

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PANEL

March 6, 2020

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Altgeld 203

Present: Barrett, Brain, Cripe, Douglass, Ferdowsi, Gipson, Grahovec, Jaekel, Klonoski, Lagana, Osorio, Santuzzi, Subramony, Zack

Guests: Angela Bross, Assistant Director, Testing Services; Chad Glover, Director JobsPLUS; Anthony Guzzaldo, Assistant Director and Coordinator of EngagePLUS, Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning; Michaela Holtz, Director, Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning; Omar Ghrayeb, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies, Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost

1. Announcements

- a. Went around the room for introductions.
- b. Ritu Subramony discussed the planning process for orientation.
 - i. She asked for panel member's input and the potential dates being considered.
- c. Carolinda Douglass said this is the last meeting of the semester.
 - i. In process of changing the general education program.

2. General Education/ NIU Plus Assessment Discussion – Omar Ghrayeb and Ed Klonoski

- a. Omar Ghrayeb provided an overview.
 - i. Started looking into this about a year ago.
 - ii. There are more general education courses being offered.
 - iii. Courses previously with high enrollment now have low enrollment.
 - iv. Few students are completing pathways. Students take a few courses and then switch.
 1. There are too many courses in each pathway, and there are too many pathways being offered. There is no coordination between the two either.
- b. Douglass asked for an example of a pathway.
- c. Ed Klonoski gave a brief overview. There were three main areas in the NIUPLUS program:
 - i. Foundation studies
 1. Written communication, verbal communication, and quantitative literacy.
 2. Replace core curriculum in former general education curriculum
 - ii. Knowledge domains
 1. Disciplinary based

2. Students were locked in
 3. Wanted to broaden these areas of study
 4. Focus was previously offered, mainly housed in CLAS
 5. Students viewed general education courses as something to get out of the way
 6. Task Force's goal was they wanted to spread out the general education courses' to all colleges
 7. The knowledge domains were created intentionally to encourage other colleges to offer general education courses
- iii. Allow upper division courses to be offered to spread general education offerings across the four year experience
 - iv. Writing infused courses – students getting writing across their four years at the university
 - v. Asked if there were any questions.
 1. Sheila Barrett asked with the lower enrollment issues, what was the focus behind making diversity course requirement?
 - a. She was asked last semester to make one of her courses a human diversity course by changing some of her curriculum. However, she believes her current course content is infused with diversity already. She is reluctant to change the structure of her course content.
 2. Douglass said she was most likely asked to ensure the human diversity component was apparent in the course content. Klonoski can further explain.
 - a. Klonoski said a public act required a human diversity experience. NIU was not compliant with this for a few decades. NIU finally got compliant with this and created this as a graduation requirement (course or non-course based).
 - b. Klonoski said Barrett's college curriculum committee has a set of criteria for these human diversity courses to meet. The colleges are responsible for their courses to meet these if they are going to be offered as a human diversity course.
 - c. Katy Jaekel asked is it up to individual colleges to make sure these requirements are met.
 - d. Klonoski confirmed and gave an in depth explanation on this.
 3. Barrett asked when the human diversity became a required component.
 - a. Klonoski said 2016.
 - b. Ghayeb further clarified there are a variety of ways to meet these diversity requirements besides students.
 - d. Klonoski discussed the pathways.
 - i. Each course in a pathway is supposed to address questions associated with the specific pathway.
 - ii. The idea is for students get the content exposure across a variety of courses.

