

LAC Minutes – Final

Friday, 6/8/2018

Attendance:

Voting Members		Voting Members, cont.		Non-Voting Members	
Chris Brooks, Chair	x	Beth Manhat		Kendra Cawley	
Marc Goodman		Linda Paulson	x	Sally Earll	x
Allison Gross		Davina Ramirez	x	Susan Wilson	
Dana Harker	x	Julianne Sandlin	x		
Wayne Hooke	x	Torie Scott	x	Today's Guests	
Troy Jesse		Thomas Songer		None	
Jamee Kristen	x	Nora Stevens, Vice Chair and today's recorder	x		
Matt Levy	x	Ann Su			
Hannah Love		Jacki Williams	x		

ACTION ITEMS

- Kendra: make sure the deans know that the DSACs are a two-year commitment
- Nora: ask Kendra for ideas on structure of administrative relationship with college-wide assessment
- Nora and Chris: ensure new forms work even if faculty have not filled out their fall plan (suggested by Jacki)
- Nora and the LAC's Fall Tasks:
 - Determine the LAC's relationship to the Gen Ed process
 - Keep the LAC updated on the Gen Ed project
 - Debate the core outcomes question: Are there more than four?
 - Give thought to how to set up CTE assessment so it fits college outcomes
 - Look at aspirational outcomes and their relative importance beyond strict assessment
 - Consider the issue of equity in outcomes and graduation rates
 - Revisit how part-timers get paid and mentored in the assessment process?

DISCUSSION

Debriefing the morning's meeting of the LAC, CC, and DAC

For those who couldn't attend the joint meeting earlier today, Chris summarized the purpose of the meeting as discussing the process for approving/reapproving courses for the General Education list post-revision. The meeting was to brainstorm ideas and to learn about each committee's processes and roles. When done, he asked if there were any concerns about the LAC's role as we forge ahead. The members had observations, concerns, and questions:

Linda said it was interesting to see processes in place and to visualize the LAC's viable roles. Can we use our coaches to help? Torie found it a productive meeting, though she was surprised how little the LAC came up in the smaller brainstorming group.

Wayne noted that the Gen Ed Discipline Subject Area Committees (DSACs) will have a significant role as bodies of expertise, and wonders what that will mean for the LAC. Chris appreciates the current LAC; it's quite practical. To Wayne's point, most were struck by how the DSAC process has been faculty-driven.

Rubric development has been led by the DSACs themselves over the course of 11 meetings, guided by Jamee's expert hand, and sponsored by Academic Affairs with LAC in a cooperative role. Chris has been diligent about bringing items of concern back to the LAC for discussion. Few realized that the DSACs would be an ongoing committee/role. To be fair, Jamee acknowledged that this *is* a work in progress, so the idea of the DSAC(s) has changed over time. She also noted that the DSAC committee role is, at the very least, a two-year commitment; we need to make sure the deans know that.

As to the future relationship between the LAC and the DSACs, Chris explained that the DSACs will have expertise in rubrics and college-wide assessment, where the LAC has, to date, guided only the annual SAC-level assessments. Wayne asked if the DSACs could become sub-committees of the LAC? If so, he said there should be an LAC member on each one. Jamee said there already is at least one LAC member on each DSAC already. Back to the bigger question of 'what is the LAC's purview over college-wide assessment?' Chris said PCC continues to follow the MSC model, with Academic Affairs running college-wide assessment, largely independent of the LAC. The LAC has had some input into informing the approach to the DSACs. There are SACs that oppose the idea, even though few of their classes are affected. On the other hand, proponents believe college-wide assessment needs to be pinned to real things happening in real classrooms and built 'up' not down. Nora sees the LAC being an ongoing advisory body. Wayne believes a faculty group has to keep on top of its advisory role; otherwise, Academic Affairs will end up with all-assessment oversight and it is not a balanced, faculty-heavy body.

Linda reiterated her mantra "always return to purpose;" she sees college-wide assessment as more administrator-pushed and says we need to make certain we stay with a faculty-led focus. What is our mission? Faculty-driven assessment. Jamee said it's a balancing act, for sure. Chris said Susan also is a major advisor (an Academic Affairs conduit). Kendra's heavy schedule often is in conflict with LAC meetings, but Chris said the lines of communication are pretty good right now.

Matt is intrigued by the new "growth" and how the group has evolved. Wayne asked what do we see as the role of the LAC in the future? We haven't done much for last few years, he said, referring to the status quo approach to assessment during the Gen Ed Inquiry. We do need to manage evolution of any new assessment system.

