

MEMORANDUM

To: Provost Ray

From: Ranelle Eubanks, Chair
CASAA Committee

Date: March 16, 2006

Subject: Report and Recommendations of the CASAA committee

The CASAA committee is the hardest working, most dedicated group of individuals on this campus! They have worked tirelessly, with great effort, and for long periods of time to review and recommend changes in the unit annual assessments. When you see these folks, please thank them for their work on this committee.

Members of the committee: Peggy Doss (Academic Council), Bob Stark (Agriculture), Sarah Bloom (Arts and Humanities), Marsha Clayton (Business), Terri Hopkins (CIS), Sue Martin (Education), Sayeed Mehmood (Forest Resources), Jeff Dickens (Library), Hassan Sayyar (Math/Science), Beverly Lobitz (Music), Leia O'Fallon (Nursing), Craig Greathouse (Social and Behavioral Sciences), Laura Hughes (Counseling/Testing), Veronica Studards (CT-McGehee), and Shirlene Josey (CT-Crossett).

The CASAA committee met numerous times over the past several months to review the North Central report concerning assessment, critique each academic unit's Annual Assessment Report in light of the North Central report, and make recommendations for future reports.

Other work completed by the CASAA committee included development of a website, accessible from the UAM Academic Affairs homepage:

<http://www.uamont.edu/AcademicAffairs/AssessmentWebsite/index.html>

From this site one can access the Assessment Handbook, each academic unit's assessment report for the last year, minutes of the CASAA committee meetings, information about the CAAP exam, and UAM comparative results for the CAAP. The CASAA committee diligently researched information, and we have included on the website links to numerous articles, other websites, and publications concerning assessment that the committee felt would be useful for UAM faculty and staff.

Concerning their specific charge, the committee generally thought the North Central report was accurate in its report that some units were doing a good job of assessment and other units were not. The committee also agreed with the North Central report that unit's have quite a bit of data available to them that they are not using productively. The committee did not ask any unit to re-write its report; however, the committee noted in its minutes that several reports were vague, lacked specificity, or were nondescript. The committee thought the 12 questions used by the units to guide the assessment report were themselves vague and misleading, leading to poor reports. Each unit representative was to

discuss with their unit head the findings of the committee regarding their Assessment Report.

Recommendations:

The CASAA committee would like to make the following recommendations concerning future unit Annual Assessment Reports:

1. Make the Assessment Report a part of the unit's Annual Report. Much of the data from the Annual Report can be used to complete the assessment for the unit. There is no need to duplicate reports and the timeframe (August 1) is identical.
2. Use the new set of Guiding Questions attached to this memo. The questions were developed from North Central guidelines concerning assessment, research completed by the committee, and thoughtful consideration after reviewing all unit reports. The recommended questions are demanding in their specificity, yet brief enough that the task should not be foreboding.
3. Develop a University Assessment Report that includes overall graduation and retention rates, data concerning students entering remedial programs, the number of students who must re-take College Algebra/Survey and/or Composition I to achieve a grade of "C", the GPAs of students who are in remediation and non-remediation, etc. The report should address a plan of action of how we can address improving student learning.

If you have questions or concerns about the committee's work and recommendations, please do not hesitate to contact me.