- iii. Pathway focus – students take three courses across the knowledge domains and get a transcript documentation
 - 1. For example, there is the health and wellness pathway
 - 2. Gives students more reward at the end to complete their general education requirements
 - 3. Completion of pathway courses is low, and there is a communication issue
 - 4. Douglass asked how many pathways there were
 - a. Klonoski answered currently seven
 - 5. Douglass asked if it was transcribed on students' transcripts
 - a. Klonoski confirmed. This was the purpose of the pathway focus. It is potentially a discussion point for students in employment interviews as well
 - b. Also a way for undeclared students to explore through general education courses to pick an area of study
- e. Ghrayeb asked if they wanted to discuss the revision for the UAP's benefit.
 - i. Rod Caughron, Gen Ed chair, contributed by saying:
 - 1. Looking at pathways this entire year
 - 2. Voted at last meeting to retain the pathways in a different form
 - a. No decisions made yet
 - 3. Eliminating the coordinators is one component they are discussing
 - a. Main issue was faculty resistance here
 - ii. Klonoski further added detail to the process.
 - 1. Coordinator met with faculty to be aware their course was a component of the pathway
 - 2. These faculty were supposed to get together and have a discussion about their course cohesiveness
 - 3. Initial excitement from faculty
 - 4. The current structure does not work for a variety of reasons
 - 5. Believes there will be a recommendation for fewer pathways
 - iii. Caughron continued
 - 1. Will probably eliminate several pathways that are unsuccessful
 - a. For example, some pathways have never had a student reportedly completing it
 - 2. Two are very successful currently
 - 3. Enrollment is driving a lot of the problems
 - a. Courses are offered then cancelled
 - b. Frustrating for the students
 - 4. There is a survey right now for chairs if they will not be offering the course, they can trim the pathways
 - a. Main problem is there are too many choices
 - 5. Students really want online courses

- a. Drive behind wanting online courses: don't want to do general education courses in the first place, don't see their importance, commuter students
 - 6. Advisor support
 - a. A lot of advisors – their curriculum is so full already with college requirements, there is not the ability to make choices on the pathways
 - i. For example, CEET and COB
 - b. Lack of support from administration
 - c. Lack of money
- f. Ghrayeb further discussed general education courses
 - i. Served to support the Baccalaureate outcomes
 - ii. How does it support these outcomes?
 - iii. Why should students give extra effort to navigate through these pathways?
 - iv. Just putting courses together on a list does not make them pathways
 - v. Looking forward to see recommendations from GEC (General Education Committee)
- g. Douglass thanked them for discussing this and bringing more background information for the committee.
 - i. As we struggle with the general education program, how do we assess it?
 - ii. Klonoski contributed
 - 1. Former program had 7 year assessment cycle
 - 2. Chair would write up one assessment on one course for the entire seven-year period and this did not accomplish what needed to be done
 - 3. Wanted to take chairs out of this role and responsibility
 - 4. Also wanted a more simple way for faculty to complete the assessment and a closed loop where the results were sent back to them to make decisions/improvements on this
 - 5. Each must identify the two baccalaureate outcomes their course identifies
 - 6. Has been inconsistent oversight and communication
 - a. The response rate has declined as well
 - iii. Brandon Lagana
 - 1. It is an assessment of the administration of the Gen Ed
 - 2. It is really about how the work of GEC?
 - iv. Douglass clarified the importance of being able to see this
 - v. Ghrayeb asked for context on the question
 - 1. Lagana asked whose responsibility it was to look at performance in individual courses, is it the GEC?
 - 2. Ghrayeb said the intention is not to assess individual courses or students
 - a. Goal is to assess the general education courses in general at a high level overview

- b. We get a sample to make sure it is inclusive
 - c. If it is determined students are not performing at the desired level (for one's course), we will give you this feedback and it is expected there will be implementations made
 - vi. Douglass said ultimately we need to know whether or not students are leaving with the Baccalaureate outcomes achieved.
 - 1. Klonoski said there cross referenced Gen Ed and baccalaureate outcomes and they aligned well
 - a. This is not the only place students get this opportunity
 - b. Douglass said these outcomes are embedded in these
 - i. If students are not achieving this, we need to address it
 - 2. Ghrayeb said to consider the following.
 - a. These pieces are supposed to help students obtain the overarching outcomes
 - b. General education courses maps to these eight baccalaureate outcomes
 - c. The level of attainment is partial because there are other pieces that are even larger that are mapped to the same outcomes
 - d. The level of attainment – we are not expecting students to prepare at the masters level at a 100/200 level course because it is mapped to other courses in the future
 - i. Douglass said you are bringing up another issue which is assessing them at the end
 - ii. It is a matter of setting the targets

