

# UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PANEL

February 21, 2020

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Altgeld 315

## MINUTES

**Present** Arado, Barrett, Brain, Douglass, Ferdowski, Gipson, Grahovec, Jaekel, Joung, Osorio, Setterstrom, Subramony, Zack

**Guests** Michelle Bringas, Director, Asian American Resource Center; Anne Marie Edwards, Director, Center for Black Studies; Joseph Flynn, Associate Director of Academic Affairs, Center for Black Studies; Molly Holmes, Director, Gender and Sexuality Resource Center; Luis Santos-Rivas, Director, Latino Resource Center

### **1. Announcements**

- a. Carolinda Douglass opened the meeting and asked everyone to go around the room for introductions.
- b. Everyone stated their name and department.
- c. Douglass explained the consultative feedback nature of the committee to the guests.
- d. Ritu Subramony thanked committee members for the last meeting. There was valuable, great points about certain concepts for academic degree programs. This is important as we prepare for orientation next year.

### **2. Review of Assessment Plans and Status Reports**

- a. Center for Black Studies – Assessment Plan and Status Report
  1. Anne Marie Edwards, Director, Center for Black Studies and Joseph Flynn, Associate Director of Academic Affairs, Center for Black Studies attended to discuss the report.
  - ii. Edwards said this is her first time doing assessment on campus in general and for the center.
    1. She wanted to combine the academic center and student support under one umbrella.
    2. They have not done a UAP panel in about seven years prior to today's committee meeting.
    3. They are interested in learning from the feedback to see how they can grow.
  - iii. Douglass asked Edwards how long she has been in her role.
    1. Two years.
  - iv. Flynn confirmed there was a long gap between these assessment reports. They had to look back to see what was going on, and then they had to look forward to the future while writing this report.
  - v. Douglass opened the conversation to the history and content.
    1. She said she likes the crosswalk.
    2. She also found it interesting that the center was part of interdisciplinary studies. It was interesting that it started this way.
    3. Flynn confirmed that this gives the center a home in CLAS.
  - vi. Douglass directed the conversation to mission, goals, and objectives.

1. With goal 1, objective 1.1, should the assessment method be reworded to observe the academic achievement? It seems that the method does not relate to the target.
2. Douglass expanded that if there is a rubric used here, it would help to be included. It is not specific enough, and it sounds like an activity right now or operations the way it is worded currently; does not seem like an outcome.
3. Subramony said SLO 5 is what they are trying to say here with the level of performance. In some way, there is some impact. Again, the objectives seem like procedures or processes. It is extremely important to break the larger SLO into objectives that are measurable. The assessment should be about the outcomes the program is trying to achieve.
4. It is important to identify what the goal is and determine if students got what we wanted them to take away from the program. You need to be able to determine if this is happening.
5. They did implement a survey. The academic piece can be a little more difficult. It can be difficult depending on how long students are here in terms of years. Surveys are difficult to do after every program they have.
6. With the minor, we are trying to determine if students are engaging with the ideas. What we have is fine, but we need to add a part two to our objectives, so there is something clear and measurable.
7. It's not that you need to add; if they are doing this in their capstone class, that is okay.
8. Douglass emphasized you might already be doing it, you just are not including it in the plan.
9. Subramony said it is easy to indicate how many students are doing the minor over time. When focusing so much on the operations, sometimes we forget to include what the impact was. This is the important question to consider.
10. Douglass mentioned goal 3, with objective 3.4 you could assess the value to students and faculty. You can mention the continuous improvement of the collection that you have.
11. Usage can sometimes lead to getting more funds. If you have data that people want these resources, it can really help.
12. They do have a policy in place to track this, but it is about whether people are utilizing this procedure or not.
13. Douglass asked what is happening to those people who participate?
  - a. They are taking a different route to how they look at how they support black women, for example. It is to increase awareness of the issues impacting them instead of having a specific program.
14. Subramony asked when looking at goal 2, would it make sense to review this in terms of what you want to achieve?
15. Douglass emphasized what is the impact on the broader culture and society? We want everyone to attend and learn about these topics.

