

University Assessment Panel
October 18, 2019
10:00–12:00 p.m. Altgeld 225

MINUTES

Present: Arado, Ballantine, Brain, Comber, Cripe, Douglass, Jaekel, Joung, Lagana, Osorio, Setterstrom, Zack

Guests: Kate Cady, Acting Director, Center for the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality

1. Announcements

- a. Carolinda Douglass opened the meeting and welcomed guest Kate Cady from the Center for the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality.
- b. Everyone went around the room and introduced themselves by stating their name and department.
- c. Carrie Zack noted Ritu Subramony was not able to attend the meeting, but she addressed announcements on Subramony's behalf.
 - i. Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation (AAE) have completed their feedback to all of the programs on their annual assessment updates.
 - ii. Assessment Workshop was held last Friday.
 1. Thank you extended to David Ballantine and Therese Arado for attending.
 2. The workshop participants indicated it was a helpful learning experience.

2. Review of Assessment Plans and Status Reports

- a. Proposed B.A./B.S. in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies – Assessment Plan
 - i. Kate Cady, Acting Director, Center for the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality was in attendance to discuss the report.
 - ii. Kate Cady gave the committee a brief overview of the proposed degree.
 1. The center currently offers undergraduate certificates and minors.
 2. A major has been a longtime goal of the center.
 3. There are a lot of dedicated students and faculty interested in this.
 4. The assessment plan was thoughtfully comprised.
 - a. The former director and the joint faculty thoughtfully put this together by looking at peer programs and student learning outcomes (SLOs).
 - b. They decided on an e-portfolio since it shows students reflection in their growth.
 - iii. Douglass emphasized this is consultative feedback that is discussion based.
 1. A hardcopy of the feedback will also be sent to Cady.
 - iv. Douglass opened the floor to comments and questions regarding the SLOs.
 1. The SLOs were well crafted.
 2. A few could be revised slightly so measuring the student and program achievement is clearer.
 - a. For example, with SLO 7, how is this measured? How do you measure student's level of appreciation? How do you demonstrate they acknowledge movements?

3. Cady agreed. She stated she enjoys the affective SLOs.
 - a. When doing an e-portfolio and not having a signature assignment in each class, students and faculty struggle to find the artifact for the course.
 - b. There are staffing issues in the program. With adjuncts or having Ph.D. students teach the signature assignment, it is helpful.
4. Part of what Cady is alluding to is also touching on curricular maps. This can be a challenge since it is an interdisciplinary program. There are some signature or key courses that could be included in a curricular map to demonstrate how the core curriculum addresses the SLOs. We want to see the curriculum supports what you want to see as outcomes of your program.
5. Zack asked what knowledge are students demonstrating by supporting arguments by analyzing evidence in SLO 1?
 - a. Cady said the signature assignments aligned with this are about reading news and assessing it.
 - i. What is well supported in the news or not?
 - b. Zack clarified maybe to contextualize it in the discipline then. Currently, it reads as a general, critical-thinking skill.
 - i. Douglass emphasized this would map well to the SLOs, but she agreed, what is the unique part?
6. For SLO 1, are you talking about producing an argument or analyzing someone else's argument?
 - a. Cady said both elements for the signature assignments, but she will also double check on this.
7. SLO 6 could be three different SLOs because communication, collaboration, and leadership all seem separate. When grouping these all together, what does this mean?
 - a. Zack built onto this. Looking into the methods coming up in the rubric, not all these points are necessarily hit upon since they are so different. All three together makes it difficult.
8. The rubrics were very helpful. An example signature assignment also would have been really helpful to see. There are only two methods, and this is concerning. One is really a culmination of the other as well. There are other methods you could incorporate into your assessment that would be very helpful.
 - a. For example, the internship experiences and exit interviews. You could be creative in finding other methods to assess the overall program.
 - b. The portfolio is excellent for communication and understanding.
 - c. For application of skills, the internship could address this.
 - d. The exit interview would give information about their perception of the program as a whole.
 - e. What is changing throughout especially as it rolls out?
9. Cady worries that it would be high stakes.
 - a. Would alumni data work?

