

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PANEL

February 7, 2020

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Altgeld 203

Minutes

Present: Arado, Barrett, Comber, Cripe, Doyle, Ferdowsi, Gipson, Grahovec, Hathaway, Jaekel, Joung, Lagana, Osorio, Santuzzi, Setterstrom, Subramony, Zack.

Guests: Mansour Tahernezehadi, Senior Associate Dean, College of Engineering and Engineering Technology; Abul Azad, Associate Dean, College of Engineering and Engineering Technology; Amanda Durik, Chair, Department of Psychology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Christine Malecki, Professor, Department of Psychology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Sandy Lopez, Coordinator for Undocumented Student Support, Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

1. Ritu Subramony opened the meeting.

- a. Subramony announced Carolinda Douglass will not be in attendance.
- b. Subramony briefly reviewed the agenda.
- c. Everyone introduced themselves by stating their name and department.
- d. Subramony gave more detail on the University Assessment Panel (UAP) for the guests.
 - i. The committee meets twice a month to provide peer review feedback to assessment plans and the plans being presented.
 - ii. There are different perspectives since everyone in the room comes from different disciplines and colleges. We are trying to bring the best assessment practice to our colleagues so that we can have that discussion. Anything mentioned to you today is worth looking at from different perspectives.
 - iii. It is this discussion that Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation (AAE) will consolidate and send to you. If the program decides to make changes, they are welcome to send AAE the finalized version.
 - iv. UAP's focus is always to help Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and assessment of those, so that programs can build up their plan from year-to-year to the time that mid-status comes and then the Program Review (PR).

2. Announcements

- a. Subramony asked if there were any other announcements.
 - i. Tawanda Gipson clarified that the plan, not the details or results, goes on our (AAE) website. If you have changes, you can send us that finalized version.

3. Review of Assessment Plans and Status Reports

- a. The first plan the committee has today is the Proposed B.S. in Civil and Environmental Engineering.
 - i. Subramony stated it is an assessment plan only. We are using the Academic Degree Program Rubric to evaluate and provide feedback.
 - ii. Subramony opened it to the engineering representatives.
 - iii. Mansour Tahernezehadi from the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology (CEET) provided the committee background.

1. This new program came from our university wide initiative to establish a center for community sustainability.
 - a. In academic alignment with that center, the leadership inside and outside the college were of the mindset to establish a program that would serve our students for trying to recruit as well as retain the best talent.
 - i. This is relative to the mission of the center.
 - b. The campus wide group consists of faculty members from geological sciences, environmental, geography, public health, as well as our department – mechanical engineering, industrial systems, and technology.
2. We explored the best practices in the field of environmental engineering.
 - a. We examined the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Northwestern University, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Stanford University.
 - b. We tried to develop a curriculum that is respectful of our assets at the university.
 - i. This includes intellectual faculty assets and resources, such as laboratories, to bring a unification of our assets and a high level of synergy among the different talents and skillsets across all of our departments.
 - c. We are trying to introduce another avenue of university collaboration between science and engineering faculty.
3. We devised a competitive curriculum.
 - a. It consists of 127 to 128 hours depending on which emphasis a student pursues.
 - b. There are two emphases within the curriculum: water resources and energy systems.
4. We designed the curriculum under the CIP Code of civil engineering because under the CIP Code of civil engineering, we could also intertwine environmental.
5. There are two practices nationwide that have two different CIP Codes – one for civil and environmental.
6. We think giving one under civil is more encompassing in terms of accommodating environment.
 - a. Thus, enabling the degree program as civil and environmental engineering.
 - b. Our assets are mostly aligned with environmental engineering.
7. In alignment with that CIP Code, the first two to two and a half years are pretty much identical. In year three or four, we have a bifurcated strategy towards environmental engineering and our courses become more specialized.
8. We have two emphasis under environmental engineering: water resources and energy systems.
 - a. Within those two emphasis, we have required courses and elective courses.

- b. The required courses basically have a civil engineering designation.
 - c. If students are taking elective courses, they might not be able to get some of the assessment treatment.
 - i. This is the rationale for having only the required courses.
 - 9. We are very hopeful that we will be able to offer this program by having joint faculty hiring between engineering and geological sciences to do more justice to our assessment plan. And then assessment is very strong component within the college.
 - 10. CEET has accredited programs.
 - a. Every six years we go through accreditation.
 - b. We had our last accreditation back in 2016.
 - c. The college was established in 1986 and we got our first accreditation in 1989.
 - d. Assessment is an integral part of our exercise.
 - i. Every department has their own assessment committee.
 - ii. We have an ABET assessment at the college level with our Undergraduate Associate Dean.
 - iii. As part of the assessment plan for UAP, we also try to ensure we are aligned with ABET assessment.
 - 1. Dual effort since everyone's time is very precious.
 - e. Every six years we go through accreditation.
 - f. The college was established in 1986 and we got our first accreditation in 1989.
 - g. We had our last accreditation in 2016.
 - 11. Tahernezehadi asked if there were any questions.
- iv. Subramony thanked Tahernezehadi.
 - 1. That was very comprehensive.
 - 2. She thanked CEET for using the correct rubrics and the template.
 - a. In the past, engineering has been using different templates.
 - b. Hopefully this was helpful for CEET.
 - 3. She then directed the conversation to the SLOs. Does anyone have an opening comment about them? Tahernezehadi said these are replying on ABET standards, so they are similar to many of the other degree programs that we have seen.
- v. Zack said being from AAE and hosting all the SLOs from all of our programs on our website, she noticed the SLOs are basically the same for this program as for several other of the engineering programs.
 - a. Would it be a consideration to distinguish this program in terms of outcomes from other programs by adding SLOs or modifying some of them to indicate some content knowledge or that might be different in this program compared to different others?
 - b. Are there different types of frameworks or calculations students need to master?

