Minutes
Assessment Oversight Committee
February 8, 2010

Present: Shane Drefcinski, Duane Ford, Dennis Ciesielski, Margaret Karsten, Matthew Roberts, Amanda Tucker
Guests: Jeff Huebschman, Lisa Landgraf, Pamela Peters, Tammy Salmon-Stephens

1. Members and guests were introduced; the minutes of the January 25th meeting were approved unanimously.

2. There were no announcements.

3. Lisa Landgraf, Pamela Peters, Tammy Salmon-Stephens discussed the results of their AAF grant, *Improvement of Assessment Tools to Improve Campus Diversity*. Their report focused on three specific areas: a survey of career day for potential female recruits in STEM fields, a survey of UWP faculty about their impressions of the Women in Engineering Program (WEP), and a workload analysis of WEP Director. Major points addressed were as follows:
   a. The AAF grant was one of several, including a NSF grant, that the women in STEM fields program has been awarded and that they are still working on potential funding opportunities.
   b. They have developed a strong model for the career day survey but have had difficulty in getting responses (only three out of approximately one hundred were returned). Some of the recruits are too young to really know their future academic and career plans and therefore cannot fill out the survey. In the future, they plan to focus on obtaining results from recruits who are in or have finished their junior and senior years of high school.
   c. Data from the faculty survey was only received very recently (earlier today), so only a couple points of data were available. 39% of faculty members think the gender imbalance on campus has no impact while 51% believe the imbalance has a negative impact. The majority of faculty members (79%) believe that the WEP program has a positive impact on campus. A more complete analysis of the data will be available for the final report.
   d. After completing a workload analysis of the Director of WEP, the following recommendations were made after completing the analysis: 1.) the Director should, if possible, to try to schedule in advance larger periods of time during the academic year for long-term projects; 2.) a half-time LTE position as an assistant to the Director during the school year would be invaluable in creating that time and 3.) it is premature to say that a full-time director of Women in Engineering/STEM fields.
   e. A couple of questions requesting clarification of the report were asked, and commendation for the report was expressed.

4. Jeff Huebschman discussed the previously distributed documents on the Biology Department’s Current Assessment Plan, Evidence of Student Achievement of Learning Outcomes, and Changes Resulting from Assessment Efforts. Major points were addressed as follows:
a. In 2007 the Biology Department began a series of curriculum revisions, with student learning outcomes in mind, and core biology courses address these new learning outcomes in terms of attitude, skills, and knowledge.

b. The department uses a variety of assessment tools, including discussion, labs, case studies, written assignments, presentations, etc. to evaluate student learning. To the course evaluations distributed to students at the end of the semester, they have added a specific series of questions to assess a student’s development of attitudes about biology and science, and analysis of Fall 2009 evaluations indicates that in their self-assessment, the majority of students agree that the course improved their attitudes about science. On average, majors show a slightly higher score than non-majors.

c. Huebschman stated that they have difficulty obtaining senior exit surveys and have shifted from having these distributed through advisors to emailing the survey directly to students to moving the survey online.

d. Career Center data indicates that of the self-reporting graduate in biology, 86% pursue careers related to biology and nearly a third go onto professional school in a health-related field. Given this focus, they would like to see data collection for students taking the MCAT or GRE but recognize the difficulty in doing so.

e. Huebschman noted that the department is still looking for a better means of collecting, storing, and analyzing data. As mentioned earlier, he is attempting to increase the responses to the senior exit survey by moving the survey online. He is also working with Mark Mailloux in the Institutional Research Office to fine-tune the survey and to allow various data sets to be compared (i.e. sophomores vs. seniors). Finally, he is also looking at the possibility of working with the alumni office to collect data on alumni.

f. In the discussion that followed, Ford asked how more detailed information regarding content knowledge in a specific area (rather than just passing the course) might be obtained. Drefcinski suggested that conversations in the department about what strengths and weaknesses they see in their majors could help to formulate a couple specific questions to add to the course evaluations each year.

g. Roberts asked about the need for two sets of student learning outcomes. Huebschman replied that this query would be brought up in further discussions in the department about the curriculum.

5. The revised draft of the AOC response to the Faculty Senate was discussed and approved. Karsten mentioned that Carlos Wiley had a suggestion about the response and Drefcinski said that he would be in contact with him.

6. The guidelines for 2010-2011 AAF Fund were briefly discussed, particularly in relation to what types of proposals would be given preference and the due date. Ford suggested that proposals that evaluated and compared the performance of different groups of students should be given priority. Further discussion of AAF grants will continue at the next meeting.

7. The meeting adjourned at 5:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Tucker