

## **University Assessment Committee**

January 17, 2014

Approved Minutes

**Present:** Sharron Ronco (chair), Patricia Bradford, Marilyn Bratt, Tom Kaczmarek, Noreen Lephardt, Laura MacBride, Michelle Nemer, Toby Peters, John Su, Fred Sutkiewicz, Christine Harris Taylor, Joyce Wolburg, Jean Zanoni.

### **Opening:**

Sharron Ronco called the meeting to order at 9:05AM. Sharron began the meeting with a reflection that included wishes for a successful year for the committee and its members.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

The committee unanimously approved the minutes from the December 6, 2013 meeting. There was a suggestion that minutes of the committee ought to include more details regarding any voting. Sharron Ronco confirmed that the committee ought to adopt that convention.

Sharron welcomed Toby Peters, Director of Student Affairs Assessment, Evaluation and Program Development Student Affairs, to the meeting.

### **Continuing Items:**

As part of the ongoing effort to assess the state of assessment, Sharron Ronco distributed two documents to committee members prior to the meeting.

Because prior discussion in the committee included questions of scope and the possibility of an external review by assessment experts, Sharron met with Gary Meyers, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs and Teaching. Sharron related that Gary Meyers believes that the scope of the University Assessment Committee is assessing academics and that there is no need for outside review.

The committee's discussion focused on the document entitled "Improving Assessment at Marquette University."

Members of the committee indicated that there was significant progress on many items from the document.

- The committee was engaged in assessing assessment,
- The university had improved the level of expertise by adding Sharron as the Director of Assessment,
- The integration of curricular with co-curricular activities was moving forward (as evidenced by the inclusion of a Student Affairs representative on the UAC),
- Report management had been vastly improved,
- We had improved our ability to use reports,
- Existing plans for assessment were audited and improved.

Given the history of HLC reviews at Marquette, a clean report from the recent HLC visit would be further evidence of improvement in the assessment process

The committee asked Sharron Ronco to update the document to reflect the review and the current state of assessment. The revision should include an emphasis on the improvements resulting from ARMS and reinforce the need for this system. The professional development workshops should be another highlight. Sharron agreed to prepare such an update.

Sharron reminded the committee that the original question that prompted the idea of assessing assessment was “What are we going to do to help PALS?”

The committee questioned access to committee minutes. Currently, the committee publishes minutes on its public website. Access to an archive of the minutes could provide continuity and support the PALS efforts to understand the assessment process. Further discussion of public access and a process for creating an archive is required.

Sharron reminded the committee of the suggestion to survey the PALS to generate recommendations or guidelines.

There was a suggestion to look at the concept of a maturity model to guide the PALS in efforts to improve assessment. Such an approach looks for evidence of maturity to rank an organization in a multi-level system of benchmarking, where elements of the best practice are distributed across the levels.

The committee made the following observations:

- The amount of time that the faculty spends talking about assessment could be a sign of maturity.
- Defining changes and using them based on the assessment process also reflects maturity in the assessment process.
- The quality of students can affect the learning outcomes. The question of whether assessment ought to include some process to evaluate the influence of admissions on assessment requires further discussion.
- Maturity models require an understanding of the benchmark.

The chair asked committee members who are familiar with the concept of maturity models to provide background at a future meeting. Noreen Lephardt and Tom Kaczmarek agreed to provide some materials for the February 7, 2014 meeting.

Sharron mentioned that the HLC might have a suggestion to focus on curriculum mapping. The committee was asked, “Should curriculum mapping be required?” There was a discussion about the involvement of the curriculum committee in the mapping process. The committee suggested inviting representatives of the

curriculum committees to join the PALS at an upcoming workshop on curriculum mapping.

Sharron reported that she is planning three assessment workshops for February. Topics will include the assessment of graduate programs, alternative approaches to assessment, and curriculum mapping.

The chair adjourned the meeting at 10:30 AM.