

Minutes from the **Assessment Task Force Meeting**  
Tuesday, October 3, 2006

10am-11am

Present Members: Barri Tinkler, Karen Green, Gordon DeMeritt, Laura Renninger  
Absent Members: John Adams, John Sheridan, Rhonda Smith

**Discussion began with review of the Dept. of Sociology Assessment plan.**

Karen Green felt that the proper forms were not used or provided and that the plan focused too much on the General Sociology course. She suggested more focus be placed on the courses required by majors. General competency was addressed, but a more narrow focus regarding specific competencies was recommended.

Barri Tinkler suggested that the Honors Dept. Assessment plan be posted on the website as an example of a good plan. Laura Renninger agreed to ask this permission of Stephanie Slocum-Schaffer and agreed that this would be a good sample plan for other departments to view. It was also reinforced that university assessment should differ from accreditation review plans. Laura plans to schedule a meeting with Margie Kiter-Edwards to further discuss these issues regarding the Sociology plan.

**Discussion regarding plans still outstanding which are needed to attain 100% cooperation from all units**

Laura reported that most plans have been received. Those that haven't been include the Library, Accounting, the Academic Support Center, Registrar, Financial Aid, Facilities, Bookstore & Wellness center. Communication is pending with several departments. No response from several e-mails to various depts. Meetings will be arranged by Laura to follow up with these departments.

Environmental Science dept. turned in their first assessment plan and it is very good.

**Review of the Information Technology Services Assessment Plan**

Brian Hammond submitted an initial plan. Proposed ILO is a survey. Hammond has requested help in constructing a survey to send across campus. Meeting will be arranged between Laura, Brian and John Sheridan to discuss details of plan. Suggestions for improving plan include:

1. conducting a baseline survey 1<sup>st</sup>, then follow up surveys OR administering a basic survey three times throughout the assessment period to compare results (Laura)
2. Survey should definitely answer the questions posed by the ILO (Gordon)
3. Survey should address satisfaction TO and FROM ITS, not just one way satisfaction (Barri & Gordon)
4. The ILO's focus on faculty but what about student satisfaction & WebCT user satisfaction. It was recommended that a survey of STUDENTS be listed as a third outcome (Barri & Laura)
5. Response time to complaints and type of instruments used should be addressed in the survey (Gordon)

It was decided that these suggestions would be discussed with Brian and 3 ILO's would be requested in the revision. Rewording of the ILO was suggested as well for clarification. Laura would ask ITS to have sample survey completed by next Task Force meeting for review. Gordon stressed that ITS is a significant point of interaction for students and assessment could be very revealing. Barri suggested the positive aspect of conducting such assessment should be highlighted, such as using the survey results to justify requests for better and newer resources, i.e. spam filters, etc.

**Proposals submitted by Rajeev Rajaram discussed:**

Rajeev resubmitted a revised proposal requesting funding for attending the Wakonse Conference in Michigan in May 2007. The Panel Discussion that he proposed holding was unclear as to whether that would be a Shepherd or at this conference. Laura said the plan was not a direct as she would like it to be. The plan does address teaching & learning, so she suggested the minimum funding be approved, however other travel expenses should be sought from within Rajeev's department or, if he is a panelist at the conference, from Mark Stern's office. Approval of \$550 for conference registration would be given but is dependant upon revision of the Mathematics dept. assessment plan, which Rajeev also submitted. Karen brought up the concern that conference registration fees may include alcohol and other miscellaneous costs that we may not be authorized to cover. Rajeev would be asked to provide conference brochure and details as to what registration fee would include (\$550).

**Assessment Event proposed for Departments that have not yet turned in plans:**

Laura suggested a special event be held for depts. and academic support units who have not submitted plans. Attendants would watch a motivational video and mentors would be on hand to help create plans with representatives from depts. so that a plan would be finalized before the close of the event. Departments who should be present were discussed. Best time and day of event was decided to be a Friday afternoon (12-4pm) with the event starting off with a lunch. It was debated whether a speaker should be brought in or whether smaller, one-on-one sessions would not be equally effective. A date will be found and other details secured by next meeting.

**CLA Official Report: Results for Shepherd**

Copies of the official report were given to everyone. Seniors are below norm on performance level, but at skill level in other areas. Laura recommended that the seniors be tested as part of a Capstone course requirement so there is less resistance and negative attitude toward participating, which may have been a factor in the lower scores. Seniors need to be more challenged. Restructuring may improve this, but in the meantime, a breakdown of subjects in which students from that major fell short was recommended. Retention issues may be a factor (Gordon). It would be helpful for depts. to have an overview of both CLA & NSSE data results so that broad observations could be made (Barri). It was decided that this information should be provided to dept.chairs. Laura has also requested further comparison from CLA as to how well Shepherd performed compared to other commuter institutions.

Meeting adjourned at 11:05am.