3. Review of the Assessment Plans and Status Reports

- a. EngagePLUS
 - i. Michaela Holtz, Director, Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning and Anthony Guzzaldo, Assistant Director and Coordinator of EngagePLUS, Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning, were in attendance to discuss the report.
 - 1. Wanted to share what has been done
 - 2. Report indicates what has been established already
 - 3. Douglass asked if this is going to be absorbed into other functions of OSEEL
 - a. Holtz confirmed.
 - ii. Douglass opened it to any comments or questions.
 - iii. Tawanda Gipson said she thought they did a good job.
 - iv. Douglass said there have been some concerns
 - 1. Holtz said students have to pre-apply for this and the mentor has to approve this
 - a. Once experience is completed the mentor then approves

- b. Sometimes students start the process and do not complete this
 - 2. Lagana said it is wise to set the goals and standards
 - 3. Alecia Santuzzi asked how the components were derived for this
 - a. Bottom up or there was a model?
 - i. Holtz was not part of this process, so she is unsure
 - ii. Klonoski confirmed.
 - 1. University of South Carolina was the reference for this
 - iii. Holtz contributed these are the consistent co-curricular tracking across the country that are seen
 - iv. Klonoski conceived initially as a formative process to achieve the baccalaureate outcomes
- v. Carrie Zack said sometimes the objectives look more like what the unit is going to do and not what we want to get out of this to indicate success of our efforts
 - 1. Douglass asked Zack to give an example
 - 2. Zack said incentivizing freshman and transfers to attend
 - a. Rephrase to indicate what you want to see to know freshman and transfer students have been incentivized
 - 3. Subramony said 2.2 is more clear – indicates what we want students to get out of the program
- vi. Holtz thanked everyone for their comments
- vii. Douglass said part of your mission is to support the baccalaureate learning outcomes
 - 1. What is the value? Why are you doing these things?
 - a. Klonoski said get the transcript documentation.
 - b. Holtz said they have two separate assessments for this. This is more about the value coming from the experiences.
- viii. Douglass said objective 2.1 – serving for recruitment and incentivizing students to attend NIU
 - 1. Be more specific here.
- ix. Santuzzi said she thinks the objectives are really focused on getting people in
 - 1. Follows her other question from earlier
 - 2. Anthony Guzzaldo - Someone said one of the challenges is there are not other institutions that are documenting this the way that we are
 - a. The value and end product is different
 - 3. Holtz said the list of programs approved is small
 - 4. Douglass said Engage PLUS might transition into something that is more than something that can be measured on transcripts
- x. Gipson said it is still value to have for a starting point
 - 1. Data is still good
 - 2. The results will still help convince people

- xi. Zack said looking at the methods by outcomes, she thinks you can put direct for the surveys
- xii. Douglass said there are not a lot of results, but what they have is excellent
 - 1. Gipson contributed that it was well connected
- xiii. Lagana said in terms of moving forward, disaggregated data can be useful moving forward year to year
- xiv. Holtz discussed the next steps
 - 1. EngagePLUS could become a part of something bigger
 - a. Honors students
 - b. OSEEL students
 - c. She thinks we need to do a better job of learning where the transcript goes
 - d. Also missing out on other experiences that are out there that may not be meeting their criteria (honors, study abroad)
 - i. Want to identify as many participants from programs they can as possible
 - ii. Want to identify who is participating as well and what is the value
 - e. When students try to find experiences like this, they might look on students affairs, example. We currently don't have this one stop shop website.
 - i. Might help to have these experiences outlined with what else it aligns with, such as honors and Passport
 - ii. Two pieces: for students and for us to get data
- xv. Santuzzi said it sounds like there is value coming through the functions
 - 1. Maybe capitalize on the value of these functions
 - 2. Are there any barriers?
 - 3. If students are seeing value? Are there too many obstacles to get them involved?
 - 4. Holtz said adding more programs does not mean she is starting more programs. She wants to link to pre-existing ones, such as study abroad
- xvi. Klonoski discussed the notion of documenting engaged experience
 - 1. Everyone wanted to list their course as being engaged
 - 2. Raised issue of how we make sure there are standards set
 - a. Students raking leaves in DeKalb vs. a student completing service in an impoverished country
 - 3. There is not much room left on transcripts
- xvii. Holtz said there is still a need to evaluate
 - 1. Do students know about what experiences are out there?
 - 2. Maybe they are not looking in the right places
 - 3. Who decides whether the course is engaged or not? Who makes the rubric for this? Is it the language in the catalog?
 - a. This is a future issue and discussion.

