Minutes of the Meeting of the Assessment Committee
Monday, April 1, 2013 – 3:30 p.m.
Academic Affairs Conference Room, Founder’s Hall 2147

Present: Chair Beth Hinga, Karin Covalt, Angela Hollman, Mary Kommers, Janet Lear, Anita Lorentzen, Susan Mueller, Scott Unruh, Stephanie Baer, and Bill Wozniak

Absent: Doug Waterfield, Chris Jochum

Old Business:

I. NSSE.
The NSSE survey at UNK has been completed with a 33.1% response rate. This response rate is comparable to past response rates. The national average is 25%. Students received an initial e-mail and four reminder e-mails. Hinga acknowledged appreciation to all that helped achieve this response rate at UNK, particularly faculty that promoted the survey in their classes as well as student life personnel. We will receive our campus report from NSSE in August.

Chair Hinga asked that any academic area wishing to have a copy of NSSE data please forward their requests to her.

II. Meetings Across Campus.
Hinga has now met with all academic deans and department chairs, as well as the areas of student life, the library, Faculty Senate, and Staff Senate to introduce herself, discuss her views on assessment, answer questions, and offer assistance to them as needed. She plans to meet with Student Senate in the near future.

III. Taskstream License Proposal.
Two handouts were shared with assessment committee members for discussion. One dealt with the article recently published in The Antelope that seemed to show that students reflect a negative opinion of TaskStream. Discussion ensued on how and why this topic has come to the forefront of UNK topics. It seems that a Political Science class is doing a survey on this issue. The writing assignment reporting in Task Stream is easy to use, but the papers being written are for GS classes, not in students' major fields.

The second handout summarized the current status of TaskStream at UNK as well as a tentative proposal for discussion that involves a new $15 student fee per semester for a site license for TaskStream. This would make the software available for all students and eliminate the need for out-of-pocket purchases. It would also remove faculty from their “enforcer” role. There are uses for TaskStream that are not utilized and possibly not understood. ePortfolios are becoming widespread across campuses, but an understanding of their value is an important part of their acceptance. Realizing the total cost to campus, committee members suggested alternatives to a campus-wide site license for TaskStream. If Blackboard or Digital Measures has the functionality, perhaps one of those could be used. Hinga will follow up. Another suggestion was that perhaps CSIS students could develop a program to do assessment data collection for GS as a class project. Hinga will also investigate other ePortfolio software at the upcoming Higher Learning Commission meeting in Chicago with any vendors that happen to be represented there. Perhaps a less expensive but comparable alternative can be found.

Members also discussed the proliferation of specialized pieces of software being used on this campus.
New Business:

I. Assessment Training.
It was the consensus of the committee that it may be best to do training of committee members and training on curriculum mapping may be best done after finals week. Hinga explained that the stipends previously provided for curriculum mapping and TaskStream implementation are no longer available. Curriculum mapping take student learning outcomes and compares them to a set of required measurements. This should not take more than 15 minutes to do, however less than 50% of departments have completed it and posted results to the document management area of WEAVEonline.

Wozniak asked if it would be possible for department assessment coordinators to get some type of release time, maybe one class per year or every two years. Dr. Hinga will follow up to determine if release time or stipends for assessment coordinators might be feasible in the future.

II. Restructuring of Assessment Committee.
The assessment committee will be restructured for next year. The committee will include representatives from each college, student affairs, and the library. Hinga would like committee members to help review annual reports. The reports members will review will be within their respective colleges.

The current committee members were asked to inform Hinga in the near future whether or not each would like to continue on the committee. Wozniak and Kommers will not serve again, and all other members have agreed to another term.

III. Restructuring of Assessment Meetings:
Hinga believes that input make things better. Her style will be to bring pertinent issues to the committee for input and discussion, obtaining various perspectives, thereby making informed assessment decisions backed by the majority of the committee.

Other.

Assessment Reception.
There will not be an Annual Assessment Luncheon this year. However, Director Hinga would like to do a come-and-go reception for coordinators and committee members during finals week. Invitations will be issued in the near future.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m. The next meeting of the Committee will be announced at a later date.