

Assessment Council Minutes

Spring 2021

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Assessment Council Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2021, 2:00-3:00

Zoom Meeting

Members:

Kim Black, Academic Effectiveness, Council Chair
Brian Dauenhauer, College of Natural and Health Sciences
Colleen Fitzpatrick, Undergraduate Council
Sherri Frye, Student Affairs
Donna Goodwin, College of Performing and Visual Arts
Allison Grant, Assessment
Darren Ilett, University Libraries
Brian Johnson, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
Tyler Jones, Instructional Design and Development
Heng-Yu Ku, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
Michael Martin, Monfort College of Business
Chris Marston, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Lyda McCartin, Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning
Berniece Mitchell, Recording Secretary
Junpyo Park, Undergraduate Council
Stephanie Torrez, Student Academic Success
Renee Welch, Student Affairs
Vacant, Graduate Council
Stephanie Wiegand, Faculty Senate
Tara Wood, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Guests

Aaron Haberman, College of Humanities and Social Sciences and Senior Faculty Assessment Fellow

1. Welcome
2. Approval of December 14, 2020 minutes – approved.
3. Announcements and Updates
 - a. AACU General Education Assessment Conference—Kim explained that the conference this year will be totally remote so we will be funding 3 faculty to attend, including Tara Wood. The three attendees will be doing a presentation based on this conference later this spring.
 - b. Other--none
4. Discussion Items
 - a. FY22 Assessment Mini-Grants
 - Number of projects funded and funding amount—
 - do we go back to allocating the full \$15,000 to assessment grants or do we reserve a portion of the funds for a second cohort of ILO grants? Tara said she would like to see some funds set aside for the ILO's again this year. Lyda asked Aaron about timing—will we be ready to fund a second cohort this year? Kim agreed that the timing might have some implications on how much we reserve. She also said that we could extend the deadlines into next year if needed. She elaborated with the explanation that we could either allocate \$9,000 to ILO projects as we did last year, or we could allocate half of that to come out of current budget, with the remainder coming out of next year's

budget. Kim observed that the general consensus seemed to be to fund a second cohort and would be limited to “new” programs (who were not funded this year). This year we funded six programs, which worked well because we had 6 applicants. The hope this year would be that as those folks talked to colleagues, there will be increased applications from other programs.

- Lyda suggested that maybe a portion of the remaining grant funds could be set aside for Programs to work on their PLO’s which could ultimately lead to them then moving on to the ILO’s. Kim spoke to this idea and suggested this could be accomplished as a Priority Point if we decided to go that route.
- The next question was the funding structure—do we want to keep it the same as last year? This year we funded six ILO projects at \$1,500 each, and funded six general projects at a decreased amount of \$1,000 each. It was agreed to leave the funding structure the same for the coming year.
- Priority points—Last year the only priority points went to new projects and collaborative projects.
 - Kim suggested that, as a result of some things that have come out of the delivery changes caused by COVID, she would like to see Assessment of Learning across modalities and Assessment of both pedagogical and outside-the-classroom opportunities for engagement of the student to increase their sense of connectedness in this “new” learning environment as possible Priority points.
 - Sherri asked if there was a way to connect some projects to the Institutional Strategic Planning and the data that may be necessary to those?
 - Kim said she feels that it is always good to connect funding to institutional priorities—that can be a lever to engage participation.
 - Stephanie suggested doing a combination if we decide to offer Priority Points to offer a list of some of the institutional opportunities for and need for assessment and selectively include some things related to the Strategic Plan, maybe HIS, and the concepts Kim suggested so that it might prompt some ideas for individuals. It could be done in such a way that it doesn’t limit, but could inspire. Kim said this kind of suggestion list has been provided in the past.
 - Kim also expressed that the challenge from her perspective is if we only have \$6,000 to distribute, we have to be strategic in the priority areas that we attach to this because it’s not a lot of money to support people’s work.
 - Tyler suggested that we combine a lot of those ideas and put it into a broad type of assessment.
- Other changes
 - Deadline—Kim will put together the call for proposal for at least the general grants, but preferably for both kinds of grants, and will post it in the Teams folder soon, with an eye to the call going out right before the next meeting on Feb. 8th, leaving the call open for about a month, after which the Review Team will review the submissions, for potential announcement at the T & A Symposium on March 23. Lyda suggested that we might want to announce the grant winners in the CETL Weekly and UNC Today this year, as opposed to at the T & A Symposium—the virtual climate kind of diminishes the impact of such an announcement.
 - Review team – ideally 3 volunteers with at least one being faculty. If you are interested in serving on this team email Kim.

