Minutes
Meeting of the Faculty Senate ad hoc Assessment Committee
Thursday, September 9, 2004
Academic Affairs Conference Room (2122), Founder’s Hall 3:30 p.m.

Present: Powell, Cutler, Elliott, Barton, Jackowiak, Moore, Hoehner, Wadkins, Butler, Wozniak, Hodge, Bishop, Van Ingen

Absent: Lomicky

The meeting was called to order by Glen Powell, committee chair.

I. Meeting opened with introduction of Elliott, Academic Publications G.A. to Cutler, who will be attending Assessment Committee meetings to keep minutes and gain an understanding of work of committee.

This meeting represents a transition as three members complete their terms: Damon and Barton are leaving the committee; Hoehner’s term is up, but she has accepted reappointment as representative of the Graduate College and will be returning in October. Ron Crocker from FA&H and Janet Wilke from the Library, at the nomination of their respective deans and subsequent approval from the SVCAASL, will be joining the committee in October. Additionally, Scott Darveau of Faculty Senate was nominated today; Powell will submit this nomination to the SVCAASL for approval.

II. Powell distributed the “Agenda of Activities for Assessment Program,” which was developed after the NCA meeting in May. Powell discussed this document with each college’s dean and chairs council over the course of the summer, receiving positive feedback. After meeting with all four colleges, it is clear there are two areas of emphasis: 1. Alignment: with APR, other accreditation groups, other programs, etc. 2. Budget: interest in idea of faculty stipends for assessment development or refinement.

In general, assessment is gaining increasing campus-wide support. For example: the Administrative Council Retreat sponsored by Faculty Senate requested a presentation on assessment at its meeting in mid-August. Additionally, the primary item in the Chancellor’s report was the need to continue to develop an infrastructure to support assessment.

III. Powell distributed the assessment budget proposal submitted to the SVCAASL on Friday, September 3, 2004, with a brief explanation of each line item. Substantial discussion of item 5; Powell explained that in looking at the money programs spend on assessment, he found that there is an inefficient use of existing money on campus, and would like to develop a more cost efficient cycle, where programs are gathering the same data less frequently and using the money in this line item for additional assessment expenses.

Committee members provided reaction and comments, and Powell encouraged members to e-mail or call him with other ideas or suggestions. Barton asked about the possibility of Pepsi money allocated to assessment.
IV. Powell distributed a proposed work list, which he developed with Cutler and Butler in late August. This work list identifies tasks that the Director, Coordinator, and Web Site Manager will need to complete as part of the process needed to clarify job responsibilities and undertake the implementation of the governance document for assessment. The document was revised in May to reflect Faculty Senate input. It has been forwarded to the SVCAASL. However, final acceptance of the document is pending input that may be provided by the final report from the North Central Accreditation external team visit.

V. Powell briefly discussed sub-committee work for the future since it will not be fulfilling the same role as last year. He gave two possibilities: 1. Review NCA criteria and determine what we need to change. 2. Analyze the second round of annual reports for trends to feed to the data analysis committee (a committee that has been proposed to analyze data and make recommendations to the SVCAASL).

Committee members provided reaction and comments. Wozniak asked what will happen with Strategic Planning. Powell explained that the SVCAASL would like to develop a data analysis committee, which would review data from assessment committee, make decisions based on data, and report to strategic planning committee. Strategic planning is yet undefined, as we are still awaiting the NCA report, which should have arrived by the end of the summer.

VI. Butler reported on Assessment Culture and distributed “Developing an Assessment Culture at UNK.” Developing this culture is essential as UNK moves from resistance to acceptance, and works toward demonstrating to NCA in 4 years that we have made progress. The development of this program is based on research of similar programs at other institutions.

Butler has implemented regular meetings with college/department assessment liaisons, eventually meeting with each once a semester. She is encouraged with the response she is receiving and noted that most of the departments with problems have been contacting her before she gets to them. Additional means of communication are the assessment newsletter, which will debut this month with an article featuring the upcoming IRB meeting on September 23; the assessment website, which is in process; the schedule of assessment activities, which will appear on the website; as well as CTE monthly events related to assessment, including a “brown bag” at the end of the month for faculty interested in doing research in assessment (time and date to be determined).

Because it is becoming clear that faculty are interested in accurate assessment but are unsure how to achieve it, Butler is also focusing on training: seeking funding for faculty attendance at conferences, developing on-campus workshops/seminars, planning a one-day assessment conference at UNK this spring, and facilitating an assessment expo for each department to present its assessment activities.

Attached to the culture handout was a “Levels of Implementation Analysis,” which Butler would like to use to gain a sense of where the organization is, and then use again during the next four years to assess progress.

VII. Cutler has been developing the website, but one of the problems is knowing how to navigate. She handed out packets of index cards for each committee member to categorize and return to her, to help her sort assessment website pages into sections. She will notify the committee of when the website is finished and live. Powell explained that the goal for the website is to make
it an all-purpose information center.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Elliott, Scribe
Mary Barton, Secretary
Glen Powell, Chair