

Assurance of Learning Steering Committee Minutes

Dec. 3rd, 2014 3:15 – 4:45 PM

Members Present: S. Scott, Chair; D. Fischer, V. Manlow, M. Grayson, H. Friedman, and S. Williams

I. AoL Status

- S. Scott reviewed status to date of the AoL Program.
- The committee was reminded that a public server exists for them to access all steering committee meeting minutes and AoL reports. Scott will ask Jean Ford to send directions to all faculties on how to access the server again.
- The committee reviewed AACSB standards on Assurance of Learning relative to the items on the status reports.

II. Closing the Loop on Writing

- The committee discussed the results of the written communication report previously completed (attached) and recognized the critical need to “close the loop”. This needs to be undertaken early in spring semester. All agreed the next step is to decide where in the curriculum learning opportunities for this would be situated. S. Scott noted that this was most often done in the Marketing or Management (or both) core courses.
- A second report on assessment of writing in the Accounting Program will be completed over the intersession. Scott has contacted Michael Ayers (Institutional Research) to see what student data is available so report can include breakdown of results by certain student demographics (e.g. transfer vs. non-transfer, native born vs. non-native born).
- Fischer suggested that we consider focusing on one of the criteria in the written communication rubric rather than try to improve all criteria at one time. This would make closing the loop more doable in the short term. The committee decided there was value in this approach and the writing sub-committee should consider it.
- Others noted that the core courses were experiencing large class sizes that would make writing assignments difficult for faculty to grade. S. Scott suggested that there were two alternatives to this problem. One would be by hiring Grad Assistants to do grading on writing and requiring multiple drafts

from students. The second would be to cap these classes at 25 – 30 students so faculty member could grade them. The committee debated the issue and agreed members would take this to the department curriculum committees for discussion.

- S. Scott recommended we establish a common paper across sections to make assessment easier and a rubric more effective.
- Scott agreed to have faculty/staff from the Teaching Center or the WACS present to faculty on low-stakes writing assignments that would help students while being less labor-intensive for faculty. This will happen in spring semester. Scott also mentioned that the writing tutor stationed in the Advising Center has been under-utilized and that the members need to encourage faculty to embed this in their writing classes.

III. Curriculum and Syllabi

- FBM maps of current student assignment practices were completed. The committee is waiting for curriculum maps from the Accounting and Economics Department. The AoL committee members will take this back to their departments to accelerate the process.
- Syllabi templates have been discussed in the FBM Department and will be finalized at the next department meeting. Accounting and Economics need to formalize their template and get it to the committee. Grayson said the request was sent to department members for comment.
- Core courses have been adopted by Accounting and FBM. The Accounting curriculum changes will go to Faculty Council on Dec. 9th. Grayson noted that final approval is contingent on the State Board. We are still shooting for the new curriculum to be in place for Accounting by Fall semester 2015.
- Departments need to review their pre-reqs for all courses to align with AACSB standards related to overall curriculum structure and organization. It is implicit in the standards that business core courses be completed prior to major program courses.
- Scott will set up meetings with each of the core course coordinators and the relevant faculty members for each to collaboratively move toward consensus on learning opportunities in their courses.
- A discussion followed on the need to establish learning goals and summative assessment methods in the Graduate Programs. Friedman suggested that we adopt the same goals required in the undergraduate program. Scott is reviewing graduate learning goals from other schools and will disseminate to

departments asap. This should be decided on in early spring so that the first assessment can take place in fall 2015.

IV. Summative Assessment of Ethics and Critical Thinking

- Work done by the Ethics and Critical Thinking sub-committees clarified what needs to be considered to assess these learning goals.
- The committee agreed on the use of a HBR case identified by Nakato Hirakubo for ethics. Fischer submitted questions for students that require a written response. The committee discussed whether the assignment could also be used to assess critical thinking. The critical thinking sub-committee will review to see if additional questions might be needed to make it applicable to the critical thinking learning goal.
- Plans for the ethics assessment have been agreed on by members of the capstone courses (three sections of BUSN 4200W). Williams will work with other faculty teaching ACCT 4501W to assess ethics in three sections also. The assignment will be embedded in these courses and used for the class grades. It will be independently evaluated for the summative assessment.
- Scott noted that the summative assessments would be conducted by faculty with some release time and expert external evaluators from other departments in the College.
- Concern was expressed regarding using the same case over in future assessments for fear of plagiarism. Scott noted that we would be doing summative assessment on a two year schedule, which will help mitigate this concern to some degree.

V. Summative Assessment of Quantitative Proficiency and Information Literacy

Plans for assessment of quantitative proficiency and information literacy have not yet been submitted from these sub-committees. This should be accomplished early in spring semester so that the first assessment can be accomplished in fall 2015.

VI. Summative Assessment of Content Knowledge

The School needs to explore methods to assess broad content knowledge as well as the skills noted above. A discussion ensued on whether a nationally-normed

test (e.g., major field test by ETS) or an internally developed test for this purpose. Discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

The next Assurance of Learning meeting will take place after winter intersession. By then the writing examples will be assessed and a report issued. Scott noted that we need to accelerate process as we move into fall 2015.