

Outcomes Committee Meeting Minutes
Friday, September 25, 2009
2:00 p.m. CE 207

Presiding: Kathleen Thatcher, Director Assessment
Present: Megan Graham, Nancy Madura, Ana Thompson, Scott Johnson, Jared Bowden, Renee Griffith, Fred Kuck

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of April Minutes

Jared Bowden moved, Scott Johnson seconded. The minutes of April 2009 were approved as written.

III. Introductions

IV. Announcements

a. Assessment Inventory Survey

b. CCSSE: Spring 2009

Kathy Thatcher CCSSE results have been returned to Casper College. The Commission will host a workshop on using CCSSE data November 17, 2009, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on campus. All Wyoming community colleges will be represented.

c. CAAP: Spring 2010

Kathy Thatcher announced that she will probably add Critical Thinking to the CAAP this spring.

d. WEAVE

Kathy Thatcher explained that there were several reasons for deciding to drop WEAVE. She said she has received feedback from faculty that the program is cumbersome, it changes / updates often, they do not use it often enough to keep up with them and WEAVE makes it difficult for programs to share assessment information. The Deans asked Kathy to stop using WEAVE.

V. Unfinished Business

a. Committee review process

VI. New Business

a. Assessment plan and annual update template(s)

Kathy Thatcher asked the committee for input in developing an alternative to WEAVE. The documents she has shared with faculty so far are meant as a starting point. She would like a document that faculty fill out to develop an assessment plan for their programs that would be implemented over a three to five year period, aligning with Dr. Simone's three year annual department review process. Faculty would list program outcomes and how they plan to measure them and the timeline for implementation, and explain how collected data will be used for curriculum improvement.

In addition to the long-term plan, Kathy would like an annual update document to report on progress and help keep the plan on track. It allows for flexibility because short-term results can suggest changes to make to the broader plan and to the curriculum. The process will not be too intense as faculty will consider only one or two outcomes each year or two and make updates based on those.

Kathy thinks the new assessment templates will make it easier for faculty to share what their programs are doing in assessment in a way that WEAVE did not. She is working with Todd Cotton and Rich Fujita on a webpage within the Assessment pages that will house the assessment plan documents for each program, organized by school. The outcomes committee could periodically review plans and provide feedback to programs.

Kathy also told the committee that all faculty are already doing assessment but are not calling it that. Faculty concerned about unfamiliarity with certain assessment terms will find that their processes are fitting the definition of those terms. The templates will not add work to faculty loads but rather document and create an organized system from what they are already doing. Kathy said she is here to listen to faculty and provide them with resources that compliment what they are doing.

Kathy asked the committee for feedback. Jared Bowden expressed concern that WEAVE had been too top-down in that there was not much room for course level assessment. The committee wondered if the new templates were geared toward course level assessment. Kathy said that they are specifically for program level assessment because an assessment plan is typically implemented at the program level. She said assessment plans do include information from core courses. Ideally course level outcomes tie back into program level outcomes.

Committee members stated that they believe that if they are successful at the classroom level, then programs will be successful, and that most faculty are more concerned about where they are failing or succeeding at the course level. Kathy said that some information is gathered at the core course level and then aggregated at the program level.

The committee expressed concern about whether or not assessment data would actually be used for anything. Kathy noted that besides assessment, data could be used for marketing and retention, etc. She also said that all the data that was in WEAVE has been saved and has been sent to the deans of all the schools.

Nancy Madura noted that art courses are project driven and project outcomes are accumulative and measured according to specific rubrics. She wondered how that approach meshes with the college assessment plan. Kathy answered that tracking and measuring cumulative progress over the course of two years constitutes an assessment plan because the end result of the process is that an art student finishes the program with the skills necessary to be successful.

Jared Bowden pointed out that many classes taught at Casper College compliment programs outside of their original department as electives or Gen Ed requirements and it is difficult to

assess them from a program level perspective. Ana Thompson suggested some type worksheet or form for evaluating how a class fits into various programs.

b. Course evaluations

Kathy Thatcher is putting together a committee to discuss and revamp faculty evaluations by students. Most faculty say the only valuable information gained from the current evaluations comes from the open-ended questions. The online course evaluations are different than the classroom evaluations. They should both be the same. Melanie Young, Mike Moline and Marty Finch are already on the committee. Kathy asked for volunteers from the outcomes committee and Renee Griffith and Nancy Madura volunteered.

c. Mission statement of the committee

VII. Other

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m. The next meeting is Friday, October 30, 2:00 p.m., CE 207.