- i. That might be specified in the outcomes.
- 2. Tahernezehadi said this was a very good question. In the past, there used to be eleven SLOs, but starting in 2017, they receded to seven. It is very possessive for engineering departments to be respectful of the SLOs, since this is how the assessment plan is instigated from ABET. The level and intensity of the SLOs that are listed vary from program to program.
 - a. Problem formulation may be enjoying the same level of intensity across all engineering.
 - b. Data analysis may be more pronounced in environmental engineering as opposed to electrical or mechanical engineering.
 - i. This is because they have a lot more data analysis and so forth compared to other engineering programs.
 - c. Learning and applying new knowledge is also common across all of the engineering programs.
 - i. Students have to learn on a constant basis.
 - ii. It is a fast paced field in terms of newest field sets required for students to make themselves marketable.
 - d. Ethics is also maybe more strong in civil and environmental.
 - i. People's health and lives are involved when designing a bridge, water treatment system, and energy distribution system.
 - ii. Ethics enjoys a higher level of respect in civil and environmental engineering.
 - e. For this program, students must have licensures within the state to practice.
 - i. For electrical and mechanical engineering, they can get away with it. For civil and environmental engineering, they must be licensed engineers.
- vi. Subramony said a concrete suggestion involves ethics. If you believe this is at a deeper level, then maybe change some of the language.
 - a. Instead of an "ability to recognize", include something that is more in depth.
 - b. Whether it is "apply" or "analyze" or to the level that you are speaking the program is going to address.
 - c. Some of those verbs right now are just language, but it actually might indicate what you are trying to do.
- 2. Tahernezehadi asked if they should try to make it more specific to the field.
- 3. Subramony said this was her second point – to make it more specific to the field. Instead of defining what problem formation is as an "ability to", we could say "students of this degree program, we are expecting them to do these things, perform these behaviors, and show these competencies as best as they can to be demonstrated." Does anyone else want to add anything else to this or the discussion?

- a. Someone contributed that they think of differentiation on how this program is described through its SLOs that would make it different from others.
 - i. SLO 1, 2, 4, and 6 have engineering specific differentiation. Whereas 3, 5, and 7 could be better identified.
 - ii. If there is a requirement or an expectation from accreditations that there is language from the program that needs to be here, perhaps a simple grid that says this is what the ABET standards are, their SLOs, and here is how they translate to the NIU differentiated approach. By doing this, you could delve in a little deeper.
 - iii. One of the questions I had was on communication. Is it written communication, verbal communication, or presenting?
 - iv. Are there specific communication goals the program is hoping to develop based on either strengths or areas for growth to see your students develop further or profession?
4. Subramony asked if there were any more comments or suggestions for discussion.
5. Subramony directed the group towards talking about the curriculum map.
 - i. This is a new section we added in the rubric were they are talking about the SLOs as it is addressed in the curriculum map and how each SLOs is assessed or covered through multiple factors, different courses, and different experiences.
 - ii. Subramony asked if anyone have any comments on this.
- b. Someone asked if Subramony was looking at the formative assessment or the qualitative assessment? They do not have a formative assessment in the table.
- c. Subramony opened it up for discussion about the curriculum map or the matrix as well as the assessment methods.
 - i. Someone said they had a question about the curriculum map. Do students take the courses in that order? For example, do students take CEE 340 ahead of CEE 350? Do they take CEE 381 after CEE 463? Please reference page 4.
 - ii. Tahernezehadi said CEE 330 is going to be a prerequisite for CEE 331.
 - iii. She asked is this the order of how the students will progress through the program.
 - iv. Tahernezehadi said this was correct for the most part.
- d. Subramony said acknowledged the core courses and required courses lined up to the SLOs. When looking at this map, is

there a redundancy in the courses. For example, problem formulation, we have got a lot of P's.

- i. Are there too many courses still mapping onto that same problem formulation?
 1. If so, do we need to say that it is developing to the highest level?
 2. Why would I as a student want to sit through all these courses if I am going to be learning very similar things unless the level is different?
- ii. Tahernezehadi asked if Subramony was suggesting a few represented courses and then ascending order from beginning to proficient level.
- iii. Subramony said no. For example, she is questioning if CEE 350 is across the board for all LOs. At a proficient level, it is addressing all of these LOs.
- iv. Tahernezehadi said yes. CEE 350 has different content compared to let's say CEE 331.
 1. Students have to get into the nitty gritty of design, so it demands a different set of problem formulation as opposed to structural engineering.
 2. There is a different level of mindset when it comes to problem formulation, design, data collection, and so forth.
- e. Brad Cripe indicated it might be helpful for the committee and college to think about defining the construct of what they are getting, developing, and define proficiency as.
 - i. It might be helpful for the committee to think about asking the departments to define the construct.
 - ii. Once we know what they define proficient and develop as, we can better provide advice.
- f. Someone responded, that is why I asked if this is how students progress through this. If we had this information, we could better conceptualize.
- g. Zack said because the SLOs encompass so much, each of those aspects are developed and become proficient in different courses. It seems like that might be what is causing us to have a hard time.
 - i. Normally, if we have a more granular SLO, we are tracking across the curriculum, we would expect to see proficiency in one or two courses. The rest of the time they are developing it because it is only one narrow skill or set of knowledge.
 - ii. It sounds like this is broader, and that might be why we are seeing all of these P's here.
- h. Subramony said, if you just want to highlight 1, 2, 3, or 4 LOs that are most salient in that particular course, we could probably just look at that.

- i. Tahernezehadi asked if he should find the construct.
- j. Subramony agreed. A lot of times, we do not particularly see every course mapping onto every LOs.
 - i. To your point Katie, they tend to build on each other. That's at least how we design them. Does anyone else want to add anything else to the curriculum map matrix discussion?
- k. Someone said they read that differently.
 - i. Are there different ethical considerations for each of those classes? For example, if one is a systems engineering idea and another is structural, there are going to be different ethical considerations.
 - ii. Maybe say that there is proficiency and actual mechanicals in design material, but now there is a developing in ethics involving how this impacts the environment, culture, or people.
- l. Tahernezehadi said that ethics is the core of engineering.
 - i. Engineers put products in consumer's hands and design bridges, systems, and so forth.
 - ii. Water and design exercise have ethics is at the core of it.
 - iii. When you get to the more design focused courses, for instance 331 and upward, ethics should be at a proficient level.
- m. Subramony said we are talking about LO and what ethics is supposed to be saying.
 - i. There will be some wordsmithing on your end, it will not just be an ability to recognize. Instead, consider if this is an ability to recognize, apply, and analyze in different situations across different contexts.
- n. Subramony and Gipson mentioned there is probably another way to think of it.
 - i. When the courses line up in the curricular maps, it indicates they are heavily loaded on these particular SLOs; ideally you should be able to go into any of these courses then and pull out an assessment method.
- o. Tahernezehadi asked when it comes to the data collection; it should demonstrate the assessment aspect?
- p. Subramony said it should be helpful to you.
 - i. For assessment methods, we are going to that last section in terms of how plans are written. It was really nice.
 - ii. It is very comprehensive, and it covered the competencies and the SLOs. The coverage is really fantastic.
 - iii. Moving to assessment methods, are there any suggestions?

