University Assessment Council  
October 11, 2013, 1:00 p.m.  

Minutes  

Members Present: Drew Clark (Chair), Vince Cammarata, Cecilia Champion, George Crandell, Abbygail Langham, Dan Larocque, Ed Loewenstein, Jenny Schuessler, Bret Smith, Susan Villaume, and Iryna Johnson.  

Guests Present: Ty-anne Tench and Paula Sullenger  

Drew Clark called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.  

Minutes from the last UAC meeting on July 30, 2013 were approved.  

Drew informed the council that the main agenda items are (1) the means by which units will receive feedback and (2) what units are expected to do once they receive their feedback.  

Drew also provided several informational items. (1) The budget of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment was restructured to create ongoing funding for a full-time permanent position of Assessment Analyst. The Search committee has concluded search for an Assessment Analyst position. We are waiting for approval from Human Resources. The person in this position will provide support and expertise to academic and other campus units as they develop and implement their own planning and evaluation processes. (2) Compliance Assist is functional and is being used by units to submit assessment reports. If anyone experiences technical problems with the software, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment would be happy to provide Word templates. (3) Auburn University decided to appoint a review committee composed of representatives of Auburn University and institutional research and effectiveness experts from other universities to conduct a review of Auburn’s current assessment reporting procedures and recommend improvements. Additionally, this committee will examine the current scope of work assigned to the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment and advise the Provost on appropriate staffing levels and reporting structures. The visit of the review committee will take place on October 28-29.  

Drew asked council members if their colleges and schools provide or plan to provide feedback on submitted assessment reports to their programs and units. All colleges and schools either had already started to provide feedback or plan to do so. Dan Larocque expressed a concern about consistency of feedback from colleges and schools and from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. Bret Smith mentioned that units might expect that feedback could be different, as reviews from a college or school would have a greater familiarity with the discipline.
The next point of discussion was related to expectations. What are units and programs expected to do once they receive feedback? Council members agreed that units will be expected to revise their reports in response to feedback provided.

Vince Cammarata pointed out that, in addition to revising the existing report, units should be expected to provide a new plan for the upcoming year. The plan should include some details, such as data that will be collected by the end of fall or spring semesters.

To help with the consistency of feedback, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment created the checklist of criteria that will be considered in the review process. The checklist was distributed among UAC members. Iryna Johnson briefly outlined the main items on the list. One of the items was related to inclusion of program outcomes in assessment reports. Jenny Schuessler asked about a possibility to use pass rates on certification exams as a program outcome. While assessment of learning outcomes should be more granular, assessment of program outcomes can be based on pass rates. In some cases, if both the overall score and test subscores are available, the same instrument can be used for both program and learning outcomes.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.