided pathways, but how do we define 'student completion'? There is a need for institutional data about our own completion and success rates, variously defined – Chris indicated that he will try to follow up with Institutional Effectiveness to get at some of that data next term.

Funding Part-Time Participation at PCC

When Chris learned that funds set aside by the faculty contract hadn't been fully tapped at the end of fall, he sent an email to SAC chairs in January encouraging them to apply for the funds on behalf of their adjunct faculty to get them involved in assessment projects. He started hearing back from chairs who had attempted to apply but found the procedure wholly confusing. He reached out via e-mail, but wasn't able to get a definitive answer on how the application process worked. That prompted Chris to send another email to the SAC chairs asking if any of them had successfully applied and whether they had heard anything about their proposals. At today's meeting, Jenny said Gerontology had received funds—she'll check with Jan A. to get the details. Tom said his SAC's part-timers are on track to getting paid, but he had to ride herd to get to this point. Matt and Ralf mentioned that Comp/Lit was on it from the get-go and he referred Chris to Megan Savage for more information. *Note: The link to the application can be found at the POD web page, but it is the Deans of Instruction who are ultimately in charge of*

deling out the funds. When applying, Chris was told by POD to choose “Workshop,” then “Other,” and then to use the narrative section to explain the nature of the request.

In light of the challenges that have surfaced in this funding expedition, it is critical that full-time faculty amplify their voice to support adjunct faculty. As an aside, one member expressed frustration that the mere existence of funds doesn't always ensure that they will be distributed fairly if tapped at all, pointing to examples in own department where shared ideas for the funds went ignored or they were tapped for someone else.

Culture of Evidence-Based Change (EBC)

Tom kicked off the discussion with the question: Do we agree that we aspire to a culture of evidence-based change? In response, Chris said the career pathway conversations has led him to think differently about EBC. It is one thing, he said, to support assessment but he's also seeing student success differently. As an example, he told the story of a student who earned an A in one of his courses 4.5 years ago, and then showed up again in another history course more recently. Why is the student still at PCC?

Torie suggested that separating the 'evidenced-based' part from the 'change' part might be in order. Having a culture of evidence can mean doing a lot more analysis than what we already do. Maybe it would be more effective to just provide the evidence (the data) to get the conversation started. Ralf contends that people have a hard time seeing where they fit in, that they cannot see that they can be or should be the change agent. Chris agreed that some resistance is a normal byproduct when one encounters uncomfortable information.

Ann said all of this work is multidisciplinary, yet decisions tend to be made by small councils and task forces that are not so discipline-diverse. She is for more faculty involvement across the board. Faculty-led committees, Chris added, tend to be the proxy 'voice' for all of the faculty simply because there is a core group of active participants who are willing to attend the meetings.

The discussion turned to SAC-level challenges, such as the inability of some departments to 'close the loop' when it comes to assessment. Or, SACs not understanding how to analyze the results—not knowing what to do with them. Too many times, assessment is just a 'have to' exercise—the SACs assess, write up a report, turn it in, and then do it all over again the next year. There is little time to analyze and make sense of the data. There really needs to be at least two full years between assessing and reassessing, Nora suggested, though Tom says his department could use four or five years in between.

Torie asked if PCC will or would ever hire someone whose sole job is to oversee assessment? Budget issues notwithstanding, Chris really doesn't know. Though many colleges have an Office of Assessment, adding one at PCC would be administrative bloat. Torie thinks the best overseer would come from the faculty ranks and that the district TLCs should be under their purview. Chris agrees that the role really begs for someone who can be a champion for institutional assessment and who can guide and inspire PCC to meet its obligations without interfering in the 'what and how' of assessment that should remain in the control of the subject experts.

Outcomes in the CCOG - Tabled

The meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.

New Member Application

Matt Levy, full-time instructor in composition, has attended the last two meetings as a guest and