University Assessment Council  
September 13, 2011, 1:00 p.m.  
Minutes  

Members Present: Drew Clark (Chair), Donna Angarano, Cecilia Champion, George Crandell, Susan Hubbard, Dan LaRocque, Leonard Lock, Edward Loewenstein, Nels Madsen, Sharon McDonough, Paul Patterson, Juliet Rumble, Karen Rogers, Jennifer Schuessler, Tin Yau Tam, and Iryna Johnson.

Drew Clark called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

Minutes from the last UAC meeting on July 25, 2011 were approved.

Drew Clark updated the council on the Performance Task Academy that was held at Auburn University on August 15-16. Targeted groups of faculty—those who served on Teaching Effectiveness Committee, QEP Committee, and Core Curriculum and General Education Committee—were invited to participate. Response rate was tremendous. There were 27 participants; and the reviews were quite positive.

Drew also informed that in preparation for SACS review the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) is working on ensuring participation in assessment activities from administrative and educational support service units. Question about applicability of the standard to research centers was raised. While the standard is applicable to research and community/public service, Auburn University will assess these areas at the institutional level, not at a center or unit level.

The issue of assessment of new graduate certificate programs that just had been approved was briefly discussed. For programs that were recently approved, assessment report should provide student learning outcomes and plan for assessment. OIRA does not currently collect assessment reports for free-standing minors.

The deadline for filing assessment reports is coming up on October 15, 2011. Drew called attention to the fact that this is the last reporting cycle prior to SACS compliance certification. It is important that UAC members ensure participation of all degree programs at their colleges.

Iryna Johnson distributed college-level NSSE reports. These reports are based on the data from the last five years. Multiple years are used to ensure sufficient sample sizes for colleges. Reports show a comparison between Auburn University overall scores and college-level scores for five NSSE benchmarks—Level of Academic Challenge (LAC), Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL), Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI), Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE), and Supportive Campus Environment (SCE). Technical details of the report were discussed using example from College of Architecture, Design and Construction. Several topics were raised during the discussion of NSSE report. For example, an issue of differences in scales for indicators and scales for benchmarks was brought up. Tin Yau Tam made an observation that, unlike other benchmarks, SCE score is lower for seniors as compared to freshmen. This observation was followed by a discussion of possible reasons of lower SCE scores for seniors, such as requiring seniors become more self-sufficient or providing more programs for freshmen. It was pointed out that lower SCE scores for seniors are typical for other colleges and universities. Drew encouraged UAC members to push discussions of NSSE results at colleges.
A paper that describes ways to provide feedback on assessment reports at Marquette University was distributed among UAC members. UAC members were invited to look at how Marquette University provides feedback to their faculty and think about ways Auburn University could provide feedback and whether it is the time for Auburn to provide such feedback. UAC members were asked to prepare for such discussion at the next meeting on October 26th.

Other issues that were discussed included retention reports, new student profiles by college, and Course Evaluations.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.