- a. It is really hard to determine for the entire community. We can speak to a very targeted population. But, it depends where people are coming from. People start at very different points, which results in very different outcomes. We get our information at the end of these.
- 16. One of the covert goals is they want to increase the diversity of the flow coming through their doors. They are unsure how other centers think about it, but there are entire populations that do not come through their doors for anything. It is a challenge to increase the numbers of people coming and to expand this community so that there is intercultural learning. This is something they are very concerned with, but they do not know if they are ready to have this as a stated goal. They do not want this goal to fail.
  - a. Douglass said this is an interesting perspective, but she understands the balance. She understands the importance of wanting to serve their targeted group, but also wanting to reach out to others within the larger community.
- 17. Is this not the view of college students anymore of attending the majority of events on campus?
  - a. The students have changed in their perspective. The politics of the nation have changed drastically over the last twenty years. People do not want to have their ideas challenged. It is not a blanket statement, but it is a larger trend. It is not a pure liberal arts education. They do not know how much more they can do to recruit diverse students. A part of this challenge is the way the current politics have shaped the environment. Looking at the age distribution, many of us when we went to college were interested in the education and experience because the title seemed interesting. Over the last few decades, higher education has become more about social mobility and credentials. Part of the purpose of the university is new ideas and being challenged. A lot of students do not want this anymore.
  - b. Career success starts here. We are saying we are here for a job, not a liberal arts education. Higher education has gone this way.
  - c. We talk a lot about students, but our faculty and staff are the same way as well operating in silos. Most of the programs at our center are open for all, but the amount of faculty and staff is less than the student engagement. There is a student piece, and a fear about learning about black issues. We do not necessarily talk about them in this way. We have to acknowledge that there is a fear learning about culture. How do we break this to get others to want to learn about diversity?
  - d. Subramony brought up goal 2 again. You need to communicate these things we just previously discussed in your goals because it is powerful.

- vii. Douglass directed the conversation to assessment methods.
    - 1. On page 11, most of the methods are indirect rather than direct. Can you add more direct methods?
      - a. One of the guests agreed to this. This might naturally play out once they make revisions based on the current feedback they have already received.
  - viii. Douglass directed the conversation to the results.
    - 1. Douglass noted there are a number of places where they are still collecting data which is okay.
    - 2. Subramony said she found the information about the programs useful. Might it be better to focus on certain goals rather than have so many objectives? Currently, you have so many objectives, which will make assessment overwhelming.
    - 3. The objective needs to be directly connected to the goal so that the assessment methods can collect data on these.
    - 4. Carrie Zack said there are probably a lot of things you are doing that can contribute to one of your goals. All of those things can contribute to what it is you are doing.
      - a. So streamlining this?
        - i. Correct.
    - 5. Tawanda Gipson said usually she makes suggestions about goals being too specific. Here, she thinks there are too many methods, and this is a lot for your office to constantly be doing. It might be a lot to sustain for your office.
    - 6. Subramony commented this is a lot of rich information.
    - 7. Gipson added to check for typos.
    - 8. Is there a timeline on revisions?
      - a. Douglass said no, but we want to have the most recent revision at any point.
  - ix. Douglass directed the conversation to decisions, actions, and user results.
    - 1. There were no comments from the committee.
  - x. Douglass asked the guests if they had any questions for the committee.
    - 1. The guests said no.
- b. Asian American Resource Center – Assessment Plan and Status Report
- 1. Michelle Bringas, Director, Asian American Resource Center attended to discuss the report.
    - ii. Michelle Bringas brought some additional handouts.
  - iii. Bringas provided a brief introduction.
    - 1. She has not been to UAP since 2015, and she was excited about the feedback received.
    - 2. Most of the feedback concerned streamlining.
    - 3. As a result, they revamped and realigned the outcomes. They realigned everything they do with the center under six core elements.
    - 4. There are also mentors now.
    - 5. The center has also gone under a major transformation since their last UAP meeting in 2015. They had a change in resources from moving center locations.