- q. Someone questioned, in terms of the professional licensure exams, does CEET get feedback from those on whether previous students have passed or not?
 - i. If they have, that is a wonderful assessment method to identify where the deficiencies are and where your program is exceling.
 - ii. If you are just getting passing and failing information, it is not really informative in terms of where the deficiencies may be in the program.
- r. Someone commented in regards to teamwork.
 - 1. In the College of Business, that is one of learning goals (LG) at a college level. That is something we struggle with assessing too.
 - ii. Tahernezhadi said it is going to be part of the examination itself at the state level. The design may require a team of engineers from different disciplines to address this design.
 - iii. Previous person continued talking.
 - 1. He indicated his concern then is, as long as you are getting individual feedback on where one excels versus where one does not, then this is a great assessment method.
 - 2. If you are not getting this information, then it might not be very helpful.
 - 3. For example, with teamwork, if someone does not pass a particular licensure exam, it might not be great feedback.
 - iv. Tahernezhadi said as a society for professional engineering at a state level and at a national level, we can go to them to get this kind of feedback.
 - v. Previous person said that this seems like a great source of information. Hearing this report and feedback you are getting, the reader can see this and say that it is a great source for assessment.
- s. Subramony asked if there were any other comments.
- t. Someone said Tahernezhadi did a really great job stating what has been done with the program. They wanted more information the timeline though.
- u. Subramony brought up ethics again. For SLO on ethics, were might that be assessed in a targeted profession?
 - i. It is seen in CEE 350 – the course business assessment question. You have done a wonderful job saying here are the three things we look for in that question. It is formulating the real-world problems, it is using the data, and they are writing the conclusions. I am not seeing though where the ethics part is being addressed.

- ii. Is there some other part to that question that might be addressing it?
 - iii. If not, do we need to look for some other assessments that really target the ethics for example in this case?
- v. Tahernezhadhi said that this is a really good question. The way he justified in his mind for this assessment matrix was that ethics is embedded.
 - i. If you wanted to have more explicit statement in regards to professional ethics, we can have a statement on this.
- w. Subramony said she thinks this is a really good idea. This is a nice summative way of understanding, and externally too, that students are able to show that capacity and competency.
 - i. For the program, if they wanted in a couple of years to say how are our students doing, could there be some way of assessing in terms of these ethical problems for teaching to happen?
- x. Tahernezhadhi said that there is a series of capstone projects where ethics is a component of that. We actually do ethics assessments in those classes.
- y. Subramony said it would be a nice gauge of how our students are doing.
 - i. If in this course they are not doing so wonderfully or are doing really well, what are likely the next steps as they go through the curriculum?
 - ii. That is typically how we have tried to look at assessment.
- z. Subramony asked if there were other questions about the assessment.
- aa. Gipson said for the passing rates for the licensures, the goal is to demonstrate the specifics.
 - i. We look at the outcomes separately.
 - ii. Instead of just saying they passed, what did they learn?
 - iii. The overall pass and fail we try to steer clear of when we are looking at the LO.
 - iv. Similarly, for the percentage of students gaining admission into a graduate program, that is also a really important program LO.
- bb. Subramony said in terms of ABET language, this is a really good measure to see how our students are doing and where they are going.
 - i. For the assessment plan, we should also focus on the SLOs of what we want our students to be able to do, how they can think, how they behave, and what they will do once they are out of this degree program.

- ii. These are good evaluator measures, but you want to focus on the SLO as well.
 - cc. Someone said they noted the graduation survey, but they wanted to know if there could be an alumni survey and a survey from their employers.
 - dd. Tahernezhadhi said that they do those for ABET.
 - ee. Subramony said it is an exciting, interdisciplinary program. We are very hopeful for the success of this program and we hope that the feedback we are trying to provide you will be nothing but helpful when you try to do the program. When is this expected to start?
 - ff. Tahernezhadhi said the Provost and Dean are having conversations right now on the Committee Services Program.
 - i. The original target was fall 2020 to start if we can go through the Illinois Board of Higher Education and our Board of Trustees.
 - ii. It also depends on agreement between the Provost and the Dean as well as the resources they are willing to commit.
 - iii. It may be late because human resources says there is nothing available. Then we would go fall 2021.
 - gg. Subramony said they wish them good luck. Is there anyone that wants to add anything else to the assessment plan? If not, we want to thank you for being here today.
- b. The second plan the committee has today is the Proposed Specialist in School Psychology.
 - i. Subramony opened the discussion.
 1. This is an unusual program because it has really been in existence for a long time, but now we are looking for an actual separate degree program.
 2. She asked if either of the psychology representatives had anything to say about the program.
 - ii. Amanda Durik said she will defer to Christine Malecki – the Program Director.
 - iii. Malecki indicated Subramony said the main thing she would comment on.
 1. This is a degree for an existing program that has been around, accredited, and approved by a variety of different governing bodies that oversee the program.
 2. For a variety of reasons, it is in our students’ best interest to have this culminating degree be at the end of the program versus being a “Masters plus thirty” credits.
 3. This puts students in a position after graduation where they are no longer degree seeking program.
 - a. This caused a variety of problems that became worse overtime.
 - b. Having this degree also puts us in line with other programs in the state that are direct competitors.