5. Preparing for HLC 2024-2025

- a. HLC examples of evidence (posted in the Teams site)—Kim expressed that HLC is clear that the examples of evidence should not be used as a checklist.
- b. UNC evidence —Kim shared a poll and invited the group to respond to the poll as she is using the Council as her “test group” with something she intends to use across campus later. She explained that her rationale around the poll and the specific questions in it were three-fold. The first purpose was to generate a conversation around what we are doing; the second particularly for those items where we have a lot of people feeling like we are NOT doing it, to have a conversation about “is that something UNC would benefit from doing”, remembering that there are lots of different ways to demonstrate what we are doing and what she has pulled out here are just examples—there may be other ways to demonstrate it. So just because something shows up that we aren’t doing it doesn’t mean that we have to automatically start doing it; and ultimately, her hope is that by the end of the semester our council will have a set of action items and recommendations that she can bring to campus leadership and say “we’ve evaluated UNC’s level of preparation for the next HLC visit and the Assessment Council recommends these actions to make sure we are meeting the criteria for accreditation.”
 - What we do and document
 - **Syllabi:** The responses indicate that we are establishing program and course level learning outcomes, but documentation may be an issue. Conversation was around the fact that some delivery methods are better documented than others (i.e., face-to-face more-so than Extended Campus or online). Kim said this was a perfect example of the kind of conversation to lead to action items because from a reviewers standpoint this should be one of the easiest things to provide as evidence because what reviewers would look at are course syllabi from all modalities of the same course to see if the learning outcomes are the same in all modalities, regardless of where it is being delivered. We know that some colleges are collecting all syllabi and archiving them and making them easy to access. There has been conversation about putting them in Digital Measures. And these are the kind of recommendations she is hoping that the Council will be able to put forward as something that is fairly easy and straightforward and this is our recommendation that UNC create a system for doing this.
 - **Communication:** Kim and Lyda talked about the Program Learning outcomes that may have been established, but are not always advertised, or documented where it is easily discovered by students and prospective students. This raises another area of opportunity to make sure that we can demonstrate that all programs have learning outcomes. And the other thing around HLC is it’s not just a compliance activity. The reason that this is a criteria is there is a consensus across institutions that students benefit when they have clear information about the intended learning outcomes of the program. We need to be constantly reframing this question around not compliance but what is the end goal for why this exists as a compliance area to make sure students are informed.
 - What we do but don’t document
 - Tara talked about a conference she attended where they were charged with writing language to differentiate between the 100, 200, 300 and 400 level courses, and it was very challenging! Kim agreed and said that UNC does need to be having conversations about **what is required to differentiate between Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral studies other than the number of credit hours**. Lyda talked about, especially in some of our smaller programs, we know that doctoral students are often sitting in the same classes with Masters students and maybe the assignment is slightly different or the doctoral student does an additional project, but if someone is reviewing the syllabus for

the course what is the language we use to justify that it is a doctoral level course? Kim said: “and is it the class, or is it the additional expectation in doctoral programs for students to do original research for the dissertation, and then what differentiates the dissertation from the thesis at the Masters level?”

- What we don't do but need to start
 - Kim will save the poll results for further discussion next meeting.

6. Meeting adjourned.

Assessment Council Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2021, 2:00-3:00

Zoom Meeting

Members:

Kim Black, Academic Effectiveness, Council Chair
Brian Dauenhauer, College of Natural and Health Sciences
Colleen Fitzpatrick, Undergraduate Council
Sherri Frye, Student Affairs
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Tara Wood, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Guests

Aaron Haberman, College of Humanities and Social Sciences and Senior Faculty Assessment Fellow

1. Welcome
2. Approval of January 11, 2021 minutes – approved as written.
3. Announcements and Updates
 - a. TLA Symposium Update – Lyda McCartin. The Symposium is March 23, 2021; Lyda will be sending the Council members a calendar invite. Lyda shared the tentative schedule, including the Keynote speaker, Dr. Chayla Haynes Davison. She explained the Lightning Talks will be presented by the mini-grant recipients. The Symposium website is [here](#).
 - b. NSSE/FSSE surveys – Allison Grant – We will be using the standard survey, plus topical modules: Inclusiveness & experience with cultural diversity (on both student & faculty); on the NSSE - first-year experiences & senior transitions; teaching and professional development (on FSSE only). Please look out for the survey and encourage your colleagues to do same. NSSE goes out to first year and seniors only. However, one thing that will be different this year is that we sought permission, and were granted it, to use the IECD topical module with a broader segment of our population to at least include staff, graduate students and graduate faculty. Kim added that they worked with the Office of Equity and Inclusion to make the decision to use the Inclusiveness module rather than have that group have to create yet another survey. Allison said that these surveys will come out shortly after Spring Break.

- c. ILO Project Update – Aaron Haberman and Kim Black. Aaron met with the academic programs that are participating at the end of January to go over what his department did in terms of aligning Learning Outcomes with the institutional Learning Outcomes. Going forward he will meet with each individual program separately instead of as a group. Met with Libraries and they have finished their alignments. Waiting on the others. Kim met with the two co-curricular programs (The HSS Student Success Center and Tutoring). Both have completed their ILO to Program Learning Outcome alignment. The HSS Student Success Center is going to try using Canvas which will give us some insight into how that will function compared to course use of Canvas. She also met with IM&T and received some good news that Eli Swick had done a lot of the work before he left in Canvas, and IM&T has continued to do some work that will help with data collection. Renee Welch asked the question: What is the process to share what is learned with the rest of campus? Kim said they did not build into their RFP a requirement to share information but she hopes that CETL can facilitate hosting some sessions with the opportunity to share, and based on who is participating they would be willing to do that. We did also build into the process some evaluation steps to get that feedback so even if they aren't able to do an actual presentation we will have that information that we can put into a report that can be shared with the campus. Allison suggested that maybe we could put some of the basic steps to getting your Program Assessment up and running on the website for people who want to navigate to that in a more passive approach.

