Assessment Notes
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An occasional newsletter from the Director of Academic Assessment

Assessment Update for Assessment Liaisons, Department Chairs, Program Directors, and Deans

1. Please understand that some things are requirements, not options.
   - Departments and programs in all cohorts must collect and enter some kind of assessment data every academic year. Although our IE process does not require programs to execute every assessment every year, having assessment data from multiple years within a cycle is very helpful for developing action plans.
   - Department chairs and program directors have final responsibility for the unit’s active participation in assessment. Assessing student learning is the responsibility of all members of the department, program or unit. Assessment liaisons serve as the department/program contact persons for assessment issues, and manage the entry of department/program data in TracDat, but chairs/directors serve as the leaders of this process and should contact their deans and the Director of Academic Assessment when an assessment program is not moving forward.
   - Department chairs and program directors must inform the Director of Academic Assessment when there is a change in assessment liaison. Because Academic Affairs pays annual stipends to assessment liaisons, and supplemental stipends to those in the cohort asked to report, it is critical that we have an accurate list of names. To facilitate record-keeping each liaison and chair/director now will sign an appointment agreement for the 3 year appointment term. This agreement includes the information in the current document, Responsibilities of Assessment Liaisons, and will be posted in place of it at: http://ierp.unca.edu/schedules-and-instructions. Other than the requirement for signatures, the document includes the following changes.
     - A requirement to attend IE and TracDat training.
     - A change in the Fall stipend payment date (now January rather than December).
     - A statement that payment of stipends is contingent upon verification of completion of assessment duties.

2. There are several mandated changes to assessment plans for all majors.
   - We are moving to a slightly different configuration in TracDat so we can easily identify data we need to report to internal (Senate) and external (GA, SACS) constituencies. Each outcome should focus on a single property of person rather than a set of properties.
   - There now are 5 core outcomes to be included and assessed by each major program:
     - knowledge of the major - major competency as one assessment, others?
     - critical thinking (new GA requirement) - need a direct assessment
     - written communication (new GA and Senate requirement) - need a direct assessment
     - oral communication - oral competency as one assessment
     - information literacy (new Senate requirement) - need a direct assessment
   - New outcome lines for each of these will be created in TracDat. An accompanying note will indicate whether it appears that there is some assessment of the property as part of a multi-dimensional outcome or whether the unit needs to develop an assessment. In the former case the goal is to relocate the outcome and assessment information to the new separate lines so
that the data you enter can be collected for reporting to the appropriate oversight body.

3. **Assessment liaisons: Don’t forget your “to-do” list for the end of the semester.**
   - If you have not done so already, please create a new folder in your Document file defined by the dates of your next three reporting cycle. Save all rubrics, other assessment materials, and your final report in that folder.
   - When you revise your unit’s student learning outcomes please make sure to update the unit’s outcomes on your web site. The UNC General Administration took action last summer to require all UNC schools to have accurate SLOs posted for each academic program.

QEP Update

1. **New course-based assessment plan**
   Inquiry ARC faculty piloted a new model for course-based assessment of critical thinking this semester. Each instructor developed a brief assignment, given during the first 3 weeks of class, to assess at least three dimensions of critical thinking as defined by the AACU Critical Thinking Rubric. Evaluation of student performance is in progress. Stay tuned for more information in the Fall 2014 edition of *Assessment Notes*.

2. **Executive Summaries of assessment data**
   The QEP Assessment Team is in the final stages of revision of two reports summarizing data on student learning and faculty pedagogy for the 2012-13 academic year. Both reports will be posted on the assessment page of the QEP web site within the next two weeks. We plan to post similar reports each year once all data analyses are complete.

Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Update

1. **Assessment Iniative Grant**
   Kim Brown/Joyce Davis, Education Department—$1,000 for a pilot study of candidate performance on newly required MTEL exam

2. **Training for Chairs/Program Directors and Assessment Liaisons**
   Are you a new chair or program director? A new assessment liaison? Or just someone for whom the name “TracDat” causes you to break out into a cold sweat? No problem. Jessica schedules TracDat training several times each semester for those who are new to the system. I can give refresher sessions whenever you need them. Entering results, and editing plans, whatever you need—just let one of us know what you need.

3. **Institutional Surveys**
   Next year is going to be busy for the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. We will be administering an alumni survey and admitted student survey over the summer as well as the CLA, NSSE, a faculty survey, and the Climate Survey during the next academic year. In order to prevent survey fatigue, it is essential that our office know of ALL other surveys which will be administered to faculty, staff or students in the next year. We are interested in ANY survey which uses students, faculty or staff as the population. Please send an email to Annis Lytle (amlytle@unca.edu) with the following information:
   - your name
- department
- survey name
- survey population
- survey length
- planned dates of administration
- Do you plan to administer the survey yourself or will you need assistance from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness for design, administration, and/or analysis and interpretation?

Even if you are not sure of the details yet, but think you might want to administer a survey during the 2014-15 academic year, you MUST contact our office before the end of this semester.

4. **Data resources**
   If you are looking for data or information for your IE plans or other departmental planning, there is a wealth of information located on our website. Frequently requested data can be found [here](#). Other data reports related to enrollment, alumni, graduates, faculty and departments can be found [here](#) and the Common Data Set (full of all kinds of institutional data) can be found [here](#). Results of various institutional surveys can be found [here](#). Finally, if you cannot find the data you are looking for on our website, please fill out this [form](#).