- iv. Subramony said she will open the floor to anyone who wants to start from SLO comments, suggestions for improvements, or strengths noticed.
- v. Someone commented that they would have some minor revisions on wording for some of the SLOs.
 - 1. For example, SLO 2: “students will demonstrate a foundational knowledge”, it might be better as: “students can explain the foundation knowledge.”
 - 2. Try to use some of the higher level LO verbs.
- vi. Someone said the SLOs stack a lot off of each other. Maybe try to use some of those words to make sure we recognize they build. Remove “demonstrate” and focus on what are some of those measurement words that illustrate the learning? Whether it is explain or describe.
- vii. Someone asked, with SLO 3 and 4, the term “systems”, does this stand in for the idea of school psychology, school systems, or students systems with teacher systems? Maybe describing that would also help differentiate those two and be more specific to the programs.
- viii. Cripe said it comes down to the definition of “construct”. When we do not know what construct means, then we do not know what the demonstration level is.
 - 1. When I think of demonstrating the competency at the graduate level, it is much more intense than the demonstrating competency at the undergraduate level.
 - 2. When I understand what competency means, then I can know what demonstrating means. It is a verb that can be appropriate for the master’s level.
- ix. Zack directed the conversation back to SLO 2.
 - 1. There is a lot in here.
 - 2. She is guessing because the measure they are leaning on here is that content test.
 - 3. It would be helpful to either give some of those separate areas some of their own SLOs or break them out within number two as sub elements so that it is clear one is looking at those individually.
 - 4. She is guessing they are probably getting information from that test that will tell you how well they do in ethics versus assessment.
 - 5. These are two very different things.
- x. Subramony reiterated by saying try to keep the ethics law professional issues as its own because there is a lot of assessment and intervention that has been covered in other places.
- xi. Someone questioned SLO 5.
 - 1. It says a student is prepared.
 - 2. Will this be an outcome?
- xii. Subramony asked the psychology representatives if that sounds like an outcome as opposed to a SLO.
 - 1. Maybe reword it to emphasize how the research will be applied, if that is what they are looking for.
- xiii. Subramony emphasized we have to change the language maybe.
 - 1. When they are looking at the SLOs, they want to know that they will be able to learn and apply this immediately as a practitioner.

2. Does anyone have any suggestions on how this could be rewarded?
- xiv. Zack said she had a suggestion. There seems to be two aspects to SLO 5.
 1. If I am reading this correctly, there is synthesize and design research in being consumers and producers of research. To me, that sounds like I can read and understand these articles that are on existing research, and I can also design my own study.
 2. Those might be two separate aspects that can be broken apart and specified that students are able to do.
 3. They can read and get something from existing research as well as be able to do whatever it is they need to be able to do to design their own.
 - xv. Subramony asked how the committee would relate that to the first part.
 1. They will be prepared to function as entry level school psychologists who can do these things.
 2. Are we hearing people say they would be prepared to apply the synthesis and design of research studies in the school psych setting?
 - xvi. Gipson said maybe move that to the end.
 - xvii. Someone reiterated this idea.
 1. Put this phrase at the end and focus on the two aspects of what they need to do with research.
 - xviii. Gipson said one other thing someone else mentioned is it is helpful to see a little bit of methods in SLOs.
 1. With organization, it helps while writing the plan.
 2. She is sure this was very helpful to have this here.
 3. Now that the methods have been done, you might want to remove it for the consumer.
 - xix. Subramony asked if there were other comments on the SLOs. If not, let's talk about the curriculum map and assessment methods together.
 - xx. Someone said they think the targets are very high, and they caution them.
 - xxi. Durik or Malecki said we just had our interview day yesterday.
 1. We have candidates from all over the country, and we spend the entire day with them.
 2. We get 100%; we are selecting at the upfront.
 3. On average, we are selecting four to five candidates each year for this program.
 4. If they do not pass the test, they cannot practice as a school psychologist. They would fail in every possible way if they were not able to pass the test.
 5. Someone added a suggestion with this. How many of your students received first time versus any point in time in passing? They need to pass this in order to do their job.
 - xxii. Durik or Malecki said first time every time to this date. If they have made it to the point where they are taking this test in the program.
 - xxiii. Subramony clarified: we are looking at a program that has very strong selection criteria. You are hearing suggestions from peers based on what they have seen other programs do. However, to your program, if that is what makes sense, then that is what you should stick with.

- xxiv. Durik or Malecki said I like that wiggle room. This test gets revamped every couple of years. That is always scary when candidates take the revised test for the first time. That will allow that wiggle room if students need to do the retake.
- xxv. Subramony agreed that this was a very good suggestion.
 - 1. This is kind of backwards.
 - 2. Usually, the committee is saying please inch your targets higher.
 - 3. We are trying to tell you to have some wiggle room.
- xxvi. Zack thinks that is a great comment Katie said generally about being cautious of 100%.
 - 1. Knowing the program and thinking about this with aspiration compared to being afraid of not meeting the set target, I would support keeping it at 100% because that is what you are aiming for.
 - 2. We cannot be so afraid to set a high target.
- xxvii. Cripe countered this. Consider another point of view. If your expectation is perfection, perhaps your expectation is too low.
 - 1. When his faculty hit 100% consistently on their targets, I go to them and say your expectation is too low. And it may not be. But I wanted to give you an external perception on 100% and what it mean to me.
- xxviii. Zack agreed and said generally that would be a good thing to say, but given this is a licensure test, they cannot raise the bar. It is a moot point with this.
- xxix. Gipson added that we should think of this from a SLO perspective.
 - 1. SLO 2 is packed since it had a lot of content in it.
 - 2. If you were to look years later at the results of the report and see 100% of the students met the target, what does that tell you?
 - 3. Because one student might have met the target. However, they were average at one of the objectives in SLO 2 since there is so much. But they still met the target. This does not tell the program what to do next in terms of their SLOs.
- xxx. Subramony said in some areas, 100% makes sense as the best. In other areas and other methods, is there room to build some wiggle room?
 - 1. It is a program that needs to consider what makes sense.
- xxxi. Durik or Malecki said based on this discussion, SLO 2 would maybe be proposed to focus on the ethics of law piece – professional issues piece. The foundational knowledge of those are embedded in SLO 3, 4, and 5 because you need a foundational knowledge to be able to apply that knowledge.
 - 1. We can focus on ethics and actually add our competence exam that does have retakes sometimes in terms of the ethics and law pieces they are reading any synthesizing.
- xxxii. Someone commented that one of the questions they had is that this is essential to the program.
 - 1. It is something you are going to be doing regardless.
 - 2. You brought up a really good point that when there are changes to the exam, we need to be aware how those are impacting the results.
 - 3. Perhaps this is a method that is done periodically because as I read this, it is less of a method to me and more of a data point.

