Campus Assessment Network

Notes from Meeting of
October 4, 2012

The meeting of the Campus Assessment Network (CAN) was held Thursday, October 4, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. in Adams Hall B13.

Welcome and Introductions

Members were introduced and thanked for their attendance.

Members present: Angela Branson, Evelyn Comber, Crystal Doyle, David Gorman, Brian Lance, Victoria Livingston, Sherrill Morris, Jarvis Purnell, Deborah Robertson and Carrie Zack.

Direction of the Group

Morris talked about the direction of the group. She mentioned that there would be four meetings this year and how the structure of the meetings would go. She told the group that if anyone has any suggestions of a book for our book discussion to please let her know. The group was also informed that if anyone had any assessment or agenda ideas that they could email her with that information as well.

Discussion Topic

Best practices in influencing faculty, staff and administrators to see assessment as a powerful and valuable tool for their own purposes rather than a dirty word associated with external pressures.

Zack informed the group that a lot of changes were happening in teacher certification due to the Illinois State Board of Education making changes. Zack thought it would be good to help people understand that assessment can help their department and not be just a burden.

Zack talked about some of the changes that were happening in teacher certification and how it is a mandate but people are still very hesitant about it and aren’t really working with it. Eventually they will need to make the change and there is no way getting around it.

Livingston shared a tool that has worked for her in the past. She suggested having peers talk to other peers about assessment and why and how it has worked for them. She did say that that tool has worked with some people and groups but not all of them. Livingston mentioned that it might be good to have someone from a department where assessment has worked for them, attend a meeting to describe how it benefited them and their department.

The question was asked where do we start in a college. Do we start at the bottom and work our way up to the Dean or start with the Dean and work our way down. What part of the college and/or department do we start with?
Purnell said that maybe we should focus on how people use their results. Highlight areas of colleges and departments who have used the results and how they were successful with them.

Zack said that some sort of communication on what various departments are doing for assessment, workshops, faculty development, etc. would be nice. The Office of Assessment Services or someone else could maybe send that out. It would let people know what is available at the department level. Maybe also look to see what other colleges/departments do and how we can help other people in the college/department try and get it.

Robertson suggested that we get someone from every department to understand it and then have them be the one to explain it to the rest of the department.

Livingston suggested that we make an assessment mentor database. She said the database could contain names of “experts” in certain assessment areas who would be willing to help out other departments trying to use the same type of assessment tools.

Lance said some departments and people might be reluctant to share reports/information on a website because they may not want other schools/departments to know what they are and aren’t doing.

Morris asked the group if we wanted to put some of these ideas in motion and act on anything that we have discussed. She also asked the group how the Office of Assessment Services can be a resource and a collaborative.

Lance suggested that a survey be created and sent out to everyone at the university. The survey should ask some questions like “what areas of assessment do you need”, “how are we doing”, “how can we help” and “what would you like us to do or see us offer”.

Gorman wondered if we could even distribute the survey until after HLC was done. Many departments are so busy with that would they even take the time to fill out the survey and return it.

Lance said to still send the survey out but make it an informal survey and not hound people to turn it in.

Morris suggested that maybe adding questions to a HLC survey that she needs to send out might be a good idea. The group disused that option and decided it would be best to do our own survey.

The group decided that we would come back with question suggestions at the next CAN meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.