6. Now they are able to provide Ohana nights directly in their center.
- iv. Douglass asked about the Ohana nights. Do you get students that are not Asian American?
  1. Bringas said this was a challenge for her at first since she was the only fulltime person working for the center. They decided once a month to take the education into the classroom. They had a great connection with the Department of World Languages and Cultures, the Honors Program, and the Business Passport Program. These have been the most effective ways to connect with students that are not Asian American. They also started doing mini workshops with other departments on how to work with Asian American students.
- v. Douglass opened the conversation to history and context.
  1. Subramony asked if they have any graduate students?
    - a. Yes, the number of Graduate Assistantships (GA) have grown, but this has been a struggle for them. The resources for getting GA's has been tough. The number varies each year. Currently, the center has two GAs.
  2. Subramony asked if they also have graduate level students participating in the program.
    - a. 99% of the students the center attracts are undergraduate students.
- vi. Douglass directed the conversation to mission, goals, and objectives.
  1. It says you are interested in measuring persistence with retention type data on page 10.
  2. As far as the retention, and since it speaks to what the UAP asked them to do last time, they have been trying to measure first-year student retention compared to NIU data. Their numbers have increased since the cohort they started to focus on started to impact the overall retention of Asian Americans.
- vii. Douglass directed the conversation to assessment methods.
  1. Douglass said there are many methods included here. This can be hard to keep up with the sustainability of it. Most of them are done annually as well. It could become burdensome.
  2. Bringas commented they used to do surveys before and after events to see what attendees learned.
  3. Gipson said there are about four methods where the GA is the only one responsible for it. Maybe consider staggering the roles since they do graduate.
  4. Douglass said she thought this was very analytical in terms of the results.
- viii. Douglass directed the conversation to reporting results.
  1. Douglass mentioned you could consider disaggregating the data.
- ix. Douglass directed the conversation to decisions, actions, and use of results.
  1. There were no comments from the committee.
- x. Douglass asked if Bringas had any questions for the committee.
  1. Is there a resource that can help with more direct observations?
    - a. Douglass directed her towards AAE.

- b. Subramony confirmed they can help her work through some of these concepts.
    - c. They plan to reach out this summer, since that is when they do most of their planning as well.
- c. Gender and Sexuality Resource Center – Assessment Plan and Status Report
  - 1. Molly Holmes, Director, Gender and Sexuality Resource Center attended to discuss the report.
  - ii. Molly Holmes gave a brief introduction about the center.
    - 1. Combining centers gave them an opportunity to offer more resources.
    - 2. They are excited to get feedback and continue supporting students.
  - iii. Douglass opened the conversation to history and content.
    - 1. Douglass thought illustrating the merger was done very well. She thinks the services may need more detail.
    - 2. The timeline breakdown was helpful and gave a great visual.
  - iv. Douglass directed the conversation to mission, goals, and objectives.
    - 1. Some of the statements listed under the objectives could be identified in a more measurable way. Reading it as an outsider, it took a little bit to understand what was being said.
    - 2. Douglass expanded on this. What is capacity, baseline, and what will be increased each year?
      - a. Holmes said the center has moved from New Hall to Neptune. It is a wing in Neptune, but they were not specific since they were a few months into the new academic year. Housing also gave the room for a roommate option or a single living option. The capacity has flexibility every year.
    - 3. Institutionally, they cannot data collect and have numbers. This is similar to Sandy Lopez’s situation at the last UAP meeting. Their targets are softer since they are not data collecting.
    - 4. Douglass asked what the data was roughly.
      - a. The New Hall location had twelve bed spaces. This year, there are thirty bed spaces filled in Neptune.
      - b. Douglass emphasized this information is for them to utilize, not the UAP committee.
    - 5. Douglass asked if students who room on this floor identify themselves in the LGBTQ community or not necessarily.
      - a. Holmes said it is currently listed as an interest floor in the housing services. This is how students find it. Then they email me through housing. The goal of the floor is to welcome anyone who identify or support the LGBTQ community.
    - 6. 2.1 is not a target, but from the center’s perspective, it is unclear if this is enough or not.
  - v. Douglass directed the conversation to the assessment methods.
    - 1. Douglass thanked them for the inclusion of the tools. This is always very helpful.

