

Assessment Subcommittee
Of the IPPC

Meeting Notes Sept. 27, 2013

Present: Sarah Goodwin, Beau Breslin, Joe Stankovich, Lisa Christenson, Corey Freeman-Gallant, Sue Layden, Paty Rubio, Shannon Rodriguez, Auden Thomas, Peter von Allmen, Denise Brooks McQuade, Masako Inamoto, Andrew Lowy

1. We welcomed all members went briefly over the role of the AS in steering assessments.

2. We reviewed the Assessment Goals for 2013-14 (our Action Agenda) and agreed to amend the wording of the bullet regarding study abroad and to add a bullet regarding information literacy. (See attached amended document.)

3. Beau updated on the AS report on Climate, May 2013, which was presented to IPPC last week.

Follow-up: Lisa will work with Beau and Rochelle to identify which of the recommendations have already been acted on and will report back to us and to IPPC.

4. Science literacy assessment project: We looked briefly at the outcomes of the Alumni Learning Census for classes 2006 and 2008, noting that they confirmed our sense then that there was progress to be made. Denise summarized for us the last assessment of science literacy that she conducted in 2008, and we agreed that we should use it as a starting point now. We also agreed that we should enfold the report of the Science Literacy Working group to CEPP [in spring 2012]. Another assessment could give us a sense of how reliable our 2008 data are, and whether things have changed since then with the major changes in students and curriculum already undertaken; we could also expand the instrument to include new measures, for example about attitudes toward science and about quantitative reasoning skills.

Follow-up: Sarah will confer with FEC on establishing a working group that might include several faculty to undertake a further assessment. Lisa, Corey, Sarah and Denise will work on this; if FEC agrees, Josh Ness and/or other faculty may be approached.

5. Visual communication assessment project: With the chastening sense that we cannot afford to take on too much major assessment work, while at the same time knowing that in 2014-15 we will be very much occupied with the Middle States self-study, we discussed the possibilities for advancing work on a visual communication assessment in support of developing our teaching and learning of effective visual communication. Andrew mentioned that Academic Council is moving ahead with a project to make student peer tutors available for visual projects. We considered whether we might follow something like the Teagle writing initiative model of supporting departments who might wish to assess visual communication; we also talked about developing a possible shared/adaptable rubric, and about mapping visual communication to the curriculum.

Follow-up: We decided tentatively to establish a working group, after consulting with FEC, to pursue the rubric and the mapping, and to alert departments to this agenda for 2014-15. The working group might involve someone from Career Services and the Tang as well as a social scientist in addition, potentially, to Deb Hall from Art [and perhaps also someone in the natural sciences]. Auden also expressed interest in this working group.

6. Communicating assessment results and consequences to our constituencies: We talked briefly about how best to do this.

Follow-up: Lisa and Sarah will work with Andrew (and if possible our second student rep, yet to be appointed) on communicating to students about how their survey responses are being used by the college. Sarah and Lisa will also strip department-specific information from the summary report on the Teagle writing initiative and circulate it to chairs and directors.

7. Middle States self-study timetable and standards: We reviewed the timetable and circulated Standards 7 and 14 with the request that committee members read them carefully and begin communicating with their constituencies about the content of the standards, with particular attention to the Fundamental Elements. We announced the leadership group of the Middle States process: Beau and Sarah will co-chair; Joshua Woodfork, Lisa, and Joe will form the rest of the leadership group.

Follow-up: Further members of the Middle States Steering Committee will be appointed this fall in consultation with FEC. In the spring of 2014, we must choose a self-study model, write a Design, and set up a visit with our Middle States liaison. Members of the AS are invited to consider joining the Middle States Steering Committee.

8. Travel to conferences 2013-14: We invited members to consider attending any of the AACU conferences this year to deepen our familiarity with assessment processes being undertaken across the US. In particular, the General Education and Assessment conference Feb. 27-March 1, 2014, could be useful to us.

Follow-up: Sarah will confer with individuals about attending and funding sources.

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1. We welcomed all members and went briefly over the role of the AS in steering assessments.

2. We reviewed the Assessment Goals for 2013-14 (our Action Agenda) and agreed to amend the wording of the bullet regarding study abroad and to add a bullet regarding information literacy. (See attached amended document.)

