Assessment Oversight Committee
January 24, 2011 Minutes

Attendees: Dominic Barraclough, Cathy Cornett, Dennis Ciesielski, Thomas Hunt, Sharon Klavins, Mittie Nimocks, Wayne Weber, and Shane Drefcinski

I. Minutes from December 13, 2010 were deferred until the next meeting.

II. Shane Drefcinski announced that the open forums to discuss the second draft of the new general education model will be next Tuesday and Thursday, Feb. 1 and 3, at 4:00 p.m. in the Nohr Gallery.

II. Cornett, Klavins, and Weber presented their AAF grant report, “Piloting of on-line CLASSE survey to assess student engagement in biology classes.” They explained the mechanics of the survey and how they administered it to both students and faculty in four biology courses (two non-major General Education courses, an intensive research course in the major, and an upper level major course). A key concern was to assess student engagement in the learning process. The instructor is asked to evaluate the importance of specific educational practices to the success of students in one course. Students are in turn asked to evaluate their engagement in that one course with respect to educational practices, cognitive skills, and class atmosphere.

The results of the surveys were very positive. They noted in their report, “The CLASSE tool was shown to be an effective means of assessing student engagement in the classroom. In this capacity it was quite informative in that it provided a comparison between faculty and student perceptions of engagement, allowing for the identification of discrepancies. This then enables instructors to reflect on these discrepancies and provides them something tangible on which to take action.” The group plans to incorporate a more diverse array of biology courses in future administrations of the CLASSE survey so that the results can be looked at from the perspective of a program as a whole. They also intend to assess engagement of first-year students in General Education classes, the relationship of academic preparation with engagement in classes, and impacts of student demographics on course dynamics.

Respectfully submitted,

Shane Drefcinski