

Senate Assessment Committee

2005-2006 Year-end report

Submitted by Paula Danzinger and Madhuri Mukherjee – Co-Chairs.

Year-end report questions:

- 1) What were your charges? (Please list EACH charge and then, next to each, indicate what you did to fulfill the respective charge OR what prevented you from fulfilling the respective charge).

Charge 1: To review the charges of the Senate Assessment Committee, and to streamline and update documents relating to the function and constitution of the Senate Assessment Committee.

At the first meeting of the Senate Assessment Committee this spring 2006 semester, the Senate Vice Chair distributed copies of a document describing the charges, functions, and constitution of the Senate Assessment Committee. This document was obsolete and dated back to a time when the assessment structure at WPUNJ was different from what is in existence today. The Senate Vice Chair requested that the SAC review, discuss, and amend this document to more accurately reflect the current constitution, functions, and charges. SAC members discussed, reviewed, and revised the said document, and drafted a more accurate and concise document which will be submitted to the Senate Governance Council for action (see attached).

Charge 2: To work on an assessment page for the Faculty Senate Website.

Efforts to establish an assessment page for the Faculty Senate website were spearheaded by SAC committee member Judy Matthew. Judy has been creating an archive of assessment documents, with assistance from Kurt Wagner. These documents will be posted online as they get scanned and become available.

Charge 2: To publish the annual assessment newsletter “Assessment Matters!”

The 2006 edition of “Assessment Matters!” was published in a timely manner, and distributed campus-wide, both in hard copy and as an e-newsletter. Madhuri Mukherjee solicited assessment-related articles from faculty and librarians and served as editor, and designed the newsletter together with Bogong Su who produced and distributed it. The committee would like to thank all who contributed to this issue (Steve Betts, Anne Ciliberti, Bruce Diamond, Marjorie Ginsberg, Kathy Malanga, Judy Matthew, Maria Villar and Nancy Weiner).

Charge 3: To organize the annual spring assessment forum.

The Fourth Annual Spring Assessment Forum was held on Friday, April 7 2006. The topic of the forum was: "Closing the Loop: Using Assessment Data for Program Improvement." The forum featured speakers from each of the five colleges, and included a welcome from the Provost Dr. Edward Weil who affirmed his commitment to and support for assessment. In addition, Pixy Ferris provided an overview of the history of assessment at WPUNJ. The forum attracted over 50 attendees on a Friday morning when there were several other competing events on campus. The speakers (Steve Betts, Peter Griswold, Joanna Hayden, Maria Villar, Nancy Weiner, and David Horton) were passionate about assessment, the audience was responsive and involved, and according to the feedback received, the forum was interesting and instructive to all (Data from participant questionnaires will be available shortly).

Charge 4: To keep the assessment dialogue on the front burner at WPUNJ, and to serve as resource persons to the campus.

The 2005-2006 Senate Assessment Committee under the leadership of Co-Chairs Ginny Overdorf and Paula Danzinger in fall 2005, and Paula Danzinger and Madhuri Mukherjee in spring 2006 has worked diligently and conscientiously to promote a climate of assessment on the WPUNJ campus. The SAC has been fortunate to have a most collegial and dedicated set of members who have been responsive and proactive in approaching assessment related questions and concerns. We thank all members of the committee for their year long efforts, Jane Zeff from the IR&A office for her input and service, and the particularly dynamic college coordinators (Steve Betts, Paula Danzinger, Carol Fierson-Campbell, David Slaymaker and Maria Villar) who have been assiduously promoting assessment to their constituents.

2) (Aside from the standing charges) What charges do you think should remain in place for next year's Council/Committee?

The SAC accomplished a great deal during academic year 2005-2006. We would suggest continuing to build on this year's accomplishments, and propose no changes for the coming academic year.

3) What new charges (if any) do you think should be given to next year's Council/Committee? Please include a brief explanation for each proposed charge.

We believe the current charges are adequate.

4) If you have any additional comments to make, please do so here.

Just a few words of gratitude: Thanks to all who served, in various capacities, to keep the assessment dialogue ongoing at WPUNJ. Thanks to Ginny Overdorf, who although on sabbatical, was always available to mentor and guide, and thanks to Kathleen Korgen and to Donna Potacco for help with governance issues.

Draft of suggested by-law changes

3. Assessment Committee
 - a. The Assessment committee shall carry out its charges within the context of the current Assessment Plan and the following “Principles of Assessment” adhered to by this institution:
 - i. On this campus, assessment is distinct from evaluation. Assessment at WPUNJ shall be defined as “the measurement of course, program, and other student learning outcomes, as well as university-wide curricular initiatives, for the purpose of improvement.” To enhance our educational environment, assessments will be designed that:
 1. better articulate educational goals,
 2. provide means for collecting information on the progress towards the goals,
 3. disseminate results to faculty and staff involved, who will consider possible modifications in that which has been assessed.
 - b. Composition of the Assessment Committee shall consist of the following:
 - i. One Faculty member from each College,
 - ii. One Librarian,
 - iii. One Professional Staff member,
 - iv. Two At-Large members, not from the same department, and from different departments than the College representative, thus allowing representation from seven different departments.
 - v. One Adjunct Faculty member,
 - vi. The College Assessment Coordinators, either as ex officio members or as elected in (i) or (iv) above.
 - vii. One or more administrator(s) with representation from the Provosts’ office and Academic Deans, the Director of I.R.&A., and the Chair of the Assessment Committee of the Director’s Council.
 - c. Members of the Assessment committee shall serve a minimum of a two year term and these terms shall be staggered so that no more than 5 members or less than 4 members shall be elected to a new full term each year. Members may serve multiple terms if elected.
 - d. The Committee’s principal functions shall be to:
 - i. Inform and educate the university community regarding issues and trends in relation to assessment (e.g. via an annual newsletter, and annual university forum).
 - ii. Act as consultants for assessment projects campus-wide, including program reviews.
 - e. Minutes of the Committee’s meetings shall be provided to the Senate Executive Committee, Provost and President.
 - f. The Committee shall submit a year-end report to the Senate ending its term at its last meeting of the Academic year. A copy of this report shall

be made available to the President of the University and any member of the university requesting it.