Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee (LOOC)
Annual Report
May 5, 2016

The Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee is committed to promoting, supporting, and ensuring effective assessment as an integral part of the student learning experience at the University of Rhode Island.

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 (SLOAA) 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.

Item #1: Committee Actions

1) Assessment reporting for accredited programs:
LOOC and SLOAA have revised the reporting requirements for accredited programs to streamline their efforts. The new guidelines are found at: http://web.uri.edu/assessment/planning_reporting_documents/

2) Student learning outcomes assessment language in the Academic Program Review Self-Study:
LOOC and the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) have revised the language for the APRC Self-Study guidelines to increase clarity and direction. There is no additional work required by departments but rather a gathering and discussion of process and reports already completed. This is consistent with NEASC's expectation "The institution's system of periodic review of academic programs includes a focus on understanding what and how students learn as a result of the program" (2/2013 response to URI's 5-year report). The new language regarding student learning assessment states:

• Describe the department's process for each of its programs' learning outcomes assessment, and include:
a) The engagement of faculty in assessment activity, and specifically, the strategy for planning, executing, and reflecting upon the biennial assessment process and results
b) The date of the most recent program learning outcomes assessment report and the date of the next planned report
c) Curriculum map, assessment reports and feedback in the appendix

• Describe how your program has used the results of program learning outcomes assessment for program and student learning improvement; include examples of changes to curriculum or other innovations that resulted from the assessment process

Appendices:
Program Curriculum Map(s)
Learning outcomes assessment reports and feedback

This new language will be incorporated later this month into the APRC Self-Study Guidelines, posted at: http://web.uri.edu/facsen/committees/academic-program-review-committee/.

Item #2: Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Assessment Reporting and Program Recognition

The SLO assessment process includes a biennial cohort-based reporting structure with a mix of graduate and undergraduate programs providing SLO assessment reports every May, at graduation. The reports are evaluated over the summer using a formal process created by the Office of Student Learning, Outcomes Assessment and Accreditation. Faculty reviewers apply to evaluate reports and are vetted and trained, with compensation provided by the Provost's Office. Scoring of reports include both individual components as well as overall evaluation using set rubric criteria. Scores of "well-developed" and "advanced" reflect meeting or exceeding campus reporting expectations, respectively. Other scores include "beginning" and "missing".

Results from May 2014 and May 2015 reporting:
(Note: institution-wide results are reported reflecting combined results of biennial reporting from Cohorts I and II.)

Undergraduate:
53/65 (82%) of programs submitted reports assessing a new outcome; of these, 83% met or exceeded expectations
21/23 (91%) of programs submitted reports re-assessing an outcome using results from prior reports to make change; of these, 62% met or exceeded expectations

Graduate:
39/56 (70%) of programs provided reports assessing a new outcome; of these, 87% met or exceeded expectations
2/2 (100%) of programs submitted reports re-assessing an outcome using results from prior reports to make change; both met or exceeded expectations. (Note: This was the first report cycle for most grad programs and re-assessment was not expected)

Program Recognition for Cohort II Assessment Reporting (2015)

Student learning outcomes assessment is an essential part of ensuring quality of student education at the University of Rhode Island. It takes significant time and effort on the part of faculty. The Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee, the Office of Student Learning, Outcomes Assessment and Accreditation and the Graduate School would like to recognize the following 2015 Cohort II programs and their faculty for their outstanding efforts in learning outcomes assessment. These programs achieved scores of *Well Developed or Advanced* for all reporting criteria, and *all program reports* received overall scores of *Advanced* through a faculty peer review process:

Recognized Undergraduate Programs

Program	Department	College	Faculty Member Submitting Report
Anthropology	Anthropology	Arts and Sciences	Kristine Bovy
Communication Studies	Communication Studies	Arts and Sciences: Harrington School	Sandra Ketrow
English	English	Arts and Sciences	Jennifer Jones
German	Languages	Arts and Sciences	Damon Rarick;Norbert Hedderich
Human Development and Family Studies	Communication Studies	Arts and Sciences	Karen McCurdy
Kinesiology	Kinesiology	Human Science and Services	Bryan Blissmer
Sociology	Sociology	Arts and Sciences	Barbara Costello
Writing and Rhetoric	Writing and Rhetoric	Arts and Sciences	Nedra Reynolds

Recognized Graduate Degree Programs

Program	Department	College	Faculty Member Submitting Report
Education (PhD joint w/RIC)	School of Education	Human Science and Services URI/RIC	Julie Coiro (Co-Director) Minsuk Shim; Janet Johnson (RIC)
Elementary Education	School of Education	Human Science and Services	Peter Adamy
Education: Reading Specialist	School of Education	Human Science and Services	Terry Deeney
Nutrition and Dietetics	Nutrition and Food Sciences	CELS	Ingrid Lofgren
Political Science	Political Science	Arts and Sciences	Kristin Johnson

Highlights from the 2015 Learning Outcomes Assessment Reports:

UNDERGRADUATE
Anthropology
- A narrative was provided which enhanced the report template; appendices enriched the results provided.
- Used direct evidence (final papers) and indirect evidence (student reflections about learning).
- Engaged several faculty in the process, and provided both quantitative and qualitative results.
- Pedagogical recommendations made for the assessed assignment (provide rubric early to students, redesign the prompt, etc.) and at the course-level as it becomes the program capstone, including changing prerequisites, possibly adding an additional book.
- Followed up on past recommendations, providing recommendations for continued improvement.
- Plan to provide the curriculum map to undergraduate courses instructors to support a consistent level of instruction by sharing how their course contributes to the student learning goals for the program.