4. If it is something that year and after year after year you have this long support for being at 100%, then maybe you should ask what is it that we need to focus on that we do not know about our program yet.
 5. Or, unpacking that to look at how there are differences in performance based on what we know of the candidate's preparation. They are scoring high on the test, but are there areas where we are seeing they could progress better, and can we get a pulse on how we can make progress towards that.
- xxxiii. Someone commented in regards to Cripe's comment. If we set the high standard to 100%, but just looking at the curricular map, there is a lot of developing. There is not a lot of proficient. The standards are really high but it seems like the program is not really developing proficiency along the way?
- xxxiv. Durik or Malecki commented that this was interesting during the engineering discussion.
1. There are several assessment courses, so I was thinking in each of those courses it is developing cognitive assessment, then academic assessment, then another course is social emotional assessment. I thought about specific areas of assessment; I could say they develop it in this course better, but proficient makes me nervous until they get to the end.
- xxxv. Subramony thought the assessment plan and the assessment methods were extremely well defined.
1. She asked if there could be some course embedded assessments. Would it be useful?
 2. In first and second semester, is there something that is a pretty big group project, individual project, or some assignment in the classroom that would give you the pulse for what they might need next?
 3. There is always going to be some case or exception. Could you potentially consider this and would it be useful?
- xxxvi. Durik or Malecki said she thinks all of the SLOs would be able to do this, and they are required to.
- xxxvii. Someone commented that for SLO 1 they did not see the assessment method for that one. This sells the program short.
- xxxviii. Cripe said his final thought on this is if we have a metric were we have below meets the needs of completion, and we are never able to since our target is 100% to meet expectations, then our measurement tool is flawed.
1. If you cannot load into an exceeded expectations category, then your method of assessment does not meet or exceed or is qualified by the definition.
 2. If you need to add something as well, so that this is our second tool.
 3. You are evaluating something, if you cannot achieve a certain measurement of the evaluation, then the evaluation itself must be redone.
- xxxix. Zack brought up SLO 5 and how there are two parts – consuming and designing research.

1. She was looking at the two methods that get at SLO 5, and she could not figure out where the survey or the research design was in either of those.
2. It is because it is somewhere in the portfolio.
- xl. Durik or Malecki said they might not be explicitly. That might not have pointed to the right items in the portfolio tool.
- xli. Subramony said when we are looking at the actual assessment tools, it might be nice to mention research design then there as well.
- xlii. Zack also said if SLO 5 were broken down into two parts, such as 5a and 5b, then looking at an instrument in which you rate them might make it clear on what part of it they are demonstrating.
- xliii. Durik or Malecki confirmed this is only required for Ph.D. candidates only.
 1. She was looking at 6b.
 2. At the end, the pieces of evidence demonstrating impact are embedded in case studies doing single case design.
 3. This is when they are designing and implementing research into practice.
 4. For the students in this program, these are the ones that would probably point to for the part two which is the design.
- xliv. Subramony indicated that overall she thought it was done very well in many aspects compared to how many assessment plans they have seen. This might be because the program is already in existence so there was a lot of data.
- xlv. Gipson said she wanted to share a comment from a person who could not make the meeting – the tools are well developed.
 1. Gipson and Subramony also agrees with this comment as well.
 2. Subramony said it was great psychology included the rubrics as well.
- xlvi. Someone else also commented that this relates to what Zack said.
 1. An assessment plan is put together to identify what your goals are for your students and your program.
 2. At one level it is aspirational. It is setting the expectation that we want to support all of our students; we want to have a curriculum that supports all of our students to certain levels.
 3. On the other end to reflect back on evaluation and program, I hear your point that it would be really good whether you meet or exceed expectations.
 4. I do not have a solid working understanding of the process of assessment in terms of understanding the components of those two goals.
 5. It seems like at this point, there is a departure/ from the goal for the students and the program versus the goal for evaluation.
- xlvii. Subramony said the assessment is going to roll into evaluation overall. We are looking at such a granular portion of your entire program. However, in the trenches, we know we want to graduate students and we want them to go be practitioners.
- c. The third plan the committee has today is the Undocumented Student Services – Assessment Plan only.
 - i. Subramony said this is a different template since this is an academic support template. As you are aware it takes some switching around in terms of how

we think about things. SLOs are still important but sometimes they may or may not be directly relevant to the programs that are coming up.

- ii. Sandy Lopez said it was important to note the history of how her office came to be.
 1. Allies got together in 2009 to support the undocumented peers since they saw there was a need for them to stand up and advocate because the students were afraid to come out and share their status.
 2. It began with student allies and then documented students started organizing stuff.
 3. That is when we started seeing a lot of change on campus.
 - a. They were doing a lot of the heavy lifting as far as training faculty and staff, creating a handbook for undocumented students, having immigration workshops.
 - b. They were doing all of this as a student organization.
 4. I came on as an advisor the year after it was formed and I was housed in the Latino center.
 5. Because I was there, they kept pushing saying we need a person to be dedicated to this and to help support us because we don't know what we are doing.
 6. They had been advocating for themselves and doing a lot of heavy lifting themselves, such as school, jobs, and families.
 7. They also were very adamant that there was a position created outside of the Latino center which was very forward thinking of them.
 8. Since my office has come into existence, I have had students from over 14 countries represented.
 - a. They saw there were not students coming to the center because they didn't see themselves fitting into that space.
 9. They are very much involved with all of the ally trainings we do because they know the importance of countering the myths out there and the power of the collective narrative that they share.
 10. This helps to dispel the narratives that exist.
 11. They are also very active when it comes to lapping Springfield and creating change.
 - a. With my help and with the office, we have been able to go to Springfield to advocate.
 - b. They were part of the team that helped pass 14 laws in the state of Illinois that were immigrant threatening.
 - c. One of them was in particular the Rise Act, which helped them receive institutional aid and apply for an alternate form of the MAP funding, which is called the Rise Application.
 12. What you see is how much work it takes and involved and why this office was so necessary.
 13. Again, the students had been very adamant and they said they want to be involved in the process, but it is not really fair to put that burden onto them.