4. Discussion Items

a. FY22 Assessment Mini-Grants

- Approve call for proposals—Kim noted that there have been some comments added to the document.
 - Tara asked, “can these funds be used for course content revisions without actually collecting artifacts and scoring?” There was no other input so Kim observed that we probably didn't need to change the content. That the scoring matrix will also screen that to some degree. After some discussion around this topic, Kim said that she could revise the wording to say that the purpose of this grant wouldn't be to support revising a course or a co-curricular activity. It would be to developing and conducting an assessment of a course or activity that has been revised to better align to the program learning outcomes. It was agreed that that helped make it clearer what the expectations are and why it is included. We could also say something about course content or an activity to better align to learning outcomes and then to conducting a pilot assessment.
 - Tara had also posted a question about the Teaching & Assessment Symposium Event Community that is hosted on the CETL website and whether people must actually go through CETL for that, or can they post their own? Lyda said they cannot post their own, they have to send it through CETL and we can work out a better process for that if we need to, but there is a lot of permissions on the back end that makes a little more difficult for people to upload to an event community. Kim said we can make that language clearer that they must provide that information to CETL for that.
 - Kim will post a revised version in TEAMS reflecting the conversation & comments to add clarity and she will send a notice to everybody, requesting a pretty quick turnaround in your feedback so we can move forward. She would like to have the call go out by the end of February.
- Review team volunteers (need 2)—Darren has volunteered; we need two more. If you are interested either tell Kim today or email her later.
- Timing for the “Assessment Grant 1.0”, the traditional mini-grants, and ILO second cohort grant RFPs. We have two different grant opportunities, and it might be confusing if the calls

went out at the same time. She would like to have the ILO grants awarded before the end of Spring semester so we know who will be participating. She is thinking the Assessment mini-grant call will go out end of February and the ILO call right after Spring Break. She explained the reason the mini-grant call goes out first is that it requires a bit more planning.

b. Preparing for HLC 2024-2025

- UNC evidence
 - What we do and document—Kim shared the first question on last month’s poll and asked that those who responded this way would explain where this information is housed/stored.
 - **Question: All academic programs leading to a credential have program level learning outcomes.** Aaron said the tricky thing is the “all” academic programs. Maybe not all, but he knows that many do and it would be easily tracked through the program’s 5 year reviews because that is now a requirement and programs are required to have an assessment piece which would then be reviewed to include articulation of their outcomes. Those reports should be filed with the Provost. He also would assume that the Deans would have that documentation. Chris said that the majority of the programs in HSS do but they still have a small number who don’t. Kim asked if people in other colleges have a sense of where we have this information other than program review or even if you feel like it is adequately collected now through program review? Answer: Brian said College of Ed has a lot of external accreditations and certainly accreditation reports for external bodies would have all of this information. Tara said that programs offered through Extended Campus would be an extension of what Brian had just said about the external accreditations facet. Allison suggested that the mapping survey that Julie Sexton did might be a starting point. The point was made that there is a lot of “silo-ed information”. Lyda asked what we do about the programs that don’t have Learning Outcomes? She is running Program Assessment workshops right now so she knows that there are programs that don’t have Learning Outcomes. Kim reminded that one of the things she is hoping for by the end of this semester is that we will have some recommendations for at least a few of the “low hanging fruit” or really “high priority” things that we need to have in place and this is one for both the academic programs and for the co-curricular programs that is both low-hanging fruit in the sense that it is the kind of evidence that the review teams find most compelling when they can just see easily that every program has this and for us it is probably the most challenging because we don’t have any parameters around kind of a centralized way of being able to demonstrate these and program review is definitely a mechanism that supports this and last year we added a requirement that these actually be submitted as a part of program review but that’s not going to get us to all or even a critical mass because of the sequence and timeline for program review. One of the things we might want to have some conversation about in a subsequent meeting is what would be our recommendation for being a way of having this information easily available? Second, what do we need to do to support programs that still at this point in time don’t have learning outcomes? This is one of the things that the HLC has very little patience with now because we are going on two decades that they have been asking institutions to have this and so saying “Oh, this is something new and we are still in the process of figuring out how to do this” doesn’t really fly anymore with reviewers.

