

Outcomes Assessment Update

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OFFICE OF STUDENT OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Reporting Process Update

On October 25, 2004, Dr. Michael Summers met with Mike Bryan, Diann Holt, Lisa Kleiman, and Lonnie Schaffer to discuss the Program Review and Outcomes Assessment reporting process. Below is a summary of the meeting.

Faculty Participation

The program review and assessment process must require participation from each and every full-time faculty. Participation is requisite in terms of writing outcomes, identifying/developing course-embedded measures, and compiling assessment data.

Meaningful, Multiple, and Readily Available

The assessment measures must include data that are typically used in decision making and curriculum planning such as...

- * Feedback from Advisory Committees
- * Observations by Lead Deans & Faculty
- * Grade distributions from capstone courses
- * Success rates on targeted assignments
- * Respondents' perceptions from survey data

We need to "**inspect what we expect**" by writing outcomes and collecting data from **multiple sources**.

We need to then "**close the loop**" by making use of the data in terms of curriculum enhancements.

Schedule of Programs

ALL remaining degree-granting programs will need to write outcomes and identify assessment measures during the 2004-05 academic year. Assessment of disciplines and other non-degree programs (e.g., certificates, diplomas) will be addressed in the near future. Similarly, the reporting **process** will be refined and **timelines** announced in the near future.

Resident Experts: We're In This Together

Drs. Lonnie Schaffer and Diann Holt will be serving as resident experts on assessment and provide assistance to Mike Bryan on an as needed basis.

Whoever invented binary logic knew
how to put two and two together.

* Pun of the Day *

SOA Website

To better navigate the SOA website, each and every SOA webpage now contains a frame or header across the top. The "**SOA Quick Links**" has links to:

- * SOA Homepage
- * SOA Personnel
- * SOA Mission and Goals
- * SOA Surveys and Reports
- * Program Review Homepage
- * Program Review Data
- * Program Review Toolkit
- * SOA Consultation Services

Program Review Data Webpage

The **Program Review Data webpage** is where some of the necessary data will be posted. Data will be disseminated first via email to each Lead Dean. Depending on the type of data, information will be posted on the **Program Review Data webpage** and/or in the **Program Review folder on the college-wide shared network drive (Q)**.

Sample Reports and Other Resources

The **Program Review Toolkit webpage** contains a page entitled "**Peer Plans and Resources**" which is currently being revised (<http://www.tcc.edu/welcome/collegeadmin/OIE/SOA/review/toolkit/Samples.htm>). We are in the process of providing labels or sections so that the reader can more quickly locate the resource of interest (e.g., assessment reports, resources and other documents, SACS documentation, etc...).

Beta Version of the 2004-05 Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Report Form

"Good teaching is one-fourth preparation and three-fourths pure theatre."

Gail Godwin

"Much education today is monumentally ineffective. All too often we are giving young people cut flowers when we should be teaching them to grow their own plants."

John W. Gardner

"We are students of words: we are shut up in schools, and colleges, and recitation-rooms, for ten or fifteen years, and come out at last with a bag of wind, a memory of words, and do not know a thing."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Enhanced Features to Improve Manageability

The assessment report form for the 2004-05 academic year was presented at the Council of Academic Deans (CAD) meeting on October 18, 2004. Numerous user-friendly features were demonstrated, and initial feedback from several Lead Deans was that it represented a marked improvement over the previous years forms... especially in terms of reducing the paperwork by increasing automation and the manageability of the reporting process.

Database in the Program Review Folder on the College-Wide Shared Drive (Q)

Last year, the Lead Deans had to download the MS Word document, key-in the information, and then email the completed draft for review. This year, however, the Lead Deans no longer need to download a form because the form has become a MS Access database that is located in the "Program Review" folder on the college-wide shared network drive (Q:). Upon completing of the form, the Lead Dean merely needs to notify his/her respective Provost (via email) that the draft is complete and ready for review.

Access/rights to the folder and its contents are currently limited to Dr. Summers and members of his ASAC staff, 4 Provosts, 12 Lead Deans, and the OIE/SOA staff. **Please take a few minutes to ensure that you have been given access to the Program Review folder on the college-wide shared network drive (Q).**

Health Professions Database in a Folder on the Shared Drive (Q)

The Health Professions have a long history of assessment with their annually-updated, manually-completed assessment plans that are rigorous and detailed. In many respects, their reports are where we need all TCC programs to be..."living documents" that include multiple, course-embedded measures that clearly document how they "close the loop." Because of this history and their own specialized, technical reporting elements as required by their accreditors, a Health Professions folder was created for them and is located on the Q: drive. SOA is currently creating this specialized report form that will meet each Health Profession program's accreditation standards, yet blend-in several data elements contained in the TCC form (e.g., track FTEs, Other Noted Accomplishments, Planning Process).

