

**Learning Outcomes and Oversight Committee (LOOC)
Annual Report
April 2010**

As amended by the Faculty Senate on April 29, 2010

The charges to the committee (University Manual 5.84.10- 5.84.12):

Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee (LOOC) shall create policies for URI student learning outcomes assessment, data distribution and frequency of measurement at the university-wide level, with the approval of the Faculty Senate and the Provost. Such policies would include but not be limited to external reporting and the release of assessment data, setting of standards for outcomes assessment, identification of strengths and limitations of existing assessment practices and recommendations for resource allocation to enhance assessment practices.

The committee shall provide advice and guidance to the Office of Student Learning, Outcomes Assessment, and Accreditation relevant to faculty learning of best practices of student learning outcomes and assessment and oversee implementation and facilitation of approved policies by the Office of Student Learning, Outcomes Assessment and Accreditation.

The committee shall also develop an ongoing review of the learning outcomes assessment process, interpret external expectations for university-wide learning outcomes assessment, including those of accreditation bodies and facilitate internal communication across units regarding ways of meeting those expectations.

The members of the committee:

As defined in the University Manual under section 5.84.13, the 27-member committee is representative of the entire University community. LOOC includes 15 faculty members, representing all academic Colleges. The listing of members of the 2009-2010 committee and their representation is on page 4 of this report.

Activities of 2009-2010:

LOOC met monthly beginning November 2009, when a new chair was elected. Priorities of the committee this academic were to:

- 1) Create a unified voice for student learning outcomes assessment at the University by:
 - a) providing support and a reporting venue for the Office of Student Learning, Outcomes Assessment and Accreditation (SLOAA)
 - b) providing a common ground for programs working with graduate student learning outcomes assessment through cross-membership and monthly reports to LOOC by a member of the graduate council
 - c) ensuring connectivity through cross-membership and monthly reports to LOOC by members of SAGE (Subcommittee for the Assessment of General Education)

- 2) Increase University awareness of the importance of student learning outcomes assessment by:
 - a) ensuring appropriate LOOC representation on Academic Task Forces
 - b) improving general faculty awareness through direct contact with LOOC representatives

- 3) Create policies for student learning outcomes assessment at the University, to be presented for formal vote by Faculty Senate on April 29, 2010 following review by the Provost (pages 2-3 of

this report). These policies provide an important framework for University-directed student learning outcomes assessment of academic programs.

Establishment of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Policies

In fulfillment of a key element of its legislated mission, The University of Rhode Island Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee (LOOC) recommends the following student learning outcomes assessment policies for approval by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Faculty Senate.

These policies represent both an institutional commitment to program-level assessment of student learning outcomes in order to advance our educational mission, and a response to external expectations from our accrediting body, New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and the Rhode Island Board of Governors of Higher Education (RIBGHE). The policies assure the important role of the faculty in guiding the process, setting the standards, drawing conclusions from the results, and promoting meaningful action in response to findings. These policies directly promote learning as a central aspect of our mission.

Background

In April 2004, the RIBGHE charged the three State institutions of higher education with engaging in institution-wide student learning outcomes assessment. The 2005 NEASC Standards for Accreditation (4.44) requires the implementation of, "...a systematic and broad based approach to the assessment of student learning..." In 2006, URI established The Office of Student Learning, Outcomes Assessment and Accreditation (SLOAA) to support faculty in meeting RIBGHE's student learning assessment reporting requirements. The Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee (LOOC) was established in the spring of 2007 as a joint committee of the Faculty Senate and Provost with representation from many important constituencies within the University. Approval by the Faculty Senate and the President occurred at the April 19, 2007 Faculty Senate meeting, and approved University Manual language (09/06/2007) includes the following:

5.84.10 Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee (LOOC) shall create policies for URI student learning outcomes assessment, data distribution and frequency of measurement at the university-wide level, with the approval of the Faculty Senate and the Provost. Such policies would include but not be limited to external reporting and the release of assessment data, setting of standards for outcomes assessment, identification of strengths and limitations of existing assessment practices and recommendations for resource allocation to enhance assessment practices. #06-07—25.

Proposal

The central mission of LOOC is to facilitate the student learning outcomes assessment process to foster productive use of assessment at all levels. This goal requires collaboration and full support from many parties, including the President, Provost, Deans, faculty, professional staff, and students. The proposed policies provide clear guidance for the institution as we move forward in this essential process.