2. Douglass mentioned there was a number of students listed here. She cautioned that this can come off as this is the capacity.
  3. Douglass said sometimes the report mentions LGBTQ and sometimes LGBTQI. What is the “I”?
    - a. Holmes explained that this is intersex. It is typically a medical condition.
  4. Douglass said most of their methods are summative not formative, but this is not uncommon for centers.
  - vi. Douglass directed the conversation to reporting results.
    1. Douglass suggested adding starting to think by disaggregating by students. Can you do this by different identities or race profiles?
      - a. Holmes said she think this would be very specific, but they strive to ensure their LGBTQ ally training is inclusive of race and ethnicity. They are starting to ask this demographic information to make sure they are being inclusive.
    2. Douglass also brought up staff versus faculty.
      - a. Holmes confirmed they are collecting this information.
    3. Subramony confirmed disaggregating the data was the biggest suggestion she would have.
  - vii. Douglass directed the conversation to decisions, actions, and use of results.
    1. The further tracking of retention was nice. What would it look like if you extended this from just the floor to all students who utilize the center?
    2. For improvements, bullet point number three on page 18 was called into question.
      - a. Holmes said they do not have an academic component yet. These connections have not been made yet.
  - viii. Douglass asked if Holmes had any questions for the committee.
    1. Holmes was curious about the numbers. She wants to use assessment to tell their story. Would using the numbers be helpful in telling the story?
      - a. Douglass confirmed. This helps to give external readers a perspective. It indicates to us how many people have been impacted by the center’s services.
- d. Latino Resource Center – Assessment Plan and Status Report
1. Luis Santos-Rivas, Director, Latino Resource Center attended to discuss the report.
  - ii. Luis Santos-Rivas briefly provided some information.
    1. He stated this was his first time attending UAP.
    2. The mentoring program changed its name.
    3. This year they broke a record of retention and recruitment for the program.
    4. Students need a 3.0 GPA to be in the program. The recruitment went to 98%.
    5. The Latino graduation events increased as well. They have eighty-one students registered already for this year. Every year, this is growing.
  - iii. Douglass opened the conversation on history and context.

1. There is a reference to URL, and a committee was unsure on what this stands for.
  - a. This used to be the name about ten years ago. There was a shift to align all the resource centers.
2. Be consistent throughout and unify the ways you are engaging holistic evolution.
  - a. They are trying to be inclusive.
  - b. Be thoughtful about using your terms. It is important to consider who is being included in the data.
3. Subramony said consider streamlining goals and objectives.
- iv. Douglass directed the conversation to mission, goals, and objectives.
  1. There were no further comments from the committee.
- v. Douglass directed the conversation to assessment methods.
  1. Douglass said there is a lot here. This is concerning to her if this is doable in the long term. Maybe consider staggering this.
    - a. Sometimes, people spend all their time collecting data and then never spend time interpreting it.
  2. There were a couple times when a committee member could not see the relation between the method and target.
    - a. The center is trying to be the main place for Latinos.
    - b. They tried doing a focus group to determine this. They need more traffic through the center, and the focus group was helping to give more feedback on how to do this.
- vi. Douglass directed the conversation to results.
  1. Zack said it was tricky to navigate through the report and to the items attached to it. It would be helpful if some of the data was summarized from these various reports and placed underneath the goal or objective it related to.
  2. Douglass said this helps for the external readers as well as your internal staff when they are looking at older reports and trying to decide how to move forward. Aggregate summaries can inform actions.
- vii. Douglass directed the conversation to decisions, actions, and use of results.
  1. Douglass said she thought this was still very high level. With the data under the results directly, this may have helped this more directly. It might help with trying to determine what programmatic decisions to make.
- viii. Douglass asked if Santos-Rivas had any questions for the committee.
  1. He said no, but thanked the committee for their feedback.

### **3. Other Business**

### **4. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

Next meeting Friday, March 6, 2020, 10:00 a.m. in Altgeld 203