14. My position has been evolving, since it is very busy. With the immigration laws and the current state now, there is a need for this office more than ever.
- iii. Subramony thanked the representative for that introduction. She opened the floor for comments.
- iv. Someone asked how many people are involved in the program staff.
- v. Lopez said it is only her.
 1. She now has a GA, a student worker, and a volunteer this semester.
 2. They do not track their undocumented students, but there is roughly 250.
 3. There are a lot of students who come as a recruitment.
 4. Our students go out to high schools and community colleges and we see a lot of students during the year trying to recruit to NIU.
- vi. Someone said one of the things she is wondering is that there is a needs assessment done that she has at the office.
 1. She wonders if some of this information can be added to the plan.
 2. She thinks there are some clear connections with the STEM goals that can be made in this part because she thinks this office's mission is credible and she does not want anyone to realize this.
 3. She acknowledges that they do a lot more than they say they are doing. Lopez thinks she is understating herself. You do some undocumented ally stuff that maps really well.
- vii. Subramony echoed what Katie said.
 1. Add more to the history and content section.
 2. In addition to the STEM, you are also part of the ADEI.
 3. Their mission goals become your mission goals and how you are aligning with those.
 4. There are two things happening here:
 - a. We are talking about all the activities and actions and things you are doing, such as the operations of the program, and you are looking at how successful those activities are.
 - b. Second, you are looking at the overarching what are the program goals. Those things that came out as the program goals were the student engagement for this population, the supports for this population, and then the success.
 5. If you can keep these three as the outcomes for what your program is trying to do, then everything else is the operations and how well you are successful.
- viii. Lopez said in addition to not only these students, but all of our huskies, we are going to classrooms – sociology, geology, future educator classes, and we do a training of how to support undocumented students.
 1. It not just our students that are benefitting from this program and this office.
 2. It is all of the huskies as well as the community colleges in the surrounding area.
- ix. Subramony asked if there were comments about the mission goals or objectives.
- x. Someone said that Goal 3 and 4 look similar.

- xi. Lopez said they are going to look at them and it was one of the notes she had.
- xii. Subramony asked if there were other comments.
- xiii. Someone said really working with a lot of the support units to put the students first literally into the goals to be able to say that the students will be able to achieve “x” based on what is provided by undocumented student support helps to clarify those three areas you identified to get at what students are achieving versus the operational aspects of the unit.
- xiv. Subramony said if this will work for you then this is fine.
 - 1. When we go to the assessment method, we realize we are looking at the success of the actions and the activities.
 - 2. This is different from the overall arching goal.
- xv. Subramony directed the conversation to assessment methods. She asked if anyone had any comments or suggestions.
- xvi. Someone said other methods they could add involve the trainings, the different classrooms and the different needs.
 - 1. At first, she was really taken with the assessment level target.
 - 2. She wondered if there is a little bit of contextualization we can do.
 - 3. While they are sort of seemingly low, we also have to realize that this is inherently about student development.
 - a. These students are often concerned, scarred, and ashamed.
 - b. These mediate why these are 20%, 30%.
 - c. If we maybe contextualize about this a little bit, that might make sense why they are what they are.
- xvii. Someone said the first thing that jumped off to her when she saw this was how one even gets the students.
- xviii. Lopez said that some students are open and willing to share.
 - 1. They have an event were they tell the entire campus they are undocumented.
 - 2. There are times when we have a spectrum of students were they are a certain way about cheering their status and how unafraid they are about it.
 - 3. That is why these numbers are not as high as I think most people would want them to be. I knew we would run into those variations.
- xix. Zack said reading through the targets that are about what percentage response rates, in those instances I wondered if that is really an assessment method or more of an information gathering to inform what you are going to do.
 - 1. I wondered if that was not just misclassified.
 - 2. Usually, when I think of an assessment method that is going to tell you how well you are doing something.
 - 3. Maybe some of those will start out as informing and later it will be an assessment method.
- xx. Lopez said we want to survey the students to see are they benefitting from the services we are providing.
- xxi. Zack said when it becomes more of a reflection of now we have a reasonable sample and we want to start a target, then that would be the target then.

- xxii. Cripe said they are also in an environment where there is a lot of variables that impact your students' willingness to engage this behavior.
 - 1. To come out, if that changes, then your assessment part may have to adjust.
 - 2. This is completely out of your control.
 - 3. When I looked at that, I had no concern with the numbers, I thought to myself how much of the targeted will be revoked.
 - 4. That might need to be mentioned. Things tend to shift overtime.
- xxiii. Someone commented would we be able to track participation as a measure. One of your measures is faculty and staff and students. This will be a control variable and an assessment.
- xxiv. Someone said it is difficult because you cannot capture the students themselves, but she wishes there was a way to reflect the outgrowth of the success you are doing.
 - 1. When the legislation happens, it is hard to draw a direct line there and it is not that you are doing this for the glory of it so you can put some gold stars on your door for.
 - 2. But at the same time, it is something that your efforts have helped to produce.
 - 3. I do not know how to capture that and I hate that part of the story is not in here since it is so important.
- xxv. Lopez agreed and said one of the biggest things was students were a part of the legislation with Bob Pritchard who is now the Board of Trustees.
 - 1. He was the only republican cosponsor of this.
 - 2. He voted yes on the visitor's driver's license because of the students going to Springfield.
 - 3. When he left, they asked him why he changed, and he said because of the conversations they had. You impacted that decision for me.
 - 4. I do not know how or where one puts that into an assessment piece, but there is so much that does happen because of them.
- xxvi. Someone commented so there are other ways to get that information out and make sure you are garnering the support.
- xxvii. Subramony said she hopes you get support from your peers for your efforts you are putting forth.
 - 1. If you have any ideas where the other colleges or departments can help you, I think this is a good body to start with.
 - 2. You can reach out to people sitting at this table since they are so generously offering their help anyways.
- xxviii. Subramony asked if there were any other comments or suggestions for Sandy.

4. Annual Assessment Updated Report: Summary of Multi-Year Trends Across Academic Degree Programs

- a. AAE wanted to present a summary of three years of annual assessment updates.
- b. We reach out to degree programs and every program provides an assessment to us. We provide feedback back to them.
- c. The idea of this annual assessment is to build up to when they come to the UAP with their mid-status report, which then they will go onto PR.