- xviii. Ed said EngagePLUS was not a recruitment tool, it was a documentation process
 - 1. He agrees it has a lot of potential to attract students for more activities
 - xix. Subramony asked if there is a direct relation to employment- what is the value of the transcription as students graduate?
 - 1. Students also need to know the value of what they are trying to achieve; how many times does a potential employer look at the transcript as a selection criteria?
 - 2. They are seeking these experiences for a reason- what are these?
 - xx. Holtz asked about the panel's input. A lot are through the Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning. If they add in more programs for the purpose of tracking, when it comes to student do they assess this or not? Study abroad probably does this already.
 - 1. Subramony brought up the transcripts again. Is there something that is even larger? She asked Chad.
 - 2. Chad said a lot of students in their program participate in a number of programs per semester. They want to focus on the in depth participation in a program and not the number of programs. Another component of this is helping students learn how to communicate their experience to others.
 - xxi. Zack asked if students are documenting this on their resumes.
 - 1. Often transcripts are not viewed until they are hired.
 - xxii. Santuzzi said the comparison with Engage and Jobs is interesting
 - 1. Students see the added value since it is an added plus
 - 2. Yes, it is all about the value of the transcript notation for EngagePLUS
 - a. Is a transcript notation superior to a resume bullet?
 - b. Does the whole program hinge on this? Yes
 - i. We are trying to shift this. The value for the student is just completing this experience.
 - ii. It's creating barriers between experience and transcript notation.
- b. JobsPLUS
- i. Chad Glover, Director, JobsPLUS was in attendance to discuss the report.
 - ii. Chad thanked everyone for the support they have received.
 - iii. EAB featured program in a national program
 - iv. Include program in one of five in Chronical of Higher Education
 - 1. Resources these programs had was the key differentiation
 - a. They spent about \$700 and others spent about \$3 million
 - v. NIU was able to get access to data because of this experience
 - 1. Encouraging experience to get this recognition
 - vi. Opened for questions

- vii. Douglass commented that this program is successful because of this leadership
- viii. One question on mission statement being on giant paragraph
 - a. Being able to consolidate to two powerful sentences would be a better mission statement as a whole
 - 2. Chad said he does not have a lot of assessment background so it has been an ongoing process
 - a. Was able to benefit from Santuzzi and her students
- ix. Zack said try to consolidate and reword some of these
 - 1. Assessment methods and targets – make sure you are focusing on what you want to get out of this and how you want to measure it
- x. Gipson – goal 1 to focus on skills maybe
 - 1. Chad already answered this question indirectly though she said
 - 2. Chad discussed what their program is best able to contribute
 - a. Communication skills is important to focus on
 - b. Learning more about where we are best able to contribute based on the current position of the program
 - c. Douglass said there's always a balance with student learning and programmatic
- xi. Santuzzi discussed measuring retention
 - 1. How important is this?
 - 2. Chad said this might not have as much importance in the report. How would they measure this if they did have impact on this?
 - 3. Goal is getting more students involved and depending on their experience
 - a. Not a lot of ways to capture this right now, but hopefully some ideas and opportunities moving forward
 - 4. A lot of participation is occurring in later academic levels
 - 5. Chad said they are open to grow participation from freshman and sophomores
 - a. Junior and senior involvement tends to be the partnerships they have
 - b. Have a lot of partnerships outside of the employment realm
 - c. Faculty are connecting it to classes too
- xii. Subramony asked more about assessment method: 20-35% working in part time jobs (pg. 6)
 - 1. Internships with career services
 - 2. Is it assumed they go through events first with JobsPLUS then get internships?
 - a. Chad said this is something he would reword.
 - b. Some students are participating because of their internship experience.
- xiii. Douglass said there are a lot of methods here for a one person job
 - 1. Chad said he has one GA (10 hours)

