Minutes
Assessment Oversight Committee
Nov 8, 2010

Present: Shane Drefcinski, Mittie Nimocks, Dominic Barraclough, Thomas Hunt, P.B. Ravikumar

1. Minutes of the Oct 25, 2010 meeting were approved unanimously.
2. There were no announcements.
3. Drefcinski briefed the committee on the process that led to the Exponent TV-5, and WSUP all becoming part of the assessment review cycle. He also pointed out that students work with Exponent and TV-5 as part of some of their courses which are anyhow assessed. This led to the discussion as to why Exponent, TV-5, and WSUP must be reviewed separately regarding assessment. A similar question was posed via e-mail by Joseph Clifton of Computer Science and Software Engineering as to why AOC must review in addition to the rigorous review by the external ABET accreditation agency. Clifton’s query was in the light of eliminating low-value activities and redundancies. These topics brought out an open discussion of pros and cons of addressing these issues in different ways. Drefcinski pointed out the difficulty of knowing what criteria will decide which ones could be dropped from the review cycle. Drefcinski also pointed out that review procedures and outcomes of different programs/services provide useful information for each other. Ravikumar mentioned that he had spoken with Dave Kunz, the Chair of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering besides drawing attention to the Chairs of General Engineering and Electrical Engineering supporting Clifton’s position. Kunz agreed in principle with Clifton’s position but was open to the idea of AOC streamlining the AOC procedures for engineering programs. Nimocks suggested that AOC could look into the assessment of Exponent, TV-5, and WSUP as part of the courses they support rather than pure services. Hunt talked about the possibility of other programs wanting exemptions on their own grounds once certain programs are exempted from the review cycle. Barraclough drew attention to the fact that Exponent gets funds from SUFAC and may therefore be required to be assessed separately and not part of courses they support. AOC felt that Nimocks can provide guidance from the administrative side about all these issues even while AOC looked into it through its membership discussing these aspects with their colleges. Nimocks summarized the discussions by recalling that APC reviews programs while AOC oversees the process of assessment and outcomes. Nimocks also said that she would be encouraging of professional development grant for AOC members to get acquainted with assessment issues so as to be more productive. Academic Standards Committee’s place in all this and how it has evolved to address changing goals were also discussed. For example, it looks more into admission standards, plagiarism etc and less into extensive scrutiny of course syllabus for instance. Barraclough distributed a couple of interesting articles regarding assessment and concurred with Nimocks about the benefits of professional development grants to help AOC members. All members supported this idea.
4. The meeting adjourned at 4:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

P.B. Ravikumar