- d. There are changes in the PR format already. I am sure Carolinda will reach out to you in regards to this.
- e. In respect to who does PR or where, we are mandated to have PRs. The assessment updated will always be an important part of that.
- f. AAE staff – primarily Gipson, Zack, and the GA staff – have produced three year report. Subramony asked them to walk us through it.
 - i. The end goal is as panel members to get feedback and suggestions on what we can do, what you can do, and what your suggestions might be.
- g. Zack started the presentation.
 - i. The purpose of annual assessment updates is to provide an annual space for programs to show us they are collecting their data on SLOs and using this assessment data to report on their findings and how they are using it to improve their programs in any way.
 - ii. This is also a time where they can get feedback on their program, assessment practices on an annual basis in between their higher stakes: mid-status reports.
- h. Subramony said our regional accreditor – the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) – requires us to assess SLOs of each program. They also ask us to make sure we have processes that involve faculty in the continuous quality improvement efforts in our operations.
- i. Zack went over the rubric they use.
 - i. Every year, we ask programs to report on two SLOs on an annual basis.
 - ii. We want them to make sure they are looking at different SLOs.
 - iii. We used to ask them to report on two methods, but we have shifted since we really want them to focus on the SLOs.
 - iv. They do these reports and go through each of the sections that you see in the UAP report basically.
 - v. They tell us what SLOs they are doing, they tell how they are assessing these, and then they give us their data and how they used it.
 - vi. Then we have a rubric we use that looks similar to ones you see.
 - 1. It is broken down into SLOs, assessment methods, reporting results, decisions, actions, and usefulness of results.
 - 2. They have boxes just like you normally see.
 - vii. When we get to the data table, we have provided measures that are not partial.
 - viii. We give that report feedback back to them through Blackboard so that they can decide to use this feedback to decide during their mid-status reports if they want to modify their SLOs, assessment methods, or need to report their data differently.
- j. Zack echoed what Subramony previously said about the rubric.
 - i. The point of this table is it starts from 2003, 2004 to the present.
 - ii. It shows how many programs have submitted reports to our office.
 - iii. It also shows how many active programs we potentially could have been receiving reports from.
 - iv. Then it shows a percentage calculation about participation on an annual basis.
 - v. In 2003-2004, the very first year this was done, only 78% of programs submitted reports.

- vi. Over years, it's gone to 100% and has had some fluctuations over the years.
 - vii. In recent years, 2013-2014 was the last year we have 100% participation.
 - viii. Since then, it has been a slight decline to the most recent year 2018-2019 where there was 92% participation.
- k. Zack indicated one of the main things they want to address today feedback wise is figuring out how they can get back to nearly 100% participation. They want to hear from every program on an annual basis.
- l. Someone asked if there is a systematic trend, such as what programs are not coming back?
- i. Subramony said they have some data on that.
 - ii. Subramony said the last three years she has been with this office they have gone down.
 - iii. Someone asked if the numbers of programs change.
 - iv. Subramony said it fluctuates, but also, we have not had the staff in the office we previously had. There also has been a lot of turbulence in the programs as well, such as moving Chairs and people who actually completes the report. Most of the time, there is a disconnect and miscommunication within programs as to who completed the report. There are certain programs we have shown that need to come back.
- m. Gipson said the next part is a change from previous years.
- i. Since there is three years, they decided to aggregate the data.
 - ii. They collected three years of data for each program and aggregated this.
 - iii. More information is on the website for everyone to see details on particular programs.
 - iv. Most programs are meeting a two, which is meeting standards. It is difficult to get a three since you have to have a three for three years in a row for each category. Keep in mind though, some programs we have three years but some are only one or two years.
 - v. Subramony defined the scale for these key indicators:
 - 1 = not at all
 - 2 = partial
 - 3 = completely
 - vi. Zack said they have highlighted the 3's there. There are a few colleges that have done well such as law and engineering.
 - vii. Carrie discussed SLOs about being student learning focused.
 - 1. This is overall very high across the university.
 - 2. In contrast, we see slightly lower numbers in the assessment methods.
 - a. For example, the assessment methods area, all three of their items related to those of clearly describing the methods, having appropriate assessment methods, and stating the student program level targets.
 - b. All these numbers are close together.
 - c. In other areas, such as reporting results, they had lower averages on the dates they collected the data.
 - d. In terms of aggregating the data in meaningful ways, this was much lower for obvious reasons.
 - viii. Zack now discussed strengths and areas for overall improvement.

1. The strengths and opportunities are broken out for each under the umbrella categories.
2. One of the conclusions was seeing a lot of similar comments from our office across the three years.
3. We want to figure out how to encourage programs to use the feedback they are getting to improve what they are doing and improve the quality of information they are getting.
4. In terms of SLOs, programs are generally doing really well on focusing on student learning and targeting higher levels of this, but they need more help on using measurable verbs. This includes using language that helps demonstrate what students are doing to demonstrate the knowledge or skills. Also, specifying what successful performance looks like.
5. The assessment methods are doing quite well on using appropriate methods that lineup with what knowledge and skills they are looking for.
 - a. Using methods that provide data specific to SLOs where they can develop a little more.
 - b. This is an area where we do not have a specific item on the rubric where we say make sure your assessment methods are going to be able to provide this data.
 - c. We are making comments in this area because one of the aspects that makes sense to us in terms of being appropriate is it is able to give you data in the next section, which is being able to disaggregate the data based on SLO.
 - d. Sometimes, they address multiple skills or multiple SLOs, and if they just have a score or something that gives us a holistic view of how they are doing on an assignment but not how they are doing on particular knowledge or skills, then it is not going to be as informative as areas need attention or not.
 - i. Those two feed into each other.
6. A strength under reporting result is that all the other things we asked the programs for, we usually have no issue getting this information, such as the date they collected the data, the sample size, and their targets at the student level and program level.
7. In the decisions, actions, and use of results, we are seeing identifying and planning program improvement is something programs are actually doing.
 - a. On the other hand, the connection between what they tell us they are doing and the data presented does not line up.
 - b. Sometimes, a program improvement action will be something that makes sense that they want to improve, but they do not base it based on the data they give us.
 - c. They are not tying it back to data on a specific SLO.
 - d. Maybe they have trouble doing that since they do not have the data reported on SLO.

