Assessment Leadership Team Meeting

October 1, 2021

9 AM via Zoom

Attendance: Nathan Myers, Melissa Nail, Ellen Malito-Green, Brian Stone, Joe Harder, Laura Froelicher, Sheikh Ferdous, Paula Jarrard, Kelley Woods-Johnson, Ashley Layman

Review of the Minutes.

Kelley motioned to approve. Multiple seconds. Minutes were approved.

Brian reported that English completed their SOAS report. First time he was involved in the creation of the report. They are looking how they can best represent all their concentrations, in addition to the general major assessment. Sharing results with the department. Categories are good, except for source integration. Also an issue in the composition assessment. Wondering if students are not getting the information in junior comp. Trying to figure out where they get that knowledge in the curriculum. Looking to take results and implement change.

No new movement in regard to e-portfolios. Conversations will start again next week.

Joe reported that Ashley is piloting using Canvas for assessment. For undergraduates, they are trying to integrate Canvas into assessment this cycle.

Kelley said she is excited about the use of Canvas and suggested partnering to put on some workshops on the subject.

Sheikh announced that College of Technology will be doing their accreditation visit on Oct. 10-12. Different departments have submitted their SOAS reports. He can give a full report after Oct. 12.

Paula reported that all the departments in HHS are involved in self-studies at the moment.

Brian noted that there have been proposals to take away course releases for program directors. English is working to protect course releases to protect work like assessment. Directors are being asked to provide descriptions of their work to defend the continuing course release.

Kelley noted that we should keep this issue on our radar.

Kelley said she tracking SOAS reports coming in and consulting with departments. College of Education and College of Arts and Sciences have been proactive in regard to working with faculty. Workshops have been held on collecting Foundation Studies Assessment Day. This year UDIE and Lab and Science categories will be assessed.

Kelley had conversations with Molly Hare and Kristie Bigler about the Canvas transition. Program and college outcomes are not required to be put into Canvas, however, it is encouraged. Malea loaded learning outcomes for non-accredited programs in Education into Canvas. Accredited programs already have a database for the information. Chris Fischer wanted to get CAS faculty used to the teaching aspects of Canvas before focusing on assessment. Trying to support faculty in using the tools they are interested in.

Melissa reported that they had an external review for Curriculum Instruction and Technology. Kelley noted she went to the exit interview and it was noted that the students felt strongly supported by the program.

Committee Reports

Strategic Planning

The Excellence in Assessment rubric and comments from the HLC review were used to guide the strategic planning discussion. Three priorities were identified, also with questions, evidence, and potential strategies. We hope to flesh this out more over the course of the rest of the semester. After today, this document will be sent to the full Assessment Council.

Report Committee has not meet yet this semester. They do plan to continue their work this semester.

Kelley shared folder with marketing materials for the Assessment Institute, which will be held virtually again. Trying to get more people engaged in assessment activities. General and marketing has been done. Looked for sessions related to particular topics: STEM, undergraduate research, e-portfolios, etc. Kelley has been excited by the positive faculty response, particularly distance education and enrollment management. Another benefit is that you do have access to materials digitally after the conference is over. There will be an in-person meeting to watch the plenary session. Focused on taking program goals/objectives from the top and integrating across the university. The plenary will be October 25th at 3 PM. Working with OIT to create an opportunity to make it a hybrid event where in-person and people watching on-line can discuss together.

In regard to old business, we will have an election coming up for Assessment Council officers. Kelly is still accepting nominations.

We invited a member of the committee leading the effort regarding the program data/qualitative narrative reports. Susan Powers indicated it would be better to wait to have someone come because they are currently working on a rubric to share with faculty.

Discussion of Strategic Planning Document/Questions

Kelley reviewed the key questions from the Strategic Planning document.

* How might this plan fundamentally change the activities of Assessment Council?
* What resources (fiscal, human, and otherwise) are reasonable to seek in the current climate, and which might dictate longer-term goal timeframes? How do we build buy-in for allotting resources?
* How do we encourage urgency around priorities when we just came off our “HLC success?”
* How do we ensure “what do we want to know” is a two-way conversation between what we need to know institutionally and what faculty, staff, students, administrators, accreditors, etc. want to know?
* What low-hanging fruit can we identify to tackle and get some small wins?

Brian asked about how broadly or narrowly we are looking the resources question. Kelley noted that it could be either/or. Brian noted that assessment should be better articulated in regard to its importance in the tenure process. How do we look at assessment reports during the tenure process as compared to peer-reviewed articles?

Kelley asked how we encourage faculty to pursue assessment that matters to them?

Joe noted that it tends to work better from the top down. In Business, retreats are held to explain the importance/utility of assessment.

Melissa noted it should be looked at as a tool for growth and improvement. It is not valued when it is something done to us. Some universities have their assessment time early in the summer to focus on using it for growth.

Kelley noted that there have been a lot of different approaches to Assessment Day. Appreciated Melissa’s point that assessment is a tool. There is power in being able to uncover some of the granular issues that you don’t necessarily see unless you are going through an assessment process.

Brian noted that getting resources and sitting down with faculty to explain how it has value to them and got them involved, it changed the conversation. They have been successful in maintaining buy-in. Suggested using the assessment grants to fund stipends to support faculty assessment work.

Kelley noted that she doesn’t know why the grants can’t be used for stipends. She will investigate that issue. She also noted that even though we did well on the HLC review, there were some pointed questions about things we are not doing. So it is worth looking at maintaining a sense of urgency and continuing to try to improve, particularly participation in SOAS process. Some programs have not reported during Kelley’s entire tenure. We need to look at more targeted interventions. We also need to work on using assessment for continuous improvement. We also need to look at aligning curricular and co-curricular efforts.

Nathan noted the potential for using assessment to improve student recruiting and doing outreach to the larger community and potential donors.

Kelley noted that sometimes you can lose the point of the assessment process and the use of data amid all the deadlines.

Kelley will send out the strategic planning document to the Council for review and discussion next week.

Meeting adjourned at 9:52 AM.