Minutes of the Meeting of the Assessment Committee  
Thursday, November 13, 2008 – 3:30 p.m.  
Academic Affairs Conference Room, Founder’s Hall 2147

Present: Jeanne Butler, Greg Anderson, Wayne Briner, Karin Covalt, Ron Crocker, Mary Kommers, George Lawson, and Tami Moore

Absent: Brandon Benitz, Paul Bishop, Aaron Clark, Jessy Hansen and Scott Unruh

The meeting was called to order by Director of Assessment, Jeanne Butler, at the above time and place.

Old Business:

I. Status of 2007-08 Assessment Reports
Only 85% of department assessment reports have been submitted to the Office of Assessment. Several Bruner Hall departments encountered some unexpected disruptions of office space related to the construction that has been going on, so they have been given an extension. A few technical issues have arisen with WEAVEonline, but in most instances, problems have been the result of user error. December 1, 2008 is the final date for all assessment reports to be in to Dr. Butler.

Deans and Associate Deans will be offered training next to facilitate familiarity with WEAVEonline. Some Assessment Committee members have not yet had an opportunity to receive training, so it was decided that training for Committee Members will be held on our next meeting date, December 11, 2008, at 3:30 p.m. in the Mitchell Center of C.T. Ryan Library. Anderson will reserve the Mitchell Center.

New Business:

I. First candidate for SrVCAASL Position – Charles Bicak
Chair Butler asked if any of the Committee members had attended the Open Forum for Charles Bicak. Anderson was there as was Tami Moore. Anderson reported that Dr. Bicak was familiar with TracDAT, the assessment software package that St. Edward’s has purchased for their assessment needs.

Butler explained that TrakDAT is an older system than WEAVEonline, but WEAVE has higher education experience behind its design, and is growing fast in popularity among higher education institutions. UNK considered TrakDAT as a choice for assessment software, but did not feel it was as easy to learn and user friendly. WEAVEonline is user friendly and the support people at WEAVEonline have experience in assessment in higher education so could explain and adapt the software better to UNK’s needs. In addition, the cost for a TrakDAT license is twice the cost of WEAVEonline. Because WEAVEonline hosts the student data, security issues are virtually non-existent, as well.

II. Second candidate for SrVCAASL Position – Martin Tadlock
The second candidate will be on campus next week. Dr. Butler asked that as many of
the Assessment Committee as possible attend the Open Forum for Dr. Tadlock. She has a conflict and will be unable to attend.

III. Questions for candidates
Butler shared three questions for the Committee’s review that could be used at the Open Forums. It was agreed that these questions seem to cover important aspects of assessment, and would assist in determining what the candidates’ views are on assessment.

1. Why is it important to have institution-wide student learning outcomes assessment?
2. What experience have you had overseeing student outcomes assessment at other institutions?
3. Do you have a particular focus for university-wide assessment?

IV. Assessment in Student Life
Butler recently returned from attending a Student Life Assessment Conference in Texas. She and Interim Dean Gail Zeller are working to get Student Life on board with assessment. It is apparent that NCA will expect assessment of student outcomes in Student Life at their 2114 accreditation visit. Student Life must be able to show what students are getting out of SL departments and programs from a learning perspective and how student life experiences contribute to the academic experience of students. For example, the office of Multicultural Affairs sees students increasing their knowledge and experience with other cultures through the interaction of various student cultural groups. Student Life can also use retention data and GPA to demonstrate student outcomes. Last year a new orientation program for freshman integrated student life personnel and faculty to provide a more comprehensive orientation for new students. Butler began training sessions with res life people last month. Dr. Zeller, the interim director of Student Life is very supportive of assessment and is involved in training and working with student life personnel.

V. WEAVEonline upgrades –curriculum mapping
Feedback from Higher Learning Commission stated that curriculum mapping will be required in 2014. WEAVEonline has this capability and in Spring 2009 assessment personnel from each department will be trained on the use of the curriculum mapping function. Curriculum mapping will allow departments to evaluate their current learning objectives to determine where those objectives are actually taught and at what level of learning.

The other important feedback from the HLC was related to GS and that the current program isn’t assessable. In the future, to assess General Studies, students could do a portfolio in the GS capstone course; which would be a more objective and comprehensive way of assessing student learning outcomes rather than having each departments collect GS date using different measures and objectives.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Committee will be December 11 at 3:30 p.m. in the Mitchell Center.