

## LAC Minutes – Final

Friday, 06/09/2017, CLIMB 305, 1:00 to 3:00

### Attendance:

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

After the meeting was called to order, informal introductions were made for the benefit of guest Troy Jesse, full-time Biology faculty. It was Wayne's last meeting as outgoing vice-chair.

## BUSINESS UPDATES

### LAC Minutes

It has been difficult to get the minutes formally approved and posted in a timely fashion, so Chris wishes to adopt a "speak now or forever hold your peace" policy. Starting with today's meeting minutes, Chris will send the attendees the draft and ask for corrections and comments. He will make the necessary changes, if any, and send them to the committee one last time. Barring any further corrections, the minutes will be considered approved and final. That version will then be posted to the LAC web page and a link to same will be included in the email Chris sends to all faculty after each meeting.

### Gen Ed/Core Outcomes Update

Wayne updated the group on the status of the Gen Ed/Core Outcomes conversations. Though no decisions have been made, the year's Gen Ed focus sessions with LDC faculty and a recent meeting between Kendra and the CTE chairs were considered largely successful. The "pay to play" model, where SACs with courses on the Gen Ed list would be required to have built-in assessment of specific outcomes, seems to be gaining momentum. The Core Outcomes review process looks good, and Kendra has said we can keep what we have if the faculty so chooses, even if it (the Core) doesn't work perfectly. With the mid-cycle review just around the corner, Wayne said Kendra has an ambitious timeline for identifying and codifying PCC's Gen Ed system. This week, she was preparing a strategic plan with goals, activities, and the resources needed to support them. If funded, she will convene groups of faculty to identify outcomes and develop

rubrics to assess them.

Thomas asked about the future of summative vs. formative assessment. Wayne explained that if the “pay to play” model is adopted, the affected courses would be subject to summative assessment that would ideally be managed centrally. All SACs still would be responsible for conducting formative assessments at the course/program level, and CTE SACs would continue assessing their degree and certificate outcomes.

On Kendra’s behalf, Wayne invited the attendees to a full-day retreat on June 30. Members of the EAC and all of its subcommittees, and the LAC, will come together to discuss next steps in the Gen Ed movement at PCC. More information forthcoming.

### Subcommittee Reports

- Bylaws: No quorum; the vote to approve revised bylaws was thus postponed.
- Templates: This subcommittee was tasked with making the annual planning and reporting forms less off-putting and less painful, given that completing the current forms is often compared to doing one’s taxes. Allison, subcommittee lead, recently met with Chris and provided him a draft of a proposed template for LDC year-end reporting. Chris put the form on the screen, in chunks, for the council to see. It generated a variety of observations and suggestions.

All agreed the new template, designed as an online fillable form, is radically simplified compared to the current template. Chris is concerned that the text boxes, though expandable, might encourage one-sentence answers. Sally pointed out that long responses on any report are no guarantee that the writer has answered the questions.

Wayne observed that the new form resembles a past version that was very hard for peers to review. He advocates for streamlining the existing form and cleaning up the support guides. Torie suggested that the form needs more prompts, so writers know where to include an executive summary, for example, and where it is appropriate to put other information.

The new version has none of the embedded instructions, links, and resources that pepper the current forms. Ralf prefers this clean, unencumbered format, while others believe the detailed information is crucial for the faculty who are new to assessment and who have the task of completing the forms dropped in their laps. Torie and Nora noted that having the links and resources at one’s fingertips while they are filling out the forms is essential.

Chris noted that the new form is missing a place for SACs to identify which

outcome(s) they assessed. This information is critical for all readers, especially peer reviewers. All of the points on the Peer Review critique need to be in the template as well, Nora noted.

Torie wondered if we are asking too much of one form, if we expect it to meet the needs of the author, the peers, and the public? She posed the idea of keeping a simplified form and replacing the current peer review system with some kind of panel presentation made by each SAC. Chris appreciated the innovative idea, but noted it would take more time that we have to overhaul the entire reporting *and* peer review process.

If we are going for readability, Ralf thinks the instructions should be plucked from the form and placed on a dedicated web page. Chris agrees, but he knows the presence of embedded instructions, however cumbersome, do serve as a speed bump that folks have to acknowledge as they work their way through the form. If we take them out completely, it will be “out of sight and out of mind,” and the people who need them won’t necessarily know where to find them. Thomas suggested a compromise: Why not remove the detailed instructions and insert a hyperlink to them instead? A link could be added to any question where related guides or resources exist.

The council liked the check boxes at the bottom that allow SACs to indicate areas where they need further guidance. This will be an excellent way to connect SACs with their coaches.

The group was enthusiastic when Wayne suggested we field test the new form with a few carefully-selected LDC SACs in the fall.

[Later in today’s meeting, Wayne said we should ask SACs: “How many hours did you spend on his project?” The group agreed this would be a great addition to the template and that we should ask SACs to break down the hours spent by FT and PT faculty, if possible.]