- i. These are two separate things.
 - b. It is one thing to get student's exit interview upon leaving the program and alumni data. These are two different perspectives.
 - c. Employer perspectives are great too. This is an external perspective of how your students are viewed by potential employers.
- 10. For the e-portfolio rubric, you might consider more than two scoring categories (developed and underdeveloped). It is easy to place people, but it does not give you a lot of data to analyze.
 - a. A lot of the comments on rubrics thus far involve when you get the data back, how is it going to help you improve the program?
 - b. We do not necessarily want everyone perfect at the end. We want to understand how we can help them get better. As an instructor, sometimes this can be difficult to think about at a programmatic level.
- 11. Cady said she has been getting great feedback. She asked if this body sees the revisions.
 - a. Douglass stated this body does not, but AAE does because they post these on the website.
- b. B.A./B.S. in History – Assessment Plan and Status Report
 - i. A program representative was not in attendance to discuss the report.
 - ii. Douglass opened the conversation on SLOs.
 - 1. The verbs needed to be adjusted. The measurable aspect of the verbs was not apparent.
 - 2. No variation in the different letters.
 - 3. They have about one hundred courses in this department, but only a select number are the core courses.
 - 4. They could group the core classes so there is more differentiation.
 - a. This could lead to a more granular evaluation.
 - 5. The results are unclear. The results talk about the outcomes, but in the assessment plan, it talked about the goals.
 - a. They are portraying the goals as SLOs.
 - 6. Maybe they are trying to link this language to the SLOs.
 - iii. Douglass directed the conversation to the methods.
 - 1. Did they only assess HIST 495?
 - a. Yes, it looks like this.
 - 2. The rubric differentiates a little bit, but it does not allow you to see where the strengths and weaknesses are.
 - a. It does not explain if it meets expectations, and what are those expectations.
 - 3. The survey was difficult to line the questions up with the SLOs since they are presenting data.
 - 4. These are all end loaded.
 - 5. Relying only on exit interviews is indirect and completely objective.

- a. There are some disconnects with the data presented and the self-evaluations from the students. They did not mention this or discuss this in the evaluation of the data.
 - b. They could do a better job with correlating the two.
 - 6. Is there a mechanism where we know if our students in a lower division are meeting the requirements of the history department?
 - a. For example, if one of the accountancy students took a history course, I would hope they leave with an appreciation for the history's class. Is there a way to know this?
 - b. Are you talking about general education?
 - c. This is technically under the purview of the general education committee.
 - 7. Their methods do not include anything from the lower division. If they are doing it, they are not reporting on it so there is no way for us to know if they are doing this.
 - 8. Is there a course that every history student is expected to take to learn about common concepts and methods?
 - a. They listed HIST 395 in their map, which made someone think this may be it.
 - b. Their student survey also mentions "the semester you took HIST 295." That looks like another common course.
 - c. Douglass asked that this question gets back to the Department of History so that they are aware.
- iv. Douglass directed the conversation towards the reporting results.
 - 1. They list the target as 85% of their students will achieve this score. They look overall at aggregates. How many overall students is this percent calculated for? What is the range? A little more evaluative data to provide more information would be useful, especially since they are looking at an average.
 - a. They have a few numbers below 80%, and they do not address these. Clearly, there are issues here, but we need to know the sample size.
 - 2. The percentages were all below the target, but the student's perception were all positive. They do not address this disconnect.
- v. Douglass directed the conversation towards the user results.
 - 1. If you look at the 3.2, going from AY17-18 to AY18-19, rather than noting all these things are below the 80%, it actually went from 61.2% to 83%.
 - a. They improved immensely, but they did not address the fact that these were below their targets for several years.
 - b. How are they using the data? They need some assistance here with this.
 - 2. They have so many courses their students can take. If they focus on primary courses that focus on these SLOs and form meaningful assessments, they would be able to take away useful information about their program.
 - a. The formative assessments will be really important for them.

