I. Approval of November 28, 2012 Minutes

Minutes approved.

II. Announcements

None.

III. SLOAA Update

A. Multi-state assessment initiative (Elaine and Diane)
   At the NEASC meeting with Deborah Grossman-Garber, RIC, and UMass, it was determined that URI will go to the next meeting of the national group for the multi-state assessment initiative. Elaine, Diane, and individuals from CCRI will be attending the meeting in Boulder next Sunday. At this time RIC is not attending. It also remains unclear if there is any grant money.

B. June evaluation of reports (Elaine)
   Cohort I undergraduate reports are not due until June 2014. However, Cohort I graduate plans are due at commencement 2013, and we are expecting around 17 reports. Mini-grants, due a bit earlier than commencement, (N=25) will also need review. In sum, there are about 42 items that need to be reviewed and a reviewing schedule will be created.

C. Graduate assessment (Elaine and John)
John and Elaine presented at the Graduate School Retreat on the interesting and unique methods that pilot graduate programs have used in their assessment work. The pilot programs have completed an entire cycle of planning and reporting. Mini-grants were awarded to Cohort I graduate programs and they will be submitting their plans in May 2013. The third graduate assessment workshop will take in February and will focus on types of evidence and creating an assessment timeline. SLOAA also presented at a Graduate Pharmacy Retreat in December.

D. SAGE (Elaine and Anne)
SLOAA is able to offer sponsorship to the AAC&U meeting in Boston. Seven individuals from URI will be attending this conference, which is based on general education and assessment. Several of these members will attend a civic engagement and quantitative literacy workshop.

E. Additional Points from SLOAA
   a. NSSE will be starting on February 19th. Please notify freshmen and senior students to complete the survey. Numerous campus outlets were notified to promote survey participation.
   b. The Wabash presentation will be held on March 28th, there was an agenda and save the date that was distributed at the Academic Summit. This is competing with the Center for Humanity presentation, though it is possible for individuals to attend both events.

IV. New Business—Goals for 2012/2013
   A. Enhancing the Learning Outcomes Assessment Climate at URI
      a. Powerpoint Presentation of Assessment Climate Survey (John)

      The assessment climate survey was given to undergraduate department chairs and directors in Fall 2009 and Fall 2012 in order to benchmark progress, identify strengths and weaknesses, and to inform policies and resource allocations. The survey was divided into six domains: (1) personal attitudes towards assessment, (2) perceived campus norms, (3) perceived leadership commitment, (4) structured support for assessment, (5) department level implementation, (6) university-wide implementation. Participants answered on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for multiple items in each domain. Global results indicate the highest levels of agreement in the personal attitude towards assessment domain by the chairs and directors. (Summary, previously provided with agenda, is attached at the end of these minutes)

      Points identified by John in his presentation:

      Several items increased in positivity/agreement: Chairs are saying that assessment of learning outcomes for their majors is very important; we need to keep track that our
students graduate with the skills and attitudes we believe they need; assessment of student learning outcomes is here to stay; there is an office on campus and a website that provides assistance of many kinds of assessment; two or more of the department faculty have attended workshops on assessment; and adequate assessment training is provided. In summary, we are making progress in establishing the role of assessment within programs and the structured support available.

Several items decreased in positivity/agreement: Perceived campus norms; perceived positive administration leadership; and perceived university-wide achievement. There was a drop in the perception that there are rewards and incentives in place for chairs/directors or faculty in doing assessment work; departments that choose not to assess their programs will experience negative consequences; department uses assessment in strategic planning; and department has changed curriculum design based on assessment.

Qualitative comments demonstrated that there is increased awareness of structured support (e.g., office, website) but a decreased awareness there is much importance of assessment as a whole. The pattern emerging from both the quantitative and qualitative suggests that there have been gains in areas under control of departments, awareness of practical help, and a decline in perception that the administration genuinely values assessment work and will reward and value it.

b. LOOC Discussion following presentation

Following discussion of the survey itself, the group focused on determining areas of greatest need and how to move forward. Comments included:

• Increased participation from the Provost’s office is essential.
• Focus on the department seeing the importance of assessment and making it clear to the faculty that assessment is important for bettering the program versus receiving awards.
• Pushing the mandate may not be the best way to increase participation in the department.
• There is a constant turnover of who is doing the assessment work in each program. We are working at the college level to increase awareness of assessment, but we need to act on the department and program level as well.
• Find the balance between resources available and what is needed for resources.
• What are you already doing in your department for assessment? How can we work with this? Where is the easiest place to look?
  o Models are available in order to help each program tailor a model to their own unique needs.
• Ability to bring together programs with commonalities in learning outcomes.
• Use standardized items that readily available to the department.
• There is both an internal or external process in assessment, and so we must be aware of what is going on externally. Each higher education institution in the US must report to their regional accrediting board on what programs are assessing, how they are assessing, the results of the assessment, and how they are using these results. As of now, we do not have to collect the same data and compare
across institutions. Given the lack of resources and decrease in state funding, there is a huge external pressure to force colleges to be able to show achievement of student learning. We are better off doing this in a way that benefits us internally, and if we are unable do this, we are in a vulnerable position.

- Have external individuals coming in and speak on the value of assessment.

As time was getting short, Marilyn asked the committee to keep the conversation going by using the email group list from the LOOC agendas- to contribute concrete ideas and suggestions:

1. How to communicate information to departments that there are resources available
2. How do we ask departments what they really need (e.g., what types of resources are needed, or is there a way to rethink the process so that they do not need all of the resources that they believe that they need)

B. Policy for Distribution of Assessment Data

A brief discussion was initiated. Gary Boden would like to lead a group of individuals who will analyze institutional data and be able to present the findings. This is both required by NEASC and recommended by NILOA, and is important in informing the university. Those interested are urged to contact Gary.

Meeting adjourned at 5pm.

Next Meeting: February 20, 2013 3:30-5pm Room 207 Pharmacy Building