When Chris goes to joint meetings, he said he arrives with the "voice of the council," which has a lot of weight, largely because few others know about assessment.

Julianne is concerned that if we don't take on college-wide assessment, that we may become obsolete. Jamee disagrees, saying we cannot minimize the work that will continue at the SAC level. There's the coaching piece, accreditation issues, new types of assessment, faculty engagement, and the overall value of assessment. She believes it is unlikely the LAC will become obsolete. Chris reminded the group that as a council, we are on the same level as the EAC. Coaching, assignment design, and SAC assessments all will be needed going forward. Jamee said that while she wasn't chosen to lead the DSAC meetings because of her membership in the LAC, this work is too important and too interconnected to not be guided by someone on the council. Sally voiced appreciation for the meeting this morning. Jamee was happy to get the positive feedback, as it was difficult to decide on the level to present.

Formalizing the LAC's relationship with college-wide assessment needs to be the near-term focus of the LAC. Wayne suggested asking Kendra for ideas on structure of the administrative relationship. And, as new members come on who may not know the history, Linda said the DSACs need specific rules.

CTE and Core Outcomes

At this point, the discussion morphed into a discussion about CTE and Gen Ed. CTE's needs are not well-represented in the four new outcomes, so how do the career/technical programs fit into the new assessment framework? How can we make it less onerous while meeting accreditation requirements? CTE SACs had to map focal outcomes to core outcomes because of accreditation recommendations. How flexible are these and how easily can they be changed? Chris asked if there is a reason for CTE to assess core outcomes? Wayne clarified that they're only required to assess degree and certificate outcomes (it's an accreditation thing). Sally thinks it's not a burden to CTE to be aligned to the core, and because they are so mapped, assessment and instruction are strongly linked to the core. Any break in that connection would change assessment and make CTE an autonomous entity—disconnected from PCC's institutional outcomes—and this causes Linda great concern.

CTE has been put 'on hold' during the Gen Ed Inquiry. Chris admitted he didn't understand the value of CTE mapping before. FALL QUESTION: How do we set up CTE assessment so it fits college outcomes? Jamee noted that there is one CTE person in each of the DSAC groups. When the subject of transferrable skills came up, it resulted in great conversations. Sally concurred, saying the CTE faculty remind us how to connect "soft skills" value to the degree programs. Jamee shared that at one of the meetings, Marc (Goodman) emphasized that now CTE can know what soft skill is being provided in each Gen Ed course and thus direct their students more confidently. Chris said it is evident that CTE has to be involved in future discussions.

Peer Review

The new peer review team is built around assessment expertise associated with the LAC, though council experience is not formally required. The LAC should develop expertise in assessment by using experts in peer review (previous years have been hit-and-miss for assessment quality in the feedback forms). Chris has high hopes for this summer and is counting on more members of the LAC joining the peer review team as the years go along.

Coaching

Chris said several coaches are retiring and we need to recruit more. Nora mentioned Kendra's plans to install CTE-specific coaches to assist with proprietary issues such as the Summary Data Reports. The all-important SDRs are linked to Perkins funds, but are often misunderstood—resulting in incomplete or absent forms.

The new CTE coaches (really, all coaches) should be part of the LAC membership. Torie asked if coaches could be peer reviewers? Yes. The new idea is that coaches and LAC members will be peer reviewers, and there will be four "lead reviewers" (Chris, Nora, Susan, Sally) who will provide the final check. (Coaches will provide any "stories" about particular SACs as needed.) Torie recommends that other LAC members become coaches. Coaches are paid and they learn a lot about SACs in the process. Davina and Wayne said they might become coaches. Jacki asked how a person can be a coach without being on the LAC? Chris and Linda offered that many coaches are not available to meet on Friday afternoons, and historically it was never a

requirement. Wayne agreed that there are shifting priorities on who should be coaches. With this new focus on coaches being LAC members, Chris asked what to do about the already busy CTE coaches? On a related note, Nora is all for bringing back the coach trainings.

Peer review and coaching will help to build up expertise and create greater LAC visibility. The LAC largely is invisible to many people. One example is the fact that members of the EAC were surprised that we can make decisions that could affect them! Upcoming years will be even more active. Linda advocates for a PR arm of the LAC and mentioned the idea of a promotional video that had been discussed earlier in the year. She said other committees have a PR-only person who attend meetings mainly to get the word out. Nora thanked Linda for keeping the PR idea in front of the group. Chris said he has consistently sent an email of the minutes to all faculty after each meeting, which is a big step forward. Some people even read them!

Visibility of assessment is generally high so we as coaches and reviewers will become more visible by association.