- **Question: “All non-academic programs with student learning in their mission have program level student learning outcomes.”** This is an area where we have even more work to do. Part of this is it is fairly recent we’ve been asking people, although Kim would argue that we’ve been doing program review in these areas and that includes criteria around student learning outcomes. And we’ve been doing that for almost a decade now so we are kind of behind in making sure that we have them. Processes may end up being similar for the co-curricular and the academic programs in terms of where this information needs to be provided but that will be part of the conversation for making recommendations. Sherri said the Division of Student Affairs spent a lot of time last year creating their student learning outcomes so she does think they have it, and she does have a document of a collection of all of them. Now, where they go with all of that will be the next question and do we have proper assessment and that kind of thing, but she does know they at least now have student learning outcomes within their division. Kim thanked Sherri for her work in this and added that she thinks what the chart regarding this question shows is that even if we have the documentation, it isn’t publicly visible so that people know about it and that will be part of our thinking on recommendations. Sherri said she is working with University Relations right now on creating an impact report for their division that will include this information and it would then be available on their website.
- **Question: “All UNC programs assess and report on the results of student learning outcomes annually.”** Kim found this interesting. So we have these, but do we assess them and do we do it on an annual basis? She reminded that on these STEM kinds of statements these are examples that the HLC has put forward of ways that institutions can document that we are meeting the criteria but they’re not requirements. However, based on the responses to this question the majority of this Council believes that we should be doing some kind of assessment in all programs every year. Kim pointed out that we have tried a variety of approaches in the past to having annual assessment reports and the two things that have been the biggest barriers is the logistics of having a process to actually collect the reports and then having these reports actually be meaningful and not just a bureaucratic thing that we ask programs to do every year. We were doing that when she first started and most of the reports would say “No change” or “in progress” and that’s why she has kind of let go of the annual requirement until we have some mechanisms so that they produce actual meaningful information that people care about. So when we are thinking about our recommendations this seems to be one that was very high on people’s list. We’ll spend some time in a future meeting talking about if we believe that annual reporting is useful how do we make it meaningful as well? Brian commented that with the use of Canvas that all faculty have access to, if we could just get the tagging feature and that whole system up and running, that could make something like annual reporting on student outcomes feasible. But, if we don’t have something like that where it is already integrated, even if it’s a separate thing (like Live Text for education purposes) it makes it so burdensome on faculty to do “one more thing” on an annual basis. Kim agreed that if we can make Canvas work and in order to make even Canvas work we have to have a critical mass of programs actually willing to use the system or we have to have a policy as an institution around the use of Canvas.

- c. Kim will post this poll results report in TEAMS so you can see where we fell on the remaining items: she has often thought about whether there would be any value in an annual assessment that asks programs instead of just collecting data on their program learning outcomes which frequently don't change that much from year to year so it does become a reporting kind of activity, if the annual assessment was more inquiry based around "as a department what are you curious about or what is an issue that you're seeing with your students in terms of their learning and spending the year looking into what do you think is happening?" What could be causing students either to be doing really well or to be slipping or to be struggling and coming up with solutions for that? As we talk about recommendations we can think a little bit more about not just a process for annual reporting but what would make that process actually meaningful and useful for departments and could actually lead to improvements in student outcomes rather than just collecting data and reporting it. Donna commented that she really likes that approach. In the School of Art & Design every time she says the word "assessment" people roll their eyes and make the hex sign, but wording it the way Kim did makes it more of a research project and by doing that they will see the benefit of it in terms of what can be thought of as value over judgmental. Lyda added that CETL is starting a SOTL Learning Community next academic year so she feels there is a way to connect all of this to SOTL. If we are concerned about the program learning outcomes and whether or not students are graduating with the knowledge and skills we want them to that's important, but if we also want people to start engaging in these deeper things then we can do campus wide conversations about what questions we really care about. Things like: Are women performing better/worse than our men? And why? Or other questions. Kim said from an HLC reviewers standpoint, it would be a paradigm shift to go from having just data reports that are collecting information but it's defensible and that an institution that has moved to a more inquiry based assessment would do very well in a review and probably would see their student learning outcomes changing. Lyda said she thinks the hurdle, which she believes we can overcome, is we've been telling people "you need program learning outcomes and you need to assess them so you need to have assessments" and now if we shift and say "actually, let's think about big questions they are either going to push back at the idea that "we have to do both things" or we're going to get push back on "why did you make us do this thing?" So, we have to figure out a way to have a campus-wide conversation about why both things are important and how you might balance the work of both of those kinds of things and have them work together. Kim said if we have people using Canvas so we can pull the data so that that workload on faculty is minimized that might remove a huge barrier in terms of the workload. Lyda asked about the Canvas process—so we pilot this for a couple of pilots and get the process down, is it a top-down decision then that one can make that says this is the process of how we collect program data? Then chairs are in charge of implementing that process so that the faculty from the bottom up can answer the more interesting questions? Chris said what she is hearing from her chairs is if we could have some systems where we were actually providing them the data like we do with program review data of what we want them to look at and then they are responding to evaluating and critiquing that is a much better use of time. Kim said that that is the direction we are trying to go with program review. The challenging part with assessment data is that it does rely on departments and faculty to do the data input. Without that from an institutional standpoint she can't tell you how your students are performing. If you put that information into Canvas she can extract that and give you a report that you don't have to collect or do anything in addition to that, but the faculty do have to use that system and put that information in. One

of the things around this pilot is creating a model that says “you don’t have to do this assessment in every single class” and helping faculty understand and having those conversations in the departments around where is the best place for us to get the information that tells us how our students are doing and then everybody agreeing that that is going to be the place where that data is collected. So you’re not asking everybody to collect everything, every course, every semester.

