

University Assessment Steering Council
October 25, 2016
Minutes

Present: Dr. Todd Brown, Dr. Anjum Najmi, Dr. Jannah Nerren, Dr. Debbie Pace, Dr. Mark Sanders, Mr. Scott Shattuck, Dr. Hans Williams

After opening remarks the council approved minutes from the September 9, 2016, meeting with no revisions. These minutes will be posted to the UASC website.

The council was joined by Mr. John Calahan, OSLIA Interim Director, and Dr. Paul Henley, OSLIA Assistant Director, who provided updates and participated in discussion on the topics outlined below.

UASC's recommendation to add assessment as a category in Digital Measures:

- Per the discussion in the September UASC meeting, the council forwarded a proposal to Dr. Bullard recommending that an assessment category be added in the "Service" section of the Faculty Activity Report in Digital Measures.
- Dr. Bullard presented this recommendation to the deans' council for discussion. Mr. Calahan reported that the discussion in deans' council produced questions about implementation in different departments and colleges, specifically regarding how various types of assessment activities might be evaluated differently. Discussion was tabled and the topic will be considered again at the next deans' council; Dr. Nerren has been asked to attend and participate in that discussion.
- The UASC council agreed that the intent of the recommendation was simply to provide a convenient location within Digital Measures for faculty to describe some of their assessment related responsibilities; faculty might still choose to account for their assessment activity elsewhere within their annual faculty activity reports. Council members confirmed their perspective that evaluation of assessment work within departments should be the purview of department chairs and deans.

Timeline for selection of a director for the OSLIA:

- Mr. Calahan stated that the provost confirmed there is not funding to support an external search at this time.
- A search is not likely to begin until at least January 2017, but the UASC will be included in any search process.

Selected 2014-2015 4-column assessment reports:

- Mr. Calahan provided background on 20 four-column assessment reports from 2014-2015 that had been forwarded to his office from Dr. Brunson. He explained that the review process utilized last spring through the OSLIA had focused on the Action Plans in the 2014-2015 reports and that the remaining portions of reports selected for inclusion in the SACS fifth year report have now been reviewed by

Dr. Brunson and staff in the OSLIA. These 20 reports with comments were forwarded via email to the UASC.

- In the discussion about these reports, council members reaffirmed their role as a steering body rather than one focused on enforcing compliance.
- Mr. Calahan confirmed that he would be contacting departments directly about these reviews and that council members might simply want to inform those in their colleges that they would be contacted by the OSLIA.

Current college level review process:

- Mr. Calahan explained that in prior years the evaluation rubrics submitted to the OSLIA following the college level reviews of the annual assessment reports were attached to an audit report indicating that reviews had been completed.
- He reported that this year, college review committees should complete their reviews as scheduled but that they would not be required to submit those reviews to the OSLIA.

Other assessment topics:

- Mr. Shattuck asked if there was any possibility that reporting for programs with very low numbers might be combined in some way to allow for more effective quantitative analysis. Mr. Calahan replied that he felt there may be a way to do this but would need to investigate further.
- Dr. Henley expressed that of primary interest to SACS is that we demonstrate a culture of continual improvement and that we may do that in a variety of ways.
- Mr. Calahan shared his perspective that programs and their assessment belong to the departments and that there is no required number of objectives or assessment methods. He values input from the council on restructuring assessment practices at SFA to make them more effective and efficient.

In closing, Dr. Nerren reported that the video of the assessment workshop would be posted on the UASC website pending final approval from the speakers. She also noted that no questions or suggestions had been submitted in the online comment box since the last meeting.

The council will meet again in early November for future planning.

The meeting adjourned 11:55 am.