Next Year

Chris asked if everyone plans to return next year, whereupon everyone nodded. What do we anticipate having to do next year?

Jamee said we need to do a better job of updating the LAC about Gen Ed. Another fall task is to determine the relationship of the LAC to Gen Ed process.

We need to revisit the core outcomes question—are there more than four? What about Communication as an outcome? If we want another outcome, we'll have to give some thought as to how to fit it in. Jamee doesn't see this as a huge obstacle, as we're already using written papers and could draw on the Writing SAC to make a rubric. If we follow the AAOT's outcomes for foundational courses, Wayne asked, who would "own" communication and how could we ensure all students get it? Nora suggested putting Communication into all SAC programs, but Jamee commented that it might get complicated if the assessment of Communication is part of the college-wide process. Defining what we mean by 'communication' needs to happen first, Linda suggested.

Chris wondered how we could make assignments fit more than one rubric—like combining grammar elements and cultural literacy. Jamee is all for double-dipping (using one rubric for two outcomes), but it could be a challenge for the math/science/computer science disciplines when their artifacts may be all quantitative or non-narrative question-and-answer style. She definitely doesn't want the group to go it alone.

Chris understands how the Cultural Literacy designation works, and he acknowledged the enrollment advantage of having a course on the CL list, but if Communication is not DSAC-specific, which classes would get the Communication flag? Does it show in course catalog only? Sally clarified that the AAOT and ASOT/B currently recognize only WR 121, WR 122, WR 222, and COMM 111 as meeting the foundational writing requirement, so Jamee suggested we look at the writing/speech/oral requirements of the statewide degrees. Sally noted that there is a set of comprehensive requirements for all of the following foundational degree elements: Gen Ed, Writing, Math, and Cultural Literacy. Matt pointed out that there are speech and writing courses that are not on the Gen Ed list. He said it's 'common sense,' courses don't have to be in Gen Ed.

Davina suggested three more fall tasks:

- Determine if some outcomes might be better suited to 'aspirational,' in which case, they wouldn't be subject to the same strict assessment requirements. She said this was an informal suggestion of the spring visitation team. True, Chris allowed; there are institutional outcomes and institutional themes. The themes we don't have to assess, but they can guide budget and discussions.
- Address the connection of racial equity in outcomes and graduation rates. PCC needs to push minority graduation rates to be the same as white grad rates. Does the LAC have a way to put that into assessment? Wayne said we can break data down by racial and other demographic groups. He agrees that the LAC's strongest role in equity is calling out inequitable practices.
- Investigate how to provide pay and mentoring to part-time faculty for the added responsibility of assignment design/redesign. As someone who teaches 15 credits every term, Davina feels like she hasn't gotten these two vital messages (equity and PT pay) into LAC discussions. Would this fall under contract negotiations? Professional development? The LAC should have a unified theory about this. Chris said he and Jamee are pushing hard for paying PTers. Nora agreed that assignment design can be very important to equity. Jamee wondered if we can get YESS funding for assignment design?

Chris admits to being shocked that the LAC budget was cut in half last year, just when needs for assessment were/are ramping up. The Administration is not budgeting in a manner that reflects the importance of assessment. Matt offered that administration may not anticipate/realize assessment is valuable to equity, and Wayne suggested this is also true of aspirational outcomes. He used environmental responsibility (ER) as an example, but Chris said the Science/Math/Comp Sci outcome does, in fact, encompass ER.

We work well as a team to get things done, Chris said. We are not a place where concerns/blowback necessarily reach us, except, of course, in those instances where LAC members bring them to our attention. This year alone, multiple members have shared their SAC's concerns about PT pay and about college-wide assessment.

As the discussion wound down, a few more ideas were put on the table:

- Matt would like accessible sample assignments and a way to submit assignments to have them critiqued for good rubric fit and equitability—would take \$\$ though. Chris said something of this sort is planned for the Gen Ed assessment roll out, and he believes there will be funds for this (maybe through Katy Ho's office).
- Linda's wish list includes a faculty tutoring service until everyone is on board and comfortable with the process. Dana says this might be something the TLC can help with. They are well-known and accessible. The TLC might be a natural place to house the assignment design workshops, too, Jamee suggested. It would add resources and partners. The workshops could go on the TLC calendar with links to the rubrics.

Transition to Nora as new chair!

Chris thanked Nora for her support in 2017-2018 and said he looks forward to working with her this summer and next year. Nora will serve as council chair for the next two years, and Chris, as outgoing chair, will be vice-chair for 2018-2019.

Adjournment

Chris adjourned the meeting at 2:30.