University of Rhode Island
Student Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee (LOOC)

Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2015
12:30-2:00pm
Pharmacy Building

In attendance:
Marilyn Barbour (interim Chair) Patricia Morokoff
Laura Beauvais Pamela Rohland
Gary Boden John Stevenson
Joanna Burkhardt Rick Vaccaro
Elaine Finan Anne Veeger
Diane Goldsmith
Michael Greenfield (listened via phone)

I. Approval of March 2015 Meeting Minutes
   • Motion to Approve – Approved

II. Faculty Senate Update (May 2015 meeting)
   • Vote on modified membership language for LOOC:
     o Language passed (manual language can be changed at the meeting)
   • Give information in regards to reporting process and give recognition for exemplary (each program all criteria measures well developed and advanced and overall score was advanced) programs:
     o Undergraduate and Graduate programs recognized
     o After last LOOC meeting (March), Marilyn sent letter to the exemplary programs, their deans, and the provost
     o Feedback from programs - appreciative and positive
     o Feedback from Faculty Senate – wish more committees would do it

III. SLOAA Update
   • Thanks to Marilyn & John for their service
   • Kristin Johnson, Political Science, will be taking over for Graduate Assessment Coordinator
   • Faculty Report Reviewers:
     o Three returning (Kristin Johnson, Norma Owens, Ingrid Lofgren)
     o Seven new!
     o Two training sessions: last week of May, first week in June
Presentation: Assessment Reporting Update Cohort I (will be uploaded to SLOAA website)

- Intro: Cohort I & II = Full institution
- External versus Internal Reports
  - External: presentation
  - Internal: program-, college-level;
- Reminder: Assessment has been phased in since 2006
- SLOAA Learning Outcome:
  - Results and Reflections, Recommendations
- Compliance
  - Section I: new reporting
  - Section II: follow-up to prior recommendations
  - Compliance Expectation: 100% per NEASC
- Performance
  - Performance Expectation: we don’t have an expectation for institution-wide
  - John: Expectation level should be 80%
- Outcomes Examined in Cohort I, Section I (LEAP Outcomes)
  - Institution-wide: Most programs looking at knowledge outcomes (ex “students will know”... lower cognitive level)
    - Knowledge, Critical Thinking, Communication
  - Undergraduate: Knowledge, Critical Thinking, Communication
  - Graduate: Knowledge, Research, Communication, Professionalism, Critical Thinking
- Cohort I, Section II
  - Undergraduate: Knowledge, Research, Communication
  - Graduate: sample too small
- Types of Evidence Collected:
  - Undergraduate: Embedded Exam Questions, Written Report, Oral Presentations
  - Graduate: Thesis/Dissertation Proposal, Presentations, Written Comps...
- Where are the programs conducting assessment?
  - Undergraduate: 300, 400 level courses
  - Graduate: 500, 600 level courses
- What evaluation tool/methods are programs using to examine learning and achievement?
  - Program-created rubric, grades, surveys/questionnaires
- Who is doing program assessment? (Sec I)
  - Multiple faculty members, course instructor, chair/director, assessment committee
- What types of changes are proposed to improve results? (Sec I)
  - Assessment process, curricular, pedagogical
- What changes were implemented following up on recommendations in prior reports (2010,2012)? Evidence-based changes made? (Do
programs use data to make change?) What changes are making a difference?
  o  Pedagogical, curricular, assessment process
  o  **Were the changes effective?**
    ▪  76% ongoing, 54% yes, 6% no
    ▪  Trish: consider comparing the data from the Curricular Affairs Committee
•  **Recommendations and Planning – Comments & Questions**
  o  Anne: Since most grad programs are using the thesis/dissertation proposals, is there a proposal rubric available?
    ▪  John: Standardized rubric is available on SLOAA website
    ▪  Should the graduate school also fill out the rubric for the reading and approval of the proposal?
      •  Timing and personnel issues – program specific
    ▪  Students can access the rubric, but how many students actually know of the availability of the rubric?
    ▪  Suggestion: ask Graduate Council Assessment Committee
      •  Michael Greenfield is our representative (listening via phone, responded via email)
  o  Marilyn: Programs that were recognized may be great for mentoring other programs in assessment
  o  Trish: Arts & Sciences Assessment Committee update
    ▪  Decided to become actively involved in monitoring the assessment tasks
    ▪  Developing timeline for each program to adhere to
    ▪  Faculty are to some extent clueless about what to do and when to do it
    ▪  There is accountability, so A&S took initiative to support and guide programs in assessment effort
    ▪  Anne: would like to see an example/template of timeline/guidelines to keep assessment on radar for programs outside of A&S
  o  Laura: Elaine should present this report at Committee of Deans (and maybe Grad Council)

