Assessment Oversight Committee
Minutes
October 8, 2007
4 p.m. 320 Brigham

Present: Carol Sue Butts (Provost), Ben Collins (Faculty Senate Representative), Shane Drefcinski (Assessment coordinator, Undergraduate Curriculum Commission Representative), Mohaninder Gill (EMS), Peter Hadorn (LAE), Marge Karsten (BILSA), Tom Lo Guidice (LAE), Matthew Roberts (EMS) and Amanda Trewin (BILSA, APC Representative)

Guests present: Louis Nzegwu and Majid Tabrizi

Absent: Carlos Wiley (Student Affairs Representative), (Student Senate Representative)

1. Approve minutes of 9/24/07
There was a motion to approve minutes by Marge, second Peter. Motion passed.

2. Announcements.
Carol Sue reported that there is a lot of concern about the lack of an approved state budget. UWP will be 1.4 million dollars short if no budget is passed. We would be forced to continue on with last year’s budget. A new budget needs to be approved by November 1 (early Spring 2008 registration begins) or UWP will need to make cuts. These cuts will likely include cuts in the number of classes/sessions being taught. Part-time academic staff would likely be cut since approximately 90% of UWP’s budget tied up in salaries. A second possibility would be the addition of a $300 surcharge to tuition per student. In the long-term, UWP may need to limit number of freshman accepted.

Art building which was recently renovated is beautiful.

Student numbers for Fall 2009 are strong.

3. Loguidice Resolution
Tom proposed that AOC work collaboratively with Improvement of Learning Committee (ILC) on grants related to general education (approximately $50,000 between the two committees). This suggestion is in part based on critiques offered by the Higher Learning Commission (December 4-6, 2006). How this will be accomplished will be discussed and determined later. It could include the formation of an ad hoc committee that includes members from AOC and ILC. This would be a priority for next funding cycle (2008-09 awards). This ad hoc committee would guide AOC with regard to Assessment Activity Funds.

It was suggested that Provost may send faculty to training sessions/conferences about GE. Committee should discuss competencies and other ways to offer GE. It was suggested that GE experience could be made more interdisciplinary and more
applicable to majors. Carol Sue noted that it has been about 20 years since whole GE package has been looked at and that it is probably time to consider GE again. She recommended that we look at models that work at other institutions. One possibility would be to use a thematic approach to GE. For example, one theme might be the environment. The GE courses would then explore various aspects of the environment (biology of, sociology of, etc.). Other themes might include health care and globalization.

Peter asked, why is resolution is necessary. Tom answered that he was not sure that it is necessary but offered that this would provide an avenue for two committees to work together. Further, pooling money will provide funds to provide appropriate faculty training.

It was noted that for this to work, AOC and ILC will need to be working on same schedule.

Tom motioned that AOC and the Improvement of Learning Committee will work jointly to prioritize funding Assessment/Curriculum Improvement and Scholarship of Teaching (SoTL) grants/activities that promote reexamination of General Education and Assessment of Learning in 2007-08. Mohan 2nd the motion. Motion passed. It was noted that approval is contingent upon approval by Improvement of Learning Committee too.

4. IBRC Assessment Report
A self assessment report of the International Business Resource Center was submitted. Louis Nzegnu presented and answered questions.

Tools used to assess various outcomes of program were identified. They included such things as grant evaluation/renewal of grants (only awarded if program has made advancements) and pre- and post- interview of students participating in study abroad short courses. The goal is to evaluate whether program has accomplished what they set out to accomplish. Study abroad numbers have been increasing (unlike trends at other institutions). Students learn better when they are in comfortable environment. Providing a comfortable environment includes incorporating social/cultural activities into course, providing ample free time, and reducing fatigue in students. Effective communication is always important.

Tom asked “Is model assessment program part of national model?”—No

Tom asked “What are the implications of what you do for broader university?” The study abroad program is a service to students. Students returning from a study abroad experience do typically share their experiences in the classroom. These are typically taped so that they can be available for others to view.

Tom motioned to receive report. Matt seconded. Motion passes.
5. Center for Plastics Processing Technology
A self assessment report of the Center for Plastics Processing Technology was
submitted. Majid Tabrizi presented and answered questions.

In 1992, the Department of Industrial Studies decided to have minor in Plastic. This
is an equipment intensive program therefore a Center for Plastics Processing
Technology was established. This Center is link with industry. The Center is
relatively successful. The center is involved in fund raising to get equipment. Often
industry contributes funds/equipment for Center. It is accredited every year. The
result is that we have equipment that students can learn with whose capabilities
actually often exceed industry. Students definitely benefit from the Center.

One benefit that has occurred is that graduates are able to contribute to companies
that hire them earlier because they don’t need excessive training. UWP’s plastics
program is among top 5 programs in US.

Shane asked Majid to elaborate on changes made to curriculum. Majid indicated that
a group of people from industry (an advisory board) provides feedback to the faculty.
The curriculum has been adjusted based on their input.

Marge motioned to receive report. Mohan seconded. Motion passes.

6. Adjournment
Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.