Minutes of the Meeting of the Assessment Committee
Thursday, October 8, 2009 – 3:30 p.m.
Academic Affairs Conference Room, Founder’s Hall 2147

Present: Chair Jeanne Butler, Paul Bishop, Wayne Briner, Karin Covalt, Ron Crocker, Mary Kommers, George Lawson, Janet Lear, Richard Meznarich, Susan Mueller, Keri Pearson, and Scott Unruh

Absent: None

The meeting was called to order by Director of Assessment, Jeanne Butler, at the above time and place. Butler welcomed all members of the Assessment Committee to the first meeting of 2009-10. Several new members had not been able to attend the last meeting, so Chair Butler asked all members to identify themselves and what areas they represented.

New Business:

I. Assessment reports submitted for October 1 deadline

Butler shared a handout showing which departments had met the October 1 deadline for submitting assessment reports. As was discussed in the last committee meeting, departments involved in developing GS courses have been given a deadline extension to November 1, 2009, for filing their assessment reports.

II. General Studies Common Assessments

a. Common rubrics

A set of common GS learning outcomes has been developed by the GS Council with input from faculty and departments. The rubrics used to evaluate these learning outcomes would be related to these GS program level outcomes and the distribution outcomes. A set of common assessment assignments would be given and would be graded using these common rubrics. The rubrics that will be used have been adopted from the AAC&U LEAP project and represent rubrics developed at the national level over an 18-month period with input from numerous higher education institutions. The ultimate goal would be to have faculty be able to input the GS outcomes they are assessing and a rubric could be automatically created that incorporated items associated with those learning outcomes taken from the AAC&U rubrics.

GS assessment data using these common rubrics will be collected in Fall 2010. The data will be included in the NCA report due April 2011.

b. Common assessment items

Examples of common assessment items for the program level GS outcomes and for the distribution outcomes were provided to the committee. These items would be
used in required GS assessments in all GS courses. The same items would have to be used in all the courses being evaluated in a given year.

How to collect the GS assessment data and how often to collect is being considered. Certain courses will be randomly selected to provide data each semester. The same classes will be used only every 2-3 years to reduce the burden of data collection.

UNK also will administer the critical thinking and essay writing portions of the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) test to UNK freshmen and seniors. This standardized test will be given every 2-3 years as a requirement in the portal courses and in the capstone courses to ease logistical issues in administering the test.

III. Future use of GS portfolios for assessment

General Studies portfolios are being considered as an efficient and effective way to collect GS data from each student at UNK. Blackboard has a portfolio function but it is not designed to be easily graded or artifacts shared with reviewers. The common assessment assignments would be put into student portfolios and portfolio projects would be randomly selected for grading using the common rubric. This would allow longitudinal assessment with comparison of a student’s freshmen level proficiency on the GS outcomes and again on their junior or senior level skills on the same outcomes. Grading/scoring would be done from the portfolios rather than requiring the faculty teaching a course to grade all the assignments and submit them for inclusion in the GS assessment. College of Education students currently must have portfolios as part of their program in COE.

IV. Other


There being no further business to come before the Committee, meeting adjourned at 4:24 p.m. The next meeting of the Committee will be Thursday, November 12, in FNDH 2147.