Minutes
Assessment Oversight Committee
December 11, 2006

Present: Carol Sue Butts (Provost), Shane Drefcinski (Assessment coordinator), Mohaninder Gill (EMS), Peter Hadorn (LAE), Annie Kinwa-Muzinga (BILSA), Amanda Trewin (BILSA, APC Representative), Carlos Wiley (Student Affairs Representative), Qi Yang (EMS)

Guests: Rea Kirk (Representing LAE for Tom), Sofia Carlos-Cuellar, Tim Zauche

Absent: Tom Lo Guidice (LAE)

1. Approval of November 27, 2006 Minutes.
   Need to modify two typos.
   Move to approve by Mohan Gill. Seconded by Peter Hadorn

2. Announcements
   Carol Sue Butts indicated that she is pleased with accreditation results. At the exit interview the reviewers started with “this campus is something special.” The reviewers were astounded by pride and enthusiasm on campus. They felt this may in part be due to TSI influence (money trickling down). Reviewers commented on the engagement of the faculty and students in part due to the large number of individuals that attended the faculty and student forums, respectively. Reviewers also stated that the service learning/engagement with the community is admirable. The final report is expected in January.

3. AAF presentation: Tim Zauche, “Peer-Review Assessment in Chemistry”
   Tim Zauche and Sofia Carlos-Cuellar presented a progress report for their Assessment Activity Fund Grant. Both have used calibrated peer-review (CPR) as a method to incorporate more writing in their chemistry classes. By incorporating more writing and through the peer review process, students are improving both their communication skills as well as their critical thinking skills. They also felt that this method could be used to explore concept that you don’t have time to cover in class.

   Other studies have indicated that CPR has benefited all students. They found that students in courses that used CPR did better on both multiple choice and essay exams.

   CPR involves the following steps:
   1. Students prepare and submit their essay. (These can vary based on instructor/class). In chemistry students typically wrote 200-300 word essays.
2. Students then provide feedback on three provided essays, one good, one ok and one poor. (This is the calibration step.)
3. Next students provide feedback on/grade three peer essays.
4. Finally, students provide feedback on/grade their own essay.

Initially incorporating CRP into your classroom can take a great deal of time since the instructor must build the assignment and develop three essays for the calibration step. Tim and Sofia indicated that this might take 10-15 hours/assignment. They stressed that this was a one-time time investment. Incorporating CRP into the classroom also involves more time/work on the part of the students. For this reason, it is important to sell this to the students as well.

Tim and Sofia think that CPR has benefited their students. They think this method does make their students better communicators. Students also become better proof-readers of their own materials. Students also learn concepts better (based on previous studies.) In addition to benefiting the students, Tim has found that using CPR has forced him to provide better instructions for assignments, thus it has also improved his teaching effectiveness.

AOC found this report interesting. It is possible to bring Arlene Russell to UWP to present a 2-day workshop on CPR. Such an activity would cost $1,000.

4. HLC Visiting Team Suggestions for the AOC
The accreditation reviewers had several comments/suggestions for AOC. These included
1. Do more to celebrate effective assessment. This could include a banquet, newsletter or monetary rewards for effective departments. Monetary awards could be used to support faculty/staff travel and professional development.
2. Do more with documentation of assessment.
3. Ensure that work on assessment be meaningful to AOC members as well as department being evaluated.
4. An over-reliance on verbal report. Paper documentation is vital. Reviewers did comment that according to the UUCC/UWP, assessment is owned by the faculty.

5. Adjournment.
Move to adjourn by Mohan Gill and seconded by Qi Yang. Meeting adjourned at 5:05 P.M.