3. Zack asked what they would be gaining from introducing an indirect summative midterm assessment as the form of an entry survey.
 - a. We do not know what they plan to ask on the survey, or what they want to get from the survey.
 - b. This seems to come out of nowhere.
 - c. It seems as though they knew they needed more assessments so they did this easy one.
 4. The assessment data does not provide insightful information for the faculty. They need more data and data that pieces out more where the weaknesses and strengths are.
 5. With SLO 4.1, what is the process and plan on how to go about this?
- c. M.A. in History – Assessment Plan and Status Report
- i. A program representative was not in attendance to discuss the report.
 - ii. Douglass opened the conversation on the SLOs.
 1. How do we measure “be successful”?
 - a. It is not a SLO.
 - b. This is something they want for their students, and that is great, but it is not really an SLO.
 2. There are a number of them that are iffy like this.
 3. If they are not really assessing it, it should not be an SLO.
 4. SLO 4 and 8 could be combined.
 5. How does “satisfied” relate to their program?
 6. Zack said with the first few SLOs, it is not clear, such as using “demonstrating.”
 7. Some of the SLOs did not seem applicable to a master’s level.
 - iii. Douglass directed the conversation to methods.
 1. There are similar comments to the B.A./B.S. in History.
 2. This curricular map has a few more things in it.
 3. The students are never “proficient” in one and two. How do we know when they become proficient then?
 - iv. Douglass directed the conversation to reporting results.
 1. They have numbers here, which is better.
 2. They need more information here so the reader understands what the numbers mean.
 3. There are counts but no percentages even though their target was a percentage.
 4. The number of excellence goes down over time. This trend is never addressed in their data discussion.
 5. It is not clear what criteria are being used by the people performing the evaluation. What is the criteria that constitutes one from another?
 6. There is a lack of understanding of the meaning the assessment can give to your teaching. This could actually improve their program, and they would benefit from having this conversation.
 7. Is their rubric more rigorous than it was in 2015? They do not explain this.
 8. They are only being assessed at one point in the program.
 - v. Douglass directed the conversation to the use of the results.

1. There was a mention of gaps identified but no specific plan on addressing these.
 2. The plans to institute assessment for SLO 8.
 3. A notation earlier in the assessment plan would have been nice to know that SLO 8 was not assessed anywhere in the plan. I spent time looking for where it was assessed.
 4. SLO 6 and 7 are not appropriate SLOs, but they want to do an alumni survey here for these.
 - a. The alumni survey would be beneficial though regardless.
- d. Ph.D. in History – Assessment Plan and Status Report
- i. A program representative was not in attendance to discuss the report.
 - ii. What is new that might not have been mentioned in the other two assessment plans and status reports for history?
 1. SLO 2, yes this is what the committee is looking for, but it does not tell us what it is.
 2. Do these rise to the level of a Ph.D. program?
 - a. The mastery of a primary field and secondary is an appropriate one.
 - b. Plan and organize a college level course.
 - i. How you assess this is a different question.
 - ii. This sounds like the assessment and the learning is the demonstration.
 3. SLO 5 is not appropriate.
 - iii. Douglass directed the conversation to the methods.
 1. It is all summative.
 2. There is no formative.
 3. It would be helpful if they were here. What are they doing? It is apparent they are probably doing something, but they are not reporting it.
 4. What data do they have, and what data is useful to them?
 5. Is it the same kind of tool? We need a rubric here. It is unclear how they are looking at this.
 - iv. Douglass directed the conversation to the results.
 1. It is hard to say anything meaningful when they are meeting their targets.
 2. Zack questioned what is the comprehensive exam? Is the teaching portfolio part of this?
 3. The formative assessment is critical. How do other Ph.D. programs with small numbers handle this?
 4. Their evaluation tool is applied in the rubric and needs to be more granular. It needs to focus in on what areas are doing well and which ones are not.
 - a. They are probably having in-depth conversations that they are not mentioning here.
 - v. Douglass directed the conversation to the use of the results.
 1. A lot of it is the same as the masters.

3. Other Business

4. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

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