5. Meeting adjourned.

Assessment Council Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2021, 2:00-3:00

Zoom Meeting

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Guests

Aaron Haberman, College of Humanities and Social Sciences and Senior Faculty Assessment Fellow

1. Welcome
2. Approval of February 8, 2021 minutes- Approved
3. Announcements and Updates
 - a. Teaching and Assessment Symposium – Lyda McCartin—Lyda put in the chat the link to the symposium webpage with RSVP links. She said that we are going to share the invitation to the Keynote with outside folks.
 - b. ILO Project Update – Aaron Haberman and Kim Black. Kim has met with both of the co-curricular student services programs and worked with them on the project, did some Professional Development with them around understanding how to write Student Learning Outcomes and then create what she calls an educational learning opportunity map for co-curricular programs similar to a curricular map for academic programs. They are on target for moving forward. Aaron has met with the four academic programs and they are working on their projects. The initial aligning of their program learning outcomes with the ILOs is basically done. A bit of revision had to be done, but they are now working on the next phase of the project which is to develop rubrics for those PLOs and trying to come up with a good single line rubric that shows essentially some sort of differentiation between proficiency and non-proficiency. Once we get that settled then we will talk about the process about how they can determine that proficiency. Jun asked about the timeline—the current cohort will have their assessment plans developed by the end

of the semester and collect assessment data in the Fall. We will be talking a little later about the process for the second cohort for people to start applying for those grants for the second cohort.

4. Information Items

- a. Assessment planning process revisions – Lyda McCartin. As a result of some of the Program Assessment sessions she has been having with a couple of programs. What has come out of those sessions is questions about how we've been preparing programs for program assessment. What we have been doing is following the very traditional program assessment cycle. There is nothing wrong with this cycle, however some questions that have come up through these sessions has led her to want to re-invent this cycle for our campus because reinventing it in a different way will help us to guide programs through the process more easily. She said that using the traditional cycle as a part of the planning causes some confusion. She recommends a change and it's not small. Her recommendation is that we break the assessment process to a planning process and then an actual assessment cycle. (The slides Lyda presented are attached which explains the current process, and the process she proposes). Lyda proposed establishing a small Council working group. Time commitment estimate: "a few hours" to review the documents and then meet to finalize. If you would be available to work in this working group, please email Lyda with your interest. Chris asked if we are going to do some of this work, where do we stand with some of the previous conversations we've had about revising some of the program review process and having more data analytics utilized with the program review process? Kim said "they are related but they don't live together in the same house." What Lyda is talking about is how do we support people to do their program learning outcomes assessment and that is a part of program review, but the data analytics and those pieces are not necessarily the same depending on what individual programs are doing with their assessment of learning. Chris said she agreed but she is trying to think when we present faculty & staff with new ways of doing things she could see some of those other questions arising. Kim said she thinks that is why it's important to frame these refinements as refinements not as a change, supplementing and expanding on the existing resources to help programs have clearer understanding of both the process and what they need to do, less than a brand new process because the things that Lyda is outlining aren't actually outside of that traditional assessment cycle; it's just that she's breaking it down into component pieces. Colleen said she thinks ultimately what faculty need is a process that creates both efficacy and efficiency. Is this going to help simplify things or make them more efficient and yet still valid in any way that we could sell it to our faculty? Lyda said if we can get programs to actually participate, then yes it will make it more efficient. Right now in programs she is working with the program assessment plan is so complicated that it hinders the work. If she can work with programs and kind of lay out the planning process a little bit better and then have conversations with them about looking at questions they want to answer using that data, not just "because I have program review I'm going to collect this and tell you what my benchmark is" that gets to the efficacy piece but updating the process itself yes will help with efficiency. The bigger question is how do we get programs to participate in this kind of professional development so that we can break down the really intricate program assessment plans that they have to get to a simpler way to collect this data and answer questions that they want to answer. We have exemplars on our campus that do that where it's not a really crazy process but we have many programs where it there is so much going on that it just falls over on the weight of itself and they just don't do it. Colleen asked "How would you frame the question of usefulness?" because personally she doesn't want to spend a lot of time, no matter how efficient it is if it's not going ultimately to be useful not just to the program but to the campus. Lyda said she thinks we really do need to do some work around how to get more programs

involved in taking another look at what they're doing, simplifying their processes to make it easier. Kim said she thinks the big thing is that it is a continuing conversation about tapping into faculty and our student affairs and co-curricular programs the real commitment that faculty and staff have to making sure that our students are learning and we care about their learning and we care about whether the things we're doing are effective and are getting us to those goals that we have and it's a continuing conversation because assessment is so often framed in the language of accountability. If we're doing it because we care about students learning and making sure that our programs are healthy and strong and functioning in the way that we intend them to then the reporting part is an artifact of looking at these questions that we care about. Lyda said she is hoping to have documents updated and available to those who volunteer to help with this project by April to review before the summer. Then we can go from there for some of the other pieces.

