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UAP Meeting
Friday, January 18, 2019
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Altgeld 315

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Present: Abendroth, Arado, Ballantine, Brain, Carter, Coley, Comber, Cripe, Douglass, Ferdowsi, Gipson, Hathaway, Hogan, Holtz, Joung, Osorio, Siblik, Subramony and Zack

Guests: Judy Chitwood, Professor, School of Theatre and Dance; Richard Siegesmund, Professor, School of Art and Design and Katharina Barbe, Chair, Department of World Languages and Cultures

1. Announcements
   - Carrie Zack will be starting the position of Associate Director at Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation in the Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation office.
   - There has been an ongoing assessment project in the College of Education:
     - A template has been created that merges AAU/UAP reporting with licensure accreditation.
     - Relevant units will now only write one report each year, instead of two. The feedback they receive will help them with both processes.
     - The UAP will receive a presentation about this template within a few sessions.
   - A change in the UAP template will emphasize the curriculum map.
     - If changed soon, then programs for the 2019-2020 UAP will receive the updated rubric during April orientation.
     - Next UAP, a draft of this updated rubric will be provided for review.
   - The Mission, Vision, and Values Revision Group had some updates.
     - During two meetings, the group decided to start with core Values and work up to the overall Mission. They currently have a draft, and next week they will formalize the Vision and Values.
     - Then, they will be posted to a website (which currently hosts information such as their timeline), where feedback will be solicited from the community at large.
     - The exact language is still being wordsmithed, but there is a desire to capture NIU's uniquely important character (e.g., involving inclusion/diversity and social mobility) in addition to collegiate universals (e.g., teaching, research, service).

2. Review of Assessment Plans and Status Reports
- B.F.A. in Theatre Arts – Assessment Plan and Status Report
  - Judy Chitwood, Professor, School of Theatre and Dance was in attendance to discuss the report
  - Overall, there's an impressive amount of contact and feedback between faculty/students
  - The faculty know what they're looking for in performance, and ideally that would be better-conveyed through the SLOs.

- The accrediting body, NAST, may convey standards that could inform the SLOs (and could help differentiate this program from Dance Performance, which is accredited by NASD).
- The guest conveyed that the recently-hired 4th full-time faculty will help to distinguish the two programs.
- Overall, it seems like many important parts of the program are there, but they just are not assessed yet.
- The rubrics provided in appendices don't clarify how faculty choose between ratings of student performance. Currently, it seems to be based on subjective judgment.
- The Student Self-Assessment Method has a target based on a completion rate; it would be ideal to instead base the target on how students are anticipated to respond.
- It looks like the Methods generate a lot of important, informative data. However, the potential depth of information is not reflected in the current reporting. It would be interesting to observe student feedback and faculty feedback together (e.g., do students' attitudes change as faculty feedback reflects better performance from the student?).
- The program conveyed that a lot of reporting is done in the AAU reports. The UAP encouraged the program to reuse that content in the UAP Status Report (with any necessary updates).
- AAE offered to help the program with a consultation that would convey what other similar programs are doing.

- B.F.A. in Dance Performance – Assessment Plan and Status Report
  - Judy Chitwood, Professor, School of Theatre and Dance was in attendance to discuss the report.
  - Due to similarities between the Theatre Arts and Dance Performance programs, some feedback from the former applies to the latter.
  - One of the similarities between programs is the wording of SLOs.
  - Some of the SLOs are holistic and capture multiple aspects of the program (e.g., auditions, collaborations). It would be ideal to ensure that each SLO conveys an important aspect of your program.
  - Given the large amount of data collected by the program, it may be appropriate to identify themes from the qualitative feedback of some Methods.
  - In addition to presenting averages for data, it would be helpful to indicate how many students met the target thresholds for each Method.
  - It will be helpful to disaggregate data and consider use of results according to each SLO.

- B.S.Ed. in Art and Design Education – Assessment Plan and Status Report
  - John Siblik, Chair, School of Art and Design and Richard Siegesmund, Professor, School of Art and Design were in attendance to discuss the report.
  - The program conveyed that their faculty recently developed a better understanding of assessment with a retreat. Additionally, this program is typically thought of in terms of licensure requirements (instead of degree requirements), so B.S.Ed. students and M.S.Ed. students are sometimes considered in tandem.

- The current SLOs are broad, but subsume a lot of individual details. It seems like many different things would be assessed by the same SLO (and it might be difficult to find suitable Methods that encompass an entire SLO).
- Some SLOs focus on specific skills (e.g., knowledge, competence, communication), and not what students actually do. It may be helpful to use the phrase "students will demonstrate…" for these skills.
- When choosing how to word SLOs, keep in mind that some accrediting standards do not lend themselves directly to measurable language; the program may need to paraphrase.
- The Methods are well-defined. The UAP noted that most Methods seemed to occur late in the program, but the program clarified that students are only in the program for a short time (usually 2.5 years). The program may consider producing assessments from earlier classes, with the courses 344 and 345 being mentioned specifically. The UAP advised against relying on overall course grades as an assessment Method, given that many factors external to student learning can influence grades.
- The program noted that they were recently approved to hire a program advisor (which had formerly been synonymous with student advisor). They anticipate that their assessment efforts will be bolstered by this.
- Regarding the edTPA, the students' performance was noted to be phenomenal. However, reporting by an average does not directly address whether students met the program's targets. It would be helpful to convey how many students met the threshold set by the program.

- B.A. in World Languages and Cultures – Assessment Plan and Status Report
  - Katharina Barbe, Chair, Department of World Languages and Cultures was in attendance to discuss the report.
  - The program iterated that they recently reorganized. Due to student interest, their curriculum began emphasizing culture and translation. Regarding their assessment efforts, the program had a new committee with many good ideas, but they experienced difficulty with operationalizing those ideas. Regarding the status report, the program's data are based on old SLOs (but their new SLOs are in the assessment plan).
  - The UAP iterated that simply having an assessment committee and faculty buy-in is wonderful, because some programs only have one individual coordinating their assessment.
  - The program's SLOs had some language that was not conducive to measurement (e.g., understanding, proficiency), but at least some part of each SLO tended to convey measurable skills (e.g., reading, speaking, developing a compelling argument).
  - It seems like some student-level targets weren't stated accurately in the assessment plan. In some instances, it seemed like the program treated student-level targets as "lower-level" than program-level targets (e.g., student-level were written for 300-level students whereas program-level were written for 400-level students). For the exit questionnaire Method, no targets were provided.
  - Only indirect Methods are used for SLO #3 (involving speaking). It would be ideal for the program to consider using a direct Method that actually captures students' performance with speaking (the program mentioned potentially using a Method from course 311).

- The UAP was slightly confused by the "Goal" rubrics that preceded the presentation of results for each SLO. The rubric criteria often did not match the criteria used for the visualization of results for each Method.
- The status report contained a lot of Methods, and they were all presented very well! The UAP noted that the program does not necessarily need to change at a high level for each trend observed in the data.

3. Other Business

4. Adjourn

Next meeting Friday, February 1, 2019, 10:00 a.m. in Altgeld 315