Assessment Committee Meeting Notes

April 15, 2020

Elizabeth made some report and plan template revisions and shared them with the committee for their input. The new and old versions were provided by email prior to the meeting.

Below is some framing and questions the committee considered:

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| **Goals for report revision** | **What I changed in this draft** |
| Communicate about the audience and purpose of the report (make this “assignment” more transparent) | Note added at the top |
| Given the impacts of COVID-19, provide space for programs to document if their assessment work ended up being different than planned this year. | Question about COVID added, near the top of the report  |
| Follow the advice of Linda Suskie to “do all you can to keep reports to a bare bones minimum, and streamline and simplify the process of preparing them” (*Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide*, 3rd ed., p. 163) | Tried to balance ease and flexibility/creativity. Reduced the overall amount of info requested in Q 14 and streamlined visually. Provided checkboxes where possible throughout, to reduce cognitive load of report prep, but also provided space for comments. Added the open, reflective questions on page one. |
| Do a better job of communicating that the process, not just the product, of doing assessment work is valuable (teams have made efforts to improve teaching and learning based on what they’ve learned from the collaborative process itself and not only from the “product” of student achievement results—and this is good) | “Assessment activities” section moved up so that it comes before the section on student achievement results. Questions added about what was learned from activities and if that learning led to any action. |
| Provide space for more holistic reflection on assessment process, practices, development—a way for programs to capture a summary of “where we are” from year to year | Added questions Q #5 and #6 |

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| **Goals for plan revision** | **What I changed in this draft** |
| Follow the advice of Linda Suskie to “do all you can to keep reports to a bare bones minimum, and streamline and simplify the process of preparing them” (*Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide*, 3rd ed., p. 163) | This is a plan not a “report” but the advice might still hold. I shortened and streamlined the template. The previous template walked you through step-by-step the process of planning one assessment—this seemed important when we first started assessment in 2016. I’m thinking that now we can provide that sort of support in worksheet form behind the scenes. |
| Provide space for more holistic reflection on assessment process, practices, development | I added questions #6 and 7 |

**A Note on the format of the report and plan templates**:

We had a brief hope that we could use the Docuware system to create online forms for the assessment report and plans (Docuware is the enterprise management system that was chosen for the College last year). Because we knew a new system was coming, I had held off in previous years on upgrading the report template. The current Word doc situation in okay but awkward. However, when I met with the Docuware folks in the fall, I discovered that Docuware does not allow the person completing a form to save their progress as they go; in other words, you would have to fill it out in one sitting. That was a no-go for me—not user friendly. So, instead, I plan to turn the Word doc into a fillable PDF form. This would still provide benefits compared to Word: 1) You can download responses from a fillable PDF directly into Excel. Right now, I have to manually populate an Excel sheet by paging through all the completed reports and plans. 2) Filling out Word docs is awkward given spacing and fonts, for both the person filling them out and the person reading the result. A fillable PDF provides windows and check boxes that you can fill out with any length of response without messing up the overall formatting.

**My questions for you, dear assessment friends**:

1. What do you think if the revisions I made? Do they meet the revision goals?
2. What do you think of the revision goals?
3. What do you think about having fillable PDFs?
4. Any thoughts about COVID-19 and reporting expectations this year?
5. Any other thoughts?