- b. FY22 ILO Grants updated application—Kim has updated the application and it is posted on the website. It was clear from the first round of applications that people weren't clear in the difference. She has tried with this new application to make it much clearer that you are participating in a project, and your program will receive some grant funds as an incentive to participate but this is not a project that a particular department or unit is interested in taking on because they are interested in it—that's what the assessment grants are for. She invited feedback on the updated invitation. She plans to get this announcement out the week after Spring Break, with an application deadline sometime in April. Our last meeting for the year is in May and as a Council we can look at the applications in May. The mini-grant announcement will go out this week.

5. Discussion Items

a. FY22 Assessment Mini-Grants

- Review team – need 1 more reviewer

b. Preparing for HLC 2024-2025

- Final Poll Results—today we are going to go through the last 3 questions. And then, between now and the next meeting she will be going back through the all of our discussion and pulling out what she sees as a set of possible action items and recommendations that we should be considering as a Council to recommend to the University leadership of things that need to happen between now and when our next accreditation visit is.
- Question 3: Question was about our faculty and staff evaluation processes, including expectations for engagement in student learning outcomes. It sounds like this is something that people either think we are currently doing but the majority of people thought that we are not currently doing this and would need to start. A few said we have this but can't easily document it. Kim asked those who answered that we have it to share their awareness about where this is happening because that might be a model and then we can talk about the majority answer of "we don't have this and need to start" and what that would look like.
 - Chris said that for their college it would be unit-by-unit if they chose to include it.
 - Kim said that was as she suspected and that might be buried in the non-college units that it might be very specific to an individual staff person who it's part of their job description includes assessment, but she doesn't know that there is an expectation across the board.
 - Aaron said that if it exists, surely the Deans would know it through their evaluation criteria for faculty or faculty would have developed by those programs and then sent on to their respective Deans for their approval. So, if it does exist it was never laid down as a specific requirement in their program.

- Kim said both of those comments points to a major challenge if this is something that we would want to recommend is that at least among faculty our “current evaluation processes are defined department by department in terms of the criteria. So it would really require a big persuasion campaign to make that happen.
- Tara said: She believes there is room for this in faculty review, but it’s not an expectation. She said she might have a narrative about doing assessment work in the service component of her review narrative but it’s not like it’s one of the bullets that she must check in terms of getting points awarded. She said she feels there is “space for it” which is her only hesitancy about making it an expectation because she doesn’t feel that for faculty review it precludes articulation of your engagement in this kind of work.
- Aaron said he feels it really depends on the individual program’s assessment plan and what that looks like. Is that assessment taking place in particular classes, who’s teaching those classes? So there may be faculty for various reasons that during a particular cycle aren’t teaching those courses and thus not engaging in it, so it would be tricky to put that as a criteria for all faculty in the program if that’s not what the program itself is doing with assessment.
- Tara said, maybe in program review, but not necessarily in individual faculty review.
- Aaron said it’s definitely in program review, and certainly if there are faculty . . . in his department, it’s an expectation that if you are teaching these courses you have to do it and if you don’t that’s going to be known and that’s going to be a problem, so you could get marked down for it for not fulfilling general requirements. You could have other criteria that could be brought in as assessment if you are teaching those bigger courses.
- Stephanie said that she knows it’s on HR’s short list to revamp the employee evaluation, particularly for staff and she leans toward working through that process because otherwise it’s a completely employee-driven what goals do you want to write down, what do you want to focus on this year? There’s nothing standardized other than it all goes onto the same form and she thinks it needs to be, based on what is being suggested here if people agree that should be on there it would have to be a standardized non-negotiable item on the evaluation and it’s just not built like that right now. Even in the final pages that talk about behaviors those are to rank order them, those that matter or apply, and it’s again employee-driven.
- Colleen asked “aren’t faculty departments essentially faculty-driven?” There’s no standardized set of items that we have to include? This would just become one-more bullet out of the whole assortment of service things that from which you could choose. She feels that faculty supervisors are in the same position as staff supervisors. If we are going expect that this be done then we need to start going more in the direction of standardizing evaluation components for both faculty and staff. Personally, she doesn’t see that happening.
- Renee said that from the Student Affairs aspect, we are looking at implementing or looking at division-wide expectations and this could be considered one of those and then we would standardize it across. We would have to just fold it into what we are currently doing and then train around it, provide information and then understand what we’re asking everybody to do. So, it would be something we could look at, especially as we pursue curriculum and a lot of other things we are currently looking at.
- Kim reminded that these questions we’ve been looking were taken from examples of the kinds of evidence that HLC reviewers might consider in terms of reviewing how an institution is meeting the criteria for accreditation. She said that personally, for me, this would not be the mountain that she would choose to die on for improving assessment

but she thinks that there are some things that we could recommend that are short of actually including expectations for student learning outcomes assessment as part of faculty and staff evaluation. One of the things she is thinking about is she knows that Lyda has worked with some different faculty to create a professional development series around other methods besides the course evaluation for faculty to think about how they are demonstrating effective teaching. She thinks that there could be some opportunities to think about to encourage people to think about work that they are doing in assessment as a way of demonstrating effective teaching. Depending on where the staff evaluation process goes that could also be something that could be built into that process, and she agrees with Stephanie that working with HR to talk about that not as a straight jacket, one-size-fits-all but as a menu of how are you supporting students that show your involvement in assessment of learning would be one of the ways you could demonstrate that. The other thing she is curious what people think about this, but particularly for staff positions and possibly for faculty positions that when those position descriptions are either revised or created for new positions to, where it's appropriate, to be really explicit that assessment of learning is an expectation for this position. She doesn't think that is something people think about. These are some ideas she has that are connected to the spirit of what the HLC is recommending without having a ridged evaluation structure around assessment, because as a couple of people has commented not everybody is engaged in assessment and sometimes appropriately so depending on their position.