IV.  **Motion to be Considered by LOOC from John Stevenson - See attached**
  o  Just up for discussion
  o  Assessment office already has internal policies, but what happens if programs are still noncompliant?
    ▪  Consequences for noncompliance
  o  Laura: Who should have the responsibility to hold programs accountable?
    o  Trish: Unclear whether it should be chairs? Deans?
    o  Anne: CELS has department chairs, not department heads with multiple responsibilities
o John: climate survey of department chairs to see who cares about different aspects of assessment
o Is assessment actually being included in academic program review?
  o Required to be in appendix, but programs not always aware that it should be.
  o Should be in the body of the report as it is a description of the quality of the educational effectiveness
o Is it a value of the Provost?
  o After he sees the work and effort put into the campus assessment effort, will be amenable to discussion
  o Continuing culture change, reinforcement of meaningful assessment work
  o New general education program will add attention to learning outcomes
o Is LOOC a place from which a recommendation for the Provost can come?
  o The Provost should communicate to the deans that HE supports learning outcomes assessment on campus
  o Marilyn: propose a motion that had the intent of: “in the fall semester we will create a formal document for the Provost in which we will ask him to ensure that deans and chairs are acknowledging the importance of learning outcomes assessment and ensuring that it occurs in their colleges and departments”
    ▪ Seconded.
    ▪ Motion passed.
    ▪ Connect proposals, new faculty positions to academic plan
    ▪ Academic plan is being redone: can integrate learning outcomes assessment (as evidence)
    ▪ Laura: Task forces being put together in June for faculty to work out new academic plan
      • Student educational focus
May 8, 2015
From John Stevenson (as a point of discussion for the meeting; not voted upon)

I move that LOOC recommend to the Provost the following policy for dealing with degree programs that do not meet the established guidelines for program-level assessment reporting at URI:

- Deans of degree-granting colleges shall devise college policies for dealing with degree programs that do not comply with assessment reporting requirements
- Those policies shall be forwarded to the Provost and LOOC and placed on file by both.
- Changes in those policies shall be promptly reported to the Provost and LOOC
- The deans shall be accountable to the Provost for exercising those policies

Context:
- The vast majority of programs do comply with assessment requirements
- It is very important to recognize and celebrate the good work done by many programs across the University – and to have the Provost’s and deans’ recognition directed to those successes
- When programs have difficulty with reporting deadlines, SLOAA will have its own internal procedures for granting temporary extensions and setting time limits for those extensions; only when those time limits are exceeded would a program be deemed non-compliant
- SLOAA will continue to maintain records of compliance and report to the deans, LOOC, and the Provost on an annual basis.

Rationale:
- SLOAA does represent the Provost for many aspects of assessment at URI, but LOOC has explicitly agreed that SLOAA should not combine its supportive role with a potentially punitive role
- LOOC has agreed that the Provost has the authority to deal with non-compliance and that NEASC requirements as well as University policy call for attention to this responsibility
- As with the Academic Program Review, the college deans are the proper authorities to support and guide departments and degree programs within their colleges