Communication Studies
- Two outcomes examined using a variety of direct (pre-post scores for speech performance; exam questions and papers) and indirect evidence of learning (student self-report using a nationally validated survey).
- Model for documentation of the internal processes, plans and assessment approach: Excellent methodology utilized: departmental rubric and growth measures; clear feedback to students about the process; exam questions aligned with outcome statements; thoughtful reflections based on extensive data analysis; recommendations for change include expanding sample size across more courses.
- Excellent communication within department/program.
- Appendices enhanced the report.

English
- Excellent sample and evaluation methodology: essays from all 200- and 400-level courses to examine one outcome over 5 semesters using common 6 item rubric; essays read by two raters each.
- Process promoted faculty engagement, collaboration in the assessment process and rubric development.
- Expectations for student performance met, but data analysis resulted in recommendations to close a performance gap for specific skills.

- Appendices enhanced the report.

German
- Report organization and presentation outstanding (included effective color coding) .
- Updated learning outcomes and curriculum map to emphasize program rather than course-level using national standards; adopted new texts
- Examined 2 outcomes in each section of the report, using embedded questions from across all sections to improve sample; used SAKAI tools to support data gathering and summaries.
- Thoughtful reflections and interpretation of the data with several recommendations to improve student learning and/or the assessment process.
- Excellent use of rubrics

Human Development and Family Studies (BS)
- Excellent sample and evaluation methodology included use of direct and indirect sources of evidence over semesters.
- Used student work from 200- and 400-level courses assessed with a common rubric.
- Clear recommendations included an intervention to provide additional writing experience, rework the rubric and assessment process for clarity and applicability.
- Comprehensive follow-up on recommendations from previous reports included changes to outcomes and assessment process; upcoming curricular changes (capstone) to align with new outcomes.

Kinesiology (BS)
- Updated outcomes and made modifications to curriculum from prior assessment.
- Thorough process, methodology, faculty engagement, reflections.
- Extensive Appendices provided excellent documentation about the assessment process.
- Assessed two outcomes over two semesters using different sources of student work.
- Engaged Curriculum Committee in rubric development to ensure standardization of use.
- Engaged participating faculty in the interpretation of results, noting overall scores and differences by section; focused on specific pedagogical changes that would support improvements in demonstrated learning although overall expectations were met.
- Highly effective comparisons of data at varying levels (by course, by rubric item), large samples, and tracking over time.
- Responded to follow-up on prior recommendations (future reports).

Sociology
- Revised outcome statements to improve clarity and representation on curriculum map.
- Examined multiple outcomes from multiple sections and time periods.
- Engaged multiple faculty to score student work and interpret results for each outcome.
- Reflections went beyond the assessment results of a particular outcome to other observations from examining student work.
- Proposed including the department in discussions of interventions and formal recommendations for change or improvement.
- Excellent follow-up on prior recommendations: implemented change with a prerequisite and assessed student performance sampling across a broad range of courses, and time.

Writing and Rhetoric
- Assessed common artifact across capstone portfolios.
- Engaged all faculty (fulltime) in conducting a norming session prior to rating artifact, and reflecting on results.

- Provided insight into faculty discussion about improvements to sampling and scoring, use of the artifact and wording of the outcome to improve the assessment process and validity and usefulness of results as a way to measure student learning.

GRADUATE

Education PhD
- Assessment included written and oral communication emphasizing the requirements that individuals will need to meet as practicing professionals.
- Evidence was collected on all students completing the program over a two year period.
- Despite all students meeting expectations on learning outcomes, considerable reflection is afforded in how to move students from adequate to exceptional in their performance.
- Reflections include modification of the existing rubric to provide more detail to lend additional insight into the evaluation of comprehensive exams.
- The report includes specific recommendations enhanced by a clear timeline for implementation and future reporting.

Elementary Education
- Included appendices were detailed, organized, and demonstrated significant thought in assessment efforts.
- A variety of evidence including measures across a range of courses using different types of assessments including practicum performance was used.
- Assessment was conducted over 4 semesters of the program.
- Plans for future efforts include thoughtful recommendations for improvement including training in inter-rater reliability.

Education Reading Specialist
- Learning outcomes were clear and outlined expectation for the program.
- Rubrics were particularly detailed with clear and well described categories.
- Curriculum map demonstrated that the program learning outcomes were well represented across the curriculum
- Plans for improvement included both considerations of the assessment process and student population including taking into account 'real life' issues of MA students including schedules and student teaching assignments.
- Reflections included complete descriptions about expectations surrounding each outcome compared to actual results and considered plans for the future.

Nutrition and Dietetics
- Learning outcomes were well crafted.
- The report included useful reflections on patterns of performance on specific rubric items linked to specific learning outcomes.
- The report included significant reflection and planning for improving the assessment process including the design and creation of an evaluation tool that meets program needs and provides students with meaningful information.
- Strong efforts to involve all faculty in a shared process for evaluation and on-going assessment.
- The assessment plan is designed to track attainment of selected outcomes at various points in the curriculum offering an opportunity for development and intervention at the initial stages of the program.

Political Science
- Plans to archive results and track student performance over time and across student cohorts significantly enhance insights from outcomes assessment and allows for long term planning by the department.
- Significant efforts have been made to ensure inter-rater reliability in the application of rubrics to student research projects.

- The report included significant explanation in the appendices that contextualized information contained in the report and included relevant details that enhanced understanding of the assessment process.
- Report was well written and clearly organized.