- Colleen said that for her, when you frame it like that that it can be part of another item that can be included in our student reviews because we have long struggled with this construct that we are in that has only one thing to assess our teaching effectiveness and that's our student course feedback. To have this offered as something in addition to could be well received.
- Question 4: UNC's programs use student learning outcomes data to make improvements. Kim said that this is probably the most important thing that HLC reviewers are looking at which is evidence that programs use student learning outcomes data to make improvements. Some of the other things we've talked about are kind of "iff you have it great", but this is one that if you don't have it will definitely be noted in the reviewers report and potentially lead to a finding that the institution is not meeting the expectations around this criterion. She was happy to see that the majority on the Council at least believes we have it but can't easily document it. But it's a different problem to solve if we just don't have a system for documenting it effectively vs. we don't have it at all and we really need it. She asked what are the ways people think we are documenting it?
 - Aaron said that the big one is through the 5 year program reviews, since that has now become an expectation to "describe your assessment". Part of that is "what are you doing", "what data have you gathered", and "what are you doing about it". A lot of programs are in their nascent forms with this, but still he feels "those reports for those who have completed it under this cycle and it has become an expectation by the Provost, it should be there.
 - Kim said that was intentionally put into the latest revisions of Program Review partly because of this, but partly because it's important. Mostly because it's important.
 - Kim asked if there are any existing processes or activities that currently happen at UNC that could be tweaked to make this more transparent in terms of the documentation?
 - Renee said that she thinks they could add this to their end-of-the year reports as a standing category to wrap up their student learning outcome process for the year and to

describe in the end-of-year report how they utilize student learning outcome data specifically to make improvements to their program. She feels that would be easy to add in on an annual program review.

- Kim said she thinks that would be great and, both in her role at the University and her experiences as a peer reviewer she would rather see reports that focus on that and less on the reporting of data that was collected because the data in some ways are meaningless if they are not actually being used so that's a great suggestion.
 - Chris said that in HSS some of this data is available if you dig deeper, but they would probably need to ask units some specific questions or sending out a certain Qualtrics survey that tries to standardize the collection of this across units. It's not in one place.
 - Kim said that has been a challenge for the two HLC reports that she has been involved in in authoring in one way or another is she has been able to find the information but it really does involve reading through lots and lots of program review reports, and then pulling those sections that talk about this into a compilation document that shows the breadth of activity happening across campus and so if there were a way of, even if it was a section that explicitly defined as we want you to talk about improvements that you've made that would be easier than reading through the entire self-study program review documents and trying to figure out "did they talk about it at all?"
 - Question 5: UNC links student learning outcomes assessment to operational and strategic planning and budgeting processes. Kim said this last question is interesting because it is something HLC asks for is that institutions show that they link student learning outcomes assessment to operational and strategic planning and budgeting processes. She said that program review is the closest thing we have but it's not an explicit connection. It's if a program decides to talk about learning outcomes assessment in light of their strategic planning, but it's not directly connected. And this may be one that our recommendation is that senior leadership needs to think about how this might be incorporated as some of us are working on annual budget proposals right now.
 - Renee asked "shouldn't we connect this to our current strategic plan"?
 - Kim said she doesn't think that it is explicit. The place where it probably shows up the most is in the sections that deal with the career readiness. That has the most implicit association with student learning outcomes although it's not the sum of all student learning outcomes.
 - Chris said she agrees with Renee—she thinks this presents us with an opportunity.
 - Next Steps—Kim's plan is she will go through all of the notes from our conversations and summarize them into a set of recommendations for action and then we will talk about that at the next meeting. She doesn't promise to have them to you far in advance of the next meeting because of the budget deadlines coming up, but she will have them ready to discuss in April. Then we can finalize those in May and bring them to the Provost and Katrina Rodriguez and that will wrap up our year-long look at where we are as an institution in alignment with HLC accreditation requirements.
6. Chris said she wanted to express her appreciation for the level of professionalism and respect that this group shows towards one another when we are having discussions, even about difficult things. Kim thanked Chris and said that this is one of her favorite committees. Thank you everybody.