- Outreach: Some strides have been made in council outreach this year; a few more colleagues know we exist. Next fall, Chris plans to implement Thomas’s idea of inviting SAC chairs or assessment leaders to LAC meetings, but wants to get all of his ducks in a row to ensure that the guests will feel it’s time well spent. He isn’t convinced that inviting them to the discussion portion of each meeting would be productive. Perhaps, it’s something to try once a quarter, maybe through a road show where the LAC visits a different campus each time. Ann suggested having food as both a courtesy and an incentive. If we know which SACs are coming, we should also invite their coaches, Torie recommended. If we decide to open one or more of our fall meetings to the chairs, Torie suggested we do so well before the

planning ARFs are due.

## LAC DISCUSSION

### LAC FAQs

The minutes from the May meeting capture the group's ideas for addressing the faculty's frequently-asked questions about assessment. Chris asked for the group's thoughts on what to do with that information. Send it to the chairs in the fall? Do videos?

- Nora proposes one-minute videos, because they're much easier to update.
- Ann says YouTube has a transcript feature that accompanies its video; we could do that.
- Wayne said we could make our own videos using iPhones and save a bundle on production costs. He also noted that it will be important to make the videos timely and relevant, or ideally, timeless.
- Torie has a colleague who produces graphic novels, and she thinks that format might be a catchy way to present the information.
- Whatever medium is selected, Wayne cautioned that we need to use technology that isn't going to go out of style any time soon.
- Ralf pictures an "Assessment Question of the Month" in the emails sent to faculty. Invite them to submit their own questions for future newsletters.
- Thomas would like to post the FAQs prominently at the LAC web page and keep them updated.
- Chris hasn't given up on the idea of a newsletter, but struggles to know what to put in it. When he passed along a nugget from Inside Higher Education earlier this year, he did get a few responses from faculty. Ann said everyone on the LAC should be on the lookout for relevant and interesting items to include. Linda advised that 'short and sweet' is a good policy, which means a one-page bulletin would be better than a newsletter. Make it appealing, with one article, a cartoon, and a link at the bottom that takes folks to the LAC web page.

### Budget Woes and Assessment

The bleak budget picture has Chris concerned. If vacant full-time positions go unfilled, it puts a burden on the faculty who remain and assessment is going to be one of the things that doesn't get done. Kendra is supportive and understands the difficulty SACs have had tapping into the funds that were set aside for efforts like assessment. Ann would like to see the 10 hours allotted to each SAC increased, and maybe increased in proportion to the size of the SAC and how many faculty are involved in its assessment. Thomas concurred that the process of applying and reapplying for projects over multiple terms is cumbersome. He advocates for having a set amount available to each SAC—apply once and be done with it. It's too late for this year, but if PCC is in a position to dedicate strategic initiative funds again for part-time faculty projects, Susan suggested it would make more sense to allot a fixed amount to each SAC and do away with the convoluted application process.

One immediate matter is the need for updated wording in the contract. The language in there now was written before the LAC was created and refers to classroom-level assessment. When asked if the Council leadership will pursue this with the union, Chris said it would.

#### Mid-Cycle Visit

For next year's mid-cycle accreditation visit, we need summative assessment data. For CTE, we are collecting TSA reports. For LDC, we are pulling out benchmark data (i.e., which SACs have benchmarks and how many students are meeting them). Kendra intends to use the results from the MSC for the students who have completed 75% or more of their degree (summative), and RRFs (the re-assessment reporting templates) to see if SACs are seeing improvements in student performance (formative).

In this last meeting of the year, Chris reflected on the council's progress. He had grand goals when he started, but has come to terms with the slow-moving nature of things. He doesn't see membership and the pace of progress changing anytime soon. The LAC has produced fewer deliverables in recent years, but that is mostly due to the fact that fewer changes were made to the assessment process during Wayne (and now Chris's) tenure as chair. The mid-cycle review could change all of that. Ralf pointed out that we have had some important discussions this year, and those are no small strides. Nora noted that if Kendra's plans for Gen Ed and Outcomes reform seem a little ambitious, it is because she is looking ahead to the 7-year review. Even if we get a buy from NWCCU in 2018, based on the earnest work on Gen Ed and Outcomes, we need to have something concrete in place by 2021.

Linda proposed putting our energies into outreach and into the bulletin. Ann agreed, saying that we need to improve assessment morale. Outreach isn't just getting the LAC 'out there,' but it is talking to SACs about the importance of assessment. Torie suggested doing videos of the good projects SACs are undertaking. Ann said she is willing to host a summer meeting in her home, because she really thinks we need to be strategic and to devote some quality time to planning before the new academic year begins. Scheduling the meeting will be a challenge due to everyone's vacation plans, but Chris said he can send out a poll.

#### Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:30.