

CASAA MEETING MINUTES

November 9, 2011

3 p.m. Wells Hall Room 200

Members attending: Bob Stark, Sarah Bloom, Terri Cossey, Donna Hunnicutt, Sayeed Mehmood, Mary Heady, Carole Efird, Laura Evans, Brandi Maxwell, Jacob Fenolia, and Ranelle Eubanks. Carol Strong sent her rubrics but were unable to attend the meeting. Those absent were: Dennis Patterson and Veronica Studards.

The **School of Mathematics and Natural Sciences** program report was reviewed using the rubric as a point of discussion in the context of the nine questions. The School of Nursing found errors in their assessment report and asked that the discussion of that program be moved to the end of all other reports.

The following remarks were noted regarding the **School of Mathematics and Natural Sciences** program. As an overall review, please order appendices as their use appears in the report, this was difficult for the reviewers to follow.

1. What are the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for your unit? How do you inform the public and other stakeholders (students, potential students, the community) about your SLOs? If your unit is accredited by an outside source, please attach the letter verifying your accreditation.

The overall average rating for this response ranged from 2 to 5 with an average of 3.6. The following items were noted: Most committee members indicated the SLOs were clear and establish what a student who completes a degree should know, the SLOs are not clearly published to inform the public and other stakeholders. The only place indicated where the SLOs can be found is the website and that may not be prominent for stakeholders. The committee recommends that SLOs should be placed in the catalog or perhaps as a flyer on a bulletin board at a minimum.

2. Describe how your unit's Student Learning Outcomes fit into the mission of the University.

The overall rating for this response was 3—acceptable. Beginning with this report, there was to be an explanation of how SLOs matched the mission of the University, not just a chart (The School of Computer Information Systems CASAA report has a very good example to follow.)

3. Provide an analysis of the student learning data from your unit. How is this data used as evidence of learning?

The overall average rating for this response was 4—very good. There were no items of concern noted.

4. Based on your analysis of student learning data in Question 3, include an explanation of what seems to be improving student learning and what should be revised.

The overall average rating for this response was 4—very good. The following items were noted: The discussion is centered on chemistry and mathematics; there is little discussion of biology or physics. The question asks, “what seems to be improving student learning?” The report indicates that students are “encouraged to present”—how does encouraging students to present improve student learning?

5. Other than course level/grades, describe/analyze other data and other sources of data whose results assist your unit to improve student learning.

The overall average rating for this response was 4—very good. The following items were noted: The last newsletter on the web is from 2006, a bit old. The report indicates faculty attend professional meetings but there is no list of what faculty and what meetings are attended. Appendix D was a good table, but a graph may have shown the analysis more clearly.

6. As a result of the review of your student learning data in previous questions, explain what efforts your unit will make to improve student learning over the next assessment period. Be specific indicating when, how often, how much, and by whom these improvements will take place.

The overall average rating for this response was 4—very good. Items noted were: The last sentence: “other units on campus are likely going to want to be involved in this minor as it is developed” is generalized and should be omitted. One reviewer noted that the following should be used as the beginning to the 3rd paragraph for better clarity: “From the contact we have had with graduate programs in the sciences, our students are well prepared and very few changes are needed.”

7. What new tactics to improve student learning has your unit considered, experimented with, researched, reviewed, or put into practice over the past year?

The overall average rating for this response was 4—very good. The following items were noted: Several new tactics have been attempted. The use of audiovisuals in biology lab is a positive change.

8. How do you ensure shared responsibility for student learning and assessment among students, faculty, and other stakeholders?

The overall average rating for this response was 2--weak. The following items were noted: To whom is the Exit Interview given? To how many? When? Labs seem to be a big issue: is an explanation given to students early on to explain why? The use of mid-term grade sheets is indicated—should this not have been mentioned earlier in the report? What data collection is done by faculty—after all, faculty should be most closely linked to student learning assessment. The answer did not explain how the unit ensures shared responsibility for student learning, it

only illustrated how faculty and students communicate. There is no evidence of how students' shared responsibility or contributed to the assessment process throughout the program.

9. Describe and provide evidence of efforts your unit is making to recruit/retain/graduate students in your unit/at the University. (A generalized statement such as “we take a personal interest in our students is not evidence.”

The average overall rating for this response was 4.5—very good. Items noted: The response had lots of information and efforts to recruit/retain/graduate students is obvious; however, editing would make the overarching points more effective and the passage easier to read and to follow. Tracking students who transfer to other departments at UAM should be fairly easy to determine; ultimate student success, even in another department, would be the key.

Respectfully submitted,

Ranelle Eubanks, Recorder