- 2. Lengthy post evaluation
 - a. GA takes all of this written information, but it is time consuming
- xiv. Subramony asked about another method
 - 1. Pg. 11 – satisfaction with professional development workshops
 - 2. Could there be some sort of intention added?
 - 3. 2 or 3 ways to incorporate into your professional life. How can they connect what they just heard to when they are walking out?
- xv. Douglass said missing information but that is because they are planning new assessments.
- xvi. Lagana – last time at UAP there were a lot of different variables, such as leadership, etc.
 - 1. Do we report on what the UAP saw last? Yes, if there was data collected for moving forward
- xvii. Douglass likes the high priority here on pg. 13 – employers providing competencies on the job as a target
- xviii. Subramony said she has data she can give Chad as well
- xix. Subramony asked if there can be modules online.
 - 1. Chad said they tried to make some of these
 - a. NIU students and alumni joined in the collaborate room and were broken into groups.
 - b. Goal: develop interpersonal skills, but also met alumni
 - 2. Ombudsperson did one
 - 3. LinkedIn learning content modules (flipped classroom concept)
 - a. Applied opportunity to apply what they have learned from this content
 - b. Leveraging content and network content to meet goals
- c. Testing Services
 - i. Angela Bross, Assistant Director, Testing Services was in attendance to discuss the report.
 - ii. Angela Bross indicated her office really does not have any SLOs (very different in this aspect)
 - iii. Douglass said it was clear and she understood it very well
 - iv. Cripe said he had alerted them to serious academic misconduct problem
 - 1. Would not have known without this
 - 2. Helped with validity of testing
 - 3. Recommends they include this somewhere if possible
 - 4. Detected this statistical anomaly and wouldn't be able to capture this without them
 - v. Gipson made comment about workshops
 - vi. Subramony said Bross was there in the summer, and she has done a phenomenal job
 - vii. Subramony commented on pg. 4 with generating reports
 - 1. Talking about assessment level targets

- 2. Accuracy and time are things that could be added
- viii. Subramony discussed pg. 2 for providing space for testing
 - 1. Something that makes sense is the comfort level of people taking the test, for example. Physical space (anxious test takers); maybe try to add quality of testing environment as a measure over time?
- ix. Douglass asked about actionable changes
 - 1. Volume of exams offered
 - 2. Comfortable? Could students find the place?
 - 3. If students were not coming, would you know why?
- x. Zack said she wrote one of these reports previously for teaching licensure
 - 1. No complaints received
 - 2. Every few years, maybe put a survey out to stakeholders? Are we serving your needs? Gives affirmative feedback and you might learn things as well you don't know about
- xi. Douglass curious about if the results were not what you wanted them to be, what would you do?
- xii. Subramony encouraged disaggregating the data
 - 1. Are there some students that are not comfortable coming to Testing Services? Why?
- xiii. Santuzzi was not aware that this office did student testing
 - 1. Constantly reaching out for data
 - 2. She does not think the importance of this is coming through on the report. Is there a way to talk about more than just the request?
- xiv. Klonoski said the data is separate from Testing services
 - 1. Thinks Greg put this in there to reflect the totality of his job
 - a. 30% of his job for the Provost Office
 - b. Santuzzi asked if this was objective of him.
 - c. Klonoski said he doesn't believe this should be part of Testing Services
 - d. Bross said she thinks because last time they did not include this
 - e. Klonoski said yes, but this really is not part of Testing Services
- xv. Douglass thanked them for taking feedback from last time and applying it
- xvi. Lagana contributed to this discussion as well
 - 1. Data aligns and tells a story
 - a. Discussed collecting emails

4. Other Business

5. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.