3. Beau updated us on the AS report on Climate, May 2013, which was presented to IPPC last week. Brief discussion.

Follow-up: Lisa will work with Beau and Rochelle to identify which of the recommendations have already been acted on and will report back to us and to IPPC. **In addition, we will amend the Climate report: "Reappointment" will be inserted in Faculty climate concerns to reflect the broader constituency. Under Part II, Faculty Satisfaction, the first section will now be headed "Reappointment, Advancement, Tenure, Promotion."**

4. Science literacy assessment project: We looked briefly at the outcomes of the Alumni Learning Census for classes 2006 and 2008, noting that they confirmed our sense then that there was progress to be made. Denise summarized for us the last assessment of science literacy, conducted in 2008, and we agreed that we should use it as a starting point now. We also agreed that we should enfold in our work the report of the Science Literacy Working group to CEPP [in spring 2012]. A repeat of the assessment could give us a sense of how reliable our 2008 data are, and whether things have changed since then with the major changes in students and curriculum already undertaken; we could also expand the instrument to include new measures, for example about attitudes toward science and about quantitative reasoning skills.

Follow-up: Sarah or Beau will confer with FEC on establishing a working group that might include several faculty to undertake a further assessment. Lisa, Corey, Sarah and Denise will work on this; if FEC agrees, Josh Ness and/or other faculty may be approached. The working group will revise the instrument and execute the assessment.

5. Visual communication assessment project: With the chastening sense that we cannot afford to take on too much major assessment work, while at the same time knowing that in 2014-15 we will be very much occupied with the Middle States self-study, we discussed the possibilities for advancing some work on a visual communication assessment in support of developing our teaching and learning of effective visual communication. Andrew mentioned that Academic Council is moving ahead with a project to make student peer tutors available for visual projects.

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Follow-up: We decided tentatively to establish a working group, after consulting with FEC, to pursue the mapping and the rubric, and to alert departments to this agenda for 2014-15. The working group might involve someone from Career Services and the Tang as well as a social scientist in addition, potentially, to Deb Hall from Art [and perhaps also someone in the natural sciences]. Auden also expressed interest in this working group.

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Follow-up: Further members of the Middle States Steering Committee will be appointed this fall in consultation with FEC and others. By the spring of 2014, we must choose a self-study model, write and submit a Design, and set up a visit with our Middle States liaison. Members of the AS are invited to consider contributing to the Middle States Steering Committee.

8. Travel to conferences 2013-14: We invited members to consider attending any of the AACU conferences this year to deepen our familiarity with assessment processes being undertaken across the US. In particular, the General Education and Assessment conference Feb. 27-March 1, 2014, could be useful to us.

Follow-up: Sarah will confer with individuals about attending and about funding sources.

Assessment Subcommittee Meeting
January 31, 2014
Meeting Notes

Present: Paty Rubio, Corey Freemnan-Gallant, Sarah Goodwin, Lisa Christianson, Peter vonAllmen , Denise McQuade, Sue Layden, Joe Stankovich, Mike Sposili, Auden Thomas, Beau Breslin, Charles Tetelman (Student), Kim Crabbe

1. Update on science literacy assessment: Lisa, Corey and Denise reported on the science literacy/QR assessment that they designed and will be implementing shortly. They will administer it to nine 300-level courses with the cooperation of the faculty. It has two versions, one that tests knowledge about science and QR, and the other on the nature of science as well as QR (and science literacy on both parts). They included some NSSE questions as a kind of cross-check and update on those data. The greatest challenge will be ensuring that the students take the assessment seriously and make a concerted effort on it. Lisa will administer it so that the students understand it is separate from their course work and grades.
1. Update on visual communication assessment: Sarah reported that we have applied for funds for an assessment as part of a grant proposal on visual communication, and Corey noted we won't hear about that until April.
2. Update on communicating with students about our use of survey results. Lisa noted that she and Charles will meet to discuss this.
3. Update on Middle States process. Beau announced the decision to do a Selected Topics self-study with a focus on integrative learning, and he outlined the timing the process. We agreed to circulate the proposal letter that we sent to Middle States to the Assessment Subcommittee.
4. Update on Alumni Learning Census. Mike reported that we are in the 4th year of 5 doing the Alumni Learning Census, and that we have achieved a 14% response rate this year, matching our previous maximum rate. We suggested that the community might be helpful in encouraging alumni to respond next fall during the final implementation, to get the maximum possible response rate. Peter also asked whether CEPP might be able to add a question to the instrument; Mike said yes, possibly. The ALC asks alumni for a given communion year--thus the five-year cycle for the assessment--about the relationship between our Goals for Student Learning and Development and their own experience; about their patterns of behavior that might illustrate those connections; and about connections they would draw between the Goals and their work experience. We agreed to look at the summaries of the responses at our spring meeting and consider how the College might make the best use of these data.

