Minutes  
Meeting of the Faculty Senate ad hoc Assessment Committee  
Thursday, October 14, 2004  
Academic Affairs Conference Room (2122), Founder’s Hall 3:30 p.m.

Present: Bishop, Butler, Crocker, Cutler, Elliott, Hodge, Hoehner, Jackowiak, Lomicky, Moore, Powell, Unruh, Wadkins, Wilke, Wozniak

Absent: Van Ingen

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

I. Meeting opened with brief introductions for the benefit of new members.

II. Butler began with a report of the culture of assessment at UNK. In developing the culture, she has been focusing on two things: communication and training, and she is keeping track of what she and Powell have been doing in this regard since the NCA visit.

A. Communication: Powell and Butler have been having meetings with colleges, chairs, and departments. They have been sending e-mail announcements, reminders, and information. The website is being revamped and improved.

B. Training: The Center for Teaching Excellence will host a number of events because of a general feeling on campus that individuals want to do assessment correctly but do not know how to go about it.

In September, CTE hosted its first event regarding assessment to talk about the NCA report. There were 32 participants. Butler and Powell will be keeping track of attendance as evidence of growth of culture for next NCA visit.

October 27, 3:00 p.m.: The next CTE event will be an assessment panel discussion regarding the use of standardized tests both as evaluation of General Studies and within departments and a presentation regarding the procedure for choosing standardized tests that accurately measure department objectives.

November or December: Butler will put a survey online allowing individuals on campus to indicate areas of assessment they feel need the most attention.

December: CTE will host a workshop on developing rubrics.

Butler and Powell agree that they have already seen progress in the development of assessment culture, with the timeliness of report submission in October (most everyone had reports in within 48 hours of October 1, and at this point only a couple are missing, but Butler and Powell are working with those departments), the overall quality of the reports is better than last year’s reports. The initiative many have taken to seek help with measuring and reporting assessment has increased. They encouraged members to keep track of positive actions and report them to Butler or Powell.

III. Powell discussed some of the main points from the NCA report, which he had received since
the last meeting and asked members to review ahead of time. The report gives the committee something concrete to work with, and does not significantly change the plan already proposed. The NCA generally felt there were many good things going on at UNK, and though they singled out four positive activities, the overall response was positive. Their visit in four years is primarily because the current work with assessment should have started in 1997.

Criticism Section: The report highlighted five areas in need of attention and development, which they will focus on in their visit in four years: assessment culture, General Studies assessment administrative infrastructure for assessment, lack of enthusiasm on campus for assessment, and lack of effective coordination or alignment.

Advancement Section: The NCA offered suggestions of areas to develop: putting together an operating budget, building an infrastructure, General Studies assessment, giving some attention to graduate education and continuing education.

IV. Powell distributed a budget, which he has discussed with the SVAACSL who has not officially approved it but is currently looking for the funds. The most significant item is the money set aside for faculty stipends.

V. Powell was pleased to announce that assessment now has a more centrally-located physical presence, as Butler has moved from west campus to Founders.

VI. Powell began writing an analysis in reaction to the NCA report, especially focusing on General Studies, which will be a main focus of assessment efforts this year. He presented this information last week to the General Studies council with ideas to accelerate the process of assessment.

Powell has also started an analysis of the graduate studies programs. His efforts will begin with increasing the visibility of programs to increase accountability. One problem with the graduate programs that makes UNK look inconsistent is that some departments do not have students every year, so they have nothing to assess. To resolve this, he will encourage those departments to report every year whether they have students or not, as a way to document intent.

Powell asked for members to review the analysis and e-mail him with suggestions.

VII. In the next month, Powell will divide the group into two subcommittees. One committee will review department assessment reports for trends in performance and format changes. The second committee will review NCA criteria for 1997 and 2005 to determine areas needing attention for the next NCA visit. Members are to e-mail Powell with their preference so that he can form committees.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Elliott, Scribe
Glen Powell, Chair