General Education Committee Meeting Minutes

February 25, 2019, 11:00am

In attendance: Josh Webster, Kathy Schwandt, Katy Duryea, Daniel Murphree, Stephanie Davis, Richelle Rader, Stephen Scilacci

Absent: Peggy Drussel, Melissa Risi

Josh reported on his attendance at the NW Assessment Conference. He learned the following:

1. Assessors don’t have just one thing they are looking for. However, their emphasis is on having/creating assessments that are useable. That is, they will want to know how we use the information obtained from the assessments to make changes – in the course, in the degree programs, and in the Gen. Ed. Program. We need to be producing information that we can act on.
   1. An example given at the conference was Student Services. Assessors might look at their assessment to see how they’ve used student feedback to change/improve their services.
   2. They want to see that the ‘loop’ between the assessment results and changes/improvements, is being closed.
   3. Only a handful of institutions are actually doing this properly, i.e. closing the loop.
   4. As mentioned, they want assessment to take place at multiple levels, including at the program level.
   5. They don’t require copious amounts of data, just useful data.
2. Assessors don’t want a ‘one size fits all.’ The measures need to be consistent across sections of the same course, but don’t need to be the same between courses. Assignments or exams that are specific to the course work best.
3. Need to have assessment ‘products’ or measurement tools that align with course outcomes. If using one large tool to assess all outcomes, need to be able to break it down to access measurements of each outcome.
4. In addition, student input on the assessments is encouraged. Asking students what they took away from the class is another way to look at how well outcomes are being emphasized. Students could write about what they learned from the course, and how well they fell they met specific outcomes. This gives students the opportunity to reflect on their learning. Again, while this is useful, it is not necessary.
5. The goal of assessment is to gather information that is useful and helpful for instructors. Assessors don’t just want compliance, they want instructors to have tools to help them improve their delivery of student outcomes.

The question was brought up, who monitors the loop? That is, who is responsible for checking if changes based on assessment results are being made?

1. It was suggested that the Gen. Ed. Committee only provide guidance if it looks like outcomes aren’t being met.

In previous meetings, encouragement was given to ensure assessment aligned with the GBC Core Themes. This was not mentioned in the conference as a requirement. Again, the focus was on closing the loop; demonstrating to assessors that the information gleaned from assessment is being actively and practically used to re-structure courses, change curriculum, etc.

An example of ‘closing the loop’ was given by the EMS program: If 50% or more miss a question on an exam, the question is re-visited and is either altered, or greater emphasis is given to teaching the concept.

The goal is to have many or most departments implementing appropriate Gen. Ed. Assessment in their classes this fall. To this end, the following will occur:

* The goals for Gen. Ed. Assessment will be presented to Department Chairs this semester. Ideas, examples, and guidelines will be shared. The meeting may be recorded to be shared with individual instructors.
* A subcommittee will be formed to help connect with members of the Assessment Committee and coordinate efforts.

In addition, President Helens will discuss accreditation will on March 8th.

Josh will send out dates for upcoming committee meetings, probably the Monday after Faculty Senate. The next meeting will focus on creating assessment guidelines that can be shared with departments.

Next Meeting: March 18, 2019, 11a.m.