5. Our primary agenda item was to address crafting a comprehensive plan for the assessment of general education/Goals for Student Learning and Development. Beau led a discussion of the existing broad, general, rather vague plan and the ways we might be more specific. We agreed, seemingly, that the scaffolding is there and it's good, and can be more specific by determining which particular Goals we would like to investigate over the next five years, aiming for one each year. This year's general education assessment is the science literacy/QR assessment under way; next year's can be visual communication (Communicate Effectively); the following year could be oral communication, given that it is now a fundamental element in Middle States' outline of gen ed. We also agreed that we should confer with CEPP on what would be most useful to their deliberations, aiming to be assessing goals that seem most crucial now, focusing our inquiry on student learning rather than on mapping where the goals are ostensibly being met. (The usefulness of the map lies in part in determining what assessments are already happening; and for the more aspirational goals that are difficult to assess, it may be useful at least to know where they are being addressed.)

We concluded that Sarah, Lisa and Beau will work on updating the Assessment Plan and will circulate it, and that we will discuss the Plan further in the spring along with the results of the science assessment and the Alumni Learning Census.

Assessment Subcommittee of the IPPC
Meeting Notes
Friday, April 11, 2014

Present: Beau Breslin, Lisa Christenson, Kim Crabbe, Corey Freeman-Gallant, Sarah Goodwin, Sue Laden, Denise McQuade, Joe Stankovich, Auden Thomas, Peter von Allmen. Absent: Paty Rubio, Mike Sposili, Charles Tetelman. Note taker: Sarah Goodwin

1. **Review of the Science Literacy/QR assessment.** Corey, Denise and Lisa walked us through the results of the assessment just completed last week. The results are not quite ready for public release, but we were able to view the data, which reinforce the results of the 2008 assessment and provide additional information about our students' quantitative reasoning competency. In general, the results on scientific literacy were relatively strong for both majors in the physical and life sciences and other majors; in contrast, the QR performance for both groups seems weak.

We talked about how and when to share the results publicly, which are compelling and of broad interest. CEPP can make use of them in its review of the curriculum, and in the fall the results should be presented to the faculty. We agreed that we need a more standardized mechanism for communicating annual assessment results and allow for some open dialogue about them.

With a new QR director starting in the fall, we might suggest establishing a timeline for a response to these results, both short- and longer-term.

- >> Lisa will work with Corey and Denise on a report that can be posted on the assessment website and circulated to CEPP and IPPC.

- >> Beau will look for an opportunity early in the fall to present the results to the faculty.

- >> Sarah will pursue with Beau, Lisa and Paty Rubio, and ultimately the President, a standard way and time to communicate annual assessment results.

- >> Joe and Lisa will write a white paper that pulls together the QR results from this test with results from NSSE, the HEDS Alumni Survey, and the Alumni Learning Census.

2. We reviewed the Middle States timetable and our various responsibilities associated with it.
3. We touched base on the Institutional Assessment Plan 2011-16 in preparation for reviewing and updating it next year.

- >> Sarah will draft revisions and additions for the committee to consider in the fall.

4. We also discussed communicating publicly the results of other recent assessments, particularly the NSSE/FSSE data and multiple other surveys.

- >> Beau will plan for times and ways to communicate about these results and will work with Lisa and Joe on modes of delivery.

5. We agreed that next year's primary general education assessment related to the Goals for Student Learning and Development will be of students' visual communication. In addition to our longstanding plans to develop a rubric and assess our students' visual communication skills, this is a timely opportunity for us to establish a baseline as we begin to implement VIS, the major Mellon Foundation grant on visualization and visual communication.

- >> Sarah will talk to John Anzalone, PI for the grant, about planning now for the assessment next year.