Assessment Council Meeting Minutes

May 10, 2021, 2:00-3:00

Zoom Meeting

Members:

Kim Black, Academic Effectiveness, Council Chair
Brian Dauenhauer, College of Natural and Health Sciences
Colleen Fitzpatrick, Undergraduate Council
Sherri Frye, Student Affairs
Donna Goodwin, College of Performing and Visual Arts
Allison Grant, Assessment
Darren Ilett, University Libraries
Brian Johnson, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
Tyler Jones, Instructional Design and Development
Heng-Yu Ku, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
Michael Martin, Monfort College of Business
Chris Marston, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Lyda McCartin, Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning
Berniece Mitchell, Recording Secretary
Junpyo Park, Undergraduate Council
Stephanie Torrez, Student Academic Success
Renee Welch, Student Affairs
Vacant, Graduate Council
Stephanie Wiegand, Faculty Senate
Tara Wood, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Guests

Aaron Haberman, College of Humanities and Social Sciences and Senior Faculty Assessment Fellow

1. Welcome
2. Approval of March 8, 2021 minutes. Minutes were approved
3. Announcements and Updates
 - a. ILO Project Update—Aaron, Kim & Allison met with Kathy Zellers to discuss next steps.
 - b. Assessment Grants—she thanked Darren & Tyler for reading the applications and six recipients have been identified. Two co-curricular programs, one from Center for Peer Education and one from Tutorial Services, UNIV 101, a grant supporting assessment in early childhood education, one from Audiology and Speech Language Sciences, and one from Biological Sciences.
 - c. Recognition of Departing Council Members—Kim thanked Darren for his service on this Council. He will be stepping off next year. She also asked if there was anyone else planning on stepping down that they let her know so that she could work with their unit to find another representative.
 - d. Assessment planning process revisions – Lyda McCartin. Lyda had posted a document in Teams that she asked everyone to look over in the coming days. She said her plan is to work during the summer on creating some new documents and worksheet templates for everyone that will eventually live on the website. She asked that two or three people come together in early August to review these documents so they can be brought to the Council at the first meeting in

September. Kim said she will send out a call in late July asking for volunteers to work with Lyda on this project.

- e. Tara asked if we have heard from any of the Assessment Grant winners as to how they are handling the data during COVID? Kim said she hadn't heard any specific conversation from any of the grant winners, but in terms of general survey data there is a recognition that the past year is going to be an "anomalous blip" that may take a couple of years to stabilize. She believes that there will be a huge footnote for anyone who collected data between March 2020 and the end of this year, and probably through next year.

4. Discussion Items

- a. Preparing for HLC 2024-2025. Kim went back through the past meeting notes and developed a draft set of recommendations for us to move forward. She is hoping that today we can finalize at least conceptually and come to some agreement about the substance of the recommendations. Then her plan is to take the recommendations to the Provost and then try to move forward into the next year with some of the things the Council has identified.
 - Overview of current status
 - Group discussion of recommendations
 - Chris had raised the question of "who will ensure the SLO audits? Could this be part of the Academic Health Check?" Kim said that is a very good question and attaching it to some type of regular process is the only way it will happen. She pointed out that she could ask that everyone do it before the HLC review, but then it would become a "one-time thing" and wouldn't be looked at again for another 10 years. Kim asked what others think about ways to make this a systematic process to make sure it happens. Tara felt that that might be difficult to pin down one process that covered all units. She suggested that another possibility would be in curriculum approval processes. Kim suggested that maybe it could be built into the 6-year Program Review process.
 - Kim mentioned that during the HLC virtual conference that she attended in April she attended two sessions that were focused specifically on assessment and how the HLC reviewers are dealing with assessment. HLC has a concern about the number of institutions who are being put on additional monitoring for assessment of learning. They actually did a study to look at what was happening with that. One of the things that their study showed is that reviewers are not uniformly and consistently applying the criteria. And, in some instances are actually asking the institutions for more than what the criteria is asking for. In another session, which was more of an interactive conversation, several people talked about the challenges between the enormous pressures to be documenting for HLC accountability and that pressure then of having time to actually use assessment meaningfully when there is so much pressure on the documentation part. She asked how HLC would view an institution that moved away from the documentation to more of an action research-based assessment. They were supportive of that idea.
 - There was some discussion around the bullet point regarding all courses being set up in Canvas. It was agreed that it is desirable, but that the expectation is somewhat unrealistic, at least on the "short term". Kim's reply is that her thinking is "if you don't ask, you don't get" so she would rather ask "big" and try to incrementally implement, recognizing that it's not something that happens overnight, but if there is recognition from a core group of faculty and leadership that this is consistent with our student first vision 2030 priorities that it doesn't hurt to put it forward and kind of operationalize that. Gradebook might be a starting point but that eventually we would want to see full implementation. Aaron commented that this issue goes much deeper and that it is really

a pedagogical issue. The summary to all of this discussion is that we have anecdotal evidence from council members, and from surveys, that there is value to the students when we use the tools that we have available as an institution. Aaron expressed that his concern is in figuring out what the mechanism is to “compel” those faculty who have no interest in using Canvas to use it.

- Aaron made a “closing summary statement” that he feels if a .5 FTE position were created it could solve some of these things such as the Canvas piece, by that person being able to nudge programs when they are looking through their assessment reports. Kim said that that has been a gap ever since she has been in this position is just barely doing enough to keep things going, but never having the capacity to have ongoing conversations with programs. She doesn’t anticipate that there would be an investment next year, but having a recommendation coming forward that could be used for the next year’s staffing plan.