The University of Rhode Island Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee (LOOC) recommends the following policies for approval by Provost DeHayes and the Faculty Senate:

Policy#1. *Academic Program Engagement:* All undergraduate, professional, and graduate academic programs, including General Education, shall be actively engaged in student learning outcomes assessment as evidenced by, but not limited to:

a. *Published student learning outcomes* that are clear statements of what students are expected to gain, achieve, demonstrate or know at the completion of the academic program. These student learning outcomes shall be published on the program's website via a link to the website for the Office of Student Learning, Outcomes Assessment, and Accreditation (SLOAA). These student learning outcomes shall be periodically reviewed by the academic program for ongoing relevance.

b. *A plan of student learning outcomes assessment* that is endorsed by the program's faculty. Plans should include a regular and predictable cycle for collecting and analyzing assessment data, for discussing curricular and programmatic changes, for implementing interventions, and for re-assessing the impact of implemented changes. Outcomes assessment plans will be published on each program's website via a link to the SLOAA website.

c. *Reports of student learning outcomes assessment* that are provided to SLOAA using staggered cycles of no more than 3 years. Cycles for accredited programs will be adjusted to decrease redundancy of effort.

Policy#2. *SLOAA Guidance for Academic Programs:* Guidelines and schedules for preparation of outcomes assessment plans and reports shall be provided by SLOAA with the assistance and approval of the Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee (LOOC). SLOAA shall offer advice on the logistics of collecting assessment data, support for analyzing the results, and feedback on designing curricular and programmatic changes. Rubrics for evaluating the plans and reports shall be generated by SLOAA and posted on its website.

Policy#3. *Evaluation of Plans and Reports:* Student learning outcomes assessment plans and reports shall be submitted through SLOAA for evaluation and recommendations by LOOC. Programs shall be notified directly of the results of the evaluation and whether modification is needed. Summary reports shall be published on the SLOAA website. LOOC shall provide a general summary of outcomes assessment in its annual report.

Policy#4. *University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes Assessment:* With guidance from LOOC, SLOAA will work with the Office of Institutional Research and other university offices to collect, maintain, analyze, and distribute student learning outcomes assessment findings, derived from a variety of local and national sources. SLOAA will identify patterns of student performance to inform ongoing program and institutional improvement.

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
 LEARNING OUTCOMES OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (LOOC)
 2009-2010

Committee Member	Position/Title	Representation
Barbour, Marilyn M. (Chair)	Professor	College of Pharmacy
Beauvais, Laura	Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs	Provost Office
Boden, Gary	Professor	College of Business
Burkhardt, Joanna M.	Senior Info Technologist	Institutional Research
Cicomascolo, Lori E.	Associate Professor Librarian	CCE Library,
Erickson, Bette L.	Associate Dean, HSS	Univ College Rep
Evans, Kathy	Student Representative	Graduate Council
Finan, Elaine	Assessment Coordinator	Instructional
Hames, Carolyn C.	Professor & Associate Dir	Development Program
Hicks, Sandra Jean	Associate Professor	CCE Prov Campus
Higgins, Mark	Dean	SLOAA
Hubbard, Anne M.	Assistant Professor	College of Nursing
Kowalski, James G.	Professor/Department Chair	and Honors Program
MacDonald, Mary	Associate Professor, Librarian	Chair, UCGE & School
McCurdy, Karen	Professor	of Education
McQuaide, Andrew	Undergraduate Student	College of Business
Miles, Libby	Associate Professor/Dept Chair	CCE, Bachelor of
Oberle, Josh	Graduate Student	Gen Studies Program
Richmond, Jayne	Dean	College of Arts & Sciences
Rivero-Hudec, Mercedes A.	Professor	(Computer Science & Statistics)
Rosen, Deborah E.	Associate Dean and Professor	CAC UCGE
Shea, Robert	Acting Director	College of Human Science &
Smith, David	Assistant Director	Services (Human Development
Stevenson, John F.	Associate Dean	& Family Studies)
Torrens, Kathleen	Professor	Student Body
Veeger, Anne	Professor/Department Chair	College of Arts and Sciences
Yensan, Chip	Assistant Vice President	(College Writing & Rhetoric)