Improvements Around the Corner

This winter, SOA will be developing a webpage for faculty to enter their course-embedded assessment data which will be automatically aggregated and easily accessed by the Lead Deans for use in completing the report. Another feature to improve the automation and manageability is the use of checkboxes for selecting assessment measures. Lead Deans will be given several potential assessment measures for selection, and when a measure is checked, it will be automatically entered in the report form...eliminating the need to type. Our goal is to automate as much of the reporting process as possible.

S.O.A.R.R. or S.T.O.R.M.M.

When referring to their program review and outcomes assessment process, VCU created the acronym WEAVE (Write expected outcomes, Establish criteria, Assess, View results, and Effect change) and utilize a "tapestry of quality" theme to describe the process. In an effort to improve understanding and name recognition for our assessment process, SOA hopes to create a new name and theme, one with an easy-to-remember acronym such as SOAR or STORM.

S.O.A.R.R.

Structured
Outcomes
Assessment
Review and
Report

S.T.O.R.M.M. (Storm is TCC's new mascot)

Structured
Tool for
Outcomes
Reporting (that is)
Manageable & Meaningful

SOA is leaning towards SOARR with a flight (ascending new heights) theme, but we'd like to know which name you prefer or if there's another acronym that needs consideration.

VAG Conference—Lessons Learned



Noteworthy Presentations

SOA's previous experience with VAG was last year's spring practitioners' workshop, so we came into the conference with high expectations. These expectations were fulfilled to say the least; we were thoroughly pleased and came away from each and every session with something to take back home. Although each session warrants a full debriefing, below is a summary of the lessons learned from 2 sessions.

Pre-Conference Workshop: Web-Based Assessment

SOA attended a pre-conference workshop entitled, "WEAVEonline: What Difference Can Web-based Assessment Management Make?" that was facilitated by Jean Yerian, Director of Assessment, Virginia Commonwealth University; and Jim Yucha, VCU Director of Web Services. WEAVE is an assessment program that automates writing expected outcomes/objectives, establishing criteria for success, assessing performance against criteria, viewing assessment results, etc (<http://www.weave.vcu.edu/welcome/>). In preparation for SACS reaffirmation, WEAVEonline™ was developed by a team of administrators and programmers. The program is a flexible, easy-to-use tool for program and discipline review. VCU is charging an initial, one-time start-up fee of \$20,000 and a \$3,000 annual fee for troubleshooting, etc. It took a relatively large team of programmers and 3 years to get to where it is today (version 3.0). After attending our TCC presentation on Thursday evening, Kristine Downing, WEAVE Program Director, sincerely expressed her excitement about our work and offered to share any insights and technical support as TCC moves from the MS Access database to an online assessment reporting form.

Keynote Address: 5 Steps to Support Assessment

SOA attended the keynote address titled, "How Do We Keep Assessment Thriving?" presented by Linda Suskie, Associate Vice President for Assessment & Institutional Research, Towson University, and past Director of the American Association of Higher Education's Assessment Forum. Valuable information was provided, which included 5 critical actions to support assessment.

- **Have a clear set of expectations.**

Everyone will initially ask, "What do we want? When is it due?" So have in place policies, procedures, and governance structures in place. For example, (1) define the term "assessment"; (2) define exactly what will be assessed (degrees, certificates, diplomas); (3) put everything in writing and widely disseminate it; (3) permanently embed assessment into the college governance (not an ad-hoc committee); and (4) involve faculty throughout the process [e.g., representation on steering committee].

- **Have adequate resources.**

(1) Hire a full-time coordinator to provide outreach and assistance; (2) provide professional development and "technical assistance" in the form of a website, newsletter, lending library, monies for conferences such as VAG and guest speakers; (3) one-on-one consultation [ideal]; (4) provide compensation for extraordinary work; and (5) identify, refine and/or develop assessment instruments.

- **Monitor assessment activities and provide feedback.**

(1) Assessment plans need to be in writing; (2) plans need to be periodically updated [at least annually]; (3) evaluate plans/reports and provide feedback [e.g., use a rubric with expected content]; and (4) periodically revisit the policies, guidelines and standards.

- **Provide incentives and rewards for assessment efforts.**

(1) Allocate special funding such as grant monies for new efforts or for curricular improvement activities; (2) recognize and honor assessment efforts such as an annual luncheon or a simple "thank you" letter; (3) provide "best practice" awards or certificate for each section of the report; (4) publicize positive results which could be incorporated into an informational brochure that could be given to stakeholders and other interested members of the community; (5) recognize assessment in the promotion and tenure process such as a form of scholarship and teaching, not just service as typically thought of; and (6) require less frequent reporting such as biennially.

- **Minimize the burden of assessment.**

(1) KISS = Keep It Short and Simple [3-6 outcomes that are assessed by simple tools]; (2) be flexible in format and deadlines; (3) relieve faculty [at least temporarily] of other responsibilities.