- e. That also relates to that other point that there is an opportunity for improvement which is triangulating data across sources.
 - i. This means that you are focusing in on the SLO and you are not focusing in on the assessment method.
 - ii. You are pulling it all together and trying to make sense of all of that.
 - f. One of the things we have done recently is restricting the report. We asked programs to put down their SLO data together here and give us a conclusion that looks at all of these sources. This is one of the things we are looking at in terms of an area of improvement.
8. Subramony said we should wrap up so we can get the committee's thoughts and suggestions.
 9. Zack indicated the three main questions they have for the committee.
 - a. How can we encourage programs to use this as an opportunity for improvement when getting their feedback on their annual reports?
 - b. Any ideas of how to increase submission rates for annual reports?
 - c. As members of this panel, do you have suggestions for enhancing SLO at the college or department level?
 10. Subramony thanked them for putting the report together. It is going to be available on the website.
 - a. When we do the annual assessment updates, there is a great assumption that the person who submits the report to us is getting the feedback in Blackboard, accessing the feedback, and assume that person is a proxy for the program.
 - b. The trends are showing that the colleges with teacher licensures or accreditation tend to do better. Typically, HHS, COB, CEE tend to be better.
 - c. It is also a 3 point scale which is hard to do anything with.
 - d. As you give suggestions, think about these things too.
 - i. Do people really look at the feedback we provide?
 - ii. Or do they not look at it until it is time for them to submit their report. We are not convinced they are.
 11. Cripe said we have an external accreditation body.
 - a. We are focused like laser beams on this external accreditation body. If it tell us jump, we jump.
 - b. I put together all these reports for this committee over the summer.
 - c. Any comment that was made in this committee that was not addressed by my external accrediting body was not gone over because we are not going to anything to upset those people.
 - d. When I check my feedback after every meeting, I was asked what our external accreditation body said about that.
 - i. They were silent. The people that I report to said then we are fine.

- ii. I want to give you that. I am not discounting what you are saying and I do not discount the feedback I get here at all.
 - iii. What I am saying is that there is such a powerful force externally.
 - e. On our website we have that we are AASB accredited. We cannot lose that. That is the issue. We are so focused on that, that somehow this committee needs to align itself with that body in order for it to get its concerns heard in a way that motivates change.
12. Subramony said that this makes sense.
- a. At the university level, this is going to be a very important component moving forward.
 - b. If you have not heard already, the process of PR that is looked at by APC is now being taken back by the colleges.
 - i. With that happening, every college is going to have its own process of how it wants to do PR, which up until now, it has been separate.
 - ii. Once they do that, there are just a few questions at the end that need to provide to the IBHE.
 - iii. One of the things that is going to happen here is that if your college or program is accredited externally then you do not need to go through the long process of PR which is what Provost Ingram would like to move forward with in that direction.
 - c. Some accreditors give very critical feedback, but some accreditors give just very high level feedback.
 - i. They may/not give you the targeted feedback on the assessment systems.
 - d. HLC on the other hand when they come, they will say what is your PR process, where are the SLOs, now what happens.
13. Cripe said it was very good feedback that he got that he took back. He reiterated what Subramony said – it is balancing.
14. Subramony said what does the committee have in terms of reflection, suggestions from what you are hearing?
15. Someone asked if there is a penalty for not submitting this assessment. Maybe people would submit it then.
- i. She said she finds it hard to understand that there are some programs not submitting it. The feedback should be discussed at meetings. We have to sit together and discuss this.
 - b. Carrie and Subramony said that this is encouraging.
 - c. Subramony said that we see the differences from the different colleges but at the university level it is overall very good.
 - d. Someone commented if your program is accredited it makes a very big difference.
 - i. Subramony agreed.
16. Subramony asked about the panel.

- a. How does the committee see their responsibility in what they do and what they want us to do?
 - b. Is there something that the members here can do to assist in this effort?
 - c. She thinks it will become even more important now with the change to PR being localized.
17. Someone asked Subramony if there is a college level curricular and assessment committee. She is wondering what the structure is in any other colleges.
- a. This is a good time to articulate this for any programs that do have accreditation with this change of not having PR.
 - b. As a member of this panel, if there is a college assessment committee, a member of this panel being on it as a liaison might help strengthen that relationship.
18. Someone said she was thinking about this and she just started this year on this panel. One thing that struck her was the spirit of evaluating.
- a. People are scared to come over here.
 - b. Part of it is they are coming in and they are very on the defensive side.
 - c. Maybe a secondary use of the committee is to actually make advocates of us out of this by actually working with them on the assessment plan.
 - d. Then, we can be a person on their side in this room when presenting.
 - e. Psychologically coming into this meeting, they might be more comfortable and appreciate the nature of this experience more.
19. Subramony asked the committee what they thought about this.
20. Someone said it sounds like more work.
21. She agreed but said it establishes a better relationship.
22. Subramony said her office takes everyone's feedback and condenses it into one document. They try not to be super heavy. A lot of time psychologically, Subramony and Zack feel like they have become the assessment panel since they have been writing the reports and it is not true. It is faculty that understand the different programs.
23. Cripe said this is a very good committee.
- a. He agrees that it can be a help to our colleges to tell them this is a process of improvement, collaboration, consideration.
 - b. This is a wise move. No one has left here crying. Getting our name out there and telling people is a collaborative, supportive process helps people see the value of the information that you provide.
 - c. We are better because of this work you give us.
24. Subramony said and that is this committee. This is from these members that create this.

25. Subramony asked if there are one or two things that everyone can think of to go back to your respective colleges and departments that you could do immediately since we are discussing this.
26. Someone asked what kind of actions Subramony was looking for.
 - a. Maybe consider being advocates, discuss UAP.
 - b. Subramony asked if they need to reach out to the person who writes the annual assessment updates.
 - c. We assume the department chair is proxy to this.
 - d. Do you write back to your department chair or to the person who writes the report?
27. Zack said she thinks both, but she mentioned this was a first year thing.
28. Someone said, they are trying to retrofit things they do for accreditation in a way to say let me appease this process and still use the data as we normally do.
 - a. If there is a way to make it clear that this process can fit into existing processes, so that they can understand this is a piece that would naturally fit in.
29. Subramony said it was an important point.
 - a. If that is what you are picking up, that is important.
 - b. Maybe it means truly behind the scenes and showing them that no one is going to ask them to change their standards.
You just contextualize this to your program and your degree.
30. They said if they actually start moving towards being faculty advocates and development that is something we can work interpersonally into conversations.
31. Carrie said if you think of any other suggestions, please email us or bring it to the next meeting.

5. Other Business

6. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

Next meeting Friday, February 21, 2020 10:00 a.m. in Altgeld 315