The presenter also mentioned other ways to maintain faculty participation and buy-in such as:

- **Keep it useful** (we're not doing assessment just because of SACS).
- **Focus on teaching and learning** (don't use the "A" word).
- **Don't expect 100% buy-in** (always anticipate a few who resist).

Featured Report—AAS Management

Collaborative efforts on last year's 2003-04 Program Review and Outcomes Assessment report for the AAS Management program began on March 30, 2004. An informational meeting was facilitated by Bill Clark and Joanne Diddlemeyer, and was attended by full-time business faculty from all four campuses.

Approximately 4 months later, a second meeting was facilitated by Jimmy Peterson and Tom Leonard. During this meeting, the report form was reviewed along with a discussion about the required report elements. After initial reviews by SOA, the DRAFT report was approved by Dr. Bullock on October 29, 2004.

The student learning section lists outcomes that address written and oral communication skills as well as managerial, marketing, and financial analysis skills. Their 2004-05 assessment report will have an analysis of **success rates** for targeted courses that are considered by the faculty to be a reasonable measure of student proficiency for a given learning outcome.

MKT 100 - Required course where students demonstrate an understanding and application of **marketing concepts**.

FIN 215 - Required course where students demonstrate an understanding and application of **financial analysis procedures**.

BUS 200 - Required course where students demonstrate an understanding and application of **management skills**.

BUS 202 - Required course where students demonstrate an understanding and application of **written and oral communication skills**. This course was selected by faculty because of its case study format and extensive oral presentation requirements.

Although course success rates were identified as the primary assessment measure, future plans include utilizing course-embedded, capstone-like assignments. Course grade distributions are merely starting points in terms of assessment-related dialogue among faculty.

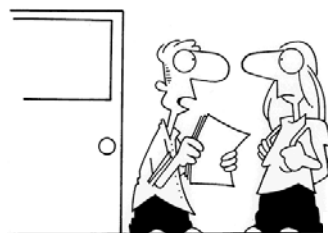
Status of Completed 2003-04 Reports

DRAFT Reports are **Works-in-Progress** (Need review by Provost and/or SOA; current versions, if available, are posted in the Program Review/Works-In-Progress folder on the Q: drive)

- (1) Developmental Math
- (2) Developmental English
- (3) AS Engineering (initial feedback by SOA on 7/22/04)
- (4) AS Business Administration
- (5) AAS Accounting (Dean R. Cool to Dr. Buchanan 10/4/04)
- (6) AAS Administration of Justice (Dean D. Edson to Dr. Buchanan 6/9/04)
- (7) AAS Early Childhood Development (initial feedback by SOA on 10/19/04)
- (8) AAS Industrial Studies: Quality Assurance (Dean L. Bagley to Dr. Buchanan 7/1/04)
- (9) AAS Industrial Studies: Air Conditioning (initial feedback by SOA on 10/19/04)
- (10) AAS Legal Assisting (initial feedback by SOA on 10/19/04)
- (11) AS General Studies (initial feedback by SOA on 9/20/04)
- (12) AS Science (Dean G. Frank to Dr. Buchanan 10/19/04)
- (13) AS Social Science (Dean D. Edson to Dr. Buchanan 6/9/04)
- (14) AAS Nursing [ongoing effort with specialized Health Professions database]
- (15) AAS Respiratory Therapy [ongoing effort with specialized Health Professions database]

Completed DRAFT Reports (Signed-off by Provost; then entered into the 2004-05 database on the Q: drive by SOA; to be completed by Lead Dean in Winter/Spring 2005)

- (1) AAS American Sign Language (10/20/04)
- (2) AAS Automotive Technologies (10/20/04)
- (3) AAS Graphic Design (9/20/04)
- (4) AAS Management (10/29/04)
- (5) AS General Studies—Developmental Disabilities (10/20/04)



"I used a \$3,000 computer, a \$1200 laser printer and a \$300 word-processing program—and I still got a D on my term paper!"

Reminder: These year-one (planning-phase) reports include a description of the planning process, listing of programmatic and student learning outcomes, intended assessment measures, and any other noted data. Upon receiving notification of approval from the Provosts, SOA enters the information into the database created for the 2004-05 academic year (located in Program Review folder on Q: shared drive). Then during this upcoming winter/spring, these programs enter the year-two implementation-phase. Lead Deans complete this phase by entering into the database an update to the planning process narrative, refined outcomes and measures (if necessary), desired targets, collected data/findings, draft highlights and action plans (again, if necessary), and a response to the various items listed in the Noted Accomplishments section.

"I don't ever want you to forget that there are millions of God's children who will not, and cannot get a good education, and I don't want you feeling that you are better than they are. For you will never be what you ought to be until they are all that they ought to be."

Martin Luther King Jr.